

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ATTITUDE

# PEAKLIFE

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**PHILANTHROPY  
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**New Life & New Innings**

**YUVRAJ SINGH**

# THERE'S A LAMA IN THE BOARDROOM!

By Neeraa Maini Srivastav  
Author, Creative Director, Content  
Curator, & spiritualist



**E**arly burn-out. Long hours. Job insecurity. Pressure of EMIs. Work-life imbalance. Fatigued minds. Emotional mismanagement. Health challenges. Stress overload. Clearly, the great human potential that has produced innovations and pioneered industrial progress is witnessing the first cracks of a breakdown, taking a heavy toll on the mental, physical and emotional well-being of the corporate world. Some manage to heal themselves with sporadic sabbaticals but the vast majority are clueless about the arsenal required to combat the growing trauma and drama at work.

Given the dismal situation, it's only natural that a large number of individuals, organizations and modalities are making their presence felt. In fact, they have found their way to the corporate alleys of discontent to work their magic of

rejuvenation across corporate hierarchies.

Welcome to the innumerable providers of the fastest moving consumer good: peace and wellness. From formulating special wellness packages focused on detoxification to special retreats, leadership training programs and workshops to achieve and deliver 'nirvana', the options are endless.

## REJUVENATE@WORK

Today, we're seeing a new wave of workforce-based health and wellness innovation, a new generation of wellness programs designed for the way people live and work, customized to their goals- be it healthcare, stress-relief, self-actualization or other aspirations.

Foremost among them is APEX (achieving personal Excellence) – a practical training program that offers participants real techniques for meaningfully reducing

workplace stress and insights into how to work smart.

Affiliated to the Art of Living- founded by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the program has shown to ultimately foster greater productivity, ethics and integrity in an otherwise highly volatile work environment.

"Being productive at work is simply not enough. To find real joy and meaning one needs to be inspired, from within and for your own sake. The drive needs to be personal. What you do then matters little as you are doing it with a purpose. This course helps you feel inspired from within and find that purpose.", believes an enthusiastic participant of the course and a Strategy Director of a large corporate.

NLP training is yet another way of enhancing leadership skills, cultivating strong partnerships and interpersonal relationships that lead to higher productivity.

The Isha Foundation in Coimbatore, offers a philosophy-cum-yoga course that is called 'Inner Engineering.' The program is an 'effective tool' for corporate companies to run successful businesses.

From Yoga and meditation to 'manifesting abundance', companies are now open to turn their traditional offsites into well-being/ spiritual retreats.

## AWAKEN @WORK

Today, there seems to be an organized momentum in tapping the inner source of wisdom and enlightenment that permeates all aspects of life. Indian corporates are finally opening doors to ancient spiritual wisdom and its direct impact on work. In fact, spirituality in the work place is gaining importance among academicians as well as business professionals currently. Spiritual leadership is now being touted as a model

for organizational development and transformation that can guide the evolution of positive organizations in which human well-being and organizational-level performance can not only coexist but also be optimized. It is a now being widely accepted by the suits that this creates vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered team, and organization levels; and ultimately fosters higher levels of organizational commitment and productivity. "Keep the collective frequency aligned- when everyone vibrates at a single frequency, the organization can then transform" recommends Dr Chintan Dalal – Successful Businessman, Yogi, Tibetan Sound and Acupuncture Expert.

He also adds a poignant insight: "As corporations and businesses, we envision to bring heaven and earth together to experience a blissful life. We forget that

between heaven and earth lie the 'humans'- we need to look deep within our human nature to bring this holistic success, else one day we will be crushed between the two! The three have to co-exist in balance and harmony." In fact, even management education is becoming holistic and Indian spirituality is finding its way into B-school curriculums. Overall, ancient Indian mythological figures have now been given a corporate twist.

Among popular concepts in management principles are 'the Arjun model of management', which trains managers to be goal focused. 'The Eklavya model is about self-management and self-motivation. And 'the Krishna management model' talks of smart strategizing. Put Krishna in today's corporate world and you have the typical CEO, and the Gita is touted as a perfect management manual. Devdutt Patnaik-

## Sanjiv Sarin

Leadership Coach. Teacher Apex Program,  
Art of Living Foundation.  
Retired MD & CEO Tata Coffee Ltd

As an eminent professional with over 40 years' experience in leading multinational organizations across global geographies and a recipient of 'CEO of the year' award among other awards for excellence, Sanjiv Sarin's laurels lead to even more humility as the man will not be deterred from 'mind over matter' engagements. Meet a leader who is literally at the apex of his life- both professionally and spiritually.



**S**pirituality over the years has become the 'flavor of the season', though once wrapped in it the 'flavor is for a lifetime'. It brings richness, depth, joy. The only way to describe it is that it enables you to blossom, become a better version of yourself and thereby positively impacting people you relate with.

Spirituality is about being in touch with the inner self, being human and living a life of purpose. At any one moment, the mind can hold one thought and it is your call whether that should be one of 'gratitude' or 'complaint'. The choice determines the world view. Circumstances are a result of your thoughts and choices and spirituality merely enables these to be grounded in humanness.

My entry into the spiritual path was accidental, though I often wonder if there are any accidental happenings! As I reflect - the string of seeming coincidences were just incidents sewn along that one single thread. Each step has brought forth a more sensitive, intuitive and human person. There is a difference between a 'human being' and 'being human'. The former is just acknowledging your space on the planet while the latter embellishes that space.

An organization is a microcosm of the planet where human beings are at the core. Capital and technology can be bought. The human element determines what you make of them. Each person is here seeking happiness and striving to unlock their potential. It becomes so important, therefore, to enable people to

## Spirituality is about being in touch with the inner self, being human and living a life of purpose.

blossom. And foster a space that nurtures collaboration so that jointly the organization grows manifold and also becomes the place to be. Collaboration demands trust, transparency, building on each other's capabilities, each one delivering to commitments and beyond. Delivering ethically.

The organization has a social role to play in serving its communities. It cannot consume resources and not plough back. People are giving their active lifespan to the organization and you need to enable them and their families to live happily and decent lives. It demands opening your hearts beyond just profit and market share.

Ever so often we read about sportsmen at peak performance being in that 'zone' where every disturbance is blanked out and there is sharp focus. To achieve this, the mind needs to be in a distressed state. Action is the sharpest when the mind is in a peaceful state otherwise time is spent really arguing between thoughts in the mind. As H.H.Sri Sri Ravishankar says 'Deeper the rest, more dynamic the action'.

A spiritual bent, as I have experienced it, has been the enabler for all of the above."

## Nikhil Kapur

Ironman Triathlete & Founder Director  
Atmantan

'Make your work your calling'. How many can actually manifest that in real life? Not only epitomizing this spiritual goal, but also pioneering the creation of one of India's largest luxury wellness destinations, Nikhil Kapur, the founder is an avid health and wellness enthusiast and a visionary who seeks to facilitate integration of wellness into real life- for individuals and organizations through innovative retreats, therapies and detox models.



**I** am fortunate to be in a business that I am passionate about and which is an extension of my lifestyle. The most influential person for me in my father who was a professional sportsman in his younger days. When I was 5 years old (early 80s), I remember waking up on Sundays to dad doing this headstand and other asanas. Both my sister and I have grown up seeing our father participate in many events and take care of his health. In a positive and encouraging manner, we have grown up with the understanding that good health is critical to enjoy quality of life.

The pursuit of good health has had such a positive impact on my work. I have been participating in long-distance endurance sports for the past 6-7 years and some of these events are regarded as the toughest sporting events in the world. The training is where you build character and it influences all parts of your life including work. You see each challenge positively and view every goal as accessible, therefore one becomes more resilient....

My wife, Sharmilee, and I am both very passionate about good health and observed that there was no destination in South Asia where one could go for a healthy holiday. We realised that people are going to start taking holidays differently... holidays of excess (food, alcohol, and party) were on their way out and now people would get more mindful about where they spend their holidays. Holidays would become opportunities for people to rejuvenate and emerge stronger. With this idea, we turned entrepreneurs in 2005 and started Atmantan...the holy grail for the most transformative wellness experiences.

Wellness is mainstream in the corporate sector and will remain so. We are observing how progressive companies are developing strategies for a healthier and more engaged workforce. Initiatives are being taken at all levels starting from the senior leadership teams. The newer offices are being designed to cater to

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the increasing number of millennials who are joining these organisations... offices are being designed as active workplaces. In fact, there are WELL standards for offices now.

The next 2-3 decades will see increase use of AI, robotics, data mining etc and executives need to be top shapes - emotionally, mentally, physically, and socially to be able to harness the technology.

Atmantan has a tailor-made offering for corporates and we have both individuals and teams coming to us as we become their wellness pit-stop. The focus is on equipping them to strike the work-life balance. We have various modules to offer like Heart Healthy cooking workshops, Stress Adaptation Test & Management, Straight Talk (workshop on posture), Emotional Healing via talks, meditation, Pranic Healing and Breathing sessions, Sleep Sanctuary (program to help you get better quality of sleep), Pain Management (for people with musculoskeletal pain), Cardiovascular fitness (including fitness assessments) and the number of activities to help them build social health.

Being well is the optimal way of life which enables us to better even our best. I walk the path to good health with what I call a combination of science and spirituality. The science is about taking care of your physical body (eating habits, being active, getting sleep, social health) and spirituality is taking care of our mind and our spirit. The optimal way of life is a multi-dimensional approach to better living. ▲



eminent author, speaker and mythologist helps leverage the power of myth in business, management and life.

Another way of awakening spiritual consciousness at work has manifested in seeding the culture of philanthropy that can help a person's overall wellbeing. Companies are giving their employees opportunities to give back to their communities through fundraising especially during natural calamities, mentoring children, and any number of other initiatives — and reaping the benefits of happier, healthier workers.

#### TRANSFORM@WORK

Whatever the routes and methods, one thing's for certain: during the course of such transformation, there are visible changes at the workplace:

- A shift towards a purpose-driven and meaning-based organization

- Management of efficiency and control in place of Management with a mission.

- A paradigm shift from fear-based culture to love-based culture.

- Alignment of Management practices and decisions with spiritual values such as honesty, love, hope, integrity, kindness, and respect and nurturing.

- Open communication channels between management and the employees

- Breakdown of hierarchy to create a sense of community and inspire a sense of belonging in their employees.

- A shared attitude and belief that products and services need to be beneficial to community and humanity.

- Evaluation of employees based on who they are, what they can become, rather than what they can do for the company.

- A philosophy of nurture rather than exploitation

- Use of spiritual ways in resolving conflict.

- A move from command-and-control leadership to horizontal servant leadership, which emphasizes empowering, delegation

- and cooperation.

- Enhanced morale, job satisfaction, loyalty and productivity.

- Spiritual dimension is fully integrated with every aspect of work life, such as relationships, planning, budgeting, negotiation, compensation, etc.

- Such an organization sounds as fictional as the Shangri-La.

- However, when you hear corporate corridors echoing with the sound of new-age designations like 'Chief Abundance officer and Chief Happiness officer, one is convinced that we are moving slowly yet surely to a time when we can say 'Spirituality is a verb'.

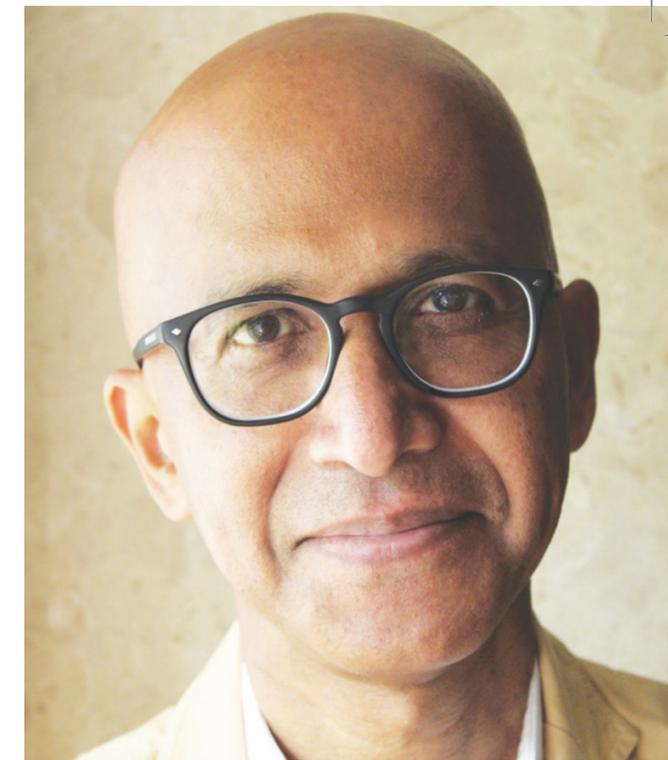
#### SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP @WORK

The verb is already taking shape in the corporate landscape that is dotted with a few icons who have been successful in integrating spirituality/ wellness at their workplace and in doing so, emerge as transformation agents in their world.

## Kiran Khalap

Co-founder & Managing Director,  
Chlorophyll Brand Consultancy

As I walk into his office, I am greeted by two hosts: contentment and alignment- permeating the smiling faces of his staff, the unhierarchy of the physical space and decor and the 'happy' vibe that fills the room where lunch is a daily shared activity amidst laughs, cackles, anecdotes, appreciation and delight. Meet Kiran Khalap whose own higher spiritual frequency is reflected all over Chrophyll.



I was blessed with a genetic lottery: loving parents that sowed the seed of harmony. In fact, spiritual influences played a key role in my life very early on: An evolved father (age 5 onwards) whose quest for the higher realms was inspiring; J Krishnamurti (age 17 onwards) whose writings and teachings gave birth to a new awareness; vipassana meditation (age 44 onwards) that sharpened the inner vision.

Belonging to a family with rich knowledge about spiritual Indian traditions coupled with the practice of kundalini yoga played a subliminal role in preparing my life for a path later.

Over the years, I was privileged to meet the finest saints and seers: Gulavani Maharaj of the Nath Panth (one of the oldest sects in civilisation); Nisargadatta Maharaj (author of 'I Am That'); Sri Madhav Ashish of Mirtola; J Krishnamurti (walked, shared breakfast, lunch and dinner tables with him).

My 'awakening' was triggered in 1977 (age 19) by J Krishnamurti's book "Talks and Dialogues". For the first time in my life, I recognised the existence of unalloyed awareness untouched by the bad habit of thinking.

#### MY EVOLUTION: WITHOUT 'PRACTICE'

Many thinkers affected my journey: Ken Wilber, Alan Watts, and fiction writer Tom Robbins.

The recognition of an awareness that was not an 'object' led to many natural outcomes. The realization that society or family or organization is a concept, the individual is the only reality. That changing oneself is the only way of changing the world.

#### MY EVOLUTION: WITH 'PRACTICE'

Since 2002, the vipassana meditation has led to different effects. Apparently, science has proof: the

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primal parts of the brain like the amygdala get controlled by the newer parts of the brain like the frontal cortex due to meditation. Today, I can experience the effects, irrespective of what the scientific concept says. There is a slowing down of emotional reactions, since the awareness allows you to see when the reaction is arising.

#### THE EVOLUTION AND THE ORGANIZATION

It is easier to pay attention without any filters, listening totally: within the organization this leads to egalitarianism. There are no internal mental blocks, you become like water, always flowing around barriers. You surely become more creative; you encourage experimentation all round. Our innovation lab was an adventure, it already has three world-firsts!

You are less evaluative and judgmental. You see the positives in everybody and in every situation. Yet, you are also more trusting of your own intuition. In an organizational situation, this helps in hiring...or in sacking a client! You are free of fears, boredom, depression. You develop equanimity: ups and downs don't cause emotional turbulence. "Festina lente" becomes your motto. When the organization doesn't do well, you can invest in long-termism and steady the ship. "Don't push the river" becomes your second motto."