

**Tenzing Sherpa or "I do it my way"**  
**Interview by Markus Ruckstuhl**

*Namaskar (N):*

Tenzing-ji, you are carrying a famous name! Are you famous?

*Tenzing Sherpa (TS), with a big laughter:*

Famous? Well, I guess not really as I have never climbed the Everest and spell my name differently than the sun cream!

*N:*

But you were born up in the Solukhumbu region, right?

*TS:*

Yes indeed, I was brought up near Salleri, the district headquarter of the Solukhumbu district and moved to Kathmandu for my studies when I was about sixteen before I started to assist the administration in the family-owned carpet factory.

*N:*

..... and mutated from a village boy to a town-boy!

*TS:*

Oh yeah, I was of course fascinated by the city life, believe me! Motorbikes, bars, girls, cinemas, casino, all so thrilling for a young guy from the middle of nowhere!

*N:*

An excessive way of life then - how did you finance your adventures in Kathmandu?

*TS:*

I was very, very lucky. After loosing my father as a newly born baby, my older brothers and sisters - ten of them in total! took care of me together with my mom who was running the carpet factory. Being the youngest in the family, I enjoyed all the privileges of a latecomer!

*N:*

Things must have changed after coming to Switzerland, now standing on your own feet, fighting for your own fortune?!?

*TS:*

Again, I was very lucky here, I always had people around me that supported me with everything I needed. And very importantly, I found great Nepali friends in Zurich a real Everest gang indeed with which I explored the Swiss way of life! Believe me, a totally crazy time, a time I would never want to miss though!

*N:*

And how about working, the most important of all Swiss passions?

*TS:*

Well I started with German courses right away and worked in a nursery for more than two years. Then a few years of here and there, nothing serious, and always under the motto "fun first"! Since 2003 however, I am now working for Swissport at the Kloten airport, a great chance for me, a job that is never boring and changes everyday, no routine! Moreover attractive benefits: cheap airfares, very flexible working hours, good carrier opportunities and the possibility to decide myself on my work load. A job that allows me to organize my life in the way I want it!

*N:*

Time to realize other ideas?!

*TS:*

Yes indeed, I try this and that right now, I am planning to start my own business, in a few years probably. Asian Take-Away maybe, an idea I gave up on right



now, party service, home delivery service. To be honest, I am quite confused right now and think a lot on what should come next!

*N:*

Are you still selling sports and outdoor clothing?

*TS:*

Yes I am, however, on low profile right now, but this business idea remains one of my goals for the future! My own brand, clothing for sports, outdoor, trekking, all manufactured in Nepal and exported to the West. I started this a few

years back, quite interesting potential, not only for me: jobs and an income source for many people in Nepal let's see, I need some more time!

*N:*

You are walking between two countries, two cultures! How do you feel about it?

*TS:*

See, I am Nepali in my heart, living since more than a decade here in Switzerland. I want to participate in the life here and therefore have to adapt, partially integrate, respect the rules and law of the society here. This is not always easy, but definitely thrilling and exciting!

*N:*

You may not be a worldwide celebrity, but definitely within the Swiss-Nepalese society! The motor and organizer whenever it comes to social events, volleyball tournaments, festivals or parties! What is your motivation, your personal profit?

*TS:*

Definitely not the money, believe me, I am running here my private NPO, "non-profit organization"! Do we always need to profit? For me it is pure fun, it's my way of contributing to the society I am living in. Not more, but also not less than this!

*N:*

It definitely brings much entertainment in your life, isn't it? Are you never getting tired?

*TS:*

I believe in networking, both here in Switzerland and back in Nepal. And that requires some efforts, no doubt about it. Many Nepali residing here have a tougher situation than you and me, right? I want to provide them with home feelings every now and then, great moments with food, music or artist from back home. At the same time, I am keen to prepare an international platform for Nepali artists, and maybe even more importantly, I am simply proud to present Nepali culture to Swiss people!

*N:*

Tenzing-ji, I think these are good enough reasons to run your private little NPO, keep going, I am sure our members greatly appreciate your efforts! Thanks for this interesting conversation!

*TS:*

No worries, and don't forget our Dashain party in Zurich on September 30!

*See details on the Dashain party on Page 20 of this Namaskar!*

The "sunny boy" from Solukhumbu!