



## PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

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### 2.22 LIGHT UP YOUR WORK WITH PURPOSE

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**WHILE REVIEWING** an article written by two of his MBA students<sup>1</sup>, William was inspired by a story about Albert Einstein that he had not heard before:

*Einstein was supposedly once asked: "If you could ask God one question, what would the question be"? He quickly responded that he would ask God how the universe began, because after that the rest would all be math. However, after further reflection, Einstein said he would ask God 'why' the universe began, because then he would know the meaning of his life.*

When we have this sense of meaning that Einstein talked about, we feel that our lives have a purpose in the scheme of things. In India, this is like knowing our *dharma* – our role and purpose in the harmony of life. We feel settled inside. Our work has an energy and authenticity that emanates from that sense of meaning and purpose, just as the students also expressed in their article:

*Realising the purpose of one's existence leads to one being what he is— regardless of whether he is with family and friends, or with managers, or direct reports, co-workers, suppliers, vendors, customers, and competitors, or with his spiritual neighbours and fellow congregants – always anchored in peace and contentment.*

When we seek to be a SPIRITED person, being purposeful (the "P" in this acronym) is an important step along the journey. When we are purposeful, we see a bigger picture, we envision what's important and meaningful, we commit wholeheartedly, and we promote the highest benefit for everyone concerned.

Furthermore, when our sense of purpose stems from our spiritual view of life, our work naturally becomes an extension of that personal, spiritual purpose. For example, Francisco Canada, a Director of a major publishing firm in Argentina, once told us:

*The spiritual purpose of my life is to realise God in my heart, to have God working through my own self. In the concept of business we work with, our goal is to make people aware of their inner potential, to help bring out this potential, and to always strive*

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<sup>1</sup> Article title: Organisations in Spirituality, written by Sanjay Mahalingam and Shyam Sundar

*for excellence. Excellence is the way God made the world. I also think this should be the purpose of business in general.*

As we live our spiritual purpose at work, it enhances and stimulates our creativity in two ways: to creatively develop our own talents for expressing our purpose; and to creatively serve through our work.

A good example of this is Frances Meiser, author and founder of a non-profit organisation called the “Brain Train” in the USA<sup>2</sup>. At the age of 50, she faced a dysfunctional future due to her experience with panic disorder and a diagnosis of ADHD (hyperactive disorder). But she responded with a serious soul searching, while studying and participating in educational experiences that enhanced her ability to function “normally” and enjoy life to the fullest.

Then, she began to focus her new knowledge on creatively helping others who suffer from the same difficulties, especially children who were diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed pharmaceutical drugs. When she goes to schools to work with teachers and children, she starts by making the children drink water using a crazy straw. Why?

*One of the reasons children are not learning today is because their brains are literally dehydrated from all of the sugar sodas they are drinking.*

Frances then teaches what foods, especially sugar, contribute to hyperactive disorder and what foods contribute to learning. She also teaches exercises that help children to effectively use both sides of their brain. She is giving them what they need to “fire up their brains for learning.”

Today Frances is creatively serving people in ways she never dreamed possible. She delivers presentations that enlighten audiences from doctors to teachers to parents. Her simple, yet purposeful insights are directed at helping people to understand the source of their disorders, rather than masking them with drugs. When asked about her spiritual purpose and how she brings that into her work, Frances gleefully responds:

*It's all about being joyful and sharing it with others!*

So, ask yourself: *What creative changes would I make in my work if I were to wholeheartedly commit to fulfilling my spiritual purpose?*

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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)

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<sup>2</sup> For more information about the Brain Train, see: [www.braintraincenter.org](http://www.braintraincenter.org)