Spirituality in the Leadership

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Sadhguru: Leadership is not dominance; it is a certain sacrifice. It is not a question of ruling someone, but an opportunity to make someone’s life. Leadership essentially means that you are capable of creating the necessary atmosphere for people to go beyond the limitations that they have set for themselves. In your presence, people should be able to do things they never imagined they could do.

The very fundamentals of leadership are that you aspire to achieve a certain vision and take people with you towards that goal. And if, for whatever reason, that is not achieved, that you don’t become a bundle of frustrations, but instead see how to make it happen. These are essential qualities for leadership. If you have your own issues, concerns, tensions and fears, you will never function to your full capacity. It is extremely important that the leadership in the world is functioning on full capacity, not as self-curtailed capability.

When I say leadership, I am not referring to presidents and prime ministers. Whatever sphere one is in, whether spiritual, political, economic or social, or even within the family, everyone is a leader in some capacity; it is only a question of scale. Whether one is managing and leading two people or one billion people, everyone is some kind of a leader. If a leader does not feel a deep sense of inclusion, if he does not feel that people around him are a part of him and grasp the fundamentals of who they are — not understanding as an intellectual process but as an experiential sense of oneness with the people around him — he cannot be a genuine leader. He can only manipulate situations — for better or for worse.

A non-religious spiritual process can play a phenomenal role in experiencing this inclusiveness that makes a true leader. A spiritual process is about going deeper into life, not living on the surface but wanting to know the depth of life. This is very essential for leaders, as they are bound to face challenges, and above all, are required to function at their optimal potential. If one is experiencing tension, anxiety, stress or anger, one’s body, mind and emotions will not work at their best. Everything within oneself functions at its best when one is peaceful and joyful, this is a proven fact and a medical reality today.

The whole science and wisdom of what we refer to as "Inner Engineering" means not seeing joy as something that we could achieve in our life, but seeing joy as the very basis of our lives. Joy is not the goal, but the square one of your life. Other wonderful things can ensue only if this happens.

Inner Engineering is a way of exploring the inner nature of who you are. We do not consider the body or the mind as inner nature, because we have accumulated the content of both from outside. There is an intrinsic intelligence and competence within you which can transform a piece of bread into a human being within three to four hours. If even a drop of this intelligence becomes a conscious process, your life will become magical in every possible way. Whether you are an entrepreneur or a leader, this intelligence will make your life truly fabulous.

It is extremely important that we provide people with leadership of a certain quality.

Many thousand years ago, there was a king in India whose name was Janaka. Janaka aspired for his spiritual growth and when he found his Guru, Ashtavakra, he was enlightened, after much sadhana. When he attained, he went to his Guru’s hermitage, wanting to live there, but Ashtavakra said, “You cannot live here, you must be a king.” Janaka replied, “What is the point? These pleasures, the palace, the power of being king and all that comes with it, mean nothing to me. All I want to do is sit at your feet.” Ashtavakra said, “What you want is no longer important. You have found what you want within yourself. Now the people deserve an enlightened king. That is important.”

Every nation needs a focused and enlightened leadership, not a confused leadership. There was a time when in a society, a few people were spiritual and everybody else just wanted to them for blessings and sustained their lives. Today, with the tools of science and technology, we have brought ourselves to a self-threatening situation where everybody in society needs to turn spiritual. Otherwise, there is no survival for this world. With the kind of technology and capabilities we have, it just takes one fool to blow the world up. There any number of such fools standing in the queue to get to the top. Spirituality is no longer a fancy pursuit. It is an absolute necessity for our own survival and the planet’s survival. Unless some sense of oneness touches people — especially in the leadership — self-destruction is a live threat.

Skeptics are quick to ask, "Is such a thing possible?" Well, do not think of the future on the basis of existing realities. Existing realities just look at the number of people that were slaughtered today or the number of bombs that exist on the planet. Statistics cannot measure what is beating in human hearts. Existing realities do not take into consideration people’s will and commitment, and the love in them. If only we can stoke that, if only we can stir up what is happening in individual hearts, miracles are possible.

Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the "Padma Vibhushan", India’s highest annual civilian award, by the Government of India in 2017, for exceptional and distinguished service. To know more, visit isha.sadhguru.org