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THE PURE PROCESS

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

A pure devotee is he who loves Krishna, without any material desire. Such pure devotees are very rare. But by the grace of Krishna, practically all the devotees and disciples who have kindly joined me, their symptoms are like pure devotees. Even if they have got some ulterior desire, that will be removed very soon, because they have taken to the pure process of Krishna Consciousness. ❁

— Letter to Janaki, 13 October 1968

FIVE HABITS FOR A BRAHMACHARI

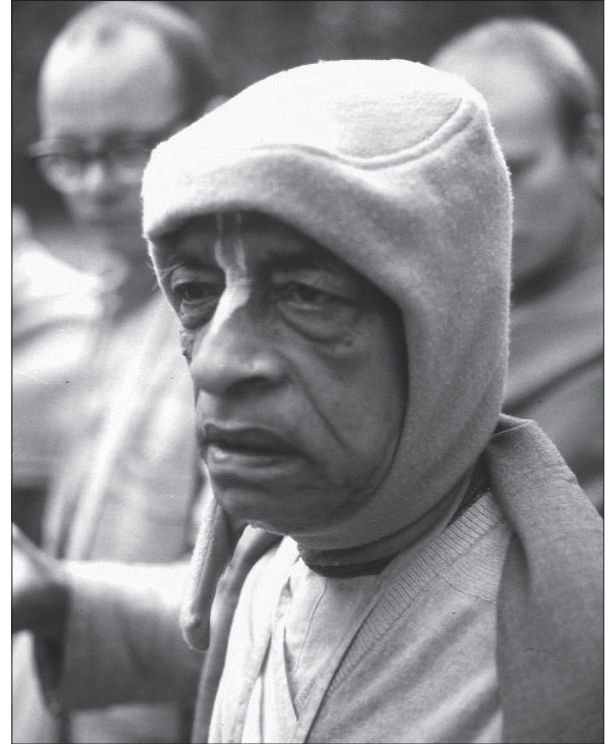
Sri Srimad Gour

Govinda Swami Maharaja

First one should be a *brahmacārī* — accept a guru, stay in the guru's ashram, and strictly follow the principles of *brahmacarya*. He should be trained how to control the mind and senses. All the senses and mind should be fixed at the lotus feet of Krishna. A guru gives that training during *brahmacārī* period, student life.

There is a saying, *vidyārthi pañca-lakṣaṇa* — a student, *brahmacārī*, has five symptoms: *kāka-snāna*, *baka-dhyāna*, *alpa-bhojana*, *śvāna-nidrā*, *videśa-gamana* — bathe like a crow, meditate like a crane, eat little, sleep like a dog, and stay in a foreign place.

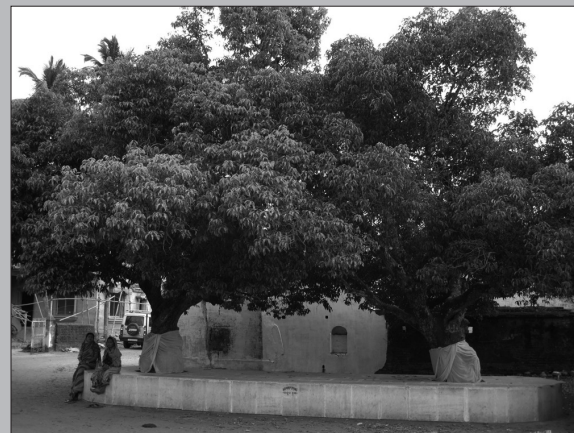
Kāka snāna: A *brahmacārī* should not spend much time bathing. Have you seen how much time



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

it takes for a crow to take bath? One minute. It takes some water in its beak and splash, finished. One should think, “I have very little time. I have to do *bhajana*. I have to serve. *Miche nida-baše gelo re rāti*, *divasa śarīra-sāje* [Bhaktivinode's *Gītāvalī* 1.1.3] — [Mahaprabhu said:] “You spend your nighttime sleeping and snoring and your daytime in taking care of this body.” No. *Kāka-snāna* — you should spend very little time in bathing.



GAURA NITYANANDA MANDIR IN MANGALAPUR, ODISHA

The above deities are found in the village of Mangalapur in Balasore district of northeastern Odisha. The local tradition describes that Sri

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu spent the night here on his way from Nabadwip to Puri. During his visit he is said to have planted two *bakul* trees and left his shoes behind. The trees are still present at this place. On his attempted journey to Vrindavan he again stopped here and took his shoes back. In memory, they keep some special wooden shoes on the altar. Shortly after Mahaprabhu's visit, the local people installed these Gaura Nityananda deities. ॐ

Photos: Temple in Mangalapur; deities; trees planted by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Baka-dhyāna: “Baka” means “stork.” The stork is a white bird with a long beak and long legs. It stands still with concentrated attention on the riverside or lakeside. If a fish comes, then the stork dives and catches it. This is *baka-dhyāna*. “Dhyāna” means attention, meditation. *Kāka-snāna*, *baka-dhyāna*—finish your bath in a short time like a crow, and always concentrate your mind like a stork on the lotus feet of Krishna.

Śvāna-nidrā: Sleep like a dog. When a dog sleeps, if the slightest sound is there, then he wakes. He is sleeping, but his sleep is not deep.

Alpa-bhojana: Eat only a little food. Don’t eat to the brim, up to the nose. Don’t eat so much. Then the body will be light and you can get up, chant, dance, go, and run.

Then, *videśa-gamana*: Stay in a boarding house. That means the guru’s ashram. Don’t stay in your father’s residence.

This is *vidyārthi pañca-lakṣaṇa*, five considerations for a student. It is a common saying that people in materialistic education advise to a student when they go to school.

A *brahmacārī* comes to stay in the guru’s ashram. The guru gives training how to concentrate the mind at the lotus feet of Krishna — *man-manā bhava* — how to always think of Krishna. [Bg. 18.65] That is *brahmacārī* training. Then the guru imparts Vedic knowledge. While knowledge is being imparted, you should hear with concentrated attention. The mind should not go here and there. That is *baka-dhyāna*.

There are strict regulations for *brahmacārīs* in ashram life. Out of 24 hours, only six hours of rest. Not more than that. Rise up at 3 or 4 AM and immediately take bath. Don’t spend much time in bathing. It is *kāka-snāna*. Finish everything in five minutes. Then come to *maṅgala-ārati* at 4.30.

Don’t sleep so much. Be like a dog that the slightest sound wakes you up. Not sleeping and snoring, “Haaaarr, haaaarr.” An elephant may come and step on you, still, like Kumbakarna, you won’t wake up! Eat very little food, *alpa-bhojana*, because if the belly is heavy then you will sleep deeply. Eat two times, one main meal of rice, *dāl*, and *subji*. If you think, “I am very hungry; I can eat this whole plate.” Then take only half. Before eating, drink a glass of cold water. Fill a portion of your belly with water, and then you will not be able to eat so much.

After the meal, drink another glass of water. Three-fourths of the belly should be filled with food and water. Then one-fourth remains vacant. Don’t eat a heavy meal; you will develop laziness, *ālasya-mati*, which is a great hindrance in *bhajana*.

“Hey! Please give me another chapati.”

“No, no, finished. You will fall down, you rascal! Why should you eat so much?”

And at nighttime, no eating. One glass of milk or one glass of water, then go to sleep. Then you can wake up at any time, like a dog’s sleep. The body will be very light and you can do *bhajana*. Such restrictions we have for eating. This is *brahmacārī* life. This is a training period, to learn how to control the mind and senses.

And you should go out and serve the guru. In the eleventh canto of *Bhāgavatam*, 11.17.28, Krishna replies to Uddhava’s inquiry about *brahmacārī* life:

*sāyam prātar upānīya bhaiṅsyam tasmai nivedayet
yac cānyad apy anujñātam upayujñita samyataḥ*

In the morning and evening, one should collect foodstuffs and other articles and deliver them to the spiritual master. Then, being self-controlled, one should accept for oneself that which is allotted by the guru.

We have this system every day. Early in the morning, get up, take bath, come to *maṅgala-ārati*, *kīrtana*, *japa*, and *Bhāgavatam* class. Then take a little food and go out, *calo*. No one should lay around eating, sleeping, and doing nothing. Go out, collect alms for the guru. That is a *brahmacārī*’s duty. Then whatever you receive, give everything to the guru, because it is his property. You should think, “Nothing is mine. I am a *guru-dāsa*. I am serving guru. I belong to guru.” Then the guru will give you something. “All right. I give this thing for your food.” Only then do you eat. If the guru doesn’t give anything, then no eating — fasting. The *śāstra* says this. Because it doesn’t belong to me, I have no right. Everything belongs to guru. So whatever you have collected, cash and kind, daily give everything to your guru.

The *Bhāgavatam* (11.17.29) states:

*śuśrūṣamāṇa ācāryam sadopāsita nīca-vat
yāna-śayyāsana-sthānair nāti-dūre kṛtāñjaliḥ*

While engaged in serving the spiritual master one should remain as a humble servant, and thus when the guru is walking the servant should humbly

walk behind. When the guru lies down to sleep, the servant should also lie down nearby, and when the guru has awakened, the servant should sit near him, massaging his lotus feet and rendering other, similar services. When the guru is sitting down on his *āsana*, the servant should stand nearby with folded hands, awaiting the guru's order. In this way one should always worship the spiritual master.

This is *brahmacārī* life. At all times one should serve the guru. There are two types of service, *paricaryā-rūpā-sevā*, and *prasaṅga-rūpā-sevā*. *Prasaṅga-rūpā* means hearing from guru. When the guru speaks, you should hear with concentrated attention — *śuśrūṣamāṇa*. *Śuśrūṣa* has two meanings, “hearing” and “serving”. Hearing is also a service, a service of the ear. You should hear with concentrated attention to what the guru says. That is *prasaṅga-rūpā-sevā*.

Paricaryā-rūpā-sevā is rendering service to his body. At all times — *gamana*, *śayana*, *upaveśa*, when the guru is moving about, when he is taking rest, when he is sitting — one should always serve the guru. *yāna-śayyāsana-sthānair nāti-dūre kṛtāñjaliḥ* — The *Bhāgavatam* (11.17.29) says that whatever the guru is doing, the *brahmacārī* should just sit and wait for orders at the guru's door with folded hands, as Hanuman does. Hanuman is the

ideal servant. He is teaching *dāsyā-bhakti*, devotion in the mellow of servitorship. *Kṛtāñjaliḥ* — with folded hands he sits at Lord Rama's doorstep, just waiting for his order. In this way one should serve the guru. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.17.30) states:

*evam-ṛtto guru-kule vased bhoga-vivarjitaḥ
vidyā samāpyate yāvad bibhrad vratam akhaṇḍitam*

Until the student has completed his Vedic education he should remain engaged in the ashram of the spiritual master, should remain completely free of material sense gratification, and should not break his vow of celibacy, *brahmacarya*.

A *brahmacārī* should stay in the guru's ashram until the completion of his education. During that time he should observe *brahmacarya-vrata*, strict principles of *brahmacarya*. He should not lose his semen. *Bhoga-vivarjitaḥ* — there is no question of any sense enjoyment during this time. If the guru sees that the student is very strictly following the principles of *brahmacarya*, no passion is there, they are situated completely in *sattva-guṇa* and are gradually making advancement, transcending the modes of nature, then the guru understands that he can award *sannyāsa*, without the student going through *grhastha* or *vānaprastha āśramas*. Such a student is known as a *naistika*, lifelong *brahmacārī*.

But if the guru sees some passion in a student and recognizes that the student cannot remain a *brahmācarī*, then, when the education is complete and the student offers *guru-dakṣiṇā* to his teacher, the guru tells him, “Go, accept a wife, marry, and enter *grhastha-āśrama*.” With the permission of the guru, that student is allowed to accept a wife.

During his time in the ashram of the guru, such a student has been properly trained. He knows how to control his mind and senses, and thus he is qualified to marry and be a *grhastha*. ॐ

— Lecture, Bhubaneswar, 6 May 1992.

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