

## *Free Write Journal #9*

**October 4, 2018**

This is week number nine of the *Free Write Journal*. The *Brhad-Bhagavatamrta* moves too fast for me to note all the devotees that Narada meets and who each deny that they are the true objects of the Supreme Lord's mercy. Prahlada denied that he was the one and recommended that Narada go see Hanuman. Despite the outstanding reality of Hanuman's devotional service, Hanuman himself denies it and glorifies the Pandavas as most intimate with Krsna and the object of the Supreme Lord's mercy. I think the Pandavas will recommend Narada to go visit the Yadus, and especially Uddhava.

An earthquake happened somewhere. That's one of the miseries due to nature's disorders. It doesn't happen by chance. Are the demigods behind it? The material scientists may have their impersonal explanation; faults in the earth. Writing practice should come from a passion. Ramaraya reported that the *gurukula* building in Vrndavana has to be torn down. He said Aindra's Deities have to be moved. He didn't tell where the *gurukulees* and *brahmacaris* will go. "Your front signal light isn't working."

A guy in another car gave us the sauce. Private, wealthy individuals are making plans to launch man-operated spaceships. They want to bring artists with them to paint outer space. Narada and the *siddhas* could do that without a rocket. I sure wish Sada-puta was still with us to comment on these things. We can practice *caksus-sastra* and see through the eyes of the *sastras*, like *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. "Everything is there," Prabhupada used to say. "It just takes submissive aural reception by an intelligent student in *parampara*." Krsna is the sweetest and most complete Supreme Personality of Godhead. All the *avataras* are emanations of Krsna. All the incarnations emanate from Him and do not possess His full splendor. He is the Cause of all causes. He is totally independent (*svarat*). Yet He is inclined and even submissive to His devotees like Mother Yasoda, the young *gopis* of Vrndavana, and especially Srimati Radharani. "Krsna alone is not particularly beautiful, but when He is combined with His pleasure potency, Srimati Radharani, He is most magnificent." (Srla Prabhupada in *Krsna Book*). Radha and Krsna are our *ishta-devata*.

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**October 5, 2018**

Writing success means it's pleasing to guru and Gauranga. There is no other success, such as "best seller in ISKCON." When Prabhupada was told

there were two news articles about his visit and that one was favorable and one was unfavorable, he asked, "Which article uses the word 'Krsna' the most?" His disciple told him, "The unfavorable article mentions Krsna the most." Then Prabhupada replied, "*That* article is the best." The holy name is absolute. Even when used in jest or to criticize, it is effective. The scriptures say the product of an animal should not be used in worship, but the conch--which is the bone of an animal--is considered auspicious. This is a contradiction, but it is accepted by *pujaris* in *arati* before the Deity and by *ksatriyas*, who blow their conches on the battlefield, making a tumultuous sound to frighten the enemy.

"Whose son is Sita?" asked the person who never read the *Ramayana*. Krsna and Arjuna, Krsna and Uddhava, or Radha and Krsna--these and others have the most intimate relationship with Krsna.

You keep writing, and something comes from your heart. You don't want nondevotee thoughts at the time of your death. Bhurijana was present at the time of Gunagrahi Maharaja's passing away. He said he showed some weaknesses, but at the very end, when he was supposed to be unconscious, he began chanting Hare Krsna. Bhurijana called it a "miracle" and a great faith-builder.

I don't know how to use a computer, an Iphone, nor do I operate any

electronic device. I write with a pen and then speak it into a Dictaphone. Someone then sends my dictation to a remote typist (located in Italy) and he sends out my letters to email correspondents. For the *Free Write Journal*, I send a Dictaphone of what I have written to a typist in America; he sends it once a week to my website operators, who post it every Friday. I am satisfied with this *modus operandi*.

Stout musclemen are not necessary. Soft obesity not desirable. Sri Krsna descends to the earth in His *sac-cid-ananda* form. He is spiritual and inconceivable but appears as a human being. As such, He is all-attractive to all moving and nonmoving beings. All the *avataras* have but a degree of His potencies and beauty. *Brahma-samhita* describes Him as *anadir adir govinda/ sarva karana karanam*.

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### **October 6, 2018**

Garuda Ph.D. kindly reached out to me after many years and phoned me for a long conversation. He publishes his books with the top publishers, Oxford, Princeton, Yale, Harper Collins, etc. I have much admiration for him as a Sanskrit translator and a profound writer on the Vaisnava *siddhanta*. I told him I was writing a weekly journal and a compilation of poems. He said he would read the *Free Write Journal*, but I feel it is much

inferior to his books. He countered by saying only Krsna could say what pleases Him. In the course of the conversation, he told me he considered the first edition of *Bhagavad-gita* to be more faithful to Srila Prabhupada than the second edition. He thinks Jayadvaita Swami made too many editorial changes. He said he is going to organize a conference of academic scholars to discuss the two editions. I don't know what he intends to accomplish with his conference. Does he intend to show them examples and get their support for the first edition? I didn't tell him my opinion over the phone, but I wrote him an email that I have implicit faith in Jayadvaita Swami and how he has improved the book over Hayagriva's editing. Jayadvaita Maharaja went back to earlier manuscripts and restored things that Hayagriva omitted. I think Garuda's "creating waves" will just serve to confuse the devotees and shake their faith in the BBT's publishing of the second edition. I am going to write to Garuda and make clear my position.

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N.K. advised me that I had written more than enough books on Vaisnava behavior, *siddhanta*, etc. Now I should write about myself, my activities, and steer to Krsna by sharing our mealtime reading from *sastra*. It is a journal for those who are interested in me. That is why I think a Godbrother like Garuda may not find it interesting or elevating. But there is

a small audience of readers who like it the way it is. At this point in my life (after 200 books), this seems to be the only way I can write.

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I am most of the time alone, but not lonely. I live with three devotees, and we share time together. Mealtimes are socializing. When writing, you are alone, and you can reach out to the aloneness in others. Tell them about the two years when you were alone on the aircraft carrier with a thousand shipmates. You noticed a sailor on the mess line who had a copy of *Zen Bones*, *Zen Flesh* in his back pocket. (Or did I have the book in my pocket and he noticed it?) We bonded, and it was a relief from the association of the average brutish sailors. He saw the rough sailors in a non-hateful way, as "furry," like a saintly person who is undisturbed among jungle animals. He did odd things, like go up on the flight deck when it was cold. He said it was "good" to get cold sometimes. We were Zen buddies, and he visited me once when we were both out of the Navy.

Be detached from your body. *Pray as you can*. My dear Lord Krsna, please accept my humble obeisances. May Srila Prabhupada accept my writing as an offering, as a contribution to followers of his. I am part of the *Sankirtana* Movement. My disciple Adi-rasa drives and cooks for a veteran book distributor in Spain. They distributed 639 books in June. My disciple

Rama-raya leads the *harinama* party that goes out in the parks or in the subways of New York City. Haridasa dasa is a counselor and teacher at a junior college in Maryland. He sees his work as devotional service. There are so many devotees who are sweet, and I am connected with them.

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### **October 7, 2018**

Another day. An opportunity to write to my friends. Henceforth . . . does it mean forever? "Watch out for motorcycles!" "Shared highway." "Detour Ahead." The book distributor who sold the most books. He said he once did 300 in one day. Was that boasting? Before honoring *prasadam* we say a prayer: ". . . Krsna is very kind to us. He has given us this nice *prasadam* just to control the tongue." You can enjoy eating because it is absolute sanctified food. Lord Caitanya honored *prasadam* with His devotees. He praised the food as eaten by Krsna and said it tasted like nectar. The Mayavadis don't eat *prasadam*. They think it is sense gratification. They eat unpalatable, rejected food. Some of them do the opposite. They eat unoffered food voraciously, even eating meat and entangling themselves in karmic reactions. One of the best meals I had was in Mexico at N.K.'s apartment with Baladeva present. They offered food to Krsna and served spaghetti with tomato sauce and homemade bread. I

consumed all of the pasta on my plate and ate four pieces of bread soaked in the sauce. I was so satisfied with the simple repast and the friendly *sanga* that I marked it indelibly in my mind as "the best."

Keep writing. Some of our sought-for realizations may come in the process. The ex-FBI director, Comey, said he had a habit of writing down in detail what happened immediately after a meeting or happening. In this way he had a fresh, truthful account of his meeting with the president, when Trump tried to coerce Comey into being "his man." I would like to get into that habit and, for example, write down my telephone exchanges. Comey's notes were confidential, just for himself, but if required, he could produce them as proof of what happened.

I am running out of time, but I want to keep the free write method, and although much of it is not usable, it will lead me to a breakthrough. In *Brhad-Bhagavatamrta*, Krsna in Dvaraka is upset and won't get up from bed. Uddhava, Narada, Rukmini, Rohini, etc. are waiting outside His door. They are talking about Krsna's deep attachment to the residents of Vraja. No one knows exactly what is wrong with Krsna or when He will come out and return to normal. Hearing it is ecstatic, mysterious nectar. We will find out more at lunchtime.

I dreamed Srila Prabhupada was ill. One of his intimate caretakers

went in to see him, and I followed. He didn't do anything to acknowledge me. I felt I was not important to his mission so he ignored me. But at least I saw him (it was quite real), and I was in his presence. He knew who I was but didn't wish to single me out or speak to me, say my name. After all, he was ill-disposed. Now I think of him saying, "If you want to know me, read my books."

I wrote about my Prabhupada *murti* this year in the *Tributes* book: forty years of worship, we have formed a bond, worshiper and worshipable. Twice his left arm broke, but we fixed it all right with "Krazy" glue. I shouldn't have taken him traveling in the van. Now he's relatively safe on a *vyasasana* on an altar. Be careful you or a *pujari* doesn't drop anything on his delicate head. He is the first Deity I look at in the morning. Baladeva dusts off Lord Caitanya with a new, soft paintbrush. I don't like him doing it to Gauranga's face because too much of that may fade the coloring of His lips and eyes, which are beautiful. He pretty much obeys me but sneaks in a couple of swipes at the Lord's face. Radha-Govinda's bodies get cleaned once every three days when Their outfits are changed. The many Deities downstairs are also regularly cleaned and given change of dress. 909 Albany Avenue is not an ordinary house. Many Deities are cared for and

offered *prasadam* in metal plates three times a day. *Mangala arotik* is performed and all the *bhajan*s sung, as in the many temples of ISKCON.

What do I know? What my spiritual master taught me. He speaks and writes what Krsna says, the Absolute Truth. It's revealed in the Vedic scriptures, which are *apauruseya*, without any origin. The Vedas are *acintya*, inconceivable. Jiva Gosvami writes unless one accepts the principles of *acintya*, one cannot understand Krsna. Krsna is *adhoksaja*, beyond our perception. But if one worships Him in devotional service, He can easily be seen. For the devotee, the difficulty (*durlabham*) becomes easy (*adurlabham*).

Your anus is itchy, and your tailbone aches. I am an aspiring devotee with aches and pains, but I am not this body. Raghunatha dasa Gosvami lived to an old age, and he ate very little. Materially speaking, he may have had some physical disorders. But he was completely transcendental; his body was spiritualized. By contrast, I identify with my body, and my consciousness fixes on my pains.

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**October 8, 2018**

Keep the *apistrida*  
(victory flag) flying.  
Excelsior, little camper  
light a votive candle  
and chant to the dim  
flame. There are  
different ways of saying "I love You"  
to the *arca-vigraha*.  
The *gurukula* building  
in Vrndavana has to be  
torn down and the residents have to  
find new quarters  
to live in  
until a new building is erected.  
Vrndavana has a *mayaic* covering  
but the holy *dhama* still  
is present to the devotional eye.

Fruitive gains are not of interest to the devotee. He or she wants only to please the spiritual master and Krsna. When I say Krsna, I mean Radha and Krsna. Krsna is not alone. He has many devotees whom He reciprocates with and with whom He has a loving relationship. But out of all the devotees, Radharani is the best--because She loves Him the most. Then why did He not return to Her in Vraja but stay in Dvaraka? It is difficult to understand. Krsna sent them messages, letters and representatives like Baladeva and Uddhava. The representatives gave some solace, but mainly by telling the *gopis* that Krsna would return. But He didn't come back. He had His motives. He said the ecstasy of separation (*vipralambha*) was the highest of all.

Anuradha dasi from Oxford is here for a week filling in for Bala, who is ill. She will allow Krsna dasi to spend more time with her ailing husband and will take over some of Baladeva's duties also. Anuradha told me of a recent seminar she taught at Radhadesh. She said it was inspired by my book, *Photo Preaching*. She put up many photographs from *Time* magazine and other sources, as in an art gallery. Then she had the students wander among the photos and look for one that resonated with them. She had them write about the photo they picked and tell what personal feelings and thoughts it evoked in them. They shared what they wrote, and everyone

said they had a wonderful time. I was happy to be a part of it. She wants to hold more seminars with varied, surprise themes.

Impersonal calamity Thou hast removed. Abhay Caran De attending the Scottish school before he came to America. A highly unlikely anecdote about Rupa Gosvami meeting with Prabhupada in the Radha-Damodara temple and saying that it was time for Prabhupada to go to the West. Another anecdote about sweeping and weeping outside Radha-Govinda's *bhajana kutira*. People we interviewed taking the credit for advising or sending him to America.

The *Brhad-Bhagavatamrta* has become too deep, detailed and emotional for me to comment on it in this *Journal*. Suffice to say that Krsna Himself has declared that Radharani (who so far has not been described fully) and all the devotees of Vrajabhumi are the dearest objects of His love. His explanations as to why He cannot go back to Vraja are clear, but they can really only be understood by one realized in *viraha-bhava* (the science of intense ecstatic love in separation). Krsna says even if He were to go back, He could not help the *gopis*. We listened submissively, with partial realization.

Keep the hand moving. You keep the editor out and write what comes. A controversy over the first and second editions of *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*. I wish I could tell you more about *Brhad-Bhagavatamrta*, but the plot becomes too complicated at the end of the first part. Needless to say, I recommend you read it for yourself. The need to keep focused on *krsna-bhakti*. Keep confidential, but don't reveal too much. I can only walk by pushing a four-wheeled carriage or holding onto the hands of another man. There's no hope of improving this condition. I am so busy that I only can write small pieces. I have visitors, doctor's appointments, exercise, naps, correspondence, etc. Then when I give myself time, I can't get started. Now it's time to go to bed. Then when I get up I have to chant *japa*. But I'll be back. "Little drops of water wear away the stone." Prabhupada added, "In this way, I have written all my books."

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### **October 9, 2018**

I spend much time dreaming while asleep. I don't dream of Krsna or transcendental personalities. Mine have mundane scenarios, and they are surreal. I used to remember my dreams, but more recently I forget them immediately, except for particularly vivid ones. I once published a small book for myself, describing dreams. Jack Kerouac wrote *A Book of Dreams*.

His habit and discipline was to quickly write down a dream on waking. His were typical bizarre scenarios of a dreamer. Srila Prabhupada said that our dreams were not important. But in his books, he has written of the dreams of pure devotees and others to whom Krsna appeared and told them something to do. (See the dreams of Madhavendra Puri, Krsnadasa Kaviraja, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, Chand Kazi and others in *Caitanya-caritamrta*.) When I am fortunate, I have a dream of Srila Prabhupada and I remember it. Baladeva recently had a dream where he was sitting next to Prabhupada, and Prabhupada was handing him many preparations of *maha-prasadam* from his plate. I like having dreams and remembering them, but I wish they could be more spiritual. I have many dreams in which I have an urge to devote myself to writing.

Dear Lord Krsna, can I direct my words to You? Should I write to Srila Prabhupada? Dear Srila Prabhupada, I am your servant, your disciple. You are my protector. By misuse of my tiny free will, I came into this material world. Even after you relieved me from my sinful reactions, I again made mistakes. But you are kind. I beg you for forgiveness. I want to serve you and your followers. Please come to me at the time of my death. Show me the way. I want to join you in the spiritual world, or wherever you are, spreading Krsna consciousness. I want to be your assistant. I want to do as

you say. You initiated five thousand disciples, and now new generations serve you and worship you as their pre-eminent *siksa-guru*. "You live forever, and your followers live with you by your divine instructions." You are the master and I am the servant. That is our constitutional relationship, and it will always be so.

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### **October 10, 2018**

There are emergencies at Viraha Bhavan. One of the inmates is ill in the hospital. The rest of us are cooperating to support him in the hospital and to fill in his duties at the *ashram*. The next two days my writing will be interrupted by appointments with two different doctors. One appointment is with a dermatologist who cut away two scabs and reported back that they had some cancer elements in them. Today the doctor is going to cut away some more flesh and examine it in the lab. Tomorrow I will have a CAT scan to try to definitely find out about my kidney stones. The ultrasound and X-rays have so far proved inconclusive. The Gosvamis of Vrndavana never underwent such procedures but went on with their *bhajana*, oblivious to their bodily impediments. Krsnadasa Kaviraja candidly wrote that he had bodily ailments and that he was struggling with advanced old age, but he declares it is "a wonder" that he is able to write *Caitanya-*

*caritamrta*, a superlative scripture on the life and teachings of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. The *Prabhupada Meditations* volumes are nectar *prabhupada-katha*. I churned them out freely in the 1990s. Sometimes I got stuck, but then I broke through. There are four volumes, lots of pages. It may be too much for some readers. Nitai published them, two volumes for distribution in India. They are a continuation of the inspiration I felt while doing *Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta*. They are also producing *Prabhupada Reflections*, the collection of daily essays I posted throughout 2016, the anniversary of Srila Prabhupada's first year in America. They are big books, filled with *prabhupada-katha*. If people slow down and read them, they will be rewarded. Nitai told me that in India, second-generation devotees are writing books and printing them. One devotee presents himself as a motivational speaker and has a big following on Youtube. Another devotee writes attractive stories from the Ramayana, along with lessons. Gopal Krsna Maharaja's disciples compile his lectures and print them as books. They have published twenty volumes of his lectures. Nitai says "everyone" is writing books in India. Is there room for this author's books in the market?

In *Brhad-bhagavatamrta* Part 2, Uttara asks her son, Maharaja Pariksit, to tell her confidential topics. She wants to know if there is a

special place beyond the earth and the universe where the pastimes of Goloka take place. Maharaja Pariksit compliments her on her questions and says that no one has inquired about this before. In response, he will tell her the secret residence of Goloka Vrndavana.

My next two days get interrupted. Today I will take lunch at 11:45 in order to fulfill a medical appointment. It will be a CAT scan to find out whether I have kidney stones and what to do about that. I will go to the dinner table directly at 11:45. The doctor will cut away my flesh where they have already cut open two scabs and reported that I had cancerous elements. This time, they're going to cut deeper and make a further diagnosis of the flesh. Writing, eating, taking a nap--all will get disrupted. I will bring my book *Forgetting the Audience* while I wait for the nurse to call my name. (John Endler says *Forgetting* is his most favorite book of mine.)

Try to stop me. I need to write but avoid certain subjects. Nitai went with us to the hospital. He says he has no way to promote my books. The young author in India, who is a motivational speaker, goes into a bookstore with a Bollywood actress and makes a pitch for his book on video. Baladeva says, "The duck who quacks the loudest gets the bread." Neither Nitai or I is quacking in India--or in Russia or anywhere else. I am a recluse and don't go on book tours. The new generations never met me and don't know my

name. Michelle Obama is going on tours with her book, speaking in venues of 50,000 people. For a higher fee, one can have a short chat with the author. They print 200 copies of my book, and we are lucky if they sell out. I can count on the fingers of my one hand the devotees who are willing to sell my books. One in India, two in Russia, one in the U.S.A. . . . (There used to be Lila-Avatara, until she passed away.) Garuda attended a conference of 800 people, mostly Mayavadis and *sannyasis*. After he spoke the true version of *Bhagavad-gita*, he sold on the spot over 90 copies of his own translation and commentary on the *Gita*. That was done by active self-promotion in an unfavorable environment. The ISKCON book distributor who attacked passersby in the 1980s sold many books but damaged the Movement's reputation. Now the motto is "Distribute books, but leave a good impression." I print books and stock them but hardly make an impression.

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### **October 11, 2018**

Another day. It's ten minutes to 5:00 A.M. I have finished my rounds. Now if I could write to you. Tell you the secrets of the *sastras*; tell you of my little life and the lives of the devotees at Viraha Bhavan. One is suffering with pain in the hospital. His wife is suffering sympathetically and going

without sleep. Anuradha is here temporarily for a week and filling in with emergencies, cooking, cleaning, answering the phone, etc. Nitai from India is here for two days. He brought me gifts of advance copies of *Prabhupada Meditations*, Books One to Four in two big volumes, and he gave me a generous cash donation. Baladeva is meeting with our ailing devotee in the hospital and taking me to the medical unit to cut away my flesh and verify whether I have cancer.

In *Brhad-Bhagavatamrta* Part 2, we are introduced to the history of simple Gopal. He has received a *gopala mantra* from a goddess, and he chants it with great faith and determination. He will go through meetings with many influential persons on their planets (starting with a group of impersonalist *sannyasis*, who temporarily sway him to their path. But he stays faithful to chanting his *gopala mantra* and rectifies himself from association with the *sannyasis*.) Gopal's journey will be a long one, throughout the universe and beyond. He will be influenced by many persons and asked to take up service on various planets. But he goes on chanting his mantra and doesn't give up his cowherd dress.

This morning the doctor cut deeper (with local anesthesia) at the two places where they cut before and analyzed. This time he said they cut away the cancer. He puts ten stitches in my back and more on my temple. When

the anesthesia wears off, I have to expect pain. In two weeks I go back to have the stitches removed.

Baladeva said I don't have to keep the ill member of Viraha Bhavan anonymous. It's Bala (from Trinidad). For some time he has been passing blood in his urine and having to get up three times at night to urinate. Both he and his wife have gone through sleepless nights. Finally he felt so weak he asked to be taken to the emergency room, although this is the first time in his life he has gone into a hospital. The doctors found him in a life-threatening condition due to lack of blood, and they immediately gave him transfusions. He underwent an operation. He is still not recovered but is feeling some relief from the heavy painkillers he is taking.

The most amazing patient is Jayapataka Maharaja. He underwent a complete kidney and liver transplant and survived. He spent many days in the intensive care unit. Now he is released from the hospital. Before this, he suffered a stroke from which the doctors said he had a one percent chance of recovering from. Jayapataka Maharaja is an amazing survivor and fighter. He has an unstoppable will to stay on the battlefield and lead the devotees in spreading Prabhupada's Movement.

Praabhupada was in a car accident in Mauritius. The other car was badly damaged, but Prabhupada was only shaken up. Some pieces of glass

tinkled on his lap. Just before the collision happened, Prabhupada placed his cane on the floor to give him more support. Brahmananda Swami threw his arms around Prabhupada in a hug. The two drivers exchanged information, and Prabhupada was driven to the home of his host. Prabhupada's secretary was shocked to see Prabhupada's grave demeanor. One disciple gently massaged his legs while another read aloud from *Caitanya-caritamrta*, "The Passing Away of Haridasa Thakura." The next morning Prabhupada was a little stiff on his walk, but it passed away, and he carried on with his schedule of writing, lecturing and traveling.