

Free Write Journal #68

Free Writes

Thanksgiving

In the truly *International* Society of Krsna Consciousness, not many devotees know the meaning of Thanksgiving Day. It is essentially an American holiday. It is the history of the first pilgrims escaping religious persecution in England in the 1660s and settling in America. The pilgrims suffered hardships the first winter and had to build their homes. Thanksgiving commemorates their first harvest, when they had sufficient food. Unfortunately they were meat-eaters and killed many turkeys as their main staple food. At this time there were no wars with the Native Americans. The “Indians” and the Pilgrims cooperated in peace. The Indians taught the English how to grow crops like corn, beans and succotash. On Thanksgiving Day the pilgrims gave thanks to God for allowing them to survive and find bounty in the new land.

The members of the Krsna Consciousness Movement give thanks to Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for sending their guru, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, to America in 1965. Under Krsna’s protection, Prabhupada singlehandedly started the Hare Krsna Movement. Srila Prabhupada’s disciples and grand-disciples have developed what Prabhupada gave them into a worldwide religion with hundreds of centers and millions of followers all over the world.

On Thanksgiving Day we don't pray for material goods; Krsna is already supplying them without our praying. We pray to be able to render eternal devotional service to Radha-Krsna and Gaura-Nitai. They are the supreme enjoyers, and it is our duty and highest pleasure to serve Their transcendental senses.

Prabhupada *Murti*

Overnight, he wears a *chadar* covering his head. It's getting colder. In a few weeks we'll give him a wool *chadar*. He's 40 years old (12 inches); one of the first *murtis* made by Locana dasa. I hope he outlives me. Someone else can worship him. *Arcye visnau siladhir*: "Anyone who thinks the *murti* of Prabhupada is made of resin has a hellish mentality." He has a stern demeanor, as befitting a guru, but not unhappy. This is the Prabhupada who saved me, and I saw him for eleven years. Now for 40 years I see him in his *murti* form (in separation). He sits regally upon the *vyasasana*, back erect and hands folded in his lap. His bead bag is around his neck, and also a silk *pavitra* garland (which we change every third day to match the change in Radha-Govinda's dress). He receives a fresh change of water in the morning and three plates of full *prasadam*—breakfast, lunch and a cup of milk with fruit at night. He is dear to me. I glance at him throughout the day, and he reciprocates with me.

Sri Caitanya-carita

This is the physician Murari Gupta's book of Lord Caitanya's pastimes in the

first half of His life, in Navadvipa. Manohara brought the English translation to me from Mayapur. Murari was a devotee of Ramacandra, and Lord Caitanya could not change him to a *bhakta* of Lord Krsna. The Lord wrote “Rama dasa” on his forehead and praised him for his fixed determination to remain surrendered to Rama. Murari saw Caitanya Mahaprabhu as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he worshiped Him with great devotion. He wrote down all of the Lord’s miraculous activities. His poem is very sweet, and the Lord’s subsequent biographers draw from it because it is accurate and authorized. The poem tells of Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s transformation into the boar incarnation, Varaha. He danced around and held a waterpot symbolizing His lifting the earth planet from the Garbodhaka Ocean. Murari personally witnessed all this and wrote it down in great detail. Murari took part in the *kirtanas* at Srivasa Thakura’s house. He saw Advaita Acarya and Lord Nityananda join and witnessed their sublime interaction with Mahaprabhu. He tells of the Lord’s marriage to Laksmi and her passing away, bitten by a snake. Mahaprabhu consoles His grief-stricken mother, Saci, then He marries for a second time, to Visnupriya in a great ceremony.

During his visit here, Manohara and I shared the reading out loud and experienced transcendental bliss.

From *Soul Eyes* (A Book of Poems)

This collection was published in 2010. The title poem is one of my favorites,

and the favorite of readers also. A few devotees have memorized it.

“Soul Eyes”

“Prabhupada had soul eyes, brown eyes.

When he looked at you across the low table, he was unfathomable.

“Deep pools, soul eyes containing mystic secrets even beyond the words of his lectures. You thought, ‘This person is in touch with God.’ Sometimes he cried tears when there was talk of cow slaughter or abortion or the suffering human souls. A tear would streak down his golden cheek. His brown eyes held mystery I can’t express, but everyone who saw him knows what I’m talking about.

“He had soul eyes. ‘The eyes are the gateways to the soul,’ they say, and

it was true in his case. They filled with compassion and the unspeakable contact he had with Krsna. They expressed beyond words his intimacy with the Lord.

“Prabhupada had soul eyes, brown eyes, and they penetrated your own soul, left you naked before him in all your foolishness and sinfulness.

“He exposed you with his glance. He penetrated to your core.

“I loved his eyes and the message they conveyed. They said, ‘I love Krsna, Krsna is my love.’

“Prabhupada had brown eyes, soul eyes, and they came from deep within.

“He was friendly, yet distant. You

couldn't get close to him. There was a barrier in his eyes because he was so deep.

“They kept you from getting too familiar with him, like an equal or buddy. He was on a transcendental plane.

“He made you drop your eyes and not look further after a while. He kept you out, yet let you see he was a saint from another world.

“Prabhupada had soul eyes, brown eyes and golden skin. His lips were full, his skin was smooth, but especially his eyes caught your attention and convinced you he spoke the truth.

“He knew of truth beyond the surface. His glance told all, but you couldn't decipher it. He was a mystery, looking out from

soul eyes frankly at whoever dared
 to stare back at him. He was my
 Prabhupada, all soul eyes, beautiful
 brown eyes of the spiritual master,
 who came from the spiritual world.”

From *Vandanam: A Krsna Conscious Handbook on Prayer*

This book was published in 1991. It was intended as a more systematic presentation of prayer than my first book *Entering the Life of Prayer*, which was written “on the tongue” without much organization. I wrote it at a time when I was feeling ecstasy at the discovery of the inner life, and I was even reading the Christian mystics. To make a more straightforward and coherent presentation of Krsna conscious prayer, I embarked on *Vandanam*.

“Difficulties in Prayer”

“A Conflict Between Inner and Outer Life”

“Prayer attracts one to inner life, and so one has to find a balance between inner and outer responsibilities. In order to understand the need for balance, let us consider two extremes. A neophyte might become selfishly absorbed in his own meditation on God and withdraw

from other persons and from the world. He thinks, ‘There's only me and God.’ His concerns are not really God-centered but self-centered. He thinks his spiritual life is a private treasure and thinks that love towards others would be a threat to his spiritual intensity.

“In a conversation with Satyaraja dam Adhikari, Rabbi Jacob Shimmel spoke of the neophytes ‘loving the concept of loving God,’ which is actually a form of infatuation based on self-love. The immature devotee may think, ‘I am now loving the right thing. I am a lover of God.’ But this is basically egocentric, a form of pride and self-love. (*Om Shalom: Judaism and Krsna consciousness*, pp. 176-77)

“The walled-up worshiper is also criticized by Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati who declared, ‘My dear mind, why are you so proud of being a Vaisnava? Your solitary worship and chanting of the holy name of the Lord are based on a desire for cheap popularity, and therefore your chanting of the holy name is only a pretension.’ (*Krsna*, p. 882)

“The other extreme is the activist who neglects inner development. Unless he is talking on the telephone (or computer or fax) or mixing at yet another department meeting, he thinks he is not doing any important work. He doesn't know how to be alone—is afraid to be—and cannot sit quietly with a book or relish the holy name while fingering his *japa-mala* (‘Where did I put my beadbag?’). When he does chant, it instantly becomes a plan-making session. If he sees someone spending

even an hour in reading, or if he hears about ‘prayer,’ he mutters, ‘*babaji*’ and clumsily wields the quote by Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura as against all who relish *bhajana*. Gradually, the extreme activist loses touch with inner life in a way similar to the materialists. He also tends to push himself ahead for position and power, losing the quality of meekness.

“So how to find the balance? On the one hand, a devotee who has discovered prayer will desire more solitary contemplation, yet he knows he can't abandon his duty to give time and energy for actively carrying out the guru's orders and serving the devotees. The conflict may be solved by finding one's particular service in the society of devotees. When one first approaches the spiritual master, he has no specific duty but does whatever he is told, in obedience. Gradually, one develops a tendency for a particular service, and the devotees begin to appreciate him for this. Srila Prabhupada has said that the spiritual master should also be expert to know, his disciples' capacity, and will tell one, ‘You are fit to work in the kitchen,’ and, another, ‘You be editor,’ ‘You should be a manager.’ As one perfects his service, Krsna gives him more facility to do it well. A devotee's choice of service or spiritual career should not be seen as a material thing, although it may coincide with one's psychophysical nature. Even if one's tendency is tinged with motives, that can be purified by the service itself.

“Therefore one's degree of emphasis on inner or outer duties will be determined by one's natural work. We should also be cautious not to brand any service as ‘outer’ or external, as long as it is done with devotion. One person may pray with his mind or words and another with a hammer or cook’s spoon. And yet all devotees will benefit by learning how to turn to Krsna and prayer.”

“Furthermore, all good prayer will lead to good action.”

From *The Wild Garden: Collected Writings 1990-1993*

“*Vrndavana*”

“Hurry along, hurry as you do when they rush you through the Indian temples—you can only see the Deity for a moment or two. Life is short, and everyone has to pass through these doors, your father and mother, and before them their father and mother, and before them their father and mother, and before them, their father and mother *ad infinitum*. It is a wonder people don't think they are going to die, as if anyone is an exception. I can preach on this point using myself as an example, then after the lecture, some people will touch my feet. Like other *sadhus* I will then ask, "Where do we honor *prasadam*?" It is the most wonderful, amazing thing in the world.

“And who likes the old, the feeble, the dying anyway? Don't they get in the way of our vigorous lives? Don't they disrupt our plans with their measured slowness? Don't they sometimes act in disgusting ways? Srila Prabhupada detected this disparity in his own followers and he commented on it: ‘They don't like me. They think I am contaminated?’ We faithfully went to his bedside and chanted with him, but there was no activity. He wasn't speaking. So we went back to Delhi and caught our flights back to Los Angeles or Germany or London, back to work on Prabhupada's behalf. Business as usual.

“Why these ‘morose’ thoughts on this cold winter morning? My Lord, my guru, I pray that on my deathbed, I will think of you. I want to savor that verse as I savored it during my outdoor walks in Ireland—
 ‘. . . Whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.’ (Bg. 8.5).

“The destination ‘My nature’ may refer to many different abodes and relationships with the Lord. It does not automatically mean we go to Vraja. Srila Prabhupada writes, ‘Anyone who quits his body in Krsna consciousness is at once transferred to the transcendental nature of the Lord.’ This statement is like a *sutra*. If we put it together with all the other statements in Srila Prabhupada's books, we will understand that he is telling us to think of Krsna in a particular way—according to the mood of the residents of Vrndavana.

“Srila Prabhupada first had to convince us of the basics in Krsna consciousness. ‘If one wants to achieve success at the end of his life, the process of remembering Krsna is essential. Therefore one should constantly, incessantly chant the *maha-mantra*—Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/ Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare.’ (Bg. 8.5, purport)

“At the end of the *Gita*, Srila Prabhupada makes it clear that by ‘Krsna’ and ‘Hare Krsna mantra,’ he is referring to Krsna in Vrndavana: ‘ . . . The very form with two hands carrying a flute, the bluish boy with a beautiful face and peacock feathers in His hair. . . . One should fix his mind on this original form of Godhead, Krsna. One should not even divert his attention to other forms of the Lord.’ (Bg. 18.65, purport).”

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“In Vrndavana, gotta minute? Let me whisper in your ear. Life is more complicated here. For every word you write, ten are passed up. Words surround you like taxi *wallas*, ‘Hare Rama, Hare Krsna! Vrndavana?’

“‘Govinda, Govinda,’ that lady is singing. ‘Govinda, Govinda.’

“Madhava dasa is restless to go out somewhere, but where is the guide to take him? It makes you sad. So many sincere persons trying to understand who is Vrndavana and what is Radha-Krsna.

“You said . . . he said . . . a monkey on the brick wall said . . . parrots screeched in your ear and then flew off. The ‘Hare Krsna, Hare Rama, Nitai-Gaura, Radhe-Syama’ ashram has a new loudspeaker, and the International Society for Divine Consciousness has a white marble dome under construction on Bhaktivedanta Marg.

“He said there’s such a huge *Bhagavata-saptaha* underway that no ashram in town has a spare room. The line of beggars grows.

“Leg stump. ‘Govinda’ lady singing the blues. The Hindi lecturer over the PA system is listened to by his immediate audience, but also by two hundred and fifty squirrels and two billion ants.

“I just killed an ant unintentionally. By the time I noticed, he was twitching and it was too late. What can I do about it? Absolve it by prayer and preaching? Tell someone they should be nonviolent? If I were kinder, I would see the ant as my brother and take *care* to remove him. I write it down here. I’m sorry about it and I will try not to do it again.

“At least I can’t understand that Hindi lecturer floating over the airwaves. He’s cutting jokes and making dramatic asides. The birds in the sky don’t care.

“He said, ‘I think there is a bacterium in Vrndavana with my name on it and it’s just a matter of time until it catches up to me.’

“That lady *bhajana* singer bending the notes: ‘*Radhe-Govinda, Govinda Rad-he! Radhe-Govinda, Govinda Rad-he!*’ Over and over and over.”

2020

John Endler and I have solved the dilemma on book publishing. We are going to go ahead full force. We will make my 80th birthday year a special push. We plan to publish two books by early July and two books for next December, Vyasa-puja. I cannot expect Caitanya Candrodaya to do all the work on layout design and covers for four books, so I am turning to Lal Krishna at Oxford and asking him to do two books. We are going to change the themes in the format. Instead of *POEMS*, Volume 1, *POEMS*, Volume 2, and *POEMS*, Volume 3, we will use titles like *Meditations*, *Kaliedescope*, and *A Storybook*. To pay for these books we are launching a fundraising appeal. John and I think the meditations and poems are very good. They are taken from a golden, prolific time when I was writing *Every Day, Just Write*. I cannot expect all my disciples to share our passion and love for these writings. We are asking disciples to take them, and if they don’t find the book palatable, we are encouraging them to pass the book on to an acquaintance who likes poetry. To pay for the printing and shipping of these books, we are launching a fund-raising appeal. Our goal is to raise \$3,000 for each volume. Let the disciples help their guru to distribute his writing while he’s alive. He has faith they will be useful and helpful to sympathetic readers.

Writing Sessions

Karttika Papers

These excerpts from spontaneous practice were done in 1994 in Mayapura, India.

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“My master carries me across. Be kind to others. Tell them, ‘Here is your sandwich on monk’s bread, made in New York State. Taste how firm it is. With Skippy’s crunchy peanut butter or some good jam or strawberry jelly.’ You okay? Are you okay, or what’s wrong?”

“Cross-eyed I’m not. Right now, okay in head. *But you don’t know me!*”

“You don’t care to know me.

I don’t care to tell you

and neither can I express—it’s

like *viraha*? Maybe—some symptoms of ennui.”

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“John Young smoking cigarettes (which I never did), clouding up my room, and beer until the end of night. I had to turn on the Vornado fan to high exhaust and get it all out before I could sleep.

“Sick and sad.

“But happy energy of youth—I had little time. Rose at 6:00 A.M. (Mother too, off to her job at Chase Manhattan Bank) and study and go to Brooklyn College, you doing okay . . .

“Cope, cope, COPE

“I’m not the same person—yet I am not so, now . . . a big spiritual master. If this is true of me, then I say ‘Crap.’ I say it might be true of you. Would you like to go from head to heart in chanting holy names?

“Oh, mama

I mean wow mama,

not all Catherine Sullivan,

but Mama Earth, Mama Vedas

Take your son on your lap.

Mama of Lord Caitanya, you also gave

your breast milk to all devotees

I am suffering in round-about

way in separation

from the half-moon

or as

jive

LOVE-PEACE

but said maybe English

is inadequate for RASA

I don't know RASA.

Srila Prabhupada praised English, but Hindi is for fanatics.

English for worldwide preaching,

but feelings in gut are in English or French or Guarino

and spill out

inchoate ache

small of back

Oh! Ah! Ow!

I howl (Ginsberg)

'My Barbaric Yawp'

Poets cry

heaven's sigh

I can't tell you how I feel just now.

Not a cat in alley

or violin from his gut-string.

Lord lord."

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“When you don’t write for half a day, then you lose touch, and it’s harder to write again. Especially the permission to express yourself and to access to your feelings. You get covered up, and I don’t think that’s good. I write to clear away the constant ‘snow.’

“I am facing Lord Nrsimha. I ask Him to drive out bad thoughts from my heart.”

(Notepad #3,
p. 135)

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“October 31st (far from Halloween)”

“When I went into the bathroom at 3:00 A.M. this morning, in the moment I actually put on the light, bugs just started pouring in. The sink basin became filled with them, and they were bouncing off my body. I turned off the light to take my shower and toilet duty that way. But then I had to put on a light for other services, like putting on *tilaka* and dressing. Again the bugs started bouncing, and I also started jumping around and exclaiming.

“Tomorrow we’ll try a new strategy of just completely closing the windows, because the bugs are coming right through the screens.

Prabhupada talks about it in his lectures, how in Mayapura during the night these creatures are born and live and die in one night, and how in the morning you see heaps and heaps of bodies. Sometimes when I heard the lecture, I felt he was exaggerating when he said that there were thousands and thousands of bugs and heaps and heaps of bodies in the morning and that you could sweep them away. Now I see it's true. Why don't I take Prabhupada literally true on face value all the time? Just a matter of time before you find out that what he says is true."

*(Notepad #3,
p. 36)*

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"How come you so silent, man?

Oh, because I'm special. My brain doesn't work well. I want to be seen as excellent but

when a fool speaks, you know he's not special, just struggling on the relative plane, and so his

silence isn't so deep. Another gob (sailor), another jarhead.

"Another year in a GBC hall.

Leave the room and wait by the rail, tell your secretary, 'Get out of

here. Let's go and preach next

year or stay at Gita-nagari.’

Wail at the rail balustrade

moon of Mayapura and masses of people near Gaura-

Purnima,

You say, ‘Get me out of here,’

but the secretary can’t do it, not in his powers.

You are trapped in

the world of Durga by your

own desires to enjoy.”

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“It’s almost a cliché to say that Mayapura isn’t as intense as Vrndavana. I think it’s me who likes the intensity and receptivity, and that’s a cliché also.

“Maybe when you are away from here you can remember early mornings, the big room in TKG’s suite, darkened, with light projecting into it from a next-door room. The large portrait of Nityananda—and beside it Lord Caitanya—painted by Mayapura artists. I chant back and forth between my newly-returned Prabhupada murti. Waiting for something to happen? Knowing it won’t happen? Pondering about “it.” What kind of breakthrough do I expect? What is lacking? Being in India is the same as being anywhere else? Where am I anyway, in mental

space?

“A devotee here gave me this verse printed on a card like a placemark: ‘I praise Sri Mayapura, where a dabbler who walks down many paths at once, a fool, one who has rejected proper religious duty, an independent person who will not follow the rules of the scriptures, a person who has not the slightest scent of the touch of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and those who live here only out of lust and greed, all attain the supreme destination.’ (Srila Prabhodhananda Sarasvati, *Sri Navadvipa-sataka*, Text 39).”

(Notepad #3,
pp. 143–144)

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“Night Before Parikrama”

“Canakya’s Ethics, a squashed many-footed
bug-centipede insists—words go out
on *parikrama*. Bring your beads
and don’t look at girls. Don’t find fault, don’t complain
don’t complain, don’t look at clouds
as white stuff only.
I will make sense like an orderly

boy. Now stop and think it over.

“Lord Caitanya’s everywhere, and it’s up

to us to see Him in the *dhama*.

Sats will tell us. He is gonna die.

Let’s see how he measures up to *that*

in his free-write.

“We’re going to Lord Caitanya’s birthplace.

‘Write,’ he said, ‘bring a notepad and write

down what you notice.’ I’ll have

to say, ‘Cramped binoculars have

jammed into my gut. I can’t pray.

I completely spaced out.

Lord Caitanya, where are You?

I *do* like these devotees, guys and gals

from America,’ for example.

It’s uncanny how he brought

us here.

“Srivasa Angam, Advaita Bhavan. We’ll have

breakfast there. It used to be a village

and they lived
 next to each other, Jagannatha Misra, Srivasa
 Gadadhara . . . We're going there. You don't have
 to be barefoot, just appreciate.
 Gape and agape.

“Bring water, clear pure Bisleri or
 from deep well of Mayapura. Don't drink out
 there. Chipped rice and potato and sweet will be
 served. Don't eat too much. Goose and gander.
 I got nothin' to lose? No, I got plenty at
 stake. So believe! Don't be a
 mushroom thinkin'
 because in private I write like this therefore
 I am better.
 Or because I don't watch
Bharata-natyam dances, I'm better. Or just
 because who I am, I am better.
 My eyes! I can't
 block 'em out. Just ask them to be
 kinder. Do unto others . . .
 walk on tar road. Walk to Yoga-pitha.

“You can go back to Godhead, he said,
 the spiritual sky—from here. Pshaw,
 I thought, how does he know that?
 You see what I mean? Lord Nrsimha can
 tear out those bad thoughts.”

*(pp. 145-146,
 Notepad #4)*

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“Oh, some new plan!
 Some new bag:
 Anything! Put the typewriter
 on the desk instead of
 out of reach—catch words for print and
 some yourself.

“Therefore, I said (I’m speaking this to the little
 Jagannatha Deities on my desk, may
 They travel with me?)
The Karttika Papers are loose,
 theme-less (seamless?)

Aunt Jo lost her finger
 in a machine, working
 class gal 1940s, my
 Aunt Josephine. Her
 daughters were Jackie and
 the other I can't recall.
 I played doctor—or
 I mean nurse and patient.
 Don't remember it, pre-puberty
 sex. Don't titillate, don't
 excite memories of the past
 like big bands of the 1940s.”

*(Notepad #4,
 pp. 148-149)*

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“Why don't you enter *radha-*
dasya? Why don't you
 act out a farce, a bulletproof vest,
 a besmirched scribe?
 All these rhetorical questions—
 why not write a pretty song?”

O Ugra Lion-Man,
 Your black body, Your
 stance of ready-to-fight,
 massive black head
 plainly silver teeth and
 ten arms and hands. I can
 almost see them all—be real for me,
 I don't fear You because
 You are our protector against
 evil. Therefore, I ask You
 please come alive—and
 tear out the roots
 of my *anarthas*.”

(Notepad #4,
 p. 150)

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“Now you could quit this. I'm a little surprised it's coming out like this, unregistered-trademark silly splurge. But it has, I'm sure, a serious import. It's like madness caused by heatstroke. It's a petulant overthrow, or

“Gas built up
 pressure until it
 explodes the lid off.
 Agh!

“The disciples march on, march up, stand outside the door of a hall,
 and I enter and spoof them by reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam* as if I really
 knew.

“Then I plays me banjo
 and we collect the bill and
 donation.

“This one is on me, it’s free. But if you wish to make a donation,
 give it to Tribhanga-Sundara, his name means Krsna who stands in
 three-curve bending way. Little Damodara, go see him in January-
 February snow, when not many will come and bother you, I hope. Write
 then. And now. In the belly of the whale.

“At this place Lord Caitanya . . .’ Read and weep. I can do it and
 like it. This goofy-serious writer isn’t all-in-all. I exist also as a person
 who likes to read a Bhaktivedanta purport and lecture a little on it.

“Roll on wild here. But this isn’t all-in-all. It’s the explosion, the
 rest (the non-written life) is also valid, straight, believed, regimented,

goes through paces, and he can eat and drink. But the soul is untouched by it all.”

(Notepad #4,
pp. 150-154)

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“After an Evening’s Disciples’ Meeting”

“I’ve got a headache.

‘You avoiding *raganuga*,’ he said, ‘while I am pursuing it and feel *acaryas* are encouraging me when I pray at their Samadhis in Vrndavana.’

His guru has gone simple, asserts,

‘It’s all in Prabhupada’s books.’

But I don’t want to bully him from my superior position as father.

“‘Are you tired?’ I asked the fifty disciples after an hour. But they looked alert.

I keep going, commenting from Prabhupada’s

1966 diaries, daring to expose my own thought
as ‘not best, but best for me.’

“How do you develop selfless service for
the guru?’ she asks. I’m at a loss to
answer precisely because

I don’t know myself!

Then did you bluff an answer?

Is this your poem, or are you
too busy with your family tonight?

“Sore throat, sniffles, give them all.

You can ‘write me letters.’ Pretend he can
take care of disciples but admits
there’s a limit.

“A stack of new letters on my desk but
I chose to come here to you, big page
and blue felt ink. Good night, they’re
singing *Namamisvaram*, weather changing,
I spouted out all I could, their
faces, best wishes . . . I lingered on
a Zen line, ‘When you carry wood,

carry wood, when you draw water,
 draw water' and said it can be included
 within Krsna consciousness. When you
 chant *japa*, chant *japa*, when you
 go to *mangala-arati*, be there. One
 devotee raised his hand and said, 'I've been
 keeping a journal here in Mayapura and
 I'm noticing
 the details.'

I had no comment.

No comment? Yeah! Details, Kaliya and
 the main thing also—the chanting
 and hearing
 and surrender day by day. Be here now—
 no other way. Oh—Srila Prabhupada,
 serve, a pure
 devotee has no desire for anything
 except his immediate engagement.
 And *that* is spontaneous *bhakti*.
 Not *raganuga*? Sorry, this is tonight.”

(Notepad #4,
 pp. 174-176)

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Note to readers: SDG personally encourages your feedback! Send your response to sdg@satsvarupadasagoswami.com.