



## PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

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### 2.9 WORKING WITH DEVOTION

The path of devotion brings us a purity of mind and heart that leads to spiritual fulfilment. This naturally allows us to give others the best of what we have to offer through our work.

**YOU MAY KNOW** people who are “devoted to their work” – meaning that they are dedicated to their careers and their jobs. If this comes from the ego, it means that they experience self-gratification from what they do. The reasons could be many: perhaps the power they enjoy, perhaps the use of their talents, perhaps the difference they make through their work. There’s nothing wrong with this type of devotion and certainly it has contributed to the betterment of our world in many ways.

However, if our devotion to our work only remains at this self-gratifying level, we are missing a huge opportunity for spiritual growth. So come with us as we explore this path of devotion as a spiritual practice at work.

In Swami Ranganathananda’s commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*, he explains the instructions that Krishna gave to Arjuna regarding this path of devotion:

*Krishna tells us, “Whatever actions you do, do it as an offering for Me.” This means if you are working in an office, treat that as serving the Lord. Then he told Arjuna, “Keep Me as the supreme Goal.” That means make everything secondary and God as the primary goal. Then he said, “Be My devotee.” Here he is telling us that the only relation between you and He (God) is pure love. If only we were to keep to these few practical instructions, nothing more would be needed. Bhakti (devotion) is always simple.*

These instructions are similar to those given by the Buddha when he advised people to take refuge in the consciousness he attained. And Jesus clearly asked his disciples to believe in him and his teachings so that they could know God. Also, the Koran focuses on this dedication of everything to God in this passage:

*Surely My earth is vast. Therefore, Me alone should you serve.*

We have found this quality of devotion to be much more practical than we at first realised. For example, Amber Chand, co-founder of Eziba, an international company that markets the products of artisans from around the world, told us:

*I remembered my childhood where my mother and father taught me to treat a guest as God. You do everything you can to make their time with you happy and satisfying.*

*During our first customer training, I told our employees that the customer is God. When the customer calls, we drop everything and we listen.*

But what happens when a customer is unhappy?

*I always pick up the phone and call them; I begin by apologising to them. The customers are amazed; they cannot believe that one of the founders is taking the time to call them. From this call, I always end up with a happy customer.*

When our devotion comes from a spiritual basis it also helps us to purify our minds and hearts, which can lead us to becoming like the one we are devoted to, and working as Divinity would work. As Mother Teresa tells us:

*We all long for heaven where God is, but we have it in our power to be in heaven with Him at this very moment. Being happy with Him now means loving as He loves, helping as He helps, giving as He gives, serving as He serves...*

G. Narayana, Chairman Emeritus of Excel Industries Ltd., described how he put the power of devoted love into action when he was dealing with the worst year of profitability his company had ever faced:

*We gave continuous love to every person, and made sure that each one was successful. In giving continuous love, I do not get tired. Love energises. No matter where I go, I give love, even more than information.*

When we work from spiritual devotion, we give of ourselves and uplift others through our work. We do the highest quality work with great joy and true efficiency, giving us a totally new experience of success at work. As Dr. Chattopadhyay, the Executive Director of Tata Refractories, told us:

*If I have a feeling of loving people, then I can provide a better service to the people. If I love, then I can serve better. This is success.*

So, ask yourself: *What is the source of my devotion at work? How can I use my work to strengthen my spiritual growth?*

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This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Book 2 – Work as a Spiritual Practice*. To download the full book of articles, as well as additional book chapters, articles, workbooks, and research on the subject of “spirituality and human values for leadership and work”, visit our website: [www.globaldharma.org](http://www.globaldharma.org)