

Daily Meditation 09/07/2022

Spirituality and Work

Good morning.

We're discussing today, and we'll begin with this meditation, launching a series of discussions on work, specifically the spirituality of work.

Now, as I point out, I wrote this essay on Labor Day. And I bring up the topic of the young people today. It's called Generation Z, and how they are asking some deep questions about work.

And they've created this phenomenon called quiet quitting, which is not giving up on one's work. And it's not being lazy at work. But it's also about not taking your work home with you overly much, so you can focus on other realities, such as relationships and family, serving the community, serving the earth.

In addition, of course, there's a rise in labor unions today, and the predictable resistance or backlash from some of our biggest corporations. And this too, of course, is about the dignity of work, and about fairness at work. Of course, we're living in a time of extreme distance between the haves and have nots, between employer and employee, shareholders and employees.

All these are issues to consider seriously in our time.

Now EF Schumacher wrote a wonderful book on work couple of decades ago. And in it he says,

Everywhere people are asking, What can I actually do? The answer is as simple as it is disconcerting. We can each of us work to put our own inner house in order. The guidance we need for this work cannot be found in science or technology, the variety of which utterly depends on the ends they serve. But it can still be found in the traditional wisdom of humankind.

So notice what he's saying: putting our own inner houses in order is what all of us can do. Now, to me, that's another word for spirituality, getting our values lined up. And committed to: for example, do we value the health of Mother Earth and the future of generations on Mother Earth? Not only generations of humans, but of other creatures as well. And we are all interconnected.

Well, that's a value, isn't it? And so much will flow from that, from our answer to that.

Now, my book on *The Reinvention of Work* actually begins with that quote from EF Schumacher. These are questions I was raising over 25 years ago, but I realized they're still very much alive today. And this makes sense, because spirituality does not go in and out of style; it's not about fashion. It is about -- what are our values? What makes the human heart grow? What makes the human heart nonviolent, what makes the human heart generous? What makes the human heart joyful?

And all these questions come up at work, in our understanding of work, and how we interact with one another at our work. And so, on this Labor Day, a couple of days late, it behooves us to be asking these questions and to pursue these questions more deeply. Especially in the face of our own extinction as a species, which is a reality in our time.

So I look forward to sharing these meditations with you in the coming days on spirituality and work.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.