



PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

3.24 HARMONY WITHIN DIFFICULTY

“One measurement of business success for me is ‘harmony within difficulty’. That would be a sign of spiritual progress in an organisation.” James Sinclair, Chairman, Tan Range Exploration, Ltd.

SUSTAINABILITY and endurance seem to be popular words these days as organisations around the world are seeking to ensure long-term success. What might be possible if our pursuit of sustainability and endurance were based in our spiritual roots?

During an interview with James Sinclair, Chairman of the Tan Range Exploration, Ltd., he offered some perspectives on endurance that were different from normal business thinking, causing us to pause and ponder over his wisdom.

James’ views on long-term success are founded in his particular view of spirituality:

I would say that spirituality is birthed in silence. It lies in the musings of the musician, or the reverie of the professor teaching that one point that’s been built over a long period of preparation, one that gives this man a moment of success. It’s that point when the mind is quieted, and the circumstances, problem or event is looked at from a different perspective – the perspective of the observer.

I believe that every calamity is an opportunity. It’s what you’ve unconsciously trained all your life for; this is why you are alive. So when a calamity comes upon you, this is your opportunity. The spirituality we are trying to deal with here must be the most practical aspect of our lives.

Organisations face calamities and difficulties too. For James, when this kind of practical spirituality finds its way into organisational life, it results in what he calls “harmony within difficulty”:

One measurement of business success for me is “harmony within difficulty”. That would be a sign of spiritual progress in an organisation. This would be seen as a cohesive ability to draw conclusions and recommendations in periods of stress.

James believes that developing this “harmony within difficulty” has many positive “returns”, or benefits, which can actually be measured:

I do think you can measure “return on harmony” because that’s exactly what I call it. I would look at the long-term industries and not the hype industries that fly in and out. I

would look for the characteristic of “harmony within difficulty” within the ethic of the company. Then we should be able to go back in time and find some piece of this characteristic within the individual corporate leader, the corporate leader’s family, or policies of the corporation instituted by an enlightened individual. I would also look to see if there are policies and procedures which give understanding to what the company is about, to what its corporate being is.

I believe that spiritual development within an organisation would need to be a statistic defined over a long period of time. If an organisation was spiritually progressive, then within the industry in which it works, it would obviously create for itself an endurance. It would be an entity in which the growth of spiritual consciousness was taking place. And I believe that over a long period of time, this type of organisation would be known for having contributed the most to its industry.

If what we’re saying is correct about spirituality, then I believe we’ll find that companies that came and went did not have this capacity for harmony within difficulty, while the ones who have endured were the ones who had cohesiveness during crisis.

James concluded that this capacity for harmony within diversity culminates in a corporate experience of “contentment”:

The most successful person is the person with the least desires. That is, the successful individual is the contented individual. This contentment can also be a corporate experience, an outcome of the ability for “harmony within difficulty”.

Contentment means recognition of having accomplished what can be accomplished in a particular area. When the respect for the stakeholders equals the respect for the stockholders, it results in a “content” corporation, because now the personality of the corporation is the stakeholder and the stockholder together.

Reflecting upon James’ words, we’ve seen that a leader’s capacity to foster contentment and a culture of harmony within difficulties is born of a spiritual view of life that Bede Griffiths, a Christian mystic, expresses this way:

We are no longer isolated individuals in conflict with our surroundings. We are part of a whole, elements in a universal harmony.

So, ask yourself: *How am I as a leader fostering “harmony within difficulty” and “contentment” in my organisation?*

This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Spiritual-Based Leaders*. 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