

Śaranagati

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RISK FOLLOWING YOUR ENTHUSIASM

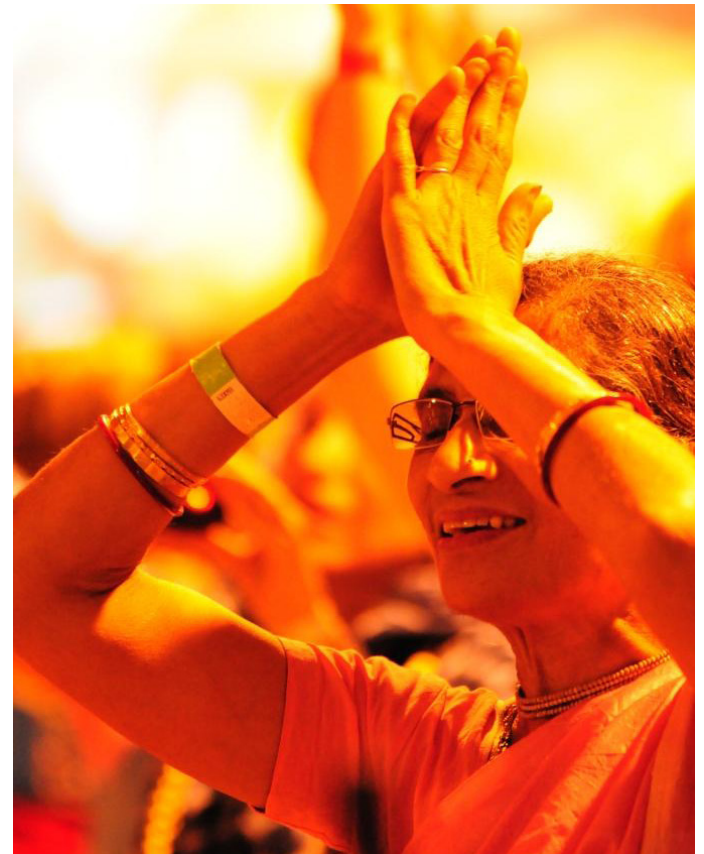
In all of us, in some secret corner of our heart, there is something which we are enthusiastic for. The word “enthusiasm” comes from the Greek word *entheos* which means “fulfilled by God”. So, being enthusiastic for something means that the spirit is coming from inside. One is filled with divine hopes, and thinking about it makes one smile. One feels, “If I do this, I will be closer to Kṛṣṇa.”

Following this inspiration means changing our life and that is often a little risky. It means leaving the known behind and entering the unknown. Most of us don't dare following our enthusiasm. This is because of something that the Sufi tradition calls the “sacred wound.” At one point we did something wrong and this left a deep impression on us – the sacred wound. In our tradition the sacred wound corresponds to the fact that we have left Kṛṣṇa, we have left a loving relationship. Since that time we have an open wound which can only heal if we revive this relationship. Since we have left this relationship, we have been trying to get rid of our discomfort. Some of us try to accomplish this through a mundane relationship, some with sport or a different hobby, some people flee into sex, etc. But these are only diversions from the original problem. Healing the “sacred wound” would mean leaving our compromised life and doing something which is beyond our comfort zone.

Whatever we do, there will be obstacles. However, if we are enthusiastic to do something for Kṛṣṇa, he gives us the strength to overcome those obstacles. Kṛṣṇa is known as *bhāva-grāhī janārdana*, which means that he accepts our attitude. If a mother brings up children and gives them as much Kṛṣṇa consciousness as possible, Kṛṣṇa accepts that. If another person feels “No, I wish to be renounced”, Kṛṣṇa accepts that. If someone wants to start a university for Kṛṣṇa, then

this is what Kṛṣṇa accepts. If one travels around the world to inspire *kīrtana* crews everywhere and to provide spiritual education, Kṛṣṇa accepts that. It is not the activity itself; it is the loving mood in which we dedicate the activity to him.

from a lecture by Śacīnandana Swami at the Fruska Gouranga Camp, Serbia, July 8, 2010



WAKING UP FROM THE DREAM

When the soul slowly awakens from the dream of material life, it can understand that it has long served ungrateful masters—the mind and body. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes, “At that time the awakened soul says in effect to the mind and body: *I am not identical with you. I do not want what you require. I have long believed that I was identical with both of you and that we shared the same interests. But now I find that I am categorically different from you. I am made wholly*

from the principle of self-consciousness, while both of you are made of dead matter. I refuse to be a slave anymore.”

(“Vaiṣṇavism: Real and Apparent”)

Oh, how much courage and support the soul requires at its moment of awakening. As a person who has just begun to regain consciousness after a deep sleep is still drowsy and in danger of again being overwhelmed by bad dreams, so the

awakening soul is in danger of again closing its eyes and lapsing back into unconsciousness. Beginners are often “divided souls” with tendencies toward both material and spiritual life. We often suffer from a divided mind, torn between the good things we now truly want (or at least know we should want) and the things we actually do.

The new will, which we begin to develop, is not yet strong enough to overcome that other will, strengthened as it is by long indulgence. Those old habits have grown into fierce masters that seem to come alive with all their brutal force once we wish to escape their unrelenting rule. When a devotee feels intense remorse because of this situation he or she can enter the spirit of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s fifth prayer,

“O son of Nanda, Kṛṣṇa, king of the country of love, I appeal for your affection. I am your servant. I feel deep within myself that I have some connection to You. I am subordinate to You, but somehow I am now in adverse circumstances. There are so many enemies within me trying to take me away from You. Therefore I cannot give my full attention to You and Your name.

At the same time I feel, from the deepest place in my heart, that You are my master. You are all and everything to me. My heart will never be satisfied without Your companionship, so I appeal to You. I am under unfavorable circumstances. I am suffering. And without Your grace I do not find any relief from my present imprisoned condition.”

(as quoted in a lecture by His Holiness Mahānidhi Swami)

The sincere crying of such an honest person quickly reaches the Lord’s ears. To the ears of a worldly man this crying may sound like a shameful admission of one’s complete failure as a human being, but to the Lord’s ears such crying is a sublime vibration, a sound that He has been anxiously awaiting for a long time. This sound pierces the strong prison walls of the material universe and moves the Lord’s heart. He then begins to make concrete plans about how to assist the awakening devotee.

☞ excerpt from Śācinandana Swami (2008). *Nāma Rahasya*, p.13, Śaraṇāgati Publishing.

—❁❁❁ DROPS OF ❁❁❁ INSPIRATION

“That is what we have to work on: this sincere acceptance of Kṛṣṇa in our heart. That is the solution for everything.”

“This question ‘Who am I?’ should not be put to rest at any stage of our spiritual life.”

“Seek out proper association. Reveal your mind in confidence and accept advice. Develop loving relationships that are based on the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa. In this way you will become more spiritually potent.”

“Spiritual life is a path of personal discovery.”

“It is said that obstacles appear only when we lose our goal out of sight!”

“If you desire a deep transformation in your heart you must include God. Without God’s help it is not possible.”

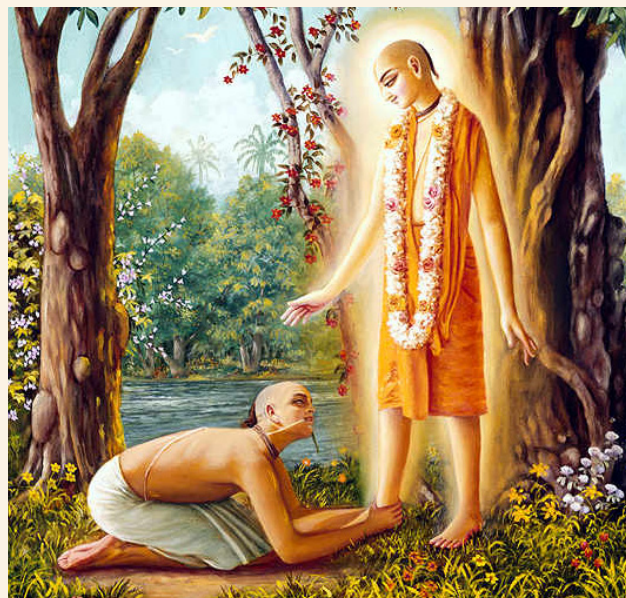


Photo by Mickey Shah

❁ MEET ŚĀCĪNANDANA SWAMI

upcoming seminars & events:

Oct. 29- Nov. 28	Kartik Vrata, Vṛndāvana, India
Dec. 1- 6	Japa Retreat, Varṣāṇā, India
Dec. 9- 15	Govardhana Retreat, Govardhana, India
Dec. 28- Jan. 1	Saṅga Mela 2012, Goloka-dhāma, Germany
Feb. 21- 25	Vyāsa-pūjā, Zagreb, Croatia

You can find a more detailed schedule at www.sacinandanaswami.com