Inclusive Expansion: Spirituality for the Corporate World

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A whole whirlwind of economic activity is happening in the world today, and especially in India. In the recent times, our economy has grown like never before. Everything is bursting at the seams; just holding it in place has been a huge circus for everybody involved. This could either bring a lot of wellbeing to large masses of people around the planet, or it could lead to total destruction of the world, depending upon who handles it and how.

Of the four major forces in the world – politics, military, religion and economics – that decide the quality of people’s lives to a large extent, I see economic force as the biggest possibility for bringing about some unification and sensible action. In the next ten to fifteen years, economic leadership is poised to play a far more important role in the world than political and military leadership. Therefore, we are presented with a great opportunity for large-scale change. More than 80 percent of the world’s wealth is controlled by just a few thousand people. Even if just 10 percent change happens in their hearts, the world will change. The world is hungry not because there is no food. There is more food than the seven billion people on the planet can eat. It is just that those who need it do not get it, because one way or the other, those who have the power and the means have not cared enough to do something about it.

Today’s corporations have grown to such a size that they are as big as governments. That is why today’s corporate leader is required to travel extensively, handle a variety of issues and complexities, and above all, deal with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Therefore, a truly successful corporate leader should be very versatile and able to multitask in complex situations. If any human being has to handle very complex issues on a daily basis without being pulled down by those issues and situations, it is extremely important that he is spiritually equipped.

What we refer to as spirituality is just technology for inner wellbeing. Unfortunately, in the course of transferring the spiritual processes through generations, cultural and religious influences naturally become part of it. These religious and cultural tinges are a barrier for the acceptance of spiritual sciences in the corporate world. A spiritual process which is free of cultural and religious trappings is most needed today. Spiritual process need not be taught as a philosophy or a belief system. It can be imparted as simple methods which will naturally lead to a more inclusive way of experiencing life.

The people who make decisions for everybody should be in a good condition because their decisions impact not just them but also a large number of lives. The business community needs to shift from operating from limited ambition to a larger vision. I want to see them more joyful because joyful people are more generous, sensible and flexible, and always more life-oriented. It is very important that they are more peaceful and joyful within themselves by their own nature, not because of the quarterly balance sheet.

The whole modern economy, the very economic engine runs only if people keep buying and buying. When we have an economy like this, we are trying to include more and more people into our list of clients or customers. The idea is to include the whole seven billion people on the planet. Right now, only approximately 40 percent of the world’s population is involved in the economic activity in a meaningful way. Excluding 60 percent of the population and asking, “What is a mystic doing in an economic forum? Is it a mistake?” A particularly belligerent top CEO came up to me and said, “What are you doing here?” I knew that he would not understand anything except his own jargon. I said, “See, right now, 50 percent of the world’s population is still hungry. So when somebody is not eating properly I cannot talk spirituality to them or teach them meditation, because when a man is hungry, talking to him about meditation and spirituality is obscene. It is vulgar. So all I am doing here is expanding my market base!”

If we want a gentler and more compassionate economic process, it is not charity but inclusiveness that is needed. If there is no sense of inclusiveness in individual human beings, there is no way that the systems they create or actions they perform will lead to inclusiveness.

Spirituality does not mean going to the temple or breathing coconuts there. It is about living here in an all-inclusive way, experiencing everything as a part of yourself. Knowing and experiencing life as life, not as individual personalities. One basic aspect of a spiritual process is that it makes one into an all-inclusive human being. At the same time it will hugely equip the individual to be more efficient, more capable, more balanced and in turn more productive. This is good for business. This is good for the world.

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