

## The Original Aids

AIDS, the disease for which there is no real aid, is the epidemic that is the worst nightmare of the sensual enjoyer.



AIDS is not caused by HIV, as most people think. The physical disease AIDS – acquired immune deficiency syndrome – originates from a subtler malaise AIDS – Acquired Intelligence Deficiency Syndrome. Let's see how.

The Bhagavad-gita explains that we are not our physical bodies; we are spiritual beings, integral parts of the Supreme Pleasure Principle, Krishna, who is the only enjoyer and the only source of enjoyment. Our innate longing for everlasting happiness is eternally and completely fulfilled by harmonizing with Krishna through divine love. Our present material existence is a diseased state, wherein our love for Krishna is transmogrified into lust.

Due to lack of spiritual education, most people today assume that enjoyment means bodily enjoyment. But the maximum pleasure that the body can offer is limited to a few fleeting moments - even for those who are in the prime of youth and the best of health and even for those who have the most attractive partners. Unfortunately, due to the unrelenting sensual propaganda bombarding them, they fail to recognize the obvious and inescapable limitation of carnal pleasure. Goaded on by erotic hype, they cast away all ethical, social and religious regulations.

This acquired intelligence deficiency – the inability to understand that the pursuit of sensual pleasures is permanently frustrated – makes them helpless victims of AIDS.

The intelligence deficiency that has led to AIDS is also evident from the deep-rooted misunderstanding about the purpose of sex. Most people indulge in sex for enjoyment and they assume that's what it is meant for. But the natural purpose of sex is procreation, not recreation. The natural result of

sexual union in every species of life is pregnancy. Thus, nature balances the enjoyment of sex with the responsibility of looking after offspring. But people today are bent on defying nature's arrangement and extracting pleasure while escaping the responsibility. So they use contraceptives and have abortions. But the natural consequence of their abuse comes back to them in the form of deadly sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis, gonorrhea, genital herpes, chancroid – and AIDS. These diseases are just the natural consequence of our unnatural lifestyle.

Till now, HIV has baffled researchers in their attempts to deal with it. Even if medical researchers find some way to remove this immune deficiency, nature will come up with some other disease to punish us for abusing sex. As long as we abuse sex, we will be abused by sex in return.

What we need to remove is this intelligence deficiency: the mis-education that makes people abuse sex for unrestricted, irresponsible pleasure. But few people have the guts to speak the truth. Nonetheless, there is no other way for humanity to save itself from the consequences of its abuse of sex. That's why Plato observed, "There appears to be a need for some bold men who will say outright what is best, oppose the mightiest lusts and follow reason only."

Our intelligence deficiency can be removed by learning from the ancient spiritual traditions. Vedic wisdom offers a systematic program of prescriptions and proscriptions to transmute lust back into love. The most important prescription is chanting the names of God like the Hare Krishna maha mantra, which unlocks the treasure of peace and bliss hidden within. And the most important proscription is restraint in sensual indulgence, which aggravates our physical misidentification and thus obscures our natural spiritual joyfulness. So, spiritual regulations are meant not to deprive us of happiness, but to provide us happiness by facilitating the recovery of our spiritual health.

Hence, to deal with AIDS, we need spiritual education much more than sex education. Only when we empower people with spiritual education will they become free from the intelligence deficiency that makes them mistake disease for



pleasure. Real freedom will come, not by becoming free *for* sex, but by becoming free *from* sex. 🌐

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