

# Milind Deora

Congress MP

'Of course there is something called luck'

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**Milind Deora, Congress MP.**

**What does spirituality mean to you?**

I see two different yet interlinked things: on the one hand religion, which is like a manual, focused, zeroing on things; on the other there is spirituality which is one step higher, open-ended, with no manual available. It is about experiencing the journey in my own way, connecting to something great out there, finding some sort of contentment.

**Do you believe you are guided and protected by a superior force?**

Of course there is something called luck, and in moments of difficulty I often have this inner conviction that somehow there is a protection and things will turn out fine. But luck favours a prepared mind so I need to do my home-work. And also, it may seem for instance that I am lucky to be born in the family I belong to. But so-called fame and fortune also come with issues and challenges, so the answer to this question is far from being obvious.

**Do you believe you have a special mission or purpose in this life?**

A part of me feels so, and that despite a lot of sacrifice (which people do not see and do not understand), I should stick to politics for the larger good. Another part feels that had I been born in

America for instance, it is likely I would have been a musician – and I could embrace that. So there is a conflict in me about it.

**What is spirituality for you in your day to day life?**

Besides over-thinking, which can be quite unproductive, the one substantial thing I do in that respect is music. Playing my guitar can take me to real highs and feelings of freedom.

**What has been the role of spirituality in your public life?**

Politics can be so frustrating, as your input never equals the output and you do not know what will happen. But I would think that what keeps me going despite all the sacrifices it implies – namely, dealing with some greater good – actually derives from spirituality.

**Can you tell us about a unique experience that changed or shaped your spiritual beliefs?**

Watching the movie "The Doors" about Jim Morrison, when I was 16 years or so was a huge turning point. Until then I was pretty much a regular kid but seeing it put me on the track of thinking more philosophically and spiritually about life – beyond just sports, cars and women! Among others, it taught me that as I can't live in a perfect world of spiritual bliss, compromising is necessary in a reality where happiness and pain are tightly intertwined.

**What have been your main spiritual inspirations?**

Two things have always gotten my spiritual hormones go crazy and work hard: music, and injustice. I derive a lot of inspiration from a musician like The Stones' Keith Richards: even though he is a complete bohemian, he can't live out there in the jungle in some "total freedom", he has to compromise with his executives, with a tour logistics and so on. The black civil rights movement in America has also been a huge spiritual inspiration, from slavery to politics to gospel to blues to food...

**If you were to be reincarnated, what would you like to be reincarnated as?**

I am not sure I believe in reincarnation and also, if there was something else I would like to be as a human, I'd better try and be that here and now, in this life.

**If there was one question you could ask God, what would it be?**

This reminds me of a scene in "The Doors", when Andy Warhol gifts Jim Morrison with a phone directly connected to God – because he himself had no use for it. I would actually use it and ask the ultimate question, what is the meaning of life.

**What is your idea of happiness?**

Last weekend in my constituency, a couple asked my help for a surgery. The man said he would give me blessings if I would help, but would also bless me if I didn't – which is so rare. There was something special in his lack of expectation. And so when I got the thing done, I had this different feeling of contentment, and happiness. So happiness is not something planned and created on purpose – it just happens, as the by product of some selfless thought or deed.