

## **Anupam's presentation for June 4, 2024 – Speaker Notes**

### **Slide 1: Spiritual Beliefs – Living, Dying, and the Afterlife**

My talk will focus on how spirituality can affect how we live, approach death, and believe in the afterlife.

### **Slide 2: Spiritual Beliefs – Living, Dying, and the Afterlife**

My talk will have six parts followed by my conclusions. I have utilized many quotes in my presentation. In my opinion, these quotes express far better than what I could say. Hence, the focus on these. I will have three quotes each from people I cherish in “spirituality as inspiration to a worthwhile life” and also in “implementing spiritual beliefs in living”. The conclusion will have spoken comments on how to leave a good legacy.

In the context of our group, I will speak on the first part, “What values to live by?”

### **Slide 3: What values to live by?**

What values should we live by, and what constitutes a good life?”

This question is an excerpt from President Rudenstine's comments. His answer is to live sensitively and creatively. I have listed three reasons for living by one's values.

I will give examples for each of the three reasons.

First, to improve one's life's satisfaction, there is the example of President Jimmy Carter who has done so much for the world for over 40 years, in his post-presidency.

Second, to leave a positive legacy for the world, originators, and benefactors, envisioned and/or implemented, the Nobel prizes, Harvard University, Stanford University, and Carnegie-Mellon University. Even in dying, people ask contributions to be sent to causes they like rather than for gifts such as flowers. Upon her passing away, it was announced that Princess Margaret of the United Kingdom, would like contributions to be made to “National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children”, of which she had been President. Similarly, after the passing away of the First Lady Rosalyn Carter, donations in memory of her were asked for by The Carter Center, and other organizations. Hopefully, this is helpful to members of the group who may want to plan to leave a legacy.

The last item of gaining a good afterlife is a matter of one's spiritual beliefs or lack thereof.

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

**PAUSE**

Next, I will describe parts of spirituality that I see as common to many faiths.

### **Slide 4: Commonalities in spirituality**

The listed aspirations from the New Jerusalem Bible, such as peace, joy, and love, can be exhibited, by people of different faiths, or of no faith. From my experience, peace comes naturally when the mind is focused on spirituality.

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PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

### **Slide 5:** Commonalities in spirituality

Some characteristics of God are common to many religions. He is all-knowing (an alternate translation of “the sage”), without beginning (a mention in Gita that relates to “the ancient”), supporter of all, and glorious.

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

### **Slide 6:** Why does spirituality interest me?

One of the three spiritual quotes from the dedication of my Ph.D. dissertation, in quotes on the slide, brings to mind that one can strive for spirituality in speech and thoughts. I like to say that God has given me many gifts of the world. Spiritual clarity is what I consider to be the greatest.

I observe that the greatest and longest impact of spirituality can be seen in as to which books have been in print the longest and after whom many children and many cities are named.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) times 3

**PAUSE**

Next, I will list quotes of three historical figures about spirituality.

### **Slide 7:** Spirituality as inspiration to a worthwhile life (President Lincoln)

This quote illustrates a life led by faith and a sense of right. One of the phrases here is “dare to” which, in my opinion, implies fearlessness.

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

### **Slide 8:** Spirituality as inspiration to a worthwhile life (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Dr. King willingly endures suffering by choosing to return to the valley of bloodthirsty mobs, rather than enjoying being on the mountaintop.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) times 3

### **Slide 9:** Spirituality as inspiration to a worthwhile life (President Kennedy)

The reward of a good conscience is enough for President Kennedy, to carry out God's work.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) times 2

**PAUSE**

Next, I will describe the words of three people, on how to live one's spiritual beliefs.

### **Slide 10:** Implementing spiritual beliefs in living (Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi)

Truth and non-violence were practiced by Gandhi, where he encourages us to find our own truth. In non-violence, I hope for a world where people have “mutually happy” interactions without

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coercion. One part that resonates with me a lot is “ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true”. This is an affirmation of one’s shortcomings, but these should not be a deterrent to keep trying to reach the ideal, throughout life.

I have listed Gandhi’s full name below as he said it pained him to be called a Mahatma or a great soul. He did not wish to be elevated above others.

As we read history, Lincoln, Dr. King, Kennedy, and Gandhi were assassinated. However, their words and life messages live on, far beyond their mortal life.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) times 2

**Slide 11:** Implementing spiritual beliefs in living (President Clinton)

President Clinton asks us to pray that we may do truly do God’s will rather than our own will. There is also a message to “let go and walk away” from real or perceived injustices in our own lives. Thus, my hope to serve God through my thoughts and speech.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) times 3

**Slide 12:** Implementing spiritual beliefs in living (Saint Teresa of Calcutta / Mother Teresa)

This shows a pinnacle of spirituality where one becomes one with divine will. Another person, Jane Stanford describes herself as an instrument in God’s loving hands. The analogy is that of the surgeon and the tools of surgery. The credit belongs to the surgeon and not to the tools.

**PAUSE**

Next, I will describe an example of accepting death and an example of looking to the afterlife with joy.

**Slide 13:** The ending as a continuum

This quote illustrates to me the certainty of death for all who live. This illustrates the ability of the Buddha to accept this transition, while considering it to be a moment of joy.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) times 3

**Slide 14:** The afterlife as joyful

The belief in an afterlife can help people live with joy in anticipation of a good afterlife. It can also inspire some to lead a life aligned with their spiritual and moral values.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE)

**PAUSE**

Next, I will describe my conclusions from this presentation.

**Slide 15:** Conclusions

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This is a succinct summary of this presentation. This presentation may provide some pointers on how to live life, plan for leaving a legacy, and approach death. We can see what important values are from our spiritual understanding and implement these in our words and actions. We can leave a legacy for others by our written and verbal words and by the example of the life we lead and also by how we allocate our material possessions.

(PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE) x 2

### **Slide 16: Acknowledgements**

I am thankful to Lee for his suggestions for how to make this talk more relevant to the group and for some comments on how to structure the talk. My friend, Mark, provided some formatting and content tips. I am especially grateful to Jon who spent over two hours with me preparing the final version of these slides. Paul provided inputs on speaker notes and describing the slide on common characteristics of God, more.