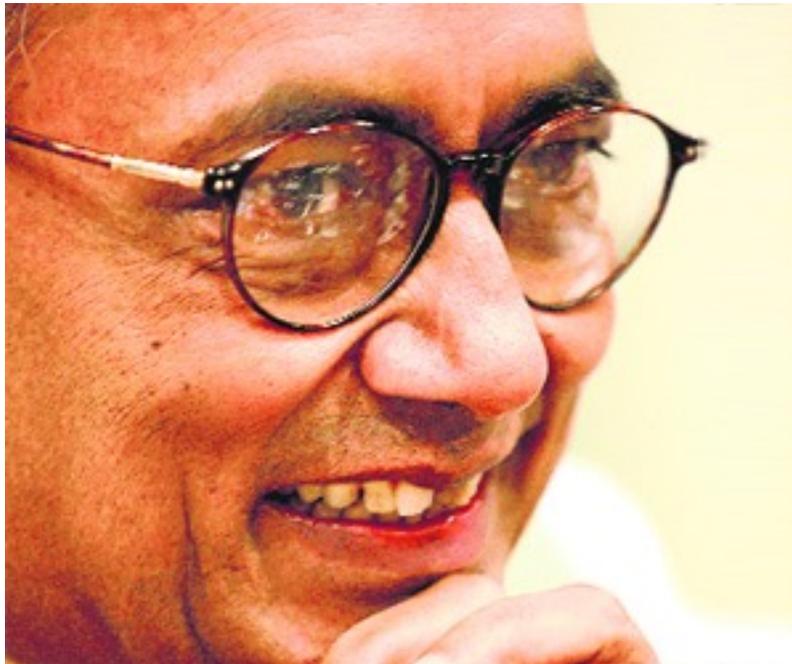


Digvijay Singh

Senior Congress Leader

'There are no permanent friends or enemies in any profession'

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Digvijay Singh is a senior Congress leader.

What does spirituality mean to you?

It is something inherent, inborn, meant to look at and connect to something beyond this world. To achieve spirituality, you have to condition your mind, your mental frame, for something you can't actually see.

Is it about connecting to something beyond us?

Yes, as our scriptures and our gurus say, as my parents said.

What have you learnt from your parents?

My mother was extremely religious and being so, she imbibed that religiosity into me. My father was a believer but not very religious.

So praying, God, and other religious things are important to you?

Yes, I pray every morning for half an hour. She told me to do so and I continue.

What does prayer do to you?

It gives me a certain peace of mind, and some sort of strength. It is not necessarily there for the rest of the day, but for that half an hour at least, I am at peace, I don't take any phone calls, I don't talk to anyone, I disconnect from everything else.

You said spirituality is about connecting – to what?

God is quite abstract yet we believe that some power moves everything on this earth. There has to be something we can't see. And coming from a religious background, at an early age I took a guru. I took diksha from Jayguru Shankaracharya of Joshimat, in Dwarka.

Why did you do so?

One, thanks to him, I got a close relationship with the Hindu clergy, the Sanatana Dharma clergy. And second, he's been a good influence on my life, with answers and insights on what life is about.

When you say there is a force moving things in the universe, how do you know it, how do you feel it? You are talking to me, I am talking to you, we are sitting in this room. It was all destined.

Is everything destined and preordained in life?

I can't really say. I have seen so many astrologers predicting things, which never come true. So I would say that nothing can be predicted. But still, things look as if they are preordained, even though I have no proof of it. Being at the right place at the right time, or the wrong place at the wrong time...

Why would the latter happen – in order to learn a lesson?

When it happens, it happens. One has to learn to face adversity in life. Adversity comes in everyone's life. And one must have the strength, the patience and the willpower to turn that adversity into an opportunity.

Where do you find that strength?

It comes from inside. This is something you have to train your mind and thoughts for.

So when a huge challenge comes, how do you cope?

I don't react immediately. I keep really cool. And then deal with it.

Do we all have a particular purpose or mission in life?

How can we live a life without it?

How did you know what yours is?

I really was not interested in politics. To the extent that I did not even go to vote during my college elections. But I lost my father in my final years so I was forced to go back to my roots; and when I went to my roots, I had no other way that going into it.

Why?

Because people expected it from me.

And has it been what you expected?

Life has been quite good to me. Whatever I thought I would achieve, I already achieved. Everything else as of now is a bonus. Besides, Baba Amte always told me not to compete with others, but rather compete with myself. So I try to do that.

You never had enough of politics and wanted to exit?

No, I never felt that.

Some people feel there is too much negativity in politics...

So what? One has to face it. When the going gets tough, the tough gets going.

Some people say there are no friends in politics?

Why in politics only? There are no permanent friends or permanent enemies in any profession.

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

Life is too complex to understand. Philosophers have spent all their lives trying to understand it and they failed. So I might as well not go there. Let's leave it at that. No question asked.

If there were such a thing as reincarnation, what would you choose?

To be myself again.

Isn't it boring to be the same all over again?

I wouldn't mind. I am quite happy with what I have been.

What is your idea of happiness?

It's contentment, to get what I want. And also, mine is a very close-knit family and that gives me a lot of happiness. The other thing is that I don't have many enemies. I avoid making enemies.

How is it possible in politics?

It is not possible actually, but I do not treat anyone as an enemy. This is something I have learnt from Rabindranath Tagore when he said " I have no enemies, because I have found none capable of my strike".

