



## PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

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### 2.12 SEE, SAVOUR, AND SERVE THE DIVINE

When we do work as a spiritual practice, it becomes a journey of wisdom, devotion and action by which we come to know, appreciate and serve everyone as sparks of Divinity.

**IN RECENT ARTICLES**, we've spoken of three different pathways that people commonly choose for growing spiritually through their work: the paths of action, devotion, and wisdom. The path of wisdom leads us to work with the awareness that Divinity is in everyone and everything. As the Sikh's book *Adi Granth* says:

*God dwells in everything, God shines in every heart. Wherever I look, there is God; no one else is seen.*

The path of devotion inspires us to work with love, compassion, and sacrifice and see work as worship. As Confucianism says:

*Always and in everything let there be reverence.*

The path of action emphasises work as selfless service, without any self-centred ego or will. As the *Bhagavad Gita* says:

*Do your worldly duty, but without any attachment to it or desire for its fruits. Keep your mind always on the Divine. Be aware that the work you do should contribute in some way, directly or indirectly, to the higher good of humanity.*

Are these three paths really different? Most people tend to focus more on one of these three paths in their spiritual growth, yet if you take a closer look you'll see that they're actually quite interrelated. For example, Joanne Zimmerman, CEO of a major hospital in the USA speaks of the path of wisdom when she says:

*I pray two times a day – prayer or meditation, they are so alike. I experience what is beyond what I can see and I let go of the reality around me. In the hardest of times – and there are hard times – I allow myself to feel the pain. I ask for help and it always comes.*

She speaks of the path of devotion when she says:

*Every answer will not be on a spreadsheet. It all comes from a position of love. I truly love my work and the people I work with. I treat them first and foremost with love. This love allows me to create intimacies with people and to achieve higher relationships. It's real! You can also forge mountains that way.*

She speaks of the path of action and service when she says:

*I believe daily that each one makes a difference. It's not all about big things. Even giving directions to a visitor can make a difference. At the end of each day, I find one thing where I made a difference.*

Integrating these paths of wisdom, action, and devotion, the Hindu Upanishads give us this guidance:

*Strengthen inspiration for excelling in work. Come from the God within through prayer, meditation, holy readings, and unselfish work.*

In other words: work and grow through devotion (worshipful prayer), wisdom (meditation and holy readings), and action (unselfish work).

We have found that one path cannot exist apart from the others because their spiritual essence is based on the single, common foundation of seeing and appreciating the Divinity in everyone and everything. From that basis, the three paths are an indivisible whole and each path leads to the other. For example:

- When we see the inherent Divinity in all (wisdom), we become motivated by love (devotion) to serve that Divinity (action).
- When we love (devotion), we begin to see everyone as love (wisdom) and wish to serve through love (action).
- When we selflessly serve others (action), we reduce our sense of ego and see the unity of all as Divine (wisdom) and naturally feel love (devotion).

The *Srimad Bhagavatam* sums up this unity of seeing, serving, and savouring the Divinity in all:

*Looking upon all beings as Divinity – in thought, word and deed – is the best of all methods of worship.*

Ultimately, work as a spiritual path is just that: a journey along a path that leads us to know that we are all sparks of Divinity, and that we can serve that Divinity in each other with love.

As Joanne Zimmerman sums up:

*The gift is the journey. Everyday is a blank slate for me. Whatever happens is part of the journey.*

So, ask yourself: *Which path of spiritual growth am I most drawn to practise in my work? How do I experience all three spiritual paths in my thoughts, words, and deeds at work?*

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)