

Viplavah

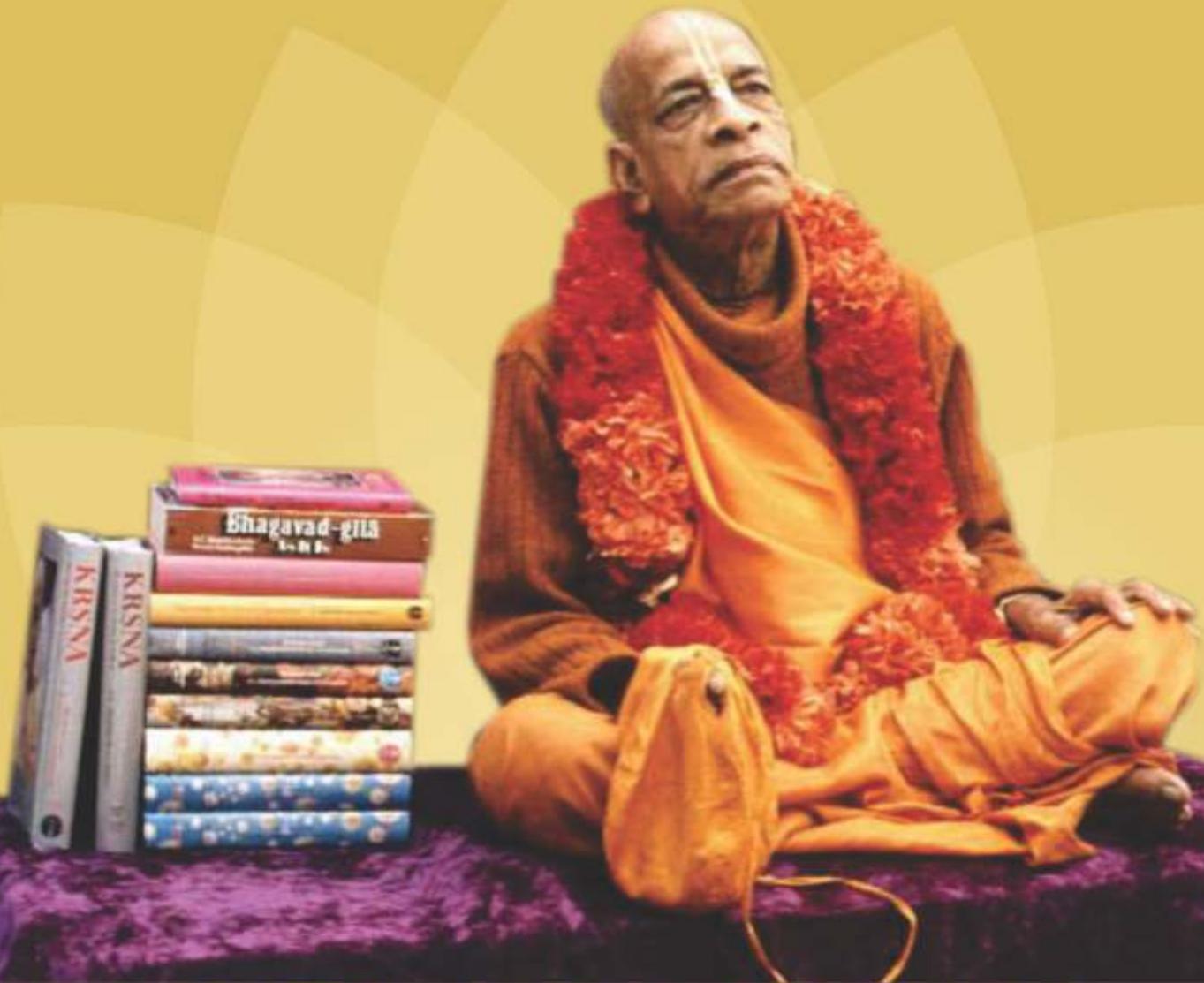
A Journal of the ISKCON Ministry of Education

Dedicated to ISKCON Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Revolution Through Education



GITA-JAYANTI 2017





MISSION AND VISION OF ISKCON MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



Vision Statement

To provide Krishna conscious education of high quality to everyone through temples, educational institutions and various global initiatives.

Mission Statement

To develop comprehensive educational systems globally, that foster higher spiritual values, fulfil the needs of ISKCON members and the larger society bringing about excellence in all areas of human life. We aim to fulfil this mission by

1. Empowering and supporting educational initiatives and collaborations among educators, educational institutions and professionals
2. Establishing and monitoring high standards of Vaisnava education
3. Supervising the development and execution of educational plans and ensuring they are delivered to high standards and
4. Understanding and fulfilling the educational needs of the Krishna conscious families
5. Making every temple as an educational centre and a centre of excellence.





Let us tell you a story. Once upon a time, there was a somewhat educated Donkey, though still a Donkey, who became Acting Editor for the quarterly journal, of a great religious movement, in a universe parallel to our own. He is doing his best but would step aside instantly if a more educated Donkey would step forward for the job.

Welcome to the second issue of *Viplavah*. Seeing this most are supposed to be surprised: Oh, it came out again. Through several steps, by the fifth issue, many people are supposed to subscribe.

This issue is focusing on Srila Prabhupada's focus, Book Distribution, Education and Book Distribution. The following articles are very self-explanatory and rather practical. With a quarterly journal we are not trying to be so perfect because we can correct any mistakes in the next issue quickly. What we want is a good dialog with our readers. The first issues got excellent, world-wide response, with letters of appreciation and to be kept on the mailing list from such experienced educators as Urmila Devi Dasi, Prana Das et al.

We have been in contact with our Minister of Education, Sesa Das, but he has been absorbed in the legal and administrative problems of ISKCON Manhattan etc. We commented based upon years of involvement in ISKCON administration that much of this crisis seems like it could have been avoided if we had better education systems in place for congregations and administrators. He, a successful lawyer, responded that we were doubly and triply right. We tried to catch him for an article for this issue but he apologized and said go ahead without him.



Ramgiridhari Das, our Executive Secretary, has been very busy as you can see from the reports that follow and he reports that the two other initiatives besides *Viplavah*, Registration, Evaluation and Certification of ISKCON Education Programs, and Regional Representatives, have been progressing and Teacher and Schools should have information about how to Register and contact their Regional Representatives in the next issue.

Well, I guess that's enough. The rest of the Journal speaks for itself. Tapan and Mother Indira have been 75% of the life of this issue. Thank you.

Hanumatpresaka Swami

www.niosnimbus.org
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Viplavah

Viplavah is a Journal of the **Ministry of Education of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya:** His Divine Grace Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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The first issue of the Journal was released on Janmashtami 2017 with the plan to publish four volumes each year. It is driven out of North American and the Western Hemisphere but is aimed at serving the educational needs in ISKCON globally.

To help in publication and for more information please contact our Corresponding Secretary mentioned above.



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SRILA PRABHUPADA'S INSTRUCTIONS: EDUCATION AND BOOK DISTRIBUTION



Education and Sankirtan are intensely inter-related – they have a reciprocal relationship. The more one reads, the more he will be eager to prosecute sankirtan – street chanting, book distribution or preaching. The more the knowledge and books are distributed, people in general will receive 'real education' and become Sankirtan soldiers – thus the transcendental cycle expands.



Every book distributor is essentially a preacher and Srila Prabhupada has high expectations from them.

“The devotees in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement must therefore be fully aware of the mission of Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya; otherwise they will be considered foolish. All devotees, especially preachers, must know the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness so as not to be embarrassed and insulted when they preach.”¹

“Regarding book distribution, everyone, including book distributors, must follow the standard regulations. Book distribution is preaching, it should not be thought of as done for money. It is executed as a preaching purpose. With these guidelines in mind, try to distribute as many books as possible.”²

The first step, then, is to educate our book distributors. Srila Prabhupada insisted that the devotees not only spend their time in widely distributing his books but also in reading them.

“Prabhupāda: Similarly, the GBC member means they will see that in every temple these books are very thoroughly being read and discussed and understood and applied in practical life. That is wanted, not to see the vouchers only, "How many books you have sold, and how many books are in the stock?" That is secondary. You may keep vouchers... If one is engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service, there is no need of vouchers. That is... Everyone is doing his best. That's all. So we have to see that things are going on very nicely. So in that way the GBC members should divide some zones and see very nicely that things are going on, that they are chanting sixteen rounds, and temple management is doing according to the routine work, and the books are being thoroughly discussed, being read, understood practically. These things are required. Now,

¹SB 6.1.38, Purport

²Letter to Kurusrestha, 23rd July, 1973



suppose you go to sell some book and if somebody says, "You have read this book? Can you explain this verse?" then what you will say? You will say, "No. It is for you. It is not for me. I have to take money from you. That's all." Is that very nice answer?

Devotee: No, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Prabhupāda: Then? "We have written this book for your reading, not for our reading. We are simply collect money." That's all."³

“And I am very much stressing nowadays that my students shall increase their reading of my books and try to understand them from different angles of vision. Each *śloka* can be seen from many, many angles of vision, so become practiced in seeing things like this. If we are selling the books but we do not know what is inside the book, that will be a farce, especially if you are preaching and selling books to the students of Edinburgh.”⁴

Srila Prabhupada noted that one who is scrutinizingly reading the books will certainly be inspired to distribute to them.

“From your letter, I can understand that you are reading my books nicely and understanding our philosophy. This is wanted. By reading my books carefully, you will become enthused to distribute them more and more in greater quantities. If you continue in this way being very much determined to achieve success in this lifetime, following all the rules, chanting at least sixteen rounds, and reading my books, then all of your desires to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be fulfilled and you will surely attain spiritual perfection and be able to go back to Godhead, very soon.”⁵

Such enthusiastic devotees can help other people to come to real knowledge.

“So I am so much pleased upon all of the boys and girls in Los Angeles and all over the world who are understanding and appreciating this unique quality of our transcendental literature and voluntarily they are going out to distribute despite all circumstances of difficulty. By this effort alone they are assured to go back to home, back to Godhead. In order to change this materialistic society and prevent them from gliding to hell, first thing is to educate them. All decent men want to give service to humanity, only thing is they do not have information really what is that service. Hospitals, feeding the poor, Red Cross, these are service to the bodies only, not to the man. Service to humanity means *jñāna*. By giving people knowledge, *jñāna*, that is the highest service to humanity. So we are performing the actual welfare work of society by informing everyone through our literatures who is God, who they are, and what is the relationship. In this way everyone who hears our message gets the opportunity to fulfill his actual position as human entity and become delivered from the clutches of *maya*.

So you may understand it that by disseminating our Kṛṣṇa consciousness propaganda anywhere and everywhere, by selling books, by making publicity, newspapers, television, so many ways there are to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness information, you may know it that by utilizing our energy in this way to give everyone access to the Absolute Truth, that is the real understanding of desire to serve humanity. Understanding is one thing, and practical application of that understanding is another. But as devotees of Kṛṣṇa, being engaged in the practical work of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is already the highest realization. That's all right, that is our real mission, to deliver the world by preaching Kṛṣṇa's message to others, but even higher realization, the highest realization, is to save oneself.”⁶

Therefore, in this auspicious month of our book Marathon, let us arm ourselves with knowledge, venture out and share with it others - Sankirtan.

³Lecture on SB 2.9.3, Melbourne, April 5, 1972

⁴Letter to Tribhuvanatha, 16th June, 1972

⁵Letter to Ganesa dasa, 22nd May, 1975

⁶Letter to Ramesvara dasa, 9th January, 1973



UJJAIN MEETING



2nd-4th October, 2017. Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India. Members of the **Ministry to Education**, namely, H. H. Hanumatpresaka Swami, Ramgiridhari Prabhu, Indira-sakhi Devi Dasi and Tapan Misra Das met in Ujjain for a 3-day intensive session with an aim to deliberate on the various initiatives of the Ministry of Education. Some of the issues discussed are as follows.

Viplavah

The members reviewed the feedback received on the first edition of *Viplavah* and deliberated on ways to improve the content, quality and reach of the journal. A new design for the layout was determined and it was decided that some additional sections can be included on a regular basis such as, summary of the philosophy of education and articles from/for youth and children. The themes of the next 3 issues were agreed upon and responsibility for the articles for the Gita Jayanti issue was assigned.

Database Creation for Connecting with Educators Worldwide

It was agreed that the Ministry would give priority to update its database of educators and educational institutes within ISKCON. Once the database is ready, various efforts will fall into place, such as connecting educators to work on joint projects, providing information to parents/students seeking education, allowing educators looking for further training to connect with those who are more experienced, and so on. The current website is outdated and is currently in the process of being revamped. It was decided that as part of the ongoing website updating project, forms would be set up to capture this information. *Viplavah* and ILS 2018 will be used as platforms to urge devotees to register with the Ministry. There was further discussion regarding desirable features of the website, for e.g. allowing the educators registered with the Ministry to interact through a forum on the website.

ILS 2018

The team reviewed the Ministry's representation at **ILS (ISKCON Leadership Sanga)** 2016 to deliberate on the



agenda for ILS 2018. In 2016, the Ministry had 1 plenary, 6 presentations and 1 booth. Awards were given for achievements in the field of education within ISKCON. There was also a large collage in the exhibition space. Agenda for ILS 2018 was determined and action points such as the topics for the presentation were identified. HpSwami et al hope to sign-up as many subscribers and workers for *Viplavaḥ* as possible.

Report on IIAC Meeting

On 2nd October Ramgiridhari Prabhu represented the Ministry at the **ISKCON India Advisory Committee (IIAC)** Meeting held in Mumbai. He updated the IIAC members on the initiatives of the Ministry and requested that each nominate a representative from their Yatra who will head the education initiatives and act as a point of contact for the Ministry. He asked them to register their initiatives with the Ministry. Prabhu distributed copies of the first edition of *Viplavaḥ*. The IIAC members welcomed regular reports from Ministry of Education in IIAC Meetings.

Standards Committees

There is an ongoing effort to standardize the Sastric education in terms of aims and objectives as well as details such as classroom training and assessment. The idea is that a devotee should be able to seamlessly continue his Sastric education even if he relocates from one part of the world to another. It was agreed that the Sastric Standards Committee should submit a report to the Ministry for review and further action.

In addition, a team of devotees is working to standardize the requirements for an ISKCON school to be endorsed by the Ministry. There was a discussion on the criteria for such endorsement. There was particular emphasis on adhering to Srila Prabhupada's vision and giving Sastric education to children in our schools.

International Education Conference in India

It was agreed that there would be a great benefit in bringing together the educators in ISKCON and organizing a conference for exchange of ideas as well to create awareness about the various educational programs. The suitable time and venue for organizing the conference, the budget and the minimum number of participants were determined. The possibility of having the conference in October 2018 is being explored. Stay tuned for further details.

Regular Executive Committee Meetings

For effective functioning of the Ministry, the Executive Committee Members need to regularly meet – either in person or via the Internet – and discuss the progress of various ongoing initiatives and the possibility of new ones. It was agreed that apart from communication on emails, regular calls would be organized to implement this.

Few other important topics such as the Ministry's organization structure, streamlining the MOE Office, and appointment of and reporting from the regional representatives were discussed. The executive members wish to regularly submit progress reports to the members of ISKCON.





We got a hold of Sriman Vaisesika Das and recorded a telephone interview. Here are some results of the interview. First, Vaisesika Das is our older godbrother. He took second initiation in San Francisco in 1974 through the same letter wherein we, H. P. Swami, took first initiation. He is currently on a book distribution Marathon preaching tour. He is the North American Sankirtan Leader, ISKCON Diksa-guru, President of ISKCON Silicon Valley, Northern California and in general one of the most experienced, fired-up book distribution leaders on the Earth

ISV has been described by former Iraq war veterans as “taking the words 'enthusiasm for book distribution' to a whole other level”. ISV has regular Wednesday evening and Saturday morning programs of hearing and chanting with the goal of getting people out on book distribution. These are even 2-hours long because most of the Yatra members cannot come to daily classes. There are also regular Sunday Feast programs and the Sastric Studies program, Bhakti-sastri, Bhakti-vaibhava and starting Bhakti-vedanta for hours before the Feast. These all are aimed toward Sankirtan.

The Wednesday evening programs have been very training oriented with each participant learning to make a presentation, and then everyone going out every Saturday evening to Stanford University's city center for Hari-nama Kirtan and book table. Devotees get a chance to experience chanting publicly with other devotees: “That was nice. Nobody killed me. I got a chance to talk with some people at the book table!” Then there are

approved Book Distribution Tables at big shopping areas like Walmart where devotees can go out with others and get trained up, then, group door-to-door and finally individual efforts. One door-to-door party selects more upper class areas for full-set distribution.

All these adult programs, and many more, work, and the results are self-evident.

For children, Mother Sukwesvari Devi Dasi has a Sunday School program and Kamesvari Devi Dasi even takes Kids out regularly on public book distribution. Prabhu says it breaks his heart to see that we have not developed stronger programs for these very special children.

He comments that the basic principle is that they approach book distribution as Sadhana, it is something that we must do “to get spiritual blood”. He comments that we all have to learn how to accept rejection and get more enthusiasm from it. “Inch by inch, it's always a cinch”.

Try to beat them man for man, woman for woman, kid for kid, this year!

For more information see:
<http://iskconsiliconvalley.com/> and write to
 Srivasa pandita Das: <http://iskconsiliconvalley.com/>





LIL' KRISHNA KIDZ



Balimardana Das and his good wife have developed **Lil' Krishna Kidz** in the Bay Area for several years now. He is on the Board of Directors of ISV and Regional Representative of the Ministry. They have about several regular Sunday School Programs around the Bay Area that involve not only ISKCON devotees but even more so non-temple India friends. They have curriculum, administrative systems and want to roll it out as an ISKCON Ministry of Education program. Here is a short dialog between ourselves, H. P. Swami and Bali Prabhu:

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Balimardana Das et al,

We read all of your "Lil' Krishna Kidz Rollout" proposal.

We would suggest that it be registered with the Ministry as per the program that Tapan and Mataji are setting up. The Ministry does not yet have a Registration and Evaluation system in place, so it could not do that, yet, but it is just now coming, Sir.

There are other Sunday school programs such as **Goloka Education** in Houston and Navi Mumbai, Mother Aruddha's programs, so I would suggest that instead of going for a mass global roll-out you send it, with review comments from people who know the program, to a few ISKCON centers or interested people who can try it out.

Start with a community outside the Bay Area that can try it and get their feedback. Promote it in the next and following "Viplavaḥ".

Where do the checks, donations, go to?

It is a separate Non-profit corporation from ISKCON, no?

When you get two or three more ISKCON communities running it then you can go for mass marketing.

O.K?

HpS

...

Dear Hanumat preshak Swami,

Please accept my humble obeisances, All glories to Srila Prabhupada!!

Thank you very much for your comments. Let me give some more input.

1) Currently we have 2 / 3 center requesting to conduct similar programs, Phoenix, Houston, Boston etc. A few devotees are interested to run this kind of program in their local ISKCON Centers for preaching purposes. As Ministry of Education, we can develop a platform to support these initiatives.

2) Regarding the money collected from these programs, I would suggest to have it done for the Ministry of Education as I know MED does not have the good financing system, this could build a revenue for the MED. In General, MED should give a guidelines, standardized format and some level of training to the local ISKCON centers to conduct these kids programs for their preaching efforts.

your humble servant,

-bali-





H. G. Bala-govinda Das writes:
Dear and respected HH Hanumat Presaka Svami
Maharaj, Dandavat! AgtSP!

Please find attached a word doc and photos.

I've tried to keep the article (in attached word doc) short and mainly glorifying the devotees in Pune who have been successful in harnessing the power of book distribution and deep systematic study of scriptures (self education). Three forums have been discussed:

1. SB study circles – Home SB installation program,
2. Regular Brahmachari training program - Bus party book distribution
3. Inspiring, and ensuring, that students who take SP BG (through book distribution) in schools study it properly (through Gita Contest).

All of these bring to our notice the deep connection shared by education and book distribution.

I also tried gathering following quotes of SP that may be useful for the journal having the current subject focus:

1. Book distribution to support education.

Srila Prabhupada gave the seven purposes of ISKCON. The first purpose is to "To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all people in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world." This purpose shows that he laid stress on education and envisioned ISKCON as a podium to educate the entire society.

Then if we look at the seventh purpose, "With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to

publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books and other writings." This shows clearly the connection between book distribution being a basis for supporting education.

2. Books that SP has made available for distribution are the basis of real education.

A prominent Gaudiya Vaishnava figure, Shrivatsa Goswami, who as a young man had met Prabhupada in 1972, affirmed the significance of book publishing and distribution in spreading the message of Chaitanya in an interview with Steven Gelberg: "Making these Vaisnava texts available is one of Srila Prabhupada's greatest contributions. Apart from the masses, his books have also reached well into academic circles and have spurred academic interest in the Chaitanya tradition ... The significance of making these texts available is not merely academic or cultural; it is spiritual."

3. The real goal of all education is to practice and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness through book distribution.

Srila Prabhupada explained that the goal of education is, "One should engage in practical service to the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all our activities are concentrated upon distributing Kṛṣṇa literature. This is very important. One may approach any person and induce him to read Kṛṣṇa literature so that in the future he also may become a devotee. Such activities are recommended in this verse. Such activities will always remind the devotees of the Lord's lotus feet. By fully concentrating on distributing books for Kṛṣṇa, one is fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa. This is samadhi." (SB 10.2.37).

4. Education is for effectively nurturing KC and Book distribution is the basis of this education.

"Distribution of books and magazines is our most important activity. Without books, our preaching has no solid basis."- Letter to Cyavana, 26th December, 1971. "There is no doubt about it: to distribute books is one most important activity. The temple is not a place for eating & sleeping, but a base from which we send out our soldiers to fight with Maya. Fight with Maya means to drop thousands and millions of books into the lap of conditioned souls. Just like during war time the bombs are raining from the sky like anything." – August 03, 1973 to Ramesvara.



5. Book distribution provides belongingness to students in ISKCON getting the needed shelter. Education in Iskcon is also finally to bond with Srila

Prabhupada and Kṛṣṇa.

Prabhupada: "You go on with book distribution. They will be benefited, and distributors also will be benefited. Kṛṣṇa says, *ya idam paramam guhyam mad-bhaktessv abhidhasyati* [Bg 18.68]. *Na ca tasman manusyesu kascin me priya-krttamah* [Bg. 18.69]. If you want to become quickly recognized by Kṛṣṇa, then make propaganda, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, and once recognized by Kṛṣṇa, then your going back to home, back to Godhead, guaranteed." (Morning Walk — July 5, 1975, Chicago).

"You are distributing this knowledge, so you become immediately recognized, very dear servant, very confidential servant of Kṛṣṇa. He says personally. [Bg.18.69]. 'Amongst the human beings those who are doing this preaching, nobody is dearer than these persons to Me'"

Your servant,
Bala-govinda Das

Education Fuels Sankirtan

By HG Bala-govinda Das

At ISKCON New Vedic Cultural Center, Pune, India, education fuels Sankirtan. Temple President HG Radheshyam Das conducts 'Krishna Rasayanam' – a monthly nectarine discussion on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* with practical applications. Inspired by the program & glory of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, several attendees invite him for *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam Installation* at their homes. This program consists of worship of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* & beautiful, laminated Deity Photos accompanied with Kirtan & a short talk on glory of this wonderful book. In book distribution marathon 2016, HG Radheshyam Das stood 1st in SB set distribution, all over world, distributing 170 SB sets in 1 month! 'Krishna Rasayanam' & SB installation programs happen through-out the year, once a month.

Also, at Pune, there are two Travelling Sankirtan Bus Parties – 'Srila Prabhupada Kripa' & 'Hanuman', headed respectively by HG Sri Caitanya Candra Das & HG

Sundar Vishwambhar Das. Every month these parties travel for 10-days to remote places of Maharashtra & distribute on an average 800 Maha-big books in just those 10-days! The secret of their success, as they say, is inspiration gained by attending several educational programs like Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha, Krishna Rasayanam, Bhaktisastri & other courses. (Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha is a monthly systematic study of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, similar to Bhaktivaibhava course.)

Devotees here, inspired by educational programs, innovated a program for book distribution – 'Value Empowerment Contest', for school children. This is entirely based on *Bhagavad-gītā*. Every interested child will have to purchase *Bhagavad-gītā* and a contest guide book to take part in this contest. Devotees proudly say, 'We don't just distribute books, but make people read them as well!!' Students are rewarded for good grades & are later attended personally for guidance. From past 6 years, they have distributed more than 1.5 lakh (150,000) *Bhagavad-gītās* by this!!

There are several other books written by HG Radheshyam das presenting KC philosophy for modern youth. These books are distributed in several colleges at Pune. Interested students meet the devotees afterwards, undergo Science & Spirituality courses, study Srila Prabhupada books & happily embrace Krishna consciousness.





In response to a crying need from educators around the world, the Ministry of Education is publishing a book on our ISKCON philosophy of education. It will include contributions from various ISKCON educators and serve as a platform for more refinement with a good philosophical basis for education. We can then more easily apply the principles of education to our teaching. In this issue of *Viplavaḥ* we are graced with a *Summary of the Philosophy of Education* By Dr. Edith Best (Urmilā-Devī Dāsī). We will continue to publish a series of such summaries in the upcoming issues of *Viplavaḥ*.

Urmila Devi Dasi (Dr. Edith Best) has served ISKCON continuously since her initiation by Srila Prabhupada in 1973. She has a PhD in education, was a primary and secondary teacher for 27 years, and has 19 years of experience with school management. Urmila is the chair of the Sastric Advisory Council to the GBC, an associate editor of *Back to Godhead*, and a professor of Sociology of Religion at Bhaktivedanta College. She travels worldwide teaching Krishna consciousness. She is the author of *Dr. Best Learn to Read*, an 83-book literacy program, and *The Great Mantra for Mystic Meditation*, available on Amazon.com.

Summary of the Philosophy of Education

Based on Śrī of the *Yajur Veda*, with references to *Bhagavad-gītā*

By Dr. Edith Best (Urmilā-Devī Dāsī), with the help of many ISKCON educators (summarized by Dr Irene Brand [Kamala-Sītā Devī Dāsī])

A philosophy of education is a description of principles upon which learning and teaching rest. It delineates what

education is, its purpose, the relationship between education and society, the definition of the learner's basic needs and identity, relationship between learners and teachers, and the process of learning. We have based this philosophy of education on the *Śrī Isopanisad* because *Isopanisad* is śruti, part of the *Yajur Veda* and, therefore, the vast majority of those who consider themselves followers of Vedic religion¹ accepts the *Isopanisad* as authoritative sacred literature.

Goal of Education

The primary goal of education is to prepare the learner to effectively relate to God, to the world, others, and to the self. In relation to God the learner must develop sincere love and attachment for the personal form of God, Bhagavān, and all His natural representatives, including those who teach about Him, i.e. the spiritual master and the teachers. The learner gains realised knowledge of God through serving Him in one or more of the nine-fold processes of bhakti while cultivating the fundamental understanding that Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa is the best friend.

In relation to the world learners are taught to discriminate between ordinary action, forbidden action, and free action. By learning these and other details of the material creation they realize the process of cause and effect, and develop the understanding to not use the creation for personal gain, but rather to engage the material energy in the service of Bhagavān, without personal attachment.

Education serves the purpose of teaching respect and love for all living beings, in all species of life. This respect rests on knowledge of the self as an eternal soul, distinct from body and mind. Therefore, learners are able to participate in the greater faith community while also developing their individual talents and inclinations, according to their *sva-dharma*. This prepares them for future occupations and family responsibilities.

Learners in Vedic Tradition

The *Īsopaniṣad* and *Bhagavad-gītā*'s philosophy imbues learners with good character, which means to be satisfied with what one achieves honestly, and to live in harmony with their environment and animals, especially



cows and bulls. Such good character enables learners to serve society in social, political and communal spheres with a mood of altruism and non-violence while dovetailing these responsibilities with service to Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. Non-violence is promoted through adherence to a diet of vegetarian food offered to Kṛṣṇa. Furthermore, learners attain an understanding of the oneness of interests of all living beings, to be connected with the Supreme and to appreciate the essence of all religions, to love God.

It is also understood that learners have their own material conditioning and therefore exhibit a strong tendency toward materialism and self-centeredness. This nature should be controlled and re-directed by progressively bringing learners to the mode of goodness by guiding them to internalize self-control. This discipline is achieved by teachers who not only command respect, but also use appropriate external consequences to foster internal responsibility.

Relationship between Teachers and Students

Discipline is based on the understanding that learners are inherently all-good souls, part of Kṛṣṇa. This nature is encouraged through loving relationships with teachers who demonstrate great kindness and who engage, together with their students, in nine-fold bhakti as distinct activities and as part of all learning. Learning that cannot be directly connected with the nine-fold processes of bhakti could still be used in Kṛṣṇa's service, provided it doesn't contradict the basic principles mentioned above, such as developing love for Kṛṣṇa and living in harmony with all other living beings.

Learning takes place by amalgamating various processes: hearing from authority, the examples of others, and teacher demonstration, as well as direct, practical experience. Most importantly, learning takes place by developing good character. All these processes are applied in progressive and developmental stages.

Qualification of Teachers

Teachers are considered qualified when they possess factual knowledge and practical skills in the subjects taught, in conjunction with good powers of discrimination. They are seen as the representative of a bona fide guru and consequently exhibit a mood of honesty, inquiry, introspection, and love for all living beings, especially the learners. Qualified teachers are also skilled in teaching strategies and student character

formation. Ultimately, they themselves are situated in or progressing toward the mode of goodness.

It is essential for teachers to command respect by developing a deep relationship of trust between themselves and the students. Teachers also maintain their self-concept as continuing learning from their own teachers. They teach appropriately for learners' developmental stage in all areas: intellectual, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual, while encouraging learners' autonomous and thoughtful choices. Thus, the focus of learning is on learners' experiential wisdom and spiritual transformation.

Process of Learning and Assessment

Learning strategies have four aspects where students 1) receive learning from authority and/or from direct experience, 2) reflect on the learning, 3) apply and assimilate the learning and 4) depend on Kṛṣṇa's mercy, though prayer, for realisation and proper use of the learning. Other strategies that teachers use include: setting clear objectives that learners understand, presenting work in a logical sequence, repetition, comparing and contrasting, summarizing, use of analogies, going from immediate felt needs to deep needs, applying knowledge, skills, and values, having high expectations, recognizing effort, and prescribing independent practice.

Learners are assessed both against a predetermined level of achievement and in terms of individual growth/progress. Assessment is done with care that one is specifically assessing the desired learning. The focal areas of assessment are: factual knowledge, values and proper behaviours, respectful social interaction, an attitude of service, the application of learning, critical thinking, creative thinking, proper discernment, and effort.

This summary of the explanation of the Philosophy of Education, derived from Śrī Īsopaniṣad and Bhagavad-gītā, represents eternal and unchanging principles which can then be applied according to specific persons, place, and circumstances.

¹Vedic religion can be defined as philosophy and practices based on the sacred writings called the "veda" which include the four Vedas, Vedānta sūtra, purānas, Mahābhārata, etc. Vedic religion can also be called sanatana dharma.





CALENDAR



1. ILS Meeting

Feb 4-11, 2018,
<https://www.ilsglobal.org/>

2. *Viplavaḥ*

Gaura-purnima (March 2, 2018),
This issue will focus on the ultimate goal of education, Prema.

3. GBC-College

Latin America. First residential session 24 March – 7 April,
www.gbc-college.com, latam.gbc-college.com

4. Fifth Annual Symposium on Education with ISKCON

Gainesville, Florida – June 2018,
Contact: H. G. Visvambara Das, 17414 NW 112th Blvd, Alachua, FL 32615
P: 386-462-2886, f: 386-518-2314, office@bhaktischool.org





Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

