



PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

1.11 LOVE IS THE ULTIMATE POWER

When love comes from the heart, it is the motivator, energiser and strengthener that gives you the power to speak boldly and act courageously – all the while respecting the people and conditions you find yourself in.

ONE DAY, this statement from Sathya Sai Baba, a spiritual teacher in India, really caught our attention:

There is no power more effective than Love.

It reminded us of Mahatma Gandhi's leadership as he sought to free India through *satyagraha* (truth-force) and *ahimsa* (non-violence). He once said that love was the basis of *satyagraha*, and elaborated by saying:

Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent. Truth quenches untruth, love quenches anger. It is the law of love that rules mankind.

If love can help free a nation, can it also help transform the workplace? We firmly believe so! To see how, we first have to understand what we (and Sai Baba and Gandhi) mean by "love." It's not the worldly love that comes from the mind and that has our self-interest desires as its basis. It's the Divine love that comes from the heart and has the wisdom and power of the universe as its basis.

When love comes from a spiritual basis, it inspires, motivates, energises and strengthens all aspects of our day-to-day work. For example, love is a common topic that spiritual-based executives often talk about in our interviews:

Love inspires. Dr. A. K. Chatopadhyay, former Senior Vice President for ACC Cement Refractories, turned around an ailing production plant by fostering a new spirit in how management served the needs of both employees and customers. Here's what he 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. It is my spiritual thinking that has led me to this.

Love motivates. G. Narayana, Chairman Emeritus of Excel Industries, an agricultural-chemical company told us that love was the key to employee relations during an extremely difficult time. He also brings love to union-management relations:

We gave continuous love to every person, and made sure that each one was successful. I tell union leaders everywhere to offer love and receive dedication, offer value and receive work – just as I've taught our own managers.

Love energises. G Narayana travels frequently and speaks not only to his own company's management and employees, but also to other organisations throughout India. His main message – which he also sincerely lives by – is love:

In giving continuous love, I don't get tired, even though I travel all the time. My wife thinks that I will be coming home tired and she gets tired waiting for me. But I come running and she wants to know how that can be. No matter where I go, I give love, even more than information. Then everyone gives me love back, so I receive more than I give.

Love strengthens. Dick Eppel, an American executive also faced a drastic turnaround situation with a telecom company. He far exceeded everyone's expectations and was successful within two years. His said his rapid success was due to two factors beyond having a good strategy:

One factor was positive perseverance, positive expectations, and positive visualisation. The second factor was how the management team came together, which was very unique to me. There was a bonding beyond friendship and camaraderie – a genuine sense of caring and love, even though those words were never expressed verbally.

To experience the power of love, we have to get beyond a typical mistaken belief. That is, most people see love as a more passive experience, and they think that in order to show love they must "overlook" transgressions and unfair behaviour, and just be nice. To the contrary, when love comes from the heart, it is the motivator, energiser and strengthener that gives you the power to speak boldly and act courageously – all the while respecting the people and conditions you find yourself in. Then you will experience the truth in these words of Sathya Sai Baba:

Divine Love is strong and steady enough to leap over all obstacles, confront with equanimity all changes of fortune, and defeat all attempts to delay or deviate.

So, ask yourself: *How would I describe the source of Divine love within me? How can I best tap into the power of love in my everyday work?*

This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: The Basics*. 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