

Priti-laksanam

A Forum for Vaishnava Discussion

"Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasada* and offering *prasada* are the six symptoms of love [*priti-laksanam*] shared by one devotee and another." — *Nectar of Instruction*, Text Four

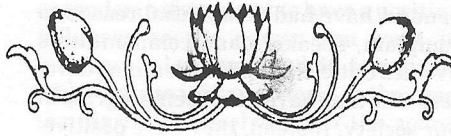
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In the service of
His Divine Grace

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A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



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Dear Readers,

First, I need to apologize for this volume being late and explain that this is happening because my wife, Kunti, who does the production of *Priti-laksanam* as well as other publications, has been having some health problems. She's okay but she's had to slow down a lot. This won't affect the number of volumes you subscribed for.

Also, we have had difficulty financing the project and could really use some help. This is your publication. It is a way for the devotees to share their views in a progressive manner. The funding for it comes from you. I can no longer finance it for you. As many of your subscriptions are running out, we hope you will please renew at this time and try to subscribe a friend to *Priti*, as well. *Priti* could also use some donations if you can do that. We now accept credit cards, as well.

It is purely the readers' material that goes into this journal, and it is for your pleasure and edification that we produce it. We hope you find it interesting and helpful. It is your forum for expression, so please do what you can to make it healthy financially and send in your realizations, ideas, and interests to be included.

We are considering also putting *Priti-laksanam* up on the web as well as printing it. We rejected this idea before because we consider *Priti* to be a confidential journal. However, since so much internal discussion about our movement is on the web already (most of it negative), we thought that it might be helpful after all to put *Priti* out there, as well. Our readers do offer very

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good ideas and we want more people to see them. Please let us know if you have any objections to this.

As we often note, our Krishna conscious society as a social movement in the West is very young. Sometimes we need benchmarks, or some basic way of judging if it is on track. A society, any society, is dynamic, not static. Perhaps the most dynamic society of all is the Krishna consciousness movement. Therefore, we have included some information from social movement scholar Bill Moyer who has been studying movements for many years and has written about the basic steps that they go through in their development. I hope you find this relevant.

Our Krishna consciousness movement attracts many different people with many different ideas. As they rise in status, their ideas become more prominent. In this process there is change, while at the same time devotees are trying to remain true to the core values of our society as enunciated in the writings of Srila Prabhupada. All this creates tension and uncertainty. Because of the comings and goings of persons rising to prominence and being removed from prominence, there is a natural built-in cycle of reform, although it may not be called that. Those of us who have been here for a number of years have experienced this informally taking place. How we resolve that tension can make or break our society and us as individuals.

Now it seems throughout our movement there have been many more calls for reform on a number of issues important to devotees. Along with the reform there is resistance to the reform. But reform is as natural as the sun rising in the East and setting in the West. Those who are resisting reform may have their particular reasons, but you cannot stop reform and still have a dynamic society.

Last fall there were two conferences held here in our Alachua community

dealing with reform, one right after the other. I attended parts of both and found them to be very different in their mood.

At the first one, a women's conference, women (and also some men) gathered from all over the US and even from other countries to speak about and hear views towards reforming the roles of women within our Krishna conscious society. Although any reasonable person by now cannot doubt that women in general have had substantial reason to complain, speakers and commentators avoided criticizing and condemning devotees who may have hurt their progress in our society. Instead, they were positive, non-judgmental, and respectful even towards their detractors. All of the attendees and most of the people who heard about it that I know felt much better about our society afterwards, knowing that the mothers were acting in a motherly fashion toward helping our dynamic society become more united and livable.

The second conference was held by a reform group of devotees who have been organizing meetings in various communities to recruit devotees into their "camp." This series of meetings tended to be more negative and condemning of devotees, especially leaders for whom the speakers hold grievances. Each devotee present at one session got up and made their sincere commentary about their situation. Many would practically demonizing some personality who provided the necessity in their minds for the reform in our society to take place. This gathering had an angrier (though civil) mood and emphasized the division in our society. It had the effect upon the people I spoke with who attended of widening the breach and increasing their negative view of our movement's future.

I believe that we can reform our society and that we must do it peacefully by avoiding cutting individuals down during the process. Demonization of individuals undermines the quality of re-

form because it hurts us all spiritually to think, say, and hear it. Rather than bringing us closer together it seems to highlight our divisions.

There was a book written some years ago called *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, by Dale Carnegie. When I was a *brahmachari* in the 70s this book was popular in our movement. The book details a number of rules, one of the most prominent is: "Do not criticize, complain, or condemn if you want to have a positive influence on the person you want to influence." I recommend it to anyone who wants to initiate reform so they can familiarize themselves with the sound principles therein. It is a small book.

A week or two after the meetings here I was spending the afternoon with a 13-year-old young man I have been mentoring. As we were going about our errands we ran into a godbrother who I hadn't seen in some time. This godbrother is very senior and I have always admired his humble, gentle presentation of things. Because of that I had previously asked him to do some writing for us. He told me on the street that day that because he was sympathetic with this reform group that organized the second conference he couldn't complete that assignment. In the course of our conversation he commented on devotees he blamed as having ruined ISKCON and referred to them only by their legal names in a demonizing way as if they had never been devotees. I wondered if this dear godbrother felt that by using their non-devotee names he would avoid Raghunatha dasa Goswami's injunction against criticism of devotees.

Although we are normally warm and friendly, in the course of this conversation, as was later pointed out to me by the boy, our voices became louder and more passionate until we were practically not even communicating at all. The boy said, "I don't understand why you two greeted each other so friendly, and

by the time you left you were shouting at each other."

Quite frankly I didn't understand it, either. But as you can probably tell by now, my young friend really helped me realize that this demonizing creates anger and divisiveness, and that's unproductive, especially for spiritualists. So I took my own advice and reread *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

The next incident that occurred was at a recent community gathering where a grand-disciple of Srila Prabhupada came up to me and said he was thinking that he would have to leave this community because there were so many Prabhupada disciples who, in the name of reform, were blaspheming his spiritual master and many spiritual masters. He said to me, "Don't Prabhupada disciples realize the impact that they have on us when they speak to us like this?" It made me sad that this talented and sincere devotee would want to go away as if he had no place here in our big community.

Finally, I had a dream in which I went to a Srila Prabhupada gathering and reunion at the temple in Hawaii where I joined. I was surprised to see that the devotees there had made big improvements to the property. They had built theaters and all kinds of exhibition halls to entertain people while instructing them in Krishna consciousness. There were also dramatic improvements to the temple itself. Throughout the dream I remember feeling uncomfortable as if something was wrong—even though the devotees and guests were all so happy. After waking up I pondered what could be the meaning of this dream? I realize now that it was because things had changed at my "home temple" and it was no longer the familiar place of my memories that I felt uneasy. I was sentimentally attached to the way the movement was when I joined. Our society is dynamic. It is growing up and there should

be plenty of room in it for every individual to grow, as well. I was upset because things had appeared to change—although for the better.

My main motivation for addressing this topic is to try to help get an understanding with those who would like to be agents for reform and change, and also those who are resisting change. We can't be attached to the way things used to be.

What we need to please our spiritual master is cooperation. Those who would be residents of the house that the whole world can live in, should understand that a house divided against its self will not stand.

Your Servant,
Sarva-satya Dasa

**Bill Moyer on Evaluating
a Social Movement
By Kunti Dasi
Alachua, FL, USA**

For many years, social theorist Bill Moyer of the Social Movement Empowerment Project has been aiding animal rights advocates, environmentalists, and peace activists in understanding how their movements can grow from the initial formative stage to long term success. In his publication, *The Practical Strategist*, he describes a guide for evaluating, planning, and conducting social movements.

Moyer explains that because activists are unfamiliar with the normal course of movement success, many "irrationally hold deep-seated feelings and beliefs that they are powerless and their movement is failing, and thus create a self-fulfilling prophecy. These feelings and beliefs have devastating results. Many activists: 1) not only have difficulty recognizing and celebrating movement successes, but even become angry and upset when people say that their movement is succeeding; 2) have difficulty thinking and acting strategically because they don't believe their move-

ment can be successful; and 3) assume unproductive attitudes and activities out of feelings of powerlessness." Such feelings "lead many activists to lose hope, become demoralized, burn out, drop out, play ineffective or even destructive roles of activism, adopt less effective programs, and make the movement unappealing to the majority of the public."

One of the destructive roles of activism Moyer refers to is what he calls the "negative rebel," a self-defined radical who advocates militant actions and/or revolutionary ideologies which may be nothing more than empty rhetoric, disconnected from any real means of achieving real progress for the society. These negative rebels may alienate much of the movement as well as most of the public, claims Moyer, and they feed off negative thinking: "Negative rebels become prevalent within a few years after the take-off of a new movement. By that time, many activists have become depressed and desperate because their naïve hopes of quickly achieving total success are dashed."

Judging that the movement is failing because it hasn't won complete victory yet is common among activists, says Moyer. "Activists often say their movement is failing because it has not stopped say, the nuclear arms race or air pollution. But this 'logic' is not used to judge any other undertaking. Performance is normally judged by whether we are making satisfactory progress toward achieving a goal, not by whether or not we have already achieved it. Using this measure, activists inevitably believe their movement is failing right up until it finally succeeds! Thus, they are unable to identify and appreciate any successes along the way."

Over time, Moyer explains, "social movements adopt an evolving series of medium-term goals as part of the struggle to achieve larger, long term goals. It is reasonable to expect that achieving any

one of these goals would take 5 to 10 or more years. Yet, social movements often adopt a new medium-term goal as their major focus every two or three years."

When old goals are achieved, says Moyer, "they are rarely celebrated or recognized as successes. Astonishingly, the achievements of old goals are often denigrated as failures! They have been replaced by more important goals, and achievement of the old goals is viewed as irrelevant or even as a powerholder ploy to appease the public into thinking progress is being made! This not only denies movement success, but also further demoralizes activists and contributes to feelings of powerlessness and despair."

Many devotees in ISKCON have gone through periods of burnout. It occurs when we become emotionally, mentally, and physically exhausted from fighting Maya both individually and collectively with too little facility, support, or sense of commonly shared purpose and agreement on strategy. Sometimes even in the midst of temple life devotees can feel alone in their struggle. When we find ourselves psychically bankrupt, the only remedy is escaping from the struggle for a time. The sense of failure described by Moyer is clearly a factor in the most severe cases, and it's something we need to develop tactics for countering.

Cultivating a realistic view of our society's progress will allow us to acknowledge success and appreciate each other better. Celebrating that success and camaraderie can ignite the optimism we need to win our future challenges. It will also enliven our many Indian congregational members who seek spiritual comfort and sustenance at our temples without having to put up with hearing bickering or dire entreaties.

In a phone conversation, Moyer stressed the importance for activists to remain non-violent and for movement leaders to refrain from a dominating role

over other members. It is odd that those who reject the dominating aspects of the larger host society and subsequently seek personal power (self realization) so often, after achieving a position of power or leadership, will begin to dominate as the new "power holders" their movement's constituents, rather than help to meaningfully and spiritually empower them in turn.

To truly achieve success, "Social movements need to promote social change, not just minor reforms, by advocating a paradigm shift—a change in society's world view. A paradigm is the frame that defines the problem, sets limits on our view of the problem's causes and solutions, and sets the terms of the debate. The movement's worldview determines its 'politics.' To promote change, social movements need to advocate solutions that are consistent with the process of achieving a new paradigm."

Put in devotee terms, if we are trying to teach the world that we are all spirit souls, part and parcel of God, and His eternal, loving servants, then we must ACT like that and treat even the least among us as God's confidential and beloved servant.

For copies of *The Practical Strategist* and the Movement Action Plan, you can send a check made out to "SMEP" for \$6.00, and mail it to The Social Movement Empowerment Project, 721 Shrader St, San Francisco, CA 94117. Or you can contact Bill Moyer by phone or email at 415-387-3361; bmoyer@igc.apc.org

LETTERS & ESSAYS

Natures of Organizing, Bhakti at Odds

Clayton C.C. O'Claerach
Berkeley, CA, USA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta "grafted the creeper of *bhakti* onto an organization."

This is a tricky business, because the nature of *bhakti* and the nature of an organization are more or less opposed. Those attracted to organizations want to rise in the hierarchy, gain control over wealth and followers and so forth, and are less interested in cultivating pure devotion. Besides which, the organization pulls the other way, away from *vairagya* and into entanglement with wealth, politics, and so forth. Lord Chaitanya did not have any organization. He never solicited, "give me wealth so I may build big temples and have the prime minister inaugurate them!" He wouldn't even talk to a prime minister. Jesus Christ never had any organization either. All this comes later, and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta was not very happy with how his organization came out. Srila Prabhupada followed exactly in his footsteps, and much the same thing happened, viz. "after his passing, ambitious disciples seized control and . . ." you know the story.

The moral is, it is an erroneous idea to think that an organization is something more than the sum of its parts. We are simply an aggregation of people, equal spirit souls, trying to progress on the path Srila Prabhupada has so mercifully laid out for us. Anything further is make-believe.

That somebody is "brahmin," somebody is "swami," somebody is "guru", somebody is "initiated" and somebody else "not initiated," somebody is an "accursed, lowly woman," somebody else a noble "man"—this is all make believe.

We have gotten entrapped in the titles, names, and hierarchies of ISKCON and forgotten that we are all equal spirit souls—the vision of BG 5: 18.

Prabhupada Meditation
Thakor Topiwala
Pineville, NC, USA

*jatasya hi dhruvo mrtyue
 dhruvam janma mrtasya ca*

*tasmad apariharyerthe
 na tvam soitum arhasi* (B.G. 2-27)

"For one who has taken his birth, death is certain, and to one who is dead, birth is certain, therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you should not lament"

I was born and raised in India surrounded by a majority of Hindu faith people. When I migrated to the West (U.K. and USA) for my material prosperity, I was surrounded by a majority of Christian faith people. During my stay in India I never thought seriously about people of different faiths and denominations because it never occurred to my mind until I studied the translation and commentary by His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada on *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta*, and other Vedic literature. He presented the Vedanta philosophy in its original, true, pure sense. He presented the answers to the most basic questions of our lives, such as Who we are? Where we come from? Is there a God? If there is, what is our relationship to Him? How we can serve Him? What is the ultimate goal of life?

In this (so called) modern age, all different classes and ages of people use the term "freedom" very loosely. People are made to believe that they are to enjoy their freedom in all respects. Politicians of all the nations are making the laws which make people think that they have total freedom and that is the greatest illusion created by the atheist class of people for mankind. Swami Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada is the only saint boldly declaring to the world that there is no freedom or even happiness on this planet for anyone, whether they are human, animals, birds, or plants. because they are acting under the stringent laws of material nature. As mentioned in the above verse, we are all subjected to birth, death, old age, and disease.

Because of our desire to be immortal, people are even willing to have animal organs within their body to stretch their lives so they can enjoy their material senses up to the last breath. As Prabhupada explained, the stringent laws of material nature make all our future plans futile. Still egotistic mankind does not want to accept the supremacy of the Lord even though we are all getting more and more entangled in our materialistic complexities.

Prabhupada touched the most basic need and fact of our lives based on revealed scriptures and often he used the phrase that "it is so simple, where is the difficulty to understand?" Lord Chaitanya revealed the ultimate knowledge and goal for the entire mankind and His unique mission is fulfilled by Srila Prabhupada with the help of many sincere souls. We may differ in our beliefs and many find so many obstacles to follow his instructions, but the message is pure and absolute truth, and it is delivered by the pure devotee of the Lord for the benefit of mankind.

We are all indebted to Srila Prabhupada for his mercy for at least awakening our consciousness to a higher goal, but at the same time as Krishna says in the Gita, "ye yath mam prapadayante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham." I reveal according to the sincerity of the devotee.

Spiritual Health Report **PDS (Pure Devotee Syndrome)** **By Nikunjavasini Dasi** **Alachua, FL, USA**

Do you suffer from PDS, Pure Devotee Syndrome?

Unfortunately, many devotees have suffered from attacks of PDS in their lifetime. It is a spiritual disorder that is a serious threat to one's whole health; body, mind and spirit! It can strike when you least expect it. It is harmful to one's spiritual progress and physical well being.

It ruins relationships. It causes isolation and alienation from your friends and family members. It makes you believe you are actually better than others. It is a form of illusion that traps you into arrogant and manipulative behavior patterns. It can cause you to be mean and cruel to others. It can cause you to take yourself too seriously and then others, who think little of themselves, tend to believe that you truly are better than they are, and they take you too seriously, as well.

Many devotees have suffered from a mild case of PDS at sometime in their devotional life, but many of them recover quickly and seem to become somewhat immune to future attacks. The cause of PDS seems to be already in place before one enters the spiritual path. There seems to be two causes identified at this time but research continues.

The two known causes of PDS are (1) low self-esteem/self hatred/fear of failure and (2) narcissism/being enamored by oneself/exaggerated self importance

If you think you might be suffering from or know someone who is suffering from PDS there is hope. Now that spiritual researchers have identified and studied this potentially damaging disorder, there are known cures. Test after test has proven successful in minimizing the symptoms in most of those who suffer from this painful condition. Researchers have not yet determined how this disorder is contracted. There is some controversy among them whether it is contracted upon contact or a genetic-based disorder due to a defect in one's personality. It can strike anyone regardless of age, *varna*, *ashrama*, or economic class. Beware of the symptoms listed below and if you suspect that you or someone you know may have this disorder, refer to treatment suggestions listed later in this report. Symptoms may vary.

Some symptoms of the onset of PDS: Upon applying *tilak* and Indian at-

tire one suddenly thinks oneself to be a pure devotee.

One compulsively feels the need to correct the mistakes of others without being requested to.

One imagines himself/herself to be better than others in spite of the fact that that her or she is riddled with faults, weaknesses and inconsistencies.

One mercilessly judges others behaviors even when they know nothing about those persons' lives or circumstances.

Because one compulsively attends temple functions, one automatically assumes that those who do not are not following spiritual practices nor have no spiritual merit.

One may publicly perform spiritual practices and rituals in *pucca* style but in private life may not practice what one preaches or live one's beliefs.

In public one acts kind and courteous to others but in private is cruel, harsh, manipulative, and controlling to close family members.

PDS can be spiritually fatal

PDS can be a progressive disorder and if left untreated for a long period of time can develop into spiritual malignancy. Although there is some data showing recovery is possible even in progressed stages, often when one reaches these stages of spiritual deterioration there is little hope of recovery and spiritual death is almost certain.

Advanced symptoms of PDS

One may seek for himself/herself fame, adoration, wealth, or a position of political or spiritual power (check your motive).

One neglects family members and duties in lieu of above persuences.

Loss of close relationships like friends, spouse, children, etc. due to denial of symptoms.

In the renounced order of life one surrounds oneself with money, opulence, women, and mindless followers who can be easily manipulated and oppressed.

One suffers from spiritual personality disorder (split personality); sometimes behaving as if very elevated and other times behaving very degraded; usually in denial of the later behavior.

When in a position of authority or responsibility, one uses that position to abuse, control, manipulate, and oppress others under their care rather than to guide, protect, and care for them.

Treatment for PDS

As we have stated, even advanced stages of PDS have been successfully cured if treatment has been applied with sincerity. There are volumes of literature dedicated to correcting this potentially destructive disorder but the treatment is actually simple and easy to apply. The most difficult aspect of dealing with sufferers is getting them to identify the symptoms within themselves and submit to treatment. Much like other related disorders, self-help is the only course of treatment with guidance from professionals, support from friends and relatives.

Treatment includes:

Taking an honest personal inventory and accurately identifying symptoms within oneself.

Applying the principles of humility and personal responsibility to one's attitudes.

Identifying harm done to others in proportion to the severity of symptoms.

When possible, making amends to those that have been harmed by your behavior.

Admitting to Krishna, oneself, and others where you are truly at spiritually (getting real, besides Krishna already knows your heart).

Learning how to respect the lives and struggles of others with compassion.

Leading others by honest example.

Understanding that externals are less important than true inner progress.

Minding one's own business unless asked for one's opinion or help.

Showing others and oneself respect in private as well as public.

Seeks position of responsibility in society for serving Krishna, not for personal gain.

If above position is obtained, vows to serve, guide, and protect those in one's care.

Checking one's self on a daily basis for new symptoms or relapse.

Seeing oneself as fortunate rather than better than others.

Focusing on similarities with rather than differences from others.

Respecting others' points of view and spiritual paths.

Loving thy neighbor as thyself and Krishna.

Attitude Towards 2000

Vyswambhara Dasa

H'Brooke, Qc, Canada

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, one of the pre-eminent *acharyas* of the Gaudiya Vaishnava Sampradaya that ISKCON now represents, prays in the following manner, "O my Lord, my master! O ocean of mercy! Through the association of Your own dear devotees You made me understand how to render service to Yourself" (Madhurya Kadambini, verse 8)

The philosophy of Krishna consciousness is all-pervading. When applied, Krishna consciousness addresses each living entity's most intimate desires, feelings, needs, and thoughts. At the same time it is a collective experience—the greater the number of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu's ecstatic sankirtana parties, the greater the blissful ecstasies of participating members.

For example, there is nothing particular about the coming of the year 2000 of the Christian era. Left by itself hanging in time and space, the year 2000 has no particular distinction from other years. Left to its own devices the year 2000 will hand out to humanity, with

great equanimity, the crop of reactions, good and bad, incurred by humanity and unstoppable.

However, by the study of consciousness and potencies thereof, we understand that if millions (and now by the power of the media, literally billions) of individual souls meditate upon the year 2000, decorating it with their highest aspirations and worst fears, then its importance increases accordingly. This is because even in bondage (explains Srila Prabhupada) the marginal potency composed of all the individual souls retains for each one the freedom to be the architect of its destiny by the subtle use of desire.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati has explained that as aspiring spiritualists, the Vaishnavas understand that once a particular desire has become expressed in the subtle mind it is fated to become a reality in the future. Therefore the present hoopla about the coming of the year 2000 that we can notice with its wildest scenarios of impending doom or unrealistic technical, scientific, social, political achievements is nothing but the throes of a humanity dancing madly in the fire of its own making.

Fundamentally the devotees of the Lord care not a fig about such displays. The age of Kali will go its course for the next 427,000 years and the business at hand in all circumstances is the learning of the glories of the name, form, qualities, and pastimes of the Supreme Lord Krishna.

However both Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Prabhupada and Srila Prabhupada unearthed the secret of *yukta-vairagya*, using all things as opportunities to serve the Supreme Lord by serving His devotees. Movements of mass consciousness should be steered to productivity, just as Srila Prabhupada single-handedly harnessed the revolutionary days of the sixties to propel Krishna consciousness upon the world stage.

This is very germane to the present situation of ISKCON and its Governing Body Commission. In many ways, too numerous to discuss appropriately in this forum, ISKCON has become a victim of its own success. This, in a sense, was almost inevitable. The departure of the *acharya* has traditionally disoriented the disciples and followers who, in the absence of vigilant guidance, are victimized by the over-watchful illusory energy. The most recent example being the Gaudiya Matha institution which became very successful in India during the presence of its founder-acharya Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati but degraded in a few short years after his departure.

This kind of victimization is in fact inherent in the success itself. "This path of worship is the simplest; but if the purity of the *bhajans* is in any way disfigured by a tinge of the contaminated desires for recognition, distinction, and reverence, then the *sadhana* is thrown off the path of *vraja-sadhana*, the mood of Vrindavana. One must approach the spiritual master with simple humility and learn the pure process properly." (Sri *Harinama Cintamani*) We find the same admonition in *Madhurya Kadambini*: "Anarthas arising from *bhakti* itself are like powerful weeds that grow along with the main plant. With *bhakti* appear wealth and other facilities, worship and respect by others, a comfortable position, and fame. These weeds grow very powerfully and overwhelm the heart of the devotee with their influences, retarding the growth of the main plant intended for cultivation, *bhakti*." Also, "Deceit is like a corrupted wife who is very careful to act as a faithful one less her husband suspect her character. To win the favor of the spiritual master, to gain fame amongst the devotees, and high regard in the eyes of the public, clever men adopt devotional life in the hope of fulfilling their deceptive ends." (Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura,

Sri *Caitanya Siksamrtam* 5.4) And finally, "Hankering for honor is in fact a shameless prostitute who yearns to be worshipped. All other unwanted desires may be eradicated, but the hankering for honor and distinction is extremely difficult to uproot. It is like a seed which sprouts only later into a deceitful plant from which all other *anarthas* stem. Thus it is called shameless, for it conveniently overlooks its own evil influence. Fame is like a dog, and one who runs after it is factually eating the flesh of a dog; thus the desire for material honor and distinction is compared to a low-class prostitute who consumes dog meat." (Sri *Manah-Siksa* by Raghunatha dasa Goswami, verse 7, purport by Srila Bhaktivinoda)

In fact, at the very outset, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* warns that *bhakti* shuns any religion that becomes materially motivated: "dharmah projhita-kaitavo'tra" (S.B. 1.1.2)

For the welfare of all the highest truth must be distinguished from illusion. If deceit is allowed to thrive then the society's success turns sour like milk gone bad and the citizens become greatly afflicted. Women and children go unprotected. Material schemes are introduced to try and stem the tide of decadence. Oligarchies form. Disputes, quarreling, politicking manifest. As ISKCON reaches maturity, many of these symptoms have become apparent in the body social of the Vaishnavas.

The sincere well-wishers and followers of Srila Prabhupada have become greatly concerned about the mix of success and utter failures that has troubled ISKCON in its 20 years since the disappearance of Srila Prabhupada from our worldly visions. Like a cork bobbing in the mad ocean of Kali ISKCON has known the very heights of success as well as the very depths of failure.

It is not unrealistic to channel the mass emphasis on the year 2000 in the

general populace to the advantage of the Krishna consciousness movement. The leaders of the movement, all the sincere followers should consider that in the attempt to restructure the social architecture of the ISKCON society, one factor must predominate over all others. If the Vaishnavas are to succeed in creating a self-perpetuating society that can cross over the usually fatal generational gap, they can only rely on the *vani* or instructions of the Maha-Bhagavata Siksa Guru Founder-Acharya: "The word of Gurudeva is my pillar, there is no such learning in this world, no such sound reasoning in all the 14 worlds, no man or God with such common sense." (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, *Sri Caitanya's Teachings*, Chap. 6, a paraphrasing)

The ISKCON movement is most fortunate. Although on the one hand it faces the greatest challenges to its harmonious development, although many devotees have lost faith in the movement (some preferring to stay aloof, some joining other groups of the Vaishnava kind or of the philosophical deviations kind, some beginning their own movement choosing to imitate their guru rather than to follow his instructions), although the *varnashrama dharma* seems to be in shambles, and although many are preying upon the movement as vultures appear when a potential victim weakens under the scorching sun in the desert—in spite all these apparently insurmountable obstacles—the ISKCON movement can easily come out victorious.

The incarnations of mundane knowledge appeared disguised as a raging bull and caused great fear in the hearts of the inhabitants of Vraja. But Lord Krishna easily destroyed the demon and under the pretext of purifying Himself for killing an animal that Vedic scriptures consider sacred, the Lord, in connivance with Sri Radhika, created Sri Radha-kunda. Sri Radha-kunda is the place of

predilection of the Vaishnavas throughout all the universe, "there is no limit to the glory of Sri Radha-kunda." (Srila Prabhupada)

In the same manner, ISKCON was divinely inspired to serve as a shelter for all of humanity. This is a very tall order. In fact it is completely arguable that as Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati says, "the materialistic devotees think they can reach Mathura-dhama by buying a train ticket," when in fact no one, for example, can bath in Sri Radha-kunda unless he immerses himself in the instructions of the spiritual master. ISKCON is like a living incarnation of Sri Radha-kunda, but only to the extent that it reflects exactly the *vani* of Sri Gurudeva.

We should be very grateful that Srila Prabhupada, having experienced the failure of his own spiritual master's institution, has instructed us how to avoid the same dire fate: "I have gotten this personal experience in my Guru Maharaja's institutions. Different godbrothers took the words of Guru Maharaja in different interpretations for sense gratification and the whole mission was disrupted. I am always afraid of this crack, but I am sure if our aim is to serve Krishna sincerely and the spiritual master simultaneously, that will be our success." (Letter to Tamal Krsna, Oct. 18, 1969)

It is an open secret that our modern *acharyas*, beginning with Srila Bhaktivinoda, have determined that to achieve widespread societal influence for the *sankirtana* movement's future *acharyas*, such as might appear by the will of the Lord, must learn to cooperate together rather than impose their independent views on others.

In these troubled and yet auspicious times, as the world is poised full of hopes and fears for the coming of a new millennium and its potential "millennium bugs," the followers of Srila Prabhupada

should take stock, revisit by collective intelligence and coalescence of experience the *vani* of our own beloved founder-acharya who provided his famous formula for others to achieve unity in diversity: "Material nature means dissension and disagreement, especially in this Kali Yuga. But for this Krishna consciousness movement, success will depend upon agreements, even though there are varieties of engagements.. That is the difference. The materialists, unable to adjust for varieties and disagreements, make everything new. They cannot come into agreement with varieties, but if we keep Krishna in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity. . . With our GBC and serious men present (in Mayapur) we should discuss how to make unity in diversity. . . That will make our movement successful. One section of men have already gone out, therefore we must be very careful to maintain the unity in diversity." (letter to Jagadisa, Oct. 18, 1973)

The onus for this task rests more squarely on the shoulders of the GBC in whom the administrative power for the society in resting: "The GBC members should form a constitution of how the GBC members manage the whole affair." (To Giriraj, Aug. 12, 1970)

If the GBC is itself stung by the poisons of impersonalists, individualism, and is confused as to what to do, as it was in 1987 when the devotees had to intervene in order to dismantle the false concept of "zonal acharyas" then it becomes the sacred duty of all devotees who sincerely want ISKCON to succeed.

All other projects should take a back seat temporarily and the leaders of the movement should organize things in such a way that collective intelligence is concentrated with as much intensity as possible in achieving a constitutional form of governance similar to that of materialistic societies but for the right purpose

of serving humanity, protecting the citizens, and ensuring minimum purity standards: "The mode of organization of a social group. the fundamental organic law or principles of government of a society embodied in a written document" (Dictionary definition of the word constitution). A constitution is the very characteristic of a thing. A constitution for ISKCON will reflect in distilled form the consensus of the Vaishnavas on what is Srila Prabhupada's exact legacy and how it will be enforced for the protection of all who pledge allegiance and sincerely work to achieve the goals of the mission.

By electronic conferencing and such it is entirely conceivable that the Krishna consciousness movement endow itself with a constitution ratified by the GBC and other saintly Vaishnavas in Mayapur Dhama in the year 2000. There is no conceivable reason for procrastinating about this task. There is no problem presently confronting ISKCON that will not be incrementally addressed by a constitution that actually reflects the will of the founder-acharya. It is not very commendable that all sincere devotees not promote this organization and realization of a constitutional convention since a constitution is like fundamental corner-stone of any social organization without which anti-social behavior, no matter how well intentioned, may be defined by anyone as representing the collective standard.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to express these thoughts in pursuance of "guhyam akhyati prechati," the discussion of confidential topics, one of the six preceptorial *priti-laksanam* recommended by Srila Rupa Goswami. May he give us all the shelter of his lotus feet.

Nimai Bhakti Prahlaḍa Dasa
A Child of Krishna Died 12-13-98
Jahnava Dasi
Alachua, FL, USA

Nimai, better known as Dasa amongst his friends, hung himself from the Broadway Bridge in Portland, Oregon, in the pre-dawn hours of Dec. 11, 1998. His soul left his body during the hour of Nrsimha on Dec. 13, 1998. He was 26 years old.

Dasa was shy, trusting, and loving as a young boy who became a victim of the most degrading and hideous act of our society, child abuse. He suffered under those who, poised as devotees and his teachers, took away his trust, security, peace of mind, and innocence. Let us understand the pain that these children have endured and open our hearts with love and support so that they can overcome the adversities and pain in their lives and learn to trust Srila Prabhupada, His devotees, and the true meaning of the Krishna conscious philosophy.

In humble respects and sorrow, Children of Krishna has aided the family in the costs for his cremation. Let us all do what we can to assist our youth.

Dasa's mother, Karunaayee, wrote:

"I cannot tell you how comforted I feel by the care you are giving one another in the aftermath of our debacle. Prabhupada told us a zillion times over, 'just use your common sense,' but he couldn't quite grasp that we more or less had none. We were the several thousand stooges when it came to common sense, and even when he'd lay it out in the simplest language we'd let it in one ear and out the other—not always and not all of us always, but way too many of us and way too often.

"Yet from the junk heap of our more innocent cluelessness and the out and out crimes some of us perpetrated on you (ISKCON youth), you have scraped away the crud and revealed the precious jewel of your own love for one another.

"We can fall at your feet through all eternity and it will go for naught but that somehow you redeem us with your grace.

"How may I tell you what it truly

means to me to see you cover your brother's back and take care for him that he should go with dignity and ease for all his family from this sad old Marga Loka wherein my own brothers, entrusted with his care, turned upon him with cruel fangs and claws, tearing away his very childhood, turning it to a nightmare too horrible to be borne.

"Let one honest tear for him fall from the eyes of my brothers who did this to him and I shall forgive: my own gnawing guilt makes it impossible to do otherwise.

"And to you, his siblings, you are my teachers and you humble my heart. I take the greatest joy to know that your own dear children will never walk the bitter streets that met my gentle, tortured Dasa in the aftermath of the Holocaust."

For more information or if you would like to help, please call 904-462-1081.

**Some Thoughts on Vaishnava
 Aparadha, Women in ISKCON and
 Srila Prabhupada's Standards**
Mark DeFillo
Staten Island, NY, USA

Thank you very much for your prompt response to my request for a sample issue. I enjoyed it immensely! I had not realized the exact format of your publication, but this is a format that I had dreamed of using for a future periodical. I am gratified to see that this concept is already being successfully used.

There were two issues that I could not help wanting to respond to. Please find enclosed two papers (whether you want to consider them letters or articles I can't predict) accordingly.

As *Priti-laksanam* is meant to be an internal publication and not a "public forum," I must describe my exact position. I am not initiated in the Gaudiya tradition, nor with any specifically Vaishnava initiation. I hold a Druidic initiation, which is to say the second-

birth brahminical initiation of the Celtic culture, which is the Western branch of pure Vedic culture (I will provide an outline of the relevant evidence from science and from *sastra* to back this statement up, if you are inclined to doubt my words.), as is increasing recognized by Hindu leaders, including Vaishnavas, and at least one or two GBCs.

I belong to the Celtic equivalent of Vaishnavism (derma Uisniaca). Actually, I am considered a leader of it, for some reason, as I am definitely unworthy of it. In addition to those affiliations, I do also have strong ties to ISKCON. I am a member of the BBT membership program. I was for a time helping the ISKCON Prison Ministry by writing to inmates, and I also wrote an article for their publication, a commentary on a particular portion of the Bhaktivedanta Purport to *Sri Isopanishad*. I regularly attend Sri Sri Radha-Govinda Mandir in Brooklyn; I have attended various Rathayatras and have done wheel-guard duty on several occasions. I have a particular taste for *nagara-harinama-sankirtana*.

I write my submissions strictly in the spirit of Srila Prabhupada's tradition, notwithstanding my other a

By the way, my full name and title in English is Ven. Dru. Mark Defillo, D.C.E. and in old Celtic (I suppose it could be said to be a Celtic initiated name) with title: Cobios Druuis Belenios Ategnatos, Uergobretos Aballoni.

For years, I have been disturbed at seeing practically every debate or controversy in ISKCON accompanied by one form or another of offense. Devotees accusing each other of "being in Maya," lacking in *siddhanta*, etc. I humbly ask all devotees to consider their words when they write, and try to avoid all offensive thoughts against any Vaishnava. Actually, we should not be offensive to anyone at all. Of course, none is perfect; I certainly am not.

It seems that whenever there is some

disagreement on any little point, devotees often want to assume the worst of the other person. This is a very dangerous tendency. It is damaging to our spirituality. In effect, it damages the credibility of ISKCON and Western-born devotees among other Vaishnavas.

Let me briefly describe a few examples that I have seen or heard about, as well as offer some principles that I have heard from various senior Vaishnavas and from Vaishnava writings.

Whenever we judge another devotee we are committing an offense. Only a guru or another accepted authority should judge a devotee, and then it is as a service to that devotee. Otherwise, one loses the important trait of humility, which is the quality of seeing one's own faults honestly, but always seeking out the positive traits of another, and praising them. If they ask us for advice, or tacitly accept us as an authority (as when someone takes up temple life, he or she necessarily accepts the authority of the temple management in place) then we may offer it in the proper spirit, and not otherwise.

I have seen devotees decried as losing faith in Srila Prabhupada for going to his god-brothers when they felt the need for personal instruction from a senior devotee. This is not losing faith in Srila Prabhupada, for in all cases I am personally aware of, these devotees have gone to those of Prabhupada's god-brothers, or their disciples, who hold Srila Prabhupada in high regard and have a previous long-standing relationship with him. Therefore, if anything, the devotees in question lost faith in their god-brothers and what they were to Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON. These are very different things. The offenses committed to some of the senior devotees in question, the ones approached by the ISKCON devotees, are unconscionable under any circumstances. Vaishnavas must try to be humble in all circumstances and cer-

tainly should never offer any offense to any devotee, much less a senior or advanced devotee, even when there is disagreement. The *sastras* say that one should be respectful of a *sahajya*. So one may avoid the association of some, in preference of those sharing in the same lineage and *siddhanta*, but there is never a call for committing any offense, either by action committed or omitted (such as basic etiquette and hospitality). I cannot say whether or not the devotees who approached Srila Prabhupada's god-brothers did rightly or wrongly under the circumstances, but in most cases it is likely that their intent was to try to maintain their faith in Srila Prabhupada as best they could under very trying conditions.

In short, my point is that we should try to avoid all forms of Vaishnava *aparadha*. Part of how to do this is to maintain a humble and open mind, particularly in not judging other Vaishnavas. In addition, there are clear rules of etiquette for Vaishnava behavior, which all devotees should endeavor to learn and put into practice. These rules include the ways to deal with various types of relationships, such as the guru's godbrothers and other senior devotees. We should also endeavor to deal appropriately with all people. For example, among the basic definitions of the civilized human in Vedic society is honoring the rules of hospitality. The barest minimum of hospitality to the rendered to an uninvited guest is to offer a seat, a drink, and the means to wash up. Please note that these rules of hospitality were even maintained by the most degraded offshoots of Vedic society, such as the Vikings of Scandinavia. If drunk, meat-eating, piratical dacoits could as a matter of course offer hospitality, how much more so is it to be expected of the Vaishnava, who is supposed to be at the top of the Vedic culture?

I have seen visitors to ISKCON centers become alienated against ISKCON

permanently, simply for lack of hospitality by the *brahmacaris* present. At the time I was a first-time visitor myself, but too interested in the nectar to notice the lack of hospitality shown. The other person, who is well-known to me, has never since been able to think well of ISKCON, or any Vaishnavas other than her personal friends. Thus, the lack of hospitality shown to this woman has effectively caused her to commit countless Vaishnava *aparadhas* in her mind. She would have been satisfied had she been offered some water and a place to sit, as it was in the middle of a heat-wave; she would not have expected to engage in much conversation, as they were *brahmacaris*, and she respects the conditions of *brahmacarya*. So, not only must we try to learn and apply the principles of etiquette, it is also all-important for new devotees to be immediately trained in them, even before being given service, otherwise, they are at risk of offending, unintentionally of course, not only Vaishnavas, but the people we hope may become Vaishnavas when we have shared the nectar with them.

Srila Prabhupada gave his male and female disciples equality in many ways which were not done in Indian Vaishnava institutions. However, despite what some may think, this was not an innovation, but really another step toward the restoration of Vedic culture in its original form. In very ancient ages, women had essentially equal rights.

Equality does not mean sameness. Men and women are created differently and as compliments. Therefore, equality does not mean that men and women have the right to the same activities, necessarily. Further, men and women in general have different types of personalities and psyches from one another. Men usually have an inherent controlling tendency, while women usually have an inherent tendency to yield to the masculine controlling tendency. This is

what is meant when it is said that men are naturally dominant. It does not necessarily mean superior.

However, all of that is on the material platform. On the spiritual platform, all *jivas* are as women before the supreme masculine controller, Lord Krishna. Therefore, on the basis of this realization, within ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada wanted his disciples, no matter what their sex, to have the opportunity to serve and advance according to their spiritual nature and ability, not merely according to the gross material body. Of course we have to live in these bodies, so to avoid dangerous material entanglements, it is wise to have certain limits on the amount and type of association with people of the other sex. Srila Prabhupada carefully maintained such standards, and there was certainly no need to set stricter principles than he did.

If it is okay to set stricter standards than perhaps we should be required to chant 64 rounds per day, as Srila Prabhupada's guru required. No? We have trouble enough doing 16, or less in some cases? Then let us not be so arrogant as to think that we can change other principles without good reason.

As for *brahmacharis* being disturbed by female association, I can certainly sympathize. I am plagued by material desires, but it is my fault, my problem, and there is not cause to punish our Vaishnavi *matas* for our own shortcomings. Instead, we who are subject to these strong material impulses should recognize the *matas* as great Vaishnavis, spiritual beings striving for love of Krishna, and they should be seen as His. Is it not wrong to lust after the wife of another? Then how much more so the women of the Supreme! In such ways we can subdue the baser designs of our minds. If you try instead to banish the Vaishnavi from your sight or keep her under oppression, you do not fix your

internal problem, and you may well increase the "lure of the forbidden" that humans are so often subject to.

Once again, men and women are complementary to each other. Women, especially Vaishnavis, are wonderful and beautiful. Let us regard them as the garlands offered to Sri Krishna: fragile, beautiful, specially blessed, and most of all, the personal property of Lord Krishna. Who are we to decide what service Krishna wants from them? Srila Prabhupada taught us what the Vaishnavis should do for Krishna; so we have no alternative but to follow his instructions not only in letter, but in spirit.

According to Srila Prabhupada's instructions we must see all women in that way—except when Krishna allows us to marry them, so as to give other *jivas* the great opportunity and fortune to be born to a Vaishnava household. What then? She is still Krishna's as are we. However, we are now in a special partnership with her together to serve Him. It also allows us to share some material pleasures and enjoyment, used properly in His service. And how is this done? In the sacred act of mating to bring forth babies, made sacred by the appropriate *samskara*, we should especially be in the serving mood, not in the mood of taking or controlling. We also serve the partner, a fellow Vaishnava. In this way, we can do what is blissful for the other, and not simply attempt our own gratification. If done in the proper mood, a serving mood, then the bliss can be considered spiritual, just like the bliss of honoring *prasadam*. But note that the mood is to please the women for Krishna's, not to enjoy her.

What about the issue of henpecked husbands? Husbands with the proper moods and attitudes, in accordance with their nature, are less likely to be henpecked, actually. If you are wise enough to counsel with your wife, she may feel

less need to nag in order to be heard. If a man can speak with his wife and use her wisdom, it is a mark of his confidence, and builds up his leadership or "dominance." If he is afraid to do so, it shows that he is not as fit for the leadership function of a husband in Vedic culture, and the partnership goes awry. We are complements, and will work together best by pooling knowledge, experience, and ideas, as well as dreams, desires, and goals. If this is done, then there is likely to be less perceived need to nag and peck.

I speak both from some amount of life experience, but mostly from years of study of the principles of Vedic culture, spiritually, and also material reality, with which we must contend in this world. I make no claim to being an exemplar of the principles I have shared, rather they are the ideal that I strive for, having learned them from various sources, with a special emphasis on Srila Prabhupada's books, tapes, and disciples. I offer them humbly as a service to all Vaishnavas.

Female Friend Needs Help Deborah Majesky Greensboro, NC, USA

I address this to my gopsisters.

I have a devotee friend, female, in difficulty, and in an isolated situation (in USA) who humbly seeks help. If you have a room, or know someone (trustworthy and honest) who has a room, live near bus lines so she can get work since she doesn't drive, possibly a college is close by, or if you have something nice going on, would you be willing to help? She needs a place to live. Not an extra set of hands but to honestly help her get back on her own two feet. If you want, it only has to be for approximately 3 to 6 months, depending on how long it takes her to find a job, apartment, etc. After she finds employment she can pay rent. She can now pay \$20.00 a week.

This movement is supposed to be about woman protection, so please somebody, reach out. This woman has no children at home anymore and is an older, light spirited, and sincere senior devotee, nonjudgmental and open minded, but has boundaries. She is not looking for a *brahmacharini* type situation, follows 4 regs strictly, chants, etc. Not a fringe, not a fanatic. Please don't respond out of curiosity or gossip. Any real help will greatly be appreciated. She is in a troublesome situation. I seek sincere inquires only which can also offer a solution. And remember, to help a devotee is devotional service. Thank you. Haribol.

Please send replies to: 4705 Whitby Place, Greensboro, NC 27406; Kurala@aol.com

Spiritual Relationships? Forget About It Yogesvara Dasa NY, NY, USA

The following summary of a talk by Yogesvara Dasa on Dec. 4, 1998 at 26 Second Ave. is reprinted with permission from Matchless Gifts newsletter.

I thought I would talk tonight about relationship. After all, relationship is the essence of Krishna consciousness. We each have a relationship with the Supreme Person, Krishna, Who is God. We can live with Him eternally in a life of loving reciprocation. Or we can choose to live separately from Krishna, in which case we depend on the material enrage and take our chances.

Krishna consciousness is meant for people who are frustrated, who have come to the point of saying, "I've tried my level best to achieve real fulfillment and I can't do it. No matter how hard I try, it ain't working—Why?" That point of asking "why" is the beginning of human life, according to the Vedanta sutra. *Athato brahma-jijnasa*: now in this human form of life, which is the only form that permit

self-inquiry, let us inquire about Absolute Truth.

This *Bhagavada-gita* is compared to an instruction manual because it explains how to use this life properly. The first rule and regulation of Krishna consciousness is to always remember Krishna. And the second rule is never forget him.

While driving to the city tonight I was listening to a Prabhupada lecture and Prabhupada was saying that the test of advanced Krishna consciousness is whether every second of our life is being used in a way that reminds us of Krishna. Does this action have something to do with Krishna? If it doesn't, I don't want to do it. Of course, the pure devotee is someone whose every moment is an example of complete absorption in thinking, speaking, acting on behalf of Krishna.

Coming to the temple is a way to remember how we are meant to live. Wherever you look you see a visual image that will help you remember Krishna. What you smell are the foodstuffs and the flowers and the incense offered to Krishna. What you hear is discussion of Krishna. What you touch are books about Krishna and the instruments that we use to chant Hare Krishna. All of the senses are engaged. That's the purpose of the Krishna consciousness movement—to reconnect you with Krishna.

By profession I am a producer. About two years ago I got involved in a film that documents the testimony of Holocaust witnesses. A lot of lessons from this production have been important to me spiritually because they've reinforced certain fundamental concepts of Krishna consciousness. I wanted to tell you about one of these realizations because it touches on the importance of relationship.

For a long time I have been wondering what is it in Krishna consciousness that pulls us together? As I research

different religious communities I see that terrible events that happened in the past may serve to pull them together. The Jews have the Holocaust. Christians have the Crucifixion, the Crusades, the Inquisition. All of these events serve as rallying points to bring people together for reunion, renewal, remembrance, celebration, and for growing as a community. I have been trying to figure out if there is an event that serves as a rallying point for those in Krishna consciousness.

Recently something happened that suggested an answer. Someone informed me about a small group of individuals who are attempting to suppress the rights of women in ISKCON. They are up in arms about women taking a more vocal role, coming into positions of administrative responsibility, lecturing, leading *kirtana*, etc. As I read some of the correspondence from these people I began to recognize a pattern. I saw that if you replace the word "woman" with "Jew," you find a rhetoric of hate characteristic of Europe in the 1930s at the time of the Nazi regime.

That gave me a clue to the question I've been asking myself. I think the rallying point for devotees is to equip ourselves against the onslaught of *nirvaisesa* and *sunyavadi*—impersonalism and voidism. That's our Holocaust, if you will. The depersonalization of God and self is what Krishna consciousness equips us against.

What is the smearing of a community if not the depersonalizing of the individual? These are all Jews. These are all women. These are all blacks. As soon as you depersonalize the group, you rob from the individuals their personhood, their uniqueness, and you can point to this category and say this is the enemy.

That is in effect what impersonalism does. Impersonalism denies both God and the individual of selfhood. Relationships in the material world, for the most part, are very unsatisfying. Someone may

say, "I don't want to deal with the headaches of relationships. Eternally I'm a person? I got to deal with this eternally? Forget about it!"

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta gave an example of a poor man whose job was towing a barge up and down a river bank. On the bank there were sharp pebbles, stones, and twigs that were cutting his feet. He thought to himself, "Someday when I'm rich I'm going to line this riverbank with quilts, pillows, and blankets." It never occurred to him that if he were rich he would never have to tow that stupid barge again. But he's projecting his impoverished condition into what his condition of wealth will be like. And people do that spiritually. We think that personhood is so miserable in this world, it couldn't possibly exist in the spiritual world.

When you come to Krishna consciousness, when you come into the association of devotees, it is a reaffirmation of selfhood, a reaffirmation of the personhood of God, personhood of the soul, and the eternal relationship that binds us. And that is the single greatest gift that we could hope to receive.

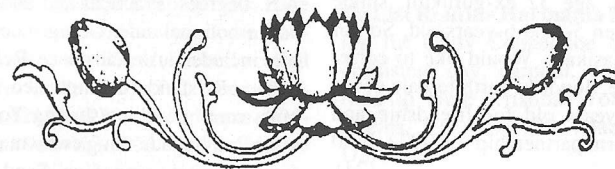
The proof that we have understood something about Krishna consciousness is that we will begin to see past the body to the soul, because seeing the body gives rise to that rhetoric of differentiation that ultimately leads to fighting. When we live our life on the bodily level, there's going to be fighting. When we live our life on the spiritual platform, there's a unity of purpose. So the proof of our understanding of the Krishna consciousness philosophy is that we will begin acting on that spiritual platform.

POETRY

By Prahlada Dasa
Troy, Jamaica

No Friends

No friends in sight
No one to comfort me
Except my Lord Sri Krishna
For His pleasure I write.
Who needs friends of this world?
The real friends are found in Vrindavana
By guru and Krishna I was told.
Krishna is the Supreme Friend
The ultimate protector
Krishna is the reservoir of all pleasure
Senses curbed, mind must bend
To reach His lotus feet
Surrender to His pure devotee
Krishna will never leave you
His *prasadam* you must eat.
You won't need any weapons
If you surrender to Krishna
Body guards won't be necessary
Krishna will always respond
If you call in love and humility,
His holy name Hare Krishna
Don't be afraid or doubtful
Just chant with love and purity.
He promised to protect the devotee
The Vaishnavas, the *bhaktas*
One whose only purpose in life,
Is to please their Lord you see.
Such a rare soul
Can conquer God
Krishna, the cowherd boy
Life's ultimate goal.
Krishna, the friend of all living entities
Lives in Goloka Vrindavana
But He especially lives in those
Who serve Him with loving Amenities.
A little common sense





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Lokanath Dasa, age 32 ex-gurukuli, single parent, 2 children 5- and 6-years old. Son of Vatsala and Shasikala. Would like to correspond with sane, down-to-earth female devotee 25- to 32-years old for friendship and possible long term partnership. 218-773-1680 Central time. (24)

20 Priti-laksanam

ISKCON Life Member, 35 years old, single, college-educated male seeking Krishna conscious wife. I have been in the association of devotees for over 12 years. I follow most of the principles of devotional life and chant on a regular basis. I'm into astrology, Krishna conscious rock & roll, FOLK programs, interfaith discussions, as well as writing and preaching Krishna consciousness at the introductory level. I have many plans for services, and need a wife (partner, not a servant) to help me. Please write me: Vasu Murty, 30 Villanova Lane, Oakland, CA 94611, USA. (27)

Indian Life Member of ISKCON for over a decade, active, in good health and spirit seeks Hindu or Hindu convert wife—young, healthy, loving, obedient, sincere, devoted, and complimentary. I am 49 years, divorced, in export/import business, financially independent, seeking relocation, and the most dharmic lifestyle as a householder in creative fulfilling and mutually beneficial relationship for the benefit of all beings, sentient and nonsentient. I have varied interests in the arts, media, and social work. Correspond with returnable photograph to Dhruv Dalmia, 199, Golf Links, New Delhi 110003, India. Tel/Fax 91-11-4617515. Every letter will be answered. Haribol! (25)

Prabhupada disciple, a young, fun to be with. 52. My interests: serving Prabhupada, sadhana bhakti, community development, preaching, agriculture, and reunifying Prabhupada's family. I'm desirous of correspondence, firm freindship and eventual marriage with like-minded Godsister or mature devotee. Paul de Jonge (Pundarika dasa), 760 Rex Dr. Hillsborough, NC 27278 or 110002.113@compuserve.com. (24)

Female Prabhupada disciple, joined 72. Two A.S. degrees. Practical and analytical with a soft emotional side. Doing inner work. Hobbies include music and dance. Relaxed Krishna conscious standard. Interested in innovative grass-roots preaching/sharing. Young 45. Seeking a Prabhupada-anuga who may become my future marital companion. Send recent photo.

birth time and place, and inquiries to Deborah Little (Daksinavari), P.O. Box 0526, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. (24)

Endeavoring devotee, 39, *brahmacharya*-trained *sankirtana* devotee seeking wife. I lived in India for one yar (7 months in Mayapur). Nowadays I live outside the temple but still associate with the devotees on a regular basis. I chant and read a lot and find peace cycling and writing poetry. Bhakta Chris, 7 Goathland Grove, Kemplah Park, Guisborough, Cleveland TS14 8LH, England. (24)

LINE ADS

ISKCON Communications Journal is a forum, or "market place," for preachers in ISKCON. Each issue has more than 60 pages and is full of dynamic and enthusing articles, written by ISKCON's preaching experts, to inspire and assist you in your preaching work for Srila Prabhupada. We invite you to subscribe! Just drop your name, address, and your check or money order in an envelope and mail it to: ICJ, 6 Quarry Court, Helens Bay, BT191TY, North. Ireland. Annual subscription (2 issues) \$18 or, 25DM, or £10.

SPIRIT-Not This Body! Upbeat magazine by/for gurukula student and Vaishnava youth. Each edition of SPIRIT-Not This Body!! is filled with contributions from around the world and is accompanied by a SPIRIT VIDEO! Send some background information on yourself, plus US \$3 for a sample issue. SPIRIT, P.O. Box 209, DeKalb, IL 60115, USA; email: krsna@niu.edu

Social issues? Spiritual Resources? Your concerns are our agenda! Keep up with Hare Krishna news, events, and new products. Subscribe to *Hare Krishna World* (formerly called *ISKCON World Review*), P.O. Box 238, Alachua, FL 32616-0238, USA. Phone: 904-462-5054; Fax 904-462-5056. To subscribe to

12 issues: US \$17; other \$29.

Stay in touch with the continuing progress in Mayapur. *The Mayapur Journal* is published quarterly and available by writing P.O. Box 4742, 6304 Zug, Switzerland. Subscription cost is US\$15.00 (1 year) or US\$25 (2 years).

Gurukula Veterans Journal—Online history of the ISKCON gurukula <http://www.bhakti.com/vets> now online: timeline history project, free subscription to online newsletter, Gurukula Yearbook, veteransjournal@steamboats.com or anudasa@aol.com (25)

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Krsna Culture devotional paraphernalia mailorder has moved to Hare Krishna Dham, Houston. Contact us at P.O. Box 926337, Houston, TX 77292, USA; 800-829-2579 or 713-290-8715; fax: 713-290-8720; email: krsnacultr@aol.com (25)

ISKCON Lawbook in Print. The ISKCON Lawbook (An Up-to-Date Compilation of All ISKCON Laws from 1975 to 1997), published by the GBC Press, is finally out. We are printing 1,000 copies for this first run. The book is 9" tall and 6.5" wide with 208 pages, softbound, costing US\$ 2.50 or Rs. 90.00 per copy. The book will be available for purchase in Mayapur.

To List Routine Harinama Party as a Chanting for Unity Connection Site (free), send consistent day, carpool, punctual departure time to Hare Krishna World Marketplace Events, P.O. Box 238, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. (24)

Priti-laksanam 21

...
Chanting for Unity is devotees of Lord Caitanya in and out of ISKCON increasing public chanting and joining in Harinama parties to give evidence we want to stop quarreling, develop fellowship, and cooperate to enhance the visibility of the Hare Krishnas appearing to enter the 21st Century in full force (even though we are not). This is a take action project that needs YOU. Please show support by sending action pictures and stories to Hare Krishna World, P.O. Box 238, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. (24)

SERVICES

Project Future Hope is the job and apprenticeship network for Vaishnava youth worldwide. Contact us with details: a) you can offer employment or training in employable skills; b) you are a Vaishnava youth seeking to learn employable skills and work in a devotee environment. Project Future Hope, P.O. Box 209, DeKalb, IL 60115, USA; email: krsna@niu.edu

...
The ISKCON Central Office of Child Protection is now fully operational and is thus prepared to investigate and adjudicate alleged cases of child abuse, both past and present. This office is working under the direction of Dhira Govinda Dasa, (David Wolf), who holds a Master of Social Work degree from Florida State University and has 7 years of experience in mental health and social service fields. If anyone knows of an instance of child abuse that happened to a devotee, please report it to: Dhira Govinda dasa ISKCON Central Office of Child Protection P.O. Box 1438 Alachua, FL 32616-1438 USA. Tel: 904-418-0882 Fax: 904-418-0982 email: dgovinda@aol.com Reports will be kept confidential, within the parameters of the investigative process. Please include with the report as much detail as possible, as well as contact information of the reporter, the alleged victim(s), and the alleged perpetrator(s). Our goal is to resolve past and present cases of child abuse in Srila Prabhupada's movement, and we thank you for your assistance in this effort.

22 Priti-laksanam

...
Plans are now underway for the 3rd Annual **Women's Conference** New Vrindavana Sept. 17 - 20, 1999. We are accepting papers/proposals for presentations and workshops. Lilasuka Dasi 304-845-7940; Radha Dasi 304-845-1094; Sudharma Dasi 904-462-2306.

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904-462-1081
afn56839@afn.org

Wanted: live-in nanny in exchange for room and board. From 11-6 Mon.-Fri for ex-gurukuli Lokanath Dasa's 2 children (5 & 6) in the state of Minnesota. Contact Shasikala Dasi at 336-593-9701. (24)

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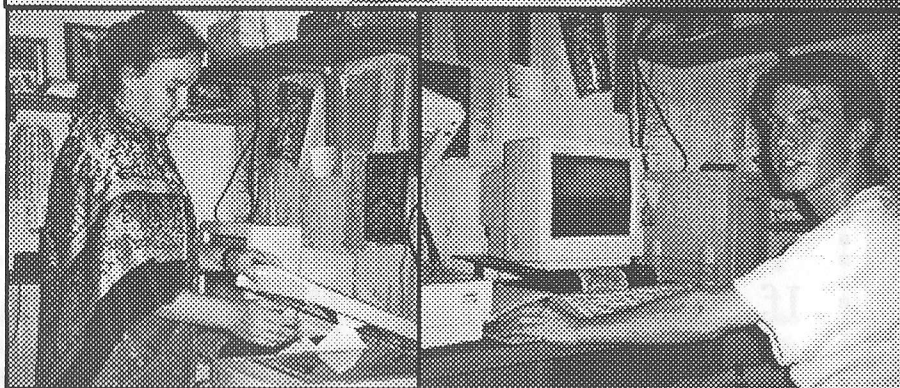
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INVEST OUR KIDS' FUTURE

For the last several years, Hare Krishna World has worked with local high school work-study students and with students enrolled in local ISKCON schools including the Vaishnava Academy for Boys and the Vaishnava Academy for Girls, as well as students in home schooling programs. Hare Krishna World aims to expand its training program and facilities. But we need a lot of help.

"Many of our youth are interested precisely in the kinds of skills that the HKW program covers. The more we invest in our youth, the more we will solidly build the foundation of Srila Prabhupada's mission."

Hridayananda dasa Goswami



"I have to pay hundreds of dollars to learn programs like Adobe Photoshop and Page Maker. But Hare Krishna World trained me for free. They take the time to help the youth because they genuinely care."

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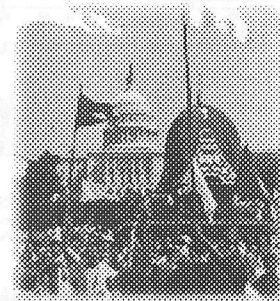
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Please send your contribution to: HKW Dept. Youth, P.O. Box 238, Alachua, FL 32616-0238, USA
 Phone: 904-462-5054; Fax: 904-468-5056, email: hkw@iskcon.net

IMAGINE!

From 17 years of publishing *Hare Krishna World* (ISKCON World Review) we have been collecting information about the Krishna consciousness movement. We have **thousands of pictures, slides, negatives, letters, documents, newspaper clippings, faxes, magazines, and newsletters** that trace the movement's development. Unfortunately the newspapers are yellowing, the negatives are shrinking, the faxes are fading, and everything is endangered.



Imagine . . . hundreds of pictures of festivals, devotees, art, dance, Deities, right on your home computer. **Imagine** your children researching school projects about any aspect of the Krishna consciousness movement. **Imagine** discovering pictures of old friends, old temples, old memories.

Now imagine we **didn't** save these things. The spirit and passion of the early years would be **lost**. Future generations would know **less** about what life was like when Srila Prabhupada blessed our lives. All of the beauty, all of the struggle, all of the work that made this movement what it is would be as **mortal** as you or me.

We know how to do it. But we **need your help**.

For **pennies** a day, you could make a **difference**. Help preserve the archives before our history is no more than a drawer full of dust. **Every** day that goes by, we all lose a little more.

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