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# Fundamental spiritual aspects of social service



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# Fundamental spiritual aspects of social service

## Abstract

The purpose of life according to the Rugveda is that one should strive for spiritual progress to attain God-realisation (the pinnacle of spiritual evolution) and strive for the well-being of society.

Some of those undertaking the noble task of serving society through social service try to follow Karmayoga (the Path of Action) which is one of the generic paths for spiritual growth. Those following Karmayoga are mainly concerned with two aspects, which are their own spiritual growth and how to most effectively help the people that they serve.

To effectively help the underprivileged, a social-service-worker needs to be aware of a fundamental life concept, which is, the root cause behind people's problems are limited to 3 reasons - physical, psychological and/or spiritual. These are not mutually exclusive and the root cause of problems can be a mixture of all three. Spiritual research carried out in hundreds of case-studies shows that any problem is best addressed when its cause is tackled at its root. For example, if a physical problem such as a skin disease is due to a spiritual problem then it is best tackled at both the physical and spiritual levels. Spiritual research shows that spiritual root causes of problems in life can account for up to 80% of a person's life problems. The destiny that one is born with is a major spiritual cause of unhappiness in a person's life and there is no getting around it through physical or psychological means.

An important question from the viewpoint of the spiritual growth of a social-worker, is how can actions or deeds be performed so that they liberate one from the shackles of the Great Illusion (Māyā), i.e., cycles of birth and death? Doership, pride and expectations are serious pitfalls in this endeavour and they can nullify all the good work from the perspective of spiritual growth. MAV advocates that these pitfalls can be minimised by the Personality Defect Removal process. Also, regular spiritual practice undertaken by both the social worker and by those who are being helped is vital to overcome spiritual problems in life.

(348 words)

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# 1 Introduction

At the outset, before the spiritual aspects of social service are discussed, it is important that one is apprised of fundamental life concepts as enunciated in the sacred scriptures of Sanatan Dharma. This is because the rationale and solutions laid out in this paper are based on these fundamental spiritual and life concepts. The concepts explained include the purpose of life and the other spiritual aspects that affect a person's lot in life. At the Maharshi University of Spirituality further in-depth information and knowledge about these concepts have been obtained through spiritual research through the medium of advanced sixth sense.

## 1.1 What is the purpose of life

'Atmano mokshartham jagat hitaya cha' a verse from the Hindu Scriptures gives the purpose of life. It means that one should strive for spiritual progress to attain God-realisation (the pinnacle in spiritual evolution) and strive for the well-being of society. Through spiritual research, it has been uncovered that a person is born for two reasons which are to complete one's destiny and to grow spiritually to attain God-realisation and liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

## 1.2 Other factors that heavily influence a person's life

Sanskrit literature also talks about other spiritual aspects such as **destiny**, **negative energies** and the **effect of departed ancestors** that can affect a person and the happiness or sadness he or she experiences.

### 1.2.1 Destiny

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।  
विविधाश्च पृथक् चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥ १४ ॥  
adhisthanam tatha karta karanam ca prthag-vidham  
vividhas ca prthak ceta daivam caivatra pancamam

- Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta, 18:14

This is translated as, "the following are the factors operating towards the accomplishment of actions, viz., the seat of action and the agent, the organs of different kinds and the separate movements of divergent types; and the fifth is Daiva or destiny."

Each person is born with his or her individual destiny or *karma* based on their deeds from previous lives. This is why people experience happiness or have to undergo some suffering in their life. The suffering that one undergoes is mainly due to sins or demerits from a previous life. Due to an accumulation of a higher

proportion of improper deeds from previous lifetimes, on average there is more suffering than happiness in people's lives in the current era. **Through spiritual research, it has been observed that on average 65% of a person's life in the current era is destined and 35% is due to the person's free-will.**

### 1.2.2 Negative energies

Subtle positive as well as subtle negative energies are always active in the environment. Positive energies assist humans in performing virtuous tasks and negative energies cause distress. There are many examples in the Vēdās and Purāṇas about demons creating obstacles in the *Yadnyās* (Sacrificial fires) of Sages and Seers of ancient times. In many places in the Atharvavēda, *mantrās* have been given to defend people from demons, evil spirits (*pishāch*), etc.

Negative energies from the spiritual dimension affect human beings on the Earth plane for various reasons. **Such negative energies are more often attracted to those individuals with a high proportion of personality defects as they can control such people through their defects, so as to carry out their own desires.** These negative energies are subtle and cannot be perceived through one's gross eyes or one's intellect. However, they continue to influence and drive human behaviour mostly without one's knowledge.

### 1.2.3 Problems due to departed ancestors

Hindu Dharma advocates the practice of performing the ritual of Shrāddha to satisfy departed ancestors and to provide them with momentum in their journey in the afterlife. In fact, almost every culture from around the world conducts some form of ritual for their departed ancestors. **Like negative energies, departed ancestors from the afterlife are also known to affect people who are their descendants for a variety of reasons and can cause many problems in their life such as addictions and family problems.**

For more information on the above concepts, please refer to the website [www.ssrff.org](http://www.ssrff.org), a comprehensive source of spiritual research.

## 2 What do these spiritual concepts mean for a social worker?

From a spiritual standpoint, these spiritual factors (listed above) from the sacred scriptures affect a social worker at 2 levels.

1. They affect the social worker at a personal level.
2. They also affect the people that a social worker aims to help.

If these spiritual concepts are not taken into account while designing solutions to help the down-trodden, the outcome can be diminished.

## 2.1 Affecting a social service worker at a personal level from a spiritual standpoint

Some people engage themselves in social work to help others as they are empathetic with the condition of the needy and out of the goodness of their heart.

On the other hand, there are those who undertake the noble task of serving society through social service as they are following *Karmayoga* (the Path of Action) which is one of the generic paths for spiritual growth. Those following *Karmayoga* are mainly concerned with two aspects, which are their own spiritual growth and how to most effectively help the people that they serve. However, there can be obstacles to spiritual growth in this path. Some of the main obstacles that can affect a social worker from a spiritual level and impede his/her spiritual growth are listed below:

- Whilst performing the task of helping others, if one's ego rises or one feels pride in one's efforts and accomplishments, then it is detrimental for spiritual growth. The result can be stagnation or even regression in spiritual level.
- If one gets emotionally involved in one's work, it can lead to attachment which in turn becomes an impediment in one's spiritual growth. This can lead to one becoming unhappy when one's expectations are not fulfilled.
- In social service, it is important that one does not have doership. Doership is a feeling that one is doing a task as opposed to feeling that God is doing the task through one. It is important to note that if a task is done with doership, it is likely to end in a give-and-take account being created between the helper and the person being helped. This give-and-take account keeps one entangled in the cycle of birth and death.

## 2.2 How it affects the people that the social worker is trying to help

The people who are going through tough times such as famine victims or refugees in most cases undergo such events as part of their destiny. As a rule of thumb, all major events in life are due to one's destiny. The pain that one is intended to suffer from such events are preordained as part of the destiny that a person is born with. To an observer, it may seem that life is unfair to this section of society and the urge to rush to their aid is understandable. Yet in the cosmic scheme of things, help from a social worker may just come in the way of the person completing his or her adverse destiny.

If a person is to undergo X units of pain from a certain life event or situation then sometimes even though help is provided physically or psychologically, forces of destiny ensure that the aid does not alleviate the suffering of that person.

### 3 Social workers need to be aware of the root causes of problems in a person's life

For a social worker, to help others overcome a problem completely, he or she needs to first correctly understand its root cause. Only when the correct and complete diagnosis has been made by going to the root of the difficulty, can the appropriate remedy be given. Modern sciences attribute the cause of a problem to being either **physical** or **psychological**. Hence, a social worker generally goes looking for the cause and remedy only in these two areas.

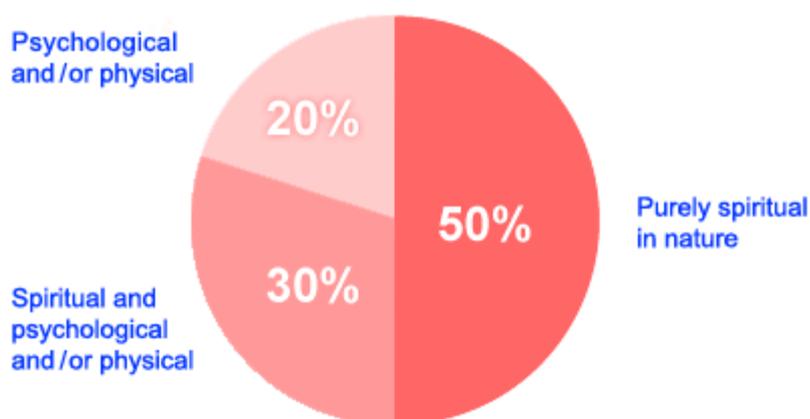
For example:

- People think that poverty is due to physical causes such as lack of education or lack of opportunities. Hence a social worker would try to address it at a physical level by providing education or creating opportunities.
- Narcotic abuse is understood as a psychological problem and is treated primarily with psychotherapy.

However, unknown to most there is a third root cause of problems in life which is **spiritual** in nature. In fact, spiritual root causes of difficulties affect a person's life to a large extent. However, such spiritual causes are not easily understood as they are subtle and modern sciences do not provide any training about them.

Through spiritual research, it has been ascertained that the following are the root causes of problems in life and their proportion.

#### Breakdown of the root cause of difficulties in a person's life



**Source** : Spiritual research conducted by the Maharshi University of Spirituality

As it can be observed from the above pie-chart, up to 80% of our problems can have spiritual reasons such as destiny, negative energies, ancestral problems, etc. as their root cause. Such problems where the root cause is spiritual in nature, can only be fully overcome by spiritual means, i.e., either through :

- **Spiritual practice** which helps to build one's overall spiritual energy to combat or be insulated from these problems or
- A **specific spiritual healing remedy** performed to overcome a specific symptom caused by some factor in the spiritual realm.

While spiritual healing may provide short-term relief, it is spiritual practice that provides permanent relief. Hence it is recommended to combine both measures for best results.

In this way, problems that have their root cause in the spiritual realm can either be resolved or one gets the strength to endure them. The destiny that one is born with is a major spiritual cause of unhappiness in a person's life and there is no getting around it through just physical or psychological means.

It is important to note that any given physical and/or psychological problem could have a proportion of the root cause in the physical, psychological or spiritual dimension and that root causes by themselves are **not mutually exclusive**. In simple terms, a physical problem such as eczema could have contributing factors from not just the physical dimension but it could be a combination of physical and spiritual or even physical, physiological and spiritual factors.

To effectively help the underprivileged, a social service worker needs keep in mind that the root cause behind people's problems are limited to just 3 reasons; they are physical, psychological and/or spiritual. Therefore, along with physical and psychological aid, a social worker should help people to understand the importance of spiritual practice and spiritual healing remedies. This will help people to overcome the spiritual root cause of their problems and bring sustainable positive change in their lives.

## 4 Simple ways to increase the spiritual effectiveness of social service

In this section, some simple and effective spiritual measures are provided to help both social service workers and the people they serve to overcome spiritual problems in life. The following measures have been obtained by way of spiritual research using advanced sixth sense.

### 1. Chanting the Name of God :

Given the hectic lifestyles people have nowadays, chanting the Name of God is the easiest spiritual practice to follow in the current era (*Kaliyuga*). The practice of chanting has no limitations of time and space and can be done anytime and anywhere unlike other practices such as meditation. When one chants God's Name, it attracts Divine energy. It not only has the ability to heal and purify one's physical body but also the various subtle sheaths/auras around the physical body. Chanting the Name of God according to the religion of one's birth helps one to grow spiritually and reduce adverse destiny. A person does not decide where he or she is born; it is decided by God. One is born to the religion or family which is most conducive to begin one's spiritual practice. Chanting God's Name helps one to remain in communion with Him at all times and thus one's spiritual practice can take place uninterrupted wherever one may be. If one is not aligned with any religion, one can chant 'Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya |' which is the chant that is most conducive for the current times up to the year 2023.

### 2. Chanting the protective chant of Shrī Gurudev Datta :

Distress due to departed ancestors is the root cause of many problems in people's lives. It can cause a wide variety of problems such as eczema, addictions, financial problems and marital problems. As the root cause of such problems is subtle and specific, the solution also needs to be a specific spiritual remedy.

It is recommended to repeat the protective chant of ‘**Shrī Gurudev Datta**’ to gain insulation from problems caused due to departed ancestors. This chant represents the Name of Deity Datta, an aspect of God whose function in the Universe is to alleviate problems due to departed ancestors. This chant is to be done daily along with chanting the Name of God according to the religion of one’s birth.

Chanting of Deity Datta’s Name is a kind of prescription chant to overcome a specific spiritual problem, i.e. problems caused due to departed ancestors. On the other hand, chanting the Name of God according to the religion of one’s birth acts as a general spiritual tonic for overall spiritual growth and well-being.

### **3. Personality Defect Removal (PDR) process :**

There is a saying that the mind is responsible for both man’s binding and his ultimate liberation from the cycle of birth and death or happiness-unhappiness. The personality defects that are there in a person’s mind are responsible for the unhappiness one experiences. On the other hand, a person’s qualities help him or her experience happiness and contentment. Personality defects create serious impediments in one’s spiritual practice regardless of the spiritual path one may follow. This is because they cause one to make mistakes which harm oneself and others creating give-and-take accounts, thus keeping the person in the cycle of birth and death. Also, if one has too many personality defects, one cannot effectively concentrate on regular spiritual practice.

His Holiness Dr Athavale who was a Clinical Hypnotherapist with a strong research background in the field created the Personality Defect Removal (PDR) Process to provide society and seekers with an effective tool to overcome personality defects. The PDR process has the following steps :

1. Observation of oneself and asking others for feedback about oneself
2. Documentation of mistakes
3. Introspection and analysis of one’s defects
4. Auto-suggestions to train the mind how to better respond to situations

Using this process, many seekers have found a quantum positive change in their behaviour and attitude. They regularly practice this methodology of removing defects and continuously improve themselves.

#### **4.1 In conclusion**

As social workers, practicing the PDR process and teaching it to others strengthens a person’s character and improves one’s personality, behaviour and attitude. This itself goes a long way in helping others and is half the battle won in overcoming problems in life. There is a saying, ‘give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime’. Teaching a person how to practice Spirituality along with the PDR process is like providing him or her with the proverbial fishing rod (mentioned in the quote above) to overcome powerful impediments in one’s life such as adverse destiny.