

# Supriya Sule

Lok Sabha MP

'I like the good things of life, I am not a hermit'

Sun Dec 06 2009



**Supriya Sule is a Lok Sabha MP.**

**What does spirituality mean to you?**

I don't think I am spiritual at all. But if you talk about values, they are the basis of my existence. My family values are the most important, the love, the affection, the commitment to parents, husband, children and friends. That's the most important thing in my life. My whole life revolves around it. My whole existence is based on the support system of family and friends. People mean the world to me. I used to live in Singapore and Indonesia many years ago. When I moved back to India people were asking me if I was not missing the infrastructure, the food, the lights. No, I never missed it. I miss people. So I missed people from India when I was living there.

You came today to interview me because I am a Member of Parliament. I have gotten this opportunity purely because of 16 lakhs voters who gave me this opportunity to come here. So again, it is about people.

My whole existence is about my relationship to people. And it is based on trust, faith, communication.

### **When you say "I am not spiritual", what do you mean?**

I don't know what spirituality would actually be to me. I never really gave deep thought to it. Some people may think it involves loving unconditionally. But I don't think I can love anybody unconditionally. Let's say my children. I love them of course. But there is a condition: I want them to be good human beings. I want them to be good global citizens. I want them to study and have good values. So I can't say it is unconditional love.

My so-called spiritual friends always say there have to be things that are unconditional. But nothing in life to me is unconditional.

### **What do you mean "spiritual friends"?**

They think they are above a lot of things which I am not. They think they are not materialistic, they are not emotionally involved, they have no fears. I have fears of everything! Everything has a condition. The world has a condition. Relationships have conditions. So I can't get myself to rise to the occasion that anything I do has no condition.

Maybe spirituality is reading the Gita, the Mahabharata, applying it to your life, or the lifestyle of those spiritual gurus, of Osho – I don't know! I've never really gone to that path. I just feel that if you are a good global citizen, that is spirituality. Love for my family, for my friends, is spirituality.

### **Is there a concept of God in your life?**

I totally believe in God. Absolutely. I always feel there is some divine power.

### **How are you so sure?**

I don't know. Maybe I was brought up in that faith. It's not about a particular religion, it's all about faith and trust.

### **Was your home religious when growing up?**

No, it wasn't religious at all. But I always feel it is between God and me. There are important days in Hindu religion when you are supposed to go to the temple. I don't go there on those days. It's so crowded. It doesn't matter, I don't need to go to a temple regularly. I'll pray to Him or Her in my own way. It doesn't need to be displayed. I actually never publicly display it.

At the same time there is so much blind faith in India. So people like me who are in public life often show it more.

### **In the race of life, you don't forget this relationship with God?**

I thank God for everything. Of course I need to work hard. Nothing will come if I just sit here and wait for God to help me. But there is always that edge coming from that connection, it puts you together, it bonds you.

Even my own children. They don't follow particular rules. My husband eats beef, so my children eat beef too. They are not allowed being Hindu. But if their father does something out of the box I have to give them the freedom. When they are 18, it is their choice. But I won't force them.

### **Do you have regular prayers or rituals?**

God and me have a friendly relationship. When I connect to Him or Her, it can be anywhere and at any time, I say my own little things, it is a very private moment. I don't put benchmarks to myself – "I have to say those prayers five times a day or three times a week". No, it is very free flowing. Whenever I feel the need for it, it helps me put myself together. It's my concentration put together. And I believe that if you are a happy optimistic human being, good things happen around you.

### **Does God ordain things, is there such a thing as destiny?**

Well, there is always a lot of hard work needed, but there also is luck, or what can be called destiny. Hard work cannot explain everything.

### **Do you have a particular mission or purpose in life?**

I think so, we all do. There is an opportunity waiting for everybody. It is what you make out of it. But when people say it is unconditional, I don't believe it. Everybody wants a better life. And better life doesn't mean a materialistic one. Everybody wants better food, better shelter and so on. I like the good things of life, I am not a hermit.

### **So how would you define your purpose?**

To make a difference. Though anyone can do it, regardless of how many people we help. To contribute to somebody's existence in a positive way.

### **You have chosen to do it through the medium of politics...**

Well, only partly politics. I basically run eleven tribal schools. So my basis is all education. And I have a huge network of self-help groups in the state of Maharashtra. There is a hidden agenda to my focus on women. Because the moment you explain women the importance of education, healthcare, insurance, the environment, the use of water, automatically everything changes. The minute the woman is aware, she will make sure that the next generation is aware of it and has a better life. We all want our children to have a better life than ours. I want my children to have a better education, better values, not to make the mistakes I have made, and as much as possible make them global citizens. And your children are a reflection of you.

There are two things in this world your parents can give you and nobody in the world can take it away from you: good quality education and values. Money today, gone tomorrow. Power not here today, you will get it tomorrow.

### **As a child, what did you want to do when growing up?**

I never thought too much about those things. I was a happy go lucky kid. My parents never pushed their ambitions on me.

**When did you decide to get involved in politics and in all this work with schools etc.?**

It was just a flow. I had seen some tribal children and some work done with them and from that day there was no turning back. I got involved in those schools. This was about ten years ago.

**And politics?**

I happened to do it by default. I don't even know if I call my work politics. It just happened in a flow of events. We will see where it takes me.

**At times of huge challenges, were do you find your anchor?**

At times of crisis, I think it comes from my family. I would turn to my family first, in a situation beyond my control.

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

The disparity in society, especially hunger – why?

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

The same. Undoubtedly.

**It would not be boring to do the same?**

The only reason I am saying this is because of my family and friends. I love this set-up. My whole life first revolves around them.

**What is your idea of happiness?**

Peace. If you put your head on the pillow and you sleep, you are ok. The day you don't, you have to review your entire life. And love of course, to receive and give it.

**Wishing you ever more of it –**

Well, I hope so, I am greedy, undoubtedly I am greedy!