

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY: ONE GOAL AND TWO PATHS

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, an effort has been made to throw some light that science and spirituality are one goal and two paths. A popular belief is that science and spirituality cannot be in harmony. Science is regarded as the pathway to a brighter and a better-developed future, whereas Spirituality is often taken to be a thing of the past, which is clinging on to us. So, the fact that they need to be in alignment may seem farfetched. For centuries, science has been at the forefront of human progress; spirituality, as practiced in orthodox religion has been in a downturn. But, the individualized definition of spirituality involves the quest for meaning, understanding, reality, and consciousness. This sentiment of spirituality has not diminished. Without the amalgamation of Science and Spirituality, the huge variety of problems on our planet will not be able to get solved. Consciousness requires the methods of science for the implementation of its ideals, and science needs the guidance and innovation of individual consciousness. This fact is being recognized by scientists worldwide as they have come to a block where unless they factor in consciousness, they cannot explain the questions of matter and creation.

KEYWORDS

spirituality, harmony, orthodox religion, amalgamation, individual consciousness

Understanding at it's most basic level is connecting, blending, even if at a very small scale, with the splendor of the Cosmos... Science is an abstract source of spirituality.

-Carl Sagan

INTRODUCTION

This thought of compatibility between science and religion goes all the way from Galileo's famous letter to today's leading thinkers. Religion may have some crucial lessons for secular thought, and they both should not be considered as opposite to each other.

In 1996, just months before his demise, the great Carl Sagan — cosmic sage, voracious reader, hopeless romantic — inspected the connection between the scientific and the spiritual in *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* (public library). He writes:

Simply, there is no way to return to our old methods. Science cannot be separated from our day to day life. So, instead, we should learn to make the most of it. When we finally comprehend its real power and beauty, we will understand that in not only spiritual but also practical matters, it holds great value.

We also need to consciously separate science and pseudoscience, which promotes fallacy. It provides false but easy to understand and follow answers, and it spreads herd mentality.

Sagan is of the opinion, that science isn't in complete contrast with the concepts of spirituality. He is of a similar opinion of Richard Dawkins, who calls the phenomenon of science being able to produce acute spiritual experience.

Science also brings out a sense of admiration and wonder for the feats of nature. Understanding at it's most basic level is connecting, blending, even if at a very small scale, with the splendor of the Cosmos. With the expanding database of science, it has transformed into something which pans nations and generations.

WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

Spirituality, unlike other material objects, is not something that can be weighed, or calculated, neither can it be proved. It is instead made up of ideals, ethics, fantasy, and credence. Despite all the secrecy that shrouds it, spirituality holds immense importance to our well-being. Spirituality is what forms the base for our morals, ethics, and values. Spirituality is what brings meaning to our lives, as by developing it we come closer to discovering ourselves, our wisdom and feelings of love are positively affected. We form closer bonds with people, and we also feel closer to the Almighty. Spirituality lightens the path to a life of faith and service for human beings.

The word "Spirit" is derived from the Latin word "to breathe". When we breathe, we take in air, which is made up of matter. Although it is often implied that "spirituality" is not something that is not made up of matter and is beyond the scope of science, this is not the case.

Science is an abstract source of spirituality. When we realize our place in the endless flow of time, when we can comprehend the nuances, and delicacies of life itself, then that feeling of upliftment, is indeed spiritual. So are the emotions that we feel and express when witnessing excellence in the form of art, music, literature, or even when we witness acts of selflessness and humanity like those of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., etc.

WHAT IS SCIENCE?

Science comprises of manipulating matter, by using natural elements. The spiritual factor within this is that all things are mandated to follow a set of natural laws, irrespective of any external factors, such as their religion, origin, race, etc. There is a sole stream of energy that moves throughout the world, whether we claim that things are made of atoms, or anything else. This stream of energy is the instance in which the physical realm and the astral realm collide, as this energy is what flows through both of them.

The spiritual edge of that is that there is one set of natural laws that all things must follow, regardless of religion or creed the natural order must be upheld; there is a single energy and force that flows through all things in the world, whether you say

its atomic particles that fill everything, or energy or something else. There is a force that embodies everything. This energy flows through both the physical and the nonphysical world, the astral realm (if you choose to call it such) and the physical realm, it is but one instance in which the two forces meet.

One needs to have faith that this is a power that is of a higher order, that watches over us instead of intervening. It would be conceitful to be of the opinion that we are the only living beings in the universe, instead, this singular instrument of energy is what enables us to perform feats that science has not yet been able to explain, through giving this energy the construct desired for our purpose. This line of thinking also explains problems relating to an energetic body (our mind) affecting the physical body (matter around us).

RELATION OF SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

In the unification of science and spirituality, the experimental verification of the delocalization of quantum objects has been a big landmark

-Amit Goswami Quantum Physicist, University of Oregon, USA.

Energy work has been known to influence people's lives in ways that science, with all its progress, can come nowhere near to explaining or achieving. This power of belief in energy is not commonly known to people as well. I think that until and unless each of us recognizes this stream of energy within us, we will not be able to see the power and unity that could exist amongst the whole world despite all our differences. Your religion does not matter, because what makes us extraordinary is this energy that we are filled of.

Energy work and the belief in energy itself is not a widespread knowledge either, I believe that until the world awakens to the possibility of a flowing energy within all of us, we will not know what we are capable of, and until that happens the world will not see just how united we are even in our differences. In this vein of thought, your religion does not matter, because we are all part of the same cycle, we are all filled with an energy that makes us who we are and makes us the extraordinary beings we are.

In Science – “Life is a manifestation of biochemical and bio-physical matter”. But in spirituality “Life is a manifestation of supreme consciousness. It has a definite purpose and power.”

Science and spirituality, in my opinion, are the same things. The findings from Quantum Physics are also confirming spiritual teachings

-Jennifer Beals

In my opinion, science and spirituality are not polar opposites of each other. Science does not contradict the teachings and practices of spirituality and vice versa. They instead work in collaboration to maintain peace and harmony in the world.

Science and spirituality are instead, two sides of the same coin. One deals with the physics, and the other with the spirit of things. One deals with the outer workings, while the other inner. They support and complement each other and are like yin-yang.

Gandhiji was also of the opinion that what we need is not either one of them, but instead the right combination of both. Their join is what results in success, peace, and a holistic approach. Without one, the other is bound to feel hollow. According to him, attaining Moksha requires Science and spirituality to go hand- in – hand.

True spirituality is the ultimate science and transcends limitations of reason and senses.

Gandhi also recognizes the importance of spirituality in shedding light on the right path for humans. On their own, humans seek only momentary pleasure, which ends up harming him spiritually rather than developing this side of his.

During the writing of his bibliography's introduction, Gandhi said, "But I should certainly like to narrate my experiments in the spiritual field which are known only to myself and from which I have derived such power as I possess for working in the political field. If the experiments are spiritual then there can be no room for self-praise. The very purpose of life is self-realization and to see God face to face, to attain Moksha."

All of Gandhi's ventures, aim to get him closer to this goal. He has also taught morals that hope to make attaining happiness lesser about materialistic assets.

A man who practices spirituality immensely is capable of connecting with millions of people around the world who may have never even seen him. On the other hand, an exquisite speaker with no spirituality will fail to make such a connection with his/her audience. This experience is unlike others, we cannot derive it through our usual senses. According to Napoleon, there are two powers in this world, the sword, and the spirit. And in the long run, the spirit emerges victorious.

Napoleon didn't resent science, but he wanted its redressal in the best way possible. Richard Gregg considered Gandhi an excellent social scientist. He wished science to not have any part to play in violence, oppression, corruption, etc.

Science fundamentally requires practical implementation, i.e handwork, along with understanding the theoretical concepts in our mind.

Science is about outer solutions, Spirituality, on the other hand, requires us to introspect and seek solutions inside. A scientist may discover powers that put his own life at risk, whereas a spiritual student finds power that guides his life towards a path of divine fulfillment.

Sri Chinmoy

*Spirituality is the poetry of our experience, Science is the gauge of our reality.
Together, they create the essence of our humanity.*

- Steve Maraboli

The future of humanity lies in the collaborated effort of science and spirituality both, as individually they both have not been able to keep up. Science can keep solving everyday issues without the need for spirituality to step in. Spirituality, on its own, can also provide spiritual guidance to people up to a certain extent. But, to solve actual real-world problems, they need to be united to utilize a person's full capability. This kind of extensive effort is what global-scale problems require. These powers of the alliance of science and spirituality, also show promise for the next evolutionary leap in human potential. Therefore, it can be said that Science and Spirituality are one goal and two paths.

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