

# **Kavita Bhartia**

**Fashion Designer**

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Fri Aug 17 2007



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**What does spirituality mean to you?**

I did not know the meaning of that word until quite recently. As a child, my mother would constantly be doing pujas and taking us to temples. But as she herself ignored the deeper meaning of those rituals, I did not understand what I was doing, pushed around to get a little piece of prasad or to put flowers at the seat of a god. The whole experience put me off. It felt wrong as obviously I was not helping anyone whereas for me, spirituality is about reaching out to others. I wish we would have been taught in school the deeper meaning of those rituals and the rich wisdom of various religious scriptures. Every day we hear about horrifying things happening in society, but I am convinced that if children were taught those sacred texts, it would help tremendously in avoiding all those calamities.

**Do you believe you are guided and protected by a superior force?**

Definitely. I used to be so scared – constantly scared – about my children and many other things. Over time I understood that God takes care of things and there is no need to torture myself in that way.

Also, when I do something, I shouldn't feel it is me and take pride in it, rather I should know it is God's deed.

**Do you believe you have a special mission or purpose in this life?**

I believe that all is predetermined and that God actually pulls all the strings. In my case, I felt so guilty for the longest time for not doing enough for others, and I was terrified to be on my deathbed wondering where my life had all gone, how I had wasted it. I wanted to make sure I would do something not to feel at the end of the road that I am about to go to hell. So gradually, following my impulses and without thinking too much, I dared jump into all sorts of projects, and out of nothing I managed to create an organization I am proud of, giving employment to hundreds of people, and hopefully creating joy through my clothes.

**What has been the role of spirituality in your life as a designer?**

Every morning when I get up, I am flooded with a stream of ideas and I would often wonder where they all come from. So I feel it is not me doing the work, rather it is like a current going from God through me and then I know exactly what I need to do. Also, my clothes are a labour of love and hopefully they create a lot of positive energy for those wearing them and others around.

**Can you tell us about a unique experience that changed or shaped your spiritual beliefs?**

As I was approaching the third stage of life, and my children were grown up, I gradually felt the need for something "beyond". The encounter with Ma Punananji a couple of years ago and the study of the Gita I undertook with her was the answer to that craving and has definitely been a turning point, initiating the path. The Gita has all the principles you need to lead your life. And I actually feel so deprived not to have been taught it before: it's been only two years and I feel I have wasted all my life.

**If you were to be reincarnated, what would you like to be reincarnated as?**

It does not matter, as long as my husband is with me. He's always been there for me and if you have one such person in your life, it makes it all worth it.

**If there was one question you could ask God, what would it be?**

Sometimes I feel God should just destroy this world instead of putting us through all those tests. And even though I feel happy with what He gave me, what about so many others – why should they suffer so much?

**What is your idea of happiness?**

I would say it is both a question of destiny and a state of mind. Though I could also reason that for my mind to perceive things in a way or another, it is also a matter of destiny – isn't it?