

BASIC MANAGEMENT BOOK FOR ISKCON TEMPLES

Presented for the GBC
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Proposed Draft

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BASIC MANAGEMENT BOOK FOR ISKCON TEMPLES

PROPOSED DRAFT

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Introduction

Management is an art. To properly manage a temple requires skills. These skills have to be learned before a temple may be properly managed. Sometimes these skills are learned in the school of hard knocks, where hit or miss management gradually trains the temple president to understand what can be done and what should be avoided. But such schooling takes time, energy, and unfortunately costs a lot of money as wastage is high. A superior form of training is to learn from those who have already gone through enough schooling to understand what is the actual standard of temple management.

This book is meant to be a manual for training new temple authorities in their duties. It will not be the comprehensive and final edition on the subject, but rather a beginner's guide to ISKCON management. Those who

systematically go through this book will get enough information to learn how to manage a temple even if they are complete managerial neophytes. Of course, a prospective candidate for the position of temple president must have certain prerequisite qualifications to manage. This book cannot grant one those qualifications if one does not have them, but it can help one who is basically qualified to learn.

As the preaching expands the number of centers in the world increase and the need for training temple presidents and other temple officers also increases. Originally this manual was written for the Soviet Union as there were many temples rapidly developing without proper leadership. Later on it was adapted for usage by ISKCON around the world. This book cannot be complete, for situations can arise which we cannot now foresee. The purpose of this book is to create a course of management. It is meant to educate neophytes into the basic principles of temple management, as they were understood from Srila Prabhupada and developed over the years in ISKCON. This book might also serve to help even an experienced manager see something which he missed over the years. In any case it is meant to help one successfully manage an ISKCON temple in most of its aspects. Our simple advice is: read this book from cover to cover, then go back over the sections which you require to immediately improve and study them in great detail. Make the required changes in the temple you manage, and then move on to the next section and repeat the process until the temple is fairly well organized. If you have a hard time understanding some portion of the book, then address the questions to your local GBC who will most likely satisfy you.

I wish you the blessings of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna in your attempt to increase your management skills, and pray that this work will both satisfy the Lord and accomplish its goals.

Harikesa Swami
Mayapur March 25, 1991

Chapter One

Chapter One

What is a Temple?

Since this book is about temple management, the first thing that we should understand is, what is a temple? There are various forms of preaching units in ISKCON. There are large temples, small temples, preaching centers, nam hatta centers, and even householder flats. Although each of these units is somewhat different in its structure, we will not make much distinction between these centers while writing this book. We will simply speak about temple management understanding that basically the same principles will apply in all cases. It is up to the temple authority to adjust the principles for his own particular instance. Later, we shall discuss these different preaching units in greater detail to distinguish one from the other where the differences require specific explanation.

The Temple

A temple is an ISKCON center of preaching activities wherein devotees gather together to worship the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna under the direction of the Founder acarya of ISKCON, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. The devotees all follow the four regulative principles, chant 16 rounds of the Hare Krsna mantra on beads each day, and follow all the regulated temple programs. A temple will usually have Deities of the Lord

in a temple room wherein kirtan and classes are held. A temple will have temple officers, at least a president, and treasurer, and sometimes also a secretary, temple commander, and department heads such as a sankirtan leader, head pujari, head cook and so on.

Sunday feasts, school programs, devotee making and training, and a regulated temple program of kirtans, classes and prasadam are some basic elements of temple life. Asramas for sannyasis, brahmacaries and brahmacarinis as well as certain qualified householders, are available for the devotees. Books are directly purchased from the BBT and sold on sankirtan and through the temple bookstores.

In short, a temple is a place where Krsna is worshiped and devotees live and are trained, with the goal of preaching Krsna consciousness throughout the area.

A Preaching Center

A preaching center is like a temple, but it is of a smaller size and stature. A preaching center may be manned by one or two initiated devotees who are trying to preach Krsna consciousness in the area. The center will perform basically the same functions as the temple, but without elaborate Deity worship and other larger programs. It is a small unit meant for preaching whose goal is to gradually grow into a full scale temple with all forms of worship and training of new devotees.

A Nam Hatta Center

A Nam Hatta center is different from a preaching center or a temple in that there are initially no initiated devotees, regulated temple programs or expanded preaching. This kind of a center is a place where interested people, most of whom do not chant 16 rounds a day or even follow all the regulated principles, may gather together and occasionally chant kirtan or hold programs when travelling preachers come by. Later on, some members of the Nam Hatta may come to the standard of being full time devotees and get initiated wherein the status of the center may change to that of a preaching center.

An ISKCON Center

All temples, preaching centers, Nam Hatta centers, restaurants, shops and so on, must be recognized by ISKCON before they may use the trade marked names of ISKCON such as 'ISKCON', 'The Hare Krsna Movement', 'Govindas', and so on.

A unit may be a part of ISKCON if it:

Recognizes that His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada is the Founder acarya of ISKCON and that the instructions found in his books and other works form the basis of all direction in ISKCON and that they follow these instructions.

Recognizes that the Governing Body Commission is the ultimate managing authority for ISKCON, and that the constitution of ISKCON is the guiding authority for the structure of the movement.

Works under the authority of the designated GBC representatives in the region.

There are a few other important items which every ISKCON center must follow. Every temple that owns property must have three property trustees recognized by the GBC Executors Committee to insure that the property

cannot be sold or mortgaged without the approval of these trustees. Further, each temple president must sign an Oath of Allegiance to ISKCON and this must be on file with the local GBC secretary. In addition, each temple must pay yearly fees to the GBC Communications Office for services provided by the GBC and must also pay a fee for the ISKCON Board of Education. Later, each temple will be licensed to use the name ISKCON and be a recognized part of the society. In this way, by following all the above items, one gets official recognition as a part of ISKCON.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two

Basic ISKCON Management Structure

ISKCON has a basic structure which must be understood and maintained in all respects. If a temple or other unit disregards this basic structure, they cannot expect to remain a part of ISKCON for long. Therefore a clear idea of what is ISKCON and what is its structure is essential for proper temple management.

First of all, the instructions of Srila Prabhupada form the basis for all aspects of temple life. His words and directions hold the society together and keep it in the same basic direction. In the early 1970's, Srila Prabhupada created a basic direction of management wherein he created the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON. This Commission, known as the GBC, was meant to take over the burden of management from Srila Prabhupada during his lifetime, and, after his departure, to manage all the affairs of ISKCON. In Prabhupada's final will, he stated that 'The Governing Body Commission shall be the ultimate managing authority for all affairs of the International Society for Krsna Consciousness'. Thus the GBC today functions as the ultimate managing authority for all activities in ISKCON.

The GBC body meets at least once a year in Mayapur at its annual meeting. During this meeting resolutions are passed giving direction to the society. Part of these resolutions deal with designating GBC representatives for the different areas of the ISKCON world. These officially designated GBC secretaries then act as the representatives of the entire GBC body in their specific zones. For the devotees in their zone, they act as the highest authority in terms of the spiritual management. They are responsible to the GBC body for the spiritual standards of the temples and devotees in their zone.

To efficiently deal with the management requirements within a smaller geographical area, some GBC men have created Regional Councils wherein the temple presidents and senior preachers within a specified region meet together regularly to cooperatively make sure that the temples are maintaining their standards and that preaching is going on in a coordinated manner. They can also expand their duties as they desire to manage things more properly. Other GBC members have instituted the system of regional secretaries who assist the GBC in the performance of his regional duties.

The next stage of ISKCON management is the temples. The temple is the basic unit of ISKCON's structure. These temples are meant to be self sufficient preaching units where devotees may live and prosper. Within each temple there is a temple president, and usually a treasurer. There may also be a secretary and other temple authorities. The authority structure in the temple descends from the temple president to the temple commander and then through the department heads such as the head pujari, head cook, sankirtan leader and so on. Sometimes the temple commander is

considered as a department head. These department heads are responsible for all the activities within their department. Since the temple is the basic unit of management in ISKCON, it is important to know the specific duties of the temple officers and department heads.

The Temple President

The Temple President is directly responsible for all the affairs of the temple. He may be of two types. The first type is a brahminical leader who works through a temple commander of the ksatriya nature, or he may be a ksatriya leader who allows the brahmanas of the temple to lead the temple spiritually. Either role model can work if the relationships are seen in terms of the varnasrama dharma system.

The brahminical type of temple president is one who manages mainly through preaching and giving a good spiritual example to the other devotees. He gives good classes and inspires the devotees to serve Krsna and thus easily gets the devotees in the temple working for Krsna out of their own voluntary desire. He doesn't have to force anyone to do anything since they do everything out of their own spiritual desire being convinced by his preaching.

This type of president manages the temple through the temple commander and the department heads. He instructs the temple commander and department heads to accomplish certain goals and they execute these goals by making plans and carrying them out. In this way all management is done by others and the brahminical temple president sees that their goals are Krsna conscious and met.

The second type of temple president is himself a great manager and leader of men. He will work intimately with all the members of the community and directly manage their activities. He may also have a temple commander and department heads, but he is managing their affairs in a very 'hands on' manner through active participation and direct intervention.

This ksatriya type of temple president will depend on his brahmanas or sannyasis in the community to do the bulk of the preaching and spiritual leadership. He will give them all facilities to preach and present Krsna consciousness in the temple. The temple runs through their spiritual example and power. He depends on these brahmanas, and may even have a brahminical council to give him occasional direction, when it is required, for problems which are too difficult for him to solve personally.

Both types of temple presidents should understand that their basic mood is to serve their spiritual master, the Deity, and the devotees. This service attitude is very important. The more the president thinks of himself as the servant of the devotees the better the management will be. When a president thinks himself the servant of the devotees then it is easy for him to engage the devotees in service, for this is his service to them. He knows that a devotee cannot be happy unless he is nicely engaged in devotional service. He will also want to please the devotees by supplying their basic needs for their maintenance and preaching. Such a president is loved by the devotees and will always succeed, whereas one who thinks himself the master of the devotees will always run into difficulties and conflict with others who are not fully surrendered souls.

The department heads are responsible for their particular department's activities. For example, the sankirtan leader is responsible to see that all the devotees engaged in sankirtan are going out each day; are getting

good spots; are paying for their books; are following the temple programs for spiritual strength; are getting proper clothes appropriate for the weather; are getting good prasadam for bodily health; are getting medicine when sick, and so on. In other words, he is responsible for their daily needs and requirements. He must carefully manage the department to make sure that every one of the devotees dependent on him is happily engaged in their service. At the same time he must act as a liaison with the temple president to inform him of the activities and results of the department and get further input, funding and manpower to accomplish his goals.

In the example of sankirtan, there are also group leaders. This principle exists in other departments as well when the department is large and spread out over a wide area. A group leader represents the authority of the department head and will basically take care of the same things as the department head but on a smaller scale.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three

General Guidelines for a Good Manager

In this chapter we will speak in a general way about certain principles which will help any temple manager regardless of his particular position. These principles are essential for success in managing an ISKCON temple. Srila Prabhupada's Unique position in ISKCON

The first and foremost principle is the recognition of Srila Prabhupada's position as the Founder acarya of ISKCON. Being the Founder acarya is no ordinary position. Others may act as spiritual masters within ISKCON, but only one person and no other, may hold the position of Founder acarya. Founder acarya means that this individual has created a society which is a significant branch of the Caitanya tree. Srila Prabhupada has created a society which was so significant that it spread all over the world within a very short period of time. No one else ever performed such a preaching work and therefore he is glorified as the Founder acarya of ISKCON, and indeed, the whole world.

Because Prabhupada has such a unique position, his teachings and writings form a unique body of knowledge which will guide and direct the activities of all the devotees of ISKCON for at least the next 10,000 years when Krsna consciousness is flourishing on this planet. Therefore all temple managers must read and study the books of Srila Prabhupada in order to clearly understand the basic standards of ISKCON. Every temple leader must read regularly the books of Srila Prabhupada in order to know the philosophy. Without knowing the philosophy of Krsna consciousness no one can preach. And, as the next point will show, without preaching, there is no real management in this spiritual movement.

The Best Manager is the Best Preacher

Srila Prabhupada once told me, 'The best manager is the best preacher.' What he meant by that is simple. If one preaches to the devotees in the temple in a nice way, they will develop a service attitude and want to render service to the Lord and the spiritual master. They will be properly motivated without the requirement of some extra special endeavor. Therefore it is incumbent on every temple president to carefully and enthusiastically preach to the devotees at every opportunity. The better he preaches, the more the devotees will respect him and then naturally want to serve under his instruction.

Srila Prabhupada wanted his temple leaders to always think of newer ways to inspire the devotees. Therefore the temple presidents, in conjunction

with the GBC, should think up newer and newer projects which will inspire the devotees. Of course, the sankirtan mission requires that the temple remain fixed in book distribution, but the president can set goals such as increasing the number of devotees and then training them to go out on sankirtan. This will certainly inspire the devotees. Further, he can create a number of marathons during the year which will inspire the devotees before special festival days. There are other programs which will enthuse the devotees, such as the observance of large festivals in the cities. In this way he should think of ways and means to inspire the devotees.

The nice thing about the preaching manager is that he never orders others on his own account. He never says, 'I am saying this and therefore you should follow me!'; rather, he simply represents the will and desire of the previous acaryas who have already given us the orders of what to do to spread the mission of Krsna consciousness. Because he is a representative of the previous acaryas, he will be loved by the devotees and the devotees will also love to follow his instructions because they can see that these instructions are not motivated by personal desires for name and fame, but are motivated by the pure desire to simply serve the previous acaryas. There is a wealth of difference between a devotee who orders others to satisfy his personal whim as compared to one who wishes to satisfy the spiritual master. This brings us to the next point.

Satisfaction of the Spiritual Master

The most essential principle that operates in spiritual life is total dedication of one's life, wealth, words, and intelligence in the mission of one's spiritual master. Dedication to the mission of the spiritual master is the perfection that fulfills all desires. If one wants to have success in spiritual life, the secret is to fully dedicate himself to following the instructions and fulfilling the mission of the spiritual master. No other principle in spiritual life works as effectively in developing all spiritual success.

We should all understand that the mission received in ISKCON descends from the original mission presented by Srila Prabhupada and therefore the mission of all future spiritual masters must be in accordance with the mission of Srila Prabhupada. If one acting as a spiritual master deviates from the mission of Srila Prabhupada then he becomes asara, or useless. Prabhupada had many goals for this ISKCON movement, but all of these goals were to be accomplished through preaching. Simply by increasing the preaching, of which book distribution is the most important part, one can automatically fulfill all the other goals within the society. Therefore we stress so much on book distribution and preaching since it is the life of ISKCON and the source of all success in spiritual life. When the book distribution and preaching is going on nicely, then all the other aspects of spiritual life will also go on nicely with the minimum of management. This is not only a theory of good management but it has been practically seen in temples where this principle is sincerely followed.

Sadhana

Every temple authority, and indeed, every devotee within ISKCON, should strictly maintain their standards of sadhana bhakti. Sadhana means the regulative principles of devotional service. Every temple authority must always rise early in the morning, take his bath, put on clean cloth and then come to the temple for the full morning program. If he does that, he will personally be Krsna conscious throughout the day, and he will be able to properly lead the devotees in their own spiritual sadhana bhakti.

One who does not properly follow sadhana will have a hard time convincing others to do so. This sadhana forms the basis of spiritual life upon which all spiritual perfection will grow.

Sometimes a temple president will not follow the temple program using his heavy work load as an excuse. But working all day without following the temple program is activity in the mode of passion and will not increase the management efficiency in the long run. Actually, it will decrease the effectiveness of the management for without spiritual strength no one can go on taking up heavy managerial responsibility for long. Therefore the temple presidents must be sure to follow the temple programs strictly. They should properly chant their 16 rounds of the Hare Krsna maha mantra each day and carefully hear the mantra. This will give them the spiritual strength to go on with their managerial duties.

Although the temple president must be strict in his following of the sadhana process, he will still be faced with various emergency services throughout the day. Sometimes these emergencies will arise during the morning program and he will have to deal with them. If someone approaches him with a problem during the japa time, for example, he should politely direct that person to another temple authority who can deal with the situation, or he should propose a means by which the problem may be solved without his having to become personally entangled in it. He should not become angry at the person approaching him and deal with the situation as far as required. Sometimes the situation is so serious that it demands his immediate attention. He should then surrender to Krsna and take care of the situation as quickly as possible. However, if he is approached with a routine matter during his japa or the morning program, he should declare that the matter can be taken care of later on during the normal working hours and that now is the time for chanting and hearing. He should strive to keep his sadhana intact despite occasional disruptions.

Advance Notification

Devotees don't like to be surprised with unexpected services. This is natural. They like to know what they have to do before they have to actually do it so they can arrange their lives in such a way as to best accomplish the tasks before them. Knowing this, a wise temple president will assist the devotees by notifying them well in advance what their devotional service will be in the future.

For example, if there is going to be a special kirtan party on the streets on Saturday, the temple president should notify the devotees on Monday of the planned kirtan. He should also repeat it on Wednesday and again on Friday. In this way all the devotees will know that on Saturday they will be expected to come to the kirtan and they will plan accordingly. The temple president who gives advance notification will minimize the possibility that he will hear from the devotees, 'I can't go, I have other things to do.'

If the temple president is planning a sankirtan marathon, let us say in the month of December (the traditional time for an ISKCON marathon), he should start informing everyone of the marathon in October. He should mention it a few times until everyone is informed that in December there is going to be a marathon and everyone should take part in it. His preaching about the marathon should increase in November to expand the sankirtan fever so that by the end of November the marathon is in the front of everyone's consciousness. There should be no surprises or the

sudden introduction of a new activity on the devotees for this will be counterproductive.

This is also true for smaller things such as a cleaning marathon in the temple. If there is to be a cleaning marathon on Friday, for example, then it should be announced on Monday so everyone can prepare their schedules to accommodate it. This is important for the smooth management of the temple.

Honesty

A temple president must be honest with the devotees. If he makes a statement to the devotees, he should back it up with action. For example, if he states, 'If you work nicely in your department all year long, then I will send you to Mayapur for the festival.' then he should actually carry out that promise. If he does not, he will risk losing all the faith of that devotee and others as well. Certainly the devotee who has been promised will speak with others and this will cause a general diminishing of the faith of the devotees in the temple president. So when the temple president makes a promise to the devotees, he should fulfill it, even if it is hard to do so. His credibility as a leader to be trusted and believed depends on it.

Besides, the golden rule in the material world is, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' If someone made a promise to us and then broke it, we would not like it at all. Commonly a president might think, 'We are all devotees, so the others should just understand that I cannot fulfill my promise and accept it as Krsna's mercy.' But this is a lot to expect from neophyte devotees. In fact, one should not even expect it from advanced devotees. To mislead a devotee to whom a promise was made is a very bad thing and is against the etiquette of Vaisnavas. If one keeps his word he will become known as a person who can be trusted. This is an essential quality for a successful temple president.

There are occasions when a promise simply cannot be fulfilled, and such circumstances teach us what to say when we promise something. For example, if a devotee was promised that he could go to Mayapur for the festival, yet the temple is completely broke at the time of departure, or the price of the air fare has increased enormously, then it might be that the promise cannot be fulfilled. Of course, the new situation can be explained to the expectant devotee and perhaps he will accept that, but it is a risk. Therefore it is better not to make promises that might not be fulfilled later on. One might say something like, 'I can't guarantee anything, but we can try and arrange it if all goes well.' Such statements do not constitute a promise yet give hope to the devotee who has a desire to fulfill. Sometimes one can confidently state something more specific if he is sure that it can be fulfilled.

Caring

A good temple president always thinks about the welfare of the devotees. He will make sure that they are well taken care of at all times. He is concerned that they have a proper place to rest, that it is peaceful and well heated, as well as comfortable. He should make sure that the residence of the devotees is as nice as his own.

The ideal president is a perfect host for visiting devotees. He should always make sure that a new guest in the temple has been given prasadam, a nice place to stay, as well as whatever things he needs to be comfortable. Of course, this means within reason, but if one just greets a new guest with sweet words and the basic facilities needed for devotional life, he will satisfy that guest and get his blessings. A

president who cares for his guests will find that more and more guests will come to the temple. This is very important when one wants to attract senior devotees to come to the temple and preach. They remember more than anything else the reception they are given, and the word will spread, either good or bad. Nothing ruins a temple more than the reputation that one will not be treated properly there. If such a reputation gets out, then it will be very hard to attract travelling preachers to come and stay for some time. Therefore one should always endeavor to be a perfect host to attract more and more travelling preachers to the temple.

One may ask what is the use of having travelling preachers come to the temple? But it is seen in those places where senior devotees come and preach that the devotees are always enlivened and happy. Whenever a new person comes and preaches it is a kind of mini festival and the devotees feel satisfied that someone new is there to give the classes and lead some kirtans. After all, variety is the spice of life. The realizations of the new preachers keep the atmosphere from getting stale and keep everyone enlivened.

One of the most important features in caring for devotees is to make sure that the prasadam is always good, on time, clean, and hot. If prasadam is nice, and well served (see the section on serving prasadam) then the devotees will always feel satisfied and they will be enthusiastic to perform their services. Srila Prabhupada once spontaneously wrote me a letter thanking me for the nice prasadam that I was serving the devotees in the temple. He considered this as most important for the spiritual lives of the devotees.

If a guest comes to the temple, he should be always greeted with some nice prasadam. This will satisfy anyone who has come from a long distance. Srila Prabhupada also said that anyone who comes to the temple, at any time of the day, should be offered some prasadam. Some subji can be always available, and some puris can be quickly prepared from puri dough ready in the refrigerator and ghee in the pan quickly heated up. A sweet should be available and this will satisfy any gentleman.

An important part of caring for the devotees is giving them proper medical care. If they are sick, it is essential that someone take care of them. Giving them water, or fruit juice, if that will help them in their particular sickness, as well as bringing a doctor if required and supplying them medicine, will go a long way to both helping the devotees in their time of crisis, and also endearing them to the management. If the managers care for the devotees when they are sick or injured, the devotees tend to become very grateful, as any person would be, and then they will increase their service when they get better.

It is only common sense to take care of the devotees when they are sick. It is a kind of reciprocation. When they are well, they are working hard for the temple, and when they are sick, the temple takes care of them. Often we hear of devotees who were just left neglected somewhere during some illness. They often become bitter and want to leave that place as soon as they can. This is certainly a good way to lose devotees. By simply taking care of them, they can expand their service to Krsna and their spiritual master more and more. This is also true of a devotee who is not a devotee of your temple. If a guest is sick, one should treat him with all the facilities of a temple devotee for the guest is helpless and dependent on the temple at that stage. Someday you will be in another temple, and you may also fall sick.

Sometimes temple managers are extremely austere. When they fall sick they do not feel that any special attention is required and they just go on serving despite their illness. This is not good from two points of view. The first point is that when one is sick and does not take care of himself he tends to get sicker or the disease becomes chronic and cannot be easily cured later on. This causes a disturbance in his service. Do not neglect the body thinking it to be merely maya. One should rather see the body as a temple of God and carefully take care of this valuable tool for self realization. It is our responsibility to take care of the body and keep it healthy. The second point is that when one neglects his own bodily illness he tends to become callous to the illness of others. He thinks, 'I would not care if this were happening to me, so why should we waste time trying to cure others?' This attitude is impersonal and will create many troubles for the devotees in the temple. One should take care of himself and others as well.

It must be noted here that sometimes devotees become overly concerned with their bodies. Although we must take care of the body, we also know that the bodily problems we face are a product of our past sinful actions and there is sometimes not much we can do about it. If, after repeated attempts to cure ourselves, we find that it is impossible or extremely difficult, we should give up the endeavor and simply depend on the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who can reduce the heavy burden of our karma if He so desires. Knowing how far to endeavor to take care of the body is a difficult subject requiring a lot of maturity. If the temple president possesses that maturity he can nicely take care of the devotees in the temple according to their actual needs. Such maturity can only be gained over time, but it should be the goal of all temple managers.

Dealing with the GBC

The GBC of the local area is the appointed representative of the entire Governing Body Commission of ISKCON and is thus the representative of Srila Prabhupada's will. Therefore he should be well taken care of. He should have a proper room, proper prasadam, and also someone to take care of his needs such as washing of clothes and bedding.

Besides the normal bodily maintenance of the GBC member, there is also the relationship of managerial cooperation that must be maintained. The GBC member is there to help the president do his job better. He is meant to train the president if there is some lacking on his part, and to help him make the decisions which are essential to success in management. Therefore one should be open and friendly with him. It is not the time to be closed up and unfriendly when the GBC member is coming. If one deals with his GBC member with hostility, this is counterproductive to the Krsna conscious ideal of vaisnava humility and etiquette. Usually the GBC member is very senior and therefore he should be respected by the temple authorities.

If there are problems, for example if the GBC member asks the temple president to do something he doesn't want to do, then they should discuss the situation together and come to some mutually acceptable conclusion. If there are very serious problems, then perhaps another GBC member can be called in to help mediate the situation and come to some conclusion. But one should never openly fight with the GBC member or criticize him to the general devotees. This would be the worst thing to do since it will cause irreparable damage to the faith of the devotees. Srila Prabhupada wanted that the GBC and temple presidents work together in close harmony

for the overall benefit of ISKCON and it is up to the temple president to fulfill his part of the bargain by fully cooperating with the GBC member as far as possible.

The GBC member will correct any mistakes or deviations created by the temple managers. This is part of their job. If the GBC secretaries, who are capable of seeing what is right and wrong, see something improper in the temple, they will usually correct it as soon as possible. Of course there may be many things wrong in the temple, especially in these beginning stages of management, and the GBC representative may not choose to correct all these things at once. He will bring the temple up to the proper standard over time. The temple managers should appreciate that they have a guide to follow who will understand their needs and problems and give good instruction where it is needed.

Later on, when the management is running more smoothly and up to the proper standard of spiritual life, the GBC representative may take a more advisory role and give instruction in a more brahminical fashion. The GBC secretaries are actually meant to guide the presidents by giving them good advice and direction where it is needed. They can also help the presidents make good decisions. Naturally the GBC will want to assist the temple presidents to expand the movement more and more. Therefore the presidents should cooperate with the GBC secretaries in all ways.

Group Efforts

There are two basic ways in which something can be managed. One may take all the responsibility on his own shoulders and singularly manage something, or he may create a group to discuss and plan out the course of action to be executed. Sometimes it is seemingly more efficient to do things alone, for having to deal with many others on managerial affairs is a difficult thing to do. But in the long run it is not really recommended. If we make decisions which are wrong, or at least not appreciated by the others in the temple, then the responsibility for those improper decisions rests solely and wholly on our own shoulders. This can become quite unpleasant and can cause one to become very discouraged. Therefore, making larger decisions which give overall direction to the temple are better made in small groups specifically designed to make such decisions. The decision made by the group is usually a better one, as the subject being decided would be considered from many different perspectives. And it is a fact that those who participate in making the decision are naturally more inspired to work to implement it. When all the managers in the temple are moving in the same direction the management becomes quite easy and powerful. But if individual managers have different ideas then there is conflict and everyone's energy is wasted. Therefore group decisions are more conducive to successful management.

Considerations of the Asram of a Manager

A temple president usually has to deal with women. Formerly in ISKCON this was resolved by having all the temple presidents marry. Although this helps solve the problem to some degree, it is not a final solution. Dealing with women is a difficult thing for a man and this sometimes will preclude brahmacaries and sannyasis from managing temples. Still, one will see brahmacaries and sannyasis running a temple now and then. It is difficult, but it can be done if one is very expert and detached.

There is nothing wrong with a householder managing a temple so long as he does not utilize the facilities of the temple for his own personal sense gratification. Certainly the president may get his basic requirements for

living and eating fulfilled through the temple, and he may also have his own place to live outside. However, he should not exploit the temple for his own sense gratification, for that would be taking more than his quota. The Isopanisad warns us that everything is owned and controlled by the Lord and therefore one should not take more than that which is allotted to him by the will of the Lord. A temple president must be careful not to take more than what would be allotted to any other householder who is working full time for the temple. For example, he should not have specially prepared opulent meals when the temple devotees are eating austerely. In fact he should eat with the devotees. Neither should he use temple funds to buy himself a nice vehicle while the other devotees are walking or taking the bus. He should take what is needed to expand his service, but not for expanding his sense gratification. This subject will be discussed in more detail later on in the book.

Whether one is married or not, one must deal with married and unmarried women. It is dangerous to deal with women since there is always the chance that one may become attached and thus entangled with some other lady. We have seen in the past temple presidents fall down because of having to deal with women. Brahmachary managers have gotten themselves married due to attachment to one of the girls in the temple and householder managers have fallen down with another man's wife and run away from their position. Sometimes illicit sex can take place when no one is looking and this causes the destruction of that devotee's spiritual life. If the president gets entangled in this manner the temple can become destroyed, so one must avoid such entanglements by all means. Some hints are as follows. If he is dealing with unmarried ladies, then the oldest, and hopefully the most capable, among them should try to take care of the girls. If the ladies are married, then the temple president should engage the ladies either through the husband of the lady, or he should have his wife engage the lady directly. This will avoid the unsavory situation of the temple president having to intimately deal with someone else's wife. Being the wife of a temple president has its responsibilities for the wife of the temple president must act as his representative in dealing with the other ladies in the temple. Sometimes the wife of the temple president does not want to, or cannot, deal with the management of the other ladies in the temple. If this happens then the temple president has no choice but to do it himself. This is not so bad if he is just giving simple instructions to the ladies for their service, but if they have more mental problems, as ladies often do, then it will become more difficult. The wife of the temple president may then act as a messenger between the ladies with the problems and her husband, carrying good instructions to them with the hopes that this will satisfy them. If they still require more attention, then the wife of the temple president may sit with her husband while he speaks with the lady with a problem.

If the problem that is discussed is one of a marital nature; that is, a problem between husband and wife, the temple president should recommend that the couple work out their problems amongst themselves. He might also recommend that the problem be brought up to their spiritual master for his opinion. It is important that married couples work out their interpersonal problems as best they can amongst themselves, for it is extremely difficult for anyone else to do it for them.

If the temple president is dealing with someone else's wife through her husband, and the husband is in maya to some serious degree, then the

temple president will have no choice but to deal with the wife directly. But this must be done in a most discreet manner. Sometimes it has been seen that a temple manager is lusty to enjoy the wife of another devotee. To do this he might proclaim her husband to be in maya in order to bring the woman under his control. This is a most disgraceful affair and it can have nasty repercussions. Therefore, before the temple president decides if the husband is in maya and he must manage the wife directly, he should get the authorization of the GBC or the temple council. In any case, even if the manager must deal directly with the wife of another they should never speak or meet in a closed place and always there should be others around to make sure that no illicit activities take place or no unwanted attachments develop. For example, if they are meeting in the office of the temple president, the door should be open and another man, or the temple president's wife, should be there. Again, if the wife of the temple president is available for management services then she should deal with that lady directly.

It is important to note here that although the temple president might utilize his wife to deal with the other women in the temple, the wife should not take this as an opportunity to start to control the temple. It is essential that the wife not try to manage the brahmacaries or other men as this would create a great disturbance to the temple atmosphere. The wife of the temple president should only pass instructions from her husband to the other ladies in the temple and should not try to manage the temple on her own.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four

Pitfalls in Daily Management

There are many activities which, if performed, can throw a temple off the course of expanding the Krsna consciousness movement. We are meant to preach and deliver the message of Krsna consciousness throughout the world, but sometimes we become sidetracked and diverted from our real duties. Therefore we have to be careful to avoid the following basic mistakes. These mistakes have been recognized over long periods of time in ISKCON. They are not at all obvious. Formerly large segments of the movement were engaged in such activities with seemingly great success, but the ultimate failure of the temples and their leaders showed without a shadow of a doubt that good management means following strictly the formulas given to us by Srila Prabhupada.

Of all the formulas coming from Srila Prabhupada, the one relating to book distribution and temple economy seems to be the most practical and important. Prabhupada often said that the economic basis of the movement is the sale of our books. He created the formula that the temple would give half of its income to the BBT and the other half would be used for temple maintenance. This becomes clear when we understand that the temple's will sell the books for at least twice the BBT price, thus automatically half of their income goes to the BBT to pay for the books and the other half goes to the temple treasury. Prabhupada wanted this formula to be followed by all his temples for it was the means of all spiritual and material success. Keeping this in mind, we can discuss some of the pitfalls in temple management.

Expansion Beyond One's Means

Expanding the Krsna consciousness movement is one of our aims. We want to expand the preaching and temples all over the world. However, when an individual temple president decides to expand the temple, or even a

temple council, often they will expand it far beyond the capacity of the temple finances. We have practically seen this occurring in some parts of the world.

This is one of the most serious traps the temple managers can fall into. If the temple managers are not mature in their spiritual realization, they may equate the material opulence of the temple with success. They may see that the more opulent the temple is, the more successful they are as temple managers. Sometimes a temple president will also compete on the subtle platform with other temple presidents. If another temple president has got an opulent temple, then the first temple president will think that he has got to have one as well. This will cause him to want to expand the temple's opulence more and more to keep pace with the other temple. Such competition is not on the transcendental platform. Real success means increased preaching, devotees joining, and books distributed, and not necessarily the increase of material opulence. Misconceptions can cause a temple manager to start to expand the temple even if he does not have the means to do so. He may buy a big building at great expense thus greatly increasing his monthly operating expenses. He may take out big loans from the bank with large monthly payments. And in order to pay for this, he will have to push the devotees more and more to collect large sums of money. This is not the way to expand the Krsna consciousness movement.

One should not get a big facility unless he really requires it. When there are so many devotees in the temple that there is hardly any room to sleep, then one really requires a bigger facility. But if that is the case, then one should have enough devotees to collect sufficiently to pay for the larger facility. If one buys a big place unnecessarily, then he runs the risk of having to maintain a large, opulent, and empty temple. Therefore do not expand unless there is a real need to do so. Every dollar spent on a mortgage payment may mean many times that in fewer books to distribute.

One should have a temple room large enough to accommodate a reasonable number of guests. It may not be possible to hold all the guests who come, but an attempt should be made to allow as many as possible to join in the temple programs.

Not every person who is becoming Krsna conscious need live in the temple. For example, householders might be better off living outside the temple in a nearby flat. They can come to the temple every day for the temple programs and engage in service as they can. If they are not engaged in essential service in the temple, where they will then be maintained by the temple, they will have to work outside in order to support their family. If they are living outside and working they can perform a valuable service by donating to the temple some of their monthly salary for its support. This is the actual varnasrama principle: the householders live outside the temple and give as much as they can for the support of the temple's preaching activities and devotees.

In the Upadesamrta (The Nectar of Instruction) of Srila Rupa Goswami, there is a verse which states 'atyahara prayasas ca...' Prayasah means to over endeavor for mundane achievements. This is something which can destroy spiritual life. Therefore, striving to expand the temple when there are no resources to do so, is one of the impediments to successful spiritual life and must be avoided by any responsible temple leader.

The Paraphernalia Trap

When the temple managers have fallen into the trap of overexpansion of the temple's facilities, they will require some means to keep the project functioning. Because they have expanded far beyond the capacity of the present devotees to maintain using the traditional methods of book distribution, they have to create some other form of income which will have a high return for a small effort. This requirement gave birth to paraphernalia distribution in ISKCON.

Paraphernalia means any product which is not books. In the past ISKCON leaders have induced the devotees to sell paintings, rugs, tee shirts, bumper stickers, and so on, to raise the necessary funds to pay the large overheads of their temples. Such collection programs become critical when brahmacaries are performing such activities as a temple organized affair. Some temple presidents justifiably argue that they only recently became the president of the temple and that they inherited the temple with its large expenses from the previous administration. This may be true, but it does not change the point. Although one may be sincere in his utilization of paraphernalia, still it means that the temple is supported in an artificial manner similar to the methodology of the materialistic society. Prabhupada wanted his temples maintained by book distribution, for this would be the best way to expand the preaching of the Krsna consciousness movement and at the same time it was the safest means of creating economic stability. Paraphernalia has gone a long way to ruining book distribution in some parts of the world.

Paraphernalia is seemingly an easy way to make money. Devotees, instead of having to preach and present themselves as devotees, could now wander the streets, offices, and homes, and sell items which were in demand by the materialists. Books about God consciousness are hard to sell since the people basically do not want such literatures (at least in the opulent West) but material goods such as paintings or rugs are in high demand and easy to sell. Besides, one can purchase these items wholesale in Asia and sell them for many times their original price making a fantastic profit without much effort.

Because of the great success of paraphernalia, temples were becoming more and more opulent on the basis of material goods. Temple presidents saw this as a means to expand their temples more and more, and even purchase large buildings which were formerly far beyond their means. It seemed that now things would become easy to manage.

However, what happened was that once starting on this paraphernalia, one was attached to it, just as one gets addicted to drugs. Since the temple was expanded beyond the normal expected facilities for the number of devotees, one must continue with the paraphernalia to pay for the temple expenses. This meant that the devotees would have to continue with the paraphernalia at all costs.

The real problem with paraphernalia is that it really does not produce more income to expand the preaching. As the income from paraphernalia increases, so do the expenses, and these inflated overheads cause the net profit to remain the same. Although one tries to maintain the program over longer periods of time, he runs into problems as the devotees doing paraphernalia need 'vacations' and breaks from the hard grind of collecting, which causes breaks in the flow of income. Sometimes devotees become exhausted and require extensive breaks. All in all, the overall increase in income is negated by the increase in expenses and decrease in efficiency of the individual collector.

After some time, the devotees become spiritually weak. Staying out late at night to visit people's homes, far away from the temple association, wearing karmi clothes and never speaking about Krsna, the devotees lose their taste for spiritual life and become contaminated with material desires. They gradually give up the essence of spiritual life, the preaching mission, and consider that maintenance of their bodily existence in their grhastha ashram (since they all inevitably get married) is the goal of spiritual life. Some go away from Krsna consciousness completely, never to be seen again. Some take up the same paraphernalia business they did in ISKCON but now completely in the material world. Others just become useless and retire to an inactive life in the temple.

The net result is that book distribution becomes weakened and even non-existent. The devotees lose all strength to actually present themselves as devotees to the public and sell books. Thus instead of being a panacea for all economic problems, it turns to be a great disaster. After a while one is either forced to change the basic principles of Krsna consciousness from preaching to collecting money to maintain the temple, or a temple just withers away completely due to the basic lack of enthusiasm of the devotees.

Krsna does not want to send new devotees who are sincere in spiritual life to places where material economic means dominate the daily activities of the temple. Some may still join, but they may be attracted to maintaining bodily comforts and material opulence. When this happens people come to ISKCON to solve their economic problems. This is not at all satisfactory to the proper prosecution of spiritual life. We want devotees to join who are eager to develop their love of God and serve Him through the sankirtan mission of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thus this paraphernalia trap has to be avoided by all temple presidents who are sincerely interested in prosecuting and preaching spiritual life.

It is important to mention here that the paraphernalia trap mentioned above does not apply to householders working to maintain their families. Srila Prabhupada even authorized the starting of an incense business, called 'Spiritual Sky Incense', for the sake of the householder's maintenance. They were to work in this business, selling the incense wherever they could, and take a share in the profits in the form of a salary. Other householders could also make their own businesses, maintain themselves nicely, and donate regularly to the temple. This is the dharma for a householder. It is not forbidden for a householder to produce and sell paraphernalia. As will be explained later, the best means of support for a householder is through the distribution of Prabhupada's books. He may take a commission and support himself nicely. But if he cannot do that for some reason, then it is not forbidden for him to engage in paraphernalia businesses.

Lust, Anger and Greed

Every individual within this material world is subject to the effects of lusty desires. A temple president is no exception. If he is desirous of being known as a great devotee or a great temple president then he is falling into the trap of lusty desires. We should always think of ourselves as the humble servants of the Supreme Lord and our spiritual masters and never the master. When one is eager to be recognized as a great devotee or a great manager, then he is thinking himself to be something else than the humble servant of the Lord.

A real devotee always knows that whatever credit is there in his activities is due to the blessings and grace of the spiritual master and Krsna. He knows that it is not due to his own efforts but it comes from the Lord. Therefore he will never expect personal recognition for his work.

Sometimes a temple president will be very much attached to recognition for his works. Often this will be the cause of falldown from spiritual life. Obviously this is true for all devotees, regardless of their position in ISKCON's management structure. But a temple president will especially have to be on guard for he is responsible not only for himself but for the devotees in the temple as well. If he falls down then many devotees will suffer. Therefore he has to be extra careful to guard against becoming victimized by lusty desires for fame, profit and distinction.

Boredom

Krsna consciousness should be an exciting and active process. But sometimes, due to maya, a temple president finds himself bored. When he is personally bored it means that he is not actively engaging himself in figuring out ways to engage the devotees more and more in inspirational devotional service. Prabhupada once wrote to one leader that the job of the authorities in ISKCON is to always make sure that the other devotees are enthused in their services. To remain enthused the leaders must always think up newer goals to be accomplished by the devotees. Therefore it is essential that the temple presidents themselves are enthused and enlivened by newer works and ideas to spread the Krsna consciousness movement. Again, it is best that the temple president consult with his local GBC before he creates some new programs.

A temple president can keep himself enlivened by sometimes travelling to other temples and associating with other temple presidents, by attending Continental or Global temple president meetings, by attending regional council meetings, and by generally associating with senior devotees and travelling preachers. All these means can help him to keep ideas of how to spread Krsna consciousness flowing positively.

Chapter Five

A Brief Description of the Relevance of Varnasrama in ISKCON

It is very difficult to analyze the varnasrama system in terms of its relevance in ISKCON because there are many different opinions amongst the devotees as to how this could work. Vaisnavas who are beyond the cause and effect of the material world are beyond the varnasrama system.

However we see that great devotees such as Arjuna, although factually beyond the confines of varnasrama, successfully work within the varnasrama structure. Krsna also encouraged Arjuna to perform his duties within the varnasrama structure and attain perfection. Work done for the satisfaction of Visnu may be performed within any structure for the ultimate goal is the satisfaction of the Lord. Since the Lord Himself has created the varnasrama institution, there are obviously principles within it which are helpful to keep in mind while managing in ISKCON. We shall delineate some of them here.

Engaging Devotees According to their Propensities

Leaders in the varnasrama system require to see the qualities of a person and then engage him in work according to those qualities. This is one of the most important features of the varnasrama system. Krsna says in Bhagavad gita, catur varnyam maya srstham guna karma vibhagasah: I have

created the four orders of life according to their qualities and work. If someone has the quality of a particular order, and he works in that way, then he can be known as a member of that particular varna.

Those who have the qualities and are acting as priests, teachers, or advisors, are known as brahmanas. Those who are warriors, managers, and administrators are known as ksatriyas. Those who are taking care of the cows and agriculture, as well as commerce and banking are known as vaisyas. And those who are engaging in service to the other higher orders are known as sudras.

Each devotee in the temple will have a particular propensity. He will want to act in a particular manner. Of course, when one first comes to the temple he will act in a humble manner, mainly washing pots and cleaning the temple, as well as chanting on the street and other simpler services. But after a while he will purify himself due to the strength of the chanting of the Holy Name and gradually his natural qualities will manifest. At that time it is important that he be engaged according to his varna in order that there be no obstacles arising in his speedy development of Krsna consciousness.

Therefore the temple leaders should see that the devotees are engaged, as far as possible, according to their natural qualities. Now it is true that a temple president must be practical as well. Sometimes there are emergency services that must be taken up in order that the preaching mission go on properly. In this case it may not be possible to engage every devotee according to his propensities. However, when the temple has sufficient devotees, it will be easier to engage every devotee according to his propensity. A temple president should endeavor to engage everyone according to their propensities as far as possible.

It is not that easy to see what the propensities of a devotee are. If the devotee is new to the temple, it is a little difficult to understand what his propensities actually are. In fact, new devotees are often confused about their own position within the material nature and can offer little guidance to their managers as to what they would be best doing. Therefore it is a tradition in ISKCON that the newer devotees engage in general activities such as cleaning the temple, going on hari nam, and so on, until they are purified of their basic material contaminations.

Devotees who have been in the temple for a while are easier to understand because there has been a close contact with them over a period of time. Because of seeing them often, the president can understand what they do best and most enthusiastically and engage them accordingly. One can also ask a devotee what he would most like to do. One can also inquire as to what he was doing before he joined ISKCON, or what abilities and qualities he brought to Krsna consciousness from the material world.

Jiva Goswami, one of the greatest acaryas in our line of disciplic succession, recommended that one examine the motivation that causes one to join the Krsna consciousness movement. In his society of vaisnavas, he had his leaders interview the new entrants into Krsna consciousness and ask them why they wanted to surrender to Krsna. If they replied that they were distressed, it indicated that they were of the sudra category. If they were in need of money, it indicated that they were of the vaisya category. If they were curious to see what was going on, then it indicated that they were of the ksatriya category and if they were seeking wisdom it indicated that they were of the brahmana category. The four orders of social division in the varnasrama correspond to the four classes of pious men who surrender to Krsna. A temple president might use

this system to get an indication of the person's basic nature at the time he entered the temple.

The Role of Brahmanas in the Temple

Every temple should have a group of devotees who are qualified brahmanas. Such brahmanas will be engaged in preaching services, Deity worship, and education. Certainly they are valuable to the temple through the performance of these services, but they can also assist the temple in another important way. These brahmanas can act as spiritual leaders in the temple. They provide an important spiritual basis by preaching to the devotees, both in classes and privately. They also help the temple management through their valuable input in the temple council.

The temple council is usually made up of the managers of the temple, the president and the department heads. But having these temple brahmanas on the council helps to even it out and give weight to the more brahminical and spiritual side of the management.

These brahmanas are leaders in their own right. They can offer leadership in the way that Krsna envisioned through their intellectual prowess. Therefore, a temple should always encourage the brahmanas to flourish by respecting them and taking their input very seriously.

One of the important points in the varnasrama system, is the training one receives to respect all the different orders of life. Respecting devotees is an essential element in spiritual life. Special respect should be offered to devotees according to their spiritual position. The more advanced a devotee is the more respect should be offered him.

One should learn to respect all devotees and the services performed by them. Sometimes devotees in one service disrespect devotees in another service due to ignorance. We have seen that sometimes the sankirtan devotees become proud of their position as the front line soldiers of the sankirtan mission and they disrespect the other devotees in the temple. But such misguided devotees should consider, without the cooks and the kitchen cleaners, then what would the sankirtan devotees eat? Without the devotees caring for and storing the books, what would the sankirtan devotees distribute? And without the management department to organize the sankirtan movement, what would the sankirtan devotees do? Further they should realize that if these services in the temple were not done by the temple devotees then the sankirtan devotees would have to take time off their sankirtan and do the services themselves since the services must be done by someone. Krsna has to eat and be worshiped, and someone in the temple has to serve the Deity. The sankirtan devotees should be glad that someone in the temple has made it his life's mission to take care of these important services.

All in all, it is important to respect all devotees and their services otherwise one will be disrespecting the Vaisnavas which is very bad for spiritual life.

Chapter Six

Chapter Six

The Temple Spiritual Program and Spiritual Standards

Every temple must have a strict sadhana, regulated life, for the devotees to follow. This is essential for the proper functioning of the temple. Without a strict temple regulation, no temple can be successful in its preaching mission.

Of all principles, following the four regulative principles (no eating of meat, fish or eggs; no gambling; no intoxication; and no illicit sex) and

chanting 16 rounds of the Hare Krsna maha mantra daily are the most important. These two principles are the basis for initiation by the spiritual master and the foundation for growth in spiritual life. All other principles are based on these elements. When these principles are followed, then the other regulative principles of temple life will be successful.

Each temple must have a morning and evening program. Before the morning program every devotee must clean himself fully and take bath. Then the morning program begins at 4:15am or 4:30am for Mangal Aratika. (In preaching centers, Nam Hatta centers and the homes of householders living too far from the temple to attend the temple functions, mangal aratika may be later according to convenience.) After the mangal aratika is the tulsi puja. Then there is usually a two hour period for chanting japa. Then at 7 or 7:15am the Deity greeting (Govinda prayers) and then immediately after that Srila Prabhupada's guru puja. After the guru puja there is singing of Jaya Radha Madhava and Srimad Bhagavatam class. After the class there may be a period of questions and answers, and then, if the temple is organized in that way, a period of cleaning before morning prasadam [this will be explained later on].

The evening schedule starts at 6:45pm after the evening bath. There is usually a tulsi aratika and then at 7pm the full aratika for the Deities. After the aratika, which is usually 20-30 minutes (the kirtan may go longer if the devotees are so inspired) the Bhagavad gita class will take place. After that there is some milk prasadam and then everyone rests for the night.

Every temple devotee should follow this morning and evening program strictly. There may be some exceptions if a devotee has to render service in other places in the temple during some parts of the temple program. But this must be carefully regulated by the temple president.

Classes should be given by devotees who have some realization in spiritual life. Although any initiated devotee can give a class, unless the devotee has some realization, the listening audience will not be inspired. One should have a sound grasp of the philosophy and be able to present it to others. If there is no one to give a proper class, then one may play a tape of Srila Prabhupada's Bhagavatam class, for he is the best speaker of our philosophy, or one may simply read from Srila Prabhupada's books and everyone should listen carefully. It is better, though, that someone gives the class, for that is good for the speaker as well as the hearers.

Generally the temple class schedule should be made in a rotating manner, that is, each devotee will give class once a week if there are 7 good speakers, or twice a week if less. In some cases a devotee may have to give many classes a week, or if all the devotees are more or less qualified, then perhaps less than once a week. The point is that all qualified devotees should be given a chance to speak on the philosophy for that will help them realize the philosophy more and more.

One practical consideration here arises when there are many children in a temple during the class times. Usually children cannot sit still during class and they generally make a disturbance. Therefore children are usually sent out of the temple room during class. It is improper that children make noises and run about during the class time, therefore they are brought out of the temple room.

Some temples have ingeniously created systems by which the mothers and children can be in class and not in the temple room simultaneously. The

simplest method is to have a speaker from the temple room in another room where the children can make noise, but the class is still heard by a sincere mother who wishes to hear it. A more elaborate system is to have a soundproof room within the temple room, usually at the back, where the mothers can see and hear the class, but the children can do what they want. Alternatively, one could set up a video camera near the speaker of the class and have a remote television set somewhere where the children are safely away from the temple.

However, taking care of children during a class usually means that no class is heard for the children make too much noise. Therefore the most practical thing to do is to have a rotating system of a nursery where the mothers take turns taking care of all the temple children during the class time. This allows the mothers to come to class most of the time, and it keeps the children out of the temple room. In case there is objection from some mothers that they want to take care of their own children, it may be explained that Srila Prabhupada told Bhurijan prabhu that if their only service is to take care of their own children, then they should not live in the temple, but should live outside. Every mother should be prepared to take care of other's children, especially in the nursery environment. It is essential that children are supervised at all times otherwise they can wreck havoc in the temple.

Another part of the temple regulation is that every devotee in the temple should eat only Krsna prasadam which has been offered to the Supreme Lord in the temple. Food cooked by devotees and offered to the Lord with love and devotion is pure and will help one advance in spiritual life and develop love for the Lord.

Sometimes devotees think that it is alright to buy karmi made bread or other goods in the store and eat that. But actually they are eating the karma of the people who prepared the bread or other items. The karma of the cooks enters the food that is prepared by the karmis. Therefore outside food should be avoided at all costs. Srila Prabhupada once told me that eating outside the temple in India is the source of all diseases. Therefore one should only eat Krsna prasadam cooked by sincere devotees. Other devotees, who live near the temple, think that it is better to eat in their own homes and avoid the temple prasadam. Srila Prabhupada was very much against this and said that the temple prasadam should be so nice that everyone will want to eat it and not eat in their own places. He was very much against the householders in Los Angeles eating food prepared in their own kitchens. The temple cooks should realize that preparing prasadam that is tasty and fresh is a first class means of pleasing the devotees. Every devotee in the temple should be satisfied by the nice prasadam. Sometimes it is required that children have their own special arrangements for prasadam since they cannot tolerate the hot or spicy cooking in the temple. In such cases it is acceptable that their mothers cook for them if required. However, expert temple cooks know the art of setting aside some prasadam before it is spiced. This allows the children to take it thus avoiding the necessity for separate cooking arrangements.

Every devotee who lives in the temple should perform regulated service in the temple. Regulated service means service which is performed at the same time every day or under the direction of the temple authorities. This service forms the basis of our daily Krsna conscious activities. If a devotee leads a regulated life and daily performs a particular service then he will quickly transcend the bondage of maya. For example, it is

essential that all the devotees in the temple clean the temple every day, for cleaning the temple is like cleaning the heart. When this is done together, even for 20 minutes a day, then the temple will be clean and nice for the rest of the day. Other devotees can then keep clean the areas that get especially dirty, like the prasadam rooms or entrance hallways. The pujari department is another example of perfectly regulated temple activity since they have to perform their Deity worship at precisely the same time every day. The book distributors are also going out on their preaching work every day and cleansing the mirror of their hearts by doing so.

Although devotional service is generally seen as a very active thing, sometimes it is also done in a tranquil mood. Reading the books of Srila Prabhupada is one of the most important activities that a devotee can perform for these books contain the essence of spiritual life. Srila Prabhupada once told me in South Africa, 'They think that I have given these books just for selling to others, but actually I have written them for the devotees to read. You are authorized to read these books 24 hours a day!' He stressed the reading of his books because he knew that unless the devotees developed transcendental knowledge they would never be able to overcome the modes of material nature. Transcendental knowledge is the key to advancing in spiritual life. Therefore let us all read Srila Prabhupada's books with great enthusiasm!

Sometimes devotees ask whether they can read other books that are written by other ISKCON devotees and approved by the GBC. Actually, any Krsna conscious book is nice, but Srila Prabhupada wanted that the devotees read all his books many times before they would attempt to read other books. He specifically said this on many occasions. However he also encouraged his disciples to write books and articles so obviously it is alright to read their writings as well. The point is that Prabhupada's books are the source of all knowledge in ISKCON and they must be studied carefully.

Training Programs for Devotees

A temple is a place of learning. Anyone who enters the temple doors should be educated in devotional practice and knowledge. Practically they are trained to do the various services in the temple, such as preaching, cooking, puja, and so on, and at the same time they are educated in the sastra.

Every temple will educate its members through the morning Bhagavatam class and the evening Gita class as well as encouraging the devotees to read during the day for at least one hour. Although this may be difficult and there may be many services to perform, in the long run sastrically trained devotees will remain devotees and will render more service than devotees remaining in ignorance. To this end sometimes programs are created to train devotees in the sastra, such as the newly developed Bhakti Sastri courses which concentrate on training the devotees in the Bhagavad gita. The Bhagavad gita is such a nice book that if one simply knows it then he will be able to preach to just about anyone as well as give nice classes in the temple. Besides the wonderful verses spoken by Lord Krsna there are many other verses quoted from a variety of sastras in the purports. One may become a completely learned personality simply by knowing the Bhagavad gita perfectly well. And one may study the Gita for a lifetime before knowing it perfectly.

One who is educated in the philosophy of the Bhagavad gita will develop his love for Krsna, for to know Krsna is to love Him. An auxiliary

benefit is that the fruitive mentality will decrease. The more one understands the futility of fruitive activity the more his desire to work fruitively will decrease and he will work just for the satisfaction of the Lord and the spiritual master.

Engagement of Others in Devotional Service

It should be mentioned that sometimes we have to work with people who have fruitive desires. For example, we may hire people to work in our restaurants to serve or to clean, and they will take a salary. They may be nice people who even appreciate Krsna consciousness (such as a Krsna's Friend, a person who likes Krsna consciousness and the devotees but is not advanced enough to be a full time devotee) but they still work to maintain their separate material existence. Sometimes an initiated householder may require money to support his family, and he may take a salary. Another example is that sometimes we hire professionals to translate the books of Srila Prabhupada when there are no learned devotees in a particular language (of course a devotee must edit the work to make sure that the philosophy is unchanged). This kind of paid helper is not forbidden for temples, but it should be avoided as far as possible. It is always best to engage devotees in our work for they are working for Krsna and that is devotional and perfect. But if there is no other choice, people may be hired when the need arises. Such persons should be encouraged to do something devotional for Krsna, such as making an offering with their salaries or even to offer some physical services with their bodies. Such offerings are very beneficial to the performers and therefore devotees should encourage them to offer the results of their work in karma yoga.

Deity Worship

Of all the standards in the temple, the most stringent and demanding are within the puja department. There are many rules and regulations regarding Deity worship and it is far beyond the scope of this basic manual to describe them all in detail. The full set of standards has been prepared by the GBC Deity Worship Committee and one may procure a copy of that book to understand the final standard in Deity worship. These standards are quite high and preaching centers may not follow even most of these principles. But larger, more established, temples should endeavor to follow these principles for they are meant for the advancement of the pujaris and the temple devotees.

One may best learn this basic standard from travelling pujaris. After discussion with and approval from the local GBC, one can invite some learned pujari to come and train the devotees in the temple who can be designated as pujaris, in the basic form of Deity worship suitable for the circumstances. To be qualified as a pujari one must be brahmana initiated, very clean, and punctual.

Actually, one may come to a very high standard of Deity worship if he is simply following the principles of strict cleanliness and punctuality. One must keep the altar and all its paraphernalia very clean. The altar must be cleaned everyday and the paraphernalia must be kept polished. In addition the pujari must keep himself or herself clean and must not enter the Deity room or kitchen in a contaminated state. (Ladies cannot enter the kitchen or Deity room during the first three days of their menstrual period.) And all services to the Deities should be punctual. If the Deity is to take breakfast at 7:30am, then exactly at 7:30 the breakfast must be set down before the Deity. If one follows strictly this standard, then he is well on his way to satisfying the Lord.

Of course, the most important item in Deity worship is devotion. If one does whatever he does for the Lord with devotion, then even if there are defects in the worship, they will be overlooked due to the loving mood of the devotee. This does not mean that we can be careless and expect the Lord to overlook that for one who actually has devotion the Lord will never be careless in the Lord's service for he will always be careful to please the Lord at all times.

Deities shall never be established on the altar without the express approval of the local GBC men. To whimsically start Deity worship is not authorized. It is also an established GBC rule that no Deities (except Gaura-Nitai) may be established for worship unless the temple property is legally owned by ISKCON.

At the time of establishing Deities in a temple, standards for the worship of the Deities are set and should be kept in writing. Once one establishes a certain standard of Deity worship, he should never decrease that standard. If one has established a certain type of offering made at a particular time, then that should always be kept up and never diminished at any time. One can always increase, but whatever was increased must be maintained for all time after that. Therefore only increase when it is absolutely certain that it will never be decreased. One must strictly keep up the Deities schedule and all standards that are set in the temple.

Exactly what is the Deity schedule will vary from temple to temple according to the level of Deity worship being performed. In temples where the full puja is done obviously there will be more included in the schedule than in temples where a minimum worship is performed.

The following rules are for the worship of Radha-Krsna and Jagannatha Deities which have been formally installed in the temple: Everyone can be engaged in Deity worship in some way or other, but not everyone can enter the Deity room and perform the puja. This is reserved for the brahmana initiates. Bhaktas may clean the temple in front of the Deities, or they may enter the kitchen and wash the Deities pots and clean the kitchen. They may also cut the vegetables that are later washed and brought into the kitchen. First initiated devotees may perform some more services in the kitchen, even rolling chapatis or preparing foods to be cooked, but cooking with fire is allowed only by the second initiated devotees. Only a brahmana initiate can work over the flame or perform worship on the altar. This is the strict standard of Deity worship for Deities other than simply worshiped Gaur Nitai.

When performing elaborate temple worship of Deities other than Gaur Nitai, one must have a sufficient stock of brahmana pujaris, otherwise he should not start elaborate temple worship. For example, Prabhupada wanted at least 6 pujaris to take care of the Jagannath Deities, and there must be other brahmanas to cook as well. One of the greatest mistakes that a temple president can make is to start elaborate Deity worship without a sufficient number of initiated brahmanas who are qualified, willing and able to do Deity worship. This mistake will cause havoc in the temple. Unless there is a proper number of dedicated pujaris, there is no use in starting elaborate worship. A pujari should understand that his service is for the rest of his life, or at least until a replacement can be found for his service.

Standards for Worship of Gaur-Nitai

Gaur Nitai are very merciful. They allow Themselves to be worshiped by anyone even in a most simple standard, and Their installation may be

performed in a simple, informal way ³⁴ even just by chanting the holy name. Sometimes we make a distinction between 'installed' and 'uninstalled' Deities and establish standards of worship accordingly. However, there is no real difference between the two. One may 'install' Gaur Nitai Deities simply by performing kirtan and worshipping Them with devotion. Srila Prabhupada comments in the Srimad Bhagavatam that he considered the hari nam sankirtan to be the real installation of the Deities in Vrindavan and not the elaborate puja being performed by paid brahmanas. Therefore when one performs kirtan he installs the Deities. Accordingly one should worship Them as best he possibly can, following a standard which can be constantly maintained.

It is best that a second initiated devotee cook for the devotees, but if that is not possible in some places, then first initiated devotees may do so. If there are no initiated devotees (in a Nam Hatta center for example) then uninitiated bhaktas who show sincerity and are following the four regulative principles and chanting 16 rounds a day may cook for the devotees and make simple offerings to Sri Sri Gaur Nitai. If these services are done cleanly and with devotion, They will accept the offerings. However, as soon as there are sufficient initiated devotees to perform the worship and cook the offerings, they should do so. Although the standard may be relaxed in the beginning due to the lack of qualified devotees, as soon as there are sufficient devotees available, the full standard should be introduced and never diminished.

Any kind of a center may have Gaur Nitai Deities and worship Them according to the devotees' means. They may be offered food according to the eating schedule of the inhabitants of the temple. One can change Their dress every week and worship Them as it is convenient. Again, when it is possible to increase the standard of worship, then one should add a daily bathing ceremony for the Deities pleasure and all the other aspects of Deity worship one after another.

The following are the standards for worshipping the Deities. The Deities' day begins before mangal aratika with the awakening of the Deities. This is usually done 15 or 30 minutes before the mangal aratika. After waking the Deities, milk sweets are offered. No preparations cooked in ghee are allowed at this time, neither is fruit appropriate, so just milk sweets are offered, like sandesh, rasgulla, rabri, and so on. Then the mangal aratika is performed. This is a full aratika. A full aratika means that one first blows the conch shell three times, (after blowing the conch shell one must pour some water over the shell into a pot placed by the side of the altar specifically to catch the water from the washed conch shell), then he offers the incense (an odd number of sticks), during the Raj bhoga aratika at noon a camphor lamp is offered (if one can get camphor otherwise this may be skipped), then a lamp with 5 flames (one makes the wicks by dipping rolled cotton in liquid ghee), then a small conch shell filled with water, then a handkerchief, then flowers with an aroma, then a camara whisk (obtainable only in India), and a peacock feather fan during the warm weather months. At the end of the aratika one blows the conch shell three times and again washes it.

There are a few points that should be understood before offering aratika. One should only do aratika if he is fully bathed and dressed in fresh, clean cloth. Before he begins, he must perform acamana, a purificatory procedure of sipping water and chanting mantras. This is done by taking a small spoon of water from a bowl or cup of water and placing the spoon in the right hand and pouring three drops into the left hand and then

throwing it away. Then one takes the spoon in the left hand and saying the mantra, 'om kesavaya namah', one takes three drops in his right hand, sips that, and throws the rest away. He repeats that procedure but saying now, 'om narayanaya namah', and then again saying, 'om madhavaya namah'. Then he will take three drops of water (with the spoon in the right hand) and place it on the conch shell and then blow it to start the aratika. Before offering each item, he must purify his hands by pouring three drops of water in them, and then pouring three drops of water on the item to be offered.

The items are offered in a circular motion, clockwise, while the pujari is standing up (do not kneel and offer the items). One must first request permission of his guru to offer the item by presenting it before the picture of his guru, then his guru's guru, and so on till one reaches Caitanya Mahaprabhu. One may present the items to the guru-parampara in a simple way, with a gesture of holding the item toward them while meditating that they are accepting the item, or he may do it in an elaborate manner by offering the items in a circle three times or seven times. Then one offers the item with the full number of circles to Lord Caitanya, then Lord Nityananda (and if one is worshiping the picture of Panca Tattva, to Advaita, then Gadhadhara, then Srivas) and then to the eldest guru, and then down to the youngest guru. Each one should be offered the item for some time in a circular motion. The full aratika should last 20 to 23 minutes; the dhupa-aratika should last 5 to 8 minutes.

Immediately after the mangal aratika, after the Nrsingha prayers are chanted, the curtains are closed and the pujaris start the process of bathing the Deities and dressing them in nice clothes for the new day. Most Soviet temples will start off worshiping brass Gaur Nitai Deities so they may be easily polished with lemon and ground tilak and bathed in warm water. Do not rub the painted portions of the Deities' body. Make sure that the Deities are nicely rinsed and dried with towels specially designated for the Deities' usage. While bathing the Deities one should chant the Cintamani prayers from the Brahma samhita.

The Deities should be nicely dressed with tilak, wigs, turbans, crowns, imitation jewels and opulent clothing. Then when the altar is nicely decorated with flowers and fresh leaves, the Deities are opened for greeting at 7 or 7:15am. While the Deities are being viewed by the devotees, play the Govindam prayers tape and simultaneously offer the Deities incense, then some flowers, then the camara whisk. This is called a dhupa aratika, or a small aratika where incense is offered. At a specified time (usually between 7:45 and 8:15), the Deities are offered breakfast. This should include whatever preparations the devotees will be taking for breakfast, and perhaps some nice fruit and milk preparations as well.

At a specified time, usually between 11:30am and 12:30pm the Deities are offered lunch which should consist of whatever preparations the devotees will be taking for lunch plus some nice subjis, rice, puris, a chutney and sweets.

After the lunch is offered there is again a full aratika (including a camphor lamp, if camphor is available). Then the Deities are put to rest for the afternoon. For Radha Krsna Deities a small bed should be made and placed near the altar. The Deities will rest in this bed. Sri Sri Gaur Nitai will be given two beds. If the beds are big enough, and the Deities Themselves are not very big, They may physically be laid down to rest

there, otherwise Their shoes, which are usually placed in front of the Deities on the altar, are moved to the bed and one requests the Deities to take rest. This procedure is best done after learning the appropriate mantras from an expert pujari. The Deities usually rise around 4 or 4:30pm. Normally They would be offered some fruit salads and milk preparations at this time, but in a small temple that may not be required.

The next Deity offering takes place at 6:30pm when the Deities are offered some subjis, puris, and chutney. If the devotees are taking milk or something else in the evening, then that should be offered at this time. Then at 7pm a full aratika takes place (without camphor lamp) with all the devotees of the temple assembled and chanting kirtan by chanting the Gaur aratika song, Sri Krsna Caitanya and Hare Krsna. In a small temple with minimal worship, this will be the last aratika of the day. If there is more elaborate worship going on, then another aratika, at 8:30pm, will be offered along with some light foodstuffs, some savories like samosas and pakoras and milk. The Deities are usually laid down to rest at some regulated time between 8 and 9pm. The pujaris must begin putting the Deities to rest at the same time each night so that they are finished at the same time each night. They must be finished before 9pm. The Deities should be dressed in Their night clothes after the curtain closes at the last aratika. Make sure that the temple doors are nicely locked so that no one can enter to cause mischief to the Deities at night. For security reasons some devotees may sleep in the temple room as well, but they must wash the temple floor immediately after rising in the morning.

Security for the Deities is a very important consideration. It has been seen in some temples that mentally unbalanced persons have entered the temple and caused physical harm to the Deities. This must be avoided at all costs. Therefore whenever the Deities are alone the temple doors must be locked so no one can come in. This is especially relevant during the afternoon when the Deities are taking rest.

Security for the Deities paraphernalia is also important. Although the Deities do not use precious gems or stones in Their jewelry, Their paraphernalia is still valuable and must be kept locked up in a locked cupboard in the pujari room. The room itself must be locked when the pujaris are not using it and at night.

A standard Guru-Gauranga altar will be laid out in the following manner. The Deities of Gaur Nitai, if present, will stand in the center of the altar in the highest position. If there are no Deities, then a picture of the Panca tattva will be worshiped in the central position. To the left side, as one faces the Deities, will be a picture of Srila Prabhupada, and to the right side, a picture of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Alternatively, one may have pictures of the whole disciplic succession from Jagannath das Babaji down to Srila Prabhupada, with Prabhupada's picture on the left side and the others on the right side in order as they appear in the disciplic succession. One may also have a picture of Lord Nrsinghadeva on the altar on the right side. One should also place the picture of one's own guru on the altar at the far left side while doing puja to the Deities, while offering bhoga, and when performing aratika, since it is the guru who performs the puja; the pujari is simply his assistant. The picture of one's guru should not be placed on a level higher than that of the pictures of the parampara and it should be taken off the altar when the puja or the aratika has been

completed. The picture can be kept nicely in the pujari room during all other times. The altar will be decorated with flowers in vases, and all personalities will usually have flower garlands in season. If flowers are not available, then they cannot be offered.

Kirtan in the temple should be of a specific standard. Srila Prabhupada once told me the proper standard for kirtans in the temple. Basically what he said was that he only wanted the standard songs sung in the temple along with the Panca tattva maha mantra and the Hare Krsna maha mantra. For example, in mangal aratika, he wanted the samsara prayers sung (Gurvastakam), then the Pancatattva mantra then the Hare Krsna mantra, all in the morning melody. We usually also sing Prabhupada's two pranam mantras after the Gurvastakam prayers. Then for guru puja Prabhupada wanted the sri guru carana padma song (Guru Vandana), then the Panca tattva mantra and the Hare Krsna mantra. We usually sing Prabhupada's two pranam mantras after the Guru vandana song as well. Similarly for the evening aratika, the Gaura aratika song, the Panca tattva mantra and the Hare Krsna mantra. In other words he wanted that the basic kirtan in ISKCON be the Panca tattva mantra and the Hare Krsna mantra along with the basic songs that are sung at different aratikas. This will create a nice kirtan atmosphere. Although Prabhupada did not mention it, he did not object when we chanted 'Jaya Prabhupada' and also the names of the Deities at the end of the various sections of the kirtan. So this may be done as well.

As mentioned before, there is a Tulasi puja after the Mangal aratika and before the evening aratika. One usually brings in Tulasi-- devi just before the puja is to begin and places her on a special table in the middle of the room. When Tulasi-devi enters the room, everyone bows down and chants the mantra, 'vrindayai tulasi devyai, etc.' three times. Then an aratika is performed where incense, lamp, and flower is offered. While the aratika is going on, sing the tulasi song [namo namo tulasi krsna preyasini etc]. After the song is finished, circumambulate Tulasi-devi at least three times while chanting the mantra 'yanikani ca papani etc.' and then chant Hare Krsna. While circumambulating Tulasi-devi everyone may offer some drops of water to Tulasi-devi, and then offer obeisances. At the end, after everyone has finished offering water, again offer obeisances to Tulasi-devi and again chant the mantra 'vrindayai tulasi devyai etc.' three times. Then the aratika is over.

Caring for Tulasi-devi is somewhat simple if one has some ability to take care of plants. She requires sufficient air and light and she should have a nice temperature maintained as well as sufficient humidity. If the temple is in an area where it never freezes at night then one can even plant Tulasi-devi outside. She will grow well in the warmer parts of the country. Sometimes she cannot get sufficient sunlight due to the cold climate, so one can use 'vita lights' that give off light that plants like. If there are bugs appearing on her, then take them off by hand, or if that is not possible, one may immerse Tulasi-devi in a tub of warm water which will force the bugs off of her. Govinda dasi's Tulasi handbook should be referred to for this explains how to take care of tulasi in great detail.

It is the standard for care of Tulasi devi.

Every temple should have a vyasasana of Srila Prabhupada located in the back of the temple room directly in front of the Deities, or to one side if that is not practical. On that vyasasana should be either a Deity of Srila Prabhupada or a picture of him. One should offer guru puja to Srila

Prabhupada by first offering him a flower garland, then while aratika is going on all the devotees will offer some flowers and then offer obeisances in front of the vyasasana. During guru puja the men will offer full dandavats and the women normal obeisances as ladies do not offer full dandavats. Aratika should be a full aratika without the camphor lamp. However it will be done quicker than a full aratika to the Deities. While that aratika is going on the kirtan leader should sing the song, 'Sri guru carana padma etc.' (Guru Vandana) followed by the kirtan sequence mentioned in the previous section on kirtan. At the end of the kirtan, as for every aratika kirtan, the premadhvani should be spoken by the most senior devotee in the room (jaya om visnupada paramahansa etc.). When gurupuja for the other initiating gurus is performed it must be done in a room outside of the temple room according to the resolution of the GBC of ISKCON. The form of the gurupuja is the same as that for Srila Prabhupada, or, alternatively, it will be determined by the individual gurus. One may have a table in some room where all the pictures of the various gurus will be located and aratika is offered to all of them at once. The disciples of each of them will come up and offer a flower to their guru and offer obeisances. This guru puja should be attended by any disciple who is fixed on a particular guru. Bhaktas and bhaktins who have worshiped Srila Prabhupada for the first six months and then chosen a guru may also attend. Bhaktas who are still undecided as to who their guru is should not attend until they have made up their minds who to worship as guru.

There are many festival days in Krsna consciousness throughout the year. One may find out those days by consulting the ISKCON calendar for the local area. What one does on those days is stated as follows:
Appearance and disappearance days of previous acaryas: one will fast till noon and then hold a feast. Usually one speaks something about them on that day in the Bhagavatam class, or he holds a special kirtan and discussion about the personality before the noon aratika. As there are many appearance and disappearance days one should follow the ISKCON calendar where it is specifically stated which of these days are fast days.

Ram navami: This is a fast till sunset. One will then make a nice feast for Lord Ramacandra. One may chant special mantras for Lord Rama, like 'Sita Ram' or 'Raghupati Raghava raja Ram etc.' He will also read something from the Ramayana, or the Srimad Bhagavatam 9th canto about Lord Rama. One may offer worship to a picture of Lord Ramacandra by placing it on the altar and decorating it with flowers.

Janmastami: One will fast till midnight. (Water does not break the fast) Since this is one of the major festivals of the year, it should be done very nicely. Usually one decorates the temple very nicely and offers to the Deities, if possible, at least 108 preparations. If there is no Deity of Krsna in the temple, then offer worship to a picture of the Lord which is usually placed on the altar and decorated with flowers. Usually when there is a Deity, the Deity is offered a special abhiseka, bathing ceremony, late at night. One should spend the day hearing about Krsna's appearance and pastimes, and chanting His holy name.

Srila Prabhupada's vyasa puja: One fasts till noon and then feasts. On this day one offers prayers to Srila Prabhupada that are published in the ISKCON Vyasa puja book. Around 11:30am make a maha offering to Srila Prabhupada with as many nice preparations as could be prepared in the kitchen. Again, 108 is nice. This offering is brought in before the

vyasasana and hidden from the view of the general devotees by devotees holding up cloths in front of the prasadam. When this offering is finished, 15 or 20 minutes later, one removes all the preparations and brings them back to the prasadam room. If there are Prabhupada disciples present, they are offered a nice plate with all the preparations after the aratika.

There is usually a large, full aratika at noon. But just before this aratika there is a puspanjali ceremony where everyone takes flowers (enough to offer three times) while a leader chants Srila Prabhupada's pranama mantras (nama om visnu padaya etc.) word by word and everyone repeats after him. At the end of the mantras, the leader says 'puspanjali' and everyone throws the flowers on or before the vyasasana and then offers obeisances. This is repeated three times. Then the aratika starts. After aratika is finished everyone takes a big feast. Nrsingha Caturdasi: This is a fasting day till twilight when Lord Nrsinghadeva appeared. If the temple is in an area where the sun does not set till very late, one can break fast around 7:30 or 8:00pm. Usually one reads about the Lord's appearance from Srimad Bhagavatam and chants prayers to Lord Nrsinghadeva. One might perform a drama about the pastimes of the Lord on this day. A feast is served at the end of the fast.

Gour Purnima: Fasting till moon rise. One will hear and chant the maha mantra throughout the day, and read about the appearance of the Lord from Caitanya caritamrta. There is usually a maha abhiseka for Lord Caitanya at around 5pm. The feast is usually an ekadasi type feast. A full feast for Lord Caitanya with grains is offered the next day at noon.

Vyasa pujas for present spiritual masters: The disciples of that spiritual master must fast till noon. The disciples of that spiritual master usually read offerings to the spiritual master in the morning and speaks about his good qualities interspersed with kirtans. Disciples of other spiritual masters may or may not attend the ceremonies as they like. There is always an aratika at midday and a feast after that. One may hold this festival in the temple room and a vyasasana with the guru's picture may be brought into the temple room and decorated for the occasion. Of course, if desired, one may hold this ceremony in another place than the temple room.

Temple Preaching Programs

During the above mentioned festival days, every temple invites all its friends and the general public. Thus all people have a chance to imbibe the spiritual atmosphere of the temple on these special days. People are pleased to see the kirtans, take the prasadam feasts, and to see the dramas depicting the pastimes of the Lord that are sometimes performed in the temple as well.

It is also nice to just arrange a preaching program in the temple when there is no special day. Sometimes one may have a program and put up signs around the area inviting people to come. Such programs may include kirtan, bhajans (done as nicely as possible) an introductory lecture, and perhaps a slide show (or a full multivision presentation if the temple has one). Always there is a feast to attract the tongue to Krsna prasad. One may also invite outside professional Indian artists who are following the Vedic traditions to come and perform in the temple. Although this is not exactly pure devotion, it is a cultural performance and it attracts the people to the Vedic culture. One may have a Vedic dancer (Bharat Natyam, Katha kali or the like) or musicians, come and perform in the

temple in the context of a normal temple program. It gives the program an air of authenticity that attracts people more to our message.

One may also go out into the public and make programs. One can visit schools and colleges and deliver a lecture and a small kirtan. Attracting the intelligent class of men is one of the most important preaching goals in ISKCON. One can also set up hari nam kirtans in a park or just chant along the streets of a city. Srila Prabhupada began ISKCON by chanting in the parks and on the streets of New York and San Francisco and his disciples continued the chanting in all the big cities of the United States.

One of the more important aspects of temple preaching is the periodic book distribution marathons. Every temple can have at least a one day a week marathon where everyone in the temple goes out and distributes books throughout the city and the surrounding area. This very much increases the sankirtan mood in the temple and enlivens the temple devotees very much. Some temple devotees are maintaining their spiritual lives simply on the basis of this one day a week distribution. In some temples they have a one week a month distribution scheme for the whole temple.

Besides these one day or week marathons, there are also the important marathons during the year wherein everyone from the temple goes out. In the month of December the year end Prabhupada marathon goes on and every able bodied man and woman, as well as the children in their own way, go out and distribute the books of Srila Prabhupada. This creates a very fired up atmosphere which purifies the hearts of all who participate. If everyone in the temple goes out during this month long marathon it is often possible to double the year long sankirtan results by this effort. Therefore it is recommended that the temple president push this marathon with all his strength.

Another important field of temple preaching is taking care of the Indians in the area. In some cities there are a lot of Indians. Often Indian gentleman and ladies appreciate our Movement and they are inclined to donate to help us since they are trained in giving to saintly persons and the Lord by their culture. Since they are basically Krsna conscious just below the surface of their conditioning, they are easily pleased with nice words and standard preaching by the devotees and some good prasadam. Indians especially appreciate it when they are given some nicely prepared prasadam of the Lord. One has to be a nice devotee in dealing with them and speak properly. If the preacher backs up what he says with quotes from the sastra, they will accept what is said nicely. Mainly they are contaminated with mayavada philosophy so one will have to preach in such a way that they can understand the superiority of service to the personal form of the Lord. When they are convinced of what is preached they can be good friends of the temple and ISKCON.

When an Indian life member comes to the temple, try to provide him some living facility for at least three days. All life members are guaranteed by Srila Prabhupada that they may reside in any of our temples for three days per year, free of charge. They may stay in many different temples, each one for a period of three days per year. If they want to stay for longer than three days, then the temple president should ask them to give a donation for each additional day they spend. Of course, the life members must follow the four regulative principles while they are staying in the temple and if they are staying longer than three days, the temple program as well. Although the temple may not have facilities for its own devotees, if there is a place to offer life members they will be

grateful, even if it is in the home of one of the devotees. Regardless of how meager the facilities are, one should try to offer some sort of accommodation to a life member who visits. Especially if they are not with their families, they may even accept a clean place on the floor with a clean blanket and sheet.

Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven

Temple Maintenance

Creation and annihilation are natural consequences of the modes of passion and ignorance. It is easy to create a temple, and it is also easy to destroy one. It is very hard to maintain the temple for that is a symptom of the mode of goodness. Goodness is a quality that is hard to develop and maintain, for the natural inclination in the age of Kali is to fall down into passion and ignorance, especially in the cities. But, if we wish to properly maintain our temples for the satisfaction of the Lord, we must develop the mode of goodness.

A temple is represented to the outside world by the way it looks. If there are broken doors and windows, paper laying about here and there, clothes hanging in all strange manners from the railings and in the windows, cars parked in a haphazard way, and a generally chaotic impression is given, people will think that we are low class people who do not know the proper standard of living. A temple president must be always on the alert that the temple looks in order and it is up to the proper standard of cleanliness and neatness.

The best way for him to do this is to always look at the temple with the eye of goodness. When he is outside the front of the temple, he should look at it as a neighbor would look at it. Is everything in order? Are there gumchas laying about here and there? Are there papers and rubbish strewn about? Are the garbage cans closed and proper? Are the temple cars parked in the spots of the neighbors? Is there unwanted noise on the street at early morning or late night hours? If any of these problems are there, the temple president should immediately correct them before there are problems with the neighbors. We should always be aware that good neighbor relations are essential for keeping up our image and also our presence in the neighborhood. If the neighbors are upset with us they could also band together to limit our activities in some way, or even make us move to another place. All of this kind of trouble is undesirable, therefore a good image with the neighbors is important.

One can keep the inside of the temple clean by having a regular cleaning crew who will clean the areas which are most used like the prasadam rooms and the temple hallways. If everyone in the temple cleans the temple during the period of time right after the morning class and right before the breakfast, this will go a long way towards keeping the temple clean. The temple president should organize the cleaning by assigning every devotee to clean one specific area of the temple. One devotee can clean a room, another can clean the stairs, and so on. The temple commander should just go around during the cleaning times and make sure that everyone is doing their prescribed duty. The president should also clean his own office during this time to make a good example for others to follow. It also cleanses one's heart when one cleanses the temple of the Lord. It is Krsna's temple and when we clean it He is pleased with us. One should put off serving breakfast till all areas of the temple are clean. When the temple commander is satisfied that the temple is clean, then breakfast is served. Usually the cleaning can be done in 20 minutes

if all the devotees are engaged and there are enough devotees in the temple. If one cleans for the entire 20 minute period of time he can get dirt out of the smallest corners and cracks making the room very clean. Each devotee can have his own personal cleaning equipment to make things more efficient.

But proper maintenance means more than just cleaning for there are many other areas of the temple that require to be organized. For example, one must keep a proper inventory of the BBT books so that he can properly pay the BBT for books distributed. Every temple is responsible to pay the BBT for the books that are distributed immediately after they are sold. [In some BBT areas the temples are responsible to pay for the books within 30 or 60 days after receiving them] If one does not pay his bill on time he accumulates what is known as a 'bad debt' or a debt that is not covered by a stock of books. So it is important to always know how many books there are in the storehouse. When books are taken out of the storehouse they should be noted in a log book and then it should be ascertained that the books are paid for by the distributors who took them.

One has to keep the SKP results and papers properly for these are the most important records of the temple treasury. All the income is coming through the sankirtan and therefore the temple president should always know what is happening in the sankirtan department. A proper account of the sankirtan results should be done each week and the BBT must be paid on the basis of that accounting each week or at least twice a month. For example, if a devotee has distributed 100 Bhagavad gitas and 200 Srimad Bhagavatams, canto one, volume one, then the accountant should write that result down and then immediately calculate the price of the book times the number of books sold. He does this for all the devotees in the temple, and then he comes to the amount that has to be paid to the BBT that week.

Now sometimes books get lost, damaged, or the sankirtan devotees give an improper account of the amount of books they sold. Therefore the inventory of the temple book stock is important. One knows how many books were received from the BBT and also how many books were sold on sankirtan. If he counts the books in the warehouse they should theoretically be the same number as the amount of books received minus the books distributed. In fact, that is rarely the situation. Sometimes books are lost or devotees do not properly report, so the temple has to periodically make up for that by paying the BBT for the missing books as well. This is best done once a month, otherwise one falls too far behind in his payments. No temple president can be considered as sufficiently taking care of his job unless he properly takes care of his account with the BBT by paying his bills regularly and on time. Not paying the BBT regularly is, according to Srila Prabhupada, sufficient grounds for removal of a temple president!

Not only must one take care of his account with the BBT but he must account for all his transactions with the outside world. We will deal with that more completely in the section on office management.

A temple should look nice and therefore it should be kept properly painted. Paint should not be cracked and peeling off the walls. Every room, not just the Deity room and the temple room, should be nicely painted or wallpapered for the pleasure of the Deity. Similarly it should be always kept in a state of repair. If something is broken, like a light bulb for instance, it should be immediately replaced or repaired. If one waits on these repair jobs, the temple will become run-down and

unattractive. There is a saying, 'a stitch in time saves nine!', which means, that repair work done timely saves major repair work later on. Always take care of the temple repair as soon as it is required for this will in the long run, save a lot of money.

In addition to these important minor repairs which keep the temple attractive, there are usually also major items which can not be neglected. These include furnaces, water heaters, pumps, roofs, elevators, foundations, refrigeration units, kitchen equipment and other major plumbing and electrical items. If you are renting a facility, the landlord is usually responsible for the majority of these items, but if you own your own building, the responsibility lies firmly on the temple administration. Maintaining these items is generally beyond the abilities of the devotees in the temple and must be done by professionals. Of course, if you have expert devotees in the temple, they may take care of the repairs. But sometimes even knowing how or when to hire a repairman may be beyond an untrained temple administrator, and the costs involved in repairs or needed replacement parts may be beyond the temple budget. Yet, if these valuable and necessary temple assets are neglected the eventual result may be disastrous and disrupt the entire temple.

It is important to have a well thought out plan for dealing with these aspects of temple maintenance, and one qualified person must be given the responsibility to oversee them. If this cannot be the temple president or temple commander, or another qualified devotee, then try to find a qualified member of the congregation who can help, or you may even need to hire a trusted person.

The plan should include what periodic maintenance is needed for each item, and when required replacements should be anticipated. Government permits, inspections, and renewal frequencies, should be carefully documented and all this should be in writing and easily accessible to the temple leadership and their successors.

Sometimes the required repair or maintenance is beyond the temple budget. This will often lead to the maintenance work being put off to a later date. But if ignored, these expenses only increase later on. Many non-profit organizations have had to lose their buildings because they could not afford to maintain them. If the needed repair work is actually beyond your budget, then do a special fund raising drive among the congregation, if you have one, or some other special fund raising program. If you face the crisis head-on, Krsna will help you. But if you ignore it, it can cause you the greatest trouble later on. Therefore every wise temple president always knows what he must do to maintain his temple in the future and he will save up for the essential repairs and maintenance work during the year before the repair work is required. Of course, sometimes there are surprises due to ignorance, but these expenses must be met as well. In all cases one must do the needful and find the funds to keep the temple operating.

If at all possible, make a garden for the Deities. If the Deities are offered flowers which are grown in Their own garden it is very pleasing to Them as well as very cheap for the temple. A temple can save a lot of money during the warm season by growing its own flowers for the altar.

Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight

Preaching

Book Production and Distribution

Preaching is the essence. This statement was made by Srila Prabhupada in the early 1970's, but it is still as relevant now as it was then. Without preaching there can be no ecstasy in spiritual life. Therefore every temple must be organized in such a manner that the main emphasis is on preaching. This is the secret to success in management. Preaching is a multi-faceted thing and we shall go over the most important elements of temple preaching in this section.

Our preaching effort begins with book production. First we make the books and then we distribute them. This is especially relevant in those countries where there are not many books available in the local languages. It is in the best interest of all temples to make sure that the book production department is fully staffed to make as many books in the different languages as possible as quickly as possible. If one, as a temple president, has someone in the temple, or associated with the temple, who can assist in the book production mission, then he should arrange that that person can work with the BBT devotees organizing the production so that we can speed up the production more and more. When all the books of Srila Prabhupada are produced in all the local languages then the devotees can become learned in the philosophy of Krsna consciousness and remain fixed in their devotional service. We can also increase the distribution of Prabhupada's books when there is a wide variety of them available for the people to read.

After the book production is going on, the next thing is to distribute these books by the millions. Every temple president should be like a sankirtan leader organizing the distribution of these books far and wide. Although a temple president may also have another devotee who will act as a sankirtan leader, the president himself should also function as the super sankirtan leader and inspire all the devotees to distribute more and more.

The BBT is there to help the temple president increase the temple's distribution. They will supply the books of Srila Prabhupada that he wants to distribute and they will also occasionally supply other materials to help inspire the special distribution marathons, such as tee shirts, tapes, posters and so on. The BBT managers are also available to give advice on how book distribution can be increased in the different local distribution areas of the temples.

Managing sankirtan is not a complicated affair and any temple president with some devotional intelligence can do it nicely if he really wants to. Desire is the main factor in increasing book distribution. The more one wants to do it, the more he prays to Krsna for assistance to accomplish this task. Krsna reciprocates by sending qualified devotees to help in the book distribution mission. If we properly train these new devotee candidates in the process of book distribution, and engage them nicely in actually performing this service, then Krsna will see that we are serious to increase the preaching and He will send more and more sankirtan men and women to us to expand the sankirtan more and more. Krsna is ready to send us unlimited help, if we are ready to use it in the proper way. Krsna is the perfect reciprocator and when He sees that we are using His gifts in the proper way, He will shower more and more facilities upon us. Prabhupada established some simple, yet very sublime, principles of temple management. One of the most important and basic principle is the one governing the economic basis of the temple. Prabhupada said that half the temple income should pay for books, and the other half for temple

maintenance and expansion. If one follows this basic principle, all his economic management problems will disappear.

To properly follow this principle is easy. The first point is that one should make book distribution the sole economic scheme in the temple. Grhasthas who live outside the temple may make other economic schemes to support themselves and the temple, but those living within the temple complex should be fixed in book distribution as their sole means of income. If one does make book distribution the sole means of income, and if he sells the books for the right price, then he will follow the 50/50 principle (half the income for books and half for the temple). To do this one must sell the books for twice the BBT price. This means that the BBT will charge the temple x dollars (for example) for a book. The temple should sell the book for at least $2x$ dollars. The temple then immediately pays x dollars to the BBT for the book and keeps x dollars for its own needs. If one sells the books for less than the BBT price, then he will have troubles in the temple economy, therefore, if one is following Srila Prabhupada's principle of 50% to the temple and 50% to the BBT, he should sell the books for at least twice the BBT price.

Now this principle might be adjusted sometimes due to time, place and circumstances by the local GBC men. For example, if there is an emergency situation in the country and it is seen that the books must go out as fast as possible and the people have not got enough money to pay for them, it might be decided to sell the books for less for the sake of preaching to the impoverished people. Of course, the temple will also have economic troubles at this point and will have to adjust to the new situation. In times of crisis, depend on the local GBC and BBT Trustee to guide one through.

Following this 50/50 principle is easy and it solves all financial problems as well. Whenever Prabhupada was asked how we maintain this movement, he would say that it was simply on the basis of the distribution of his books. That principle is as valid today as when he said it. If one makes the temple economy dependent on the sale of books, then book distribution will always be seen as the financial basis of the temple economy and it will always be relevant. If the temple president sees the sankirtan mission as economically relevant, then he will always be eager to inspire the devotees to go out on sankirtan and increase their distribution more and more. Sometimes temple presidents are overwhelmed with financial worries and think about money day and night. But if those worries are resolved by increasing the book distribution, then, although he is not actually motivated with the purest of desires, he will still be eager to increase the book distribution. This is the goal of our movement.

One may perform book distribution in various ways. Besides distributing books in public places, door to door, and office to office, one can also distribute through temple shops, temple mail order departments, and through the various ISKCON membership programs. Since some of these programs also include benefits such as sets of Prabhupada's books, these programs are good sources of book distribution as well as income. It has been seen that our Life Membership program is popular amongst the Indians throughout the world and it is a good means to present the books of Srila Prabhupada into their homes. Furthermore, as ISKCON expands its congregational preaching programs, memberships will be a good way to bring sets of books into the homes of the congregational members.

To keep the sankirtan movement increasing, one must always be on the alert to make new devotees. When there are new devotees in the sankirtan parties, there will always be new enthusiasm inspiring all the devotees. When the older devotees see newer devotees becoming inspired to increase the sankirtan mission, they become inspired themselves. This does not mean however that new bhaktas and bhaktins should go out on sankirtan immediately after joining the temple. Those who join the temple must undergo a period of purification and training in devotional life. When they are qualified as devotees and trained in the spiritual principles then the temple president will consider sending them out on the sankirtan party.

The temple president should arrange the temple in such a way that the new devotees are regularly receiving training in all aspects of devotional life. This is called a bhakta program. Part of the bhakta program is to train the devotees in following the temple programs, learning all the temple songs, learning how to chant and hear, learning the basic philosophy, learning the art of keeping the temple clean and tidy, and above all, learning that the main goal and mission of ISKCON is to preach Krsna consciousness through the printing and distribution of the books of Srila Prabhupada. If the bhaktas are continually pointed in this correct direction, then automatically they will learn the goals of the movement and the mission of Srila Prabhupada. This should be done through preaching in class as well as in special bhakta classes and individual instruction. If the travelling preachers who come through occasionally also preach about the importance of preaching through book distribution, then gradually all the devotees in the temple will also learn this essential point and take up the mission themselves.

All devotees are dear to the Supreme Lord because they are engaged in His devotional service, but sankirtan devotees are especially dear because they are instructing Krsna's messages to the people of the world. Because these devotees are so important, the temple president should make sure that they have the best paraphernalia to perform their mission and that they get nice treatment in the temple. Of course, all devotees should be treated nicely since they are important for the functioning of the temple. But sankirtan devotees should be especially cared for since they are supporting the entire temple economically and spiritually. This means that they should have proper vehicles that are relatively new, comfortable and safe to drive. If the vehicles are dangerous, and there is an accident, then so much valuable time and energy will be wasted repairing the car and even worse, the bodies of the sankirtan devotees. The temple president should also make sure that their shoes and clothes are sufficient for the weather conditions that they are meeting on the streets and that they fit properly. A sankirtan devotee should look nice, otherwise the people may mistake him for some kind of tramp and they may not want to speak with him or take him seriously.

The sankirtan devotees should also be given first class prasadam. The cooks should be extra careful to make the prasadam nicely so that the sankirtan devotees will be inspired to go out and increase their distribution. Of course, everyone will benefit by the nice prasadam since all devotees are eating it together. But if the cooks are thinking that the prasadam they prepare is helping the sankirtan devotees to increase their distribution, then this elevated consciousness will cause their cooking to be very nice. The cooks will also feel more a part of the

sankirtan mission as well. The prasadam should be served warm and on time to facilitate the devotees sankirtan schedule.

Sometimes the sankirtan devotees are travelling far from the temple. One should consider if it is possible to bake bread in the temple and then mail it to the devotees so that they never have to eat karmi made bread. Bread made by karmis is full of karma and it will destroy the enthusiasm of the sankirtan. Food prepared by karmis makes one's mind wicked. Therefore when the sankirtan devotees come back to the temple on the weekends, they should fill up their hearts with kirtan and devotional association, and they should fill up their vans with enough food supplies to last them the week.

The sankirtan leaders, as already mentioned, should carefully ascertain whether the devotees are properly taking care of their vehicles. They should see that every car has its proper oil change and that it is serviced regularly. They should check the tires to make sure that they still have sufficient rubber tread. They should see that the vans are cleansed inside and out and that all the lights are working. They should also see that the devotees are properly dressed and that their physical requirements are being met.

When the sankirtan leaders have made sure that all the devotees are properly prepared to perform their service, then they should designate certain areas of the city or country to them for the performance of their service. When the devotees are properly organized they will avoid wasting time by finding that two sankirtan groups are in the same place at the same time. Also, one should avoid sending devotees to the same place too often for this could 'burn' out the place. One should let some period of time go by before allowing devotees to go to the same place again. This instruction is especially relevant on travelling sankirtan and may not be so important in city sankirtan.

Both city sankirtan and travelling sankirtan are good, and both are useful for expanding the preaching. City sankirtan is usually done when the temple is in the city and there are many sankirtan spots accessible by public transportation. This makes getting to the place of sankirtan easy. But sometimes the temple is not in the city and one has to travel to get to places of sankirtan. Also one would like to spread the mercy of Srila Prabhupada's books not only in the crowded cities but also throughout the countryside. Therefore one gets in vans and travels from town to town, village to village, distributing Prabhupada's books. By such travelling one can not only distribute the mercy widely, but he can increase the distribution results more than if one remained in the same place. The only problem with travelling sankirtan is that one must maintain vans and also put up the devotees in hotels at night. This can be a costly affair if not managed properly. Even then, one will have a big investment in vehicles and maintenance. Therefore it may not always be possible to have travelling parties. But if it can be arranged, it is a wonderful way to spread the mercy far and wide.

Another reason why travelling sankirtan might be preferable to sankirtan from the temple, is that it is very easy for the sankirtan devotee to become entangled in overly long temple programs and other aspects of temple life and thus not get on the street very early. When one is travelling he can make his morning program in such a way that he can get on the street early in the day when the people are also getting out onto the streets. But when one is in the temple, the temple programs tend to run on till 9am or so and the sankirtan devotees will have a hard time

getting out the door before 10am. Therefore in general travelling sankirtan is preferred by the sankirtan devotees since they can do more distribution in this way.

Although travelling sankirtan is good, the temple president should make sure that the sankirtan devotees do not become estranged from the temple. Sometimes it may happen that a travelling party may develop a separatist attitude towards the temple and want to remain a separate entity. They might then go travelling throughout the country independent of any temple or temple authority. It has happened in the past in other places and the temple president should be on guard that it does not happen to one of the parties under his care.

If the temple president is intelligent, he can arrange the temple program in such a way that the sankirtan devotees are ready to go from the temple at 8:30 or 9am. The best way to do this is to make sure that the devotees get to rest early in the night so that they can chant all their rounds in the morning. One may just have to accept that the sankirtan devotees will leave the temple later and perhaps return later at night, skipping the evening temple programs, doing some personal reading, and taking rest. It seems that it is best that the Bhagavatam class be restricted to one hour from the start of the chanting of Jaya Radha Madhava to allow the sankirtan devotees, and all the temple devotees, the best start on their activities in the morning. Similarly the Gita class should end by 9pm to allow all those attending to take rest or get to their homes before it becomes too late at night. The temple president should humbly request the speakers to follow this principle even if they are visiting sannyasis or spiritual masters. Otherwise the sankirtan mission will be disturbed. One of the more important functions of the temple president is to arrange for the legalization of the sankirtan spots for the distributors. He may do this personally or through some other devotee in the temple. It is sometimes possible to get more spots legalized by making some endeavor through the legal system by presenting the case that ISKCON is doing spiritual welfare work that benefits all the people of the country. Good legal advice should be gotten to see whether one can succeed in expanding the sankirtan spots or whether one is forced to accept whatever spots the local authorities decide to give. If one is forced to accept what is given, and if it is not enough, then one can choose to go out on travelling sankirtan, where one goes from town to town and village to village so quickly that usually they do not disturb anyone and thus they can continue distributing without problem.

The temple president or sankirtan leader should not send the sankirtan men under his care into another temple's sankirtan area, without first getting the permission of the temple authorities for that other area. This is common courtesy and also essential if there is to be peace amongst the temples.

Staying with friends of devotees while on travelling sankirtan can be prearranged, as long as it doesn't cause a disturbance to the family with whom the travelling sankirtan party is staying.

One should perform sankirtan freely, without fruitive desires. Sometimes some temple authorities think that by giving the devotees quotas, it will somehow increase or maintain their level of distribution. But those who have experience of distributing without quotas know that all results are up to Krsna, and despite having a big quota, if Krsna does not sanction one to do well, it will simply be impossible. Therefore quotas often act in a counterproductive manner by making the devotees fruitive in their

mentality, thinking that they will have to perform in such and such a manner otherwise their devotional service is not being accepted. I have also heard such statements as 'Don't come back to the temple if you do not do 500 books this week' from some temple presidents. This is not Krsna conscious.

One should distribute as much as he can, depending completely on Krsna for the results. One should not think, 'I must do so many books this week otherwise I am a failure.' One should simply think, 'I am Krsna's eternal servant. In this lifetime my service is to distribute as many of these wonderful books as I can. Let me fully depend on the mercy of the Lord, and pray to the lotus feet of my spiritual master, so that I can become completely attached to the mission of the spiritual master in order to fulfil his desires to distribute these books.' If one thinks in this way, avoiding a fruitive mentality, he will naturally and gradually increase his distribution more and more, and he will also automatically become happy doing it. A happy distributor is worth his weight in gold, for he will go on distributing for the rest of his life. When one properly performs the sankirtan mission, he will naturally become happy and will naturally increase his results to the highest possible level and maintain that level with enthusiasm.

Harinam Chanting Parties and Prasadam Distribution

Every temple should organize chanting parties in public places and this program should be maintained. These chanting parties are the best way to show people the eternal dharma of Harinam kirtan. Although book distribution is the best way to preach Krsna consciousness, these other forms of preaching are also important and should go on simultaneously. Prabhupada said that one should do all these programs as they are all important for the spreading of Krsna consciousness.

Chanting in public is good for the chanters. It gives them a taste of the spiritual bliss derived from chanting the holy name. One can really taste the nectar of the holy name by chanting in the middle of a crowded street in a noisy city. One immediately feels transcendental to the havoc of the city. One can directly experience how this chanting is beyond the modes of material nature. He is secure and protected in the chanting of the Holy name. Therefore everyone should experience the chanting firsthand. This chanting is especially important for the new devotees. It should be part and parcel of the bhakta program that the new devotees are taken out in the street and taught to chant the holy name in public. Besides new devotees, old devotees should go out regularly to avoid becoming stale in the temple. This chanting brings life to the temple when regularly performed. It is also a wonderful way to unite the devotees living in various parts of the city with the devotees living in the temple.

Every chanting party should be nicely organized. First off, all devotees should be properly dressed. Formerly, due to various reasons connected with the distribution of the devotees clothes in the temple, no devotee would have on two socks of the same color. This would look absurd to the people on the street. This has since been changed, but we should make sure that the devotees look neat, clean, shaved properly, and that their clothes present the Krsna consciousness movement.

When the devotees are chanting in public, they should dance in some uniform manner, for that will attract the people more than if everyone is dancing in an individualistic way. Prabhupada wanted the devotees to dance in an uniform way and he would teach them to do the 'swami step' together in public with their hands raised in the air. Also the melodies

that are being chanted should be bona-fide and should be sweet and melodious and the karatalas and mrdngas should be played in time with each other.

If the party is chanting on the street, they should avoid stopping for too long a time in the same place if they are in front of a place of business. One may stop in front of monuments or plazas for as long as one likes, but when one stops in front of a place of business the store keepers become upset. So one should keep moving and thus not create any enemies.

If at all possible, procure a permit to chant from the police long before going. When one has the proper permit, often called a parade or demonstration permit, then no one can stop the chanting. This is especially important for large scale sankirtan where hundreds of devotees are taking part.

It is always nice to have a maha harinam kirtan on the best day of the week in your city, such as Saturday or Sunday, when the most people are on the streets and when the sankirtan devotees are available to participate. When all the devotees get together and chant it becomes very powerful. The sankirtan devotees, having performed this most important yajna all week long, bring a special power into the kirtan which might be lacking during the week.

One can have all kinds of signs and pictures on the sankirtan. One may have a sign with the maha mantra on it, as well as a picture of Srila Prabhupada, Lord Caitanya and the other members of the Panca Tattva, and Lord Krsna.

It is always nice to give out free pieces of prasadam on the street while chanting. This always wins over the crowd. One can prepare some small sweets or cookies and pass them out while the chanting is going on. One can also distribute books and magazines quite nicely to the people who are listening to the chanting.

One good way to preach to people while in public is to stop the kirtan periodically, say every 20 minutes, and then give a short 'street' lecture. A street lecture is about 5-7 minutes long and it usually covers one point of the philosophy nicely. It should be a lively lecture that holds the attention of the people for this short period of time. People appreciate such lectures when they are given by one who is expert at the art of street lecturing.

Do not underestimate the power of prasadam distribution. I have personally seen New York City surrender to Krsna consciousness through the distribution of prasadam on the subways. People became so favorable simply because they got something nice to eat from us. We would cook large quantities of sweets and pack them nicely in a plastic bags. Then, while distributing some small book, Krsna the Reservoir of Pleasure, we would give them a piece of prasadam. Even the police were addicted to our sweets. In this way there were never any problems for our sankirtan and the people became quite favorable.

Festivals

Large festivals attract the people of the city and introduce them to the culture of Krsna consciousness in a wide spread way. When the people see an organized festival in the public places of the city, they think that the Krsna consciousness movement must be bona-fide. Therefore these festivals should be continued and increased as much as possible as they also serve as a very good opportunity to distribute Srila Prabhupada's books.

Sometimes one can make a mini 'Hare Krsna Festival' by printing up a stack of nice looking posters, renting a hall, and inviting everyone to come for an evening of Krsna consciousness. These programs are usually quite well attended and successful. One can charge an admission fee and make back the costs of the festival and sometimes even a profit. The program should be nicely performed and consist of bhajans, kirtans, perhaps an Indian dance or cultural presentation, some lecture, a feast, and if possible a slide show or multi media presentation. Even if it is simply done, people will appreciate it since Krsna consciousness has so much to appreciate.

Institutional Preaching

There are many different kinds of institutions within every country and city. There are educational institutions, scientific institutions, cultural institutions and so on. We should enter into these institutions and present our culture and philosophy in a nice way to attract this more intelligent class of men. Prabhupada was especially emphasizing preaching in the colleges and universities. He said that making one devotee from the educated class of men was worth many devotees who were not educated. One educated man can attract many more people to this movement than those who are not educated. Therefore we should try to preach in these public and private institutions as far as we can. Only the most qualified devotees should enter into such institutions to preach, for intelligent people require an intelligent presentation in order to be impressed. One can present a simple program, such as a short kirtan, a nicely presented introductory lecture, and some sweets at the end. A question and answer period is usually appreciated as well. Always bring books for selling at the end of the program for the best preaching is always done by the books of Srila Prabhupada. Try and make a good connection to the teacher or leader of the group that is being lectured to, in order to come again and make another program in the future.

Other important preaching programs are those done on the radio and TV. If one can preach in the mass media then his preaching can become very effective very quickly. People tend to accept whatever they hear or see on the mass media and if they see a nicely presented program of Krsna consciousness they will accept it readily. Therefore one should try to get on the radio and television as much as possible.

To get such preaching opportunities, one should simply approach the programming director and request him to make an interview. Usually they will do this without difficulty, especially if it is new to them. If the devotees have been there before then it may be more difficult to get them to take them on the air unless one is able to present new topics which are interesting to the people (and thus the program director).

Programs Arranged by Other Organizations

Sometimes one will be asked to come to a program which is arranged by another so-called spiritual organization or perhaps some official agency. Although this may seem like a good opportunity, often it is just an occasion for argument and disturbances. Prabhupada did not like to go to programs where Krsna consciousness was not the main theme. We have plenty of opportunities to spread our preaching through our own programs and we do not need to take shelter of other organizations programs.

If one is obliged to attend some program due to a social or political consideration, then surrender to Krsna and simply present Krsna consciousness in a pure way without creating conflict with other person's beliefs or understandings. When one presents Krsna consciousness in a

pure way, then everyone can understand the superiority of our philosophy on their own, even though it may have never been said that we have the superior system. And always make sure that there is an opportunity to perform kirtan and distribute prasadam, otherwise there is no use in going.

Congregational Preaching

A temple congregation is a group of interested people who are close enough to Krsna consciousness to want to be associated with ISKCON, but who live at home and maintain their own material existence. Some of these people are closer to devotees and some are further away, but all are associated with ISKCON in some form or another. This group is called the temple congregation and preaching to them is called 'congregational preaching'. This form of preaching is very important for the long term growth of the temple.

Sometimes persons associated with the movement as the congregation join the movement and become full time devotees. Sometimes they open up a center in their own town, called a Nam Hatta Center (or Center of the Marketplace of the Holy Name). Sometimes they just remain at home and read our books or sometimes they just attend a festival in the temple now and then. All such persons are potential sources of income from donations, and they can all be engaged in some form of service now and then. For example, in Germany we usually have our congregational members distribute books, perhaps 100-200 or more, to their friends and relatives, as well as others in their town, during the Prabhupada Marathon. This increases the overall distribution dramatically.

Congregational members can support the temple through monthly donations. One can make a program for each member to give some fixed amount to the temple each month and ultimately the whole temple can be supported in this way. They can also serve as small centers of Krsna consciousness in their towns, inviting people to their homes for occasional programs when travelling preachers come by and visit them.

Congregational members are best cultivated by groups of travelling preachers. Each preaching group can demarcate a particular zone wherein they must cultivate all the members in that area. Then, by regularly travelling and visiting these people, they can gradually make them more and more Krsna conscious. Also, by holding public programs in their homes, and inviting the people of the town to participate, one can find others who are interested in Krsna consciousness and even some ready to join the movement.

The travelling preachers should be expert at making kirtan and cooking feasts for the people at these programs. The more expert the preachers are, the more attractive they are to the people they meet. One can conquer a person through his tongue, and if his tongue has been attracted by nice prasadam, he will be more able to hear the message of Krsna consciousness.

When the travelling preachers are not there, the members should still be cultivated through the mail. If the temples maintain extensive mailing lists of all the members, demarcated by area, then they can regularly keep in contact with them by sending out monthly newsletters or other publications of ISKCON, such as a Back to Godhead Magazine, an ISKCON World Review or the local equivalent. Such mailing lists are best kept on a computer, but if one cannot do this then it can be done on index cards in a filing system. When one has a computer it is easy to print out the mailing labels, but even if one has to do it by hand, it is well worth

the effort and the return. Nicely cultivated congregational members can help the movement enormously, especially in times of need. If there is a special project, and we need some help, it is the congregational members who generally help the most.

Bhakta Program

Although we have touched on this subject in other parts of this book, the bhakta program is so important that we should have another look at it. Making, training, and maintaining new devotees is a key to success in ISKCON. If one can make a new bhakta, train him into a nice devotee, and get him to surrender his life to this sankirtan movement, then we have done the best service to the Supreme Lord. New devotees give life to the movement. A temple without new devotees is dead, because without new devotees the same life is just not there. New devotees give life to the kirtans, and bring spirit into the temple atmosphere. They also help the older devotees to feel their relevance as teachers when the older devotees can instruct the younger in the principles of Krsna consciousness.

To make the bhakta program a success, the temple president should designate the best male devotee to take care of the bhaktas and the best female devotee to take care of the bhaktins. These leaders should act like the fathers or mothers of the new devotees. They should hold regular bhakta classes each day and discuss topics relevant to new devotees and go over basic philosophical points until they are learned. They should also make sure that the bhaktas are given special prasadam if needed and that they get the proper clothes to wear. They should also bring them out regularly on harinam kirtans so that they can get a safe taste of preaching in public.

These bhakta leaders can also keep track of interested persons who come to the temple and keep in touch with them regularly through the mail so that the person comes closer to the temple and wants to become a devotee. These leaders will function in the temple as the preaching leaders and they will take care of the new people who come.

Guest Reception

Every temple that expects to receive visiting guest preachers should have at least one guest room. This room should have access to a bathroom which is clean and working. The guests should be offered a bed with clean sheets, and at least three towels should be offered as well. These towels should be washed for the guest after each usage, and the bed sheets changed for clean ones every day. Their clothes should be washed and ironed each day. One should offer the guest the best prasadam that can be cooked, after it has been offered to the Deities, and one should see that his bodily needs are taken care of. It is very important that the food be offered to the Deities for many of the older Vaisnavas, including sannyasis and gurus, do not like to eat prasadam that has simply been offered to a picture of one of their Godbrothers. They want to take prasadam that has been offered to the Deities. So they should be given that facility.

It is important for the spirit of the devotees that they can meet and hear guest preachers regularly. Therefore we should treat them very nicely so that they will want to come back to the temple again. If they are treated in a harsh or improper way, then they will not want to come back to the temple, and that will be a great disaster.

Other persons who visit the temple from outside are also guests who should be seen as sent by Krsna. Prabhupada has said that every person

that visits the temple should be seen as special and we should give him a good reception. Prabhupada once ordered that each of his temples offer every guest who comes at least some subji, puris and sweets. He said that the subji can be cooked each morning and kept throughout the day. It should be ready to eat after being heated up. The puri dough can be made every other day and can be kept in the refrigerator. As soon as someone comes, the ghee can be heated up on the stove and the puris rolled out and cooked. Sweets made in ghee can be stored for at least a week without noticeable decay, and milk sweets, if stored in the refrigerator, can be saved for a few days. If every guest is fed nicely then they will remember their visit to the temple and they will always want to come again. At night, if there is leftover subji, it can be served out to the devotees.

ISKCON has many life members, and if one of them comes to the temple, he is allowed to stay for three days a year without charge. Try and have a room available for life members. These members are usually pious Indians and if they are pleased they often leave a donation for the temple. Give them nice prasadam and treat them properly with sweet words of greeting.

Chapter Nine

Chapter Nine

Vehicles

Every temple must have vehicles in order to do its preaching work and temple maintenance. But ISKCON has a very bad reputation when it comes to taking care of these vehicles. Devotees tend to think that the car doesn't belong to them ¾ it belongs to Krsna ¾ and therefore they do not care to maintain the car since it is seen as someone else's problem. This mentality causes the destruction of ISKCON cars and it has to be changed. The temple president should preach to the devotees that the cars belong to Krsna and are meant for the usage of all devotees and that they should be properly maintained by each and every one of us.

However, practically speaking, it is best to have one devotee who is making it his service to properly care for and service the vehicles for the whole temple. This will insure that certain aspects of auto maintenance will be taken care of regularly. The temple president should make sure that this maintenance is being carried out in a proper way otherwise the cars will be destroyed and it will be an enormous waste of Krsna's valuable laksmi.

The temple president should first of all see that all the cars are properly registered and that they have passed all the tests that are to be passed. He should make sure that when the devotees take the cars out, they have the proper papers with them in case there is a check from the police. Next, the temple president should make sure that all the cars are properly insured. There is nothing surer than the devotees smashing the cars at one point or another, so therefore there should be proper accident and full collision insurance on each and every vehicle. Do not leave the cars uninsured for even a day since one can be certain that on that day when they are uninsured, someone will smash them. It will not matter if the insurance costs a lot, it is well worth it in the long run. Some insurance companies in the West do not like insuring our cars since they know that they will lose money on us. This means that we must insure our cars for we are always smashing them.

Every car should be regularly maintained. The oil should be changed every 5000 km. If the oil is regularly changed there is a good chance that the engine will last a long time. The water in the radiator should be checked

periodically and new water filled in. Always make sure that there is the proper anti freeze to protect the engine from the lowest possible temperature that can be expected in your area. Check the battery water regularly and make sure that it is up to the marks indicated.

The vehicles should be regularly cleaned both inside and out. Dirty cars means that the heart is also dirty.

These vehicles belong to Krsna and they should be kept clean as they are part of the temple paraphernalia.

Tires should be checked. When the rubber is worn out, new tires should be bought. Do not try and save money by using the tires well after they are worn out, for this is risking the lives of the devotees who are driving and riding in the cars. Experts recommend that every 10,000 kms the tires be rotated on the car to even out the wear and tear on them. If the tires are non-radial, they are rotated according to the following standard system, taking the front left tire and switching it with the rear right tire and switching the front right tire with the rear left tire. Then next time switch the rear tires with each other and the front tires with each other. Then next time again the front left with the rear right and so on. Radial tires follow another system. Radial tires must always remain on the same side of the car that they were installed on initially. That means the tires on the right side remain on the right side and the tires on the left side remain on the left side. They can simply be rotated from front to back. If these systems are maintained then the tires last somewhat longer.

One must drive carefully otherwise he will risk smashing the car. If there are devotees in the car, and the car is smashed, then the driver is guilty of harming the vaisnavas and that is a greatly sinful act. Most accidents are caused by the inattention or poor judgement of the drivers which could have been averted by simply paying attention and using good common sense. One should never drive late at night. After midnight, no one can be expected to drive properly. Srila Prabhupada banned all night driving in ISKCON because many devotees were killed while driving late at night. Devotees do not sleep enough to drive through the night. If one knows that he has to drive for a long distance, then he should take extra rest so that he can stay awake when he has to drive. If one is feeling even slightly drowsy while driving, then pull over to the side of the road and take a rest, even if it means being late for whatever is to be done. It is more important that one gets to his destination at all than arriving on time, for if one smashes the car and himself he will neither get there on time nor, in his damaged condition, will he be able to serve Krsna nicely.

Every temple president should realize that the vehicles will only last for a relatively short period of time and then they will have to be replaced. Therefore he should save up during the year for purchasing new vehicles when the old ones are finished. If he fails to do this he will have a big bill for the new vehicles and he will not know how to pay it. Save ahead and be happy.

Chapter Ten

Chapter Ten

Devotees Health and Welfare

Every devotee is a valuable part of this ISKCON mission. Even if a devotee is not doing anything particularly special, still he is a part of the mission and he may in the future do something valuable. Therefore every devotee should be taken care of as nicely as possible.

Devotees should be given proper medical care when they are sick. If a devotee has something wrong with the body, then it is essential that steps are taken to correct it. A story in this connection will be useful. There was once a French devotee who had a cut on his thumb. He thought it was not important to take care of and it was more important to go on serving Krsna, so he neglected to properly take care of it. Later on the thumb became infected, but he thought that just by chanting Hare Krsna, everything would be alright. Later on he could no longer use his thumb, so someone in the temple forced him to go to the hospital. The hospital people realized that the thumb was beyond medical help and that it had to be amputated. After they had cut it off, they admonished the devotee that had he come to them sooner they could have easily saved the thumb. This is a good lesson for all devotees. Do not think that Krsna's business is to cure one's bodily diseases, He has better things to do. Go to the doctor when there is something wrong before it becomes something really wrong.

Of course this does not refer to small things that are always happening to the body. And in fact there are many home remedies that are better than the remedies the doctors can give. Therefore the temple president should be wise enough to know when the devotee can be cured using home remedies and when he should get professional help. If it is something serious, then go to the professionals, but if it is something light, one can try and cure it himself with proven medical methods. Determining the severity of a disease is only possible when one is an experienced medical practitioner, so devotees should depend on professional advice whenever there is some doubt. Obviously a cold, a headache or stomach ache can be dealt with using simple remedies, but long term fevers, chronic pains and coughs, and so on, as well as broken bones, and the like, should be taken as serious and the devotees brought to medical attention. An example of what not to do is found in the case of one devotee who was a diabetic. Some other devotee told him to stop taking his insulin and as a result he died. One should not give medical advice unless he is a qualified person. Speculation has no position within Krsna consciousness and medical speculation can have disastrous results.

A temple president should never throw someone out of the temple just because he is sick. He should be taken care of as long as possible. If someone is chronically sick and cannot be cured, then perhaps it is best for him to be sent back to his home where he can be better looked after, but that is only in rare circumstances for devotees want to be near other devotees, especially when sick. But if a devotee is sick, and also in maya, and doesn't want to get out of that maya in the temple, then he may be sent home. Prabhupada said that ISKCON temples should not become free hotels where lazy men can lay around all day. Every one in the temple should have some engagement in devotional service. This is the most important duty of the temple president, that everyone within the temple should be always engaged in some meaningful manner.

Not only should we be concerned with the bodily health of the devotees, but we should be concerned about their appearance as well. If the devotees look like a dirty and poorly clothed bunch, people will think that we are just low class people and they will not take us seriously. Every devotee should have at least three sets of devotional clothing which are not ripped. These clothes should be washed each day. Although a devotee rises in the morning and showers, if he puts on clothes that are not freshly washed then he is still unclean and should not enter the

temple. Every devotee must have freshly washed clothes to put on each morning. Therefore three sets of cloth for each devotee is important. If the devotees have to wear karmi clothes for some reason or another, then they should also have enough sets of the karmi clothes so that they can wash them regularly and keep them clean as well.

One should not wear leather shoes if at all possible and one must not wear leather clothes. Leather clothes are the product of cow slaughter and we should not support the slaughtering industry by buying or wearing leather goods. Prabhupada once said in the USA that there are many artificial alternatives to leather shoes and one should wear these shoes. He did not like us using leather apparel.

It is up to the temple president to make sure that each devotee has a proper place to live. This is the right of the devotees, especially since they are out all day working hard to maintain the temple. They at least deserve a proper place to live in.

Each temple should be kept clean, and we have already discussed this point in detail. Similarly the temple should be kept heated when it is cold. If the devotees are forced to live in a temple without heat, they will fall sick and they will not be able to work for the temple or Krsna. They will also go away to some other temple that has heat and hot water in the winter time. Each temple should also have proper ventilation. Good air is essential for good health.

And last but not least, every devotee should get good prasadam.

One of the least understood means of securing the welfare of devotees is through situating them in the proper asrama. Most devotees will get married. In any society that is the normal situation for most people. Although this is true, a small portion of them will remain brahmacary and ultimately take sannyas. It is the business of the temple president to make sure that the devotees are properly situated in their correct asrama. Even though one should probably get married, the question is sometimes, 'when to get this person married?' The temple president may think, 'should I try and get this person married or should I let him remain as a brahmacary as long as possible?' That question is not easily answered and it has to be seen in each and every case what is the best thing to do. The GBC men have to decide what is the policy of ISKCON in regards to the marriages that are to take place.

Sometimes although a devotee wants to get married, there is no proper candidate for marriage. This may go on for years. Therefore the devotees should understand that this is all under the arrangement of the Lord and that when He sanctions it, a proper wife or husband will be found.

Therefore the devotees have to be patient and await the day when the proper arrangement can be made. One must be initiated before he can get married. We do not allow uninitiated devotees to marry in the temple. Every devotee should remember the spiritual calculation that the householders have a 50% chance of going back to Godhead whereas the brahmacaries have a 100% chance of going back. Householders have the extra burden and responsibility to carry in the form of their families who have their needs and desires to be fulfilled. This makes it more difficult for them to prosecute spiritual life. The more one is entangled in household life, the more one may become attached to his household situation. If one is so attached, his attachment for Krsna reduces. Therefore one should not be very eager to embrace household life, and if he is a householder he should look forward to the day when he will be

able to take sannyas and leave it all for the pure preaching of Krsna consciousness.

There are some distinctions between householders who live inside the temple and householders who live outside the temple. Those householders who live inside the temple are usually performing valuable temple services, such as pujari or cook, or even temple president or treasurer, and so on. They are practically living like brahmacaries for inside the temple building there is no facility for householders to live together as inside the temple building householder men and women are not permitted to live together as per the instructions of Srila Prabhupada. They will live in the different asramas for men and women and they will meet sometimes in the temple where they can talk. Householders who want to have a family and maintain themselves independently will usually live outside the temple in their own places with their own economic arrangement.

If a householder wants to live outside the temple, the temple president has to be sensitive to that desire and should give him some facility to make money so that he can initially pay for his outside living arrangement. This does not mean that one will live outside and the temple has to arrange for his economic needs to be met, rather, the temple president can assist him to meet his initial needs so that when he does move outside he has a place to go. From that point on he will have to meet his own economic needs. If the temple president does not give him this facility, he will feel bitter and may go away from Krsna consciousness.

Sometimes a president will see that a devotee is valuable and needed in the temple service but that he should live outside. A valuable pujari who has a few children would be an example of this. The temple president can arrange that he lives outside near the temple and the temple will either pay or share his expenses, but only when the devotee is essential for temple life and he cannot live in the temple.

Chapter Eleven

Chapter Eleven

Cleanliness

Cleanliness starts with taking a regular bath. Devotees in ISKCON usually bathe at least two times a day, immediately upon rising, and before the evening program. When rising in the morning one should evacuate and then wash his hands three times with soap, brush his teeth completely with a twig or a brush and toothpaste, and shave if required. One should know that he is in a contaminated state if he brushes his teeth or shaves. One must take a full bath with water after these activities. One should dry oneself with a towel that is clean. The towel should be washed or at least rinsed after each usage and hung up to dry. Similarly the underwear should be washed in the morning and hung up to dry and clean underwear put on each day. Sometimes a devotee may have excessive body odor coming from the arm pits. In such a case he should shave the underarm hairs and also wash the arm pits regularly with soap.

Devotees should also make sure to keep their nails cut short and, where appropriate, they should shave their heads regularly. It is also a regulative principle to go to the dentist at least once a year and have a regular check up. One should also go to the dentist if there are rotten or broken teeth and repair them. If there is chronic bad breath a devotee should get dental help to solve it, if the source of the problem is the teeth. Most times bad breath comes from the stomach and improper digestion which also requires medical treatment.

Every devotee should have his own clothes and underwear which he must wash every day. No one should enter the temple unless they have on clean clothes. It is said that Lakshmi will not associate with Narayana unless He has put on clean clothes that day. Of course, Narayana always has clean clothes, but it is said like that to underline the importance of wearing clean clothes each day. If one cannot follow these basic principles of cleanliness, then there is no consideration of becoming a brahmana. A brahmana is clean both inside and outside, but if he cannot keep himself clean then what use is there to call him a brahmana?

Places must be provided in the temple for hanging wet clothes. It is not good to hang wet clothes over the heaters in the temple since that kind of wet air is bad for health. Therefore the temple authorities should provide a place where the devotees can hang their wet clothes to dry them.

Another important point is learning how to drink water from a cup without touching it to the mouth. This is important for those who want to become brahmanas. Sometimes when giving class, one needs to drink some water. If one drank water and touched his lips to the cup, his hand and the cup become contaminated and must be washed. If one does not wash it, and then touches the Bhagavatam or Gita, then he is committing an offense against the sastra. Therefore one must always drink water by pouring it from the cup directly into the mouth without touching the cup to the lips. Then one is not contaminated.

One must wash the area where he has been sleeping immediately upon rising in the morning. Usually all the brahmacaries will rise before 4am and then a previously designated devotee will wash the floor of the brahmacary asrama. If one is not sleeping in the asrama, then he should have a bucket of water and a floor cloth available so that upon rolling up his sleeping bag or blankets he can wash the floor. One should also regularly wash his sleeping paraphernalia for that which is used for sleeping more than two hours becomes contaminated. Sleeping bags should be washed at least once a week. Wool blankets may be washed once a month. All of one's paraphernalia should be put away in a locker or closet. Lockers and closets are a very handy way of storing one's personal paraphernalia and should be a part of every temple. They might be bought used from some school or the army. Then they can be painted and put in the asramas. Each devotee will have his own locker or closet and keep his things inside there.

One small point is that it is better to distribute to all the devotees some small pieces of tilak in chunks rather than melting down a chunk of tilak into a merge tilak where everyone sticks his fingers in it.

Alternatively, if it is not possible to have personal tilak for everyone, then one can supply a somewhat larger chunk of tilak for the asrama. Each devotee will take the chunk of tilak and place water in his left hand and then rub the chunk in the water and make a paste which is then applied to the body.

After eating one should wash his hands and mouth completely. Similarly one should wash completely with sufficient water the area where one has eaten. The place where one has eaten becomes contaminated and this area must be washed before anything else can go on there. If another person is to eat in the same place, that place must be washed first. Brahmanas usually wash their feet after eating as well.

One should wash all the plates and cups used for eating in a place that is separate from the kitchen. It is not clean to bring the eating

utensils back into the kitchen for washing. It is also not clean to bring them into the bathroom for washing as well. Therefore a proper temple will arrange for sinks to be installed near the prasadam room so that all the plates can be washed therein. Hot water and dish washing soap should be used to clean the plates, cups and bowls.

Chapter Twelve

Chapter Twelve

The Sunday Feast

Organizing the Sunday feast is a big job in temples where there are many hundreds of guests. If the temple is small, and the guests few, then one does not require to make large scale arrangements for the feast, but if there are many guests then one has to prepare for the feast well in advance in order to have everything nicely done on time.

The first thing that has to be done to organize the feast is to prepare the menu. Unless one knows what has to be cooked, he will not be able to organize its preparation.

The menu should be made almost a week in advance, usually on Monday. It should include some basic preparations such as two subjis, puris, a chutney, sweet rice, and halavah, and perhaps some sweet balls. If the devotees do not know how to cook these minimal preparations, the temple president should arrange for cooking lessons to be given to the devotees if at all possible. Also one will have to learn where to get spices which are required for cooking. One could import them from India regularly by making some arrangement with an Indian merchant, or one can simply buy them from the local Indian foods shop if there is one in your town. In any case, spices are an important part of our cooking tradition. They are also essential for good digestion which is essential for health.

Throughout the week materials are collected for the Sunday feast. They should be properly stored in rooms meant for this purpose, and perhaps also in barrels sealed off from bugs and rodents. Vegetables and fruits should be stored in a cool room so that they do not rot.

Foods should be prepared in a clean way. For example, once the vegetables are cut and washed it is essential that they are protected from contamination. This means that no unclean person should be allowed to touch them and no lower animals may see the bhoga.

The feast should be completely finished cooking in time to be offered to the Deities at their noon offering. If that is not possible, then an alternative would be to offer it at a special offering after the Deities wake up in the afternoon. This means that after waking the Deities in the afternoon one can make a special bhoga offering on the altar before the aratika and offer the food for the feast at that time.

When the guests first come to the temple, they should be led into a kirtan in the temple room. Then a short lecture explaining the basic principles of Krsna consciousness should be given by one expert in the science, and then they are led to the area where the feast is served. They can either be served plates which are already filled with prasadam, or they may take an empty plate and spoon and come up to the servers who will fill their plates as they walk past. The Indian system is to have everyone sit down in rows and the prasadam is carried by in buckets which are on wheeled carriers. The prasadam is then served out of the buckets onto the plates of the people as they pass by.

Sometimes enthusiastic devotees want to preach to the guests as they are sitting and eating. But this is a sure fire way to give the guests indigestion. When they are eating, they should be given the opportunity

to just eat and taste fully the Lord's mercy in the form of prasadam. The best thing is to have a light bhajan or soft kirtan during their eating, for this will allow them to hear transcendental sound vibration as they are eating transcendental foodstuff. If the guests have to listen to some devotee preaching to them at the same time they are eating then they will not be able to either listen properly or eat properly and the effect of both will be partially lost. Therefore at least wait till the guests are finished eating before preaching to them. When the people are finished eating, the plates and tables (if there were any), should be taken away and a large kirtan can be started and the guests engaged in chanting and dancing along with the devotees. After the kirtan one may speak with the guests and answer any questions they might have.

As the guests are leaving the temple, try to get them to take home as many books as possible for it is the books of Srila Prabhupada which will really make them Krsna conscious. This is also a good time to induce them to take home japa beads, cassettes, incense, and other devotional paraphernalia. It is also a good time to teach them how to chant japa and offer their food, if they are so advanced.

Chapter Thirteen

Chapter Thirteen

The Kitchen

Standards of Cleanliness

The kitchen, according to the standards of Deity worship, is an extension of the altar. Therefore, whatever standards are there on the altar should also be there in the kitchen. Specifically this refers to punctuality and cleanliness as well as the strict regulations governing who can cook or perform other functions in the kitchen.

Actually, only second initiated brahmanas are allowed to cook over the fire. This is the rule for all temples with installed Deities. However, in smaller preaching centers, and certainly in Nam Hatta centers, this standard can be relaxed so that first initiated devotees, or even uninitiated devotees can cook. But if there are installed Deities, then there must be second initiated devotees to cook and do the worship.

Whoever enters the kitchen must be clean and his clothes must be similarly clean. One's clothes become unclean if he has passed stool and not taken a shower and put on his clothes again, or if he has eaten in his clothes, or slept in the same clothes. It also means if one has passed urine in the toilet room with his clothes on. One cannot enter the kitchen in unclean clothes. One cannot enter the kitchen unless he is properly showered and clean himself.

If women come into the kitchen (or men with long hair), their hair must be tied up and covered with a cloth so that their hairs cannot fall into the food while cooking. If hair comes into the food it becomes rejected and must be thrown out. The Deities will never accept food with hair in it. Men must also tie up their sikhas for the same reason. If the men have much body hair, then they should wear long sleeve shirts in the kitchen to avoid their hairs falling into the food. Women cannot enter the kitchen during their menstrual period.

One should never cut hair or nails in the kitchen, nor should one spit in the kitchen sink or wash his mouth out there. If ones hands are contaminated, they cannot be washed in the kitchen sink.

No pots from the kitchen are allowed outside the kitchen for serving. One should purchase buckets and transfer all the prasadam in the kitchen from the cooking pots into these buckets which are then used for serving.

Cooks should learn the art of cooking and cleaning. A good cook will leave the kitchen as clean when he finishes as when he started. Whenever he makes a mess he will clean it immediately, therefore the kitchen will always be clean no matter what state the cooking is at. This is a most important point for cooks to learn and it was taught by Srila Prabhupada himself. A cook will always have a cloth nearby to wipe off the table or the stove if something spills. He will dump all cuttings into the proper receptacle immediately when they are cut.

During larger feast days, the kitchen should have a permanent cleaner who will simply move throughout the kitchen cleaning up everything and also keeping the floor clean and dry. He will always be cleaning the kitchen throughout the cooking operation so that when the cooking is finished the kitchen will be completely clean. Perhaps it will just need another washing of the floor. Similarly, there should be a full time pot washer working throughout the whole time while the cooking is going on so that there can be a constant supply of clean pots as the food is cooked and then transferred into other containers that are not used for cooking. One cannot put the prasadam into the serving containers until after it is offered.

Purchasing Foods, Storage, and Garbage Disposal

Purchasing should be done in bulk as far as possible. Purchasing in bulk allows the temple to get the best prices and to have a long term storage of essential ingredients. It is not efficient to purchase items in small quantities when cooking for 50 or a 100 people each day. Therefore there should be a devotee designated in the temple to purchase foodstuffs for the kitchen all the time. He should just travel from one part of the city to the other looking for the best buys and the best quality foods. After the foods are purchased, they must also be properly stored, for what is the use of purchasing without proper storage? A room next to the kitchen should be designated as the storage room, and there should be many barrels made of wood or plastic or metal, as they are available, with tightly fitting lids to keep out all rats and bugs. Inside these barrels can be the storage of grains, dahl, ghee, oils, spices, salt, and sugar. A large stock can be kept for emergency times when there is nothing available. This stock must be continually used in a rotating manner otherwise the old stored items will go bad or rot.

If foods are to be stored in the kitchen or another room, these rooms, and the kitchen, are to be sealed off to avoid bugs, cockroaches, and rodents from entering. One seals off the kitchen by plastering up all the holes in the kitchen where the bugs may enter. He also puts screens on the windows and doors and also screens over all open drains. One should never leave prasadam or unoffered foods open overnight for this will be a sure invitation for the roaches to come and eat a feast!

Similarly garbage must be properly disposed of as soon as possible. It should never be left in the kitchen overnight. One must get it out of the kitchen as soon as possible.

Recipes

One should learn how to cook from bona-fide recipes from persons who already know the art of cooking. There are many good cooks in ISKCON and in conjunction with the local GBC some of them can be invited to come to teach the devotees in the temples how to cook nicely for Krsna and His devotees. Also there are many good cook books available, and one can learn how to cook many nice things from these cook books. The best and most complete book is done by Jamuna devi dasi. If one simply follows the

instructions in these books, he can imitate a good cook and please the Lord and the devotees in the temple.

Management of Cooking

The head of the kitchen department has to have a good sense of management, otherwise he will have a hard time running a kitchen for many devotees and guests on Sundays. Therefore a few tips are given here to help him run the kitchen department.

The first thing that the kitchen head must do is to make a weekly menu of all offerings to the Deities and the mass cooking for the devotees as well as the Sunday feast. As already mentioned, he can make the menu for the Sunday feast on the previous Monday, but the weekly menu should be made one week in advance to allow for purchasing to be properly done.

One should make the menus in such a way as to allow for a sufficient variety during the week to keep the Deities and devotees satisfied. As it is stated, variety is the mother of enjoyment. Even if one is restricted to a simple diet, still he should prepare these simple foods in a variety of ways so that everyone is satisfied. The menu should take into account nutritional needs as well as taste. The devotees should get a sufficient amount of protein as well as calcium and other vitamins and minerals. One can learn how to balance that by following the traditional Indian methods of cooking and using his common sense.

One of the most important points in preparing any kind of food is to avoid overcooking it. If a food is overcooked, for example a vegetable, it will lose all its nutritional value. One should cook a vegetable until it is soft enough to stick a knife through it without exerting pressure. One should stop the cooking process at that point otherwise it will become overcooked. The best way to cook vegetables is to steam them. Steam cooking makes them soft and keeps all the goodness within them, and allows for simple chauntzing at the end for taste. For information: it is not good to fry foods in olive oil as it is very heavy for the digestion to tolerate.

A good diet for devotees would include for breakfast some milk, some fruits, some grains, and some chick peas for protein. A good lunch would include chapatis or bread (if devotees would rather have it), dhal, one or two subjis, rice, and perhaps a fresh salad. At night a light snack of milk and perhaps some cookies or maha prasadam from the day.

Making a menu means to vary the type of grains for breakfast from granola to oatmeal to halavah to upma and so on. For lunch, one should order different types of vegetables each day. If one cannot get different varieties in some seasons, then although the same vegetable will be used it should be prepared in a different way, sometimes fried, sometimes boiled or steamed, sometimes in soup, sometimes in salad and so on. If possible, one should vary the types of dhal that is used each day. One should cook some cheese subji or put cheese in some lunch preparations for protein and calcium. Avoid mixing dhal and fruits, or fruits and vegetables, as these combinations are very bad for health. Some say that mixing certain raw vegetables with cooked ones is not good for the digestion. But one can take lettuce, tomatoes, or cucumbers with the meal without problem. One should also never put salt in milk.

When the menu is made, one has to collate all that information into a master shopping list. This is done by putting an estimate of the amount of the raw material for each preparation, either in terms of kilos or crates, and then adding up the totals of each kind of dhal, grain, subji and so on. When this is done one will be able to tell exactly what his

requirements are each week and then order that from the shopping department. This will also cause the wastage to be less. Once the menu is done, one has to post the menu in the kitchen so that all the cooks can see it. This will be the master cooking list for the week. One should list the exact preparations, their amounts, and who will cook it at what time of the day for each specific offering. In this way all the offerings for the week become listed and each cook will know in advance what he has to cook that week. The menu becomes the basis of all preparation in the kitchen and the whole kitchen is organized around the menu. All bhoga is purchased on the basis of the menu and all cooks will cook on the basis of the menu. The head of the kitchen can adjust the menu accordingly if there is something special available in the market, especially if it is available at a special price.

One should not use ghee on ekadasi that has been used on other days since it will have some grains in it. One should only use new ghee on ekadasi. On ekadasi days one should be very, very careful not to mix any grains or beans into the prasadam. This might happen because the Deities other than Gaur Nitai take grains on ekadasi as They are Visnu tattva and above all such rules and regulations. Gaur Nitai are also Visnu tattva, but because They are playing the parts of devotees in this material world, They also follow the rules of devotees and observe an ekadasi diet on ekadasi days. Therefore one should be very careful not to mix in prasadam or ingredients offered to the Deities on ekadasi with that of the devotees. Even maha prasadam is not eaten on the ekadasi days.

The head of the kitchen can organize the cutting of vegetables the night before. All vegetables required for cooking the next morning can be cut the night before and those vegetables required for cooking at noon time can be cut in the morning of the same day. Of course, this is not an absolute principle and vegetables may be cut whenever convenient. Anyone can cut vegetables, so long as it is done outside the kitchen in a clean area and the cut vegetables are washed when they are brought into the kitchen. If they are cut the night before they should be properly soaked in water and covered from bugs, rodents and air.

Deity offerings should be scheduled a week in advance, with the schedule for the next week on the kitchen bulletin board by Friday of the previous week. The list should include each and every offering, who should cook it, and exactly what has to be prepared.

Feasts can be scheduled in the same way as ordinary offerings, but the scale will be different. The head of the department should make a schedule of each preparation, when it has to be ready, who should cook it, who should assist, and on which stove it should be cooked. This becomes quite critical when one has to cook 15 preparations in large scale and he has only four stoves! Therefore a good organization of what to cook and where is required to avoid havoc and chaos in the kitchen. This schedule should be hung up in the kitchen on Thursday so that all the cooks and cutters know exactly what to do when Sunday comes and they can work to the best of their efficiency.

Daily devotee's prasadam can be scheduled in much the same way as the Deity offerings, only the scale will be larger.

Sometimes there will be preaching programs which will require prasadam for the participants. If householder ladies who live outside the temple can be engaged in cooking for programs this is very helpful. This cooking must also be scheduled far in advance so the cooks are prepared and can get everything together in time. If other special cooks are used for

this, still they must be scheduled in by the head of the department so that they do not interfere with the ordinary cooking. The preaching parties must organize their prasadam needs through the head of the kitchen who will have the last word in how to get everything prepared in a nice way on time.

A final note on the preparation of prasadam: the cooks should realize that they are trying to satisfy the Lord and His devotees. If the devotees are satisfied then they can understand that the Lord was satisfied. Therefore the cooks should be eager to please all the devotees with their offerings. The cooks should cook with a mood of love for the vaisnavas. They should feel that they are cooking to satisfy all the vaisnavas and when they are satisfied then the cooks themselves will feel satisfied. Actually, the secret of preparing nice prasadam for the Deities and devotees is love. When an advanced devotee cooks, the prasadam tastes like nectar for it is filled with spiritual potency. This is the secret to good cooking.

Chapter Fourteen

Chapter Fourteen

Prasadam Serving

Prasadam serving is an art that should be learned in every temple.

Prasadam serving is something which should be done by the older devotees in the temple who want to serve the vaisnavas. It should be done with love and devotion. Food served with love and devotion becomes more tasty and the love and devotion of the servers helps the digestive process. In Caitanya Mahaprabhu's time, the prasadam was served by most advanced devotees and sometimes the Lord Himself would serve the devotees prasadam. Therefore the devotees in the temple should be eager to serve the other vaisnavas prasadam.

Some tips in serving prasadam: don't give too much or too little. If one gives too much, and the devotee cannot eat it all, then he will be guilty of leaving leftovers on his plate. If one gives too little then he will remain hungry. One should serve with a loving mood and not just throw it on the plate. Prasadam is worshipable and should be dealt with nicely. One should realize that by the pleasure of the vaisnavas he himself will be happy. We usually give seconds to the devotees until they request us not to give anymore. It is not that they should have to ask for seconds but rather the servers should bring around the prasadam again and again until no one wants any more.

Usually devotees will line up sitting on the floor in two or more rows facing each other waiting for prasadam. When serving a large group, the servers should walk between the rows of eaters, serving three on one side, then three on the other side to prevent anyone on one side or the other becoming disturbed. Seconds should also be served by the servers in this way.

Devotees will say the prasadam prayer before eating. The servers should already have something on everyone's plate before the devotees enter the prasadam room so that the eaters can begin as soon as the prasadam prayer is finished. One should always serve water first, then bitter items if they are available, then subjis like spinach, then the other vegetables and fried things. Chapatis should be served throughout the meal as is rice. Sweets are served last. One person should constantly serve water throughout the meal. At the end, when everyone is almost finished, go to each one and ask if anything more is required and if it is, get it.

When there is a big crowd, then one person should be designated as the manager of the servers. He should oversee all the servers and make sure that they are taking care of the needs of all the eaters.

As mentioned before, one should serve with prasadam containers which are usually buckets or larger pans and not take the cooking pots out of the kitchen. Cooking pots taken out of the kitchen become contaminated. One should make an endeavor to purchase large serving containers by all means. If one can get large buckets that is also good and they may be used for serving..

When prasadam is served, one should not touch the plate with the serving spoon for that will immediately contaminate the serving spoon. Prasadam should be gently dropped from a respectable distance from the plate, say a few centimeters. Persons eating should not touch the prasadam serving containers or spoons and they should not serve themselves prasadam without first having washed their hands and mouth.

If these simple rules are followed, the temple atmosphere will turn into Vaikuntha.

Chapter Fifteen

Chapter Fifteen

India Festivals and Other Communication to the Outside World

One of the highlights of the year is the annual Mayapur Vrindavan Festival. This festival was created by Srila Prabhupada to allow the devotees from around the world the opportunity to come to the holy dhams in India and make spiritual advancement there by associating with all the advanced devotees of ISKCON.

Although everyone would like to go every year, actually it was once said by Srila Prabhupada that the devotees could go once every five years. If they took turns going it would not put too much of a financial strain on the temples. But then again, he sometimes would say that the devotees should come often. So it is up to the temple president and the local GBC to say when the devotees should go. Devotees should not assume that they have a right to go every year and they should consider it a great privilege to be able to visit the festival.

Going to the holy dhams is a sacred act and selling of items such as watches and cameras is not the recommended activity for pilgrims to these holy places. Besides being illegal, one will ruin his spiritual vision of the holy dhams if he sees himself as a salesman and the local dham vasis, the residents of the holy dham, as ordinary customers. In India, it is a great economic crime to illegally import goods and sell them publicly on the black market and they are prepared to put even devotees in jail for doing this. It is also against the law to illegally change money on the streets or any place other than banks. One must change all foreign currency in the official banks. Indian jails are terrible, so please avoid these activities.

One has to visit the holy dhams in a mood of reverence. One should see that these are the places of appearance and pastimes of the Supreme Lord and thus one should come to these dhams simply to make spiritual advancement and serve the devotees there. When one goes to these places with the idea of doing devotional service, then his spiritual life will become greatly uplifted on these pilgrimages, but if he goes with an idea of being the enjoyer of a vacation, then he will have a great deal of trouble and meet all kinds of disturbances and obstacles.

There are also other programs for devotees during the Kartika month and also in January each year called the Vaisnava Institute for Higher

Education where devotees may learn some specific arts or philosophical studies under the able guidance of senior devotees of ISKCON. These programs are nicely organized and run so attending them will help everyone's spiritual life. If anyone desires to attend these programs, then they should request permission from their temple president.

Chapter Sixteen

Chapter Sixteen

Management and Administration

When one wants to manage something in an organized manner, he requires an office from which the management can operate. Management means to organize men and money according to what is required to accomplish the goals one wishes to achieve. If I wish to accomplish something, it will require manpower for executing the work and funds to pay for it. Someone must delegate the authority to men to work and authorize the expenditure of funds as they are required.

Now we do not have unlimited men and endless supplies of money; therefore, the way in which the men are organized and the money is allocated must be done in a comprehensive manner according to the facilities available. The management and administration department is meant to facilitate the project requirements according to the resources available.

In order to do this efficiently, a properly functioning office is required. It doesn't have to be an elaborate arrangement as in the big businesses of the modern society; it can be quite simple, but something must be there. If one has a small temple of under 20 devotees, he can probably do all his management and accounting in a small office room. But as the temple gets bigger, and the projects undertaken get more complex, one will require larger offices or multiple offices to separate the functions of temple president, treasurer, secretary, temple commander, and all the heads of the various departments.

The temple president will require a room large enough to hold meetings of all the temple managers. This size of room will also be sufficient for any meetings he may hold with some portion of the temple devotees. The other officers of the temple, and department heads, will require smaller offices since they do not have to meet with large groups of people at one time. Remember that we are speaking here about a larger temple which has many temple projects going on at once. Normally, when there is little going on in the temple itself, which can occur even in a very large temple where the main thrust of the temple activity is sankirtan and preaching, one will require only one main room for management where all the functions of the temple can take place. So the temple president will have to decide whether he requires to have separate offices for each of these departments or if it can all be done in one larger office.

Just to give weight to the 'less facility is sufficient' argument, Srila Prabhupada did tell me in 1974, when I was the president of the Vrindavan temple, that I did not need any office, that I was to roam about the temple and handle all the affairs in that way. So theoretically at least it is possible to handle a temple in a minimum of office facility. But practically it is seen that there should be at least one main office for the temple management, and if there is need, more offices can be made. Besides the physical facility, there is a need to manage the different projects in the temple according to a set scheme. There is a standard management cycle which is accepted throughout the world, which when used, can systemize the management in such a way as to assure the greatest

degree of success possible. This cycle, expressible in terms of a simple formula, is easy to implement.

Every project requires four things: research, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the results. Research means that one must appoint an individual or a team to go through the various options available to the decision maker and narrow down the possibilities to feasible choices which will accomplish the goals desired. Research also means to determine what will be the costs of each option and also the longer term ramifications on the temple. Legal considerations must also be researched. In other words, in the research stage one should find out all that is required to understand whether a course of action is favorable for the temple or not.

When the research is completed, and one should allow enough time to realistically and deeply research a topic completely before moving forward to the next stage, then one can start to make a plan. Planning means that one determines, through group discussion, exactly which researched option to choose. The research forms the basis of the plan that is conceived. It is best to make plans on the basis of a meeting with all the parties concerned. For example, if it is a plan of a big festival, then the legal, preaching, and kitchen department, as well as the treasurer, should all sit together and discuss the requirements to make the festival a great success. The more heads that come together at this initial plan making stage the better, for input received after the plan is made often tends to confuse things and cause further delays. A good temple president will always consult with his department heads before making any decisions. He will avoid acting unilaterally for this is not an efficient way to manage.

One of the more important parts of the plan making process is to determine the actual budgetary requirements of the project. When one knows exactly what it will cost, then he can determine whether there is enough money presently available to execute the plan or if further collection schemes are required to raise the funds. If more funds are needed than are available, the plan should include the fund raising and provide enough time to bring in the capital required. Without having the budget available there is no question of executing the plan successfully. Many very nice plans have had to be scrapped due to a lack of funding. One should be sensitive to the input of the temple treasurer when discussions of funding are taking place.

When the plan is completely worked out on paper, then it is time to implement the plan. Executing a properly made plan is often easier than one thinks it will be. If the research is proper, there will be no surprises and one can move forward with confidence at each step of the way. When the research is good, and the plan properly conceived, then the execution of the plan is usually easy. Therefore one should spend enough time researching and planning. This means that every project should be started far enough in advance to allow for proper ground work.

Execution means to organize the men and facilities to complete the works required. Here the management is basically going on at the departmental level. The upper level managers should simply oversee the department heads and make sure that they are doing what they are supposed to do at the proper time. The upper management should also make sure that everyone is following their budget at all stages of the execution. They should also make sure that all the men allotted to the various stages of work are actually performing their functions as required. If there are

problems with the manpower which cannot be handled by the department heads, then the temple president has to intervene and directly deal with that person. Similarly, if there are budget overruns, then the temple president will have to make an emergency adjustment together with the treasurer.

The last stage of the management cycle is often overlooked, but it is actually quite important. That is the evaluation stage. When the project is completed, one should look over the different stages and see where there were defects in the process. For example, if the research was faulty, and things were more costly than thought, or there were cheaper alternatives discovered later, then one knows that the research department needs to be adjusted for the next project. In other words, while evaluating the performance of the different departments during all three earlier management stages, one can see where there were mistakes and how to correct these mistakes in the future. One can also come to understand the quality of his leaders through this evaluation process. If a leader is consistently failing in his part of the executive process, then it leads one to believe that he should be replaced before the next project takes place. Similarly, if a department was especially good in its performance, one can safely give them more responsibility in the future. So do not neglect to wrap up the project with a clear look at how the project was organized and the results obtained.

This cycle of management is not only good for projects, but it will work in the day to day management as well. For example, one goal of the temple is to make sure that the prasadam for the devotees is good, healthy, and cost efficient. By researching the food markets, making a good purchasing and cooking plan, executing that plan and evaluating the results by actually tasting the prasadam and analyzing its food content, one can understand best how to accomplish the goal. This method is valid for all types of temple works and should be used by an intelligent temple president.

While researching is going on, various papers and documents will be accumulated. There will also be documents that appear in other stages of the management cycle as well. All these papers have to be stored so that they can be referred to in the future. One should have on hand as much information as possible to make decision making in the future an easy affair. Often the research is valid for longer periods of time and therefore the papers should be saved. This will mean that there must be a proper filing system in one of the offices. Usually this is the work of the temple secretary, but in the absence of a secretary the treasurer can also handle the filing. If the temple president is doing all the jobs of the temple officers himself, as in very small temples, then he will have to organize the filing system himself.

The simplest type of filing system is to have filing cabinets with folders hanging within the shelves. Each folder will be labelled, in alphabetical order, according to the particular information to be found in the folder. A filing system can be devised according to one's needs which allows one to find what he is looking for quickly. One can file things according to department and subject matter. In this way one can find the required information quicker.

Every temple officer should learn how to use his time in the most efficient manner. He should studiously avoid wasting time in frivolous prajalpa, or idle talks, for this will ruin his capacity to accomplish a large amount of things in the least amount of time. There is a rule in

management that 80% of the work is done by 20% of the people, so one should spend 80% of his time with the 20% who do the work and 20% of his time on everyone else. It is important that the managers not get entangled with speaking with those who are not very important for the management of the temple. Although every devotee should be considered important, sometimes they are not actually valuable for the overall functioning of the temple. Since the temple manager's time is limited, he must divide his time in the most practical manner. Therefore, he will spend most of his time with the devotees who are most important for the proper management of the temple.

Since the temple officers have more things to do than time available to do it, they must use their time very efficiently. It is important that they get to their offices in the temple at precisely the same time each day so that the other devotees can depend on them being there and can utilize their services regularly.

If there are too many things to do, and not enough time to do it, then one has to set priorities. He can only do what he can do, since he is only human, therefore some things will simply have to wait. Making some things wait while other works are going on is not a bad thing and it is something that we all will have to live with. Therefore one should determine the priorities of his works. He should say, this is the most important thing to do, and it must be done now for so and so much time. Then comes this other thing, and then the next thing, one after another. After this list is made, with a priority set for each item, then one can comfortably work through the items one after another until they are all done. If new items are coming onto the list while we are still working on the previous ones, they should be fitted in by being given a new priority number and making room for them on the list. Sometimes things on the bottom of the list are neglected for a longer period of time. That is also not good. It is better that the temple officer, seeing such neglect going on, delegates the authority for accomplishing that thing to another person who has the time to do it.

A good leader is one who knows what he has to accomplish and knows exactly how to go about doing it. Even if he does not personally know what to do, he will know how to organize a meeting of the other devotee leaders to work out what to do. And if the work is still above the heads of all of the leaders, then he should go to his local GBC representative. Ultimately one has to depend on Krsna for all his results.

The manager must always know how to inspire others. He will figure out services for the devotees in such a way as to inspire them in their Krsna consciousness. He must always think up newer and newer ways to keep the devotees enthusiastic in their service.

A manager who wants to be successful for a long period of time must know the art of being humble. Humility is a quality rarely found in managers who are often overburdened with the mode of passion. Passionate people do not know what is the meaning of the word humility. Therefore the managers in the temple must be first of all devotees and develop the qualities of humility and gentleness. They should be ready to admit their mistakes and make corrections for them. They must take responsibility for their mistakes and make all rectification required. They should also be ready to give all credit to others for the good works done by them. They should never want to take credit for the work done by other persons. Actually, they should see that every good thing is happening due to the nice

cooperation of the devotees, and every bad thing is due to their own failure to lead properly.

A good leader is also a good student. Even though he may have officially stopped being a student long before, he should never give up the attitude of learning wherever knowledge is to be gained. A good follower can become a good leader later on. A good leader knows how to apologize to others for his wrongdoing, how to beg forgiveness for his offenses, and how to avoid holding a grudge when someone does something against him. A good leader knows how to communicate with others. He should be able to write his thoughts down on paper so that sometimes he can post some communique on the temple bulletin board, or write reports to the GBC, or write letters to others requesting help or simply to preach to people who inquire about Krsna through the mail. He should know the basic arts of writing to express his thoughts well on the written page.

Above all the leader must know the art of talking with others.

Communication is a most important ability for a temple leader. One may have wonderful ideas, but if he cannot communicate them to others, then these ideas are more or less useless. It is especially important that the leaders know how to talk with devotees. They have to convince devotees to follow their plans and cooperate with their projects. This means that they have to preach nicely to convince the devotees that serving Krsna is the most important goal of life. The devotees must also be convinced that their leader is a spiritual personality who is worthy of being followed. They will gain this conviction by hearing the leader give inspiring classes. If the leader knows how to communicate the basic principles of Krsna consciousness in an inspiring manner, then the devotees under him will want to follow what he says.

A temple president must also be able to speak nicely to the congregation and the public. He should know how to deliver a lecture to the public and how to convince the congregation that they should surrender more to Krsna. This means that he knows the basic philosophy well. The only way to do that is through the detailed reading of Srila Prabhupada's books and hearing his lectures as well as the lectures of his bona fide followers. When Krsna conscious knowledge is disseminated according to the parampara, then it has great potency and can convince a fallen soul to give up his attachment for the illusory energy of the Lord and surrender to Krsna.

A temple president will also be called upon to manage meetings both of the general devotees and the temple leaders. He should always be strong, yet gentle, and allow everyone to speak who has something to say. He should avoid making commentaries on everything that everyone has to say, and he should be eager to hear what others have to say thus respecting their intelligence. If the members of the group feel that the chairman of the meeting does not care for their intelligence then they become discouraged and they do not want to participate any longer. However, the temple president should understand that the purpose of the meeting is to accomplish some work and not just to sit around and talk. Therefore he will have to push the meeting in the direction of accomplishing the tasks which are set down for the meeting to accomplish. He will have to know in which direction to push the meeting when it is bogged down in argument or simply entangled in talk without purpose. This will require great intelligence. Managing meetings is a skill that is rarely seen in this world, so if it can be developed by the temple president this will help the temple greatly.

If there is a computer available in the temple, it is useful for writing and managing money. One can use a word processor and significantly speed up his writing. A spread sheet, a program that enables one to do accounting and calculations in a very easy manner, can greatly enhance his ability to understand the relationship of economic data. A data base, or record of all the information received about a particular subject, can help the temple by keeping on record all the persons met and preached to and the results of that preaching. It can also help keep up a mailing list so that these persons are regularly contacted. But if there is no computer, then one will have to do all these things by hand which makes it more difficult, but not impossible.

The temple president must also know how to secure the temple against thieves and rogues. He should make sure that all the doors are securely locked at night and that there is no way that thieves can enter the temple. Above all the temple room must be locked up tightly to prevent any intruders from entering at night. During the day the temple may be open to everyone, but no one should be allowed to enter into the asramas of the devotees. The public places are the temple room, preaching rooms, and perhaps some offices specifically kept open for such purposes. People should be restricted from going to other areas of the temple. Specifically the treasury must be kept under locked doors and in locked cupboards or safes throughout the day.

It has been said that one knows that he is calling an ISKCON temple when he calls and calls and simply gets no answer, then he calls again and the phone is busy. This is because the devotees do not want to answer the telephone since they know that this means they will have to run all over the temple to find the person who is being called. Therefore even though there are ten people standing next to the ringing phone, no one will pick it up. The smart temple president knows that this will cause managerial havoc, therefore he stations one receptionist by the front door of the temple to take care of guests coming into the temple and to answer the telephone. Then he arranges some means, either a temple paging system through loudspeakers throughout the temple, or an elaborate intercom system, so that the required person can immediately be called from the desk without the receptionist having to get up. This is probably one of the most important points in the management of external affairs.

One of the least liked works of the temple president is the dealing with complaints. Often people bring complaints against devotees, or devotees complain about other devotees. This is unpalatable and ideally it should be avoided, but practically it cannot be. The temple president must be strong enough to deal with all these complaints as they arise. The best system for dealing with complaints is to bring all the concerned parties together in one room and let them discuss their problems before the temple president and then he will listen to the discussion and then make a comprehensive decision. This is usually the only means of solving a problem. Sometimes one can simply ignore a problem and hope that it goes away, but usually it ends up in the frustration of the complainer who thinks that no one cares, and he usually ends up going away. Therefore it is always a good policy to bring all the parties together and let them discuss everything quite frankly in front of the neutral temple president, and then a decision will have to be made or preaching will have to be done, and let the matter be finished.

All in all, it is seen that the managers of the temple are the servants of the Lord and His devotees. If the manager sees himself as the servant

of the devotees, the vaisnavas, he will be successful in his managerial affairs. As soon as he thinks that the devotees are meant to serve him then he will have all kinds of troubles in his management.

Chapter Seventeen

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Bookkeeping and Accounting

Most countries of the world require societies to keep accounts. Some countries may not check these accounts often, some not at all, and others frequently. It is best that each temple keep a clear record of their financial transactions according to the recognized accounting systems in their own country.

That bookkeeping system should be according to a system accepted by the government. The best way to do this is to keep track of all the money that comes into the temple treasury by keeping income records and then keeping track of all the funds that leave the treasury by having vouchers and receipts from the stores. Then all this income and expense information is handed over to an outside registered public accountant who will write up the books in a format that is acceptable to the government. Of course, if a devotee can be trained up in a system that is acceptable to the government that may be better for it will save money as one must pay the professional accountants some significant amount for each entry (booking) that they make in the account books.

It is important that the temple president learn what is the best way to present the accounts considering the taxation laws in the country. Some countries accept that ISKCON is a tax-free religious organization, whereas others consider ISKCON as simply a business. If there are taxes to be paid, then one should arrange the temple books in the most advantageous manner to reduce the tax bill. It is natural that every organization will account in such a way as to legally minimize its tax bill. There are legal means to declare deductions and get a reduction on the amount of taxes a temple must pay. These means should be understood. Besides the official needs of a bookkeeping system for tax purposes, there is a need for the president to know exactly how much money is in the temple treasury each day. If he does not know how much money he has, and how much more is expected to come in, how can he determine how to spend the money and make future projects? Therefore the accounting system should be such that he can understand what is available at any moment, on request.

This means that the temple treasurer must know how much money is in the bank and how much is held in cash. He should be able to report that to the temple president at any point in time. Further, he should know the bills or expenses that are presently being incurred, or which are due to be paid at the present time, and those which are due to be paid within the next week or month. With this knowledge he can present a report to the president on request. He knows the income and he knows the expenditures, so he can give a status report when it is required. Every temple president should get such a report at least weekly, and when he is preparing to make a major expenditure, he should get that report on the spot. Major reports are made monthly for the GBC or regional councils and yearly statements are made for the GBC, the regional councils and the government. These statements should include all income and expenses, as well as a comprehensive list of debts, if there are any.

When a temple president is thinking of making a major expenditure, he, or the temple treasurer, must know the art of making projections into the

future. If the expenditure will be made within the near future, but the payments for it will extend over a longer period of time, say some years, then he has to make a projection of his income and expenditures over that period of time and then calculate whether he can make that expenditure or not. If there is enough projected income to cover the expense, then it is wise to do it, otherwise not. Of course, this process does not take into account the considerations as to whether one actually requires to spend the money or not, only common sense and some management skill can answer that question, but it can help to determine whether one can actually make the expenditure were one to want to do so. So if it is determined that the expenditure is wanted, then a cash flow projection and analysis is required to determine whether one can actually make it.

Actually, the temple treasurer should always have a cash flow analysis available at all times. If he is keeping a cash flow updated throughout the year, then it is easy to get information at any particular moment in time. But if the cash flow analysis has to be done on the spot, mistakes will enter into it due to the improper information which is usually available immediately. It takes a while to get the proper information for making the cash flow. When the proper information is entered into the cash flow analysis, then it becomes easy to manipulate the information according to the projected expenses and determine if it is possible to make them or not.

Making a cash flow analysis is not difficult if one sets his mind to making it. One has to simply determine what were his running expenses over the last few months or a year, and then increase that by some percentage considering the increase in devotees (or decrease it if devotees have been lost) and that will be the estimated expenditure for the next year. Remember to add in any new expenditures that one is planning to make. Then make a projection of the income in the same way. Take the previous year's income and adjust that to the present reality and project that across the next year. Then see if there is enough money to cover both the expenses and the new expenditure. Most probably this short explanation is not sufficient to train one in making a cash flow chart. The best thing would be to learn the art personally from someone who knows how to do it.

This kind of analysis is something that computers are made for. They help one do this kind of thing in a very accurate and easy manner. There are computer spread sheets which help one to make these calculations in a short time. If one does not have a computer, then he can do this all on paper, although it will take a longer time. In any case one must calculate the future income and expenditure on the basis of the previous income and expenditure and then see whether there will be enough income to cover the expenses desired.

One of the most essential calculations that is to be done in the treasury department is the running balance of accounts with the BBT. Since the BBT is the main supplier of goods (books) to the temple, the temple must regularly pay the BBT for the books supplied. The treasurer must calculate how many books have left the storage that week and then pay the BBT for those books.

An important note is to be added here. If one doesn't have money, he cannot spend it! This is a simple yet extremely important and often overlooked point. In the modern world, at least in the West, it is very easy to get loans from the bank or other sources by making overdrafts and financing vehicles and other items. This kind of spending lends itself to

carelessness. One can spend much more than he makes if he is not careful and soon he will find himself in bankruptcy. When one has more debts than income then he is in debt. Getting into debt is easy, just spend more money than one has. Credit card spending is another means of getting into debt.

Getting into debt with the BBT is also easy to do ³/₄ simply do not pay the BBT for books distributed for a few weeks and the temple is in debt. This is a basic principle of economics. One must carefully determine whether he actually has the money for the expenditures that he makes, otherwise he will fall into debt. Canakya Pandit has said that there are three things that must be put out immediately otherwise they will destroy one - - fire, debt, and disease. So debt is considered as dangerous as fire. If there are debts to the BBT it can spiritually ruin the temple. We have seen many a temple go under spiritually, with the temple president going 'down with the ship', simply due to debts to the BBT. The BBT is Srila Prabhupada's heart and the laksmi is his blood. When one is in debt he is sucking the blood of Srila Prabhupada.

Being in debt causes a great burden on the temple devotees. They lose all spiritual enthusiasm if they are in debt. Devotees should always feel that the management of the temple is such that they will prevent the temple from going into debt. When they see debts increasing they lose faith in the management. Furthermore the management has to push them more to increase their collection of laksmi to pay for the debts and this will cause them to become uninspired if done for a longer period of time. The temple president should make it his first rule, NEVER spend money that he doesn't have, and NEVER go into debt for any reason. It will keep the temple financially strong and happy. One may not have many material things in the temple, but if he doesn't have debts at least he can be spiritually happy and satisfied.

Chapter Eighteen

Chapter Eighteen

Legal Affairs

Taking care of the legal affairs of the movement is absolutely required. If one is careless about these basic points, he can be closed down by the government, his status can be restricted, or he can lose his preaching facility. Therefore the temple president must make sure that the temple's legal status is perfectly in order.

In most countries there are temples which were established before all others. These temples usually are forced to do all the preliminary legal 'groundwork' first in order to establish their own legal affairs and the other newer temples can utilize their legal arrangements and simply copy their efforts and save time.

For example, the legal status of ISKCON as a society has to be taken care of. This is generally taken care of by the first centers in a country. New centers should simply duplicate their work and save time and money. Another legal problem that will be taken care of in the future is the tax status of ISKCON. The main organizations will have to figure out some means to establish the tax status in the proper manner and then the smaller centers can duplicate that work. But it is essential that the tax status be determined so that no legal repercussions undermine the preaching mission. Once this is done a standard will be set that all temples can follow.

Property ownership is also an important legal issue. There are specific rules for property ownership that have been established by Srila

Prabhupada and as far as possible these rules should be followed. Srila Prabhupada wanted specific property trustees to be in charge of determining whether a property can ever be sold or mortgaged against. And he also wanted that every property be in the name of ISKCON. In some places this is hard to do, so one's GBC man should specifically arrange some exemption with the Executors committee of ISKCON.

Legally binding contracts are also important to be made from time to time. The temple should have someone who has legal acumen and who can understand a legal contract when it is presented. One must see that the terms and conditions of the contract are favorable to us and not sign something which is unfavorable to ISKCON. Often it helps to have a professional look over the contracts before they are signed to give some good advice on how to proceed with them.

It pays to get individual releases signed by all the devotees in the temple stating that they are in Krsna consciousness by their own free will and desire and that whatever they have given to the temple in the past or will give in the future is given as a free gift and that they expect nothing in return. This will protect the temple from a devotee who joined and then left and then said that he never gave anything to the temple but he let the temple use it temporarily and that he now wants his property back. This has happened in the past and without this release and statement it is almost impossible to legally prove that it was given in the first place.

A temple president should be very cautious to not accept minors into the temple. The famous Robin George case in the USA has come about due to the temple sheltering a minor girl and the mother making a court case against ISKCON for that. It is illegal to accept a minor into the temple without expressed written permission from the parents. If both the parents state in a letter that they have no objection to the minor living in the temple then that person may sometimes be accepted, but without that letter the temple president should simply tell the candidate to practice Krsna consciousness at home and visit the temple, with the parent's permission, as often as possible. Any written communications with the parents must be carefully kept on file. This may protect the temple from expensive legal cases, as are often filed in the United States. However, even such letters do not totally absolve the temple from legal responsibility for the minor should something go wrong. One should get good legal advice before accepting minors into the temple. If the minor becomes sick, for example, then the temple is fully responsible to take care of them. If there is some discrepancy in the care, the temple can be held responsible. Furthermore, the minor can always make a case against the temple later on declaring that they were improperly coerced into joining the movement at an early age or some similar derivative of this idea. The New York temple made a policy to not allow minors under the legal age of 18 to join the temple even if they had parental permission. All new candidates had to wait till they attained the legal age of adulthood. This policy seems to make a lot of sense and may be adopted by other temples without any fear.

The temple should learn the art of doing things legally correct in the first place otherwise trying to rectify something done wrong after the fact is extremely difficult. Don't do illegal things for a reaction will manifest and one may not be able to get out of it. Especially one should register the society in a legal manner. Each temple should have a regular

lawyer they consult to make sure they are doing things in the proper way. This same lawyer can help legalize sankirtan spots as well.

A good lawyer can help give protection to the sankirtan devotees. The devotees are depending on getting good back up from the legal department in order to continue their distribution. Therefore it is well worth the investment to try and get as many sankirtan spots legalized as possible and establish our right to distribute books as far as possible. Of course the legal system in some countries is not made in such a way as to guarantee the rights of religious freedom to preach, but still a good lawyer will help the temple to get the maximum benefit in the situation as it presently exists.

The temple legal department should also learn the art of getting permissions for demonstrations. This can mean simply getting permission for a street harinam, or it can mean a major festival like Rathayatra. Sometimes permissions are required for performing in big halls and this permission should be gotten well in advance.

Sometimes people make legal trouble for the devotees. Some people can think of unlimited ways to cause trouble for the devotees and the devotees have to be determined and clever enough to counter these attacks and go on with the preaching. The legal department should immediately spring into action whenever the devotees are attacked; otherwise, the situation tends to deteriorate and the devotees are ultimately harmed.

Chapter Nineteen

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Public Relations

Public relations (PR) is the art of disseminating information to the public about ISKCON's activities to make them favorable towards the movement and appreciative of ISKCON's work. Every large organization has a PR department which works to preserve and enhance the image of the organization in the public's eye.

There are two kinds of public relations work. The first is called reactive. This means that when something bad happens and the media are reporting about it, one has to respond with his side of the story and correct the possible misrepresentations. The second kind of PR work is called proactive. This means that one first brings favorable information in the public's eye before they hear anything bad and establish his organization's image in a favorable way. This kind of PR work is vastly superior since it brings information to the public before they have heard something bad about the organization.

ISKCON can use the techniques of good PR practices to enhance its image in the public and government's eye. One can preach amongst the government people by showing them the good work of ISKCON throughout the world and gaining their favorable impressions of us before they might be influenced by others to do something bad against us. Similarly one can gain the favor of the newspapers and media by going to them and presenting our philosophy and work in such a way that they will understand that we are a valuable organization to the society.

At one point envious people will certainly start up again against the devotees to stop their preaching work. They have done this in almost every other country of the world and your country will probably not be the exception. We have to be prepared to counteract these elements before they cause another repression of the devotees. This means that whenever they bring some misinformation to the public, we must counter this with real information. Of course if their efforts are government backed, there

is little that we can do. But if they do not have government backing then it is possible to have our side of the story published in the media. This is the main work of the PR department in your country.

If the media publishes a bad article or story against us, it is our responsibility to meet them and tell them our side of the story as soon as possible. We should go with various evidences, including statements from the intelligentsia of the country, to defend our point of view. One should not wait to answer bad articles or reports. Waiting means that what they say is being accepted, which is an admission of guilt.

Responding means that what they say is not being accepted and if the response is timely it may make it into the press.

PR doesn't always mean only dealing with the media, but it can also mean dealing with the general public. For instance, informing the public of our food programs (Food for Life) will help them understand that we are working for the benefit of all the people. This is the kind of work they want to hear about.

One can also deal with the neighbors in a nice way for this is also public relations. Make sure that the temple kirtans do not disturb the neighbors at odd hours of the day and night, keep the temple noise level to a reasonable minimum, make sure that the garbage is properly bagged and disposed of, and make sure that the devotee clothes are not flying all over the yard.

Good parental relationships are essential. If the parents of the devotees are favorable, they can be a great asset for the movement when there is need of them to appear in public and speak favorably about their children and the movement's influence on them. Therefore Srila Prabhupada once said that each devotee should write home to their parents at least once a month. This will keep the parents connected with their children and they will not think that ISKCON is trying to separate the parents from the children. The devotees should also periodically visit their parents at home to maintain good relations.

One very nice means to stop unfavorable elements when they attack is to have a parent's organization connected to ISKCON. If the parents are organized into an action group, they can defend the movement against unfavorable parents who are simply against Krsna. One devotee can make it his or her business to keep in touch with all the parents with a temple newsletter sent out monthly or bimonthly, and a meeting of all the parents biyearly or quarterly. The parents should speak about their problems and realizations about their children in Krsna consciousness and also they may be served a nice prasadam feast. They can also make strategies to overcome the obstacles placed by envious elements who always try to find fault in the Krsna consciousness movement. Even if at present there are no parents who are unfavorable and trying to stop the movement, one can be sure that they will appear in due course of time. Therefore if this parents organization is made now, it will be very strong when an attack comes and they will be able to prevail.

Another good work for the PR department is seeing the local politicians. If the devotees go and meet all the politicians of their local government, and some also meet the politicians of the central government, this can have a very good effect on the politician's mood about Krsna consciousness. If they become favorable to ISKCON, then there are so many things that they can do to assist our preaching. At least they can avoid making laws which will restrict our preaching. When we need certain permissions to do things or a paper of certification for something, if we

have cultivated the politicians and ministers in advance, then it will be easy to get what we need. But one should cultivate them not just to get things from them, but should cultivate them because they are spirit souls who are lost in the material world and who need the mercy of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. If we preach to them in this mood then there is a greater chance that we will find some to be actually friendly and sympathetic to our cause.

Similarly, we should cultivate the media, specifically the newspapers, radio, and TV. We should go out to meet them in their places of work and explain to them about the important work that ISKCON is doing all over the world. It helps to also bring them some prasadam. Prasadam is an important ingredient in all our preaching efforts. Whether we are seeing a politician, a newspaper editor, reporter, or whoever, we should always bring them some nicely prepared prasadam, for this will remove all tensions they may feel towards devotees and make them favorable. Everyone likes something nice to eat.

A preaching folder should be developed which includes photos of all the activities of ISKCON throughout the world. While speaking to these people, one can leaf through the folder and show them exactly what we are doing.

If there are some urgent problems to be addressed in the media, then it is often good to make a press release from ISKCON. It should be no longer than two pages, double spaced, and it should explain our position on the particular issue in a clear and concise manner which is easily understandable to a teenager. When reporters read a press release, they read it quickly for they have little time. Therefore it should be written simply, as if one were addressing a 14 year old. It should contain some catch words and phrases which will look good in print when quoted by the newspaper people.

The ISKCON Office of Communications, led by HH Mukunda Goswami, is an ISKCON organization dedicated to teaching the devotees how to deal with all types of media problems and how to present our movement in a favorable manner to the public. They are presenting information that is very helpful to the temples. This information can help the temples far more than the brief information that is given in this chapter.

The PR office has an important function to educate the public, through the media, about what is ISKCON and what is not ISKCON. People tend to identify anyone who is looking like a devotee, or who says he is a devotee, with ISKCON, but there are many groups, some of them downright deviant, who may try to be identified as ISKCON yet are doing things which are either illegal or not at all favorable in the public's eye. It then becomes most essential to inform the media and the public that there is a difference between these deviants and ISKCON. When this is done then the bad effects of their actions will not stain the reputation of the ISKCON movement. This is one of the most important functions of a PR office.

Sometimes unfavorable people try to make our movement look bad by saying that we do nothing for the society as a whole and we are just parasites in the society who take its youth and make them crazy through the chanting of mantras and so on. This kind of propaganda is easily counteracted when we have a functioning 'Food for Life' program whereby we are giving out prasadam to needy people or victims of earthquakes, floods, droughts, famines and other natural or political catastrophes. Then people can see that we are really doing something worthwhile and

that we are not parasites on the public. So the PR department has much work to do in order to help people understand the importance of the Krsna consciousness movement.

Of course, there is no better way to change people's opinions than through the proper distribution of Srila Prabhupada's books. If we sell Prabhupada's books in a nice way, and people remember the person that sold them the book to be a sincere, warm and knowledgeable person, then they will automatically have a nice opinion of ISKCON.

Chapter Twenty

Ashram Life

Celibate Life

Life in the asrama can be at once wonderful and frustrating, depending on the particular situations. Sometimes the association and freedom from material possessiveness can uplift one to the higher levels of Krsna consciousness, and at other times the same association and lack of personal facilities can cause a momentary fall into the lower modes of material nature. One has to learn how to see the good side of asrama life and avoid falling into attachment to material things.

In order to do this, there are a few simple rules that, if followed, will help all members of the asrama live in peace and tranquility.

Do not slam the doors of the asrama, either in the day and especially at night. The asrama should be a proper place to rest, and one should respect the other devotees right to sleep. Sometimes during the day, the pujaris or other devotees whose services run into the night or early morning, require to take rest in the asrama. So do not slam the doors or speak loudly in the asrama. Maintain a peaceful mood in the asrama. It might be best to reserve a separate room for the pujaris to avoid this problem.

Don't step on sleeping devotees and do not step over them. Just as we do not step over a devotee in the temple room when he is paying obeisances, so similarly we do not step over a devotee sleeping in the asrama. And certainly we do not step on devotees at any time for it is a great offence to touch some devotee with one's feet. If one accidentally does so, immediately offer obeisances to that devotee and beg his forgiveness. Similarly be sure to not step on any devotee's glasses that may be placed next to their heads. This is a typical way in which glasses are broken in the asrama.

Do not steal from devotees. This is a great offence. If there is stealing in the asrama, then the thief should be identified and removed from the asrama. We are all serving Krsna and we are using all material things in His service. If we require something it will be supplied by the temple authorities; there is no need to steal.

Keep the asrama clean. Do not throw clothes here and there on the floor, and always make sure that the sleeping areas are cleaned immediately after getting up in the morning or after taking a nap during the day. Keep clothes and things neatly packed away in a locker or closet. One technique that temple commanders used to use to keep the asrama clean was to confiscate whatever things were left lying on the floor. After a while devotees understand not to leave their things lying around.

Don't use the asrama as a place of politics and fighting. If one doesn't have something nice to say about someone, then don't say it at all. Do not commit vaisnava aparadhas in the asrama or anywhere in the temple for this pollutes the temple atmosphere. Of course, one should avoid

offending devotees at all times since this is the first offense against the holy name of the Lord. If someone is not liked then it is better to avoid that person or tolerate him. If someone is doing something that is not proper, then bring it up to that person directly without making 'politics' against him with others. If he still does not want to change, then bring it up to the higher temple authorities and request them to do something about the situation. Ultimately depend on Krsna, for He usually rectifies all situations in due course of time.

Do help others when they require it. You would want someone to help you when you have trouble, so give your help to others when they need it. If a devotee sees a prabhu who is sick, he should serve him as much as he can. Give him proper prasadam and help him get medicine if needed. One who loves the devotees will gain the favor of Krsna.

Avoid associating with the opposite sex. The men and the women must remain strictly separated in the temple. The celibate students, both men and women, must be strictly apart in their living facilities.

Brahmacaries should generally not speak to women. If they have to speak to them for devotional service then that should be only for the bare minimum of time required to understand what is to be done and then the communication should be finished. Speaking with women quickly makes one a candidate for the grhastha asrama and the entanglements of family life.

Grhastha Life

Grhastha life is also an asrama, or a stage of spiritual development. Grhasthas may live in the temple or out of the temple according to their temperament and the circumstances. Sometimes there is no place in the temple and one must live outside. Sometimes a grhastha wants to maintain his family life in a more private manner. Every grhastha has to decide which living condition is best for his spiritual life. He may make that decision together with the temple president or local GBC. Grhasthas who live in the temple, excepting the case mentioned below, must live separately in the men's and women's asramas and they are known as Grhastha brahmacaries for they are living in the temple as celibates, although they are married. Such grhasthas do not have any children and they are fully dedicated to devotional service of the Lord. They are maintained by the temple just like all the other devotees.

Grhasthas may also live together within the temple facility if they are staying outside of the temple building. No men and women should live together in the same building as the temple. The only exception is when the temple is on one floor of a multi storied building $\frac{3}{4}$ then grhasthas might be facilitated on another floor of the complex. This was formerly determined by Srila Prabhupada in the New York temple on 55th street in Manhattan. This building was more than 10 stories high so he allowed grhasthas to live on one of the floors above the temple room. Usually though, they reside in other buildings than the temple building. The temple president will see whether the householders are performing service valuable enough to warrant the temple paying for them to live outside. It depends on whether they are performing valuable service for the temple. Most householders will want to live outside of the temple for that is more their mood. Those with children will want to live outside to have their own independent facilities. It is not proper to grow one's family at the expense of the temple. By the way, Srila Prabhupada once told me, 'Tell them all, no more than two children!' He did not want his householders burdened by the many demands that raising children bring. He made this statement after seeing one of his disciples who was surrounded

by his wife and children and looking completely dejected. He felt compassion for him and wanted that others avoid the same entanglement. It is not the business of the brahmacaries and brahmacarinis to support the householder's family life. It is the responsibility of the householders to maintain their own family economy and therefore they should perform some work and receive some income. If they are valuable members of the temple, then they may be supported by the temple. Although the temple president will support householders doing valuable service, he might also be on the alert to see if a more renounced member of the asrama might not also fulfil the duties of the householder without being expensive to maintain. Usually he will think like this if there are economic problems in the temple, for it is also his responsibility to engage the householders in devotional service, if he can. Otherwise, if they are not maintained by the temple, the householders can support themselves by starting a temple business, for instance by making a restaurant, which was recommended by Srila Prabhupada. But the best way for householders to support themselves is through the distribution of Srila Prabhupada's books. Srila Prabhupada himself has said that such a means of supporting one's family is first class. One may distribute books and get a percentage of that for one's own usage and this will be a first class means of preaching and maintaining one's family simultaneously. Householders who live outside the temple should give a certain percentage of their income to the temple, ideally 50%. This is the principle stated by Srila Prabhupada in various letters. This may be very difficult to do and therefore one might have to make some adjustment on the percentage if he is not making very much income. If one is selling books to support himself, he will usually have some arrangement with the temple where a certain percentage is taken out from his collection. But if one is doing something else, then he should understand that it is his responsibility to support the preaching mission. So he should be prepared to give some of his income to support the preaching mission. Householders living outside the temple should also engage in preaching but never separately from ISKCON. They should always remain under the spiritual authority of the temple president and the GBC and they should preach in accordance with the principles of ISKCON and ISKCON's aims and objectives. Separate preaching is only allowed when the householder will go to another city and open a preaching center where formerly there was none. Then they become a center in their own right. But besides this, all householders should work under the direction of the local temple president.

If householders, or anyone else, live in a place where there is no temple, they should make their own house into a temple. They should make an altar in their home and have a morning program with as many of the local people as want to attend. They should also offer all their food. In other words, their home should function as a temple as fully as it can. Gradually they should expand their preaching and bring more and more people into the Krsna consciousness circle of influence. Later on, their temple may grow in size and become a normal recognized part of ISKCON.

Chapter Twenty-one

Chapter Twenty-one

Problem Solving

There are many problems that every temple president will meet at one point in his tenure. We can discuss some of these problems here, although

it is impossible to completely list all the problems that will be faced at one point in the existence of a temple.

The first, and by far most commonly met problem is when the husband or wife is opposed to the spouse's involvement in ISKCON. I get dozens of letters each year from the Eastern countries asking me for advice on what to do in this case. The situation is always the same. The husband wants to be a vegetarian and eat offered prasadam, but the wife wants to eat meat and forces the children eat meat as well. Or alternatively, the wife wants to follow the regulative principles, but the husband beats her to have sex. The list is endless. One can simply state, one partner wants Krsna and the other doesn't want to give up sense gratification.

And the answer to this problem is not easy. In fact, there is no answer. The Krsna conscious devotee should simply try to gently present our philosophy to the opposing partner. They should present prasadam and kirtan as softly as possible. They should bring the partner to the temple. Above all they should pray to Krsna to somehow correct this situation. I always recommend that they take some time to make their other family members Krsna conscious. Even if it takes a few years, it is well worth it. However, sometimes this does not work, and separation is inevitable. What can be done?

Another equally common problem is when a child wants to become Krsna conscious but the parents are opposed to the movement. Often the parents rip up or throw away the child's books about Krsna consciousness, force him to eat meat, forbid him from going to the temple, or in rare cases, when the parents are really opposed, threaten to put him in a mental hospital. Here again, there is little that we can do but to encourage the child but tell him that he cannot come to the temple without parental consent until he is legally of age. When he is legally able to act on his own, then the temple can support his right to come and live with the devotees, but so long as the child is still a minor, the temple cannot shelter him.

The temple preachers should try and meet the parents and convince them that we are good people and bring them some nice prasadam. Sometimes that works as the parents usually only know the child's representation of Krsna consciousness, which is often fanatical and without maturity. Therefore the preachers should first try to convince the parents that we are there to help them in this crisis and that we are good people. Also we should explain to the minor that he should not be so fanatical around his parents for they will simply become more strict and hard with him. We should give him the example of Raghunath das Goswami, who for years had to live as a perfect businessman although he was totally attached to Lord Caitanya. When he found the opportunity, then he left home. When the minor becomes legally of age, then he can join the temple.

Sometimes there is opposition from government authorities and the police. It has to be ascertained exactly why they are giving trouble. There are different reasons for their actions and one must respond according to each of these reasons in different ways.

If there is one envious person on top of the department or within the department that is causing the trouble, then one has to isolate him from his colleagues. The preachers have to go to that department and meet the others who are not envious and convince them that we are good people and we do not deserve to be treated badly by the government. Always bring nice prasadam. Usually when the envious person is isolated, the other department members will pacify him to some degree and the problem will be

solved. If there are many opposing elements in the department, then isolating them is almost impossible. Then one has to go to higher authorities and convince them that we are alright and that these lower government servants are improperly causing trouble. But if there are envious persons there as well, then one must simply tolerate the disturbances and pray to Krsna and Lord Nrsinghadeva.

If the government people are causing us trouble simply out of ignorance, then meeting them will often solve the problem. Sometimes it is good to use already existing contacts, such as professors or other government officials, to meet these offensive government representatives to use their influence to stop the disturbances. This will often work favorably as they know better than we the art of pacifying others.

Sometimes mentally unstable people want to join the temple. Prabhupada did not want our temples filled with crazy men for this would drive away the nice people. Therefore such persons should be told to chant Hare Krsna at home, follow the principles, offer their food, and read the books. If they become more sane by this process, then they might be accepted into the temple later on. No crazy persons should be allowed to live in the temple. If they have already joined the temple, and then it is discovered that they are not completely sane, then they can be asked to move outside and support themselves with some work and prosecute Krsna consciousness on their own.

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Anyone may write a book about Krsna consciousness. Of course, for that book to actually affect the hearts of the readers, it must be authorized by the spiritual master and Krsna. But besides the spiritual requirements of purity to write something about Krsna, one must follow some basic principles. The book should not use BBT materials without permission, and if it is a magazine, it should not resemble Back To Godhead. Magazines that resemble the BTG are only allowed to be printed by the BBT. But so long as the material, be it a book, pamphlet, or magazine, is not using BBT materials, and does not resemble BTG it may be printed by some agency or individual outside of the BBT. However, it is the policy of the BBT and ISKCON that books sold on sankirtan should be purchased through the BBT. Prabhupada did not want any books sold on the street that were published locally by some temple or person. Other books have to be sold through temple book shops or mail order. Alternatively, they can be placed in bookstores. Any book written by a devotee in ISKCON that wishes to be sold in the temples or read by devotees has to be approved by the GBC review board. This means that one GBC member, or sannyasi, should favorably review the book and two others not object to it, and then it is accepted as an ISKCON publication.

If there are illicit sex scandals in the temple, or any breakage of the regulative principles, the temple president should take strong action. He should preach very strongly to the wrongdoers that they are slapping their spiritual master in the face and that they are rascals number one. He should restrict their activities so that they cannot break the principles again, or in some cases he may recommend that the parties involved in illicit sex scandals get married immediately if they are not already married to each other or someone else. He will have to see what

is the best course of action at the time. Generally we should handle such breakage of the principles as a very serious offense and we should preach very strongly to the parties concerned so that they realize the seriousness of their offense and never want to do it again. The regulative principles are simply the platform of human life and breakage of the principles means animal life. Everyone should be taught to follow the regulative principles by all means.

If devotees are engaged in illegal activities, then the temple president should preach to them to give up these illegal activities immediately! Of course, we used to print books underground when this was illegal, but this is not the kind of illegal activity we are speaking about. What is meant here is criminal activities that are not for the furthering of the preaching mission. ISKCON does not condone criminal activities and they must be avoided by all the temple members. If someone is insisting on performing such activities, then, after he is removed from the temple, it is possible that the local GBC members may recommend that he be excluded from the society. We have cases like this in ISKCON and the GBC body has voted to exclude them from the society of devotees. We should be very careful to distance ourselves from those who perform illegal activities before they cause ISKCON's good name to be ruined.

Sometimes devotees, although externally seemingly good devotees, have irreconcilable differences of opinion with the local management. If this difference of opinion becomes intolerable, and it cannot be worked out by the normal means of discussion, even with the higher authorities like the GBC, then the non-management devotees affected should leave that temple and move to another temple and start again. But even though such devotees move to another temple, sometimes they are so bitter that they cannot relate to any ISKCON managers again and they may be envious and criticize the management as a whole.

Such devotees are often guilty of Vaisnava aparadha, or unnecessary criticism of the devotees, and this often causes their spiritual life to suffer greatly. If they fall victim to such offenses, they usually move away from the temple and remain outside the association of devotees. This is an unfortunate situation, because ultimately management disputes are material. It is a spiritual principle that one should follow the authority of the temple because that is the system that was set up by Srila Prabhupada. A humble devotee, although he may have a difference of opinion with an authority, will simply tolerate that difference for the sake of following the higher principle which is to cooperate with the temple authorities. But if one is not humble, and is caught in a cycle of fault finding, then he should live outside the temple for a while and learn to deal with the material world as a materialist would. Later, after having tasted the material world for a while, he may become humbled enough to realize that he should accept the temple authorities since they represent the management authority of ISKCON. In the meantime, while such devotees are unable to accept the authority of ISKCON, they should be avoided by all devotees in good standing otherwise one could become infected by their fault finding attitude and lose spiritual strength. Fault finders and criticizers who are following the devotional principles should be mentally honored as devotees, but they should be avoided as their association is unwanted by serious devotees. We must also be careful that it was not our own narrow-mindedness or fanaticism that was the source of the conflict with these other devotees. If this was the case, then some kind of reconciliation should be attempted.

Sometimes we are placed in the situation where we have to deal with other religious or nationalistic organizations. In general we should be polite with them and not antagonize them more for they are usually already agitated. But we should not commit devotees to having to deal with them on an intimate level for they are usually materialistic and fruitive. Our movement is meant to develop love of Godhead and not to become entangled in material activities. Sometimes a nationalistic group will want to engage us in fighting for their cause, but we shall not fight for such material causes.

Occasionally devotees will leave the Krsna consciousness movement, lured away by the tricks of maya who promises them a life full of material pleasures. Although such persons are classified as fallen devotees, still it is our duty to bring them back to the Krsna consciousness movement if it is at all possible. Therefore the preachers of the society, or former friends of the devotees who have left, should visit them in their homes, bring them a lot of nice prasadam, and associate with them in a nice way so that they will remember the nice taste of associating with devotees and working for Krsna together with other devotees. They should visit them regularly, as long as they are welcome, and try to bring them back to Krsna consciousness. If it seems hopeless, or they are no longer welcomed by the fallen devotee, then they may stop trying to bring him back.

It is inevitable that as ISKCON grows, so shall other organizations which are derivatives of ISKCON. There will be people claiming to have the same aims as ISKCON, but with a 'freer' understanding, or only three regulative principles, or who demand less rounds, or who allow beards or let their hair grow, or any one of a vast number of deviations to the strict standards of spiritual life. All of these groups are to be avoided and the loyal followers of ISKCON, from the congregational members to the strict devotees, educated as to what is the strict standard of the parampara and the desires of Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupada has given us the highest practical standards of spiritual life and we should follow those standards by all means. Many others will proclaim that they are actually following Srila Prabhupada, although they do not follow his instruction to work cooperatively under the banner of the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON. Most, if not all, of these groups are useless and will wither away in due course of time as they are disconnected from the main tree of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy. One is living in illusion if he thinks that he can become Krsna conscious outside of ISKCON.

Chapter Twenty-two

Chapter Twenty-two

ISKCON Farm Communities

Part of the stated mission of Srila Prabhupada was to create many ISKCON farm communities throughout the world. Actually a whole book could be written on the creation and management of a farm community for these communities are to be run on the basis of varnasrama dharma. Here we will present only the most salient points for this is a book on temple management and not a treatise on varnasrama dharma and agrarian based civilization.

A farm is somewhat different from a temple. A farm will have a temple on it, and it will follow all of the regulative principles and temple schedule that a normal temple will follow, but its mode of life and its means of support will be basically different from a city center. A city center will preach and expand Krsna consciousness by directly approaching

people and convincing them of the philosophy. A farm community will preach through its demonstration of peaceful village life depending on the land and the cows. It will preach through its demonstration of the perfect social system, varnasrama dharma.

If the farm also has dedicated men and women who want to go out and distribute books, then it can make its own sankirtan parties who will also go out and preach. This is also good. But the main work on the farm is to make the farming a success and support the project through the labor of its devotees on the fields. A farm should be self supporting and above all it should supply the devotees with all the food they need. A farm should have opulent and fresh foods available for offering to the Deities and the devotees. There should be grains and ghee available to sustain life in all circumstances. If there are grains and ghee, then the devotees can live through any form of social chaos or disturbance in the world, for eating is the primary function of life.

On the farm the functions of eating and sleeping are easily taken care of. There should be reasonably good facilities for the devotees to live in, and the householders can build small houses here and there throughout the farm area. Contracts can be worked out between ISKCON, the holder of the land, and the householders, so that the householders can build a house on ISKCON land, and that they are allowed to use that house for their lifetime and their children may use it as well, so long as they agree to follow the four regulative principles. Of course we want them to chant their rounds and come to the temple program as well, but we minimally demand the four regulative principles. The exact nature of these contracts may change from place to place and the details should be worked out with the local GBC and the appropriate legal experts. Samples of such contracts under Indian law may be gotten from the Mayapur project where such housing projects are being pioneered.

The main work on the farm should be farming $\frac{3}{4}$ farming and all the other industries that are subsidiary to food processing. Also the devotees may collect wool from sheep and knit it into warm clothing for the winter. If cotton or flax can be grown then other clothes can be made as well. If there is good clay, then bricks can be made for building houses. There are nice techniques available for making houses from compressed earth as well.

All in all the farm is meant to provide living facilities and eating facilities as well as worshiping facilities to all the devotees who live there. And if they live in the proper way, taking care of the brahmanas and the cows, then their lives will be so attractive that people from all over will want to come there and live. This will become especially prominent and important when there are disturbances in the lives of people in the modern cities. The cities are made of passion whereas the farms are in the mode of goodness. The air and the water is clean, and the life is free from the anxieties of the hustle and bustle of city life.

Managing a farm means to manage the temple in much the same way as outlined in this book, but to also manage the land and the cows. This must be done by those who have some idea of these things from their life prior to joining ISKCON, such as one who was a farmer, or having learned it from others who know through either books or personal instructions. It is a great challenge to change one's life from the city to the country, but if it can be done it will be very satisfying for all concerned.

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