

WHY UNDERUTILIZE YOUR POTENTIAL?

Imagine a student who gains entrance into IIT. But instead of studying he wastes all his time in searching for good food to eat. He eventually fails in his exams and is ultimately expelled from IIT. A colossal underutilization of potential, isn't it? After all, the pleasure that good food can offer is insignificant as compared to what an IIT degree can offer.

The Vedic scriptures declare that most modern humans are not much different from this IIT student. We are all eternal spiritual souls traveling through various species of life undergoing education in material existence. When we are awarded human bodies, we have gained admission into spiritual IITs, so to speak; a bright spiritual career – eternal life and love – is just a stone's throw away. Death is like our final exam and life our preparation time. We have to prepare our intelligence and heart to make it fully and purely devoted to God. If by the time of death our love for God has become greater than our love for anything else in this world, then we graduate successfully to return back to His eternal abode to rejoice in divine love forever. We can awaken our dormant love for God most easily and expeditiously by chanting His Holy Names, especially the Hare Krishna maha mantra. But instead if we let ourselves become preoccupied with attaining better facilities for bodily enjoyment and

neglect our spiritual growth, we become like the IIT student who struggles to get better food to eat and neglects his studies. Food is available to anyone and everyone; IIT education to only a select few. Similarly bodily pleasures – food, sleep, sex and show of strength – are available to all species of life; divine joys to humans alone.

Just as the non-performing IIT student is expelled and loses the chance for a bright career, spiritually lackadaisical souls are expelled from human bodies back to animal bodies, where they have no access to spiritual bliss. And just as an irresponsible IIT student will never feel satisfied and always feel guilty, similarly spiritually irresponsible humans never feel fulfilled and always feel a vacuum in their hearts. The Bhagavad-gita (16.23) therefore declares that a godless materialist finds happiness neither in the next life, nor in this. On the other hand, just as the IIT student who applies himself to studies soon experiences the refined pleasure of learning, those humans who apply themselves to chanting the names of God soon relish the sublime pleasure of devotion. Let us therefore wisely reject the lure of self-deluding enjoyment and fully utilize our human potential to attain sublime happiness in this life and the next.