

Nourish your will power



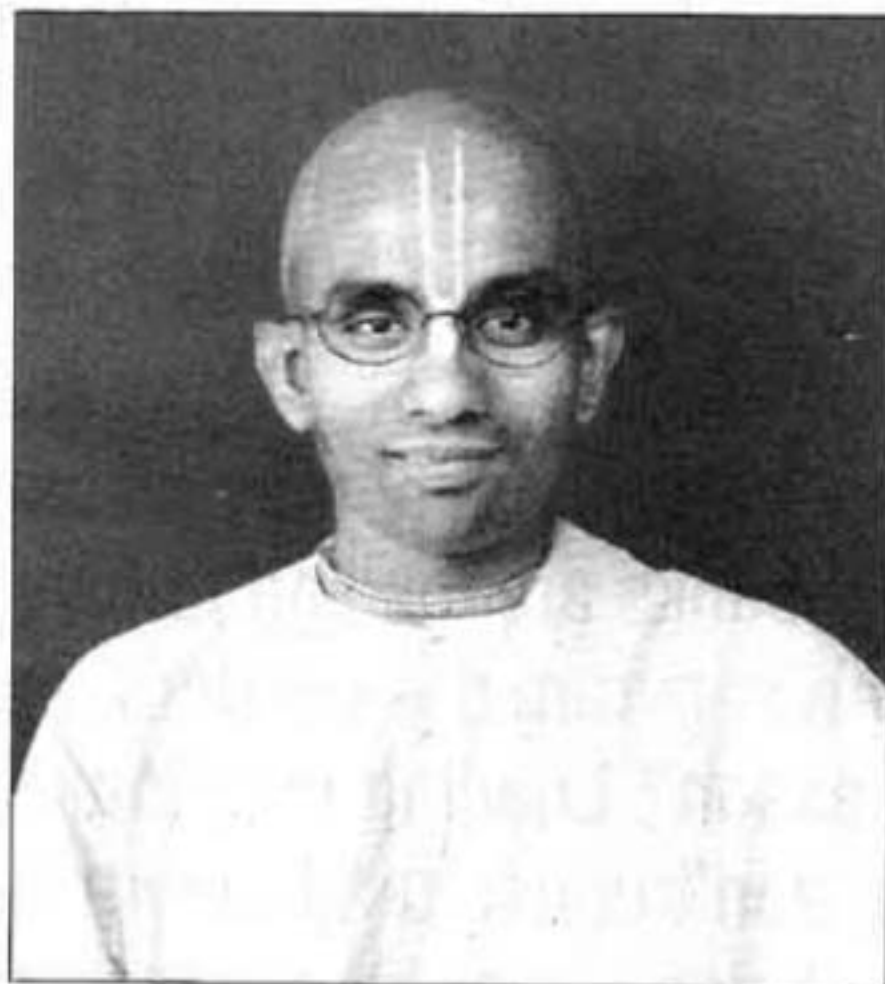
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The Upanishads offer a thought-provoking chariot-body analogy: the body is compared to a chariot, the five knowledge-acquiring senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin) to the horses, the mind to the reins, the intelligence to the charioteer and the self to the passenger. The passenger can reach his desired destination in the chariot only when the charioteer is strong enough to direct the horses. Similarly we can exercise our will power and achieve success only when our intelligence is strong enough to direct our senses.

Strong intelligence has two essential components - discrimination and determination. Discrimination is the capacity to differentiate between the harmful and the beneficial, the short-term and the long-term, the temporary and the eternal, the material and the spiritual. Determination is the strength to act as per our discrimination; to accept the beneficial, even if it is temporarily painful and to eschew the harmful, even if it is temporarily pleasurable. Discrimination refers to the fixity of vision of the charioteer and determination refers to his physical strength in manoeuvring the horses.

Just as the horses may be distracted from the path by fruit-bearing trees, our senses may get distracted by the allurements for instant gratification.

This in turn weakens our discriminatory power. Therefore we need to study spiritual literature (*Svadyaya*) and associate with mature spiritualists (*Satsang*) to sharpen our



discrimination. Just as Arjuna accepted Krishna as His charioteer and emerged victorious in the battle of Kurukshetra, we can also invoke the supreme powerful to empower our intelligence and thus emerge victorious in the battle of life. We can access divine power by *Sadhana*, regular spiritual disciplinary practices - especially chanting of holy names like the Hare Krishna *maha mantra*. Just as body building can strengthen the charioteer, our daily *sadhana* is like a spiritual body building program to strengthen our determination.

(The author is spiritual teacher at ISKCON, Pune)