



An inquiry into the nature, activities and results of leading from a spiritual basis

Spiritual View of Life

During our 1½ – 2 hour interviews with leaders who participated in our international research programme, we asked each one in-depth questions about their spiritual view of life. At the end of these questions, we asked them to create a “spiritual theme” that would summarise all that they had shared.

This file contains each leader’s spiritual view of life, along with his or her “spiritual theme.”

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**EXCERPTS ARE SORTED BY LAST NAME
THE FOLLOWING LEADERS ARE CONTAINED IN THIS FILE:**

<u>Name</u>	Country	Organisation Name	Sector or Industry	Position	Age	Years in Leadership
Aguenza, Floridas, F.	The Philippines	Planters Development Bank	Banking	President and COO	62	30
Behner, John R.	El Salvador	Nabisco	Food	Former Country Manager	66	40
Budin, Philip	USA	Royaltons Ltd.	Marketing	CEO	61	30
Canada, Francisco Roberto	Argentina	Errepar S. A.	Publishing	Director, Partner	47	20
Chand, Amber	USA	The Amber Chand Collection	Retail Marketing	Founder	53	9
		Eziba	Retail Marketing	VP of Vision, Co-founder		
Chattopadhyay, A. K.	India	ACC Limited Refractories Division	Manufacture and Installation, Refractory	VP - Senior	50	20
Covey, Stephen R.	USA	FranklinCovey	Professional Services	Vice Chairman	73	45
Cruz, Alvaro	Colombia	Cundinamarca, (major state of Colombia)	Government	Former Governor of Cundinamarca	54	23
		I.C.M. Ingenieros Ltda.	Building Construction	CEO		
Cuneo, Federico	Peru	Bank of Boston	Banking	Former Director, Corporate	50	20
		American Glass Products	Glass Manufacturing and Distribution	Chairman		
Daugherty, Thomas	USA	Methodist Health Care System	Health Care/ Medical Care	VP of Spiritual Care and Values Integration	61	27
Delbecq, André L.	USA	Santa Clara University School of Business	Education (Higher)	Director (Institute for Spirituality of Org Leadership)	67	25
Franklin, Carol	Switzerland	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	Environmental Protection & Conservation	Former CEO	53	20
		Swiss Re	Insurance	Former Head of Human Resources		
Govindan, Rajan	USA	Bankers Trust	Banking	Former Senior Managing Director	56	35
Jensen, Niels Due	Denmark	Grundfos Mgmt A/S	Manufacturing, Pumps	Chairman – Group	60	30
Jiang, Niran	Australia	Institute of Human Excellence	Business Training & Consulting	CEO	40	15
	USA	S. C. Johnson	Household Products	Former Manager, Marketing		
	USA	Coca-Cola	Food	Former Mgr, Sr Trends		
Kanu, Victor-Krishna	Zambia	African Institute of Sathya Sai Education	Education	Director	73	30

Kolind, Lars	Denmark	Oticon	Hearing Impaired Products	Former CEO	54	26
Levy, Ricardo	USA	Catalytica, Inc.	Energy/ Pharmaceutical	CEO/Co-founder	57	30
Maitra, Ashoke	India	Times of India Group	Publishing, Newspaper	Director Human Resources	45	16
Merchant, Nilofer	USA	Rubicon Consultants	Marketing	President	34	8
Moitra, Deependra	India	Lucent Technologies	Tele-communications	General Manager, Engineering	32	7
Narayana, G.	India	Excel Industries, Ltd.	Chemicals, Biochem, Agri	Chairman - Executive	60	38
Narendran, Parantha	Czech Republic	Eurotel	Tele-communications	Strategy Director	34	3
Ollé, Ramón	The Netherlands	Epson Europe B.V.	Electronic Equipment and Services	President	52	27
Pillai, Anand	India	HCL COMNET	Computer Technology	VP of Sales and Marketing	43	18
Ploix, Hélène	France	Pechel Industriesa and Pechel Industries Partenaires	Equity Investment	Chairman and Managing Director	62	38
Raghavan, N. S.	India	Infosys Technologies, Ltd.	Information Technology	Founder Director & Joint Mgr Dir.	61	35
Raman, Ananth	USA	Graphtex, Inc.	Manufacturing – Electrical & Aluminium	Chairman & CEO, President	55	25
Ranganathan, V. V.	India	Ernst & Young India	Tax & Business Consulting	Senior Partner	53	24
Sinclair, James	USA/ Tanzania	Tan Range Exploration, Ltd.	Mining	Chairman	62	41
Vrethammar, Magnus	UK	Pergo	Laminated Flooring	Former President for Europe	52	22
	Sweden	Finess	Consumer Disposable	Former President, Consumer Div.		
Webb, Janiece	USA	Motorola Corporation	Electronic Communications	Senior Vice President	47	28
Welling, S. K.	India	HMT International, Ltd. (Hindustan Machine Tools)	Exporter (Machine Tools, Watches, Tractors)	Executive Director	55	33

Aguenza, Floy – The Philippines

“President and COO of Planters Development Bank in The Philippines”

Spiritual Theme

“What would Jesus do?” “What would the Lord do?”

Spiritual View of Life

I believe in God the Father and Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and that we were placed on this earth for a purpose. I believe we have been given our life for a reason, that there is a purpose for our life and we need to discover what we are here for. The truth is we are here to do good – to make the world a better place, to be a better person, and to help others to have a better life. This is what I keep trying to do everyday.

When confronted with a situation, I am basically guided by the question, “What would Jesus do?” I read an exercise in a book by a Jesuit writer where he talked about seeing Christ in others and helping others see Christ in you. And I try to do that. All of these help me to cope as my day unfolds and, most especially, prepared me for what would be one of the greatest challenges in my life.

Behner, John R. – El Salvador

“Former Country Manager for Nabisco in El Salvador”

Spiritual Theme

“Realising God by serving others.”

Only saying “serving everyone” does not include that, which is the most important to me, which is to realise my oneness with God.

Spiritual View of Life

Spirituality is the application of the human values - truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence - in your way of doing things. But it's also more than that. It's trying to see God in everyone and trying to interact with everyone on a very loving basis, seeing everything as being perfect, and not pointing your finger at anyone or anything.

Each of the human values that you are trying to live and put into practice comes out in reflections of what you are doing. Like driving a modest company car, not having the biggest, latest model. When there is an emergency situation, and there is no other vehicle, you loan your company car or your own personal car to be used for the emergency. Being spiritual is being humble and trying to help. It includes keeping expenses to a minimum and not wasting the utilisation of space and equipment. We shouldn't waste time. Also, water and electricity is to be taken care of, because the resources really belong to everyone, if we waste it, we waste it for so many people.

Budin, Philip – USA

“CEO of Royaltons, Ltd. in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

For me spirituality is equanimity.

Spiritual View of Life

To me, everything is spiritual; it's all God. How can anything not be spiritual? To me death is not bad and there is no right or wrong; I come from my heart and have an equal mind. That's part of my teaching from Sathya Sai Baba, my spiritual teacher whom I call Swami. So if I view things from a different standard than the world. It makes me very strange and odd, which I am.

I feel that Swami told me to go back into business, after being retired for 10 years from the age of 30 to 40, so that I could learn that these things can occur from a calm consciousness – that business can be done from an expanded consciousness, from a state of equanimity. In business, I can put on a lot of different hats, but none of them are me.

At the beginning of my spirituality, when I first encountered Swami, I thought that spirituality and money were at opposite ends of the scale. God and dollars did not mix. But then I found that money was just another form of energy; this took me twelve years to learn. I gave away just about all of the money I had made in order to be spiritual because I believed that a rich man couldn't get to God and to God was where I wanted to go. Then I learned the hard way, which seems to be the only way to learn, that this wasn't true.

Canada, Francisco Roberto – Argentina

“Director and Partner of Errepar S.A., a major publishing firm in Argentina”

Spiritual Theme

Loving God.

Spiritual View of Life

To me, spirituality is the search for true happiness.

I have had major health problems all of my life. I was born with a serious heart problem, I went through major heart operations at the age of 18 months and again when I was 10 years old, and in spite of these problems, I always felt God's close presence in my life in the form of Christ or Mary. At the age of 20, I forgot a little about my religious practice, but in my heart I always kept my love for God. I always desired to live a God-loving life.

Lately I have so beautifully seen that all ways, those of religions and even of atheism, whether they are easy or difficult, are leading to God. Even a person who rejects God is searching for God in his own way. I suppose it is our final purpose in the world to understand that all is God, and to help others find God.

Chand, Amber – USA

“Founder of the Amber Chand Collection: Global Gifts for Peace and Understanding, an internet-based company in the USA that markets the products of artisans from around the world”

Spiritual Theme

Compassion, balance, grace, and friendliness are words that ring as a spiritual theme for me. Yes, this is a “God-being tapestry.”

Spiritual View of Life

I find that spirituality is a very, very big word. It reminds me of a story my mother told me about an experience she had when she was three years old. She had a chalkboard slate in school and she was asked to write the word “God” on the slate. She began to cry and said, “But God is so big; how do I fit it in my little slate?”

As a spiritual woman, I seek to infuse everything in my life with a perspective some might consider “other-worldly “ for its experience goes beyond the tangible, that which is understood only through our sensory perceptions. Spirituality goes beyond physical matter for it is the very essence of being. It is the invisible place within me that yearns to connect and experience life in all its marvellous manifestations, no matter how challenging and how difficult it might appear.

My spirituality guides me in many wonderful ways, through writing, poetry, contemplative prayer, and authentic, clear-hearted conversations. It is an invisible, essential place within my being. Frankly, language does so little justice to what it feels like; this is why I have been turning more and more to poetry and contemplative practice as a place to understand the heart of spirituality. Spirituality is a space where the heart resides; it is soul. When I speak of feeling soulful that, to me, is also spirituality. When I reflect on spirituality I literally feel my eyes soften, my body relax into itself, and an experience of peacefulness emerge. There is lightness.

What comes to mind when I think about my overall spiritual perspective is that of a tapestry. A woven tapestry that has many threads weaving through it with a central thread that runs throughout. My spirituality feels like a beautiful, beautiful, strong, powerful, central thread in this tapestry that is my life. My spirituality offers me a quiet backdrop from which to meet the exigencies (demands, pressures) of my life. It is that constant, quiet hum of OM (the sacred primordial sound of creation) in the background, a deep and enduring presence in my life.

Chattopadhyay, A. K. – India

“Former Senior Vice President of ACC Limited Refractories Division in India”
“Executive Director of Tata Refractories, Ltd. in India”

Spiritual Theme

My spiritual theme is a combination of the four goals found in my spiritual view of life:

- To align oneself with a super power
- To find out the reasons within oneself

- To have faith in others
- To have a caring nature

Spiritual View of Life

Spirituality is the manifestation of the perfection that is already there within you. Spirituality is when I look at myself, I look within and not outside, and respond from my inner feelings where we are all perfect beings. I believe that, yes, there is some super power who creates things in a systematic and organised manner and I can align my thoughts with this; this too is spirituality to me. And when I can feel that I have peace in what I have, rather than looking to what I don't have, this is spirituality.

To me, spirituality also means the synchronisation of my body, mind, brain and everything. Sometimes I do act in a different manner between my mind and my body, but I feel that spirituality calls for a synchronisation of all of these things. If I preach something, then I should also follow it. Whatever I do should go with what I think; everything should go in one direction.

I believe a super power is there that we cannot see, but he exists. Somebody is creating this entire universe in a proper manner. My spiritual view of life calls for me to: align myself with a super power; go within myself to find out the reason for things within myself, not looking to the external environment; have faith in others, even when I am cheated sometimes; have a caring nature, which to me is caring for everyone in society, starting with my wife, my children, my colleagues, and all others.

There is so much suffering because of competition among people to see who can have the better shirt, the better house, which I feel is unhealthy. This is the source of many of our problems arising in our society today. I try to stay focused on what I have, rather than what others have. This way of thinking about what I do have, rather than what I don't have, is what I call spirituality. I see harmony in nature; I try to find peace in everything.

Covey, Stephen R. – USA

“Vice Chairman of FranklinCovey, a global professional services firm based in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

One of my mottoes serves as a powerful spiritual theme for me: “Live life in crescendo.” In other words, the most important work you'll ever do is still ahead of you.

Another such spiritual theme for me would be: “Educate and obey your conscience.” Educating as I speak of it here involves getting into the sacred literature of all the great traditions that have had enduring value and then consciously living true to what you have learned. The more you live true to it, the stronger your conscience becomes. A constant effort is required to stay on track with such stewardship.

Spiritual View of Life

To me spirituality is three things: First of all, you are dealing with the whole person. That includes the person's spirit or soul. You cannot separate their body or their mind or their heart from their spirit, because they are all so inter-related, and there is a synergistic relationship between all these four dimensions of our nature. Any attempt to compartmentalise will reduce that synergistic effect and it

will have negative repercussions on your body, your mind, your heart, your emotions, your thinking and so forth.

Another dimension would be that you are dealing with those principles that are universal and timeless.

Thirdly, spirituality deals with peace of conscience. Obeying or following your conscience, means that you are true to that which you have internalised as being right and this gives you tremendous tranquillity and courage.

When I am in India I always use the “Namaste” greeting, saluting the God within you. I really do believe that we are all children of God, and I often acknowledge that God is the source of the principles and the emperor of all the credit and glory. I say to those who are not of this belief, “That’s fine, I respect you as well, I just want you to know that personally I believe that the source of all the principles that give your life its integrity, and its power and it’s meaning, all of them link up to the Divine.”

Cruz, Alvaro – Colombia

“Former Minister of the Government of Colombia and Governor of Cundinamarca, Colombia”
“CEO of an engineering/building company in Colombia, I.C.M. Ingenieros Ltda.”

Spiritual Theme

Love and respect others.

Spiritual View of Life

Spirituality is a permanent attention to the inner self. To be able to perfect one’s behaviour and attitudes, both inwardly and externally with others, basing one’s conduct on the human values of love, truth, peace, right conduct and non-violence. Spirituality is something you must persist in every day, every hour. Together with my wife, I have worked on being able to apply and reflect on this every day.

Spirituality is a permanent way of life where you are working towards attaining two main principles or goals; these goals are love and happiness. At work, if you have a spiritual outlook, you will have a wider outlook, you will be more patient and you will have greater respect for and a better understanding of the people you work with.

Cuneo, Federico – Peru

“Senior Partner with Ernst & Young in Peru”
“Chair of Peru 2021, an NGO comprised of business executives working on sustainable development and corporate social responsibility for the country”

Spiritual Theme

Unity with the rest of the world, love, eternal life and light – those would be words I would use as a theme.

Spiritual View of Life

When I began to feel tolerance, patience and no hatred toward others, this to me was spirituality. In other words, spirituality is being able to connect with the collective soul, the collective intelligence that is fused with God. While I cannot put this into very good terms, I know there is something there that I can relate to and can connect to when I meditate with a good intention. I know that I can obtain the things I need and can give the things that all people need.

One of the things that really struck me the most in one of the books I read was, “Remember, that you are a spiritual being, temporarily in flesh and bone that will go back to eternity. Yet we need to experience being flesh and bone in order to grow as a spirit.” So if we come from eternity and we go back to eternity where there is no time, where there’s no space, then our time as flesh and bone is a mere fraction. This is what has now shaped my perspective of life. In the past, I had some idea of reincarnation, and I believe it more now. But this is not an issue for me.

Since starting on this spiritual journey, my perspectives of life have changed. I now understand that the most important thing is my soul, or my spirit, or my being. Whatever happens to me while I am in this flesh and bone is really a minor thing in my existence. In one way, this is good because I can look back at the bad things that have happened and say that it gave me some experience. However, I feel bad sometimes because I love my kids, my mother, my wife such that I want them to last in my life for eternity.

Another concept that is important to me is the concept of light, the concept of working for the light, receiving the light, and reflecting the light. This is an energetic awareness that is starting to appear in my life now and it is very meaningful to me.

Out of reading one of Thich Na Hahn’s books (a Vietnamese Buddhist monk), the most important thing I retained is that when we pray, God is inside of us rather than out there in heaven as I learned from the Lord’s Prayer – “Our Father who art in heaven”. This has really changed my life. God is not out there; therefore I cannot hide. It’s not like God is a judge to punish me. God is more like a brother that I have inside who is trying to do good for me. I am conscious that I have God inside and so my actions are different. I feel that I let God down when I do things that I am not supposed to do. God is the light that I have inside and is always there.

I think that Joseph Jaworski’s book, *Synchronicity*, really helped me to understand that there is a collective mind and that you can access it and influence things and then things can start to happen. Many things have happened to me like this.

Daugherty, Thomas – USA

“Former Vice President of Spiritual Care and Values Integration with the Methodist Health Care System in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

One theme for me would be caring and compassion. Another would be faithfulness. A part of that has to do with persistence and perseverance, courage and humility.

For me, the Christian cross itself evokes all of this for me because it is such a powerful symbol of the Divine-human encounter. It represents the very best and the very worst of human experience, and it also represents the ultimate in God's love and compassion for all humankind.

The Divine-human encounter is certainly a theme that expresses all of this for me.

Spiritual View of Life

I conceptualise spirituality as the connection among myself, other people and the Divine. It is the common linkage between these three aspects of existence for me. Spirituality is also staying connected with my own spiritual centre, my connection with the Divine – which is an inner place of peace – and then listening to what I hear there. To me the Divine both lives within me and apart from me. I do believe that the Divine is both transcendent and immanent.

While Methodist Health Care System is very definitely a Christian organisation that believes in God, we are also inclusive of all religions. So for me the word Divine is a more inclusive way to talk about God or higher power. I think that all the world's religions have some relationship with the holy, or Divine, so I prefer to use that word most often.

The God within me is that part of me which calls me to deal with my ego and be accountable and responsible for my behaviour. God calls me to live my life with a strong sense of caring, compassion, and love for my fellow human beings. I spent a lot of time and energy examining my inner world and listening to God within. To me, God is within me, but not totally within me; God is also apart from me. When I recognise this and listen to that voice beyond myself it directs me and at the same time sets me free. I realise I live to serve and help make the world a better place for having been here. I try to stay connected with this motivation, even though I realise that there is no such thing as a pure motivation.

Delbecq, André, D.B.A. – USA

“Former Dean of the Santa Clara University School of Business in the USA”

“Professor and Director of the Institute for Spirituality and Organizational Leadership at the Santa Clara University School of Business in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

Wonder is the theme that naturally comes to me. I have always loved innovation because I am continuously thrilled to see what was once only imagined (and partially imagined at that) emerge as an institutionalised reality. Innovation scholarship plumbs the mystery of creativity from concept to actualisation within large-scale systems. I have always had and continue to retain a great excitement associated with building collaboration between bright minds seeking to understand a complex problem and engaged in the discovery of a creative solution.

But now my sense of wonder is even enlarged. My eyes are opened to how the unimaginable emerges in all of creation; e.g. in nature in a blossoming flower, in the movements of the tides and the mysteries of the sea. I am increasingly appreciative of the insights from each of my colleagues when they join together for innovation. So the world is filled with wonder, echoing the limitlessness of the transcendent.

I have always had a good sense of adventure: I love boating, motorcycling, and travel and I am willing to take risks. But in the past these activities have been something that I felt I had to work hard at, something I mistakenly thought depended primarily on me. Now I see such efforts as tapping into a mysterious abundance. I don't do much of anything actually; I realise how little I do. This is not to diminish the importance of what each person does, but rather to increasingly see how God (the transcendent mystery that bears a thousand names), is at work in people and in nature. This allows for increased inner joy even in the midst of the greatest difficulties.

Of course I still have days of great unknowing; I still sometimes experience desolation and anguish. Yet even these experiences don't disturb a deep core sense of peace and wonder as my spiritual journey unfolds. It's as if the fire just gets brighter and brighter as my life unfolds.

Spiritual View of Life

For me, spirituality is particular to the individual. The journey is undertaken in light of your own personality, life history, education, spiritual tradition or non-tradition. It is that personal journey of entering into becoming the true self. The fruit of becoming is always a change in what you "do". The test of spirituality is increased compassion and a new way of being present to and touching others.

In the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society (an academic American association focused on teaching challenges for faculty in management studies), we tried to define spirituality for two years and it was very unsuccessful as well as very boring. Then we changed the topic to "How is your spirituality impacting your teaching?" All of a sudden it was one of the most electric conference sessions that people chose to attend. So spirituality is less a matter of definition; it is more a matter of sharing our deep lived inner experience that one taps into and draws from in every aspect of life, including professional/organisational efforts.

Hopefully, an individual's spiritual journey unfolds towards greater light as opposed to greater darkness; although I believe we have the freedom to make choices, and sometimes our choices lead away from light. So for me, the spiritual journey includes the choices you make in the unfolding inner journey. True spirituality seeks to avoid any dualism between the inner self and outer action. Our actions dealing with the secular and mundane are part of the spiritual journey.

That the spiritual can be integrated with (is not separate from) the secular is an important affirmation for the MBA students and executives who spend time with me at Santa Clara University. They begin to understand with greater certitude that it is in the "now" of the everyday-ness of their leadership efforts that the spiritual journey is lived and unfolds (if being an organisational leader is their vocational calling). The spiritual journey is engaged as they struggle with their daily tasks including the boring, the mundane, the frustrating, the agonising, and the rewarding.

It is wonderful to watch their increased inner peace even when they have a day that in the past they would have considered to be a day of misery. They develop the capacity to see that even struggles have meaning. They find that there is something to learn in every moment, and by remaining in touch with their inner peace even during trials, they are able to bring a different presence to the challenges. They know all too well that without spiritual awareness such challenges would lead to burnout and dysfunction. So spirituality is no longer a separate part of their lives; it is no longer peripheral to their leadership.

Franklin, Carol – Switzerland

“Former Head of Human Resources for Swiss Re Insurance in Switzerland”
“Former CEO of the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Switzerland”

Spiritual Theme

Caring for and being responsible for the earth and its inhabitants. Be responsible. Be the change you want to see in the world. Help move the world forward.

Spiritual View of Life

For me, spirituality and ethical behaviour are very similar. Spirituality may be defined as “caring for the earth in the widest sense.”

I was brought up a Protestant Christian, but I am not active in the church. My spiritual view of life includes being personally responsible for the earth, including people. It’s like the “Hippocratic oath” taken by doctors. It deals with not doing harm, making sure that when you leave the earth it is not in a worse condition than when you got here, enabling future generations to live in similar if not better conditions. As an ecologist, I don’t think there are any hard-core ecologists who are not spiritual, but that is not enough. Caring for the earth means not only caring for the environment, it also means caring for people. It’s a sense of responsibility. I am more pragmatic - more “hands on” spiritual or ethical - than transcendental.

I think it is typically European not to use big words or to talk about God, although people from a lot of different cultures do that. That’s why I find it so difficult to work with Americans; they use words that we as Europeans would never use, and they think that our critical way of looking at things is very destructive.

I believe that we will reincarnate after death, and that we are responsible for what we do - and that we probably will have to live with the results of our actions at some other time; a kind of karma-concept.

Govindan, Rajan – USA

“Former Senior Managing Director with Bankers Trust in the USA”
“Chief Operating Officer of Bear Stearns Asset Management in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

To me this would be “happiness and contentment” and “to act with right conduct.”

Spiritual View of Life

To me, spirituality in the workplace means two things: one is you have to be “correct and righteous.” I hesitate to use the word righteous because it has many connotations, but you have to be very correct in how you conduct yourself at work. I think this is one of the most important things and it can apply to everyone. The second is more personal to me, and that is that God has given me the work to do and I must leave the results up to God. It has taken me 35 years to really understand this, and today I understand this even more. Work is an activity that has been given to me to do by God and I must do it well.

Spirituality to me is also that people should behave as human beings; this is actually what I mean when I say “correct and righteous, or correct behaviour.” To me this means that you must be honest, fair and objective. My personal goal is to become more human, not to be an animal as my spiritual teacher, Sathya Sai Baba, says. To me a human being means to act with right conduct, to act with moral character in everything that I do.

I think there is a spiritual maturation process. I know that God is in me, but I still struggle to say, “I am God.” I do not feel that I am good enough to say that at this point. I would like to believe that God and I are the same, but I know I’m not there. It’s just my inadequacies that cause me to not be able to say, “I am God.” I do know that God is within me, and He makes me talk, see, hear, etc. I wish I could say that “I am God,” but I still have too much baggage at this point. I still get angry and have desires and this prevents me from being able to say, “I am God.”

Jensen, Niels Due – Denmark

“Group Chairman for Grundfos Management A/S in Denmark”

Spiritual Theme

Empathy, compassion, and love for my neighbour.

Spiritual View of Life

For me the simplest way of defining spirituality is that it gives me a deeper meaning of life, and therefore also regulates the way I behave on a regular daily basis in my private life as well as in my job-life.

My spiritual view of life is based on being a Lutheran Christian, and I try my best to live up to the basic rules from the New Testament in the Bible. However, it is not something that I am conscious about every day. It is kind of in the back of my mind all the time, and therefore I instinctively base my decisions on these ground rules from the New Testament, although, of course, like any other person, I am a number of times failing on the way; that’s for sure. I should note that I don’t try to separate the way I think and decide and act in my private life as compared to my business life. It all goes together.

Jiang, Niran – Australia

“Formerly Senior Trends Manager for Coca Cola and Marketing Manager for S. C. Johnson in the USA”

“CEO for the Institute of Human Excellence in Australia”

Spiritual Theme

My spiritual theme would be interconnectedness, wonderment, and compassion.

Spiritual View of Life

For me, spirituality is everything; I don't put it in a separate compartment. As I was created with a soul, for me, life is life-force, the connection with the universe. It's where we come from, what we are carrying, and where we are going. Spirituality for me is what makes everything shine.

I want to contribute what I can in a process of "whole system change" to create a world that works for everyone – not just humans, but for all species, plants, everything that has a soul. And everything has a soul for me. I think this has been an indirect result of growing up in China, where you grew up with a strong sense of collectiveness that's above individuality. As a child you were taught every day about how to consider others, to take care of your family, your society, and eventually to build a world that works for everyone. You were trained with such a mind-set.

Kanu, Victor-Krishna – Zambia

"Former High Commissioner (Ambassador) for Sierra Leone to the UK, Norway and Sweden"
"Director of The African Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Zambia"

Spiritual Theme

Divine love is the central theme. Oneness is a parallel. Because if you say you love all, you do that because all are one.

Spiritual View of Life

I define spirituality as the practice of Human Values. It is distinct from religion, although there is a connection. A person is spiritual if he practices truth, right conduct, love, peace and non-violence.

I see myself as an individual who is connected with the entire Universe. What is important is love, caring for others, and accepting what Sai Baba says: 'God first, others next, myself last.' Always think of others, not myself.

Kolind, Lars – Denmark

"Former CEO of Oticon in Denmark, one of the world's premier suppliers of products for the hearing impaired"
"Chairman of Grundfos in Denmark"

Spiritual Theme

I believe that the theme of my spirituality would be: "love God and love your neighbour."

Spiritual View of Life

I probably see spirituality in a relatively narrow sense because I was brought up in a home that had a quite strong Lutheran Christian touch. I have been strongly influenced by that upbringing and I am still strongly influenced by it. This early interest in Christianity led me early on to be active in that part of the Danish Boy Scouts that was associated with the Danish national church (roughly 85% of the Danes are members of this church). I might add, that later on I became a leader of the scouting organisation in Denmark and then of the World Scout Foundation. Through my work with scouting I

met a lot of interesting people from all walks of life, such as bank managers, engineers and housewives, who were all strongly influenced by the combination of the church, religion and scouting.

I must admit that I find it difficult to reply to the question as to how I interpret spirituality. I fully understand how broad the concept is, but for me, personally, it is strongly associated with Christianity. So my answers will take that as a starting point.

For me spirituality is the acceptance of the existence of a God, whatever that is, and to adhere to my religion. That is how I understand spirituality; however, I am quite open to other peoples' interpretations.

I try to do a lot of things – and I obviously don't succeed in doing all that I try to do – but I try to live and act and lead according to the principles of Christianity, the way I understand them. I have become conscious of the fact that I am much more Lutheran than I thought I was. I am in particular very strongly influenced by the Lutheran tenet that it is your duty to work hard. I am so strongly influenced by that principle, that I hope that in ten years times I can have a little more relaxed attitude towards this feeling of obligation.

Levy, Ricardo – USA

“Co-founder and CEO of Catalytica, Inc. in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

“Oneness”

Spiritual View of Life

A few months ago I was asked to give a talk at Harvard University where they had a one and a half day forum on “Leadership, Values and Spirituality.” For that talk, I brought with me this definition of spirituality: *the deep inner search for a fuller personal integration with a transcendent greater than our narrow self.*

Even with this definition I find it difficult to communicate the full meaning of spirituality. It is a concept whose very articulation seems to miss the point. I find that for me spirituality is a deep connection with a force greater than myself; it is a very individual, lived experience that includes both longing and belonging, expressed often and perhaps best through love and compassion.

When we try to define spirituality we are actually attempting to articulate something that cannot be articulated. We are trying to do our best, but we are trying to define the Infinite, which by definition is a contradiction. Yet we need to try. As I said earlier, spirituality for me is a lived experience, an individual journey that includes longing and belonging; and fruits of this journey are love and compassion.

I think that longing and belonging are two of the most important concepts. Our longings are windows into our spirituality. In a sense they are interlinked with two aspects of belonging: love and compassion. It's all a marvellous intertwining circle. One of my favourite quotes from Abraham Yeshua Heschel is: *Needs are spiritual opportunities.* I find this so true, just as longings are also opportunities for us to learn about our spirituality.

Another quote that is a bit longer also expresses this same concept about needs. It comes from the Hindu book *Will I be the Hero of My Own Life?*:

"We are such creatures of wants that even simple things like being hungry set up an intense inner vibration from which our mechanism speaks. Generally speaking we then just want to respond to that vibration to feed the system. Rarely do we take the time to observe the nature of the vibration itself. We do not use the hunger as an opportunity to understand our own essence and the dynamics at work in us. We don't let the vibration intensify and change to reveal its subtler component. Were we to do so, we would begin to recognise the nature of wanting itself, independent of its particular form."

Maitra, Ashoke – India

"Former Director of Human Resources for the Times of India"

"Founder of the Centre for Human Resource Development and the Sri Ramakrishna International Institute of Management in India"

Spiritual Theme

I think my spiritual theme is "Manifestation of latent Divinity."

Spiritual View of Life

My definition of spirituality is that each soul is potentially Divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity, by any means that suits you. I believe that I am not the body, I am the soul, and that each soul is potentially Divine.

My goal in life is to manifest the Divinity in myself and in every person. I may do it by yoga: karma (path of action), bakthi (path of devotion), or jnana (path of wisdom). Or, I may do it by teaching, training, or being a carpenter. What matters to me spiritually is to give expression to the Divinity that is perceived as dormant, but is actually alive in each person. Meditation is different for everyone; technology is different and everyone's mantra is different because there are many types of human beings. So I believe in a large amount of plurality.

Our regular worldly education process does not allow you to see your Divinity. Its goal is to cram lots of knowledge into you. I wanted to go and do my Ph.D. in one of the top American Business schools. They told me that I would have to take the GRE exam. So I wrote to them and told them I am not interested in their school. They wrote back and asked why. I replied saying, "After 20 years of experience, after being a top rated HRD person, after showing you the publications and work that I have done, if you tell me you are going to evaluate me on the basis of a GRE, there is something substantially wrong with your system and I do not want to be part of a system which is so insensitive." They said no; this is our requirement. Since I have the freedom to agree or disagree I did not go to their school. To me, this kind of system has lost consciousness.

Merchant, Nilofer – USA

"President and founder of Rubicon Consultants, a marketing consulting firm in the USA"

Spiritual Theme

“Living authentically” speaks a lot to me.

Also, I am looking outside at that beautiful tree and thinking about how spirituality helps me to draw strength from the roots of life. The tree doesn't get nourishment from the leaves. And yet what do we see when we look at the tree? We see the branches and leaves and not the root system. So I think spirituality is about defining where our true strength comes from as the root system. We have a chance to consciously change the wellspring from which we draw our nourishment. So another theme would be “a wellspring of nourishment”.

Spiritual View of Life

I have a phrase I really like that I feel best defines spirituality for me: “Living fully the glory of God is being fully alive.” To me this means using your gifts to the fullest, working in a position that is using all of you, and being in true, intimate relationships with other people in the community – all of those things that bring you fully alive. The second element is the aspect of being present. To me this means that when you are there, you are really there; you're not distracted by being somewhere else.

I think there are two things that every person needs. I think people really want to know who they are, their essence; and then I think that people want to be acknowledged and recognised for that. In other words, I think people want to know for themselves, “Who am I and why am I here?” And, then I think they want other people to listen to them well and help them to use their gifts.

I think it is so clear that we were each born with our own unique essences, but we get distracted. We look in the mirror or to the outside world and think, “this is it”. It's not easy to hear and feel that inner voice, especially since it's not visible. I've never found that the answer comes from outside, even from a spiritual teacher. The answer is truly within you, and all of the spiritual methods and processes are designed to help you get quiet enough, fearless enough, courageous enough, compassionate enough, loving enough to discover who you really are. Sometimes I think we are our worst enemies and unfortunately, throughout our lives we haven't been given permission by our parents, teachers or bosses to really pursue the fullness of who we are.

Moitra, Deependra – India

“Formerly the youngest General Manager within Lucent Technologies, who at the time had 70,000 employees worldwide”

“Associate Vice President with Infosys Technologies, Ltd. in India”

Spiritual Theme

“Living with a purpose” would be my theme. True fulfilment is then the outcome of this journey.

Spiritual View of Life

My definition of spirituality is very simple. Usually this is a term that has several definitions and is often abstract. But my definition is that spirituality is “an approach to fulfilment.” Now what fulfilment is to one individual will differ from what fulfilment is to me; that is why I often say that I have my own thoughts on these types of subjects. It is important to me how I achieve fulfilment; it is a path. That is why I say that spirituality is “an approach to fulfilment.” To me is it nothing less and nothing more.

Ultimately what is most important to me is: joy, satisfaction, peace and fulfilment. Now how do I get this? I have a 4-pronged approach. Here is society, here is my family, here is my professional life, and here is my personal life. Since joy, satisfaction, peace and fulfilment are what are most important to me, I look to see how I can achieve these in each of the four areas of my life. I do not want to say that I am able to do all of this in the manner that I would like to do, but this is an approach that I am trying to take.

Let's take my professional life. I want to contribute something that has an impact on the way people think and do work. I do not merely want to be a player; I want to be someone who really has an impact on people and on businesses. So here I have specific goals for myself. Another goal is to become a most sought after leader. Now here my intention is not to become famous or popular. It is more like being a coach that people feel comfortable coming to talk to and feel that they will benefit by their interactions. This is another way I see that I can create an impact.

The personal side is what I call "self-mastery." This is what I want to achieve even though I feel that I am far away from it now. But my ultimate goal is self-mastery; that I have control over my mind, body, actions and thoughts.

The third aspect is family. Here are the things that are important to me, such as peace and the education of my child. Wealth is important because I have seen that nothing moves without that. It is important to the extent that I can live a peaceful, comfortable life, but not so much wealth that it takes away my peace of mind.

The fourth aspect is society. I definitely want to do something for the society. Since I grew up in rural areas, one of the things I saw that was absolutely lacking was good education, even at the primary level, and good primary healthcare. I have started contributing to 2 organisations in rural areas, where primary healthcare and primary education are provided. These projects are still in their embryonic stages, and there is lot to accomplish.

All of this is a framework for me to operate in life. Perhaps I am doing well in some of these dimensions and not so well in others. That is my challenge as an individual: to balance and take an integrated perspective of all four. I do not want to do one thing at the cost of another. For example, I do not want to excel in my professional circles at the cost of my family life. So there is a need for me to balance and that is where I am struggling right now.

Narayana, G. – India

"Chairman Emeritus for Excel Industries, Ltd. in India"

Spiritual Theme

My spiritual theme is: Noble actions, noble feelings, noble thoughts, noble responsibility.

Spiritual View of Life

Spirituality is inspired responsibility towards people, other living beings, and the world... seeing and relating with Divinity in every aspect. Self-improvement plus world service equals spirituality. God is spirituality.

Nara means man and Narayana means God. Nara to Narayana is the path of humanity to Divinity. The positive, helpful, truthful and responsible way is the “Divine light” way. Every human can become divine light. Nara to Narayana is this path of light.

- Being positive is accepting the joy of Self. Being negative is denying the joy of Self. Positiveness is the brightness of Self. Negativeness is the darkness of Self.
- Helping others is extending the light of Self and helping approaches the immortality of Self. Hurting others is destroying the light of Self and hurting others is the death of Self.
- Being truthful is lifting the Self and the truthful way is bliss for Self. Being untruthful is sinking the Self and untruthful is greed for Self.
- Being responsible is being divine.

These concepts and practices are the essence of all philosophies, all religions, all psychological theories, all management approaches, and all self-improvement methods.

Man can be what he chooses to be. This freedom to choose opens the door of immense potential within each of us. Basically, any person can be a happy person or an unhappy person, and a divine or devilish person. Divinity, happiness, unhappiness and “devility” (devil-ness) are the four faces of man in the four phases of life. The four keys are:

- positiveness is happiness
- negativeness is unhappiness
- helping others is divinity
- hurting others is devility.

That is, a positive person is a happy person. A negative person is an unhappy person. A helping person is divine. A hurting person is devilish. When you are positive, you are happy within yourself; your positive outlook towards the world generates a happy feeling within you. But a negative outlook towards the world will generate an unhappy feeling within you. When you help others, divinity shines in and around you. When you hurt others, devility dances around you.

Being positive is accepting the joy of Self. Aspects of positiveness are: appreciating, finding strengths, trusting, accepting, attending, responding, loving, recognising, respecting, sincerity, carefulness, alertness, truth, and pleasantness.

Being negative is denying the joy of Self. Aspects of negativeness are: criticising, finding faults, doubting, neglecting, non-responding, blaming, insulting, anger, jealousy, insincerity, dishonesty, carelessness, laziness, falsity, and roughness.

Helping others is extending the light of Self. Aspects of helping are: cooperating, adjusting, coordinating, training, sharing, facilitating, supporting, giving, guiding, motivating, inspiring, assisting, participating, accommodation, and teamwork.

Hurting others is destroying the light of Self. Aspects of hurting are: obstructing, restricting, spoiling teamwork, creating disorder, discouraging, leaving, taking without sharing, opposing, inconveniencing, snatching, misguiding, de-motivating, imposing, dictating, and rigidity.

No other person can make you happy or unhappy. You cannot say that another person has made you unhappy. Even if you abuse me, I can be happy. No other person can make you divine or devil. You become divine or devil.

The journey of Self-fulfilment and Self-realisation is nothing but moving from negative-ness to positive-ness and from hurting to helping. You realise your full potential when you are totally positive inside and when you are always helpful to all outside.

You cannot decide what I will be. We name or blame others just for the satisfaction of our mind. One has to take responsibility for himself or herself; others can only assist in the process. You can choose and be what you want; you are the key. Plan for progress. Help others.

Narendran, Parantha – Czech Republic

“Former Strategy Director for Eurotel in the Czech Republic”

“Private Equity Consultant and Investor”

Spiritual Theme

If I think here of how spirituality affects me at work, it would be that spirituality challenges me and makes me grow.

Spiritual View of Life

For me, spirituality is how you live your life. Spirituality is how you approach life and what you do with your life.

When you view your life as spiritual, you do start to make certain choices. For example, I choose to be a vegetarian because I respect life. I am careful about what I say. I am aware of violence when it appears in my thoughts, words, and deeds and I try to control that. There are certain positive values that I have accepted and I try to be aware of all of those values in everything that I do.

Through experience, I have noticed that as I've become more aware of myself, I've become more content with myself. I have learned things about other people and life that have just seemed to come to me and I have become more content and happy with myself.

Ollé, Ramón – The Netherlands

“President of Epson Europe in The Netherlands”

Spiritual Theme

“To know thyself.”

Spiritual View of Life

I understand spirituality as the inner part of a human. It is the driver of our human vehicle. It is our inner force.

I do not understand man in terms of duality – that he is matter and mind, or matter and spirit. I see man as both, fully integrated, fully associated. And it is impossible to segregate one from the other. For me spirituality is the inner part of this total, integrated concept of humanness.

It seems that today we have a lot of resistance to expressing our spirituality because it seems that the spiritual life belongs to the past; it is easy for people to misunderstand what you mean. In today's

language we seem to avoid strong words, and spirituality is a strong word. This avoidance of strong words is why we don't say that people are dead; we say that they have passed away.

If you understand yourself as a full human being, you will understand that your inner force is spirituality. Nobody can deny its existence. It is the most inner part of ourselves. And it is a force as the main driver of our human nature. When we are experiencing, say, the emotion of love or resistance to others, these are very strong feelings that are not simply related to our chemistry. Spirituality is really the inner force – not only in the exceptional moments, the super tasks, but also in our daily life.

Pillai, Anand – India

“Head of the Learning and Development Department for HCL Technologies in India”

Spiritual Theme

Connecting with God, the source of “being.”

Spiritual View of Life

For me, spirituality is that state of “being what you were meant to be.”

I recognise that spirituality is different for every person. Spirituality for a religious person is to be lost in a personal God, or to be lost in a formless God, or meditation. Spirituality for a materialistic person is to be lost in possessions. Spirituality for a workaholic, or achievement-oriented person is to be lost in success. But spirituality for a “being” is to be lost in “being.”

Have you ever noticed that we are the only creatures who are called “beings”? We do not refer to any other thing or animal as a being. Our self-worth comes *in being* who we are, *not in doing* what we do, *not in achieving* what we achieve, *not in having* what we have.

In each category I just mentioned above, there is a careful and conscious detachment. In the case of the religious person he is definitely detached from the world. In the case of the materialistic person, he is definitely attached to the material, and therefore is detached from anything else. In the case of the workaholic, he is definitely attached to his work, so much so that he is detached to the natural relationships of a husband, or wife, or a child, or other people; because he is so task-oriented, he does not have the opportunity or time to be people oriented.

Whereas if I am a “being,” a spiritual being, and I do everything out of that, then the coordination factor is within me, it is not outside. I become attached to my inner being and detached from the outer world.

Ploix, Hélène – France

“Chairman and Managing Director of Pechel Industries and Pechel Industries Partenaires in Paris, France”

Spiritual Theme

I think I can express this as: "To contribute to society". And to try to be attentive to others and have a better understanding of them.

Spiritual View of Life

As a child I was struck by a story in the New Testament; the parable of the talents (Mathew 25: 14-30). A man was leaving on a journey. To one of his servants he gave five talents (or gifts), another was given two talents, and a third was given only one talent – each according to their ability. The one who was given five talents invested them and returned ten to his master when the master returned; the one who was given two talents returned four, while the servant who had been given only one had buried it and simply returned it to his master. I learned from this, that it is better to receive five and return ten than to save the one and give back the one; that is, if you are given some gifts, you have to make them grow, to multiply them. That is your duty in life. Also, when I was a girl scout, I learnt one prayer that says that you have to give without counting.

These are words which express what is deeply important for me. I was told that I should do this, I should manage my gifts well, and that we must give, and do so without counting. This is what I have been trying to do in my life. This is the best way I can describe my spirituality and how it affects my work.

Raghavan, N. S. – India

"Founding Director and former Joint Managing Director of Infosys in India"

Spiritual Theme

"Love and trust" automatically came to my mind as my theme.

Spiritual View of Life

Defining spirituality has always been difficult for me because I do not fully understand what it means. For me, it is something that is beyond the body and mind. It is something that gives a certain purpose and meaning to our existence. It is something that gives you joy, happiness and contentment, which cannot be gotten through material pursuits and knowledge. It is also something that gives you the motivation to do something for others and makes you feel happy when you do it. Spirituality is really even beyond all of this explanation; it is something that is not in the materialistic realm.

Raman, Ananth – USA

"Chairman of Graphtex, Inc. a manufacturing company in the USA"

Spiritual Theme

"Awareness" and "Realising Divinity"

Spiritual View of Life

Until now, I have never formally attempted to define spirituality. For a long time, spirituality was just a cliché, a word that all of us bandied around without any real understanding.

So I would say that my definition of spirituality would be the awareness of myself as part of supreme consciousness, that feeling of 'I', those things that are within me. And then to extend that to mean that 'I' and the Divine are the same. The Divine is in all of us. I also believe spirituality is knowing the true core of being within you, and realising it is the same within everyone.

I believe there are three ways to inquire in these areas, in these directions: it can be through meditation, or self-inquiry, or even the study of knowledge.

What I care to know is that there is a Being; there is awareness. It reminds me of a teacher who once asked his student, "What is it knowing which everything else is known?" To me this is awareness and this answers everything. As long as I know I am, then everything else is known.

I basically associate spirituality with a sense of values. The values that we learned at our grandmother's lap, the values we learned in school, and the values we use to live in the community. These are simple, like self-respect, dignity and love. To me these are all values that are a part of you and should arise out of a feeling of union with all others. If you realise this, I think that a lot of life's problems will be solved. Then you are able to de-link the 'I' from the body.

Today, I may still need to discipline an employee by reprimanding him. But I can see that it is just an act, whereas five years ago I would have really gotten angry. Some of the words I say are just the same, and the decibel level is just the same, but now I do it because I believe it is my role to do it. There is absolutely no malice or anger at all in this for me. I think that the question of ego and malice is because of body consciousness, once you release this notion that the 'I' is not the body, then this will naturally go.

Ranganathan, V. V. – India

"Formerly a Senior Partner with Ernst & Young India"

"Co-founder of Pinnacle Opportunities, a non-profit and Compassites, a product incubation company in Bangalore, India"

Spiritual Theme

"Seeing God in everyone"

Spiritual View of Life

Spirituality to me is an intangible, subjective experience; ultimately, it is impossible to give a definition of spirituality. One may refer to several teachers and their teachings, but one must go through various experiences in life to truly understand its meaning and what it can do to one's life. According to that part of our scriptures called the Upanishads¹, Brahman, the supreme God, is consciousness. It is the ear of the ear, the eye of the eye, the speech of the speech, and the prana (life energy) of the prana. All these organs have a function to play, but there is something behind them; that is the subjective experience. By subjective I mean it is beyond the senses.

¹ The "wisdom texts" of the Vedas, the essential ancient teachings of India

Someone told me this a long, long time ago and I wrote it down, but I don't remember where it came from: "The first thing to realise is, 'There is God, God is on earth, God is in you, and God is in everyone.'" To me this is a wonderful way of looking at humanity. If you are able to work in that context, it completely changes the way you look at people and then you start sharing that invisible bond.

This view is based on the "mahavakyas" (the four most fundamental teachings of the Upanishads): "*Prajananam Brahman*," meaning "Consciousness is Brahman." "*Atma Brahman*," meaning "Self is Brahman." "*Tat Tvam Asi*," meaning "God and myself are one." "*Aham Brahma Asmi*," meaning "I am Brahman." Brahman has the meaning "Supreme God".

I quote from the Upanishad text:

*Om purnamadah purnamidam purnat purnamudachyate
Purnasya purnamaadaya purnameva vasishyate
Om santih santih shantihi.*

The chanting starts with Om which is the symbol for Brahman. The literal meaning of the verse is:

That is *whole*, this is *whole*. From the *whole*, the *whole* comes out.
The *whole* having come out of the *whole*, what remains is still the *whole*
Om peace, peace, peace

This alludes to the principle "Aham Brahma Asmi," meaning "I am Brahman." Consciousness in us (which is Brahman) has the same strength and vigour of the Brahman. Consider this to the fire you light from another fire. The source fire does not lose its original strength nor the new fire become any less inferior.

The realisation that the personality is different from the power that drives the persona was something that started gaining ground in me after I started reading the Upanishads (the essential ancient Indian teachings). All of the four Vedas talk about Brahman, the Godhead. Brahman in common parlance is understood as consciousness. But what is consciousness? In the Upanishads, there are different ways of comprehending a situation and one of them is called upama. Upama means comparison. So by comparison, perhaps consciousness can be compared to electricity; it is energy that drives different gadgets like a heater or cooler. It can cool or heat, but itself never gets hot or cold. This is a very earthly way of looking at the concept of consciousness.

The Upanishads also talk of Brahavidhya, the science of knowing the Supreme Reality, meaning that you move away from your five sense perceptions to the extra-sensory. In the Upanishads, it says not to get carried away with understanding the concept of Brahman. That is not spiritual enlightenment. Spiritual enlightenment is a very subjective experience.

Sinclair, James E. – USA

"Chairman and CEO of Tan Range Exploration, Ltd. in the USA and Tanzania"

Spiritual Theme

My theme for spirituality would be "Live it."

Spiritual View of Life

To start with, I think spirituality is a much maligned and non-defined concept. Spirituality is a perspective that comes in glimpses, but has the capacity of being a constancy. Spirituality lies in the musings of the musician, or the reverie of the professor teaching just that one point that's been built over a long period of preparation, that gives him or her a moment of success. It's that point when the mind is quieted, and the circumstances, situation, problem or event is looked at in a different perspective. And the perspective in which it is looked at is the perspective of the observer. That is a moment of spirituality.

Spirituality is a constant event within the human experience. It is included in our thoughts and activities that take place in our day-to-day lives. There are means of allowing these wonderful spiritual moments to happen; and the means to allow this is to simply get out of its way. We need to cease our busyness, physically and in our minds, and then something wonderful can happen. In order to do this, there are activities that can be undertaken that can lay the groundwork, but recognise that spirituality is ripeness. The apple doesn't say it's going to fall from the tree, it just knows it and it happens.

I would say that spirituality is birthed in silence and its purpose is for our material lives, in whatever form evolution is all about. I believe that every calamity is an opportunity. It's what you've unconsciously trained all your life for; this is why you are alive. So when a calamity comes upon you, this is your opportunity. The Chairman, or the man or woman who lost their fortune in Enron, have a phenomenal opportunity of a lifetime. They have to sort through the maze of confusion and ask, "What in the world are we trying to do?" "What are we really after?" So the spirituality we are trying to deal with must be the most practical, the most definable aspect of our lives and not something that constantly eludes definition.

Spirituality is not an active individual; spirituality is not a code of morals. Spirituality is unity with Divinity and it's the closest you'll get to unity with Divinity because God exists in the quietude between these words and is the source of these words. So spirituality is not how one acts or what one believes, and it's not the morals that you carry. In that sense, it could be that Djengis Khan² and Mother Teresa were experiencing the same thing, except Mother Teresa liked to touch people and Genghis Khan liked to kill them. Because Djengis Khan rose to greatness in the affairs of humanity, it means the worst of our experiences are also Divine. And maybe his rise, as followed by his fall, was the egoistic self-destructive safety valve of nature.

Such greatness and influence in the world doesn't happen because of the strength of a person's ego, but the need of an individual at that time, who would be interpreted by history as less than desirable. Is it possible that the moment of silence, or the quietude that exists, or the answer to "who am I?" is actually a driving force that, for a moment, drove a force to pull nature forward in a less than acceptable manner?

So spirituality is not the "procedure"; it is the "event." We don't control the event in the ego sense, and it could be that the procedure is only a prayer or an allegory that so solidifies itself within the individual that it takes up the area of belief. The character of belief required to materialise, be it in business or anywhere else, is the same character of belief that the apostles asked Christ about when they went out to do the miracles of healing that he instructed them in and failed. They came back and said, "We believe in you, but we failed." Jesus told them, "It's not the faith 'in me' – it's the faith 'of me' that does the work."

The person who drinks too much is only trying to kill the pain. The person who holds on to God's feet in a dire situation is motivated the same way, except he made a better decision. The person who

² Djengis Khan lived from 1162-1227 and was a Mongolian emperor who conquered most of Asia.

takes mescaline to see God, just might, but he's going about it in a way that's going to destroy his psyche. So before we start judging what people do or asking how someone who seems to be right is right, know that we're only asking about the one motivation that exists in life, the prime director, and that is to go forward and to avoid significant pain. This is the basic instruction of life and everything around it is to survive. The richest man you meet is the one who least believes he's going to survive; he's the one with the most fear. Now the basic question is: what is it that is trying to survive? The answer is survival itself. So if we just get out of its way, it will all happen.

Vrethammar, Magnus – Sweden

“Former President for Europe of Pergo Flooring in the UK”

“President of an executive coaching and business development firm Creability AB in Sweden”

Spiritual Theme

Spirituality is an opening process. And then the question is, “What are you opening up to?” I would say love, as long as I am very careful in how I define love. Love can be, on an energy level, a very encompassing and still impersonal energy. So, if one considers this type of love, I would say that my theme is “opening up to love.”

Spiritual View of Life

I would say that spirituality is man's quest into his innate Divinity. It's more like a road than a state of affairs; a quest more than an arrival.

Building on my definition, I would say that spirituality is a state of mind and a feeling of a universal divine presence. This state of mind and this feeling are benevolently, urgently and continuously waiting for me to open up. Spirituality, to me, also describes the goal for every thing and every being in the universe, from a stone to an insect to a human being to an angel. From this point of view, there is no difference; everything in the universe is seeking to return to its source of being.

Webb, Janiece – USA

“Former Senior Vice President with Motorola Corporation in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

I think my spiritual theme would be “God in everyone.”

Spiritual View of Life

For me, spirituality is getting in touch with the essence of God inside of me – finding God inside myself. It's knowing that if I really get quiet, let my brain quit talking to me, and get a feel for the essence, I can really find God within me.

Also, I have realised that this is all energy and that we're all connected. So spirituality is also learning to manage my energy – not in a controlled way, but as a balance of life. With this there is harmony and peacefulness because I am not allowing myself to chase false gods.

For me life is miraculous, therefore I know there is a creator. I believe that God is in every one of us and that He intended it that way. We are on earth to figure out how to find God within us. I very much relate to and appreciate the Buddhist practices, even though for me God is the higher power, the creator of our earth and creator of all this magic. Although Buddhism does not talk about God, I think that all religions are connected. I see people manifesting their God in a way that works for them. I also believe there are many interpretations and that we are all trying to get at the same thing. There is a creator and it lives in every one of us if we are willing to find it. I believe we can all make choices as to what we want to find within ourselves.

I believe that God put us on earth to find joy and happiness and to become enlightened. I do believe in reincarnation and that we will continue through many lifetimes until we have found this; to me this is what enlightenment is. I believe He will test us with a thousand episodes and it's our job to learn how to walk through them. God is the great workshop designer. I think it is just as important to accept the perfection in each of us, as it is to accept the imperfections, the parts that are so fallible. Especially when I am learning a lesson for the fifth time!

I honour my physical-ness because I feel that God gave that to me to house my soul and therefore it is important to take care of it. God also gave me a mind to think and be intellectual and it's important to take care of that too. He also gave me a spiritual side, which is my soulful side.

When I look at other people I see their auras and energy. I think that all people are God's people, some may have blocks to realizing that, but I still see them as works of art. I see God's plan and things I can learn from them. And yes it can be hard to see God in everyone, especially in a large corporation like this one where there are people who can be quite cruel with blind ambition. God gives us such potential and we can take it in any direction we want.

I do believe in the pure potentiality of every single being. It really is unlimited and we are the ones who put limits on it. Now that potentiality may manifest itself in a different way than we thought it would when we started our journey, but we just have to trust.

I also believe that faith is an important part of life; it's what gets me through the bumps. Faith is a heart and soulful-ness knowing. I don't have faith in man-made systems or man-made judgments, but I have faith that I will survive them. I know that my relationship is with God and that's where I place my faith.

Welling, S. K. – India

“Former Executive Director of HMT International, Ltd. (Hindustan Machine Tools) in India”

Spiritual Theme

Purity of character through faith, bhakti (devotion), trust and love

Spiritual View of Life

What is spirituality to me? I firmly believe in reforming myself first. I must improve myself first, and that is what I have been doing in the last five or six years. I have tried to ask and answer the question “Who am I?”

First of all I have to refine my character, which leads to purity of mind and thoughts. I've strived all my life to curtail selfishness, jealousy, hatred. All these don't ever come in my mind at all now. This self-effort, which I have developed in myself, has brought me to this platform. And I strive for spiritual leadership.

To me, spirituality is actually purity, and for all this you ultimately have to have devotion (bhakti). Bhakti means faith. And first of all you must have bhakti as a leader. I have tremendous faith. And when I say that I have faith I am not just saying faith for faith sake. What do I mean by faith? Take for instance a work situation. We have a plan for this company presently. As an individual and as a leader of this company, I must be totally committed to it, and I must totally have faith that the plan will be successfully implemented. That is what I call faith.

And another thing – which I don't know if this comes naturally to me or if I developed it – is that I have tremendous trust. The word mistrust is missing in my dictionary. That is why, even sometimes my wife tells me, "Look, any Tom, Dick, and Harry you meet, you say he is good." I reply, "I just don't see any negative thing about anybody and that is probably why I can sometimes get in trouble."

The third and last thing that is very, very close to my heart, is the people orientation. I have love and affection.

I do not know how this faith, trust, and love have come in me. They have just come.