

Artha Forum @ GEV

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Speaker: HH Radhanath Swami

Topic: The values of life

The Principles they we are trying to balance always remain common and sacred. It is interesting how youth affects us. When my father and mother were young, they listened to certain type of music. Now my father is 89 years old. He still listens to the music that he listened to when he was a teenager. The whole life he was doing that; my mother and her friends and their whole generation. When I was young I was thinking that in my generation who wants to hear that stuff; they are dressed like this, singing like this. We are people with long hair and wore anything; the whole different sound, the whole different experience. I was thinking that my parents were just stuck in the mud of what they listened in their teen ages and their whole generations thinking like that. You know something... Now I am 62 and I see thousands and thousands of people of my age, they listen to the same things that they listened to when they were teenagers, same band, and same songs. You see the rolling stones when they have a revival tour 90% of the people are in their sixties. I talk to young people and they cannot tolerate what their parents were into.

Youth is a very deeply impressive part of our life. It deeply influences and it is different with each generation especially in this modern age. They have different priorities. An example is my own life again. My mother and father were brought up in the great depression of America. America was in total poverty during the great depression. The unemployment rate, people did not have jobs; my father had to leave school when he was about 14 years old; and he was earning about 5 cents a day; just the family could eat. That was a great pressure. So they were brought up in that environment. Then those prosperity in 1950s after World War II; I was brought up in that situation. I remember myself and my whole generation, a kind of middle class, we used to condemn our parents. 'Why are you so concerned about money all the time? Who cares about money?' We did not have to care about money; that is why we did not care about money. They were brought up in a different world. So we have different impressions.

Today it is very crucial that we balance secret principles and that balance is universal; affects morality, values of compassion, values of love, values of family, values of what is the purpose of life. It should be harmonised; not one against the other. In one sense sadhu is one who walks away from the world for one's spiritual life. But my guru used to say the reason is that a sadhu does not have a family. So the sadhu can give his/her entire energy to the entire human family. So everyone in this room is a dynamic leader at some level in their life and in the society itself to balance morality with the necessities to go ahead in business and studies. Students sometimes in America especially it's probably not different in India today that such a society of drugs, sex, of totally reckless living and yet they have to study. How to balance being part of such a society without getting sub intrude.

I sometimes visit Indians' homes of orthodox religious kinds of families who go to America for business. When I am there they tell me, their children grown up in America – My daughter 16 years old she is pregnant. An orthodox Hindu family from Andhra Pradesh, their daughter 16 years old is pregnant; obviously not married. What is happening? They are asking me what they should do. We have by our own example it is very important because the parents example is very influential on the

children. We may have our lives and requirements for that life. We may have to earn prestige, we may have to earn wealth from whatever we are doing. But if we have deep values then for our children these days we may have to present them in a non-judgemental way. Because if we do judgmental we lose them. They just retaliate; they rebel. All the things by which you try to impress upon me that I rebelled against our foundational, in my service to all of you in the service of my guru today. So it is important for all of us towards our children, towards our employees or whoever to balance the necessity to instruct even to discipline sometimes with compassion. In order for us to that we have to be first balanced.

The value of ethics, the value of morality, the value of giving time for our own inner spiritual growth is very crucial. The most important thing we can give to our children is an example that can last for ever in our life.