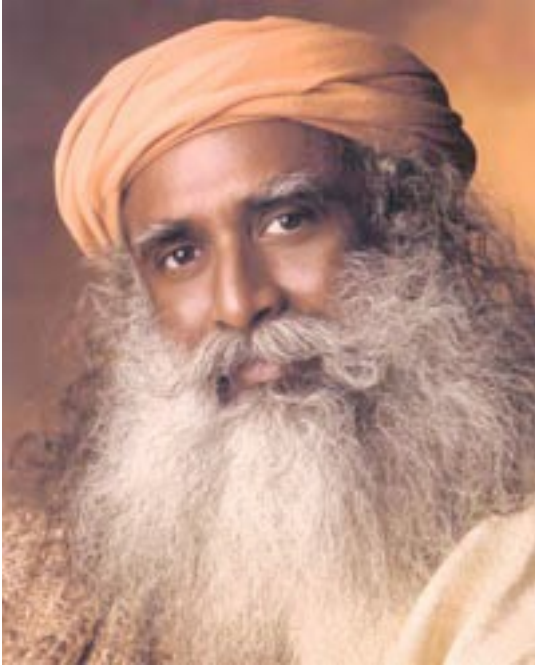


'Stock market ups and downs don't cause human suffering'

17 Dec 2008, 1440 hrs IST, Harsimran Julka, ET Bureau

*A regular panelist at the World Economic Forum for last three years, **Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev** conducts a meditation programs around the world intended to heighten self-awareness through Isha yoga. The Spiritual Guru talks on the the cure to insecurity prevailing due to economic slowdown, lay offs, terrorism amongst professionals all over the world. Excerpts:*



How to survive the economic downturn, in terms of financial crises, insecurity and emotional disturbance due to that?

Human suffering essentially happens not because the stock market is going up or down, not because you move from a bigger house to a smaller house, not because you

move from a car to a bicycle. Particularly when external situations are challenging, it is extremely important that we know how to keep our internal situations pleasant. Inner Engineering means to create inner situations the way we want it.

The break down of one defined situation is an opportunity to define a completely new situation or possibility. Human suffering is happening because our psychological and emotional situations are not happening the way we would like it. If we are truly enterprising and innovative, this is an opportunity that the Indian business should grab to see how to push their business interest to the international playing field.

Are layoffs necessary? How should a employee who has been asked to resign or laid off handle such a situation?

If an organization has invested time and resources in developing a certain level of caliber and talent in their employees, I don't think job cut is a wise thing to do right now.

People can go for voluntary pay cuts and when situations get better, they can go for pay rise. Not having enough work on your hands need not be seen as a problem. This could be seen as a possibility to explore

new ventures. Above all in a nation like in India there is room and scope for every business to move into the rural parts of India and start variety of businesses where 65 to 70% of the population lives and economic downturn have not affected this population because they were never a part of this economic activity.

How should companies handle such situations? Especially when workers are getting violent against management even to the extent of killing senior executive management team members (as in California and Noida)?

Definitely when somebody's livelihood is being taken away it is very much possible that they will become emotionally enraged.

It must be conveyed with utmost care and concern. Conveying that somebody is going to lose his livelihood should be conveyed with the same care as one who delivers the news of the death of a dear one; with the same care and concern it should be delivered not simply firing somebody just because one has the power to do so. Loss of one's job should for sure not lead to taking another life or one's own. Companies should take care to counsel and let employees know how at the earliest possible date, they could be reemployed. Closing of a known door could be the possibility of opening many unknown doors.

How should corporates counsel their employees (especially the Taj, Oberoi, Trident Hotel staff) affected by terror trauma, which is leading to a loss in their well being and company productivity? How should we counsel those who have lost their loved ones and colleagues?

People who have been through that horrific situation need much more than just counseling. They need a much deeper process to come out of it without bitterness, without hatred above all not to be traumatized for the rest of their lives. This needs a much deeper process.

It needs a much much deeper spiritual process for one to come out of this. When I say spiritual I am not talking about a religious process but a scientific spiritual process which cleanses the inner system and releases a person from any kind of trauma that one goes through. A system which is capable of freeing a person from lifetimes of imprints is what is needed when people go through this kind of horrific experiences. So such a spiritual process is possible and our foundation is very much willing to help in it. There is no other solution for this.

When can one find total bliss, love and happiness?

I am glad that at least the financial downturn is making people think in terms of your love, bliss and happiness. The most fundamental responsibility of every individual is that he makes himself into a pleasant human being. Being joyful, being loving, being blissful just means this:

mentally, emotionally, internally you are in a very pleasant condition. It is one's pleasantness or unpleasantness which permeates into the world. Only through individual transformation can there be a universal transformation.

If your work is important, the first thing you need to do is work upon yourself. I believe irrespective of what happens in the rest of the world in about 9 to 18 months, India could be doing very well.

(ISHA Foundation is conducting a workshop in New Delhi from December 19-21)