

*Keynote Address*

**Education and Spirituality**

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**Gurgaon-122015 India**

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**Abstract**

Spirituality is a deeper sense of existence. It is about connectedness and the highest aspirations of the human spirit. Spirituality is orientation of thoughts to the deeper insights of our study and experience, yielding a more comprehensive self in harmony with the community and the cosmos. Spirituality is often experienced as a source of inspiration. Education without spirituality is like “flower without fragrance”. The paper attempts to offer deeper paradigms of education through 3-orbits of learning, graduating from intellectual inputs to emotional intelligence and finally to social and spiritual consciousness.

**Introduction: Spirit & Spirituality**

*One machine can do the work of fifty (50) or more ordinary men. But no machine can do the work of an extra ordinary man.*

*'Extraordinary Man' is just a highly motivated Man and the motivation is in the domain of "Spirit".*

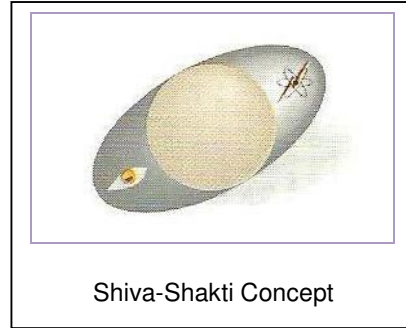
Spirituality is derived from “Spirit” which is “pure self” beyond the body. It is one’s consciousness, conscience, thinking & feeling part of existence, sensitivity, motivation, and divinity.

Spirituality encompasses humanistic qualities such as love, compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, sacrifice, contentment, responsibility, harmony, and a concern for others, values, beliefs, self- esteem, consciousness and energy.

The devine spirit (energy and consciousness) being at the root of all significant human endeavour can not be denied. Did we not watch the “Spirit” at Ramleela Maidan recently (16-28 Aug'11) ? Was it not collective consciousness and synergised energy?

### **Shiva-Shakti Concept of Cosmic Creation**

According to Indian belief, the ultimate reality is totally balanced and harmonized and is therefore represented by a perfect mathematical figure, the sphere. When the focal point of the sphere divides itself into two poles, representing consciousness (Shiva) and energy (Shakti), an Ellipsoid (Lingam) is formed which represents the root



of all cosmic creation. This shape can be seen from the atom, cell and egg to the planetary solar system. Curiously, if we can focus all our energy & consciousness within, we can be one with the Holy Spirit.

Spirituality exists wherever we struggle with the issues of how our lives fit into the greater scheme of things. The movement referred to above “India against Corruption” seeks to free our daily lives from guilt and humiliation for all of us to refine the national character and get a more respectful place in the world community.

### **Education and Spirituality**

Swami Vivekanand said “Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library”. A semi-literate man “Anna Hazare” also talks of 5-ideas viz. Pure Thoughts, Pure Conduct, Unblemished Life, Sacrifice and Capacity to withstand humiliation; which he has assimilated, practised and demonstrated, becoming the most literate man of today, saluted by the Indian Parliament.

### **Education is not merely Academics**

Somehow we have misunderstood academics to be education. We teach our children to read and memorise history but we don't teach them to create history. We teach them science but not the science of life. Education is to lead a person to knowledge (know-how & know-why) graduating further to wisdom (discovery of truth by himself) to see life in its totality and to face it in its completeness. The highest wisdom provides the vision of

oneness and genuine concern for others. Education is to set a higher goal of life and undergo inner Transformation.

Education is assimilation & absorption of knowledge. Once a disciple asked Swami Chinmayanand "I have gone through Bhagavad Gita several times but nothing has happened. Swamiji retorted "You have gone through, but has Bhagavad Gita gone through you?"

Real objective of learning is exposure to the existing knowledge + Development of:

- 1) Talent
- 2) Analytical skills
- 3) Team work / Leadership
- 4) Creativity & Innovation
- 5) Envisioning
- 6) Conceptualization
- 7) Values
- 8) Acumen
- 9) Sensitivity
- 10) Ethics / Ethos
- 11) Consciousness
- 12) Mindset
- 13) Spiritual Wisdom

Any education system which can not address the aforesaid dimensions of personality is not complete in itself. Spiritual literacy is a basic literacy for all people that enables the reading and use of the deeper meaning and connection in all aspects of life.

### **Holistic Education**

Holistic education would be one where intellectual inputs are supported by emotional intelligence, further reinforced by social and spiritual consciousness. Spiritual paradigm of value based education has the key to the problems the society faces today all over the globe. Today, science and technology have reached the pinnacle of glory, yet widening the gap between poverty and affluence; leading to a state of despair and cynicism in the mass psyche.

The very purpose of education is to improve the quality of life, not based on knowledge alone but the value-based education and spirituality with a sense of purity and

purpose. This doctrine surely helps the students to mould their attitudes, humane in temperament, refined in approach and devine in spirit.

### **The Two sides of Human Brain**

According to psycologists, the human brain works in two compartments: The left hand side (Masculine) which works like a Computer understanding language, mathematics, Analysis, logic, sequence, Linear details bits and pieces and numbers while the right hand side (Feminine) works like an Artist comprehending Space, Rhythm, Colour, Imagination, Music, Patterns, Holistic Pictures, Concepts and Shapes. In 1981, Dr. Roger Sperry was awarded Nobel Prize for Split Brain Theory. Thousands of years ago our Rishis knew this secret and they had conceptualized “Ardhanareeshwar” Combination of Masculine and Feminine virtues. Unfortunately, people use left hand side of the brain most of the times ignoring the power of right click. A systematic effort to develop the right hand side of the brain has to find roots in our education system.

### **Tapping Human Potential**

An average man does not use more than 5-10% of his hidden potential.....Einstein, the genius of geniuses had used only 18% of his potential!

Reasons for non-utilization of potential:

1. Working with selfish motives, our brain can draw only 10% of our consciousness.  
**(needing inflow of more consciousness)**
2. In the absence of total consciousness, our mind gets locked in material world.  
**(needing unlocking of our minds)**
3. We pass our life in a predicament of success or failure, constricting our intellect.  
**(needing expansion of our intellect)**

A soulful education can address the above issues.

### **Soulful Education-Need of the hour**

A more 'soulful' education seeks to open the mind, warm the heart and awaken the spirit of each student. It would provide opportunities for students to be creative, contemplative, and imaginative. It encourages students to go deep into themselves, into nature, and into human affairs. It values service to others and the planet.

*To teach is to  
touch a life  
forever.*

A spiritualised curriculum values physical, mental and spiritual knowledge and skills. It presents knowledge in holistic perspective on a conceptual format, rather than as facts to be memorised. It is integrative across all disciplines emphasising inter-relationship and inter-connectedness. It challenges students to find their own place in space and time, and to reach for the highest aspirations of the human spirit.

Education is an exploration of the external world and the self. It is a process of elevation of consciousness that transforms a “Biological-intellectual” into a realised self. Education is not just knowledge-based skill training but to develop self-awareness, a holistic perspective for wholesome development and oneness with the world.

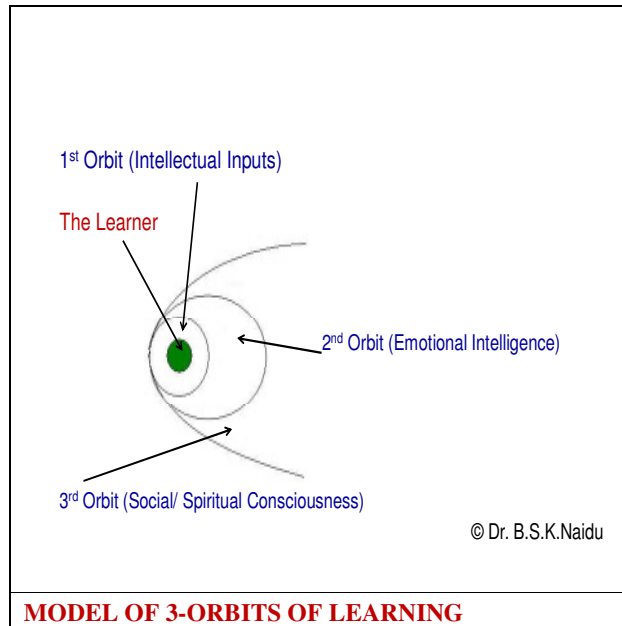
### **3-Orbits of Education**

This depth of understanding from Indian philosophy can be imbibed into the deeper paradigms of education through 3-orbits of learning, graduating from intellectual inputs to emotional intelligence and further to social and spiritual consciousness. Such an education system can connect you better with your ownself, understanding the totality of the cosmos around and within you, observing events and relating them in proper perspective and to grow as a complete person.

The above mentioned scheme can create superior mindsets and thought leaders in emerging India enabling her to play a leading role in creating a new world order. Holistic vision can come out of a combination of IQ, EQ and SQ. If IQ can germinate a flower of knowledge, its grandeur comes from EI and fragrance from social & spiritual consciousness (SQ).

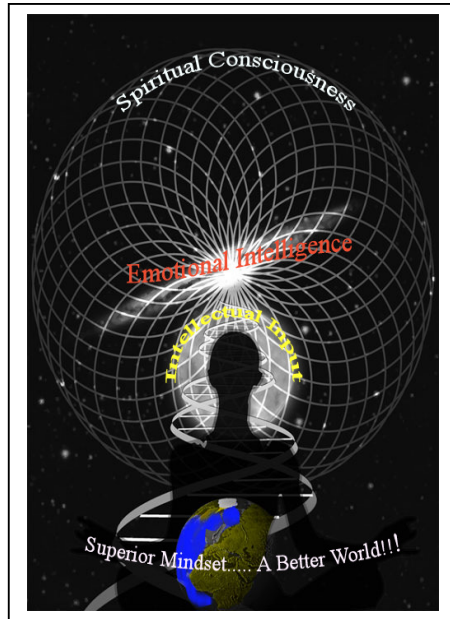
The present education with an over emphasized importance to science and technology without a spiritual foundation is a cause for concern for the imbalance evident in the self, the society, the nation and the world. The desired balance cannot be restored with intellectual inputs alone. Innovative models and paradigms which can indeed help, will

come out of holistic thinking and graduating to higher orbits of Emotional Intelligence and Social & Spiritual Consciousness.



In today's education system, we are making all out efforts to impart 360 degree exposure in "Techno-commercial-innovative-creative" aspects but all of it in the single orbit of intellectual inputs, neither supporting it with emotional intelligence, nor reinforcing it further by social and spiritual consciousness in a systematic and designed manner. Consciousness is the 'group name' for various abilities such as: consistent awareness, continued curiosity, inquisitiveness, surging ideas and rational thinking, imagination and ability of focusing, capacity to reflect etc.

According to Danah Zohar logical intelligence (IQ) is about rational, logical, rule-bound thinking. Emotional intelligence (EQ) is about associative, habit-bound, pattern-recognising, emotive thinking. Spiritual intelligence (SQ) is about creative, insightful, rule-making, transformative thinking.



For the above, we need subject Experts to take care of the domain knowledge, Psychologists to take care of the emotional intelligence and Philosophers and Spiritual Scientists to develop the spiritual consciousness. The group has to work in close coordination and synchronization in order to figure out the deeper paradigms of learning.

#### **Concluding Remarks**

Spiritual path focusing on values and consciousness needs to be road mapped for reaching the goal of an ideal education system for transferring knowledge and wisdom across generations. The ancient spiritual wisdom has for us not only a treasure of values but it also enlightens us

on what is necessary to know about the cosmos and the consciousness in order to have a coherent world-vision and to acquire right outlook to create a better world!

#### **About the Author**



Dr. B.S.K. Naidu is the Chairman of the prestigious Great Lakes Institute of Energy Management & Research at Gurgaon, NCR, Delhi, India which is known for its unique models and spiritual paradigms behind its management programs. He is the immediate past Director General (Trg & Dev) of Reliance Energy Ltd. and Senior Advisor to Advanced Engineering Associates International Inc. (AEAI), Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. Previously, he was the Director General of NPTI & CPRI – the two Apex Central Govt. Organizatons in Power Training & Research in India.

A fellow of the Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE), he has been on the Boards/Governing Councils of 7-Organizations in Government, public, joint and private

sectors including international formations. He was an Expert Consultant to UNDP for their “UNDP-GEF” Project, having addressed the First GEF Assembly.

A Double Doctorate in Power Engineering and Business Management, he has undergone advanced studies in Europe and USA. The man behind the National Training Policy for the Power Sector, he offered the Art and Science of “Power Management” to the Reforming Power Sector by way of First Ever AICTE/UGC approved MBA Program on the subject, which is recognized as a pioneering venture in Asia.

During his tenure, NPTI and CPRI experienced unbelievable quantum jumps in productivity parameters – highest in 4 decades of their existence - making a history in Turnarounds. His success story of rejuvenating NPTI has been accepted in B-Schools as a Case Study on “Transformational Leadership” for MBA students. A transnational speaker, Dr. Naidu has delivered 70-Guest Lectures abroad, across 5-continent, including his Lead Speech in United Nations. He is an acclaimed thought leader who has a unique way of mapping management and spiritual thoughts with engineering acumen. He has addressed more than 35,000 intellectuals so far.

Author of 150- publications including 15-books, he is recipient of 15-awards besides 6-Institutional awards which he received as Director General of 3-large organizations in India.