

## Artha Forum @ GEV

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Good morning to all of you

I have spent 35 years in practicing business. And as is to be expected, there were several ups and downs. So that is not unusual. But there are some aspects in my life, which I felt I should share with you, might be topic for today. When I finished my education, like, you may have come across people who, since I am fourth generation member of my family. My great grandfather started this business. I had no ambitions in life, because everything was taken for granted, everything was very smooth. So, I joined my family business within 10 days of finishing my graduation which I regretted later that I should have probably studies. That was the thinking at that time. So, the mood, the mindset was, you have everything, so relax and enjoy, you don't have to do anything. But, obviously it was a very naïve conception and soon reality came in form of several events which shook the very foundation of my life in early 80s. We had to actually leave the city for 3 years, my father and I with my family. And in a nutshell, it was like the world come crashing down. And that was the time when I was really gripped with lot of fear and uncertainty not knowing what's to be seen. The fear as I reflect by was primarily because I was used to a certain lifestyle and we were actually, potentially we were on the verge of having nothing, not even a house. Because we were staying in a tenanted premise. So, I can see that now the fear was basically asset driven as is quite normal to expect that we would like to have the best, especially when we are used to the best comforts. But then I was fortunate that I had a chance to, through the series of events, come across H.H. Radhanath Swami. This was in 1986. And within a couple of years, with H.H. Bhakti Rasamrita Swami who has been a very dear friend, though much younger in age but has been like a mentor to me. I wish they were not here because I could then speak more freely about them but you will anyway come to your own conclusion when you hear them. But what happened was that strangely, it actually gave me a great ambition and inspiration even in my business life. My father also was shaken by the events and he was anyways lot into charity. So he continued his path because he was already in his early 70s by then. And he left the business to me. That is when I really felt a need that I need guidance, I did take some guidance on the business side from here and there. But, what really transpired was that slowly I started to understand the life's perspective as such and where my role could fit in and who I am and what my business life is, but that's not the only life I have. The family is not the only life I have. But there are responsibilities that I have as a human being need to know, where I come from and what I need to do, because I could see, time is passing by. So what I would speak in the next half an hour, and I would like to be very happy to answer your question, I will leave may be 10 minutes for that. So what I am going to speak in next half an hour is primarily reflections on what as I saw my life and considering that I come from bricks and mortar manufacturing, I understand, many of you are either from banking, IT industry, so there may be some parallels, general principles, something's may not be common. One of the earliest things that I understood as a business

lesson is that a business or an industry is primarily target driven, and also it is generally speaking desensitizing. You don't have room for relationships beyond a certain time. And ultimately relationships are based on how the resources that you develop are meant to help you. So it is at a certain level doesn't go beyond that. And I was initially struggling with the idea because my father was a very different kind of a personality and I don't think I have seen anybody and I am saying as objectively as I can, personality like him, who is the only businessman I know who was loved by people whoever he met. So he was a person who put heart above everything else. He was a wonderful businessman also but primarily driven by heart. So for him, relationships meant a lot. There is a 31 years age difference between him and me. And I don't know how he developed it but it was his transparency, his straight forwardness, but all the things that we learn in EQ, how to motivate employees, how to motivate customers, how to retain customers, the techniques and the skills. It came naturally to him, because that was his heart. So there was one of the things that I understood when I came in touch with the spiritual path that actually in business, if we understand the essence, ultimately it is not a parallel life, it is one life. It is the consciousness with which we look at things. And one of the aspects of life is occupation, one of the aspects of life is family, society, relationship with government and ultimately your own individual responsibilities but ultimately is the same person. The role doesn't make any difference. It's not that so and so is spiritual and so and so is material or non spiritual. So in that when I tried to link it with business, one of things I understood is that, there is room for relationships and actually we talk of retaining employees, motivating employees, I think, when people see that it comes naturally to you when you relate with all people, not just the employees. What I saw in my father was that he was not targeted to one person, I mean it was servant at my home, his wife, his children, the prime minister, several ministers used to meet him, the way he talks to them, the way he talks to the liftman was exactly the same. His consideration, feelings for people, sensitivity was as much the same. We were going through difficulties in business, and if we had to take some difficult decision then he would be very painstaking and understanding what the implications are. So this came naturally to him. And I am talking of his development in his business in the 50s and 60s, way before the structured approach to HR was there. So I could understand these principles, understanding individuals and relationships come much better with better understanding of spirituality. As I understand, spirituality means accepting that there is a higher power, and trying to understand my relationship with him and learning from the scriptures, which in practical terms, which I am really grateful to Swami Prabhupada to have put in very practical application, also applies to business. In the process of business, when we talk to relationships, in the process of family, relationship with the wife, spouse and children, ultimately it's the understanding that they are also part of the same creation. And the fact that, if we talk of the United Nation for countries but we have more countries now than they were 50 years ago when the United Nations was started. Doesn't seem to be so united. But if we really talk of the principles of united, humanity at one, there is no room for caste, creed, there is no room for class based on somebody who is rich or poor, because he doesn't work or somebody who is working, somebody who is well educated or somebody who is not. Because we see that in the west, they do not accept a caste system but there is a different class system which is based on the achievements that you can. So if you remove that in spirituality gives you an idea of actually all being in one family together. Ultimately somebody is more privileged, somebody he will have his own karma the way he acts, somebody is less privileged, and that may be for various circumstances but how you mould this together and how you actually live life

accordingly, primarily not as Mr. Arvind Mafatlal, in his case, being a chairman of a group, which is at one time the third largest, having 20000 employees etc. and how he didn't see people as a chairman. He saw them really as individuals, as human beings and he relate it to them. So that is why, in his charity work also, he profess that so strongly and these are the principles which I have seen the parallel with in my spiritual that whatever we try to do, if we are convinced that it is the right thing to do, then others need not know about it. So even in terms of charity, it is not that left hand should know the right hand, this is one of the famous sayings, that just keep doing what you are doing and it is for the purpose itself, the action itself that really pleases, that is justified. Not that, there should be a photo opportunity or something. So actually I saw the relationship has a core aspect and it had a practical impact on business. Because, to retain employees, we know the cost of retaining employees is probably one tenth of cultivating a new, especially for customers. But for employees, cost is much lower than to higher a new employee and to get a new customer. It's much easier if there is a transparency, people like you. I felt there is a room for trust. If we develop this, it actually has merit and I actually saw practical aspect in my career. Because, there was a period of about almost a decade, when we went through some very difficult period. Our textile operations had to go through the BIFR which is equivalent to the chapter 11 here. It is very wrenching period. Personally I went through many doubts and suddenly after 80 years, 90 years of the group and I am running the group. And feeling that is it going to run under my guidance. There were mistakes made in the past which I was not responsible for, there were mistakes made by me but that was secondary, issue that they were facing there. That was one thing. But what was amazing is that when we try to go for turn around, and we went to several bankers. For about 5 years, I spent 80% of my time just meeting 4 banks and 3 institutions. SBI BOB BOI etc 80% of my time went meeting DGM and Chairman. We went through 4 Chairman of State Bank but the amazing thing what I found is, my father was practically out of the business that time, a decade ago, the kind of respect and goodwill for the group was astonishing. If you owe bank 200 crores, and you are in difficulties, I don't think it is natural. If I would have been in their place, anybody of us would have been in their place, and somebody owes you money, I don't think it comes naturally, of course they were worried about it, but it doesn't come naturally that there is goodwill. And it was really astonishing, and I was already in my 40s, I had spent two decades and I could see this was only because this man, the way he led his life and the way he went about in transparent manner even the restructuring was something which really put lot of trust in him. For instance, in the period of restructuring, State Bank was allowed to put in a nominee. In fact, my father had suggested that this company can be salvage, if you want to remove the management, we are happy to move it and there is somebody who created the business 50 years ago but this is the plan and this is what we want to do. State Bank said, we don't want any director. There was a committee and they were partly on that committee and I was amazed that they had that much trust. Because, they knew that we wouldn't do anything outside the parameters. Similarly when we went to reserve bank, finance ministry etc. trying to convince them. I could see that they all were very sympathetic. There were limitations what they could do. We were asking for more funds to be put in. but I came away with impression that it was a lifetime of trust, it could be destroyed in a moment but I had to preserve that to see that reputations take a life time to build and can be destroyed overnight. Secondly I also saw in this period, my conviction on spiritual aspects became more when I felt that there are many things, many things are not in our control and that gives an idea of our helplessness, our insignificance. For instance, we had made plans which were certified by all and it was sure shot thing. For three years we attempted

to do that and everybody was convinced, in spite of that it didn't happen. And when we looked back, that time we felt that it's pity it didn't happen. And we look back; we saw that thank god it didn't happen, because we would have been in a bigger mess as things unfolded. Even in our NOCIL, when we had to restructure and get out of the petrochemicals, at one time we were suggested by the best of the advisors that we should break up the company into three parts. That will be the best for the shareholders. For the petrochemical we signed an agreement with shell then for rubber chemicals, we signed an agreement with Apollo Tyres and the third small part was going to dispose off. But shell retained the option for 3 years because they signed an MOU saying that we will complete the transaction in 3 years. So in those 3 years, we ran the company accordingly, 3 different committees. And at that, we would have got nothing out of it, shareholders would have got nothing but all the loans would have been paid and each part would have gone to the new owner. At least, the promoted shareholders would have got nothing but remaining shareholders would have been a part of new shareholders and they would have benefit. That was the plan. For three years, we tried and it didn't work. As events happened, Shell was in difficulties in petrochemicals business and they backed out of the agreement. So we went through the wrenching period again. And it was very torturous because we had to literally for 2-3 months actually close the plant. But what happened was because of that, we got more suitors, because they actually saw that, there was more interested because our labor cost was so high and they wanted once labor was matured enough to understand, then these people came forward. The rubber chemical business could not go because bankers said that you cannot let the crown jewel move out. As it happened the petrochemicals went off with its liabilities in full, we didn't have to pay anything. Everything was taken care of. And we were left with the crown jewel. And we still have it so there are several instances where I could see that we make plans. There is a pithy saying that man proposes and god disposes but actually it is true. And this is the essence of spirituality. We may make plans, we may make efforts but reality is somebody is going to have its own plans. Not that all the time, it is in our benefit, many times it's very painful. But, the point is that if we are prepared for it. What I understand from my spiritual life these events are going to happen. Today is this situation, tomorrow is that situation. As we go along, we anticipate, we plan, we prepare, and we work hard. But the setback or benefit, if we don't get carried away, this is a critical part. Ultimately we make plans based on our success, thinking that this is the only way, I know the way, and we have seen how many people can make blunders on that. And if we have lost out everything and we feel we are finished, there is nothing beyond. Neither of them is true. We keep trying, we can anticipate, we can see someone's hand who's working there and at the same time. If we anticipate and we don't let it completely over on us, we are in a much better frame of mind, much better situation to respond to the situation. And I can say that with all modesty that my own people, I mean we have several people, top management, extremely well qualified professionals. But in 15 years, there were many situations when both in the petrochemicals and textile, when we went through the challenges, I mean, I could see because of the intimacy with which we had worked actually, I see the façades and completely going off and people whom I respected and I still do respect them, people who were competent and capable but they completely broke down and they were completely shaken. They used to come to me and say that how is it that you are so relaxed about it and you are not completely shaken. Then I could see that it is just that they will get so perturbed, sleepless nights and infact it affects the thinking. So, on a practical sense, I strongly feel this actually has a tremendous, accepting the fact that there is a controller doesn't mean that you are

faithless; you put up your hands and don't do anything. You work hard and do the best. You have an ambition, you have a mission that actually becomes, for me, I love to make money and I love to spend money. If I have somebody who can guide me how I should do it well. And I think a lot of you will share the same feeling. So that is one thing I know and I can do. But what I saw is that in the path, everything is not going to go away. And for that, it is not just accepting mentally, ok, there is god. There is a lot of behind it and to be convinced in those times to think accordingly and to mould our consciousness doesn't come overnight. That is where the spiritual practices, the association that needs to be developed over the years. Also, some of the other lessons you know that even if we were to practically look at accepting the challenges up to the blunders, actually it brings people together, specially to the people, to whom we were the authority. If they understand that leadership totally accepts the problem, and not only accept but owns up the problems individually saying that I made a major blunder, we shouldn't have done this but now in future we shouldn't do this, it not only creates a relief but also gives them a sense of belonging and also give them confidence to do so in the future which I would also expect. We demand that but it doesn't come unless first it starts from leaders. So, one was the leadership lesson which I got from the connection to, I mentioned a few, which I got from spiritual association. I also benefitted substantially on my personal front because I began to see my family in a different light and to see the reality, the totality of life, to know that, because, it often happens that if you are used to authority and you are also working in an environment which is highly efficient and you say one thing and it's done, you tend to forget that is not exactly how life is always. And initially my wife had to remind me often that she is not my secretary, she is my wife. Because, I would expect and she is just the opposite of me in many ways, many ways, highly creative, very simple, really brilliant in her own ways. But, a perfectionist who would not have time necessarily as consciousness and so these things once you start understanding how things go then really meant life very fulfilling. Even relationships beyond just family, generally stranger we meet, I found that if you look at people around, incidentally they may be part of some business or occupation but primarily is as we meet them in a stadium, at the airport etc it just relate to them. And this I found examples from Radhanath Swami and Swami Prabhupada, founder of ISKCON, whom I did not have the privilege to meet but when I saw, how they manage their own lives and how they departed their own wisdom to others. We all have these gizmos to try to add to our productivity. I am not absolutely convinced that it does. But definitely it becomes a useful tool if it is under control. But, Srila Prabhupada and Radhanath Swami whom I have studied intimately now, this is one of the things which fascinates me and I have always been learning, how they are able to manage, we talk of multitasking, doing several tasks at a time. But actually, I don't think I have met anyone else who could do it as well as these two, I have either studied or known. And this has come, I believe, because of kind of calmness, the purity and the consciousness, and understanding of the reality, they are complete like an ocean which doesn't get shaken. So with the result that, though I don't succeed often but at least it is mentally in my mind, so with the result that, as and when, when I am reminded of this, even sometimes take over, sometimes you have too many things to do, and the urgent things, critical things, which need to be, take decisions, and just at that time, so many things can go wrong and so many things happen, happens sometimes. And you get completely hassled. You end up blank out, you can't be so productive. And what I found here that on a day to day basis, Srila Prabhupada had 100s of letters, because at the 70s he was travelling all over the world and he was sleeping two hours a day. He was translating for few hours every single day; he was meeting 100s of

people. He was giving 2-3 programs a day. He was answering several letters a day, because his disciples and well-wishers from all over the world were asking. And here was a man, who in his 70s, who was actually setting up a spiritual culture, could manage to do this at a speed and nature which was amazing, so to be able to take away your mind and worries, thoughts from one issue to another and when you are juggling with several things, it is not easy. But I was really fascinated, how they could do it, because sometimes the calamity has come, there is a crisis in some temple or some issues, some court case and at the same time there are personal issues like some couple has come and their life is breaking apart, they want immediate, they can't wait for few hours. This was literally every day, several issues coming up and the same with the Radhanath swami. Amazingly, how they could take within minutes. I have had many occasions that you come to them and we would have planned for an hour, they come right through the point, understand and leave aside all the other engagements come straight to the point and they have understood and grasped the essence and within five minutes say this is what you should do, that's it. So, I felt that this on a personal level, it's very practical and it's a great help to me and I try my best not to get carried away. And to model this kind of thinking where we have to do many tasks but it is not just the external efficiency which comes from the planning of time which is necessary, the gadgets which are necessary, the infrastructure and the organization, of course all this is necessary but the state of mind and the consciousness is the very much driving factor. And that actually depends on how we relate to spirituality and understand because once you accept this principle of that there is god and need to understand more about it, that is not my subject today, but, once we go into it, this is I am sharing my own personal belief, it really makes everything starts kind of clicking into it, then doesn't matter whether you are talking about issue which is in the middle east or in Africa, you can see live but just for myself but I can see how the reality could work even for a better humanity. I would just like to conclude by mentioning one or two examples before we throw open for any comments or questions. There was a great saint who also, it was just 150 years ago, his name was Bhaktivinoda Thakur and he was a district magistrate and he was so efficient in his work. Again he had 10 children who turned out to be an extra ordinary beings and one of them happens to be the spiritual master of Srila Prabhupada who founded the mission of ISKCON. He not only had time for them and his wife but he wrote more than 80 volumes, lot of poetry, he was giving several lectures, preaching but primarily his occupation was, in the British time as a district magistrate. And he was so critically accepted needed by the British that even today we can see right at the bank of Ganga where his house was in Mayapur, Navadvip that they actually laid up a railway line just for that he could reduce his time to travel. Because he had to go to Krishna nagar which was about 20 kms away. And how he did it, it was recorded that he was in a position to give judgments within 5 – 7 minutes what would otherwise take an hour or more by people. So the amount of work he handled and he was very particular about time. He came at 10 and left at 5 because his life was full of many other things. But the intensity with which he focused, his concentration was there and which I also found in some of the great personalities that I had privileged to meet in my spiritual association that totally focused on what you speak, what you hear. I am trying to learn listening skills, we say that we need this technique, that technique but here if you are concerned about somebody's issues, you completely blotter and you focus on this person and you really grasp the essence, if you're all ears, all mind, heart, entirely for this person. So, Bhaktivinoda Thakur was one example which was so astonishing and this was only 100 years ago. The reality was that his productivity and his implementation of his spiritual ideas were for the benefit of the world at large. And lastly I

would say from the example of mine when the connections work. Recently now we went from 1500 crores, at that time 400 mn dollar debt 10 years ago to zero debt now and we have surplus cash, we wanted to buy back some of the shares. Now we have 70% of this particular company, the textile company which was went through trying period and we have 70% holding but 30% is held by 10,000 shareholders so the administrative costs are quite high. And this is historical; this is there since almost 70 to 80 years since we listed. So, we said, let's attempt, do that. And we got the registers, share transfer agents and we gave 40% premium and we got less than 5% people to respond to it. And we couldn't understand it. So, we asked our share transfer agencies, why don't you go and meet every householder but 40,000 in Ahmadabad, 30,000 in Mumbai and rest are spread over. What we found was that several of them have got 3-4 generations and they are happy with the dividend they get and it is like a sense of belonging, why? Because they have such a personal connection with Arvind Mafatlal. Now when I said that the only person I know people love him, this word love cannot associate with business, I have never heard. But there is no other word to describe how people felt for him. And may be today it would have been a challenge for him in so many ways but the principles that he laid, you know the kind of transparency, we talk of corporate governance, but his intentions and motivations were exactly one. In 1964, we were in Shimla, there was an opportunity to make more than a crore, I will not go into details but virtually overnight, my uncle had called him from Mumbai and told him to do it because the prices are crashed and he felt it was not the correct thing to do, he said absolutely not, and later on some years later, the governor of reserve bank who was also a friend of our family, Mr. L.K.Jha, he told my father, that actually we had done a secret investigation and it was astonished to find that you didn't do what would have been logical to do, was not illegal but certainly would have been unethical, so when we talk of ethics we talk of only external factors about money which is important that we talk of corruption, but the corruption of a soul, how you exploit people, how you can use other people, I think is something which we tend to ignore. And lastly this when, my father died last year, he was ailing for 5- 6 years, so everyone knew that now he is 89 so something which everyone has to go through. But, what I found astonishing is that our two joint ventures that we had with shell and some other company in the petrochemicals and high density polyethylene, the managing director and chief financial officer who did their PhD in leads and they were trained in that company and shell, they were very much grounded in multinational approach of the systems and which really made the company successful. They also come and visited my father when he was ailing. But, when they heard the news that my father died, eventually when we broke the news to him. To my astonishment for the first time I heard them both separately on phone, both were talking on the phone. This was something really telling me that this could evoke and I have never seen them break down, 89 years old man, ailing for 5 years, it was inevitable that he is going to go. I could get some understanding what it meant to them because they not only put in careers there but when they saw him intimately and they saw his views, his approach to charity, his desperate dealings to help others, it was really for no other reason but that he felt that he is an instrument of god and he has to do it. And I tried to follow that also and which I found very comfortable to understand the spiritual principles in our Vaishnava dharma that we should do it for the reason it is needed to do it and not because we are doing it, not that we are privileged to do it, somebody happens to have something, he can do and that charity is not just money but it is the consciousness, time, efforts put in. and also, he keep on saying the lord doesn't see what you give, he sees what you hold back. So that principle has always guided me that, there is much more that we can

do, because, externally somebody may give large amount of money but only you would know or I would know how much more you could do and we may be holding back. It's not that you have to give everything but there is a comfort level and if we are playing it very safe. So that is the internal consciousness, nobody else needs to drive that point. But when there is International Consciousness and in that stage somebody takes guidance this kind of approach really makes it well meaning and I feel that society can be a better place where more people who could if they have been given the chances in their life, can also look at it not the means to somehow have a subtle grip over somebody else or an authority on somebody else. That is why nobody needs to know how it happened but from our point of view, if we need to do it, that will be the best way to do it.

Thank you.

Gaurav: You were walking on the spiritual path and you had this consciousness. What about your people, your core team. Did you try to instill the spirituality and consciousness in them? How was that receipt? That is one issue.

Mr. Mafatlal: Basically it has to come from you. Nobody can force you for anything in your life. You can't do it to children, where is the question of doing it to them, so but at the same time they know what I stand for. And it does come out on and off in terms of principles. So if you asking whether directly I give them a Bhagavad-Gita lecture, I don't. But, I try to arrange sometimes, but more often what happens is that principles do come up. And for instance, in December, we have a major effort to distill the Bhagavad-Gita, the spiritual knowledge. So since I have connections not only in textile industry, not only in my factory but several others. So, I write to them routinely, whichever states we take up. And most people are very happy. What we do is that just to put a stall outside the gate because for staff and for employees. And whoever wants to take is up to them while they are leaving, there is no pressure. So things like that, I use it this way. And as far as my senior team is concerned, generally comes out the principles in difficult times. We then came to a settlement with the banks which they only brought up. And we could settle certain percentage of debt, one time settlement. They are happy with that. Because the land sale was taking 5-6 years. Eventually, we sold the land. Now our unsecured creditors, you know, all my people were telling me that we can also give the secured lenders certain percentage was substantial percentage but they are the privilege, these people unsecured. So what is the legal standing? So as per the arrangement, they were to get something between 2014 and 2018. And we were talking about 2010. My father had told me earlier, before he became sick. He said you have to tell me in Gujarati, *naano maanas ne lath nahi maarto*, don't kick a small man. Somebody was trading 2 lacs, 5 lacs, no you are 1002 empire, and if you don't have money, it's a different thing. Nobody went for winding petition they waited. But, when you have the money, so I insisted, nothing doing, we will pay everybody full amount and how much is it going to cost? We have 800 crore liability, we have settled in 2-3 months, everything. And this was coming to only 90 crores. If I would have squeezed then we have saved 30 crores. I said it was unethical. We argued over lot of times. They kept on trying to come different times to try to convince me. I said, no, they lost their money because they waited for few years. What we would have done in their position, we could have done much more. So, it's like these, when in business decisions, I would say, it would come out in values. They know where I come from in that sense, not that I have to but it's really, and our directors have the same, very strong directors and

sometimes it doesn't happen that we may not agree on that but that is how they relate. And I think we have a good relationship going forward with them. Because part of this when we took vacancy to work with us on two different occasions was to define my role. They said, are you the managing director, are you executive chairman or are you a non executive chairman? Let's be clear. And then we spent several hours defining it. So finally they defined that I am the executive chairman. But then you have the managing director, these are his roles and let him play. And I do believe that they respect that my understanding from the spiritual life that ultimately if you are controlling 60-70% of the company, and you feel something should be done, it's very easy to undermine the authority, you can go to the 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3<sup>rd</sup> level, so to restrain that, I think, to me, it became little easier understanding from the spiritual that I need to put my ego little bit on the back side and give them credit, give them full support. I do feel that it plays an important role in our turn on, and they have done a fantastic job and they know that they have the backing that they need. So it's like a relationship which they have in their own life, several of them were, they eat meat, non vegetarian, they drink, I don't counsel them on that and they would not expect that from me. But I think they respect me for that and I have respect for them. And wherever possible, I don't insist on, but when we have outing they do know that I don't eat onion garlic, meat so apart from vegetables have a effort to make, not only dealers on marketing tours, so things like that, indirectly they do, and many of them share my values and they ask can we do something? But generally it is not the senior levels, they are on different liaison but middle and lower levels, they keen to know, and when they keen to know then definitely, many of them, they ask for the books, for Journey home, the Bhagavad-Gita and then we also kept it open for all our companies that anyone wants the books, then you wrote back.

First of all I very much strongly believe, leave aside the business part of it, my personal strong belief based on the spirituality is that for the economic well being of the world, everybody concentrates on increasing demand. I feel, not only I feel, but it is a most practical understandable that if you feel that everybody is one, you have to concentrate on supply side. And that only comes when people's demand is to live simply in their life whatever the levels, somebody may be at this level, somebody may be at a higher level, but if they can cut back rather than increasing the no. of cars, no. of requirements and still lives simply if their mindset is within the contentment and satisfaction. If you apply this across the world, lot things can go to all over the world. Basically a lack of consciousness rather than, this is my strong belief. So having said that, in terms of ethics what happens is that generally it comes when you have passion and desire for yourself, so if that doesn't happens then my needs are well taken care of. From company's point of view, I look at the things from ethical point of view. I will give an example, when we give credits to our dealers or to companies, let's say customers, in a chemical business; we make intermediates for pharmaceuticals and agrochemical companies. So, typically they negotiate the terms. In good times they come down to say 45 or 60 days. But what amazes me is that the companies who have already 1000 crores cash with them, we have already agreed on 45-60 days, they will stretch till 90 days. Now that 30 days, you can easily argue, that if cumulatively I might get another 1-2 crores on somebody else's working capital. To me, I will negotiate hard and do the best but once we decide on a day, that's it, you have to pay on that day, you should pay on that day. The company Asian paints which I really admire, for years we tried to model ourselves on that, they give a particular time. They would say, come on Thursday 3'o clock and collect your cheque, this is on a regular basis and you can

imagine the kind of a, if you have the money in the bank, you might save a few lacs or crores on the interest on somebody else's money, doesn't make sense, if you are looking at moving a company to 2000-3000 crores. It is completely for me pennywise. I would say that we try to apply it and see. And wherever possible, it's not always a question of funds. So, yes, now licenses are not an issue, that could be a problem about 25-30 years ago, dealing with government. But I feel, by and large, it is more of greed or the demand that I need to do this. Similarly because we have a, we are concerned about financial analyst that they should know what we are doing but I am not overly concerned, in the sense, I am not looking at the next quarter, we have a decent control. Therefore, we are taking long term decisions, we can invest in research, it will take time and still we are earning. So the point is, once we look at the company's needs and the company should be growing. We may have to try for 15-20% growth in earnings every year, everything is fine. But there is a room for still approaching in a certain way to see that, are we benefitting everyone? Similarly also how you, just now we had to have a VRS when we came out BIRF textiles. We had to reduce, from 3500, we came down to 2500 people at one stroke but VRS technically means voluntary, by definition. So, we gave very generous terms and if only 500 would have come forward then we would have settled of for 500, we can't force anyone. Having given the terms which we said that ok, they should get at least 75 to 80 % from the interest on that money which along with whatever they supplement, they want to go back to farming, go to the village, whatever, so there is a certain concern to see that you get what you want but at the same time you also just don't exploit the situation if such opportunity you have where you get away cheaply. Sometimes, on competence basis, we have to tell senior employees that don't fit in that, not working out well. So we have to go out of the way, at least I, those who are reporting to me or next levels, we give them time, no need to humiliate them, no need to say that in one hour you are out, go home, unless there is a critical need which I rarely found except one case in IT, otherwise guy in a deputy manufacturing head in the plant, and after years, he is just not able to make it with all efforts, so we tell, start looking for, 3-4 months. So the decision is taken and starts looking for and we start looking for then everyone feels that he has resigned and gone, his employability should not be affected. These are the things where we try to be as sensitive as possible. And the thing is that it makes a practical sense because it is not that person only, you see, you are talking of one person, but every single manager, deputy manager, they all knowing, that is the audience, they are looking at it that tomorrow it could be me, so when they see, they can send some person incompetent may be out of his debt, but how you treat that person makes a difference. I am talking about the competence issues, integrity is another issue.

In the year 1986-87, when I met Radhanath swami for the first time, not first time but in the earlier time, I had mentioned that I am going through real fearful period. For 3-4 years, bewilderment fear, my father was also shaken up, and my business, not only business but legal cases, my family, you know, everything was collapsed, our all relatives deserted us. Situation was like, we were practically alone together and that was the time when I could spend lot of time with Radhanath swami, talking to him for several hours, asking relating to him though he would never go into detail on business side, we could understand that he is a great listener and I told him that I am really wondering what will happen. My fear is that, literally, after so many years, we could be on the streets and all that. So he just turned and told me that if you not being to a temple at chowpatty, I am talking of almost 30 years ago, it was extremely good condition and there were some brahmacharis, celebate monks were staying there and

he told that if you have a problem, we will have a room for you here. Now this he said with a slight smile, it was not a joke, it was not meant to be funny, I mean it was meant to really give the perspective, enlightened up, to me the impact that came was that, here are people who were younger than me not maharaja himself but some others who were younger than I who were very qualified and they could be easily earning like Bhakti Rasamrita maharaja here, he had 2 degrees and he was a manager in Standard chartered at the age of 27 in Kolkata. He was working with people who eventually landed up in the problem in 1992. So I understood that people here could actually earn much more. So there is something missing in my life and I am fearful for something that they are voluntarily giving up. They have not had a bank account for 30 years; they don't have a single asset in their name. Where is this faith coming from? It's not that there is something wrong with them I need to question and then many times I visit this thought and I could see as I went along that, it gave me not only solace at that time but it gave me greater understanding to know that there are other things in life and ultimately the fact was that when I revealing my fear, it was not that I would not be able to find for myself, it is just that I was fearful that, I assumed that certain status we need to have, you know, when the luxury becomes a need, so I think that was one aspect which was a defining moment in my life and stayed with me for a long.

Thank you