

PERSONALITY CHANGES AND UPHEAVALS ARISING OUT OF THE SENSE OF PERSONAL FAILURE

[illegible]

For the Guidance of the Reader

(Foreword to First Edition)

THE DISTINCTIVE feature of this book lies in its attempt to study the experiences of inner defeat and of inner victory, the one in the light of the other. It proceeds from the hypothesis that there is an important relationship between acute mental illness of the functional type and those sudden transformations of character so prominent in the history of the Christian Church since the days of Saul of Tarsus. It undertakes to show that both may arise out of a common situation—that of inner conflict and disharmony, accompanied by a keen awareness of ultimate loyalties and unattained possibilities. Religious experience as well as mental disorder may involve severe emotional upheaval, and mental disorder as well as religious experience may represent the operation of the healing forces of nature. The conclusion follows that certain types of mental disorder and certain types of religious experience are alike attempts at reorganization. The difference lies in the outcome. Where the attempt is successful and some degree of victory is won, it is commonly recognized as religious experience. Where it is unsuccessful or indeterminate, it is commonly spoken of as “insanity.” In those constructive transformations of the personality which we recognize as religious experience, the individual is relieved of his sense of isolation and is brought into harmony with that which is supreme in his hierarchy of loyalties. He succeeds in effecting a synthesis between the crisis experience and his subsequent life which enables him to grow in the direction of inner unification and social adaptation on a basis conceived as univer

sal. In most of those cases which we speak of as “mental illness,” no such synthesis is achieved. The patient may get well but he may not solve his problem. Frequently he becomes stabilized on an unsatisfactory basis, or else he becomes increasingly discouraged and disorganized.

A further feature of this book lies in the fact that I approach the problem not merely as a specialist in both the psychology and sociology of religion but also in psychopathology. What is more, I come to it as one who has personally explored the little-known country with which it deals.

For my thesis I think I can claim that it is independent and distinctive. Certainly I have ample reason to know that the relationship which I am pointing out between the domain of mental illness and that of religious experience has thus far been strangely ignored both by psychiatrists and by theologians. If that relationship can be established there should be far-reaching consequences.

In writing this book I have been embarrassed by the fact that the field which it covers is divided into two distinct sections, each of which is presided over by a professional group which has its own vocabulary, and neither of which knows much about the other. The nature of my problem and the purpose of my book require that I write with both these groups in mind. The difficulty is increased by the fact that as a traveler reporting on a new country, it is incumbent upon me to give an accurate account of the territory which I have explored. So far as possible I have sought to use simple and nontechnical language, but there are sections in which the reader may have to shift gears. Thus in the chapter on “The Wilderness of the Lost,” which represents ten years of research work and provides the foundation for all that follows, the requirements of accuracy and closeness of reasoning have seemed to me paramount. I can only trust that the problem dealt with will have sufficient importance for the reader to bear with a little unfamiliar phraseology, and that the book will be of interest not merely to psychiatrists and students of religion, but also to students of the psychological and social sciences and to intelligent laymen who may be grappling with the problems of which it treats. To meet the difficulty I have provided in the Appendix a list of the more important technical terms and concepts which will serve not merely as a glossary but as a review of the two major fields under consideration.

PART 4: Match each word in Column A with the most suitable phrase in Column B. Number your answer sheet from 1-14, and write the appropriate letter next to each number. Two points for each correct answer.

Column A

1. saralatā
2. jñāna
3. vijñāna
4. nāma-aparādha
5. nāma abhāsa
6. śuddha-nāma
7. dambha
8. pramāda
9. dambha-yajña
10. prude
11. punctilious
12. misanthrope
13. scapegoat
14. cynic

Column B

- A. puts undue emphasis on merely negative virtues
- B. manifest in clearing stage
- C. convinced that everyone has bad or selfish motives
- D. theoretical or book knowledge
- E. bluffing, hypocrisy
- F. hates humankind
- G. manifests in offensive stage
- H. frankness, simplicity
- I. one made to bear the blame of others
- J. distraction, inattentiveness
- K. performed to increase prestige
- L. practical or realized knowledge
- M. hypochondria
- N. Ramacandra Puri, for instance
- O. manifest in the pure stage

PART 3: For each of the numbered statements below, give the name of the particular “device of concealment or evasion” that best describes it. Number your paper 1 through 6, and put the appropriate letter next to it. (One letter will be used twice.) Four points for each correct answer.

You live in a large ISKCON community. A certain householder—a second-initiated devotee of some seniority—reveals to you that for a long time he and his wife have had fairly regular sexual relations without the intention of conceiving a child and without first chanting fifty rounds. In the course of justifying his activity and seeking your approval, he makes a number of assertions. They are:

1. “Those big, *pure* sannyasis don’t follow the standards of their own ashram either. How many of them never even *think* of sex with a woman? They’re always having problems.”
2. “I have intimate relations only with my wife. So that’s not actually illicit sex. Prabhupada preached an official higher standard, but that was so that at least we would come up to this one. Just because there’s a higher standard doesn’t mean what I’m doing is against the principles.”
3. “I’ve been serving a lot longer than you have, and I can name five ISKCON temples that wouldn’t even be exiting if it weren’t for my service. Prabhupada is pleased, and I couldn’t have done so much for him if I didn’t have Krishna’s mercy.”
4. “At least I’m not molesting children in the gurukula.”
5. “It would be easier to come up to a higher standard if there were actually some more enthusiastic, advanced devotees around. ISKCON leaders are all bureaucrats and fund-raisers, and they don’t inspire anyone. We need somebody like Prabhupada again.”
6. “All the householders do this anyway. A bunch of us men got together—it was amazing when it came out that we all doing it. We felt so much better when we talked about it. We realized that the sannyasis and gurus were making us feel bad and guilty. We get together ever so often—you know watch a little TV and eat pizza—and we’re really helping each other get over “the pure devotee complex.” We’re just a bunch of normal, regular, *good* guys who want to be devotees and who shouldn’t be made to feel like cockroaches all the time. Why don’t you come by Thursday?”

Devices of Concealment or Evasion:

A. Shifting responsibility. **B.** Fault-finding. **C.** Substituting minor for major virtues. **D.** Distorting ideals or standards. **E.** Shifting loyalties.

While I have sought to make the book as concrete and interesting as I knew how, it will be clear that my purpose has not been to produce a popular book. We have already enough of these in the field. My reason for writing it is to offer a new contribution to an important human problem. In Part I, I present a survey of the fields of mental illness and of religious experience which enables me to draw certain generalizations. Part II deals with the theoretical implications. These include the problem of religious genius as represented supremely in Jesus of Nazareth, the determinants of character, the problem of right and wrong and the laws with which theology has to do. Part III is an attempt to apply the principles thus arrived at to the work of the church and of the minister of religion. In thus limiting the application to the one professional and their constituency, I am guided by considerations of modesty. It has not seemed to me fitting that I should offer suggestions to any professional group other than the one to which I belong.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to my colleagues, Professor Arthur E. Holt, Professor Fred Eastman, and Professor A. C. McGiffert, with whom I have consulted throughout the preparation of the manuscript. Others who have read the manuscript and have offered valuable suggestions are Dr. Helen Flanders Dunbar, Dr. Charles F. Read, Reverend Donald C. Beatty, Professor George A. Coe, Dr. Macfie Campbell, Dr. R. G. Hoskins and Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown. Professor Henry J. Cadbury and Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan have helped me with certain portions of the manuscript. To the editors and publishers of the *American Journal of Psychiatry* and of the *American Journal of Sociology* I am indebted for permission to use material which appeared originally in their pages.

A. T. B.
Elgin, Illinois
August, 1936

6. Speaking of his approach to counseling, Boisen writes, “I then try to shift the basis of self-respect from the rigid or static type of morality to the _____ type. I try to get him to see that no matter how unworthy one may have been he is a good man and worthy of honor in so far as he is earnestly seeking to become better. The missing word is **a)** “dynamic,” **b)** “utilitarian,” **c)** “relativistic,” **d)** “non-judgmental.”

PART 2:. *Unscramble the table below so that you have correctly duplicated the headings under **Socialization** in Boisen’s chart. On your answer sheet, draw a small table of twelve cells, with three columns and four rows. Put the correct letter in each one of the cells. Two points for each correct answer.*

Introduction

TO BE PLUNGED as a patient into a hospital for the insane may be a tragedy or it may be an opportunity. For me it has been an opportunity. It has introduced to me a new world of absorbing interest and profound significance; it has shown me that world throughout its entire range, from the bottommost depths of the nether regions to the heights of religious experience at its best; it has made me aware of certain relationships between two important fields of human experience which thus far have been held strictly apart; and it has given me a task in which I find the meaning and purpose of my life.

Sixteen years ago such possibilities were entirely undreamed of. Thus in the year 1920 I was riding on a train in the state of North Dakota when I noticed off to the south a large group of buildings standing in sharp relief against the horizon. I inquired of my neighbor in the seat what those buildings were. He informed me that I was looking at the State Insane Asylum. I thanked him and thought no more about it. It did not occur to me that I ought to be interested in those buildings or in the problem which they represented. And yet there were certain reasons why I ought to have been interested. During my course at the Union Theological Seminary nine years before I had centered my attention upon the study of the psychology of religion with particular reference to the problem of mysticism. And at that very time I was in charge of a sociological survey of the state under the direction of the Inter-church World Movement, and as a part of my task I was

ATTITUDE	MEANS	END RESULT
A. Confidence Self-reliance	E. Reflected glory through identification with finite leader or love-object	I. Rebellion and development of cancer-like social formations (delinquent and criminal gangster)
B. Flippancy Carelessness Gregariousness	F. Finding of satisfactory self expression in social vocational and sexual life	J. Submergence (the partisan, the clinging vine)
C. Dependence Idolatry	G. Acceptance of ultimate loyalties and associated standards Confession and forgiveness Social support and reinforcement	K. Contemporary and local adjustment (the normal man)
D. Aspiration Reverence Faith	H. Making light of accepted standards Rejection of primary loyalties and seeking of social validation in antisocial groups.	L. Progressive unification on a basis conceived as enduring and universal (valid religious types)

The Cure of Souls in Vaiṣṇava Communities

Ravindra Svarūpa dāsa, Instructor

Final Examination 8 November, 1996

PART 1: Chose the missing word or phrase that correctly completes the passage from Boisen. Number your paper 1 through 6, and put the appropriate letter next to it. Four points for each correct answer.

1. Boisen writes, “The sense of _____ denotes the awareness of something within which would be condemned by those with whom the individual seeks identification and which, so long as it is not brought out into the open and dealt with correctly, will separate him from their fellowship.” The missing word is **a)** “low self-esteem,” **b)** “lust,” **c)** “sin,” **d)** “oblivion.”

2. Discussing a particular patient, Boisen writes, “In his _____ we see the symbol with which is associated the thought of those whom he counts most worthy of love and honor. The _____ thus represents to him that in his social life which he feels to be abiding and universal. It stands for him for that which is supreme in his hierarchy of loyalties. It is the composite image of those whose fellowship and approval he seeks. He therefore judges himself by the standards which are imposed upon him by his religion and associated with his _____.” The missing phrase in the passage is **a)** “parents and early guides,” **b)** “idea of God,” **c)** “idea of love”, **d)** “delusional misrepresentation”.

3. Concerning the task of the minister, Boisen writes, “Probably there is no more important lesson for the average minister than this art of _____.”

The missing word in the passage is **a)** “talking”, **b)** “praying,” **c)** “listening,” **d)** “preaching.”

4. Boisen writes, “The fact is that psychotherapy is far less dependent upon _____ than it is upon the personal relationship between physician and patient.” The missing word is **a)** “technique,” **b)** “transference,” **c)** “payment,” **d)** “faith.”

5. Concerning psychotherapy, Boisen writes, “It is now recognized that it is not the mere confession which effects the cure but the _____. The cure is only effected in so far as the sufferer tells his real difficulties to some whom he trusts, someone who stands to him as the prototype of the father and the representative of authority and who yet is able to hear the worst without condemning him.” The missing word is **a)** “acceptance,” **b)** “technique,” **c)** “listening,” **d)** “socialization.”

investigating the situation as regards church hospitals. Probably I should have remained uninterested for some time longer, if, less than a year later, I had not found myself plunged as a patient within the confines of just such an institution.

While it is not my purpose to tell how this happened, I shall give a few facts which will make clear the point of view from which this inquiry has been approached and also the biases which will influence my findings. The disturbance came on very suddenly and it was extremely severe. I had never been in better condition physically; the difficulty was rooted wholly in a severe inner struggle arising out of a precocious sexual sensitivity, dating from my fourth year. With the onset of adolescence the struggle became quite severe. It was cleared up on Easter morning in my twenty-second year through a spontaneous religious conversion experience which followed upon a period of black despair. An impulse, seemingly from without myself, bade me not to be afraid to tell. I was thus set free and given a new start in life. Two years later came a relapse into the land of bondage and then a desperate struggle to get free again. Following a decision to give up the teaching of languages, in which I was then engaged, and to enter upon the profession of forestry, there came a love affair which swept me off my feet and sent me forth on the adventure which has resulted in this book. This love affair was on my part a desperate cry for salvation. It led to my decision to enter the Christian ministry. The woman I loved was a religious worker of the finest type. On her part it was a source of great embarrassment, but she gave me a helping hand at the critical moment and stood ready to undertake what for her was a task of mercy. But I failed to make the grade. Then followed nine years of wandering. This included several years in rural survey work, five years in the rural pastorate and two with the YMCA overseas. On my return I had charge of a state survey for the Interchurch World Movement. All this time I was hoping to be reinstated with her. It was as though my life depended upon it. In 1920 such a reinstatement did occur. The disturbance followed shortly after, coming thus just at the time when the hopes of so many years seemed about to be realized.

I had had, when the Interchurch World Movement disbanded, an enticing opportunity to go on with the survey work. This I had turned down, having decided definitely to go back into the pastorate. I wanted to work out what I felt to be my religious

message. The call to a church was slow in coming and I went east. While waiting I decided to write out a statement of my religious experience, such as I had been required to do when I was a candidate for ordination. I became much absorbed in the task, so much so that I lay awake at night letting the ideas take shape of themselves, as I frequently do when I am writing. This time the ideas carried me away. First of all came the thought that I must give up the hope which meant everything to me. Following this there came surging in upon me with overpowering force a terrifying idea about a coming world catastrophe. Although I had never before given serious thought to such a subject, there came flashing into my mind, as though from a source without myself, the idea that this little planet of ours, which has existed for we know not how many millions of years, was about to undergo some sort of metamorphosis. It was like a seed or an egg. In it were stored up a quantity of food materials, represented by our natural resources. But now we were like a seed in the process of germinating or an egg that had just been fertilized. We were starting to grow. Just within the short space of a hundred years we had begun to draw upon our resources to such an extent that the timber and the gas and the oil were likely soon to be exhausted. In the wake of this idea followed others. I myself was more important than I had ever dreamed of being; I was also a zero quantity. Strange and mysterious forces of evil of which before I had not had the slightest suspicion were also revealed. I was terrified beyond measure and in my terror I talked. Of course my family was frightened and I soon found myself in a psychopathic hospital. There followed three weeks of violent delirium which remain indelibly burned into my memory. There is probably no three weeks period in all my life that I can recall more clearly. It seemed as if I were living thousands of years within that time. Then I came out of it much as one awakens out of a bad dream.

I remember distinctly one incident which helped me to find my way out. The idea which had first bowled me over was, as I have said, that of a coming world catastrophe. This same idea was dominant throughout as the premise on which my reasoning was based. I was therefore much impressed one night, as I lay awake out on the sleeping-porch, by the observation that the moon was centered in a cross of light. I took this as confirmation of my worst fears. Did not the cross stand for suffering? What else

Part 3: Matching: Match the expression in the first column with the one from the second that best goes with it. Two points for each correct answer.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. saralatā | a. devoid of ulterior motives |
| 2. vicarious | b. idealized other-than-self |
| 3. sin isolation | c. symbol of social and individual ultimate loyalty |
| 4. gregarious | d. sublimation |
| 5. Alice Batchelder | e. substituted |
| 6. ūrdhva-retah | f. breach of trust and isolation |
| 7. oblivion | g. instinctual urges associated with “lower cakras” |
| 8. ecclesiasticism | h. frankness |
| 9. anyābilāṣitā-sūnyam | i. forgetfulness of the ideal |
| 10 segmental | j. dementia praecox |
| 11. idea of God | k. “churchianity” |
| | l. must be with others and uneasy when alone |

fellowship, **c.)** not dealt with sufficiently by merely becoming free from inner conflict—for example, by lowering the threshold of conscience, **d.)** all of the above.

7. Boisen writes about a strictly brought up, well-behaved son of a clergyman who suddenly left home at the age of sixteen “After a short period of wandering he enlisted in the army. He not only put on the uniform, but with it he accepted also its easier standard of sex morality. Supported now by the group and its attitudes he was able to give expression to the troublesome sex drive and to be quite frank and comfortable about it.” This incident illustrates **a.)** the reaction of concealment, **b.)** oblivion, **c.)** socialization on a contemporary or local level, **d.)** socialization of the antisocial.

PART 2: Correctly organize the four elements in each of the three columns, so that the four styles of socialization are accurately represented in the correct sequence, according to the chart prepared by Anton Boisen. Number your answer sheet 1-4, and after each number write the correct sequence of three letters. Three points for each of the twelve correct answers.

ATTITUDE	MEANS	END RESULT
A. Flippancy Carelessness Gregariousness	E. Reflected glory through identification with finite leader or love-object	I. Contemporary and local adjustment (the normal man)
B. Confidence Self-reliance	F. Acceptance of ultimate loyalties and associated standards Confession and forgiveness Social support and reinforcement	J. Submergence (the as-partisan, the clinging vine)
C. Dependence Idolatry	G. Finding of satisfactory self expression in social vocational and sexual life	K. Rebellion and development of cancer-like social formations (delinquent and criminal gangster) L. Progressive unification on a basis conceived as enduring and universal (valid religious types)
D. Aspiration Reverence Faith	H. Making light of accepted standards Rejection of primary loyalties and seeking of social validation in antisocial groups.	

could it mean than this, that the moon - which as so often happens in acute disturbances, I had personified - is in mourning over the coming doom? In order to be sure I called an attendant and inquired if he also saw the cross. He said that he did. I was greatly impressed and agitated. But some days later in the early watches of the morning as I lay awake looking at the moon, speculating about the terrible danger which that cross betokened, I made a discovery. Whenever I looked at the moon from a certain spot the cross did not appear. I immediately investigated and found that from that particular spot I was looking at the moon through a hole in the wire screening! With this discovery the edifice I had reared upon the basis of the original premise began to fall. And only a few days later I was well again.

Concerning the severity of the disturbance I may say that the diagnosis was “catatonic dementia praecox” and that my people were told there was no hope of recovery. In consequence, when I did recover I had difficulty in convincing them that I was well enough to leave, and my stay in the hospital was for this reason longer than it would otherwise have been. I may also say that during those three weeks I lost thirty pounds in weight, but three weeks after I had made the discovery in regard to the moon I had nearly gained it back and felt physically as fit as ever. And I was also fit mentally except for certain lurking fears which I stowed away in the back of my mind with a question mark after them.

Very naturally I became interested during the days that followed in the attempt to find out just what had happened to me. I began by observing my fellow patients. I soon learned that there was a group of them that once each week took certain treatments. It seemed that they had a disease called “general paresis.” There was one young man who had something the nurse called “post-encephalitis.” She explained that this also had an organic basis. Then there were several old men on the ward, some of whom had hardening of the arteries in the brain. But aside from these my fellow patients seemed well enough physically. And some I met who had been inmates of the hospital for twenty-five, thirty, and even forty years, all the time apparently in good physical health. But they were on the whole a rather discouraged lot of men I arrived at the conclusion that what had happened to me had happened also to them. Their inner world had come crashing down. They had perhaps been thinking intently on something until they

had put themselves into an abnormal condition. I came also to the conclusion that the particular thing most of them had been concerned about was of the same general nature as that which caused some people to “hit the sawdust trail” at the meetings of evangelists like Billy Sunday. It came over me like a flash that if inner conflicts like that which Paul describes in the famous passage in the seventh chapter of Romans can have happy solutions, as the church has always believed, there must also be unhappy solutions which thus far the church has ignored. It came to me that what I was being faced with in the hospital was the unhappy solutions. Most of the patients whom I saw around me would then be in the hospital because of spiritual or religious difficulties.

Of course I spent much time puzzling about my own case. I tried to get a chance to talk with the doctor about it. In this I met with little success. That particular hospital took the organicist point of view. The doctors did not believe in talking with patients about their symptoms, which they assumed to be rooted in some as yet undiscovered organic difficulty. The longest time I ever got was fifteen minutes during which the very charming young doctor pointed out that one must not hold the reins too tight in dealing with the sex instinct. Nature, he said, must have its way. It was very clear that he had neither understanding nor interest in the religious aspects of my problem.

I was very happy to find that there were religious services on Sunday afternoons. But I soon discovered that the ministers from the neighboring village who conducted those services might know something about religion, but they certainly knew nothing about our problems. They did no visiting on the wards - which may not have been entirely their fault, as they probably received little encouragement to do so. All they did was to conduct a formal service on Sunday afternoons, and for lack of anything better they usually gave us the same sermons they had given their own congregations in the morning. There was one kindly old minister who gave us a series of sermons on missions - missions in China, missions in Africa, missions in Japan. Another preached on the text, “If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out.” I was afraid that one or two of my fellow patients might be inclined to take that injunction literally.

For four and a half months I gave most of my attention to the attempt to understand my experience and also to convince my

The Cure of Souls in Vaiṣṇava Communities

Ravindra Svarūpa dāsa, Instructor

Mid-term Examination 25 October, 1996

Part 1: Multiple Choice: Select the one lettered phrase that most correctly completes the sentence. Six points for each correct answer.

1. According to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purport to *C.C., Antya* 2.117, the word *saralata* **a.)** means “simplicity,” **b.)** is contrasted with duplicity or cunning behavior, **c.)** is the first qualification of a Vaiṣṇava, **d.)** all of the above.
2. According to Anton Boisen, one and the same type of eruptive psychological crisis commonly gets categorized either as “mental illness” or as “religious experience” according to **a.)** whether the person making the judgment is a psychiatrist or a clergyman, **b.)** whether the outcome of the crisis is successful on the one hand or unsuccessful or indeterminate, on the other, **c.)** how broad-minded and open to new possibilities the person making the judgment is, **d.)** the degree to which the concepts like God, sin, and judgment are present in the ideation.
3. Social psychology is that discipline which **a.)** deals with the neuroses and psychoses of social groups rather than individuals, **b.)** views treatment of mental patient most effective when conducted in groups of “significant others” rather than in isolation, **c.)** views the individual personality as a reflection of the social organization and as the subjective aspect of his particular culture, **d.)** all of the above.
4. According to Boisen, the common understanding of the Christian doctrine of “vicarious atonement” is wrong because **a.)** it has become a means of evading Jesus’ example and challenge to his followers, **b.)** modern scriptural interpretation has shown it to be unhistorical, **c.)** it is based on Roman, not Biblical, concepts, **d.)** none of the above.
5. According to Anton Boisen, the primary difficulty a civilized person struggles with in his effort to attain “self-realization” is **a.)** low self-esteem, **b.)** the sense of personal failure, **c.)** deficiencies in parents and other early guides, **d.)** delusional misinterpretations.
6. According to Boisen, the “sense of guilt (or sin)” is **a.)** the social condemnation which the individual pronounces upon himself on the basis of what he knows of the attitudes of the community, **b.)** the awareness of something within which would be condemned by those with whom the individual seeks identification and which, so long as it is not brought out into the open and dealt with correctly, will separate him from their

So far, the history of the modern revival of Lord Caitanya's movement has been very much the history of the "outsider." When, in the nineteenth century, the "established" Gaudiya institutions had lost spiritual potency because of material accommodation, the next step forward came out of the "marginal" *vairagis* through the agency of Bhaktivinoda Thakura. And when the established leaders of the Gaudiya Matha lost sight of the vision and order of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, they were left behind holding their positions and property when the "outsider" Srila Prabhupada proved to have inherited the spiritual power for the next great step.

It is not necessary, however, for this pattern to continue, and it is much to be preferred that the leaders of ISKCON unite in this effort of reform and spiritual renewal. For those who do not, the verdict of history is quite clear: Lord Caitanya's movement will not wait for them, and history will pass them by.

Therefore let us together resolve to take the next step forward by doing what has not yet been done in the annals of Vaisnavism. Let us actually bring into being the great *madhyama* preaching society envisioned by Bhaktivinoda Thakura. Let us make that reformed ISKCON our grateful offering to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu on the 500th anniversary of His appearance.

Praying for the mercy at the feet of all the Vaisnavas, I respectfully submit this paper for their wise deliberation and considered judgment.

Ravindra Svarupa dasa
November 16, 1984

friends that I was as well as I had ever been. But the harder I tried the less they believed it. The result was to increase my own fears and my own sense of helplessness. There followed then another period of disturbance quite as severe as the first and ten weeks in duration instead of three. This also began suddenly and ended abruptly. On coming out of it, I changed my tactics and said nothing about release. Instead I looked around for something to do. I was struck by the number of patients in my ward who spent most of the day sitting still, looking off into the distance and thinking apparently very gloomy thoughts. I suggested some games in which it might be possible to interest them. I ventured to suggest and write out a program for a play festival on the "Glorious Fourth" which was then about three weeks in the offing. I also looked around for a regular job and suggested several things I should enjoy doing, among them wood-working and photography. It so happened that they wanted someone to do photographic work, so they gave me the job. It will be seen that the doctors were really kind and responsive and that I did find something to do that I could enjoy. And I had an opportunity to study the hospital inside and out.

The question of what to do with myself after I left the hospital was of course a knotty problem. I myself had a very definite idea of what I wanted to do. I had not been three weeks out of the psychopathic ward before I was clear on that. The new-formed purpose was expressed as follows in a letter of February 14, 1921:

This catastrophe has of course destroyed my hopes and my plans. I came back east in July with the intention of taking a pastorate. From that, I take it, I am now turned aside. My present purpose is to take as my problem the one with which I am now confronted, the service of these unfortunates with whom I am surrounded. I feel that many forms of insanity are religious rather than medical problems and that they cannot be successfully treated until they are so recognized. The problem seems to me one of great importance not only because of the large number who are now suffering from mental ailments but also because of its religious and psychological and philosophical aspects. I am very sure that if I can make to it any contribution whatsoever it will be worth the cost.

There were of course many difficulties to be overcome. The doctors did not favor it. My friends had to be convinced, and

that was no easy task. Some even thought it was my duty to remain in the hospital as a patient for the rest of my life. Others assumed that something in the nature of simple manual work was all that would now be open to me. The following letter, written on August 14, 1921, will give an idea of the situation with which I was confronted at that time:

I am quite cheered by the fact that my cherished plan for the coming year meets with your approval. . . .

I had a most welcome visit the other day from my old friend P. who has now an important church in M-. P. brought with him some good advice which he hatched out coming down on the train. He thought that some work which would keep me right down to concrete things would be the best way to regain or retain my sanity! I said to him: "Hang the sanity! You can't ever make life worth living if all you're doing is to try to keep from going insane. The object of life is to accomplish things worth while, to solve problems and to make contributions of some sort to this world in which we live. As I see it, a man ought to be willing to go through Hell if thereby he has even a chance of doing something which is really worth doing."

This reminds me of a little incident from my forestry days. One day during my sojourn in Washington in 1907, I walked into one of the rooms in the Forest Service Building and found there quite a little gathering. One of our old classmates at Yale had just returned from two years up in the north woods and was busily engaged in dishing out yams about his experience in the wilds. One of the questions and its answer I'll never forget. "Say, Bill," asked one of the group, "have you ever been lost?" Bill straightened out, glared at him and replied with some heat: "Lost? Of course I've been. It's only the dubs who never go five miles from camp, who don't get lost sometimes." Now I do not mean to imply that those who do keep their poise and their sanity are able to do so only because they never venture off the beaten path. I only mean that for me to stick right to camp and wash dishes all the rest of my life for fear of getting lost again would take out of life all that makes it worth living for me. I am not afraid. I have always managed to find my way through; and I do think that in a very real sense I have been exploring some little known territory which I should like now to have a chance to map out.

In the end my plan went through. My mother gave her consent, conditioned upon the approval of Dr. Elwood Worcester. With him I had a series of helpful conferences which have left me with a high opinion of his insight and wisdom. In February, 1922, I enrolled for special work in the Andover Theological Seminary

Some relationships will be fairly easy to renovate, but there will be others that are very difficult. Where there is a long history of enmity between devotees, it may be necessary to discuss past wrongs, and this can be painful. There will be other devotees who have been so wounded that they have become psychic if not physical hermits, and they will be extremely reluctant to again open themselves up to relationships. Still other devotees may not wish to give up an attachment to some form of sense gratification, and therefore they will not wish to enter into frank and honest relationships. The reformers must learn how to approach these troubled devotees with great tact and delicacy. It may be best to initiate reform of difficult relationships not by confidential exchange, but by the other processes recommended by Srila Rupa Gosvami. One may invite someone for prasadam, give a gift, or render some service or favor.

Above all, the notion of honesty and openness should not be perverted to serve false ego and become an excuse for giving offense. That is another form of dishonesty.

In addition, one should guard against coming down to the mental platform, and preach or discuss these ideas about reforming relations with a devotee without actually reforming your relationships with him (if it needs it). If one simply entertains these ideas on the mental platform, they will quickly come to seem vacuous and impotent.

For essential advice in the whole endeavor of bringing ISKCON to the *madhyama* platform, one should carefully study *Sri Upadesamta* and apply those eternal instructions. Srila Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami's *Vaisnava Behavior and Twenty-Six Qualities of a Devotee* is also helpful.

This reform needs to take place at all levels of ISKCON. If we begin these reforms now, and steadily increase the circle of rectified relationships, then we can hope that by Mayapura the effort will fructify and all of ISKCON will become unified into an indomitable, unstoppable preaching movement. Now it is merely a loose collection of independent organizations, each one ruled by a single supreme acarya. Some mathas are indifferent to each other, some more friendly, some hostile, depending on the relations between the different acaryas. But none preach cooperatively. How heart-breaking it is to see ISKCON come closer and closer every year to that same condition!

treat into wounded silence (complaining, however, vociferously to others). He does not know how to approach the other devotee and openly resolve their differences. He is unable to reveal his mind without giving offense.

Under these conditions, a great stockpile of resentment builds up in time, and the atmosphere is filled with sullen undercurrents of hostility and mistrust, relieved only by periodic outbursts of anger. In this uncongenial climate, devotional relations become more and more burdensome, and materialistic people start to seem relatively nice. The devotees find themselves living in deepening isolation from one another, each enthroned in a well-fortified ivory tower of false ego. They learn to get along by avoiding each other. These are some local conditions that arise in the milieu of fratricidal strife.

The reformer in these circumstances can begin to renovate his relationships with his Godbrothers one by one. By getting together with one or more of his closest associates, he can establish a reformatory group. The members should meet to examine the problem of devotional relationships in ISKCON in all its ramifications. (This essay can be used as a starting point for such a discussion.) Then the members of the reforming group can unite themselves in the common endeavor to achieve the *madhyama* platform in their relationships, and together take a vow of *sadhana* and mutual aid. They should resolve to be as open as possible in their relationships and to talk to each other rather than about each other. Each devotee should resolve to be open to correction and instruction from the others, and he should tell the others of this resolve. And all the devotees should pledge their mutual help and support in the effort to remain fixed in *sadhana* so that they may become free from false ego and so enter deeper and deeper into spiritual fraternity.

We have begun in the Philadelphia temple to reform our relationships in this way, and the principles and practices discussed in this paper have arisen out of our discussions and experiences. As the reforming devotees gain practical intelligence, they will attain more insight into procedures; as this reform is taken up in different temples and under various circumstances, we should quickly be able to build a large body of practical wisdom through pooled experience.

and in the graduate school of Harvard University. I was fortunate enough to be included in Dr. Macfie Campbell's seminar at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital. I found much help also in some work I took with Dr. Richard C. Cabot. The following year I continued my work with these men together also with Professor William McDougall. At the end of the second year I looked around for an opening. I wanted a chaplaincy in a hospital. I soon discovered that there were no such jobs. What is more, the hospital superintendents were not enthusiastic over the idea. I even tried to get a job as attendant with the stipulation that I might have access to the case records. But that stipulation barred me out.

The year 1923-24 was therefore spent at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital. I worked during the summer in the psychological department under Dr. F. L. Wells. In the fall I transferred to the social service department under Miss Susie Lyons. Here I found just the opportunity I was looking for to study cases from all angles. From the standpoint of one who had spent three years in the making of sociological surveys, I made an interesting discovery. Before, as a mere inquirer, I had had to stop at the very points in which as a student of religion I was most interested. I did not dare in my survey work to inquire into the moral conditions or the inner experiences of the people. I would not have got anywhere if I had. But now I was beginning with precisely those problems embodied in the cases of individuals in difficulty. And because my purpose was that of helping those individuals rather than that of mere inquiry the friends were ready to talk, and I received insights into the social situation otherwise impossible. In the course of this work at the Psychopathic Hospital I became interested in certain of the missions in the Negro section in Roxbury and most of the last four months was spent in making a special study of their activities and influence.

The next year there came an opening at the Worcester State Hospital. In Dr. William A. Bryan I found a superintendent who rejoices in making it possible for men with very different points of view to work together at the same problem. He did indeed have to put up with a good bit of chaffing from his fellow superintendents for such an unheard-of innovation as that of bringing a full-time chaplain into a mental hospital. This he met with the reply that he would be perfectly willing to bring in a horse doctor if he thought there was any chance of his being able to help the patients.

In the spring of 1925 through my friend, Professor Arthur E. Holt, who has done more than anyone else to help me in getting the new start, there came an opening as research associate in the Chicago Theological Seminary. I spent the fall quarter there. My first task was an experiment in a small mining community near La Salle. I sought to approach from my point of view the problems of some ordinary group of people such as the minister has to deal with. The time was too short to accomplish much in the way of results beyond the new insights into pastoral work and its possibilities which it gave me. The following fall quarter I had my first course at the seminary and until the fall of 1930 I continued to spend three months of each year in Chicago.

In the summer of 1925 I was given the opportunity to try the experiment of bringing some theological students to the hospital. These students worked on the wards as ordinary attendants. My own experience had convinced me that there is no one upon whom the patient's welfare is more dependent than the nurse or attendant who is with him hour after hour during the day. I felt also that such work provided an unequalled opportunity to observe and understand the patient, and I was much concerned that theological students should have the opportunity to go to first-hand sources for their knowledge of human nature. I wanted them to learn to read human documents as well as books, particularly those revealing documents which are opened up at the inner day of judgment. These students were allowed to have information in regard to the cases. They were permitted to attend the medical staff meetings and for their benefit we held special conferences. There were four students the first summer. The plan was sufficiently successful to warrant another trial. Since then the number has increased rapidly and whatever success my undertaking has had at Worcester and at Elgin as well has been due to the fine work of these students and the favorable impression they have left upon the hospital community.

During the last week in November, 1920, three weeks after I had made my little discovery in regard to the moon, I had written a long letter setting forth my explanation of what had happened to me. I had at this time done no reading whatever in psychiatric literature and I did not even know that such a man as Freud existed. The conclusions were drawn entirely from my own experience and observations in the light of the work I had previously

tion, and they will each widen until all of ISKCON is included.

Any devotee who wants to institute reform must begin with himself. The prerequisite for coming to the *madhyama* stage is to be a strict follower of the regulative principles of devotional service. Spiritual fellowship cannot flourish if *anarthas* are not being relentlessly uprooted by daily practice. Therefore, every devotee who wants to help in the reformation of ISKCON must first carefully review his own spiritual condition and his personal devotional practice. If he is careless in observing regulative principles and slack in *sadhana*, he must immediately take up the process of rectification. This entails attending the complete morning program in all alertness, with especial concentration on attentive, offense-avoiding japa. By this effort, a devotee may quickly remove all his accommodations to sense gratification and undertake the deliberate dismantling of his false ego. A devotee of the reforming party should recognize sense gratification and false ego as the two great impediments to Vaisnava fellowship. They are the mortal enemies of ISKCON, and he should resolve to conquer them.

Having undertaken whatever personal reformatory measures are required, the reforming devotee should then undertake the rectification of his relationships. Most devotees will discover that few, if any, of their relationships are satisfactory. The devotee will probably see that he has almost no confidential friends, and that he does not and cannot trust most of his associates. He is conscious that many of his associates have made accommodations sometimes quite extensive to sense gratification. Indeed, he has participated in many meetings in which the faults and shortcomings of those not present have been thoroughly examined. Yet the established patterns of relationships are such that while everyone is free to talk *about*, no one is free to talk *to* them. In this situation, devotees find themselves standing helplessly by as they watch one of their associates sink deeper and deeper into *maya* until he finally bloats; no one is able to come to his aid. As the failing devotee falls further and further away, the criticism of him intensifies, but no one helps.

Nor can the devotees work together effectively, because they have no way of working out the inevitable differences that arise in any collective effort. When one devotee transgresses against another, the offended party will either respond in wrath or else re

selves through dead lives outside the ecstatic devotional association, they feel great compassion and preach to them out of the spontaneous fullness of their hearts. Thus the community of devotees endlessly expands. Indeed, no force on earth can check it.

Many people fear that the turmoils in ISKCON are its death throes. In a sense, they are right. One way or another the “old ISKCON,” the ISKCON of fratricidal strife, is doomed. But if we take the proper measures, the death throes of the old ISKCON will prove to be the birth pangs of the new ISKCON, the glorious, self-effulgent, dynamically increasing preaching movement it was created to be. If, working together, we each make a small, sincere effort, we will see a dazzling explosion of spiritual energy. The banked fires of ISKCON will ignite; the glowing coals will flare into white hot heat, and all those myriads of slowly dying cinders will be fired into flame. Let us do it.

The rebirth of ISKCON cannot be accomplished by legalistic means or political maneuvers. If the proponents of reform become tricked or lured into taking an adversarial, antagonistic stance against the GBC or gurus, we will simply add one more battle to the history of fratricidal war. To avoid this requires intelligence, tact, and self-restraint. The danger arises not only from our own residual immaturity, but also from administrators in ISKCON trapped in habitual roles. It is understandable that those who have been forced to function and manage under the conditions of fratricidal strife, who have been beguiled into playing for so long the power-game in ISKCON, will understandably see us in those political terms, and they will naturally treat us at first as an opposing party to be defeated. Until this misperception can be corrected, we must guard against being lured into playing the role of the enemy. That in itself would constitute our downfall, and after that it will not matter who “wins” because the war will continue in any case. We must rather bring each other to a higher stage of relationships through personal spiritual renewal. This is the precondition for any other truly regenerative institutional reforms in ISKCON.

One special advantage to this revolutionary project for the regeneration of ISKCON is that it need not wait on the action of the GBC. It can be initiated in each temple immediately. It can be started by one devotee, and then spread by progression to two, three, and on and on. Thus there can be many centers of reforma

done in the psychology of religion. In the years that have followed the original hypothesis has been considerably modified and elaborated, but in its essence it remains unchanged as the working hypothesis which has determined all my subsequent work. The following paragraph from that letter may be taken as the thesis of this book:

As I look around me here and then try to analyze my own case, I see two main classes of insanity. In the one case there is some organic trouble, a defect in the brain tissue, some disorder in the nervous system, some disease of the blood. In the other there is no organic difficulty. The body is strong and the brain in good working order. The difficulty is rather in the *disorganization of the patient's world*. Something has happened which has upset the foundations upon which his ordinary reasoning is based. Death or disappointment or sense of failure may have compelled a reconstruction of the patient's world view from the bottom up, and the mind becomes dominated by the one idea which he has been trying to put in its proper place. That, I think, has been my trouble and I think it is the trouble with many others also.

In the pages that follow I propose to examine, in the light of my own experience, the experiences of other persons who have been forced off the beaten path of common sense and have traveled through the little-known wilderness of the inner life. I shall seek, so far as possible, to arrive at some comprehensive view of this inner world throughout its entire range. I shall examine not only the unhappy solutions of inner conflicts but also the happy ones. This I shall do with the ever deepening conviction that only as we study the one in the light of the other shall we be able to understand either one or to gain any insight into the laws of the spiritual life with which theology and psychiatry are equally concerned.

Any value that this study may have will lie primarily in the fact that it is a report of one who has himself explored the country which he describes, one who has passed through an experience which was at once mental disorder of the most profound and unmistakable variety and also, for himself at least, of unquestionable religious value. For the same reason this study will be subject to the inevitable biases of the participant observer.

While I do not consider it wise to enter into the more personal factors in my own case, I shall feel myself free to make use of

observations and conclusions made at the time of my initiation into this realm of the lower regions, believing that these may have some value in that they were arrived at independently on the basis of my own personal experience and observations with relatively little influence by the views and theories of other men.

Srila Prabhupada was sufficient to make a society of *kanistha-adhikaris* function somewhat on the *madhyama* platform. Therefore, we did have some success in preaching. And some failure. We should now be mature enough to take some profitable instruction from our failure.

Our effort at book distribution was simultaneously ISKCON's greatest success and greatest failure. It was a success because so many books were distributed, but it was a failure because they were distributed in an immature manner that offended the public and inevitably caused the collapse of distribution. Although books are still going out today, the sublime synthesis of preaching and collecting taught by Prabhupada is now thought to be unobtainable. The spiritual cost to ISKCON's junior members, who cannot directly preach but must engage in what they refer to among themselves as *ugra-karma*, is devastating. Yet we can offer them no alternative.

Prabhupada clearly told us *how* we should distribute books by preaching purely about the contents, by being utterly truthful, by giving no offense. In this, he outlined the natural preaching ways of a *madhyama-adhikari*. But because at most only a handful of our book distributors could function on that platform, we distributed books by crafty, artificial mundane techniques. We were not personally in that *madhyama* level. Nevertheless, it was a glorious achievement that so many books went out. But because we are still immature, we are now baffled and stymied and trying in vain to discover the way to preach and distribute books, as we say, "purely."

We can do so if we actually come effectively to the *madhyama* stage. To revitalize our preaching relation to the public, we must first rectify our personal relationships among ourselves.

A devotee on the *madhyama* platform worships God with a determined vow, and by that *sadhana* he gradually destroys his false ego. Because his false ego becomes destroyed, he can enter into genuine spiritual fellowship with the other devotees. Because he becomes further purified and enlivened by that fellowship, he becomes fixed and fully satisfied in spiritual life. The community thus formed becomes the basis for *sankirtana*, or congregational glorification of the Lord. In that congregation, the devotees become so joyful that they naturally attract others to join, and when the enlivened devotees see all those innocent people dragging them

madhyama stage. A *kanistha-adhikari* advances to the *madhyama* platform by means of *sadhana-bhakti*. *Sadhana-bhakti*, pursued diligently and attentively, destroys false ego, and as long as the neophyte devotees attend to their *sadhana* they can be sure of elevation to the higher stages. There is, however, no other assured means of advancement, and habitual negligence in *sadhana* is therefore fatal to progressive spiritual life. Furthermore, when a neophyte devotee has risen to the *madhyama* platform, *sadhana* is absolutely necessary to maintain him in that position. If he becomes slack in *sadhana*, he rapidly reverts to the neophyte condition. Therefore, the essential prerequisite for both creating and sustaining a *madhyama* society is intense common commitment to *sadhana*.

The tragedy of ISKCON at the present time is that while the society contains many advanced devotees of the stature of *madhyama* and even *uttama-adhikaris*, the society as a whole is still operating on the *kanistha* platform. Even though many of the most advanced devotees occupy the highest spiritual and managerial posts in ISKCON, their full spiritual potency remains unmanifest, their pure desires thwarted, and their best spiritual intentions baffled. Although they know and intend better, they repeatedly find themselves, to their dismay, involved in highly immature patterns of relationships with others. This happens indeed on all managerial levels of ISKCON.

In short, we are better than we are. This anomalous situation can only be attributed to an inheritance from the past. Many of the dominant forms of political and social interaction (*de facto*, not necessarily *de jure*) were established and consolidated years ago. Typically, these habits have tended to perpetuate themselves long after they have served their purpose, and now they impede rather than advance the best interests of ISKCON. We are wearing clothes we have long outgrown.

Some may be taken aback by the depiction of ISKCON as a *kanistha-adhikari* society. We know that ISKCON is and has always been a preaching movement, and a preaching society is *ipso facto* a *madhyama-adhikari* society. However, it may be that we have on these grounds too conveniently concluded that *we* are *madhyama-adhikaris* and have complaisantly taken it for granted that we have attained without much effort an advanced state of Krishna consciousness. What seems more likely is that the enormous spiritual potency of a single, extraordinarily empowered *uttama-adhikari*,

The Battleground of Character

Chapter V of The Exploration of the Inner World

TWO BROTHERS who have been described by Dr. William Healy may serve to carry our inquiry into the field of “normal” relationships as contrasted with the inner world which thus far we have been exploring, and to throw into relief certain considerations which are of great significance in any attempt to obtain a comprehensive view of the territory which we have covered.

One of these brothers had been brought to the juvenile court for serious stealing. His family gave an account of restlessness, of irritability, of inability sometimes to eat, and even of nausea at the meal table and other “neurotic” traits. To the other boy they gave a clean bill of health with regard to both nervous and moral traits. He was the good boy of the household, quiet, merry, helpful, honest.

In response to sympathetic questioning the young malefactor told of an experience a year or two before with a miserable fellow who initiated both him and his brother into vulgarities and into the gentle art of pilfering. How he hated those words! He never said them. The very thought of them made him sick. If they came into his mind thoughts of that boy and of stealing followed. The latter was not so bad. At least it was not disgusting. He tried it from time to time and he “got away with things.” He just had to do something when he thought of that fellow and his obscenities. It made him feel cross, impatient, unable to sit still. And at meal times? Well, that was one of the times when his brother said those hated words, under his breath of course, in order to enjoy

the discomfiture they produced. He himself never said those words. He wouldn't say such disgusting things. But his brother said them all the time.

The other brother when questioned confirmed the story.

We have in these brothers two common types, types which are encountered in every mental clinic in the country and among those who never come to a mental clinic.¹ They are striking examples of two contrasting ways of meeting those evils which make for inner conflict. We have here two brothers brought up in the same surroundings, differing little either in physique or in intelligence, who are both dealing with a common situation. They have both been initiated by the same boy into vulgarities and obscenities. One of the brothers meets the situation easily. He feels no compunctions. He even laughs and jokes about the new experience. The other brother becomes involved in a desperate conflict. To him the new experience is awful beyond utterance. He cannot bring those fearful words to his lips and he finds relief from the stress of the conflict by giving way to the associated impulse to steal, which to him is the lesser evil of the two.

Now this conflict might have found other means of expression. It was merely accidental that the impulse to steal had become associated with that which was at the basis of the conflict. The point is that the same experience produced a conflict in the one brother and none in the other. *This difference may be traced precisely to the fact that the one was unable to bring "those awful words" to his lips, while the other did so quite readily. The first brother thus became isolated. Absorbed in horror-stricken fascination for that of which he could not bring himself to speak, he felt besmirched and unfit for the company of those whom he loved and honored.* His very inability to utter these words gave him an exaggerated idea of their significance and increased their fascination for him. He thus felt himself in the grip of ideas and interests which he did not dare to acknowledge to those to whom he looked for approval. Judging himself by what he believed they would think of him if they knew him as he knew himself, he became despicable in his own eyes. The second brother, on the other hand, succeeded in socializing the experience. Giving expression to the awful words, he met with responses which indicated that he was not alone but that others shared with him the same desires and interests. He thus assimilated the new experience and remained frank and undivided within, continuing to be "quiet, merry, helpful, honest."

a result, the new positions and relationships have only fueled the quarrels and widened the divisions, and the whole society is headed toward dissolution.

On one occasion when our fighting gathered to a crisis, Srila Prabhupada spoke of "fratricidal war." But both before and after that crisis, fratricidal war has been the endemic condition of ISKCON, and this perpetual internecine strife keeps precipitating crisis after crisis after crisis.

A society of devotees in which proper Vaisnava relations are not yet the norm is called a *kanistha-adhikari* society. Its distinguishing characteristic is contentiousness arising from envy. Envy is a product of false ego. Because of false ego, the members are unable to establish spiritual friendship among themselves. Instead, they vie with each other for prestige, power, and perquisites. Intensely desiring the honor and respect of others, the contentious neophyte pretends to be more advanced than he actually is. He tries to conceal his shortcomings and falldowns, and in so doing he develops a secretive mentality and holds himself back from entering into open and honest relations with his Godbrothers. Because he cannot reveal his mind in confidence, he remains aloof from real fellowship.

He strays from the path of devotional service, but his peers do not help him. For he thinks that if he allows someone to preach to him, he implicitly admits his own subordination. Therefore he cuts himself off from hearing and becomes impervious to instruction or good advice. Because he has many secret misgivings about himself, he becomes eager to find the faults of others; that way he reassures himself of his own superiority in spite of his many unacknowledged weaknesses.

Spiritual immaturity often leads a *kanistha-adhikari* to identify spiritual advancement with organizational advancement. He thinks that attaining prestige, power, and the perquisites of office is evidence of spiritual advancement. Lacking the assets for real spiritual achievement, he substitutes organizational elevation, which he can attain through his cunning or political prowess. He therefore competes intensely with others for high office, and he comes to believe implicitly that one achieves a spiritually elevated state only by becoming victorious over others. In this way material competition becomes institutionalized in *kanistha-adhikari* societies.

Fortunately, however, the *kanistha* stage is followed by the

The Next Step in the Expansion of ISKCON

*Ending the Fratricidal War
A Preliminary Proposal*

*by Ravindra Svarupa dasa
November 16, 1984*

The root of all problems now facing ISKCON is that we, the disciples of Srila Prabhupada, have not yet established proper Vaisnava relationships among ourselves. While Prabhupada was here with us, we did not enjoy such relationships, and our spiritual master plainly told us that our greatest fault was our tendency to quarrel with each other. But as long as Prabhupada was among us our contentiousness did not constitute an insurmountable problem. Prabhupada was always available to pour oil on troubled waters, keep ISKCON unified, and maintain our faith and enthusiasm.

Since the departure of Srila Prabhupada, however, our failure to establish pure relationships has become life-threatening to ISKCON. When Prabhupada left, we established gurus and ushered in a whole new complex of relations: between gurus and their Godbrothers, between gurus and disciples, between disciples and the Godbrothers of gurus and yet we failed to fulfill the essential requirement for the continuation of ISKCON after Prabhupada's departure. We did not form ourselves into a community in which Vaisnava relations became the established standard of practice. As

In the first brother we may recognize the general type with which we have thus far been dealing. The inability to socialize and thus assimilate a new experience, whether that experience pertains to sex or to any other matter vital to the individual's standing in his own eyes, is apparently common to the mentally ill, those at least who are without organic disease. The mentally ill as a group are those who, accepting the inherited loyalties and the associated standards and ideals, feel themselves isolated from those whose love is necessary to them. And the different types of functional mental disorder which we encounter may be explained in terms of the different reaction modes, or combinations of reaction modes, by which such situations may be dealt with. Though this boy was brought to the court for serious stealing he is to be regarded as mentally ill rather than criminal or delinquent, because he is isolated.

In sharp contrast to the first, the second brother may be looked upon as a healthy type. The experience which wrought such havoc in his brother had no apparent effect upon him. Perhaps he had a healthier nature, relatively immune to sex difficulties. He may have been without the "set" or "fixation" due to some early sex experience which, according to Freud, would explain his brother's susceptibility. He did not therefore feel the horror-stricken fascination which his brother felt. Instead of injuring him, it may be held that the experience had the effect of immunizing him and making him less susceptible to such perils later on. However this may be, it is clear that he made use of an effective device which his brother failed to use. To use Freud's phrase, he let the cat out of the bag. He socialized the experience and thus assimilated it.

But before giving him a clean bill of health it may be well to take account of certain other considerations. It is to be noted that he made a practice of teasing his brother. No small part of his brother's difficulties were due to this fact, and no small part of his own self-complacency may have been derived from the sense of superiority which resulted from the discomfiture which he was able to produce in his brother.

Boys of this type, if they develop a fondness for the vulgar and obscene, very commonly adopt a further protective device. They associate themselves with some group of easy standards and they avoid those associations which tend to produce in them a feeling of discomfort. They and their companions then support each

other in flippant, cynical, a-social attitudes and provide social validation for interests which their early guides would look upon with strong disapproval. They develop philosophies which rationalize their weaknesses and they rail at that which is beyond their reach. Hence the delinquent or criminal gang, hence also the Greenwich Villages and the Dill Pickle Clubs.

Not even the ordinary social group is free from this tendency. The average or “normal” man preserves his self-respect not merely by finding a task worth while and gaining recognition in contemporary society; he is likely also to have solved the conflicts of his teens by lowering somewhat his conscience threshold. His confidence and self-assurance are apt to be tinged by a trace of flippancy or of cynicism; he is apt to lay great stress upon certain petty virtues or become sectarian or partisan in his loyalties. His business and his pleasures are not infrequently a means of escape from a sense of inner disharmony which leaves him restless and unsatisfied. Hence the intolerance of the crowd. The man in the street is not likely to regard with complacency that which raises misgivings in regard to his protective devices. He may be lost in admiration for the kind of superiority which he sees in Babe Ruth or Jack Dempsey or Colonel Lindbergh. But the kind of superiority which makes him uncomfortable within is not kindly received. The cross and the hemlock have been meted out not so much to those who have threatened our economic interests as to those who threatened the moral self-respect of men. This tendency is to be observed even in the church, the one among all human institutions in which men meet on their highest levels, which stands for that which is enduring and universal in human society. Even here we see the common tendency to degenerate into ecclesiasticism with the emphasis placed upon protective devices, the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, creedal formulas and ritualistic niceties. And nowhere else, unless it be in certain organizations which make a religion of patriotism, do we find more bitterness when the protective devices are challenged. This is true precisely because the church is primarily concerned about the problem of safeguarding the moral self-respect of its members.

It follows therefore that even though by socializing inferiorities serious conflicts may be averted and the personality remain “normal,” the resulting solution is not necessarily a happy one. It

tual master,” a serious transgression. Without any indication from Srila Prabhupada in this manner, there would likely have been chaos. Yet Srila Prabhupada clearly did not want to give his sanction to unfit people, a spiritual error. So he selected them without endorsing them. In response to the question of initiation after his departure, Srila Prabhupada gave a list of “officiating gurus,” designating them in an indirect or oblique manner. He expected them to become “regular gurus” in the future, but there was no “hand-picking of successors,” no laying on of hands or anointing with oil, no transfer of power to some special and exclusive group. He also knew that some, like Kirtanananda, would initiate with or without his sanction, so he named them. If not there would likely have been a schism in 1978 instead of 1987. To me, Srila Prabhupada’s solution was brilliant, the best that could have been done under the circumstances. The result would depend upon Krishna.

I have come to recognize that what ISKCON had to achieve, through much conflict and suffering, was no easy thing. The problem is to take an ancient religious tradition, long isolated from the impact of modernity, and retrofit it for the modern world while at the same time transplanting it from its native soil into multiple outside cultures and civilizations—all without vitiating or distorting its essential practices and doctrines. The process has been the endeavor of two generations, and it is far from complete.

I joined ISKCON for spiritual life and not anything else. At the time, I did not know what would become of that part of myself that was an academically trained scholar of religion. But Krishna has both used and instructed that part, giving me a ringside seat to a fascinating instance of dynamic religious growth and change. My life in ISKCON has had unsurpassably wonderful times and times of abysmal torment and dread, but in any case not one day has failed to be consummately interesting.

Our work of reform and renewal continues. It has to be perpetual. As part of that work, ISKCON is beginning to look back at itself, engaging in its own process of honestly coming to terms with its past. Only by so doing can it have a viable and progressive future.

culty within the reform movement: there was little agreement on what to do about the rituals involving the gurus, and a particularly militant segment wanted badly to remove all symbols of spiritual authority from them. The proposal simply to remove the exclusive *vyasasana* received a consensus and satisfied the need to rectify the rituals, but it left the further issue of guru-ritual until later. It was surgically precise. It would do the job.

Eventually, both these proposals were put into effect by the GBC. There are now fifty-odd initiating gurus in ISKCON, all of them serving under GBC direction and fully accountable to the GBC. ISKCON regulations go out of their way to assure that new members are able to freely decide who their guru will be, and most temples have a diverse mix of disciples of different gurus working together. I believe we now have a movement organized the way Srila Prabhupada wanted it. That by itself does not guarantee purity of the members, but it is a necessary condition for it.

It has taken time for confidence in ISKCON to be restored. The reform movement was consolidated in 1987, when four more fallen or deviated gurus were removed and fifteen new members were elected to the GBC, among them leaders of the reform movement. For a number of devotees, the loss of faith in ISKCON leadership, the spectacular fall of six gurus, called into question their faith in Srila Prabhupada, although such a doubt was usually unacknowledged and unarticulated. They could not believe Srila Prabhupada had intended the original eleven to be gurus, and the “appointment tape” continued to be reinterpreted. The left-wing challenge to guru has undergone two further incarnations, resting on conspiracy theories, stories of suppressed instructions of Srila Prabhupada, whom they claim wanted the “officiating guru” system to continue after his demise, so that Prabhupada, (contrary to all Vaishnava teaching), would continue to initiate disciples posthumously. These stories have been crafted to get Prabhupada “off the hook.”

There is a failure to appreciate the problem Srila Prabhupada faced in his last days. We can be sure that he knew his own disciples better than they knew themselves; he had no illusions about their spiritual qualification. Yet they were pressing for a selection of successor gurus, the ultimate position to the ambitious. Hamsadutta and Kirtanananda had already been rebuked by Srila Prabhupada for receiving *guru-puja* “in the presence of the spiri

merely distribute the strain - or, what is worse, pass it along to someone else. The jokes which bring relief and self-satisfaction to one brother may cause nausea in the other. The unsought confidence may threaten another’s moral safeguards. The common weakness and the need of mutual support may result in rationalizing philosophies and attitudes inimical to social progress. And even the group which stands for that which is universal and enduring in human society is itself imperfect, needing constant renewal. It is therefore to be noted that such renewal comes ever through the prophet, through men of the type of Paul of Tarsus, John Bunyan and George Fox, who have found renewal within through reconciliation with that which represents to them society at its best.

The accompanying chart (p. 148) attempts to show in schematic form the different ways of dealing with such experiences as that which these two brothers encountered, experiences whose significance lies in the fact that they must be dealt with successfully or leave the individual with a sense of failure in his own eyes. This chart is based upon the analysis of the cases already considered together with thirty-six cases of religious experience obtained in a study of the churches and missions in a portion of Roxbury, Massachusetts. This chart has been prepared to read down and also across. Horizontally we have different levels of adjustment. The vertical columns represent the different aspects or determinants of behavior. The first four columns represent the pre-psychotic modes of behavior observed in our hospital cases as well as in multitudes of normal persons. The last three columns represent the types of solution likely to result from the different reaction modes and the means of solution operative therein. The reaction modes of shifting responsibility and of bluffing are thus likely to result in systematized ideas of persecution and of self-importance which serve to maintain the individual’s self-respect and may eventually cause him to be labeled as “paranoid.” The two central columns represent the types of transition or development by which these end results are commonly reached, the one gradual and the other eruptive. A consideration of the categories included in this chart may serve not merely to clarify the chart but also to summarize our findings thus far.

THE PRIMARY DIFFICULTY

The term “personal failure” is here used in the inclusive sense. It is intended to denote the sense of inner disharmony which extends from the “divine discontent” which is a pre-condition of effort and of growth to the loss of that which makes life worth living to the individual.

This sense of inner disharmony between what actually is and what ought to be, according to our findings, becomes malignant only in so far as it is attended by the sense of, isolation in that it has to do with something that makes one feel oneself despicable in the eyes of those he loves and unfit for their company. In other words, it is the sense of moral failure and guilt which appears as the primary cause of difficulty in those cases which we have considered.

The most potent source of difficulty in our cases has been precisely that which was found in the case of the young thief - an unassimilated experience of high emotional charge. In the great majority of cases that unassimilated experience pertains to the realm of sex. This remains for large numbers of persons something fascinating and terrifying of which they are unable to bring themselves to speak. They never succeed in incorporating it into their philosophy of life because they do not socialize it, they do not assimilate it.² It thus becomes what the Freudians call a “complex,” that is, a set of cravings or interests which they are unable either to acknowledge or control.

CONTROLLING DESIRES

Three sets of desires are manifest in our cases:

1. Those which find their best expression in the task which gives a man an outlet for his creative impulses and wins for him a recognized place among his fellows. These desires are designated by the term “desire for recognition.”

2. Those which find characteristic expression in a man’s devotion to his family, which enables him to slave for long hours at monotonous drudgery in order that those whom he loves may live and be happy. These desires have their highest expression in the devotion to that which is conceived of as universal and abiding. Such a devotion enables a man to find life worth living even

part. The second effort was to persuade the GBC to dismantle the “zonal acarya system” efficiently and decisively. We were able to put forward two proposals to the GBC, which, taken together, would dismantle the system. The first was to make the process of receiving authorization to initiate radically more open. Initially, the “initiating acarya standing committee” had the power to appoint new gurus; in 1982, it was changed to a three-fourths vote of the GBC. Up until 1986, only some half-dozen new gurus had been added (and a couple removed).

From my perspective, the central intent of this proposal was to eliminate a *de facto* “property requirement” for becoming an initiating guru. Since a guru had to have his exclusive initiating zone, one or more of the established gurus had to lose territory to create a zone for any new gurus. Such a major change, sometimes entailing the migration of large numbers of disciples, required negotiations at the highest level. And many gurus were reluctant to shrink the area of their authority. The paradigm of the institutional acarya envisioned a zone unified and made coherent by a common devotion and submission to a single person. The guru zones became more unified than ISKCON as a whole, which was becoming increasingly fragmented, turning into a kind of amphictyony of independently empowered leaders. The paradigm of the reform movement, in contrast, envisioned ISKCON temples in which the disciples of many different gurus could all work together for their common cause. The unifying personality was to be the founder-acarya of the institution, Srila Prabhupada, the master of all subsequent gurus and disciples. This could be achieved only by eliminating the implicit property requirement for being a guru, something that would happen if the authorizing process were opened up and the number of gurus increased.

The second proposal was simply that there should be only one other *vyasasana* than Srila Prabhupada’s in ISKCON temples, and any of the initiating gurus could sit on it. This proposal abolished the exclusive *vyasasana*, the symbol of the zonal *acarya*’s sovereignty. It is characteristic of religions that symbols and that which they symbolize are tightly unified; they could be said to interpenetrate. I realized therefore that if the symbol of the system were eliminated, it would go far to eliminate the system. The destruction of the symbol was a necessary if not a sufficient condition for the destruction of the reality. The proposal also dealt with a diffi

Among those who focused on the lack of qualified people to be gurus, some thought the solution was to devise a way to continue the movement and yet eliminate the position of guru as far as possible. Initiations would continue, but the guru would be considered some sort of apprentice or merely a formal ecclesiastical functionary. To my mind, these people were proposing an essential change in the tradition, not merely an adaptation to new circumstances. Typically, this group also awaited the coming of the “self-effulgent *acarya*” to lead ISKCON, which, in the interregnum, would make do with semi- or demi-gurus. Captivated by the image of the *acarya* as an absolute and decisive authority, whose judgments were indubitably correct, and needing such a person for their own spiritual security, the give-and-take of a collegial body did not appeal to them any more than it appealed to most of the gurus they ostensibly opposed.

It was my conviction that we could retain in ISKCON the full-fledged position of guru, as delineated by the Scriptures, a position that did not essentially involve being the autonomous autocratic head of an institution, did not essentially disallow discussion, consultation, revision and adjustment, and did not forbid collegial decision-making as a kind of *lese majesté*.

The zonal *acarya* position had asserted it was intrinsic to the position of guru to be absolute, and it professed that the gurus would voluntarily sacrifice that position for the sake of the movement. This implied that by working with a GBC the gurus were doing something unnatural or artificial, and of course their “voluntary sacrifice” seemed increasingly *pro forma*. To counter this conception of the guru, I argued that there was a significant way in which it was essential for the bona-fide guru to be *relative*. After all, Vaishnava doctrine holds that the essential qualifying characteristic of a guru is that he strictly follows the order of his guru. He never becomes the master, but always remains the servant. Consequently, to be qualified to be a guru in ISKCON it was essential to strictly follow the order of Srila Prabhupada, who had decreed that all of us must serve cooperatively under the authority of the GBC. Accepting the authority of the GBC board was not a voluntary option. Because it was Srila Prabhupada’s order, it was necessary to guru-hood itself.

The first effort of the “guru reform movement” was to urge a strengthening commitment to spiritual purification on every-

when all other satisfactions have run dry. These desires are designated by the term “desire for response.”

Both the desire for response and the desire for recognition are included under the term “integrative desires” because they contribute to the individual’s purpose in life as he conceives that purpose. An equally satisfactory term would be “desire for self-realization.” It should be recognized that these desires for response and recognition³ constitute the social drive, or to use Professor Woodworth’s conception, the “social capacity.”⁴

3. Those desires consisting chiefly of instinctual cravings or appetites which by their partial and regressive character tend to interfere with the attainment of some new level of development and the accomplishment of a man’s purpose in life as he conceives that purpose. To these the name “segmental” desires has been given.⁵ Our cases have shown convincingly the primacy of the social desires. The outstanding evil revealed in all of them has been, according to our findings, the sense of isolation or guilt. To feel oneself cut off from those with whom one seeks identification is death. Man, as Professor Mead insists, is a social being, a part of the social process. It appears to be just as important for an individual to feel himself part of the social organism as for a cell to be a functioning unit in the body to which it belongs. To be cast out is destruction. Later I shall try to show that our ethical standards and values are functions of our social relationships, particularly of those relationships which are to us of paramount value.

The significance of the sex desires, which are a potent factor in so large a proportion of our cases, is to be found according to this interpretation in their social importance. The sex instinct is concerned with the perpetuation and improvement of the race, which is biologically that for which the individual exists. For this reason it is hardly to be wondered at that these powerful instinctual cravings which are so difficult to keep from discharging themselves in cheap and unsatisfactory ways are major sources of anxiety and distress. From the standpoint of mental health the all-important question is not satisfaction of the craving but fulfillment of the individual’s biological function, considered from the more comprehensive viewpoint. The truth which there is in the concept of sublimation might just as well be stated by saying that a man can dispense with the sex function whenever he is able to feel that he is really counting for something in the ongoing process of race perpetuation and improvement.

According to the view here taken the great mass of mental activity takes place in the region of dim awareness and the task of growth and education is a twofold one: to explore new territory by throwing the searchlights of attention upon what had before been unassimilated and then to assign it to its proper place in the mental structure or organization of experience, where it will either function automatically, i.e., without affect, or else lie dormant until it is called forth by some appropriate stimulus.

Assimilation is to be thought of as both social and personal. We have not assimilated any new experience until we have brought it into harmony with the general social organization and requirements as we conceive of them. To be able to give expression to it in words is part of the process. ⁶

But many individuals never grow up. They do not succeed in assimilating the experiences which are essential to the attainment of new levels of development. This is particularly true of the domain of sex as the individual emerges from youth to manhood. As in the instance of the young thief whose case we have been considering, sex remains at once fascinating and yet terrifying, something of which he cannot bring himself to speak. It thus becomes the “complex” of the Freudians, an unassimilated mass of experience of high emotional potential which gives rise to all sorts of tensions. That such a complex is properly placed in the “unconscious” I am unable to agree. It seems to me to be rather clamoring insistently for attention, giving the unhappy individual no peace until it is taken care of, while he all the time is trying to escape from it by forcing it back into the region of shadow and darkness, or incorporate it into his mental structure by means of some formulation which will enable it to get by in disguise. The root evil is a craving or tendency which the individual is unable either to control or to acknowledge to those whom he loves, and by the same token to himself.

By *clear awareness* we mean the bringing into the open of whatever it is that is causing the inner disharmony. The individual not only recognizes it himself but he is ready also to acknowledge it to those whose love is necessary to him. He is not afraid to tell. By *oblivion* is meant forgetfulness not of the difficulty but of the ideal, a victory of the segmental tendencies. Between these two is the

the task of preparing a research paper which would precisely locate what had gone wrong in the establishment of the gurus.

In my research, I happened upon a 1978 letter written to a GBC member by Pradyumna dasa, a scholarly devotee who had been Srila Prabhupada’s assistant in his translation work and who was familiar with Vaishnava traditions; the letter spelled out objections to the newly established guru system. That letter provided the clue as to the precise problem. Building on Pradyumna’s insight, I was able to present a paper that combined analysis and polemics to argue that in violation of the desires of Srila Prabhupada, the traditional post of the “institutional *acarya*” had been established in ISKCON and that this *acarya* system was essentially in conflict with the GBC system so carefully established by Srila Prabhupada. This paper received the endorsement of the North American temple presidents.

By this time, the “reform moment” had broadened among Prabhupada’s disciples, far beyond the core group of the temple presidents. To many in that movement, the really vital issue was not one of structure but of the spiritual qualifications, or rather the perceived lack of them, in the present gurus. As a leader of the reform movement, however, I tried to focus our political effort on rectifying the structural problem.

I was not blind to the spiritual shortcomings of some of the gurus. I even recognized that the structural problem was in part an institutionalization of a serious spiritual defect—that is, unacknowledged personal ambition in some of ISKCON’s leaders. However, it was clear to me that the gurus held no monopoly on spiritual deficiency. I was not sure that the reform movement was that much purer—as many of the attacks on the gurus were weighted by a generous load of envy, vengefulness, and *resentment*. In my view, what had gone wrong in ISKCON constituted a collective judgment on all of Srila Prabhupada’s disciples. After all, it is Vaishnava doctrine that one advances by the grace of guru, and the guru’s grace is equally available to all his disciples. Those who became gurus were among Srila Prabhupada’s “best men.” If they were not good enough, each critic like me had to ask himself: “Why wasn’t I any better?” Thus the first part of “guru reform” had to be personal reformation, a renewed dedication to the cultivation of spiritual life by all Srila Prabhupada’s disciples, reformers most of all. It would not do to try to purify ISKCON without purifying oneself.

After two gurus, Hamsadutta and Jayatirtha, were expelled from ISKCON, many Prabhupada disciples were in constant anxiety, fearing it was only a matter of time before some one or other of the remaining *acaryas* fell down or deviated. A group centered in California began circulating papers around the movement arguing that none of Srila Prabhupada's disciples was fit to be an *acarya*. These dissidents refused to believe that Srila Prabhupada could have hand-picked to be gurus any of these (to them) obviously unqualified people, and they argued that the archival tape recording of the May 28, 1977 conversation had been doctored by the gurus. This group proposed that no one should be initiated in ISKCON until the "self-effulgent *acarya*" would emerge. The idea of putting all initiations on indefinite hold did not appeal to most devotees, however, and this group eventually dissolved. Yet the notion that ISKCON needed a "self-effulgent *acarya*" to lead it adequately became the shared presupposition of what I would describe as the extreme right and the extreme left. The extreme right constituted those partisans who fervently believed that some one or the other of the current zonal *acaryas*, say Kirtanananda or Jayatirtha or Bhagavan, was indeed the awaited "self-effulgent *acarya*," lacking only full recognition to take his place at the head of all ISKCON as Srila Prabhupada's legitimate successor, a recognition unfortunately thwarted by "ambitious and envious god-brothers." The extreme left was composed of those who held that none of Srila Prabhupada's disciples is qualified to be an *acarya*, and until such a qualified *acarya* emerges and is spontaneously recognized by everyone ("self-effulgent") no one should claim to be a guru in his own right.

In the fall of 1984 a routine meeting of the temple presidents of North America turned into a collective and public acknowledgment that nearly everyone held deep private misgivings about the manner in which the position of guru had been established in ISKCON. They organized an immediate second meeting to further consider the issue, and thus the "guru reform movement" was born. With the engagement of a significant number of second-tier leaders, men whose loyalty to ISKCON was not in doubt, a credible and potent movement was established. The temple presidents in North America, almost to a man, deeply believed something was drastically wrong, yet there was no clear idea of exactly what it was. At the second meeting, I was assigned

region of obscurity, and confusion and befuddlement which characterizes not merely the attempts at concealment and self-deception but also of uncompleted assimilation.

REACTION MODES AND THEIR END RESULTS

We are concerned here with the reactions to unassimilated experiences of the type described above. The attempt is here made to bring together the common methods of dealing with them, together with those attitudes and types of personality which are the logical end results.

By *frankness* is meant the honest attempt to face the difficulty and the readiness to acknowledge it both to oneself and to others which is a pre-condition of socialization and assimilation. Such *socialization* and assimilation can take place on different levels.

1. We may have *progressive unification on a basis conceived as universal* with attitudes of aspiration, reverence, and faith. Such an end result involves the sense of fellowship with that which is best in one's social experience and may be attained through confession and forgiveness for one's shortcomings and the reinforcement of the will to do right. The religious man at his best and the socially minded and disciplined man who may not call himself religious but who is none the less consistently loyal to the best he knows are exemplifications. It is the goal of all education to produce men of these types through normal development and without eruptive experiences.

2. Socialization on a basis that is *contemporary and local*, attained through participation in the activities and achievements of one's particular group. The individual thus wins recognition and a sense of social security. This is the adjustment of the average or "normal" man, who does not bother himself about remote Problems of world peace or future destiny. Such a man may, like the boy with the clean bill of health whom Dr. Healy describes, succeed in laughing and joking about matters which fill his neurotic brethren with fascinated horror.

3. *Socialization of the antisocial* as in the case of gregarious delinquents and criminals who support each other in pursuits and interests inimical to social welfare. By thus finding social validation within their own little group they may escape any sense of inner discomfort and guilt. In so far as they do not recognize their

membership in the larger group they are not bound by its attitudes. They may of course be active agents of destruction to society at large, constituting a cancer-like social formation.

4. *Submergence*, a type of solution seen in morbidly exaggerated form in certain neurotics who are constantly seeking sympathy and must have someone to lean upon. It is also encountered sometimes in the psychoanalytic situation known as the “transference.” It is seen likewise in some individuals who, because of a sense of inward insecurity, identify themselves with other individuals or institutions or causes in the effort to maintain their own self-respect. This tendency is responsible in large part for sectarianism, superpatriotism, et cetera.

5. Under *Concealment* we have a number of common protective devices and means of evasion.

(a) The reaction of *compromise* is especially common among those who would cling to their primary loyalties without paying the price of the complete commitment essential to the attainment of higher levels of development. The frequency of this reaction among religious people is responsible for the charge that religion itself is an “escape from reality.” Here would belong the case encountered in my survey work of a minister with an unresolved sex conflict and guilty of marital infidelity, whose sermons were confined to such themes as keeping the Sabbath; and that also of another minister with a similar conflict whose constant concern was correctness of ritual and loyalty to his denomination. These men because of their own inner disharmony were unable to hold before their people the really significant social ideals and symbols without discomfort to themselves. They escaped this discomfort by substituting other symbols. This reaction of compromise through the substitution of minor for major virtues and loyalties is to be found in *ritualism*, *legalism*, *pedantry*, *sectarianism*, *superpatriotism*, at least when these are characterized by attitudes of intolerance. A man may be punctilious about the tithing of mint and anise and cummin precisely because he is deficient in the weightier matters of the Law. Under this general reaction we may also include the placing of undue emphasis upon merely negative virtues, such as we see in *prudishness* and asceticism. The pathological stealing in the case of Dr. Healy’s young thief is also a form of compromise. It seems to be a solution of a severe sex conflict found in the substitution of what in the boy’s eyes was a lesser offense.

mission. In other words, Srila Prabhupada’s position as the autonomous guru at the head of ISKCON, was, from his point of view, a second-best arrangement, the consequence of failure.

Learning from that failure, Srila Prabhupada set up a governing body and watched over its operations as it tried to manage the society. He taught the GBC how to function. For example, in 1975 he took the body through its first regular annual meeting, showing how the GBC should strictly follow parliamentary procedure (as set forth in Robert’s *Rules of Order*), how proposals should be put forward, discussed, voted upon (Srila Prabhupada himself voted on each item, acting as one among many), and those that passed entered into a minutes book. As time went on he tried to turn as much management over to the GBC as possible, intervening only when there were crises. He made sure the whole movement understood that the GBC was being trained to continue at the head of the society after he was gone.

The GBC did carry on, and no one had tried to establish a single *acarya* over ISKCON. Yet the division of ISKCON into private initiating zones, the installation of the exclusive *vyasasana*, the ritual elevation of the gurus far above their own god-brothers, had implicitly established eleven *acaryas* of the traditional institutional type, each bearing the same relationship to his zone as Srila Prabhupada had borne to the entire movement.

The manner in which the first eleven were selected as gurus became interpreted in accordance with the paradigm of the *acarya*’s appointment of a successor to the head of his institution. For example, in a book of homages to one of the new gurus, published in 1979, we read this: “Desiring to prepare his disciples for his departure, His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada very wisely selected eleven of his most intimate disciples to become both his material and spiritual successors.

At the same time, a growing number of Srila Prabhupada’s disciples felt there was something wrong with the position of new gurus in ISKCON. Many felt their god-brothers—or most of them, anyway—were simply unqualified for such a position. Yet when several *acaryas* began to engage in questionable or even scandalous behavior, it was only with some difficulty that the GBC established its right to exercise any authority over gurus, who were seen, after all, as Srila Prabhupada’s hand picked successors. Even after the GBC established its authority, its control in most cases remained more *de jure* than *de facto*.

Such disagreement among the disciples of one *acarya* is also found among the members of the Gaudiya Matha. In the beginning, during the presence of Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya Astottara-sata Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada, all the disciples worked in agreement; but just after his disappearance, they disagreed. One party strictly followed the instructions of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, but another group created their own concoction about executing his desires. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, at the time of his departure, requested all his disciples to form a governing body and conduct missionary activities cooperatively. He did not instruct a particular man to become the next *acarya*. But just after his passing away, his leading secretaries made plans, without authority, to occupy the post of *acarya*, and they split in two factions over who the next *acarya* would be. Consequently, both factions were *asara*, or useless, because they had no authority, having disobeyed the order of the spiritual master. Despite the spiritual master's order to form a governing body and execute the missionary activities of the Gaudiya Matha, the two unauthorized factions began litigation that is still going on after forty years with no decision. (*Caitanya Caritamrita*, *Adi-lila*, 12.8, purport)

Other accounts, from Gaudiya Matha sources, say that a Governing Body Commission was formed and operated for a while before the attempt to establish an *acarya* at the head of the institution shattered the organization. In any case, it is clear that the previous generation came to grief on the same issue that confronted ISKCON: of forming a unified preaching mission that did not depend on the direction of any one individual but rather on a collegial body, functioning cooperatively. Indeed, the *acarya* first established over the main body of the Gaudiya Matha suffered the same fate as that which befell a number of the ISKCON *acaryas*: after being raised so high, he fell down from the principles of Krishna consciousness. From Srila Prabhupada's perspective, all these spiritual problems must be considered as the consequence of the disciples' disobedience of the order of the spiritual master.

Because the Gaudiya Matha had failed, Srila Prabhupada had to work independently, establishing his own society and becoming its sole *acarya*. Had things gone better, he would have been one of many missionaries and preachers within a unified Gaudiya

(b) The reaction pattern of *diversion* is a Common and often wholesome way of dealing with a sense of unworthiness. By a resort to activities of various kinds such as work, play, travel, it may be possible to escape a troublesome conscience. This is one of the principles involved in occupational and recreational therapy as practiced in our mental hospitals. To be able to forget aright is one of the secrets of growth and development and work and play may contribute toward this. But it is also true that there may be certain hurdles that have to be taken and that rest and recreation and work may become means of escape. Such is the case with many of our elated manics.

(c) The method of *bluffing* is likewise common not merely among our hospital patients but also among those who pass as normal. There are many who deal with a sense of insecurity by putting on an air of bravado, swaggering, blustering, using big words, and the like. In cases of mental disorder we see this reaction most strikingly exemplified in some elated manics.⁷

(d) The device of *shifting responsibility* or "passing the buck" for one's own failures and shortcomings to other persons or objects is all too common both inside the hospital and out. Its frequency among normal persons can be attested by anyone who has made a low mark on examination or who has failed in some commission and has found himself blaming the instructor or the chief. We may thus find ourselves resorting to the devices of self-assertive ideation and delusional misinterpretation. The end results of this method of dealing with disowned and unassimilated tendencies is to be found in those types which we label *paranoic*. Some paranoic types, as we have already seen (pp. 35 ff.), are characterized by the development of fictitious self-importance. The commonest patterns are those representing the externalization of conscience. The sufferer hears accusing voices charging him with unseemly behavior. People are talking about him, laughing at him, trying to read his mind. Scarcely less common are ideas representing transfer of blame upon enemies who seek to hypnotize him, who put bad thoughts into his mind, who play upon him with electrical currents, who try to "frame" him, and the like.

The shifting of responsibility upon an *organic scapegoat* differs from the preceding types in that it locates the difficulty within the individual and involves the bid for sympathy and attention. The famous tennis player, who whenever she lost a match would

discover that she had not been well at the time, is an example. This tendency to “pass the buck” to an organic scapegoat is said to account for a large share of the fees which are paid each year to the medical profession. It is seen in its more striking forms in those disorders which we label *psychoneurotic*, particularly in the hysterical and neurasthenic forms. A variant of this attempt to shift responsibility is to be found in the “shell shock” or warneurosis so common in the recent war. In such cases an individual faced with the painful necessity of going over the top would become blind or deaf or otherwise incapacitated so that it would become physically impossible for him to go. He would thus escape both the necessity of performing the dangerous task and the even greater danger of condemnation as a coward. The beginnings of such reactions are to be found in the child who avoids going to school by developing a headache or escapes an unpleasant situation by fainting.

These concealment devices are of greatest interest from the standpoint of our inquiry because of the light which they throw upon the social nature of man. In the accusing voices and other manifestations of the morbid conscience we have striking confirmation of the view that the sense of guilt is essentially a social judgment which operates within the personality itself. We may be impressed by the marvelous devices and the strange lengths to which men will go to escape the sense of condemnation and by the relationship between mental health and the systematization or structuralization of ideas. The paranoic who succeeds in achieving some sort of systematization in his misinterpretations may be socially isolated but he does manage to keep his head above water.

6. *Withdrawal* is another of the major reaction patterns. This may appear very early. The child who fails in one thing may stop trying and turn to something else. If he keeps on failing he becomes listless and is regarded as lazy. Failure in one line of endeavor may of course lead to redirection of energy into other and more profitable channels, but all too often it results in the reaction of hopelessness. One escapes failure and pain by refusing to hope or to try. Such a reaction is likely to be accompanied by sulking and brooding, and by easy pleasure-taking. The latter is particularly apt to be the case where the primary evil lies in instinctual claims which the patient has neither been able to own or to control. Where this reaction of withdrawal and phantasy-

acarya would be ritually elevated over all other disciples of his guru (his “god-brothers”), and all of them would bring new members to him for initiation.

ISKCON, however, represents a departure from this archaic form of organization. Srila Prabhupada repeatedly stressed his intention that ISKCON would not, after his departure, be managed by a single *acarya*, but rather by the board of directors, the Governing Body Commission, that he formed and began to train in 1970. Srila Prabhupada’s intention, and his departure from the tradition of the institutional *acarya*, is shown in a striking way in his will. Traditionally, it was in the first article of his will that an *acarya* named his successor, passing on his institution to his heir as if it were his personal property. The first article of Srila Prabhupada’s will reads: “The Governing Body Commission (GBC) will be the ultimate managing authority for the entire International Society for Krishna Consciousness.”

(To speakers of American English, “Governing Body Commission” has a distinctly British ring, revealing at once the colonial provenance of the phrase. Indeed, “Governing Body Commission” turns out to be the title of the board of directors of that great British contribution to India of modern efficiency and management, the Indian Railways.)

With its corporate form of organization, ISKCON thus represents a modernization of a religious tradition. That modernization is the culmination of several generations of effort and it was not easily accomplished. Bhaktivinoda Thakura (1838-1914) was the first *acarya* in the tradition to receive a western-style education and to write in English. A visionary, he saw a reformed and revitalized Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition operating as a unified world-wide preaching mission in the modern world. He instilled this vision in his son, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura (1874-1937), who was to become Srila Prabhupada’s guru. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati had constructed a preaching mission of over sixty centers throughout India called the Gaudiya Matha. He tried to push beyond the boundary of India by sending a missionary *sannyasi* in the 1930s to Europe (but without much success). The Gaudiya Matha was a large, vital, and growing concern, yet soon after the demise of its founder, the organization fragmented. Srila Prabhupada explains how this happened:

devotees in ISKCON. Indeed, I am convinced that even those who established the system had not fully articulated its meaning even to themselves; for what ever reason, they were not all fully conscious of what they were doing, but were acting more on instinct or intuition. Why could there not have been only one additional *vyasasana* upon which any new guru could sit? Why two? This question was not asked until the reform movement raised it in 1985. In fact the exclusive *vyasasana*, reserved for the sole use of the *acarya* of that zone, symbolized the seat of that guru as the head of the institution. The exclusive *vyasasana* indicated the traditional absolute and autocratic guru of Hindu tradition. And it is that particular conception of the role of guru which was indeed essentially in conflict with the GBC system of management as set up by Srila Prabhupada.

The Sanskrit word *acarya* was commonly used in ISKCON as a designation, as a title, for the initiating gurus, but the word has several meanings, and this ambiguity became the source of much difficulty. The most basic meaning is “one who teaches by example.” It is synonymous with *guru*. However, *acarya* tends to convey a more honorific sense. The outstanding teachers and leaders are called *acaryas*, and the word is encountered as a title, and incorporated into the names of teachers who were founders of institutions or communities: Sankaracarya, Madhvacarya, Ramanujacarya, and the like. Finally, *acarya* is specifically used to denote a guru or teacher who resides at the head of the institution.

The *acarya* in this last sense denotes a prominent and traditional form of religious leadership in India: in which a single, charismatic individual attracts others to him and by a natural process an institution forms about him. In this typically premodern style of leadership, the organization is very much a personal extension, a veritable embodiment, of that charismatic individual. (Srila Prabhupada is often quoted as having said that ISKCON was “his body.”) The viability and spiritual credibility of the institution is largely a function of the perceived spiritual potency of the *acarya*. In India, the current *acarya* would appoint his successor from among his followers, and in this way the charisma would be transferred. Upon the demise of his predecessor, the successor *acarya* would take the seat at the head of the institute. That successor

building goes on to the point where the dream-world becomes the real world, we have the type which is generally labeled *simple schizophrenia* (dementia praecox).

Where unacceptable tendencies get the upper hand and the unfortunate loses not only hope but self-respect, we have that progressive disintegration which is generally labeled *hebephrenic schizophrenia*. From the standpoint of this study it is to be noted that such disintegration of personality is characterized by an impairment of the language functions which lends support to Mead’s conception of the place of language in the development and organization of personality. Where in the paranoid the speech remains coherent and logical and relevant, it becomes in the hebephrenic disconnected, choppy, incoherent, irrelevant. Schizophrenic thinking is sometimes compared to the thinking of children and of primitive man. For this there may be some justification as regard the types of symbolism which appear. It is however important to recognize that so far as form and sentence structure and social intercourse are concerned the thinking of the hebephrenic merely reflects the fragmentation of personality which has taken place.

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT

1. *Gradual*. In our consideration of typical ways of meeting the sense of inner disharmony it has been assumed that these reaction patterns tend to develop gradually into certain logical end results. We have recognized in the chart three different types of gradual development:

(a) *Normal Growth* - the progressive socialization and unification of the personality on a socially acceptable basis.

(b) *Arrested Development* - stabilization through various concealment devices upon an unsatisfactory basis, frequently that of isolation. In psychotic cases there would be a steady and often imperceptible change in the controlling desires, interests and attitudes until the point is reached where the individual is so queer or so dangerous or in some other way so impossible socially that segregation becomes necessary. In such cases, as we have seen, the prognosis is commonly poor. Such persons seldom go all to pieces. Neither do they often make a satisfactory social adjustment.

(c) *Progressive Disintegration* - increasing listlessness, seclusive

ness, and domination of the segmental cravings, with regression to lower and irresponsible levels and with corresponding loss of hope and of self-respect. Such changes are possibly but not demonstrably accompanied by structural changes. They are certainly concerned with emotion and volition and with the organization of the personality.

2. *Eruptive*. The significance of the acute disturbance has already been dealt with. It will be sufficient at this point to suggest that the favorable outcome which we have found in this group of cases may be explained by the fact that the acute disturbance serves to bring the cause of distress from the realm of evasion and concealment out into the realm of clear awareness. Such disturbances often serve as a sort of judgment day, the patient blurting out what before, for the life of him, he would not have dared to say. Just as inflammation in the physical organism is an attempt at repair or elimination, so the emotional disturbance serves to purge out accumulated poisons and break up malignant concealment devices which have been blocking development.

It may be in order also to recall the fact that according to our findings these acute disturbances begin with the narrowing of attention and then with an experience interpreted as a manifestation of the superpersonal. To the individual concerned the effect is overwhelming. It is a new experience of the sort that cannot at once be assimilated. It compels a reorganization of his entire mental structure and a revaluation of values. Compared however with the sex experiences which are likewise so difficult to assimilate, such experiences may perhaps be likened to an emetic or a purgative. They may be crushing and destructive but they are purifying. Their purpose is to make possible a new start, at least in those cases in which constructive elements are present.

It is important to bear in mind that such acute disturbances are closely related to the religious conversion experience which ever since the time of Paul of Tarsus has figured so prominently in the work of the Christian church. According to Starbuck's findings such conversion experiences are likewise an eruptive breaking up of evil habits and abnormal tastes and the turning of vital forces along new channels. In mental disorder of this type we therefore have a manifestation of the power that makes for health just as truly as we do in the religious conversion experience.

his initiating guru out of the eleven, formidable social and institutional pressures directed his choice to one place only. Typically, a new devotee strongly attracted to taking initiation from another guru would be relocated to that guru's zone.

In point of fact, in each ISKCON temple room *two*—not one—*vyasasanas* were established for new gurus. The two smaller *vyasasanas* flanked Srila Prabhupada's. The one on Srila Prabhupada's right was consecrated to the exclusive use of the local zonal *acarya*. The one on the left, referred to as the "guest *vyasana*," was occupied by any of the initiating gurus from outside the zone who might happen to be visiting.

The zonal *acarya* naturally exercised great de facto power, and the relation between the guru and the GBC (both individually and collectively) soon became a difficult and troubling issue. It seemed to many that Srila Prabhupada had established two authority structures—that of the GBC and that of the gurus. Indeed, the gurus, with their status as sacred persons, a status constantly emphasized by formal deference and ceremonial honors, and their growing numbers of personally devoted followers, quickly eclipsed the GBC. Many of the gurus felt that the GBC was a temporary, *ad hoc* expedient until the movement could be unified under the charismatic leadership of a single, "self-effulgent *acarya*," who would emerge among the gurus in the course of time, in the way that an emperor would gradually be recognized among a group of kings. Further, many gurus tended to feel that the essential characteristic of a guru as an absolute authority (being the representative of God on earth) was vitiated by the give-and-take of collegial relations among the GBC. Indeed, in response to the question about such a compromise of the guru's position, it was at one point officially stated that for the sake of the movement's unity and harmony the gurus *voluntarily* set aside the natural exercise of their absolute position and accepted the relativity of working with the GBC.

Yet it is interesting that the true position of the guru in ISKCON was most honestly proclaimed to the devotees in symbolic terms, in the language of furniture, as it were, rather than in explicit verbal utterance. I have already mentioned that two *vyasasanas*, or ceremonial seats, were provided in each temple for the gurus coming after Srila Prabhupada. This system of twin *vyasasanas* was established without any explicit articulation of its meaning to the

demise, however, those same officiating gurus to be selected by Srila Prabhupada would, if qualified, become gurus in their own right. Those whom they initiated would be their own disciples, and Srila Prabhupada would be their grand-spiritual master.

In July, Srila Prabhupada selected eleven members of the GBC (then twenty in number) to begin acting at once as officiating gurus. Thus the GBC understood Srila Prabhupada to have chosen the first initiating gurus to succeed him.

After Srila Prabhupada's demise in November, 1977, those eleven members quickly became elevated in an extraordinary way above all other devotees in the movement, even their colleagues on the GBC. Within the GBC, the gurus formed a special sub-committee, which had jurisdiction on all matters concerning gurus and initiation, including the exclusive power to appoint any new gurus and to deal with any problems concerning gurus.

The new gurus received the same ceremonial treatment that was accorded Srila Prabhupada. In every ISKCON temple room, there was reserved for Srila Prabhupada an elevated ceremonial seat, called a *vyasasana*, that represented the spiritual authority of its occupier. After Prabhupada's demise, most temples installed a life-size statue of Prabhupada on the *vyasasana*. During the daily morning order of service, Srila Prabhupada was honored at that *vyasasana* with a ceremony called *guru-puja*, during which the devotees would gather at the *vyasasana* and sing a traditional hymn in praise of guru while a priest would perform the formal *arati* ceremony of worship. In addition, after Srila Prabhupada's demise, new, lower *vyasanas* were installed next to Srila Prabhupada's, and there the new gurus daily received *puja* at the same time that Srila Prabhupada was offered his.

Each of the new gurus was allocated his own geographical area to initiate in and preside over. Srila Prabhupada had organized the GBC so that each member was responsible for the movement's activities in a particular geographical area, or "zone." With the advent of new gurus, those 20 or so GBC zones became part of eleven greater zones, each of which had one of the eleven initiating gurus as its head. That guru's zone would consist of the zone he managed as a GBC member, and then in most cases the zone or zones of other GBC members who were not initiating gurus. To all new recruits, the local zonal *acarya* was presented as *the* spiritual master. Although in principle a new devotee was free to chose

In the discussion of the various reaction modes the end products were also considered. It is not necessary to go over this ground again. We are concerned here only with those solutions which result from the attempts at reorganization and with certain considerations of general interest.

Following the acute disturbances we may have almost any of the different end results.

First of all, there may be no particular change. The individual may come out of his disturbed condition and become normal again without solving his problem. He may stick his head in the sand and try to forget. He may go back to his former manner of life and to his customary reaction modes. He may continue to compromise or "pull the wool over his eyes" or "pass the buck" or seek escape from responsibility. And the primary evil may still remain. Most of the patients discharged from our mental hospitals are probably of this type, and because their problem is still unsolved, and because the sense of personal failure and isolation is aggravated by the discouragement and humiliation incident to the hospital experience, there is soon a recurrence and perhaps repeated recurrences.

In the second place, the results may be definitely destructive. We have seen that acute upheaval tends either to make or to break. The victory may thus go to the segmental and regressive tendencies. The unhappy individual may pass from the upheaval into a condition of progressive disintegration.

In the third place, he may reconstruct his life on the basis of delusional misinterpretation.

In the fourth place, the problem may be solved and correctly solved. A favorable outcome for an attempt at reorganization seems most likely to occur under the following conditions:

1. When the attempt is made with group influence dominating. Positive suggestions then control and the eccentricities which appear tend to be those of the group. The greatest amount of deviation among the cases of attempted reorganization is found among those whose experience was solitary. Attempts at reorganization are thus most apt to be successful when they take place under the influence of a religious group or of a psychotherapist.

2. When the attempt is made on the individual's own initia

tive and of his own volition before the unacceptable tendencies get possession and before disaster comes crashing around his head.

3. When the sufferer is able to lay himself bare and seek help from those who are competent to give it.

4. When the life situation admits of satisfactory adjustment. The case is hopeless if the unfortunate hasn't it in him to be something of a success economically or socially or if his instinctual cravings are such that he can neither own them nor control them.

In the case of our young offender a satisfactory solution was reached. Involved in difficulty he found his way to a wise and sympathetic physician. To him he told his story, the cause of the trouble was brought to light, certain adjustments were made, and once more he was at peace with himself and with his fellows. Not infrequently the mere bringing to light of the unassimilated material is sufficient to end the conflict and effect some degree of unification. But in this case the influence of the physician must not be forgotten. It was not the mere bringing of the difficulty out from the realm of concealment into the light of clear consciousness which did the work. There was also the social factor which the psychoanalysts recognize in the doctrine of "transference." According to this doctrine, as it was originally formulated, a certain attachment on the part of the patient toward the physician is to be expected in all cases in which treatment is successful. This attachment must be recognized as part of the process of treatment, it must be utilized, and then in order to complete the cure it must be broken up.⁸ This has been explained as due to the fact that the physician becomes for the patient a "father substitute." That is equivalent to saying that in order to help a nervous sufferer, the physician must be for him a representative of authority. In laying bare to the physician his inner difficulties, the patient places himself at the bar of judgment and gives to the physician power to bind or loose. If the physician, after hearing the story and knowing the worst, does not condemn, he may feel himself restored to right relationship with those whose love is necessary to him. He may feel himself forgiven and able to meet his fellows with his head up and hope in his heart. And in saying that before the process of cure is complete the transference relationship must be broken up, Freud has recognized that no solution involving an attitude of submergence can be a satisfactory one. No man can be dependent upon another human being, whether physician or

not exclusively due to the spiritual and material immaturity of the leaders, although that was serious enough in itself. Those shortcomings were linked, both as cause and effect, to a profound *structural* problem in ISKCON. This problem concerned the way in which the position of initiating guru had become institutionalized in ISKCON after Prabhupada. The problem arose when the conception of guru was implicitly based on a traditional model of an inspired, charismatic spiritual autocrat, an absolute and autonomously decisive authority, around whom an institution takes shape as the natural extension and embodiment of his charisma. Indeed, Srila Prabhupada himself was such a guru. Yet starting in 1970, Srila Prabhupada had worked diligently to establish a quite different sort of leadership structure in ISKCON, a structure he repeatedly emphasized that would continue after him. This is a model of management found in distinctly modern institutions, that of a corporate board of directors, called in ISKCON "the Governing Body Commission." The practical problem facing ISKCON after Srila Prabhupada's demise was this: How do gurus, who are God's direct representatives and according to fundamental Vaisnava theology to be worshiped by their disciples "on a equal level with God," fit within an organization functioning through modern rational and legal modes under the direction of a committee? This is the institutional and philosophical dilemma that ISKCON faced. Although ISKCON's crisis of leadership and authority was precipitated by the falldowns and deviations of some of the gurus, that crisis was to a large extent resolved by a structural revisioning and reordering of the institutionalization of gurus in the society.

On May 28, 1977, during what turned out to be Srila Prabhupada's terminal illness, the Governing Body Commission deputed a committee of seven members to question their spiritual master about the delicate matter of guru succession: How would the function of initiating guru be carried out in ISKCON after Srila Prabhupada's departure? In response to this question, Srila Prabhupada said he would select some disciples to begin immediately performing all of the activities involved in giving initiation—approving the candidate, chanting on the beads, giving the name, and so on—acting as an officiating priest (*rtvik*) on Srila Prabhupada's behalf. Those so initiated during Srila Prabhupada's physical presence would be Srila Prabhupada's disciples. After his

sition, and power within the institution, had propelled most of these young men into rash and improvident heroics. The persistence of desires they could neither acknowledge nor control started to manifest as intolerance and fanaticism. The social climate began to turn ugly: Some of these *sannyasis* embarked on preaching campaigns against householders and even more so against women, whose life in the movement at this time became extremely trying. Feelings grew so heated that in 1976, a clash between householder temple presidents in North America and a powerful association of peripatetic *sannyasis* and *brahmacaris* escalated into a conflict so major that Srila Prabhupada called it a “fratricidal war.”

As one would expect, over the long run many of these young *sannyasis* found it impossible to maintain their vows. There was a steady, even growing, exodus. In most cases, an extreme sense of disgrace and shame, amplified by the merciless condemnation of the *sannyasi* community itself, propelled them into exile into the fringe or beyond.

Although the problems of *grhasthas* and *sannyasis* became well-known by the agency of scandalized gossip, the devotees in the movement could not bring themselves collectively to acknowledge the scope of the difficulty and its significance. This was more or less the state of affairs when Srila Prabhupada passed away in November of 1977, at the age of eighty-two, and ISKCON was transferred to the hands of his students, none of whom had had more than a dozen years training. Eleven select members of the GBC were elevated to the position of initiating guru. (The two householders among them were quickly persuaded to take *sannyasa*.) However, the empowerment of the next generation did nothing to abrogate the trend of *sannyasis*’ falling down, a trend that did not spare the group of new gurus. Some were soon in trouble. Within ten years of assuming the role of living exemplars and via media to God for thousands of new devotees, six of them had quite spectacularly plummeted, and ISKCON’s survival was in doubt.

“Guru Reform”

The crisis of authority that shook ISKCON to its foundations in the years after Srila Prabhupada’s demise—and led finally in 1987 to a restructuring of the position of guru in ISKCON—was

mother or wife, and yet be free and well. The structure of the personality must be built upon the enduring foundation represented by true religion. The individual, as Professor Mead points out, must learn to respond to that to which others also respond (see endnote 6). Such a common object of response is best found in the supreme loyalty which in most men and in most societies is represented in their idea of God. Of this I shall speak in the next chapter.

According to this view no solution which does not involve progressive socialization and unification on a basis conceived as universal and abiding can ever be permanently satisfactory. It is not sufficient to be free from inner conflict. Judged by the standards of the good which is ever in the process of becoming, which is not yet but ought to be, the one brother may have been in no happier state than the other. The very complacency which gave him a dean bill of health in the eyes of his family may be as the carefree unconcern of the animal. It may be even an obstacle in the path of progress. Only time will tell and the understanding which is based upon all the facts after the adventure of life is completed. The ultimate test is the biological test, the test of survival - stated, however, not in terms of the individual but of society as a whole and the more abundant life which ought to be achieved. Therefore I say that the only truly satisfactory solution is one which results in progressive unification with the fellowship which has the capacity for universality. But this proposition will require another chapter.

1. Alexander and Staub in their discussion of the criminal (*The Criminal, the Judge, and the Public*, New York, Macmillan CO., 1931, PP. 54-5) distinguish three types:

(a) The neurotic criminal, whose hostile activity against society is the result of intra-psychic conflict between the social and antisocial components of his personality.

(b) The normal criminal, whose psychic organization is similar to that of the normal individual except that he identifies himself with criminal prototypes.

(c) The criminal whose antisocial behavior is the result of some pathological process of organic nature (e.g., idiots, schizophrenics, epileptics, paretics, etc.).

It is to be noted that the brother who was brought to the clinic for

stealing is a fine example of the first type. The other brother, even though he had committed no criminal acts, may be taken as an example of the second type. For the purposes of this inquiry, which is concerned with reaction patterns and motivations and not with legal status, the terms “criminal” and “delinquent” will be used to designate persons of the second type who have become involved in overt antisocial behavior. ‘nose whose antisocial conduct is incidental to an intra-psychic conflict and is unsupported by group attitudes seem better regarded as mentally ill. So also those in whom, as in schizophrenics, the inner conflicts have reached the terminal stages, will not be classed as criminals. We shall therefore regard as criminal and delinquent only those who have identified themselves with an antisocial ideal and whose conduct is supported by an antisocial group.

2. For a consideration of the structuralization of the personality and its relation to socialization see Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1935). See below footnote, p. 151

3. Cf. Thomas, *The Unadjusted Girl* (Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1924), chap. 1.

4. *Dynamic Psychology* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1922).

5. Kempf, *Psychopathology* (St. Louis, C. V. Mosby and Co., 1921), chap. 14. It is to be noted that the term “segmental” is derived from Kempf’s theory of the autonomic functions of the personality and their association with the segments of the spinal cord.

6. A most illuminating consideration of this process is to be found in Mead’s *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1935). According to Professor Mead, man is essentially a social being and part of a social organism. Human social organization is basically different from that of the highly developed societies of ants or bees. In the latter social organization is based upon a physiological plasticity which makes possible the development of different types of individuals which then perform automatically the various social functions. The process of reproduction is thus carried on for an entire community by a single queen bee or queen ant. In this single individual there is an enormous development of the reproductive organs, while in the other members of the community there is a corresponding degeneration of the reproductive organs. A similar differentiation we find also in the case of the fighters, who are unable even to feed themselves. In man the social organization is based upon an entirely different principle. There is no physiological differentiation except that between the sexes. Instead social organization is based upon intelligent co-operation. This is made possible through the development of language. Unlike dogs in a fight, who respond only each to the other, man is able to respond to symbols which call forth the same response in others as they do in himself. He is able to converse, to speak

here. And they worked so nicely that within one year we started our London temple, and that is going on very nicely. [applause]

So it is not the question of a *brahmacari*, *sannyasi* or *grhastha*..... One who knows the science of Krsna and preaches all over the world, he is guru, spiritual master. It doesn’t matter. So in Europe and America I am especially creating more *grhasthas*, families, so that they can take up this movement very seriously and preach, and I am glad to inform you that this process has become very successful. Thank you very much. [applause]

Then, when I joined ISKCON it was assumed that everyone would become married, and indeed, devotees were urged to do so. Marriages were arranged, usually without courtship, and each had to be approved by Srila Prabhupada. But as early as 1971 Srila Prabhupada was becoming concerned, as shown by this letter of July 5th to Hridayananda, one of his leaders:

So far as R--- getting himself married, you must first discuss with him that this marriage business is not a farce, but it must be taken very seriously. There is no question of divorce, and if he will promise not to separate from his wife, then my sanction for the marriage is there; otherwise not. Recently too many couples have been drifting into Maya’s waters, and it is very discouraging. So if he will agree on these points, then you can perform the marriage with my blessings.

Srila Prabhupada’s discouragement with the outcome of marriages continued to increase. Finally, in 1974, Srila Prabhupada simply refused to sanction any further marriages. (In my temple, there were no marriages between devotees for nearly a year, and then they were performed under my local sanction with a civil ceremony.)

Srila Prabhupada’s policy seemed to change as a result of his discouragement. Throughout ISKCON, householder life began to undergo a radical devaluation. Scriptural statements condemning married life as “a dark well” and so on became prominently quoted. Male devotees were strongly urged to remain *brahmacari* (celibate), which now seemed to be the norm, and *sannyasa* was a kind of reward for achievement. The number of men initiated into the *sannyasa asrama* increased dramatically. A genuine desire for transcendence, often co-mingled with an urge to acquire prestige, po

five or seven years, at different rates in different locations, has the ISKCON leadership began to acknowledge the “fringies” as “our people,” as a genuine congregation to whom the temple should minister.

The belated recognition of a congregation illustrates the unwillingness to confront the fact of a wide spread failure of its member to maintain a long-term commitment to its own standards of spiritual purity. But the movement as a whole was forced to face the problem when the fall-down of a number of senior members who had taken on the role of initiating gurus after Srila Prabhupada’s passing away in 1977 finally led to a crisis.

All these gurus were *sannyasis*, those who had taken final and supposedly irrevocable vows of celibacy and renunciation, and their fall from the standards became the crowning event in what had been a continuing failure rate of those who had taken *sannyasa* vows, a rate that approached 90%.

In 1969, three householder couples (*grhasthas*) very successfully launched the Hare Krishna movement in London. Impressed by the way that householders could preach, Srila Prabhupada encouraged marriage as a matter of policy. He explains his position in this 1971 Bombay *Bhagavad-gita* lecture (March 29):

Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya Asttotara Sata Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Maharaja Prabhupada [Srila Prabhupada’s spiritual master]: He was creating more *brahmacaris* and *sannyasis* for preaching work, but I am creating more *grhasthas* [applause], because in Europe and America the boys and girls intermingle so quickly and intimately that it is very difficult to keep one *brahmacari*. So there is no need of artificial *brahmacaris*. .

So married life is called *grhastha-asrama*. It is as good as *sannyasa-asrama*. *Asrama* means where there is *bhagavad-bhajana* [glorification of God]. It doesn’t matter whether one is *sannyasi* or one is *grhastha* or a *brahmacari*. The main principle is *bhagavad-bhajana*. But practically also, I may inform you that these married couples, they are helping me very much . . . For practical example, I may say that one of my Godbrothers, a *sannyasi*, he was deputed [in the 1930s] to go to London for starting a temple, but three or four years he remained there, he could not execute the will [of his spiritual master]; therefore he was called back.

Now, I sent [three] married couples. All of them are present

build up within himself consistent responses to certain common social symbols. In this way the individual takes into himself the organized attitudes of the group. It is also possible for him to influence the group. This organization of social attitudes which the individual takes over is his character. What the individual is, then, depends upon the group which he reflects or represents and the degree of harmony or consistency which he achieves. We thus judge ourselves in the light of the organized attitudes of the group. Self-criticism is essentially social criticism and the *sense* of guilt is the social condemnation which the individual pronounces upon himself on the basis of what he knows of the attitudes of the community.

7. Not all manics react to a sense of failure. There are those who, possibly insecure, fly off the handle when things go well.

8. For the early formulation see Freud’s *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (New York, Boni and Liveright, 1920), PP- 379ff. During the last sixteen years the ideas regarding the transference situation have undergone considerable development and present-day psychoanalysts would not be satisfied with the original formulation, much less with my oversimplified account of it. They would in particular question the view that an affectionate attachment is essential and that the “negative transference” which Freud recognized is to be explained merely as the reverse side of love. They are also disinclined to speak of “breaking up the transference.” According to Sullivan (“The Modified Psychoanalytic Treatment of Schizophrenia,” *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Nov., 1931, P- 530) there seems to be nothing other than the purpose of the interpersonal situation which distinguishes the psychoanalytic transference relation from other situations of interpersonal intimacy. It seems to be a special case of interpersonal adaptation, distinguished chiefly by the role of subordination to an enlightened physician skilled in penetrating the self-deceptions to which man is uniquely susceptible, with the mutually accepted purpose of securing to the patient a-n increased skill in living. In such a relationship many phenomena are likely to appear. In particular the patient is apt to invest the physician with the attributes of those he has known in the past who have been for him representatives of authority. Hence the attitudes of affection. Hence also those of hostility. The one attitude is quite as favorable to successful treatment as the other, provided only the patient is willing to discuss them with the physician. In fact some excellent psychoanalysts center the entire treatment around a frank consideration of the origin and meaning of the patient’s attitudes toward them. It is to be noted however that the changing conceptions of the transference relationship tend rather to enhance its social significance and that release from the sense of isolation (estrangement) and the attainment of autonomy (maturity) remain still the goals of psychoanalytic procedure.

Foundations of Spiritual Healing

Chapter X of The Exploration of the Inner World

IN VENTURING TO USE the term “spiritual healing” I am probably laying myself open to criticism. Only a few weeks ago I was taken severely to task for using the term “cure of souls.” A professor of religious education thought it most unfortunate that I should cling to such an outworn and misleading word as “soul,” while a psychiatrist friend suggested that it would be much wiser if I should avoid the use of words like “cure,” to which the medical profession laid an exclusive claim. I am afraid the present title will be open to the same objections.

Now I have no desire to become involved in any controversy over the use of words and I should be happy to substitute another phrase if I could find it. I am concerned only to follow out the logical consequences of our findings as regards the distinctive task of the clergyman and the conditions essential to its accomplishment. We have found that mental illness of the functional type has to do with the philosophy of life and usually with the sense of personal failure. We have arrived at the conclusion that acute upheavals are really attempts at reorganization which are closely related to those eruptive solutions of inner conflicts so familiar to the religious worker under the name of “conversion experiences.” We have furthermore concluded that in mental illness there are operative those profound and delicate laws of the spiritual life with which theology deals. If our findings are correct it follows that the religious worker, as his major problem, is dealing with precisely those same inner adjustments and conflicts which come

be no clue at all. A close inquiry would subsequently disclose a few devotees who had ascertained that the “blooped” devotee had been having problems following the principles. He could not bring himself to admit it, and his sense of isolation and guilt drove him in silence from the community.

In the early days, each such departure tended to create a community crisis. It rocked the faith of many members, whose own hold on Krishna consciousness was none too strong. Sometimes the temple members covertly envied the “blooped” devotee. At any rate, the community reacted to the departure as to a betrayal. Usually a communal post-mortem would spontaneously take place, in which the faults and shortcomings of the departed devotee were analysed and condemned to the point at which the remaining members felt more secure about themselves and their values.

To the bewilderment and, frequently, annoyance of the temple residents, many “blooped” devotees did not utterly vanish. They would instead establish some sort of contact with a temple member; they would become part of a social network of other former temple residents. They would show up regularly at the Sunday feast and other public functions. They were always about, just on the periphery: I remember one temple resident who referred to them as “the shadow of ISKCON.” In ISKCON’s jargon these liminal persons were called “fringies,”—a term, by the way, one now rarely hears. Because of the anger and resentment many temple devotees felt toward the “fringies,” the treatment they received was often unfriendly, and they were subject to cutting or sarcastic remarks of the temple residents. At best, the temple devotees were indifferent, because “you could not preach to fringies.” Preaching meant in this context to persuade someone to join the temple community, and the fringies were inoculated against such appeals.

They maintained an allegiance to Krishna consciousness, but had stabilized themselves on what the temple residents considered an unsatisfactory platform, for the most part compromising to some degree with one or more of the regulative principles and participating in a reduced or irregular program of devotional activities. Over the years the population of fringies steadily increased, but ISKCON leaders and temple devotees did not acknowledge any duties or obligations toward them, nor concede much validity to their continuing allegiance. They represented failure, and the establishment wanted simply to disown them. Only over the last

lowing of the regulative principles a *sine qua non* of allegiance to Srila Prabhupada. At the same time, members who were themselves fairly new looked for validation by seeking and producing swift conversions, conversions that entailed, in the devotee's mind, a complete break with outside society and total immersion with the culture of an ISKCON temple. Naturally, the temples became filled with premature and tentative candidates, who were under great internal and external pressure to profess a degree of commitment far in excess of the reality. Further, a lack of mature devotees, who had passed successfully through the trials of spiritual development, left most of the movement without experienced practical guides and counselors. All these factors combined to produce in the movement an inability to deal in a healthy and constructive manner with the spiritual failings and failures of its members. Those problems could hardly even be acknowledged, let alone discussed.

The climate of ISKCON in those days strongly discouraged any frank and open confession of difficulty in following the principles. This was true not only on the institutional level, but quite often on the personal one as well. For example, when soon after joining the temple I confided my own normal problem in a slightly senior devotee, hoping for some forgiveness, practical advice, sympathy, and encouragement, my confessor showed alarm, astonishment and anger; becoming aloof and stern, he simply delivered the judgment that I "could not be a devotee." Such experiences seemed to have been all-too typical. Concealment became the dominant mode of reaction. Devotees became isolated from each other, and real fellowship was baffled. The various forms of concealment that are the unfortunate by-product of any religious group with a high demand for sanctity surfaced within ISKCON: bluffing, hypocrisy, intolerance, fanaticism, punctiliousness, fault-finding, and the substitution of minor for major virtues. (I take this list from Anton T. Boisen, *The Exploration of the Inner World* (Harper and Brothers, 1936), p. 148.)

A steady stream of devotees joined the movement, and a steady stream left. In ISKCON jargon, they "blooped," fell back into illusion. All too often the exit scenario went something like this: A devotee would simply disappear, without any forewarning, in the middle of the night. Sometimes this removal would be preceded by a period of withdrawal and depression, but often there would

within the province of the psychiatrist. It is of course true that he is dealing with these difficulties in their incipient rather than in their terminal stages. But that only makes his task the more important. If only he have understanding, there is no one who has it in his power to do more effective preventive work than the minister who in his professional capacity goes in and out among his people, visiting them in their homes, talking with them individually about their personal problems, and preaching from his pulpit on that which has to do with the end and meaning of life. For the same reason, if he have not understanding, he may be worse than ineffective. He may do actual harm. But the fact remains that so long as the church is in existence and so long as it retains any influence whatsoever, the minister will be engaged in the same general task as the psychiatrist. Regardless of the name we use, for better or for worse, he will be doing psychotherapeutic work. It would seem advisable that this fact should be recognized and that he should be enabled to do his rightful part toward the achievement of mental health among those whom he serves.

I count it, therefore, as not the least important of my obligations as a student of the advanced disorders of the personality that I should do my part toward acquainting ministers generally with the insights derived from dealing with serious mental illness. In endeavoring to perform this task before groups of ministers I have not infrequently encountered among them a certain impatience. They want to be told at once what to do. They want rules of procedure which they can apply and they are apt to be restive under the attempt to discover the meaning of the different forms of mental illness.

For such an attitude there is much justification.¹ The driver of an automobile does not have to be a physicist or even a mechanic and an electrician may be perfectly competent for a practical task even though he may think of electricity in terms of "juice." One does not need to understand all the factors involved in order to do good psychotherapeutic work. In fact, much research work having to do with the treatment of the mentally ill has arrived at erroneous conclusions just because it has not taken this principle into account. The results obtained with dementia praecox patients by one set of workers through the treatment of "focal infections" (see above, pp. 100-1) or through the inoculation with horse serum do not prove the validity of their respective theories. Other

workers, using the same methods, arrive at different results. Apparently the results obtained have been due to other factors, such as the physician's faith in his own remedy, the greater amount of attention bestowed on sufferers who had before been neglected and the consequent change in spiritual atmosphere. Neither does the fact that important beneficial results are secured through psychoanalytic treatment prove the correctness of psychoanalytic theories. The fact is that psychotherapy is far less dependent upon technique than it is upon the personal relationship between physician and patient. Wherever the patient has come to trust the physician enough to unburden himself of his problems and wherever the physician is ready to listen with intelligent sympathy, good results are likely to follow regardless of the correctness or incorrectness of the physician's particular theories or procedures. This 'principle has been stated by Dr. Macfie Campbell in an article which ought to be in the hands of every physician and clergyman. Says Dr. Campbell in part:

The essence of psychotherapy, no matter what the special procedure may be, is that Brown, an individual in trouble, is getting an honest chance to bring up important problems of his life before McConnachie the physician, who is willing to listen to him, and that McConnachie is honestly endeavoring to pool his special knowledge with Brown's lay experience to see whether poor Brown can by means of his help make a better job of his life and get along without his previous evasive reactions, whether the latter consist of physical symptoms, special fears, domestic friction, economic inefficiency, or social eccentricities....

So long as McConnachie is intelligent and listens long enough to the information which Brown can put before him, and so long as he is able to talk to Brown in a useful and constructive way, details of procedure are of vanishing importance. One physician may wish to employ the dramatic technique of the hypnotic procedure in order that he may listen to Brown and talk to Brown. Brown may be docile and have no objections to this little drama. In fact the mild mystery connected with it may somewhat exalt McConnachie in his eyes. Or he may find it less embarrassing to tell some things with head averted or with eyes closed. It is gratifying to have at the same time the possibility of unburdening and the official fiction that we ourselves are not really conscious of the facts we are disclosing. So in diplomacy it is sometimes useful to communicate certain information but at the same time to make a "dementi officiel." This is in accord with diplomatic tradition and the diplomatist maintains his self-respect. . . .

in the movement to a charismatic outpouring of enthusiasm, manifest especially in *sankirtana*, group chanting of the names of God while dancing to the rhythm of drums and cymbals, either within a temple or in public places. This central practice—*sankirtana* is said to be the *yuga-dharma*, or dispensation for this age—illustrates the ability of devotional activities to produce an intense concentration of consciousness through the expressive engagement of the senses and feelings—a fundamental principle of *bhakti-yoga*. The compelling energy generated by *sankirtana*, which easily engenders a contagious enthusiasm and a sense of exaltation, is greatly boosted in the participants by the affective channelling caused by the asceticism of the regulative principles. Conversely, the ability of devotional activities like *sankirtana* and Deity worship (*arcana*) to engage one's feelings and senses can make adherence to the principles not an exercise in barren abnegation but rather a natural displacement of material activities by spiritual ones.

At any rate, not only did young people vigorously commit themselves to the regulative principles of Krishna consciousness with great self confidence, but they also rallied around the principles as a kind of shibboleth, a distinctive validating feature of ISKCON that set it apart both from other, competing new religious movements from the East and from the mainstream denominations of the West.

From the beginning, ISKCON has excelled in causing its members to internalize an extremely high ideal: that of a "pure devotee of Krishna," one totally engaged in God's service without any personal motive and without interruption. Such a standard was visibly exemplified in Srila Prabhupada himself, an *acarya*, or model for all to follow. Initiated devotees, who must strictly observe the regulative principles, are to conform themselves to the standard of a pure devotee, if not out of spontaneous love for God, at least out of dutiful obedience to the command of scripture and *guru*.

It is only natural to expect that it would take a great and often protracted struggle for young men and women, raised in the lax and increasingly permissive moral climate of urbanized, secular America, to live up to their newly-adopted standard. Yet in the early culture of ISKCON such difficulties were not to be easily acknowledged. The shibbolethic role played by the regulative principles, and the fact that taking initiation vows was the only acceptable means of socialization within ISKCON, made strict fol

reality of immediate perception (*pratyaksa*. See *Bhagavad-gita* 9.2). This systematic aim at experiential results gives *bhakti-yoga* a common feature with modern material science, and indeed Srila Prabhupada often used the word “science” to translate “*vijnana*”. As the title of a popular ISKCON book puts it, *bhakti-yoga* is “The Science of Self Realization.”

The practice of the science of self-realization requires that one make oneself the subject of an experiment in the progressive purification of consciousness, an experiment that entails a fairly rigorous program of spiritual practices (*sadhana*) which includes rising each day before dawn to spend the first four or five hours in intense devotional exercises (“the morning program”). During this time, two hours is set aside for individual chanting on beads in fulfillment of a daily commitment to repeat the Hare Krishna *mantra* in this way, 1,728 times as a minimum.

Furthermore, one has to strictly observe four prohibitions. The first prohibition against eating meat, fish, or eggs means, in its most rigorous understanding, that one ought really to eat only food that has been sanctified by first being prepared for and offered to Krishna. The prohibition against taking intoxication means eschewing even the milder anodynes like tea and chocolate. The injunction not to gamble is meant to exclude participating not only in wagering and games of chance but also in time-wasting diversions like sports, cinema, television, and so on. Finally, the injunction against illicit sex forbids not only sex outside of wedlock, but even within marriage if it is not exclusively intended for procreation; for that purpose, sex can be engaged in one time in a month, within the period of the woman’s fertility. The goal is to get through life with a minimum of involvement in sex, and not only in deed, but in speech and thought as well. Srila Prabhupada called these rules “the regulative principles of freedom” (*Bhagavad-gita* 2.64, purport). He made it starkly clear that self-realization and sense-gratification are mutually exclusive, and he refused to compromise on this matter. His followers tended to attribute the lifeless, dispirited condition of the routinized religions of their childhood precisely to institutional accommodations to sense-gratification. Consequently, the very stringency of ISKCON’s regulative principles became to many a hallmark of ISKCON’s validity and acted as an attractive, rather than repellent, factor.

In addition, the emphasis on stringent practice was closely linked

An orthodox follower of Freud may prefer to sit behind his patient, who lies stretched out on a couch and with closed eyes talks to the physician about whatever happens to come into his or her mind. Here too the patient has an opportunity to talk with averted face and it may be more pleasant for the physician not to have the patient scrutinizing his face for an hour continuously. This setting too may give both to the patient and to the physician a diluted magical feeling which heightens the prestige of the physician.

The essential fact about the situation is that Brown, whether in the hypnotic or in the psychoanalytic setting or sitting with eyes wide open on any convenient chair, is talking seriously and earnestly about vital issues to McConnachie, who is seated upon some equally indifferent article of furniture, but who is profoundly convinced of the important role played in many ailments by the complications of human nature and the difficulties of adjustment to a modern cultural environment.²

This does not mean that technique is unimportant. There is certainly much to be learned from the experience of successful practitioners which will help in avoiding difficulties and finding useful devices and methods of procedure. From the experienced and skilled worker the novice may learn much about the importance of keeping accurate records. From him he may learn the elements of a good case record and the distinction which, all too often, is not made between the systematic combing over of the ground and the artistic case summary or the record intended for teaching purposes, in which the significant facts are singled out into clear relief. From the skilled worker the beginner may learn how important it is in questioning a patient or his relatives to establish a proper point of contact. He may note how such a worker begins by putting the informant at ease, how he asks first questions of central interest and works from them back to the questions regarding grandfather or grandmother or the alcoholic uncle, and how carefully he prepares the way for those questions on which the informant is likely to be sensitive. He may learn to recognize the significance of things that are not said and to take note of the sudden pause, of the embarrassed smile, of the averted eyes, or the shift in position which, to those who have eyes to see, may speak as plainly as words. He may learn also the importance of leaving the patient free to tell his own story in his own way with only such questions and comments as are necessary to stimulate him and draw him out and guide him toward the more significant topics.

Probably there is no more important lesson for the average minister or teacher than this art of listening, for not uncommonly he likes to do the talking himself. From the good psychiatrist he should learn the need of beginning with the other fellow, of listening without condemning, of trying to understand his language, particularly that symbolic language which is intended to be understood only by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. And seeing back of symptom and symbol to the real needs and the unspoken longings, the man of understanding will be little concerned about creed or formula but will concern himself with the task of leading the sufferer in terms of his own formulations to discover for himself that solution of his problem which is socially acceptable and constructive.

While it is necessary to bear in mind the primary importance of the imponderable and elusive personal factors, we should not fail to recognize that there are different psychotherapeutic techniques, each with its particular point of view and its particular uses.

The methods which in the past have generally been employed by the church belong in the “faith healing” group. This form of psychotherapy is characterized by the fact that it relies chiefly upon suggestion. It takes the patient as he is, making little or no attempt to discover the roots of his difficulty, and directs his attention to comforting and constructive thoughts through prayer, friendly advice and devotional books. It would do the church serious injustice not to recognize that considerable good sense has been brought to bear by individual workers and that rather generally a great deal of stress has been placed on facing the facts and squaring accounts and correcting misunderstandings. But there has never been any systematic attempt at treatment on the basis of diagnosis, while in such forms as Christian Science suggestion is even carried to the point of denying the reality of evil and pain and asserting the absolute omnipotence of Mind and Love and Truth.

A somewhat different form of faith healing is that which some years ago received much publicity through M. Coue and his little formula about “getting better and better.” Still another is that which makes use of hypnosis. With the patient in the hypnotic condition the practitioner makes constructive suggestions. Of recent years the use of deep hypnosis has been limited. The ten

Prabhupada was giving us. But there was no one else to do the job, so I received on-the-job training with no immediate trainer.

I can hardly remember my performance without shuddering. I think that this was rather typical of ISKCON at the time.

Another difficulty arose from the inter-generational warfare of that era. A contempt for society and its institutions was a countercultural trait that was absorbed into ISKCON in the early days (and in some parts remained for a long time). As a result, devotees were often unnecessarily hostile to and confrontational with established authorities, (including their own parents); when those authorities responded in kind, it only confirmed one’s worst estimation. In some cases, the countercultural hostility became combined with elements extracted from Krishna conscious philosophy to produce a virulent antinomianism—something you will hardly find in, say, the *Bhagavad-gita*. This antinomianism later produced the disaster in the West Virginia New Vrindavan community.

Yet with all these early difficulties the movement still grew and developed, and even in the most trying times an extraordinary degree of spiritual discipline was available to those who sought it.

One could say, in retrospect, that Srila Prabhupada should have put the brakes on the expansion of his movement, held back his preaching, until his leaders could be properly trained by him. One could say that he was doing a very risky thing. I am sure he knew the risks, but from his perspective it would have been inconceivable not to respond as energetically as possible to the God-given opportunity to save souls. The positive results would be eternal, the bad temporary. For my own part, I am deeply grateful for the risk he took in allowing the rapid expansion of ISKCON with all its attendant hazards and shortcomings. It saved me.

Dealing with Spiritual Failure

It seemed to his early followers that Srila Prabhupada offered them something unavailable in the religions they had been raised in. He offered direct spiritual experience of God (*vijnana*, or “realized” knowledge), as opposed to mere doctrinal or “book” knowledge (*jnana*). *Bhakti-yoga* is a spiritual discipline that aims to alter or “purify” consciousness through deliberate cultivation so that the divine can eventually become directly present to it, become a

hood as a viable goal of life, a practical vocational aim. Young western men and women became convinced that they could attain direct experience of God in this life. Srila Prabhupada made it very clear that such an achievement demands an uncompromising standard of purity, and yet his followers became convinced that, in spite of their own past actions and present conditioning, they could be elevated under Srila Prabhupada's tutelage to that requisite standard of purity.

Srila Prabhupada's success in establishing his beachhead in the counterculture soon produced problems within his movement. His early followers were young, immature, untrained, and inexperienced. Many of them had suffered mental, moral, and spiritual disorders as a result of their sojourn in the counterculture, if not in post-war America itself. In short, Srila Prabhupada constructed his movement out of dubious raw material. He was convinced that his efforts were a matter of spiritual life or death, and he was animated by a sense of extreme urgency. In a raging storm one must construct a shelter with whatever comes to hand. Later, architects may criticize. Indeed, Srila Prabhupada knew very well the defects of his handiwork. In the mid seventies, a certain ISKCON leader showed me a letter that Srila Prabhupada had sent him. As I recall it, Srila Prabhupada, writing about his difficulties in managing his movement, had made the striking statement: "Krishna did not send me any first-class men. He sent me only second and third-class men." Another leader told me Srila Prabhupada had written to him in nearly identical language. (I should note that I have not been able to find either letter in the present archive collection of Srila Prabhupada's correspondence.)

The movement's early explosive growth created a further problem. New people, without much material or spiritual maturity or even training, had to assume positions of leadership and responsibility. For example, I moved into the temple in Philadelphia in January, 1971, and by October I had been made President, with twelve or fifteen devotees under my material and spiritual care. My qualifications were that I was a bit older than everyone else, that I had held down regular jobs, that I had three years of post-graduate education. But I had never managed anything or anyone, and spiritually I was still very much occupied with my own struggles. The disciplined world of spiritual life was completely new to me, and I was only beginning to absorb the heritage Srila

dency among those who use hypnosis at all is merely to give suggestions to the patient while the latter is in relaxed condition or under light hypnosis. It is also used for exploratory purposes in order to discover hidden causes of trouble. The disfavor with which hypnosis is now regarded is due to the view that results secured with its help, while often striking, are not permanent. They are suggestions imposed from without and may even tend to weaken the patient's will.

The results secured at religious revivals in the years gone by have undoubtedly been due largely to the influence of suggestion; so also the cures effected at such shrines as Lourdes and Ste. Anne de Beaupre.

A very interesting method is that of moral re-education as represented by Dr. Dubois at the beginning of the present century. He sought to, understand the patient's difficulties and to inculcate a morality based on sound rational and biological principles. In this country the moral re-education plan is best represented in the work of Dr. Riggs at Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

The form of psychotherapy now most in the public eye is psychoanalysis. This in its aims is the exact opposite of faith healing. It has often been compared by its proponents to surgery, and major surgery at that. It is an attempt to lay bare and bring into clear consciousness the disowned sexual desires and cravings which it assumes have become detached from the conscious self and are responsible for the neurotic symptoms. Its aim is to make over the harsh conscience and the rigid ethical standards which have led to the disowning of these sex cravings so as to permit of their incorporation in the personality. To this end the psychoanalyst tries to get his patient to live through again his early experiences. The entire procedure is designed to detach the patient from his early loyalties in order to enable him to build up a new philosophy of life in which the dissociated cravings may be properly assimilated. The analysis begins with the understanding that the patient is to tell everything without evasion or concealment. He is required to report his dreams. He is asked for his earliest memories. He is placed in a reclining position and told to report everything that comes into his mind, no matter what it is. All this is done with the assurance that there is to be no moral condemnation. The patient is in fact encouraged to lay bare even the crudest and most primitive sex imaginings. The analyst's task is to

listen in a detached and impersonal fashion and to help the patient work out his own solution. It is insisted that the analyst himself must make no suggestions. Particularly must he avoid any imposing of his own standards.

Great stress was in the beginning laid upon the idea of “catharsis.” Confession served to let the poisons out of the system and therein lay the curative value of the analysis. It is now recognized that it is not the mere confession which effects the cure but the socialization. The cure is only effected in so far as the sufferer tells his real difficulties to someone whom he trusts, someone who stands to him as the prototype of the father and the representative Of authority and who yet is able to hear the worst without condemning him. The importance of this relationship between physician and patient Freud has recognized from the beginning in his doctrine of the “transference.” According to this doctrine, in all cases in which the physician is able to accomplish anything it is to be expected that an emotional attachment will develop. This attachment may even go so far as to become a love relationship. Even so, it is to be accepted and utilized as part of the process of treatment. It must however be broken up before the cure is completed. This is done by analyzing the relationship itself. This task is however a delicate and difficult one and many an analysis has gone on the rocks at just this point.

Jung has taken sharp issue with Freud in this as well as in several other particulars. According to him the physician should seek from the beginning to avoid such complications by directing the patient’s attention to that which is beyond himself.³ He is also inclined to challenge the wisdom of seeking to detach the patient from his early loyalties and attempting to make over his scale of values. Instead of trying to destroy the “super-ego,” in order to bring about a synthesis with the disowned elements, Jung is intent upon discovering what the “collective unconscious” wants. He then tries to effect a synthesis between this and the conscious self.⁴

This brief resume of the chief psychotherapeutic techniques will suffice to indicate that common to them all is the primary importance of the relationship between physician and patient. The techniques and methods of procedure are, as Dr. Campbell points out, of vanishing importance compared with the qualities of heart and mind, the genuine interest in the patient and his

In spite of having “reached renunciation,” (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 6.16.26, purport), American youth, for want of spiritual direction, disastrously took refuge in sex and drugs. The hippies appeared to Srila Prabhupada as “morose” (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 4.25.11, purport), “distressed,” “wretched,” “unclean,” “without shelter or food,” (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 4.25.5, purport), “irresponsible and unregulated” (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 5.6.10, purport), “lying idle, without any production,” (*Bhagavad-gita* lecture, 1976), and so on. While the counterculture at one point made something of an icon of Srila Prabhupada, he himself remained vigorously opposed to its standards and practices and frequently exhorted his followers to renounce all allegiance to it. This, for example is from a letter of 1969 to Hayagriva dasa:

Anyway, we should be very much careful [not] to publish anything in our paper which will give impression to the public that we are inclined to the hippy [*sic*] movement. In our papers nothing should be published which has even a small tinge of hippy ideas. I must tell you in this connection that if you have any sympathies with the hippy movement you should kindly give it up.

It is surprising that Gaudiya Vaishnavism could have been transplanted into the modern West at all. Yet it should not be surprising—especially to those acquainted with the history of religions—that its earliest American followers should have largely been drawn from radically marginalized and alienated youth. Although Srila Prabhupada may have hoped for a hearing from the establishment, he accepted the receptivity of the hippies as providential, and relied on the potency of the holy name, vigorously preached, to achieve the requisite effect. And, indeed, the movement increased with extraordinary rapidity.

It may seem strange that someone like Prabhupada, with a message so essentially traditional and conservative, should have attracted such radicalized youth. What was his appeal? His sustained and systematic critique of modern material civilization, undertaken from a spiritual perspective, resonated strongly with his young hearers’ own disillusionment. But the deep attraction, in my judgment, was Srila Prabhupada’s ability to implant in us an extraordinary hope: He was able to establish the ideal of saint

eral years before his missionary journey, Srila Prabhupada had written in his English translation and commentary on *Srimad Bhagavatam* [League of Devotees: Vrindaban and Delhi, 1962], that the work was “a cultural presentation for the re-spiritualization of the entire human society,” “meant for bringing about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization of the world.” At that time, however, he envisioned such a cultural revolution as coming from above:

We are confident if the transcendental message of *Srimad Bhagavatam* is received only by the leading men of the world, certainly there will be a change of heart and naturally the people in general will follow them. The mass [of] people in general are so to say tools in the hands of the modern politicians and leaders of the people. If there is a change of heart of the leaders only, certainly there will be a radical change in the atmosphere of the world situation [*sic*].

As it turned out, the American establishment proved quite immune to the attractions of Krishna consciousness, but Srila Prabhupada unexpectedly found a sympathetic reception among the hippies—“the spoiled children of society,” as he once called them (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 4.12.23, purport)—who had emerged as a group in the year of Srila Prabhupada’s arrival. Srila Prabhupada was often to note that the hippies were “our best customers” (Letters to Gaurasundara dasa, 1969, and to Satsvarupa dasa, 1971), “immediate candidates of our Krishna Consciousness” (letter to Govinda dasi, 1969). The reason for such receptivity, according to Srila Prabhupada, was that “the youth in the West have reached the stage of *vairagya*, or renunciation. They are practically disgusted by material pleasure from material sources” (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 6.16.26, purport).

In a 1971 *Bhagavad-gita* lecture Srila Prabhupada said that “these American boys” are

fed up with this materialistic way of life. They want something spiritual. But because there is no such information, there is no such leader, they are becoming hippies, frustrated and confused. And because here is something substantial, they are taking it. This is the secret of success of this Krishna Consciousness movement.

problems, together with the balanced judgment and insight and tact necessary to win the patient’s confidence and establish the rapport which is the *sine qua non* of all effective psychotherapeutic work. With these qualities the techniques will take care of themselves. Without them good technique may perhaps keep the patient from being disillusioned. This resume will also serve to indicate that among the various techniques there are two contrasting methods. One of these relies upon personal influence alone in that it seeks to impose suggestions. The other calls also for the discovery and the solving of the patient’s actual difficulties. It seems hardly necessary to say that the hope of genuine progress lies with the latter group.

In the matter of training for psychotherapeutic work it is obvious that in the case of those techniques which rely merely upon personal influence and suggestion there can be no particular type of training which is to be regarded as essential, and that men without any training at all may be quite effective provided only they have the personal qualifications necessary to win confidence and prestige. It is equally clear that for those techniques which call for understanding the training can hardly be too thorough.

In this country the field of psychotherapy is claimed exclusively by the medical profession and no man is considered equipped to deal even with less serious mental disorders unless he has passed through the educational machine leading to the medical degree. Among the psychoanalysts, who have probably done most toward laying the foundations for a true understanding of these disorders, there is a difference of opinion on this matter. Professor Freud himself has come out definitely in favor of “lay analysis.”⁵ This is not because he wants to lower the standards but because he recognizes the inadequacy of the conventional medical training in the field of mental illness. Adler and Rank seem chiefly interested in the application of the insights derived from psychoanalysis to the field of education, while Jung is frank to say that most of the problems brought to him have to do with the philosophy of life and with religion and that the clergyman ought to be equipped to deal with them, as today he is not.

There can be no question but that membership in the medical profession is today of very great advantage to anyone who wishes to practice psychotherapy. It unlocks the doors. It carries with it a certain prestige; most people today are probably more disposed

to unburden themselves to a physician than they are to a clergyman. More than that, there are of course many cases in which organic disease is actually a primary factor and always there is the interaction between the physical and the mental. But once the organic factors have been ruled out it seems beside the point whether a man be called a physician or a clergyman or by other title when it comes to intelligent dealing with the emotional and spiritual difficulties of his fellows. The first essential is that the beams should have been removed from his own eyes. He should first of all have found solutions for his own difficulties which are socially acceptable in order that his own biases and protective devices may not make him a blind leader of the blind. He must, in other words, have attained to some measure of discipline and integrity and fineness of character. Of equal importance is it that he should have checked his own experience and insights in the light of the experiences and insights of others than himself, particularly of the noblest and best in the experience of the race. A further important requirement is firsthand acquaintance with the primary sources of all knowledge of human nature, the living documents themselves, particularly the revealing documents which are opened in the inner day of judgment.

In these particulars we find a striking contrast between the training of the medical man and that of the clergyman. The medical man is trained to deal at first hand with living human nature. He knows particularly the dangers and diseases to which flesh is heir, and if he be a psychiatrist, he knows the vagaries of the human spirit. He has not, however, as an essential part of his training, been introduced to human nature at its best. In the case of the clergyman the primary stress is laid upon character and purpose and he is introduced in his training to the noblest experiences of the race and to its most important insights. As yet however it is not an essential part of his training that he should be introduced under guidance to the raw material of life or that he should learn to recognize and understand experiences that are morbid or pathological.

Now I have no brief for either profession. I have had almost as much difficulty with the one as with the other. I can only say that from the standpoint of the mentally ill, in whose behalf I speak, I scarcely know which is worse, to have to depend upon a clergy man who has never come to close grips with the realities of hu

were shown scriptural text that stated, for example, that a pure devotee, no matter how low-born, is superior to the most well-qualified, but non-devoted, Brahmin (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 7.9.10).

Mahaprabhu could justify his liberal policy by citing Vaishnava texts that claimed the practices of devotional service to possess such spiritual power as to elevate untouchables (*sva-paca*) (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 3.33.7) and aboriginal peoples (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 2.4.18) to the highest position of Vedic culture. Furthermore, the specific devotional practice of congregational chanting of the names of God, which Chaitanya made the centerpiece of his reform movement, is natural and pleasing and requires no prior qualification whatsoever. Yet it possesses immense purifying potency.

Thus Chaitanya Mahaprabhu offered direct entry into what amounts to the private life of God, and, by virtue of a process practicable by all, could liberally extend that offer to the low as well as the high, the ignorant as well as the learned, the unworthy as well as the worthy, the fallen as well as the saved. All this Srila Prabhupada encapsulated in his conjunction “easy and sublime.”

However, it must be stressed that “easy” did not mean “cheap.” The “easy” process was supposed to make one fully qualified for the sublime position. The verifiable symptom of advancement in chanting is the disappearance of lust, greed, and anger from the heart; full qualification for the higher stages of devotional service is complete absence of all material desires (*virakti*). For example, the conjugal pastimes of Krishna cannot be understood by anyone still affected by mundane sexual desire. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s liberality did not stop him from enforcing very strict standards of conduct among his followers.

This particular mixture of elements, transmitted quite faithfully by Srila Prabhupada to America, did much to determine the inner tensions that produced the dynamic of ISKCON’s development in the West.

Preaching to “White Aborigines”

The demotic thrust of Vaishnava teaching provided theological justification for Srila Prabhupada’s coming to the West—for, by orthodox Hindu standards, all Westerners are *ipso facto* untouchables. Even so, Srila Prabhupada had initially envisioned his mission as directed toward the West’s political and cultural elite. Sev

formularies; and Mahaprabhu was vigorous in extending this relationship to everyone, even the outcastes, the untouchables, and the fallen.

These two tendencies were consonant with Vaishnava tradition in general. Vaishnavism had always propounded, as the highest salvation, a relationship with a transcendent person, whom it viewed as ontologically higher than the undifferentiated Brahman attained by a mysticism of negation (*Bhagavad-Gita* 14.27). And Vaishnavism had always extended spiritual enfranchisement to traditionally disenfranchised people (*Bhagavad-Gita* 9.32). Mahaprabhu developed both tendencies further. He taught, and practiced, the process of entering into a relationship with God in his most private and confidential feature.

According to Gaudiya Vaishnava theology, God has both a public and a private face. When he manifests his power and majesty (*aisvarya*), he is known as Narayana and is served perforce in awe and reverence. However, when he sets aside his lordship, and allows his beauty and sweetness (*madhurya*) to overpower his majesty, he is known as Krishna, the all-attractive. In order to enjoy intimate exchanges of love, Krishna causes his confidential devotees to forget that he is God, so that they may serve him in a fraternal, parental, or conjugal mood. The attainment of such intimate service, Chaitanya taught, is the highest achievement of spiritual life. That achievement was not at all relegated to a future life: pure devotees could fully experience such ecstatic relationships even in this existence. The correct practice of devotional service results in direct experience of the divine (*paresanubhava*) (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 11.2.42). The person of Mahaprabhu himself underwent the extreme physiological alterations (*sattivka-bhava*) that accompany such ecstasies.

The other side of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's endeavor was to extend this relationship with Krishna to all, including those considered degraded and uncultured by birth or habit. Some of his most prominent followers came from beyond the pale of orthodox Hinduism. For instance, Thakura Haridasa, whom Chaitanya made the exemplar (*acarya*) of chanting the divine names, was born a Muslim, and his great lieutenants Sanatana and Rupa Goswami had become outcastes by serving as ministers in the Turkish government of Hussain Shah. This liberality was an affront to the position and prerogatives of the hereditary caste Brahmins, who

man nature, or to be at the mercy of a physician who has no understanding of the spiritual needs and aspirations and of the nobler potentialities of mankind. I am merely convinced that our present system of training experts in the maladies of the personality is in need of improvement. I regard it as a great misfortune that the rigid standardization which now prevails in medical education makes it impossible for a man to qualify as a psychiatrist except by taking five years of expensive and arduous training in order to qualify as internist and surgeon and obstetrician before he can even touch the field of his real interest. ⁶ I am equally certain that certain things all-important to any true understanding of mental illness have been left out of that conventional training and that constant emphasis upon the organic and the sexual may even distort the vision, when it comes to dealing with the delicate inner adjustments of men, particularly with their philosophy of life and with their religious problems and aspirations.

As for, the clergyman, in so far as he has no message for the soul that is sick and no understanding of those experiences in which men are grappling with the issues of spiritual life and death, I am very sure that he will hardly be able to speak with authority regarding the way either to individual or to social salvation. Medical education does stand for one essential requirement. That requirement is firsthand experience under guidance with people that are sick. In the case of the maladies of the personality this would mean that no man is fitted to deal with the incipient disorders of the mind without a background of experience with mental illness of the full-blown variety.

For those who seek authority I am afraid this chapter may not be satisfying. Not in any revelation handed down from the past, not in anything that can be demonstrated in test-tube or under the microscope, not in systems found in books, nor in rules and techniques taken over from successful workers would I seek the basis of spiritual healing, but in the living human documents in all their complexity and in all their elusiveness and in the tested insights of the wise and noble of the past as well as of the present. To the ability to read these human documents in the light of the best human understanding there is no royal road. It calls for that which is beyond anything that books or lectures or schools can impart and to which only a few can attain.

1. Cf. Cabot and Dicks, *The Art of Ministering to the Sick* (New York, Macmillan CO., 1936), PP. 49-50.
2. "Psychotherapy," *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, Sept. 17, 1925.
3. For an illuminating discussion of this point see Cabot and Dicks, *The Art of Ministering to the sick*, chap. 12; also, Elwood Worcester, *Body, Mind, and Spirit* (Boston, Marshall Jones, T93i), Introduction.
4. For Jung's position read his *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1934), chaps. 2, 3, 6, ii; also his *Two Essays in Analytical Psychology* (New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., x928).
5. *The Problem of Lay Analysis* (New York, Brentano's, 11927).
6. Cf. William Healy, "The Newer Psychiatry: Its Field -Training for It." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Jan., 1926.

as an exemplary model, a paradigmatic individual. This personage—the guru, or *acarya* (one who teaches by his own behavior), not only embodies the ideal for all to see, but also delivers the divine grace by which others can become similarly advanced. Thus the institution itself requires devotees who appear to have realized the ideals.

The problem for ISKCON has been to deal constructively with its own failures to live up to its ideals. Many more people have been attracted to the principles of Krishna consciousness than are actually able to follow them. Its more public shortcomings or scandals have resulted from a somewhat protracted refusal or inability to recognize its problems. In the minds of many devotees, they were simply not supposed to happen.

The difficulty for ISKCON was exacerbated from the beginning, however, by the marginal social position of most of the early recruits. They were very young and very alienated, and in joining ISKCON they became double dropouts—from mainstream society into the counterculture, from the counterculture into ISKCON. At the same time, certain attitudes of the 60's counterculture were retained and became part of the unofficial culture of ISKCON.

“Easy and Sublime”

When A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami—known later by the honorific title “Srila Prabhupada”—began preaching in New York City in the second half of the 60's, he characterized Krishna consciousness by a hendiadys that became something of a catchphrase: Krishna consciousness, he said, is “simultaneously easy and sublime.” The combination seems unlikely, for the easy is usually common and ordinary, and the sublime, difficult of realization. Yet in presenting this unlikely conjunction, Srila Prabhupada was quite faithfully representing his received Vaishnava (monotheistic, devotional) tradition from India.

That tradition, called “Gaudiya Vaishnavism,” had attained its distinctive identity in sixteenth century Bengal, as a reformed branch of a much older Vaishnava tradition. This reformation was the achievement of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1533). Somewhat like his European contemporary, Martin Luther, Mahaprabhu stressed a direct, intimately personal relationship with God, unmediated by the traditional priestly offices and ritual

That decision of my younger self is indeed the spiritual capital on which I still live. My self-doubt, rather, is whether I would at this time have the courage to make such a decision, knowing what I know now.

What I know now, of course, is that transcendence is not so easily attained, that history does not so easily release us from its grasp. What I know now is that the line that separates the godly from the ungodly is not congruent with the line dividing ISKCON from non-ISKCON. I know now that, like most in this world, I am committed—in my case deeply committed—to an institution that has done things that make me appalled and ashamed.

I joined ISKCON in my youth, when ISKCON itself was newborn. Over the last quarter-century both of us have matured together. I can no longer be called by any stretch of the term a “youth,” nor can ISKCON be called a “youth-religion.” Through struggle and difficulty ISKCON has attained—has been forced to attain—concrete awareness of its own limitations, and has, on the institutional level, enacted structures of self-criticism and self-correction. I want to set before you what I think is the central problem ISKCON has faced in that struggle. That problem arises out of both the internal dynamics of its spiritual endeavor and of the historical situation in which it has found itself.

ISKCON aims at creating “pure devotees” of God, that is to say, people who serve God without any personal motive and without any interruption and who are free from all material desires. It is not thought in ISKCON that this is an ideal of which we must all, inevitably, fall short. On the contrary, ISKCON has the ability to present this ideal as a practical aim to its members and potential members in an extraordinarily vivid manner. Its members internalize this ideal for themselves, an ideal that demands an exacting and unremitting standard of purity in deeds, in words, in thought.

ISKCON says to people that pure devotional service, though an extremely elevated condition, is an attainable goal. Whenever ISKCON is powerful in recruiting new members and drawing from them a high level of commitment, it is because it can preach this with great confidence. People join and people remain because a very high ideal seems feasible of realization.

Much of the power with which ISKCON is able to present this ideal as both a desirable and an achievable aim depends upon the concrete, physical presence of a successful devotee who functions

Technical Terms and Concepts

From the Appendix of The Exploration of the Inner World

PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE. A term which denotes personality as viewed from the standpoint of meanings. It corresponds to the German term *Weltanschauung* and signifies the individual's orientation with reference to the external world, his conception of himself and of his purpose in life, his hierarchy of loyalties and values and his system of beliefs and attitudes. The development of such a system of meanings is dependent upon the use of language. This means that it is a social process. It involves the incorporation within the individual of the group organization and system of meanings. While thus growing out of clear awareness, and depending for its framework upon that which can be put into words, the philosophy of life is to be thought of as something vastly more than that which is clearly articulate. It is the entire system of meanings which influences and determines all his reactions and

and we have explained the remarkable distortion of belief in the paranoid as the attempt to incorporate or assimilate the disowned desires. Our inquiry has thus led us to look upon the social or “integrative” desires for *response and recognition* as representing the fundamental need of every individual. We have also been led to distinguish the “segmental” desires which by their partial and regressive character tend to conflict with the requirements of the organized self (pp. 149-52, 156-57, 172-75).

SOCIALIZATION. The term “socialization” we have used to denote the identification of the individual with his group. We have been led to the view that man is a social being. He must be able to feel himself a functioning part of some social whole, for the sake of which he can, if necessary, even give his life. The value judgments of the individual are thus dependent upon his social relationships. He judges himself, his possessions, his accomplishments through the eyes of those with whom he seeks to be identified and to feel himself “isolated” from them is, according to our findings, the root evil in functional mental illness (cf. pp. 172-80). We have seen that root socialization may take place on different levels, from that which is conceived as universal and abiding, as In religion at its best, to the acceptance of the ideals and the finding of satisfaction in the approval of a criminal gang.

ISOLATION. A term used in this book to denote an inner attitude or state of mind characterized by the sense of estrangement from those with whom the Individual seeks identification. We have explained it as due to the presence within the individual of instinctual tendencies out of harmony with the fellowship to which he aspires and which he is unable either to renounce or control or to acknowledge without fear of condemnation (P.144).

LOYALTY. Used in this book in the special sense of an accepted identification with some person or group. The term “primary loyalty” is used to denote the relationship toward the parents and early guides with its mingled attitudes of obligations, fear and affection. The term “ultimate loyalty” is I used to denote the identification with the social whole which generally is symbolized by the idea of God. The relationships toward those who are looked upon as representatives of authority differ widely in the relative strength of fear and obligation as compared with love and understanding.

Cleaning House and Cleaning Hearts Reform and Renewal in ISKCON

*A paper by Ravindra Svarupa dasa delivered at the Vaishnava Academy conference held in Weisbaden, Germany in January 1994. Published in **ISKCON Communications Journal**, No. 3 (January-June 1994), 43-52 (Part 1) and No. 4 (July-December 1994), 25-33 (Part 2).*

In 1971 I underwent the profoundly wrenching change of becoming a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, leaving one life and embarking on another. I abandoned old associations to immerse myself totally in the life of a tight-knit temple commune; I radically restyled my exterior to complement my utterly changed interior. I became a stranger in my own land.

I undertook such an arduous passage because I was convinced that I was thereby effecting an ontological crossing: I was leaving the material dimension for the spiritual, awakening from the nightmare of history to the peace of eternity. ISKCON temples were embassies of the kingdom of God. Although apparently located in Maya's realm, they were under direct divine jurisdiction. There the powers of material conditioning and desire had no sway. This is what I believed.

Looking back at that younger self of mine—twenty-six years old at the time—I am appalled by his naiveté—“stupidity” would be appropriate—and at the same time awed by his sacrificial commitment. Foolish and ignorant though he was, I am more than ever

which was characteristic of the “dementia praecox” types. This is a doubtful point.

DELUSION. Is often defined as a “false belief” It is better to think of it as a belief, held to with emotional intensity by some individual, which is not shared by his fellows and serves to isolate him from them. Usually what is called “delusion” pertains to the individual’s conception of him self and of his relationship to the external world. A hospital staff seldom calls a man deluded so long as his ideas, no matter how unusual, are shared by his group. Most of us today believe many things which are false and our beliefs, like a patient’s delusions, may be determined by the requirements of the life-situation. They are part of the system of meanings, of the organization of attitudes and interpretations which enables us to reason and function.

ILLUSION. An erroneous interpretation which may be shared by the group. It is a false belief, but it does not isolate those who hold it. A mirage is an illusion. So also is the idea that the European nations, even if they were willing, would be able to pay off the war debts in gold.

CONSCIENCE. We have followed Professor Hocking in regarding conscience as an awareness of success or failure in maintaining one’s status and one’s growth. It interposes a check when any act is proposed which threatens the integrity of the personality. It is also on the growing edge of human nature as a guide in determining the direction of ‘growth (*Human Nature and Its Re-making*, pp. 123-24). Its origin, or basis, we have found in the organized system of meanings and moral judgments taken over from the group, particularly from the early guides (pp. 163-80; also notes to p. 151 and p. 171).

CULTURE. A sociological term denoting the system of attitudes, values and customs held in common by a group of people and relating to their self-maintenance and self-perpetuation. It follows from our findings that culture, as thus defined, is dependent upon a common loyalty. With the acceptance of that loyalty by the individual members of the group, the system of values and attitudes which the group holds is internalized in the form of conscience. The curbing of the antisocial tendencies is thus provided for not through force from without but through individual self-discipline.

RELIGION. Socialization on the level of that which is conceived as universal and abiding, It involves the sense of identification with a fellowship which has the capacity for universality. This may or may not include the idea of God. Usually it does. It involves also certain behavior sequences. According to our findings an acutely disturbed patient, struggling for survival against forces which threaten to engulf him, is likely to be preoccupied with the problem of his own relationship to God. In so far as he has the sense of mystical identification and in so far as his conduct is in keeping with his ideation, he is regarded as religious, no matter how grotesque his ideas and no matter what the outcome may be. And to the extent that he succeeds in achieving a unification of personality on the basis of what for him is the supreme loyalty, to that extent we have recognized the experience as religious, regardless of its social acceptance. We must then distinguish between superior and inferior types of religion. The superior type would be that which makes for unification with the finest potentialities of the human race.

Our findings indicate that religious concern is associated with

the attempt to face the facts of the life situation in the light of ultimate loyalties and values. It does not tend to appear in the reactions of drifting and of concealment.

From the social standpoint religion is the attempt to establish and perpetuate some common loyalty and the moral achievements and insights associated with it. Organized religion centers in a common loyalty and in the purpose of fostering the potentialities which it represents.

GOD. According to our findings the idea of God, regardless of the metaphysical reality which may or may not be involved, stands for a social and psychological fact of basic importance. It symbolizes that in the individual's social experience which he counts of highest value and with which he would be identified. It represents the composite impress of those whom he counts most worthy of love and honor. It is likewise the symbol of the abiding collective interests.

SIN. A tendency or an action which is out of harmony with the fellowship to which the individual aspires or ought to aspire and with the level of development to which he ought to attain. It is more specifically a breach of trust as regards what he conceives to be his ultimate loyalty.

GUILT. A legal term which is used interchangeably with the term "sin." It is current today in psychiatric circles, while the term "sin" is frowned upon.

It is important to distinguish between the sense of sin or guilt and the actual faultiness or "state of depravity" which is at variance with the requirements of the highest fellowship and of which the individual may be unaware. The sense of sin denotes the awareness of something within which would be condemned by those with whom he seeks identification and which, so long as it is not brought out into the open and dealt with correctly, will separate him from their fellowship. The consciousness of sin, according to Christian theology, is the first step in the process of Salvation.

CONVERSION. The more or less sudden change of character from sinfulness to righteousness or from indifference to spiritual awakening which, ever since the time of John the Baptist and Saul of Tarsus, has been recognized and cultivated in the Christian church.

FORGIVENESS. The experience of reconciliation following

upon some breach of trust, marked on the one side by the acknowledgment of wrongdoing and the desire to make amends and on the other side by the capacity to understand and the willingness to resume friendly relations.

SALVATION. The release from the sense of isolation and the restoration to fellowship with God (mental health) which follows immediately upon the experience of forgiveness.

SANCTIFICATION. The transformation of character which is the goal of all religious or mystical experience. It is the old theological term which denotes the integration or unification of the personality which merely begins with the acceptance of the Christian ideal and the identification with the Christian fellowship.

REPRESSION. A psychoanalytic term now widely current and frequently confused in popular speech with self-control. It denotes properly the exclusion from consciousness and from motor expression of painful or dangerous material by preventing its ideational presentation. It thus deals with troublesome instinctual claims by disowning them and refusing to acknowledge them. The result is that the disowned tendencies get by in disguised form and are indulged in secretly. From the standpoint of our inquiry it is important to notice that the evil to which Freud is referring lies precisely in the failure of self-control and in the resort to self-deception. The instinctual claims are not brought into the open and dealt with in the light of the requirements of the organized social self. They remain thus unassimilated and after the manner of unassimilated food they give the sufferer no peace until in some way or other they are taken care of. According to our findings such "complexes," as the Freudians call them, are not to be thought of as in the "unconscious." They are rather clamoring for attention.

DISSOCIATION. A term applied by Freud to the splitting off from the organized, social self of the disowned or repressed tendencies. These may form something in the nature of an independent organization. Janet and Morton Prince in their work with hysterical psychoneurotics found cases in which there was an emergence of secondary personalities. Between these secondary personalities and the normal self there was a break in the memory chain. Dissociation of this type is seldom encountered in the mental hospital. Bleuler, in coining the term "schizophrenia" (split mind), assumed that there was a splitting between idea and effect