

Free Write Journal #82

Free Writes

Gaura Purnima Meeting

On Saturday we entered Keli-lalita's yoga studio, and she was leading *kirtana* with the harmonium. Saci Suta was accompanying her with a short Indian drum. It was very nice. Gathered were about twenty adults and eight children. The *kirtana* lasted about half an hour, then I was asked to speak.

I had prepared a summary of Lord Caitanya's life, centering on the external reasons for His appearance and the confidential reasons. I told of His mischievous early childhood, His intensive school studies (in which He was a proud scholar and did not associate with the Vaisnavas). Then He became married to Laksmi. After that, He went to Gaya to offer *pinda* for the welfare of His deceased father, Jagannatha Misra. At Gaya He met Isvara Puri and was very impressed by him. Isvara Puri became attached to Nimai Pandita. Finally Nimai asked Isvara Puri for initiation. After this, Nimai's life changed completely. He returned to Navadvipa as an ecstatic pure devotee, always chanting the names of Krsna. He gave up His proud demeanor, and in His school He taught that all grammar ends in the worship of Krsna. He joined in the nightly *kirtanas* in Srivasa Pandita's house. He created a great influence among the Vaisnavas. Everyone respected Him—except the student *brahmana* community. Once, in the mood of the *gopis*, Nimai Pandita was chanting,

“*Gopi! Gopi! Gopi!*” A student happened to come by and hear him. He went up to Nimai Pandita and said, “What benefit will you get from chanting the names of the *gopis*? You should chant the names of Krsna.” Nimai was in the mood of the *gopis*, who are sometimes angry at Krsna for His creating separation from them. So He didn’t like to be advised to chant Krsna’s names. He became angry and picked up a stick to beat the student. The student ran away and joined an assembly of 1,000 *brahmana* students. He told them what had happened, and they all became angry at Nimai and began to blaspheme Him. They said, “Nimai is a *brahmana*, but we are *brahmanas* also. If He tries to attack us again, we will beat Him with our sticks.”

Nimai was omniscient and he knew what the students were saying. He became very morose and thought that although He was trying to influence people in Krsna consciousness, He was now getting the opposite result. He thought about it deeply for a long time and concluded that He would take *sannyasa*. As a *sannyasi*, He would be given respect. With a very few confidential devotees, such as Lord Nityananda, Nimai approached the *sannyasi* Kesava Bharati and asked for *sannyasa* initiation. When word of this spread to His Navadvipa Vaisnavas, they all became unhappy. They thought that as a *sannyasi* Nimai would travel, and they wouldn’t see Him. But the most devastated of all was His mother and His second wife Visnupriya. Sacidevi, Nimai’s mother was an elderly widow, and her whole affection and life was focused on Nimai. His wife was beautiful, pure and faithful to Him. Yet, for the benefit of the whole world, He left His family and accepted *sannyasa*. To solace His Navadvipa devotees, He returned to Advaita Acarya’s house

and stayed there for a week, holding *kirtanas*. His mother came there, and she requested that she only cook for Krsna Caitanya while He was at Advaita's house. She also requested that her son make His headquarters in Jagannatha Puri. Jagannatha Puri is close enough to Navadvipa that she could receive news of her son's activities. Lord Caitanya agreed to her proposal, and after leaving Advaita's house He traveled to Jagannatha Puri. I told more of His activities, including His tour of South India.

Then I told the confidential reasons for Lord Caitanya's appearance.

When Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu began his talk, he started by telling the nature of the Hare Krsna Movement when it first began in the West. He said it was seen as a counterculture movement. Those who joined had first dropped out of the "square" middle-class culture and became hip. But now they had to drop out of the counterculture and take to Krsna consciousness under Prabhupada's direction. Thus they were double-dropouts. They were seen as very far out!

When Ravindra talks, he ranges over different topics. He spoke of the prominence of Bhaktivinoda Thakura, who rescued Caitanya's movement from disrepute and established it as a true universal religion. He also spoke of Lord Caitanya as an "androgynous God." On the outside, He was a male, Krsna Caitanya, but within, He was female—Srimati Radharani. Ravindra Svarupa dwelt on the movement of Lord Caitanya as Bhaktivinoda Thakura uplifted it and passed on the legacy to his son, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati established sixty-four Maths throughout India and wanted to spread Krsna consciousness to the

West, specifically England and even Germany. He sent a few *sannyasis* there but they were not successful, and Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati called them back. Ravindra Svarupa said Krsna acts in perfect timing. And so He sent our Srila Prabhupada at the exact right time and to the exact right place—the 1960s and the Lower East Side of New York City—where there was a burgeoning movement of young hippies. Prabhupada was able to pick up followers by his dynamic presentation of *kirtana* and speaking realized knowledge of Krsna consciousness. It was Prabhupada alone who traveled at the age of 70 to America, and after spending a year without much results, moved to the Lower East Side, rented a storefront and began meetings three nights a week and every morning. He gradually drew a following, and after less than a year he left New York City and traveled to San Francisco, where his disciple Mukunda dasa had gone and had rented a storefront for another ISKCON center. Prabhupada had great success in San Francisco, and the devotees arranged the “Mantra Rock Dance,” at which Allen Ginsberg led the chanting of Hare Krsna. So Krsna consciousness was still affiliated with the counterculture, especially in San Francisco. Ravindra Svarupa said we now had to go forward step by step and fulfill the vision of Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya all around the world.

Book Report

We just finished our out-loud reading of *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*. It was a wonderful treat. We immediately cast ballots for the next book we would read. Bala is away in Trinidad, and so he could not vote. We were only three inmates at Viraha

Bhavan. The ballots turned out two in favor of the *Krsna* book and one in favor of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. So we began our first hearing.

The book begins, “Once the world was overburdened by the unnecessary defense force of different kings, who were actually demons but were posing themselves as the royal order.” Mother Earth (in the shape of a cow, Bhumi) was very distressed, and she went to Lord Brahma in his planet to present her case about the calamity. Lord Brahma was sympathetic, and he immediately went with the demigods and Bhumi to the milk ocean, where Ksirodakasayi Visnu resides. Brahma recited the Purusa-sukta prayers . No one could hear the Lord’s answer, but Brahma heard it in his mind. Then he told the demigods: “Krsna has said He will very soon descend to deal with the demons.” In the meantime, they should all appear on earth to play roles as Krsna’s elders. The demigods and Bhumi were satisfied to hear the Lord’s message, and they returned, pacified, to their residences.

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We are speeding through the childhood pastimes of Krsna. He is involved in loving dealings with His mother and father, and He takes care of the calves and plays with His cowherd friends. We have just heard the killing of Aghasura, a gigantic serpent who came to Vrndavana and opened his mouth wide to swallow all the boys and Krsna. Krsna went into his mouth and expanded Himself so that the demon suffocated, and his spirit soul popped out through the top of his skull. Krsna brought the boys back to consciousness, and they all ran out of the serpent’s mouth.

They saw the spirit soul of Aghasura hovering in the sky. Then the soul flew down and merged into the body of Krsna. Thus Aghasura, although trying to kill Krsna, got the benefit of liberation because Krsna entered his body on His lotus feet.

But the killing of Aghasura wasn't told in Vrndavana for a whole year, and this was a mystery to Maharaja Pariksit. Sukadeva Gosvami gave him the explanation. When Lord Brahma saw Lord Krsna as a small cowherd boy playing with His friends, he thought, "Is this my Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead?" Brahma came down to test the power of Krsna, and he wanted to show his own powers. So he stole all the boys and calves that were waiting for Krsna to return from searching for the stray calves. Brahma put them into sleep in a cave. When Krsna returned to the spot where the boys were, He saw they were absent, and He knew it was the work of Brahma. He then expanded Himself into the exact forms of all the individual boys and all the individual calves. He did this just to give the mothers a chance to love Krsna as their own son and give Him their breast milk. Krsna returned hom along with His expanded forms of the cowherd boys and calves, and the mothers felt new increased affection for their boys, who were actually expansions of Krsna. This continued for a year.

Visakha d.d.'s Favorite Picture

Visakha, the number one photographer of ISKCON, took this picture of Prabhupada around 1971 in Visakhapatnam, at the ashram of his favorable Godbrother Puri Maharaja. Prabhupada looks in good health. He is sitting in a

straight-back wooden chair on the porch of Puri Maharaja's ashram. He looks very relaxed and peaceful. His arms are thin, and he has his right hand in a bead bag. His left hand grips the arm of the chair. He wears a long garland of roses. It is a black-and-white photo, and Prabhupada's *sannyasa* clothes appear white. There is a wonderful antique quality to the photo. Prabhupada's lotus feet do not appear, but it's definitely a worshipable picture of the spiritual master, the Founder-Acarya of ISKCON. It is suitable for placing on the altar—Prabhupada with the *parampara* gurus. I keep this picture in a big frame in my ashram. As it is Visakha's favorite, it also one of my top favorite images of Srila Prabhupada. I can't produce it here, but you can look it up in pictures of Prabhupada in 1971, when he was touring India without a home base, just a small following of disciples and going from place to place.

Radha-Govinda

Radha-Govinda look very beautiful today. They are wearing exquisite outfits made by Tapan, the master *mukut-walla* of Vrndavana. The colors are light-green and pink. Radharani has an outstanding green skirt patterned in shapes like the feathery chests of peacocks. Now She wears a long black braid; I like it best when it's not adorned with flowers. Radharani's waist is thin with a silver belt. Her blouse fits perfectly over Her form. She wears just two small necklaces, which do not obscure Her breasts. On Her forehead is a silver *candrika*, the top of which points in the direction of Krsna.

Govinda wears a stylish pink turban made by Krsna dasi. It has decorative ornaments on top and a little peacock feather sticking out. Govinda also has a pink middle-piece on His *dhoti*, and His lotus feet, with red anklets, are exposed, with one leg bare right up to the shin.

All the outfits please me, but today is a special favorite. I look forward to more favorites for contemplative *darsanas*.

Rev. John Endler

Rev. John Endler has found his vocation. He wants to be the “steward” of my writings. Two years ago he discovered my long series of journals and poems, *Every Day, Just Write*. He studied them deeply, understood them better than any other reader, and came to love them. The entire *EJW* is available on a website in e-book (electronic book) format. John approached me with a proposal that we reprint only the poems from *EJW* in book form. We have so far printed two volumes, and have four more books in production. The poems were written in the 1990s, but John thinks they were twenty-five years ahead of their time. Bhurijana Prabhu, who is deeply immersed in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, said the poems were in “hipster” style, but they gave him “joy.” I myself love them for their energetic freedom and their sticking to Krsna consciousness.

John and I meet once a week. He inspires me with his fiery dedication and appreciation. In addition to books, he is transcribing material for me that I’m posting weekly in my *Free Write Journal*. This includes free writing and plans to

serialize books I wrote in California, when I was going through a difficult time. John calls these California books “redemption songs.” John says his working with my writing is making him a better preacher and pastor in his Baptist church. He refers to my writing in his sermons, and he says his congregation loves it.

John and I truly have a bond of love based on dedication to my writing.

Uddhava

Uddhava is here for a month. He comes here every year. He is first-initiated by Srila Prabhupada, second by me. But he treats me as a vital link in the *parampara*. He lives in Hungary with his wife and oldest son. He behaves wonderfully when he’s at Viraha Bhavan and likes the time he spends here. He cooks, cleans, goes shopping, and helps with the Deity worship. He’s also a handyman/carpenter.

In Hungary he works on a new house they’ve purchased. He paints still lifes; he teaches English. He listens to Prabhupada’s lectures and mine, and he reads both our books. He realizes that *japa* is his most important *bhajana*, and he strives to overcome inattentive chanting.

He was originally recruited by the Radha-Damodara bus party and served many years as *pujari* and Deity cook in ISKCON Dallas before he married his Hungarian wife and moved to her country. (She translates books into Hungarian to supplement their income.) While distributing Prabhupada’s books in a parking lot, he was hit by a car and broke both his legs; he still walk with a pronounced limp.

Uddhava is good company, good association. He is mild-mannered and

doesn't speak *prajalpa*. He is looking forward to our out-loud group reading.

Acceptance/Tolerance

I am listening daily to recordings of ten years of Govardhana Retreat talks. In the one I just heard, Bhurijana spoke on acceptance and tolerance. He gave the examples of Citraketu and Bali Maharaja. Citraketu was flying in his airplane, and he came upon Lord Siva. Siva was surrounded by great sages and transcendentalists. But Siva had his wife Parvati seated on his lap, and he had his arm around her. Citraketu laughed and expressed wonderment that Siva was acting like an ordinary man. Parvati was insulted and cursed Citraketu to become a demon in his next life. Citraketu had the power to counter-curse Parvati, but he submissively accepted her curse. He begged Parvati to forgive him because he had disturbed her. Then Siva spoke up. He said, "Parvati, you are very beautiful, but I think Citraketu has defeated you by his acceptance and tolerance of your curse. He can do this because he is a devotee of Narayana and is not afraid of anything."

Bali Maharaja conquered the demigods and ruled the entire universe. Aditi, the mother of the demigods, prayed to Lord Visnu to reinstate her sons in their ruling positions. The Lord was pleased with her and agreed to appear on earth to reverse the demon's rule. He appeared in the form of a dwarf and went to the place of Bali Maharaja. Bali was enamored by Vamanadeva, who was giving off a great effulgence. Vamanadeva begged charity from Bali, who said he would give the brahmana boy whatever he wanted. Vamana said he only wanted the land he could cover with his

three steps. Despite the protests of his spiritual master, Sukracarya, Bali granted Vamanadeva his wish. Vamana then expanded into a huge form. With His first step He covered the world; with His second step, He covered the entire universe. Thus Bali lost all his possessions, and he was tied up in the ropes of Varuna. Despite the almost-unbearable test, Bali remained tolerant and surrendered to the Lord. The Lord was pleased with Bali and agreed to live with him on his planet.

So Bhurijana gave two examples of great devotees who passed severe tests and remained faithful to the Lord.

Here Is Srila Prabhupada

This book contains personal realizations of Srila Prabhupada. Interspersed with them, I tell of reading sessions the devotees were having in a Wicklow house in Ireland. We were reading from the Prabhupada-lilamrta.

“Week 2

6:00 P.M.

“Now we are reading about Abhay in his most difficult years. He was evicted from Jhansi. He had no money, no business, no family responsibilities. But his Godbrothers competed for his service as editor and writer of their Gaudiya Math magazines. He went to work for the *Sajjana Tosani* in New Delhi. They asked him to settle the petty

quarreling in the Math, and to write and edit in his spare time without a typewriter. The Godbrother in charge wanted only five hundred copies a month. But Prabhupada couldn't take writing and editing as a perfunctory duty. He saw it as an absorbing meditation. Abhay found a way to print a thousand copies a month at the same price they were paying for five hundred. He rented his own typewriter and envisioned the magazine becoming as popular as *Time* or *Life*. But his Godbrother dismissed him because he didn't agree with Abhay's ambitious plans.

“What next? ‘In terms of food, clothing, and shelter, these were the most difficult times he had ever gone through.’ He moved around Delhi from week to week, sometimes staying at a temple, sometimes in a room . . . but he wasn't striving to solve his material problems. He was preaching, getting appointments with leading citizens, showing them the manuscript that he had written and wanted to publish with his plans for a worldwide movement.

“People's impressions of him were often like this: ‘He had a smiling demeanor. The main thing was his humility. He could talk with affection and confidence, and he knew we were discussing things dear to God. So every talk with him would sublimate us.’

“During a time when most people would have been scheming how to get out of a near desperate situation—no income, nowhere to live, and

no regular meals—Abhay was thinking of something else: How to publish.

“Writing articles was no problem. By the grace of his spiritual master, he was neither short of ideas nor unable to set them down. Translating and commenting on the Vaisnava scriptures, his pen flowed freely. He was inspired by the miracle of the press, the *brhat-mrdanga*. The work of writing his message down and printing it a thousand times—with the awareness and urgency of speaking directly to everyone, not just people in Delhi or India but *everyone*—put Abhay into an ecstatic meditation. He would contemplate how copies of *Back to Godhead* could reach thoughtful people who might read them gratefully.’

(*Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta*, Volume 1, p. 183)

Visitors

“Why not ask yourself? Inquire within. Recall what your gurudeva has taught, and what Sri Krsnadeva has spoken in the scriptures through the mouth of Srila Vyasa and Sukadeva. ‘That's good enough for you.’ Yes it is. I will visit with my own inner sources, whom I know will never

be bothered by my inquiries. They will welcome me. They will welcome me like kind fathers and close friends.

“Q: ‘How much longer do I have to be reborn into this material world?’

“A: ‘As long as your heart remains attracted to matter. As long as you do not love Me and My pure devotees with uninterrupted devotion.’

“Q: ‘What is meant by Lord Caitanya in five features?’

“A: ‘The Supreme Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu appears as the Panca-tattva; that is, He appears in five features. It is stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrita*, ‘Spiritually there are no differences between these five *tattvas*, for on the transcendental platform everything is absolute. Yet there are also varieties in the spiritual world, and in order to taste these spiritual varieties, one should distinguish between them. Let me offer my obeisances unto Lord Sri Krsna, who has manifested Himself as five as a devotee, expansion of a devotee, incarnation of a devotee, pure devotee, and devotional energy.’ (*Cc. Adi 7.5-6*)

“Q: ‘Could you explain these divisions a little further?’

“A: ‘The three predominators (Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, and Advaita Prabhu) are worshipable by all living entities, and the fourth principal (Sri Gadadhara) is to be understood as

Their worshiper. There are innumerable pure devotees of the Lord, headed by Srivas Thakura, who are unalloyed devotees.’ (*Cc. Adi* 7.15-16).

“Q: ‘Does the *Panca-tattva* teach the living entities in a special way?’

“A: ‘Yes, they teach in a special way by the Lord's *sankirtan* movement of chanting Hare Krishna. This is the best method. Each of them can deliver the world by chanting imbued with *prema-bhakti*.’

“Q: ‘Why do they have to appear as five? Isn't one good enough?’

“A: ‘They appear as five because that is the Lord's pleasure. It is His mood. He likes to appear as five, so that He can be the worshiper and the worshiped. He enjoys His mellows in that number. He likes to be Lord Caitanya and to be with Lord Nityananda and to be with Advaita. They have their special pastimes, as recorded in their biographies. He also has a special relationship with Gadadhara, Gaura-Gadadhara, and He has a special relationship with Srivasa, so nothing is unnecessary. All of the moods are absolute, and all the relationships are necessary. You cannot ask why He comes as five. He comes as five because that is His desire, and it's for the perfect blend of mellows for all people.

“Q: ‘Do I have a relationship with the *Panca-tattva*?’

“A: Yes, you do, and you can realize it through your spiritual master. He gives you instructions on how to enter the *sankirtan* movement, and if you do it wholeheartedly, you can see the *Panca-tattva*, and you can dance with them. There's nothing to prevent you, and through the *Panca-tattva*, you can enter Radha-Krishna pastimes. But it is not a plaything. It can only be done by the topmost devotees, who approach through their relationship with their spiritual master with utmost seriousness and dedication to his order.’

“Q: ‘I must be very fortunate to have found a spiritual master in the line of Lord Caitanya.’

“A: Yes, you are very fortunate. But now you must not lose that fortune. You must take advantage of the fortune to your utmost capacity. Lord Caitanya is very lenient, but you must be very strict.’

“Q: What does Lord Caitanya think of my attitude about visitors?

“A: It could use some improving. A Vaishnava is *para-dukhadukhi*, he is compassionate to all living entities. He is glad to help everyone advance in Krsna consciousness, so your not wanting to see anyone is not so good. But it is natural that you distinguish and don't like to waste your time with hordes of guests who steal your time from your good devotional projects that you can do only in solitude. Make a balance so that you have time to pursue your

work and not have all your time stolen, yet be willing to give to others the precious gift of your association so that you can help them also.”

ISKCON in the 1970s: Diaries

“December 1, 1977

Dallas

“I haven't made an entry here every day because I am not going out and preaching to anyone. Hardly a single person. More than ever I have been preaching daily and at night in the temple—filling in the devotees on all I've gathered about Srila Prabhupada's disappearance. I'm preaching how we have lost him in his physical presence and how we have gained a greater opportunity to realize him and increase our attachment to him in his *vani-seva*. Certainly that is also preaching—*bodhayantah parasparam*—but it is not the same thing as approaching the nondevotees. I want the other also. Hridayananda Maharaja said I will have to realize that it isn't an either-or life, but I will have to try to balance both—responsible execution of Srila Prabhupada's will within his ISKCON (for me this means working daily at the *BTG* office, residing in L.A. and preaching in the class there, and preaching in connection

with my GBC responsibility for the Northwest U.S. zone)—and preaching to nondevotees. But I have no program at all to accomplish the latter.

“Yesterday I was thinking, ‘Oh, you say, ‘I cannot preach because my duties do not allow me to have a program for preaching full-time to nondevotees. Unless I am forced into a situation where I have no alternative (like a person pushed into the water and told, ‘Now swim!’), then I'm not able to boldly speak why they should take to Krsna consciousness.’” Then I thought, ‘What you really mean is that you are not a preacher. If you were really a preacher, if you were *really* able to preach, then you wouldn't need a P.R. man and this and that full-time arrangement and mental atmosphere and adjusted conditions, special kind of audience, etc. You would preach. Even if you had to divide your time between administrative duties and such preaching, you would still be able to preach. But you can't preach.’ Is it true?

“Lest I forget: last night a man and woman showed up at the evening *arati*. I approached them afterwards. It turned out that he was quite pious and frustrated by material life. He was very interested in taking to some practice of Krsna consciousness, and I answered his questions and tried to guide him. I had to very cautiously overcome his doubts about Deity worship, giving up meat-eating, too much austerity, and attract him to the real possibility for him to take to Krsna consciousness. He said that he would come back to the temple tonight. I

felt blissful after he left, and confident. I felt like a preacher. I felt worthy. I felt the indescribable taste of following Lord Caitanya's instruction, 'Whomever you meet, tell them about Krsna.' I went to the *prasadam* room and the boys coming back from the day's book distribution were relating their scores, collections, and experiences—all very hopeful. I felt I too was a preacher. That is the real taste.

"I'm trying to get myself a van and a few men—I don't know how yet. But if I try to do it, certainly Krsna will give me some kind of facility. And whatever He offers me I should take and go out and try either to chant in the street or go to someone for preaching, or any such direct program. Do it in the California area, and in this way, launch a genuine *sannyasi* program. At the same time, attend to my duties in my L.A. office. I also plan to install a Prabhupada deity in the office.

"If the purchase of a van or recruiting of men is somehow frustrated, still I will pray now: 'Dear Lord, dear Srila Prabhupada, please empower me to go forward, even if lacking in all paraphernalia, even though not qualified as bold, even with no booked program. At the most primitive level if necessary, let me approach the nondevotee regularly and tell him about Krsna ('door to door') so that the mercy of Krsna consciousness can be extended and spread and I can be saved by my own absorption in even the tiniest part of the *sankirtana* effort.'

“For the record: my preaching to the couple last night lasted an hour and the result seemed favorable—the man seemed like his life might have been seriously changed.”

The Wild Garden: Collected Writings 1990-1993

Vrndavana

“The bell is ringing. Noon *arati* is going on in the temple. I imagine myself five months from now in the back of my Renault van, sitting on the bunk. I have a six-hundred page manuscript typed and bound, and I am reading an excerpt aloud to Madhu and another devotee. Maybe we are parked in South France on the way to Barcelona. Reading the manuscript, we get a glimpse of Vrndavana and the goal we hope to always keep in mind. Cars and trucks whiz by on the European highway. I read something about the chirping of the squirrels at noontime while the temple bell rings slowly, tolling . . . tolling . . . and everyone is busy in his existence—workers hammering and sawing, *brahmanas* busy on the altar, and the animal kingdom, sleeping, defending, climbing walls, cawing. Then the sound of the conch resonating through the air. It is ironic how we keep thinking of going somewhere else. When in County Kerry, I think of Vrndavana, and in Vrndavana, I think of County Kerry. There’s a little bird on the *gurukula* wall. I don't imagine he is

thinking of any faraway place or future time better than the present. He is not waiting for his secretary to return from New Delhi to tell him whether plane tickets are available during the Christmas rush. This bird stands on his spindly legs for just a few moments before his instincts take hold and he soars off to catch an air current.

“Everything in Vrndavana is sweet and meaningful. I would like to write down at least one millionth of what is going on here. The earthiness of the *parikrama* trail, the people who say , ‘Radhe! Radhe!’ One millionth. Keep at it.

“Tonight I will give a talk to disciples. The group gets smaller as Karttika draws to a close. I plan to read from Uddhava’s remembrance of Krsna in Vrndavana in the Third Canto. Uddhava went deeply into trance remembering Krsna.

“Earlier, I read the talks of Lord Caitanya and Ramananda Raya. Prabhupada states that we have to hear with pure faith, not like the impersonalist logicians or scholars, and definitely not like the *sahajiyas* who hear from a guru outside the authorized *parampara*. As I read *Caitanya-caritamrta*, the monkeys in the courtyard jabbered and screamed. I ignored them. I stayed with *Caitanya-caritamrta*.”

Memory in the Service of Krsna

“Because You Are Never Envious of Me”

“There is no envy in the spiritual world: one *gopi* is happy to see another *gopi* pleasing Krsna. But I was envious whenever any devotee was given special attention by Srila Prabhupada. I could feel it in my body as a total disease, a reeling, a burning, a bad feeling in the heart, a feeling of ‘turning green.’ ‘Why should others go to India with him and I be left behind? Why should he have a laughing, friendly relationship with another, and why should that other disciple be so fortunate as to please Prabhupada with faithful service?’

“The young *gopi manjaris* are simple and open-hearted, and thus they are allowed to enter into all the confidential dealings of Radha and Krsna. Radha and Krsna know that when these manjaris are present, They can feel free to act as if They were alone. The *manjaris* will never be envious or betray confidences or misunderstand the dealings of the Lord and Radharani. They can be trusted because they are completely pure. They are happy to keep their own place and to make arrangements for the pastimes of Radha and Krsna.

“When I think of the *gopi manjaris*, it becomes clear to me how I failed. I always wanted to be included in the intimate, confidential dealings of Prabhupada, but for my own satisfaction. At least that taint was there. I wanted a special place and recognition. I preferred

Prabhupada *my way*, not his way. The completely surrendered servant does not demand special intimate moments with his master. He does not mind if his master reminds him of his subordinate place by excluding him from certain meetings. The servant waits outside the door with a pure heart, and he goes to fetch other devotees who the master wants to see, and he cleans up the master's sitting room and workroom and bathroom with equal relish for each task. If the pure servant is reprimanded, he does not become envious of the master who holds the weapon of chastisement. He doesn't think, 'This is unfair. I have surrendered to you, and now you are taking advantage.'

“There is a correlation between envy and confidentiality. The disciple who is nonconfidential may yearn for what *he* thinks of as confidential moments, but because he has his own concept of sweet intimate times, and because he rejects and accepts what is good in relation to his guru, he misses out on the dynamics of confidential service.

The Radha-Govinda Worship Book

“Wow! Those guys are too much! I’m speaking out of control. I dressed the Deities while listening to *Prema-samputa*. It’s so sublime, the love-secrets Radha tells there. I have read it before and want to enter

it again. I don't have to memorize anything in it, and I certainly can't realize (experience) it, but I listen with faith. Thank you, Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura and Srila Prabhupada, for allowing me to take part.”

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“Radha-Govinda in purple with silver trim. Govinda has a curvy silver walking stick and a flute. I listened to *Sri Hamsaduta* while dressing Them. Lalita wanted to tell Krsna what Radha says and does in Her grief.”

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“Jaya Narasimha dressed Radha and Krsna in clean clothes. Away from Vrndavana while hearing of Radha and Krsna's pastimes in Rupa Gosvami's play. Krsna is the target. If you can't focus your mind on Him, better to go back to bed and lead a life of dreams. But Kana is there too. But not just His energy. We want Kana, the lover of Radha.”

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“New outfits for Radha-Govinda have arrived from Vrndavana. They were sewn by Tulasi dasi. I appreciate her service. I read Bhaktivinoda's commentary while I served Them.”

WRITING SESSIONS

Geaglum Free Write Diary

“Manu’s House, North Ireland

June 15, 1996 (continued)

“Listening to Jagadisa Goswami’s lecture on tape. Serious talk on very basic points regarding the subtle body and spiritual body. He makes you actually want to think about these things, rather than just run through them as we tend to do. That’s a wonderful quality in speaking and hearing—when both persons are seriously attuned to understanding the Krsna conscious philosophy.

“Same is true of writing. It requires a breakthrough from the superficial saying, ‘Do what you care about.’ But that means you have to start (as in prayer) with where you are actually at, which may be a low level. Each time I write I go to start with a gut feeling. I practice to go for it and not avoid it. But I don’t just stay there, I steer to Krsna.

“He was saying we are self-centered. The greatest difficulty in spiritual life is to change from self-centered to serving Krsna as the center of your life. Strong tendency to see me as number one. I know critics would be quick to see my writing as self-centered. I contend that

is a superficial view of what I am doing. If, as Jagadisa Goswami said, it's very difficult to shift from self-centered to Krsna-centered, then even the book distributor and GBC men, whose works may not seem self-centered in the way my writing is, could very well be self-centered. I'm facing it and working with it. Strong sense of self can be converted to a strong sense of serving Krsna.”

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“June 16, 1996

“Some fear about the neighbor and the deer who are raiding his garden. Syama says there are two herds totaling twenty deer. The farmer would have a genuine complaint. But his demand that ISKCON give up some of its land to him in recompense is not, I think, a reasonable proposition that would stand in court. Maybe a fine, or he will kill them. Build a fence to keep them out.

“Blue sky, clouded over. How bothersome it was, and distracting, seeing pleasure boats, water-skiers, surfboarders, and big boaters filling the lake yesterday. I hope there will be less today, a Monday. Even a remote, so-called scenic place like this becomes agitated, like the surface of the water filled with waves. They think it's a joy to speed as fast as possible, skimming over the water. One can get next-life karma from

that, or break your neck in this life.

“I had considerable thoughts of appreciation of full-sized timed books like *The Best I Can Do*, *Last Day of the Year*, etc. I ought to plan more of them. But then *Poor Man Reads the Bhagavatam* will have to step aside to let it happen. That’s okay, but to do full-time scale, you need a full retreat of, say, three weeks, unless you went into the situation with an attitude that, ‘you’ll do it in ten days,’ as I did in *Progresso*. But *PMRB* has to be suspended in that time. *PMRB* is good for when I am in temples and you can still do a verse at midnight, I think. Keep at it. You have to decide what you write in the month of July, the content. Shall it be *PMRB*? Or should I start a travel book with timed book aspirations? Perhaps continue like I’m doing now, a little of both.

“Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna. I was happy about the book *Last Days of the Year* because I could write anything at all and yet feel it was in the container of *The Last Days of the Year*. It’s hard to explain just why that was satisfying, but it worked for me. Some kind of structure of the roomiest kind, and yet it shapes things. *PMRB* is more demanding in that requires I stop and read and preach each verse. My free writing is also on that verse. A good kind of discipline, but then I seek to write outside of it, too.

“Desire for pure Krsna consciousness.

“Madhu going into Dublin. Leaving here by 5:00 A.M. We should

know by 10:00 whether I have to go down too to prove who I am to the Motor Vehicle Bureau, me, the owner. I hope not. But if I have to go, I may carry on with some writing, perhaps of *PMRB* or this one with notes in the car, some free writing as I move on to Narada's last instructions. The other day when I had to be in Dublin, I prayed that I would use the van for service of traveling, lecturing and writing the best I can.

“Birds calling me to go out and walk. Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna. For the briefest moment of my first ten rounds, it occurred to me that I am desiring better chanting. Then it went away, and it was back to thinking of other things while I chanted.

“Pray here: ‘Lord Krsna, it's You who gives intelligence to write a book or operate a machine. You give us the body to use in walking or digesting. We wrongly use our intelligence, we fall into false ego. We think that our lifetime of eating, sleeping, mating and defending is all there is. The Vedas tell us that's not the situation. We are the self beyond the body. We need to revive the sense of *atma* in relation to the supreme being, Krsna.

“ . . . Geaglum has been nice. Read yesterday of Lord Caitanya cleaning Gundica. It was Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati who said the Lord was teaching in a symbolic way. We have to clean out our hearts if we want Krsna to come there. That sounds like separate endeavors other than just doing *sadhana*. Be aware of desires for profit and worship and

compromises with Mayavadis. Prabhupada said *ahimsa* is to preach. You should not go alone to chant, he says, but preach. If I go alone, I have to preach so others can benefit from the experience of Krsna conscious lessons I have gathered. Preach in writing. Best if I can. Maybe a notebook in July for ideas for the August timed book. Get ready for a walk now.”

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June 17, 1996

“The cleansing of the Gundica Temple may be used as an argument in support of my writing. It’s similar to how I explained *Churning the Milk Ocean* but from a different point of view.

“Lord Caitanya chastised and praised those who engaged in the cleaning. He chastised those who did not collect enough dirt. He said the more dirt you collect, that’s a sign that you’re working hard in devotional service. He Himself collected more dirt than all of the others put together. In the purport, Prabhupada says Lord Caitanya taught by His own example, that all the *acaryas* who follow Him should follow that. What’s the example? That you should clean your own heart and then demonstrate that devotees should do that too. You can do it along with them.

“When I free-write, dirt comes out. That’s not wrong. The more dirt I collect, the better it is. Of course, I’m not just wallowing in dirt. It is a fact that Lord Caitanya’s body did become dirty, but all the dirt is finally washed, washed, cleansed, and then the Lord is willing to sit in the heart. All the dirt can be enumerated, but for the purpose of eliminating it. Then it is actually to be eliminated. Not that we remain perpetually dirty while cleaning, but we get the job done.”

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“June 18, 1996

“There’s not much of a Geaglum diary left. Only a week remaining here, but that’s not what I mean. I mean my attention is going into *PMRB* when I have time. Also, Madhu and I are battling to get our van on the road. That takes up this tension. Sounds silly, I guess. I’m also turning my imagination toward what I will do in July and August. We expect a mail packet to arrive here in a few days. Once that lands, I will give almost all of my time to it. Anyway, here we are to say hello this morning. . . .

“Another thing that will always be with me in this lifetime, it seems, is the introspection that brings a kind of doubt: Am I doing the best thing? This might even be praised as ‘steady bhava,’ to be anxious

that you are making the best use of your time in Krsna's service.

Prabhupada says if you feel you didn't do your service well, then there's room for improvement.

“You wake at midnight, and before you even put your feet on the floor, you're asking yourself, ‘Am I doing the best thing? Why am I not involved in a temple community?’ and so on. There is a time for at least temple program participation when I am in the temple during my travels. At those times, I invariably want to leave and get into deeper writing time.

“So, as I say, this will always be with me. I desire to practice writing, to be better at it, to stay in the ability to express myself plainly, and to get Krsna's mercy so I can sometimes produce something with more art or structure. If Krsna is really pleased with me, He will reveal to me the most direct surrender. He is sometimes described as the passive witness, as in the two birds in the heart. That's when we ignore Him and show Him that we want to be the Lord of all we survey. Then what can He do for us? But He is interested in us when we show some interest in Him. He wants us to come and play with Him in the spiritual world, which is free of anxiety. But we still want to play out some scenario here, where we are the master. I hope my writing is not an act like that.

May Krsna agree to come through these writings with His immortal teachings. I am the transparent medium. Let them shine through (His

teachings) in various splendid colors as He likes, and catch the attention of the materialists. I would like that, catch their interest. Be a big famous preacher? No, I don't mean that. But make an art, something nice at least, some persons will get caught up in it.”

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Current Events In This Little Life

“Keep the journals and diaries and free-writes.

“Kathleen (Kay) Adams’ *Journal to the Self*. A devotee friend, Caroline Constantine, about to be initiated this month by Romapada Swami, is a counselor in Colorado. She attends a weekly journal-writing class conducted by Kay Adams. Caroline also likes to read my books and sometimes shares some of them with her journal-writing group. I inscribed a copy of Shack Notes as a gift to Kathleen Adams. So, there is some link. I am looking through her book again. She says that she is a psychotherapist and a writer. Therefore she’s interested in gaining self-reliance, self-knowledge and self-esteem through writing a journal. Also, linking up with the Self. I can translate that readily into Krsna conscious terms. I do write to cope, and then I share that with others. The more I write honestly and freely . . . some will be usable and some not.

“It is good to express freedom. I need not feel it’s a mundane taint

in itself to openly use the journal. That is, to think of my writing books in that way. I could do a timed book. I'm giving myself this August for free writing, so I could just dig in and use all these journal techniques in that month. Learn the art of writing a journal again, and don't think you're above it, that it's not Krsna consciousness.

“Anyway, I'm dipping into her book with that open attitude. The *Geaglum Diary* will have to travel out of station. Our mail pack is already on the way from America with two or three weeks of mail for me.”