MEDITATION AND SPIRITUAL EXERCISE AT WORK PLACE

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Abstract
This paper highlights the spiritual values and work life using meditation and spiritual exercise at workplace. The mankind needs knowledge which is strengthened and supported by science and religion, philosophy and common sense. It needs such knowledge to answer questions satisfactorily about the physical world and the spiritual reality. It needs something which has science, religion and purpose to life, should bring about unity in place of fragmentation and should give peace and solace to the suffering humanity.

The paper highlights values and spirituality, Ethical Values, Professional Values, Meditation and its various types, Benefits of Meditation, Spirituality, Spirituality at workplace, process of meditation. Values and Spirituality is central to the moral philosophy of human civilization and its legal institutions. These are considered traditionally to be the prerogatives of the religions and they are viewed as being embodied in the family unit. Today we face a crisis of values. Meditation helps you disconnect from damaging habits of thought, feeling and reaction. This results in a conscious, positive release of energy which improves the quality of your attitude, actions, and interactions. Meditation is taught as a method of raising self-awareness leading to self-realization. Meditation stills the mind and empowers the intellect to achieve insight and understanding of the spiritual laws and principles which sustain harmony and can bring natural renewal at all levels of life on earth.

Engagement in spiritual service is finding an appropriate way to use your growing spiritual power and understanding for the benefit of others in the wider community is also a method of sustaining your personal growth. Spiritual service occurs on many levels, including spreading peaceful vibrations into the atmosphere and helping others develop awareness of their own spiritual qualities through good wishes and pure feelings.

Keywords: Values, Spirituality, Ethical Values, Professional Values, Meditation.

1. INTRODUCTION

The term ethical refer to ‘Conforming to accepted principles of right and wrong, although they tend to change over time.
Ethical Values are a set of moral principles that apply to a specific group of people, professional field or form of human conduct and interaction. The Ethics are based on awareness that a human being is essentially spiritual. Ethical values respect human rights, non-aggression, integrity, justice and honesty. A person with ethical values can be trusted and will be respected
Professional Values apply in the work place. These include punctuality, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, clarity of communication, accuracy, quality of output or production, honesty in dealings and trustworthiness. They also includes appropriate behavior towards the colleagues, Superiors, equals and subordinates respectful conduct towards women, no sexual harassment, respect for intellectual property rights, commitment to contractual obligations etc.

2. MEDITATION

Meditation is deep and purposeful thought. It is a method to dwell on the landscape of your mind with understanding and a mean to access your sub conscious. It teaches you to have concentration, single track thinking and instant recognition of deviation from your intended focus.
TYPES OF MEDITATION

2.1 Mantra Meditation

A “Mantra” is a sacred word, usually given by Guru to his or her followers. The mantra is whispered as it’s meant to be kept secret and is chanted internally or externally by the mediator. Some mantras are longer some are short taken from important scriptures of India. Another mean of word ‘mantra’ is ‘Advice’. The mantra advises you to be conscious of your essential spiritually to be stable in peace, and to become free from the influence of the nature of material existence.

2.2 Japa Meditation

Japa meditation uses the technique of repetition as it makes awareness stronger. In this meditation a mantra is chanted loudly or internally as a repeating thought or prayer while the beads of rosary are turned. There is emphasis on a number of times a mantra is repeated. A typical rosary contains 108 beads and mantra is chanted once for each bead.

2.3 Dhayan Meditation

It is used for developing concentration on the sacred object. A devotee will sit in a particular meditative pose generally half or full lotus pose or asana. With half closed eyes, the mediator focuses his or her attention upon the figure of divinity.

2.4 Pranayam

Mediation upon the breath is a favorable technique. Attention is given to inhalation and exhalation. Pranayam is also well known to be good for health.

2.5 Yama and Niyama

These practices promote a healthy balanced way of life. It helps to be in balance and harmony with you.
2.6 Raj Yoga

In this way, the mediation practice is a process of shifting again and again from body consciousness to soul-consciousness. You establish a connection, cultivate a relationship and absorb divine qualities, virtues and powers. The raj yoga takes the form of preparation for leaving this world. It frees you from the fear of unknown and gives you clarity in thoughts.

BENEFITS OF MEDIATION
1. Gaining Concentration
2. Improving Performance
3. Self Awareness
4. Character Development
5. Health benefits

3. SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is a connection with divine. Spirituality refers to truths and realities that apply to all people at all the times in all places. The spirituality is not a blind faith. It makes people fearless. It leads to happiness. Spirituality reconciles religion and science.

Spirituality refers to spirit, mind, higher faculty, soul and highly refined thought and feeling. It means awareness of the incorporeal and free from sensuality. It focuses on our collective original spiritual qualities of peace, purity and love.

The concepts of spirituality or facts of knowledge should give an integrated and satisfying world vision and should be of universal nature so that they are not meant for a particular territory or should give to man a scientific temper but should also have an element of faith and should also have transcendental source of its origin. It should draw its life from revelations but should be so logical as to gain support from scientific and philosophical methods of exploration. It should synthesize various branches of knowledge, such as history, geography, philosophy, health science, psychology, ethics, social science etc., into one whole and should give a way of practical living. It should give a comprehensive and clear world view which should inspire and unite mankind to a higher level of consciousness and a way of life that is characterized by love, kindness, compassion, co-operation, humanism, ethical values and has a happy blend of knowledge of the mundane and transcendental reality.

The spirituality should build such an interpretation based on history as can identify the causes of fall of civilization and can now provide guidance for building a better world. It should have rationalism of science, faith of religion and integrated vision of philosophy and common sense. It should give an overview of all branches of knowledge of the mundane and should flower into such spiritual wisdom as can bring fulfillment and bring about happiness. This something which has all these characteristics is called spiritual wisdom. It is this which promotes spirituality.

The law of spirituality governs the relationship:
1. Between Humans and the Divine
2. Between and among Human Beings
Spiritual knowledge as distinguished from religion is free from prejudices. It provides an insight into the nature of consciousness. It interprets the finding of history, sociology, economics, politics, biology, psychological and the science.

FOUR SPIRITUAL PILLARS
A spiritually fulfilling life is based on a foundation of four pillars:
1. Daily practice of meditation/yoga
2. Regular spiritual study
3. Spiritual relationships and fulfilling responsibilities
4. The service of humanity

4. SPIRITUALITY AT WORK PLACE
Many people use prayer at work for several reasons: for guidance in decision-making, to prepare for difficult situations, when they are going through a tough time, or to give thanks for something good.
1. The ABC Evening News reported that The American Stock Exchange has a Torah study group; Boeing has Christian, Jewish and Muslim prayer groups;
2. Microsoft has an on-line prayer service.
3. There is a “Lunch and Learn” Torah class in the banking firm of Sutro and Company in Woodland Hills, CA. New York law firm Kaye, Scholer, Fierman, Hays and Haroller features Tallmud studies. Koran classes, as well as other religious classes, are featured at defense giant Northrop Gumman. Wheat International Communications in Reston, Virginia has morning prayers open to all employees, but not required. Spiritual study groups at noon are sometimes called “Higher Power Lunches”—instead of the usual “power lunches.”
4. According to a study at Harvard Business School published in The Harvard Business Review, business owners credit 80% of their success to acting on their intuition.
5. Apple Computer’s offices in California have a meditation room and employees are actually given a half hour a day on company time to meditate or pray, as they find it improves productivity and creativity. A former manager who is now a Buddhist monk leads regular meditations there.
6. Mamta Steels Ltd. JMD Mukesh Kumar used his religious beliefs and the Hindu holy text, The Bhagavad Gita, to guide business decisions and company policy and to steer his business out of trouble like many others.
7. Aetna International Chairman Michael A. Stephen praises the benefits of meditation and talks with Aetna employees about using spirituality in their careers.
8. Avaya, a global communications firm that is a spin-off of Lucent/AT&T, has a room set aside for prayer and meditation that is especially appreciated by Muslims, as they must pray five times a day.
9. Medtronic, which sells medical equipment, pioneered a meditation center at headquarters 20 years ago, and it remains open to all employees today. Prentice-Hall publishing company created a meditation room at their headquarters which they call the “Quiet Room, where employees can sit quietly and take a mental retreat when they feel too much stress on the job.
10. Sounds True in Colorado, which produces audio and video tapes has a meditation room in their office. Meditation classes and begins meetings with a moment of silence. Employees can take Personal Days to attend retreats or pursue other spiritual interests.
11. Grey stone Bakery in upstate New York has a period silence before meetings begin so people can get in touch with their inner state and focus on the issues to be discussed.
12. Lotus founder and CEO Mitch Kapor practices Transcendental Meditation and named his company after a word for enlightenment.
13. A research project by Prof. Richard Davidson at the University of Wisconsin at Pomega, a biotechnology company that had a very high-stress workplace, found a mindfulness meditation training produced astonishing results in reducing stress and generating positive feelings.
14. Paula Madison at WNBC TV in New York City prays before each show and says she became the number one news show in the area when she increased coverage of spiritual stories.
15. Apparel manufacturer Patagonia provides yoga classes for employees on their breaks, as does Avaya telecommunications.
16. A Spiritual Enfoldment Society has been meeting regularly at The World Bank for years, with lectures on topics such as meditation and reincarnation.
17. Executives of Xerox have gone on week-long retreats led by Mar Lowe Hotchkiss of the Ojai Foundation to learn a Native American model of council meetings and experience vision quests. The vision quests inspired one manager with the idea to create Xerox’s hottest seller, a 97% recyclable machine.
18. The CEO of Rockport Shoes, Angel Martinez, talks openly of the spiritual mission of his company and encourages employees to spend work time envisioning ways to express their deepest selves in their work. Companies such as Evian
spring water have successfully used spirituality in their advertising, as for example. “Your body is the temple of your spirit.”

19. The Service-Master Company, with six million customers world-wide, provides cleaning, maintenance, lawn care and food services, and puts its spiritual values upfront in its annual report. It begins with a biblical quote, “Each of us should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”

5. HOW TO DO MEDITATION AT WORKPLACE?

Like breathing, daily meditation is not something that you must have absolute silence in order to do. Your ability to meditate comes from inside of your heart. Thus, meditation does not require you to follow a list of complicated regulations in order to achieve a degree of personal improvement. Furthermore, you do not need to be at home to practice daily meditation. You can also learn to meditate in the workplace if you follow these simple steps:

1. Prize productivity. A common misconception regarding meditation is that it must be conducted in somber stillness. While a calm spirit is useful when you are undertaking daily meditation, you can still maintain the composure of your spirit even within the midst of physical activity. In the workplace, productivity is a virtue. Similarly, productivity in your meditation is essential to your personal improvement.

2. Gain a humble attitude. Meditation is meaningless if it is done with an arrogant attitude. In the workplace, arrogance will only get you so far. If you are beleaguered by the dog-eat-dog atmosphere of your job, daily meditation is a godsend. By focusing on your personal improvement, you can inject a note of sanity into your career.

3. Get into a zone where you can focus. Some people have a closet for their daily meditation. However, in the workplace, a closet is not what you should be looking for. Meditation can help you at work, but your focus should be on the job at hand. In order to get the most out of your daily meditation, you should get in to a frame of thinking where you are able to manage stress in a healthy way. If you apply these principles of personal improvement, you can easily manage stress even as you function at the top of your game.

During Meditation

4. Begin by relaxing. Stress in the workplace can cripple your spiritual well-being. However, when you learn how to manage stress with the help of daily meditation, you can begin to make great strides in personal improvement. People who obsess over petty trivia will always be too distracted to benefit much from meditation. For this reason, avoid gossip, griping and grief in general.

5. Clear your mind. Daily meditation does not require advanced thinking skills. Rather, it requires you to release control and to see things from a creative perspective. You benefit more when you put your heart into it. In the workplace you will have a lot on your mind. However, don't clutter your mind more by letting aimless thoughts float around in it. We tend to get emotionally attached to our aimless thoughts, and if we clear our minds with daily meditation we'll find that our thinking will become much more focused and beneficial in value.

6. Practice forgiveness. Forgiveness of yourself and of others is a key feature of daily meditation. While there will always be reasons to hold grudges in the workplace, it helps to build better relationships with others and it serves to increase your opportunities. In reality, personal improvement is not something you can accomplish alone. You need the help of others in order to grow in your life and your career.

6. BENEFITS OF SPIRITUALITY

Positive interaction between employer and employees is crucial to the success of spirituality program. When the atmosphere is good and work assignment is inspiring, the productivity can be dynamic. It enhances following skills among employees at workplace:

Leadership Qualities
A good leader transforms information into insight and act upon it. Good leaders know and believe in themselves unequivocally and have no personal illusions. Some of the qualities are:

1. Commitment
2. Non-punitive methods or correction
3. Effect of language on mentality
4. Using your free will

Higher Consciousness
1. Changes in Perception
2. Taking personal Responsibility

Improving Personal Relationship
1. Consider the mistakes of others to be of your own
2. Those who criticize you are your friends
3. Be dispassionate in face of success and failure, praise and blame, good and bad situations
4. Do not judge things or people by appearance
5. We all are fundamentally good
6. You do not see your own faults

7. CONCLUSION
Moral, Ethical and Spiritual values represent the aspirations of a society and acts as its guide. Values are principles, self imposed rules or the ethical policy we adopt in order to travel through life with a clear conscience. The values in a person’s life reveal their character and determine their moral and ethical choices.

One of the primary benefit of spiritual workplace is that people are more in touch with the source of creativity. Creativity is a cornerstone of any business. It allows us to do more with less. In essence, creativity leads to more efficient contribution. One has to create an atmosphere in which creativity and innovation flourish; and that is accomplished through the bountiful expression of spirit. When we are more in touch with the source of creativity, there is also revitalization, renewal and resilience. Another benefit is increased authenticity in communication. When the truth is allowed to be safely and respectfully spoken, old problems clear up, new possibilities emerge, and people feel more aligned. They work together in a trusting team. Increased ethical and moral behavior is yet another benefit. But who cares if a company is ethical? Isn’t business just a place where you see how much you can get ahead? No. An important value of ethical behavior for a business is the development of trust. We trust people who operate in an ethical framework. Employees trust employers. Employers trust employees. And customers who trust a company stay customers longer.

Spirituality in the workplace also promotes the expression of talent, brilliance and genius - talent in the sense of our Divine gifts; brilliance in terms of our intellect and the intensity of the light we have to shine; and genius not as a scarce commodity, but as something that everyone has. Our true job is to connect with that genius. And moreover, spirituality in the workplace also leads to increased self-fulfillment, contentment and a deep sense of belonging.

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