

The Role of Spirituality in Social Change

During the last three decades, we have experienced the fastest growth and development across the globe. As a result, the entire world has become a global village exposed to different cultures, life style, and thoughts. In the modern world, everyone, in order to be happy, is chasing an unknown goal. People have forgotten to be happy with what they have or achieved in life. People want to achieve every goals of their life at the cost of anything. They do not want to loose anything. In the process, people forget that the human value, faith and support system are the three pillar of life. But then, how can we learn the true value system in our life? The answer is spirituality; the way to achieve solace deep within us.



Spirituality is a value that is inspirational through all avenues of our life. It helps us grow closer to our creator. It is the spontaneous energy that enriches and strengthens our inner self and makes us good, beautiful and wise. It brings calmness and helps reduce the aggressive way to look at life. Spirituality helps grow the realisation that we are powerful within and the cosmic energy we



have within can transform ourselves for doing meaningful and holistic jobs. The concept of the idea of multiple intelligences needs to be understood in this context. Most people excel in one or two but do poorly in the others. In most of the time, we are after our weakness but it is necessary to emphasise the fields one is best at. This is important for our integral wisdom. A great

human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation and, further, will cause a change in the destiny of all humankind.

The Crisis of Spiritual Deterioration and the Need for Transformation

To live a happy and fulfilled life is what all of us aspire. In the recent past, there has been an unprecedented development of science and technology with the expectation that humankind would be benefited. While material progress has been made, environmental destruction and exhaustion of natural resources have also risen. Further, an unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity has expanded within and among countries. The material power among nations has often led to gaining control over the military, politics, and economics. The advancement of science and technology has

also led to the production of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. These weapons have resulted in the destruction of human life and in environmental deterioration. Thus, it is no denying the fact that while material progress has occurred, humanity's spiritual life has deteriorated. Loneliness has replaced the ties between people and the cosmos.

On the other side, realizing the emergence of the divisive military, political, and economic power among nations, the concept of humanitarian competition has assumed utmost importance. This concept is based on the need for a transformation from inhumane competition to the concept of cooperation and coexistence. Besides, the concept of interconnectedness has emerged. It advocates that we benefit ourselves by extending benefits to others. This idea supports the notion of human revolution – a way to change the inner nature of each human being and in this way, bring about improvements in society as a whole. In other words, changing the external world for the better requires the internal transformation of people who are willing to lead in order to bring about such changes.



Shift in the Paradigm of Leadership



Traditionally, many people thought that the major purpose of leadership was to acquire power and privilege. This form of leadership encouraged a handful of leaders to manipulate and control others in the attainment of their goals. In fact, the traditional paradigm of leadership has been one that includes hierarchical and pyramid-type structures that focus on

the leader, and pursue utilitarian and materialistic perspective. However, with the realization that this traditional paradigm cannot solve many of the problems we confront today, a number of scholars have begun to emphasize the importance of values such as collaboration, the common good, and global concern as important components of leadership.

Moreover, of late, educators and scholars emphasize the importance of spirituality as a critical element of leadership. The essence of leadership stems from the soul rather than from one's behaviour. Leadership is thus closely related to one's spirituality through a growing awareness of self and others.

Role of Spirituality in Nurturing Higher Education

Higher education plays a major role in shaping the quality of leadership. The primary goal or mission of education is to develop leadership skills and abilities among the students who will become the future citizen leaders, better



preparing them for professional and community responsibilities. Therefore, it is not surprising that many leaders in business, industry, and government have been student leaders while in college. The new type of leadership should be a spiritual type of leadership that can bring positive changes not only through knowledge and technique, but also through the leaders' inner strength.

It is thus critical that our higher education system continues to work to foster interconnectedness in students, faculty, and staff members in order to help them better appreciate the importance of harmonious coexistence, explore the meaning and purpose in life, and cultivate infinite potential in each person. If we can do this – nurturing future leaders and citizens who embrace a spiritual existence can ultimately change the destiny of all humankind.

Conclusion

Spirituality can be described in a variety of ways, such as higher consciousness, transcendence, self-reliance, enlightenment, self-actualization, compassion, grace, forgiveness, higher power and a multitude of other qualities. However, if we were to analyze the spiritual experience and its behavioural manifestations among individuals, it becomes evident that there are some commonalities in the essence of spirituality that affect outward behaviour. Spirituality also includes an active life force and high levels of positive life energy that affects the state of human physiology. Higher states of consciousness refine our nervous system. This positive life energy increases one's own creativity and gives rise to one's compassion toward others. In this way, positive life energy enhances one's well-being and becomes a source of action for others, further fostering leadership for social change.

The argument that leadership for social change requires the inner cultivation of spiritual elements has been recognised by the UNESCO. Thus, we need to foster as many future leaders as possible who have developed a deeper sense of spirituality through achieving higher consciousness and interconnectedness to our global society. What we can conclude is that the need for spirituality in the inner core of human being in social change is of utmost importance.

