

We live in a changing world where there are some things that don't change. There's a great difference between my body which is in its 7<sup>th</sup> decade and the bodies of children. The skin is more pliable and fresher; the scent is greater and more pleasant. In ancient cultures you would greet a young person by smelling their head. No one's going to greet me that way. It's been a long time.

The Bhagavad gita is the song of God and it is a book of wisdom that has guided Indian philosophy for over 5000 years since it was originally spoken by Lord Krishna. In the Bhagavad gita there is a definition of reality given which says that to the non-existent there is no endurance and of the existence there is no cessation. That certainly couldn't be true of our body. I had a body like this at one time; believe it or not I had a body just like this at one time. Now where is that body? It certainly hasn't endured. Cells die and are being replaced by new ones. Every 7 to 10 years you get a totally different body. If you make it to 85 years, you will have had 12 different bodies, or you will have been reincarnated 12 times in this lifetime. So by this standard, by this definition, that if it's real it has no cessation, the body is not real. The body is not real. I mean it's here, but it doesn't meet the standard of reality because that which is real has no cessation and that which is not real has no endurance. That certainly describes the body. The body has no endurance. Even as you are sitting here today, cells are dying and dropping on the ground and being replaced by new ones. The body is going through flux and change even as we are sitting here today. So in terms of love, the love that we experience body to body has got to be of the same temporal nature. Only lasting love, only eternal love is going to satisfy the eternal living being within us. I am still the same person. I once had a body like that. I've got a totally different body now, and between the time that I had that body, maybe 55 years ago, and the time that I have this body, I changed. 5 or 6 times, I've changed bodies and yet I am still the same person. I survived all these different changes of body. I am, in fact, eternal and Krishna confirms this in the Bhagavad gita.

na tv evāham jātu nāsam  
na tvaṁ neme janādhipāḥ  
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ  
sarve vayam atāḥ param

[BG 2.12]

Krishna addresses Arjuna, saying “Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be.” However far back you go in the past, the soul – *you*, existed. Even beyond this birth, you existed. After this present life is over, you will continue to exist. Never was there a time, past, future, or present, when you didn’t exist. We can all experience this for ourselves. We exist. Does anyone here need me to write them a certificate that you exist? Do you need me to validate that you exist? It’s self-evident, isn’t it one of those self-evident truths? You exist and you know you existed in the past and you assume that you will exist in the future. So to conceive of not existing is an oxy-moron; it’s not even possible. So then, what about the function of the soul? The highest function of the soul, the reason we are put here on earth, is to learn how to love. Ultimately we are meant to learn how to love God as God loves us. So how do we do that? We practice loving our fellow human beings and especially those who love us; our family and our friends, our spouse, our husband. We need, by way of practicing for that eternal love in the spiritual world; having stood before the altar and taken those marriage vows – we need to keep that marriage together throughout the entirety of this lifetime, and not just keeping it together, not just two people living in the same house who don’t love each other but to keep the fires burning. We need to know the secrets of lasting love. If we can’t keep love aflame in this short life after having committed to someone and taking vows in a holy place; if we can’t maintain love for a mere 30 or 40 or 50 years in this life – forget about it in the Kingdom of God. And we’re not doing a very good job of it.

By these statistics, not too many people are eligible for glory after this life. Not too many people are practicing for the test that comes afterwards. 41% of all first marriages in America end in divorce. 41%; and of the surviving 59%, how many of them are actually in love? In how many of those is love actually still alive and well? Second marriages, 60% divorce. Those that try to say third time lucky – apparently not; the rate of divorce is 73% in your third marriage.

I once was flipping through an art book by a photographer from National Geographic who spent a lot of time in India and he had captions to his pictures, and one was a little story. This photographer, male, who was about 35 years old, was traveling on a train one day. India is an interesting place. I went to India twice last year. I went in October by myself to do shopping for the gift store. I was going to be in Delhi, Jaipur and Vrindavan and I'd be on my own for about a month. My wife said to me as I was about to leave, "aren't you going to be lonely?" I say "are you kidding me? Will I be lonely in India? No way! I might be annoyed, but I will not be lonely." People come up to you all over town, especially if you are from the West:

"Hello, you are from what country? Which country are you from?"

Oh, USA? Very good country, very good country.

And which state you from? Utah? You are from Utah?" Yeah.

"You are married? What is your wife's name?"

Kids? How many boys, how many girls?"

They want to know everything about you. Lonely? No. There are a billion people in India but in many ways it is just like a small village. Everybody wants to know everything about you. So this 35 year old photographer for National Geographic is on the train and a little Indian man, an old farmer comes up to him and they start talking.

"You are from which country?" "You are married?"

“No.”

“Oh, why you not married? You are 35 years old, why you not married?”

“Well I haven’t found true love.”

“Ho, ho, ho, ho, oh true love he says! True love! Don’t you know that you only find true love after many, many years of marriage?”

Love at first sight is no big thing. How many of you have been in love at first sight? 10 times, 15 times, 20 times? Love at first sight is no big thing; it’s just excitement, attraction and arousal. It happens daily. Love after 35 years, that’s a big thing. To get up after 35 years and see the same face every morning – that’s a miracle. Nowadays they have these creams. This is just a personal testimony here. When you’ve been in the sun as much as I have, you get melanomas; you get these pre-cancerous things. When I was younger, nobody told us anything about the dangers of the sun. We hadn’t got a clue. We figured the sun is just good, good, good, and the more of it the better it is. So I spent a month living on the beach in the Canary Islands, in Las Palmas. I spend a month living on the beach. I didn’t have a motel room; I was living on the beach. The ultraviolet rays in Las Palmas are 6 times stronger than anywhere else in the world. I was also on beaches in Australia for 5 years. Australians all have – there’s something about the sun there and so all Australians, even when they are young have chapped lips and the little pre-cancerous things. So now they have these creams. You put this cream on and it will start to eat away, it will kill these pre-cancerous tissues. The problem is that after about two weeks, your skin looks like hamburger. It looks like ground beef. I look at my wife sometimes and I say “honey, you’re putting on that cream again, aren’t you?” “Yeah, I can tell.” It makes you look like ground beef. From an external physical point of view, it’s very unsightly. Honestly I don’t know how she thinks about me when I get the cream on, but for me, “honey, it doesn’t make a bit of difference. I love you anyway because I see you, not in terms of the body after 38 years of marriage; I experience

my wife as a flame, a spiritual entity who just happens to be in that body. She in particular, is a flame that burns very brightly, very hotly, and very energetically in the service of the Lord. I am in awe of my wife and I love her far more now than I did 38 years ago. Mark Twain also echoed the same sentiments by saying that “no one can know true love until after 25 years of marriage.” So how do we get to 25 years of marriage, and how do we have a healthy, loving marriage after 25 years?

These are the hurdles: the deadly “D’s”:

- 1.) Difficulty
- 2.) Disagreements; how many of you are married? Have you had any disagreements, raise your hands? If you don’t raise your hand, you are guilty of lying on top of everything else.
- 3.) Differences
- 4.) Discord
- 5.) Disappointment
- 6.) Defeat
- 7.) Depression
- 8.) Depth – that’s even more true now than about 6 months ago,
- 9.) Distance – not only do husbands and wives have to go on distance trips with physical distance but sometimes you just get that feeling that your spouse is distant from you, that your wife is distant or your husband is distant even within the same house, so that’s a hurdle.
- 10.) Demands.
- 11.) Divorce. If you hold fast and if you stand tall and if you stick to it, you will avoid the worst and most deadly “D” of all; and what is that? Divorce.

To avoid divorce and to have a love that endures, there are things that you must never stop doing. You must do them on your honeymoon and you must do them 20 and 30 and 40 years later.

➤ The first one is never stop being patient

Patient means to never stop extending grace. You need to extend grace because guess what, the person that you married is imperfect. The person that you married is a sinner. And for ladies, the person you married is an even a bigger sinner. If you, as an incomplete living being, look to another incomplete living being for the satisfaction of your deepest needs; if you think that marriage, and that married partner is going to solve all your problems, you're in illusion. If you have a zero, and you put another zero next to it doesn't make a one. You have little baby zeros, but it doesn't make a one. Incompletes, however much they are multiplied do not make a complete, so you need to extend grace. We're imperfect and you need to extend grace because you need grace. You need to cut other people slack because you need slack. We don't want to burn the bridge that we ourselves are going to need; we want to keep that bridge intact. Here are some pictures that are floating around the internet right now. I'll describe them to you. This is a boy, no more than 10 years old, with dynamite around his mid-section and the fuse in his hand, a Palestinian boy. This is a boy crawling with an Ak-77 in his hands. This is a baby with a hand grenade. This is what happens when we don't extend grace to each other. This is what happens when we have tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth. In 1948, the Arab Countries had a coalition to attack Israel and the Israelis beat them. The Palestinians who had collaborated, who had cheered for the Israelis to be exterminated, left the country because they were afraid of reprisals when the Israelis came in. Some Palestinians stayed and were treated very nicely and they weren't discriminated against. Their standard of living was higher than in the Arabic countries. The ones who had left, wouldn't be let them back in because they had already become radicalized. So that happened 60 years ago. The Palestinians think that they were kicked off their land when in fact they left their land due to circumstances. The Israelis feel like in an effort to exterminate them, they resisted it, they defeated the forces of extermination and they occupied the Palestinian lands

and they treated the locals well – very well. So don't you see some validity in each point of view? I'm not saying one's right or one's wrong but I'm saying is *this* right? Is *this* going to make things right? Don't we need grace somewhere along the line? Don't we need to cut other people a little bit of slack because maybe we need slack ourselves? You may be familiar with the great epic in Indian culture, the Ramayana. The tyrant of the Ramayana is named Ravana. Ravana kidnapped Rama's wife. He took her to his city and he held her captive for one year. He threatened her that unless she would submit to him voluntarily, he would have his ogress associates cut her up, cook her and he would eat her for breakfast. He forced Rama to raise an army of monkeys in the forest and besiege and attack Sri Lanka. Finally, Rama killed Ravana with a flaming arrow and got his wife back. Do you know what Rama said, as Ravana's body was lying on the ground? Did he exalt? Did he cheer? Did he give a high-5 and do a little touch-down dance? Did he gloat? Did he rub it in? He was sad. He was sad that Ravana couldn't have seen the error of his ways sooner. And he said that if at any time, at any time – even like half an hour ago, Ravana had gone down on bended knee and said "I'm sorry, please forgive me," Rama said I would have cut him that slack. I would have fully forgiven him. We would have been friends, we would have had a meal together and I would have put it behind me because the past is the past and that's where it should stay.

Grace; we need to show grace. Prabhupada, our Guru; when he would give a lecture he was like a lion and unbending. This is it – 16 rounds, the 4 regulative principles: no illicit sex, no gambling, no intoxication... and one time he even said that you have to be free of all material desires before you can do back to the spiritual world. If you have one single material desire, you have to come back and take another birth in order to fulfill that desire. Even if you want a Hershey Bar, you've given up all desires except for a Hershey Bar you have to take another birth, take another body so you can eat that Hershey Bar. So sometimes he was unrelenting in his lectures and in the early days he was sitting on a Vyasan

about 4 feet high and saying “da da dada dadada... this is what you have to do be Krishna Conscious, to go back home to Godhead.” The lecture ended and the devotees were like “Holy Cow! I can’t do that! Wow! That’s a tough pill to swallow.” Prabhupada began to get down and he says “the things that I say here, no matter how hard you may think them to bear, if I gave you everything you would simply faint, but I have to give to certain minimum standards: 16 rounds, no illicit sex, no gambling, no intoxication, no meat eating” – minimum standards.” And even that, the devotees are like “uhhh.” Then Prabhupada began to get down off his Vyasasan, he got down, he saw the crest-fallen looks on all the devotee’s faces and he said “100%...ehh, 90%. 90% is alright. If you are 90%, it’s ok, you can go back home, back to Godhead.” Then he took a few more steps and he stopped and looked around and said “even 80%. Become 80% God Conscious and you will go back home to Godhead.” Then he took a few more steps and when he was at the exit and he looked back at the devotees and he said “70%. At least become 70% and you will go home, back to Godhead.” He’s cutting them a little slack.

There is a story also, about one very, very nice Gujarati Vaishnava gentleman in Surat; he was a jeweler and the devotees were having a preaching program. Prabhupada was giving lectures in Surat – this was in 1972 or something, and the devotees were new and they weren’t cultured in Krishna Consciousness and they weren’t brahminical; they were enthusiastic and they were fired up but they weren’t exactly cultured in Krishna Consciousness. So they were accompanying Prabhupada and this Mr. Bagavai Jaliwal, an elderly man, a jeweler by trade, quite well off – put them up in his house for a week. Where the devotees lived, they didn’t keep it that clean; they didn’t keep it clean like you should if you are a proper guest. Mr. Bagavai gave them wonderful prasadam and served them with his own hands. He was a big man in Surat. The devotees were lusting “oh those Puris are good, give me more puris – sometimes ordering him “give me more,” not only treating him a little brusquely but also exhibiting a certain amount of gluttony as well. When it was time for them to leave, Mr. Jaliwal went

to them; he served them with his own hands and he put on their plate a little envelope with 51 rupees in each envelope, which was a lot of money for the devotees in those days. He says “I want you to know that I was honored to have you as my guests for a week and I hope that if I have committed any offenses to you, you will forgive me. When they told Prabhupada about this man and his comportment, Prabhupada said “that is real a Vaishnava; humility and grace.” And what’s a prime way of showing people grace? Show them grace by listening to them.

You know, I was reading about the bullfrog. The bullfrog makes this dissonant sound and it’s interesting when you study of the anatomy of the bullfrog. It puffs up this membrane to make the sound and there is another membrane, and as it expands into the inner ear it also expands another membrane to keep the bullfrog from hearing the obnoxious sound it makes, so he hasn’t got a clue. We’re all like the bullfrog at least some of the time. We don’t get up in the morning and decide “I’m going to be obnoxious today; I’m going to rub people the wrong way.” Maybe 20% of the time when we say something abrupt or insensitive; maybe 20% of the time we realize it. We realize it and we start to feel bad and we hope those people cut us a little grace – not only for the time we realized we were abrupt and insensitive, but for the 80% of the time when we didn’t have a clue because we are like the bullfrog; he can’t hear the obnoxious sound that he’s making. We don’t actually know the impression we are making on other people and we don’t realize that many times it’s negative. Men, particularly, are known for being rough, physical, temperamental and abrasive. Do you know what temperamental means? It means 90% temper and 10% mental. Women also, when they have reached that PMS stage of life especially, are very, very difficult to live with. You have to cut them a little bit of slack. What’s the difference between a terrorist and a woman with PMS? You can negotiate with a terrorist! We all have those times when we need to cut slack and when we need to receive slack as well.

➤ Express Faith

Another quality, the second of the four qualities we need to never stop doing if we want lasting love with friends and with spouses, is that we always need to express faith. We can never stop expressing faith in other people. Now, there are three kinds of people

- 1.) There are people that are very gullible; by the way did you know that the word gullible is not in the dictionary? Seriously!
- 2.) There are cynics; people who are suspicious and mistrusting.
- 3.) And then there are healthy people. There are healthy, normal people.

A professor, named Jullian Roder, did an extensive study to see which people were more psychologically healthy; the people that erred on the way of trusting or that erred on the way of cynicism. He wanted to see which one was healthier, more fit psychologically, less likely to work themselves into some sort of a disease laden condition. He found the answers to three questions; these are true or false. Think about these, but don't say anything – I'll give you the answers.

Trusting people tend to be more gullible, true or false?

Trusting people tend to have a lower IQ, true or false?

Trusting people live happier lives, true or false?

Gullible is not in the dictionary, true or false? That was just one I threw in there.

So the answer to the first question: trusting persons tend to be more gullible – no, they don't. They're not taken in. The fact that you err on the side of trusting does not mean that you are naïve or gullible. That is what he discovered as a result of his research. Trusting people tend to have lower IQ's? False! Trusting people live happier lives? True, so it is better to believe in your partner than to always bring up the errors of the past and to nag about it. Don't tell it like it is, but tell it like it could be. We have a wonderful example in our scriptures of Ajamil. Ajamil, in his early life – for the first 10 or 12 years of

his life, was a Brahman; a pure pucca Brahman, born in a Brahman family. One day while he was getting flowers to take back to worship the Deity, he saw a couple – an intoxicated low class couple on the side of the road embracing. He was in puberty and he was very vulnerable. As a result of that encounter, he left off his Brahminical ways, took a common law wife and to support the many children over the years he had with her, he took to a life of crime. There was no crime that he did not commit: robbing, stealing, cheating, extortion, murder. He reached the end of his life at the age of 84, and was about to leave his body. I don't know how many of you have seen that movie "Ghost" by Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore? You know the dark guys; they come up from the underworld to take the bad guys away? The director got the idea from the story of Ajamil. So the yamadutas, the agents of the Lord of Death were coming to take him away for the punishment which he very justly deserved. Ajamil, who had spent a whole life in degradation, screamed out the name of his youngest son in fear and terror. "Narayan," he called, was a name for Krishna. "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna." He wasn't even thinking of God, he was just thinking of his youngest son. In India people name their youngest children with names of God. So simply because he shouted out at his dying moment the name of God, to prove the power and the absoluteness of the name of God – he got a reprieve. The agents of Lord Vishnu came and stopped the yamadutas from taking him away. The yamadutas said "what do you mean? We're not supposed to take him away? If anyone deserves punishment, it's *this* guy. He's done everything in the book." Yeah, but he said the name of God. He was offered redemption; he was offered a second chance. People say Christ went on the cross, he suffered for my sins. Why? To offer me a second chance! He showed faith in us, that if he did this for us, then we have to do something for him. That means we don't go back to our old ways; we don't resume the very activities that caused him to suffer in the first place. So Ajamil was given a reprieve – two more years of life on the condition that he totally abandons his sinful activities. They put trust in him. There was no basis for it,

just this one moment – one moment, he wasn't even thinking of God and yet they gave him the benefit of the doubt. They said “you can do it. You've made a start and you can do it.” So he took his two years, he went to Rishikesh in the foothills of the Himalayas where there are many temples and many holy men. I was in Rishikesh and we were crossing the Ganges river and there were a lot of people in the boat; the boat was only clearing the river by about an inch and so I was looking over the edge and there's these huge trout and you can just reach out and touch them. They are very friendly. They have no fear of people and I said “wow, trout really live long lives here, don't they?” Someone in the boat told me that if anyone catches a fish – two weeks in jail. It's a crime. You will not find any flesh foods. In Haridwar Rishikesh, it's all vegetarian and whoever catches fish goes to jail for two weeks. I mean, this was 20 years ago, I don't know if it's still the case. So he went there: he went to the Temples; he listened to the discourses of the holy men; he did service in the Temple; he took the remnants of prasadam, the foodstuff offered to God; and two years later he hadn't done any sin. He filled his life with simple, humble, pious activities and when he left his body he went back home, back to Godhead. He got a totally different result than he would have, had he not chanted the holy name of the Lord one time and had not faith been put in him.

So someone comes to you and says “Caru, I can't trust my husband. I can't trust my husband.” Or “I can't trust my wife.” Then you have to learn how to trust God. That's what you have to do; you have to learn how to trust God because He knows what he is doing and we don't. Oftentimes something we think is a problem is really a protection. Einstein said “if we knew what we were doing it wouldn't be called research.” There's a poem I've always enjoyed by William Cowper. This is an interesting story: the man who wrote this poem suffered from depression and despondency. One evening in London in the 1700's, he decided that he was going to go to the Thames and commit suicide so he called a horse and buggy and he told the cab driver, “Take me to the Thames.” Now, it was a

very foggy night that evening. So off they went, and this is a cab driver, you know *he* knew the streets of London. Whether he really got lost or whether he knew what this fellow was intending and wanted to avoid it, we don't know. From the point of view of William Cowper, they went for hours and hours through the city and never came across the Thames – it runs right through the city, and they never came across the Thames. The fog was thick, and after several hours, the cabman said “I don't know what to do; you have to get down here.” He got down and where was he? He was at his own doorstep. And he wrote this poem:

God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.  
Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never failing skill,  
He treasures up his bright designs,  
And works his never ending will.  
Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,  
The clouds ye so much dread  
are big with mercy, and shall break  
With blessings on your head.  
Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust him for his grace;  
Behind a frowning providence,  
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.  
Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan his work in vain;  
God is his own interpreter,  
And he will make it plain.

I was in Berkeley in 1975. I was the Temple President of our Hare Krishna Temple there. Incidentally, it was a Mormon chapel – it was a converted Mormon chapel that we bought, and they made me the President in 1975 and I was there until '78. The Temple wasn't doing very good when I came, there were only about 20 devotees, most of who had left under my new management. Under the systems that we installed, within the year we were up to 120 devotees in the Temple. We had our Golden Gate Chariot Festival, which never had more than 3,000 people attend it in Golden Gate Park. 20,000 people attended it in the second year I was Temple President at Berkeley. On Monday morning the San Francisco Chronicle had a front page article "20,000 people attend Krishna Festival" and Golden Gate Park – I don't know how many of you know the climate at Golden Gate Park? Mark Twain said "the coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco." He was talking about the places that skirt the ocean, like Golden Gate Park. So the article said that 20,000 people braved blustery winds to go to the Hare Krishna Festival. We sold a million dollars of books a year and submitted that to the book fund which finances Temples all over the world. We acquired a 150 acre farm in Mendocino County, one of the most beautiful pieces of Shangri-La, and on the street where the Temple was located in Berkeley, just 5 blocks from the University of California-Berkeley, we bought 7

houses. We called it “New Jaganath Puri,” Vaibhavi had a whole crew of 15 men that completely renovated the interior of the Temple to look just like Jaganath Puri in Orissa. We were smoking; we were on a roll. Nothing could stop us; and then one day Prabhupada passed away. Then there was a new breed of Gurus who thought that they were Prabhupada, that they were as good as Prabhupada. One of them came to Berkeley, and I tried to work with him, I tried to accommodate him. After 3 months of hellish co-existence with him, 3 nightmarish months, he confided in me. He said “when I came here, I had already made up my mind – it’s either me or you.” At the time, I couldn’t understand. Why? “I’m serving you Krishna, we’re selling a million dollars in Bhagavad gitas, and we’re buying farms, schools, festivals, bringing in new devotees... why do you do this to me Krishna? Why?” I couldn’t understand, but I wasn’t in despair. I didn’t despair because I knew there was a reason - I just didn’t know what it was. Now I know. I don’t know whether it’s better or worse; I don’t know if I’d stayed in a big bustling metropolitan area like San Francisco if we could have done something even more glorious or not, but this is what Krishna had in mind. None of you would be sitting here tonight; this Temple would not be here; this property would not be here. Lord Caitanya propagated the chanting:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

, He said that chanting Hare Krishna will eventually go to every town and village in the world. We always joke, if it can come to Spanish Fork, it can go anywhere. So maybe we would have done greater things in San Francisco; maybe the main reason Krishna sent us here was for a joke because he is a prankster. He is a trickster and he is a prankster; but whatever it is, I am here because this is where Krishna wants me to be and I needed to trust him and I did trust him and we didn’t stand around

moaning like the Palestinians about something that happened 60 years ago. We hit the ground running and with faith and trust, we didn't lose a beat and here we are.

Believing in people – this is a funny quote. One of Prabhupada's early disciples said Prabhupada was holding a globe. He was holding a globe and he was saying "Brahmananda will go here to Africa" and he was pointing to Indi when he said "Gargamuni will go here and open up Temples." He was pointing to all the places where he would send his disciples. Who were his disciples at this time, in the late 60's? A handful of teenagers who couldn't get it together to brush their teeth and he had it in mind to send them all over the world and open Temples. You know, sometimes I wonder – Prabhupada invested so much trust in certain people, and after Prabhupada left they did not exactly discharge their duties in the highest form. Some of them left, and a few of them were corrupt and so on and so forth. I used to wonder – why did Prabhupada give such special attention to these people? What was special about these people who seemed to have breached the trust that was put in them? I often wondered about that and lately I realized that is what a pure devotee does. That's what devotees do – they trust. It's not because of what you are; it is because of what they are. I was thinking less of Prabhupada because he put incompetent people in charge when I should have been thinking more of him. It wasn't what they were; it's what he was. If you want people to change – you have a problem with your husband or wife; if you want a change, you need to change yourself. If you want a miracle, you need to work out that miracle in your own life before you can expect other people to change. If you, as a husband, want your wife to treat you like a king, then why don't you start treating your wife as a queen; or vice versa? There's a story of a family that went to a restaurant and the waitress took their order – the mother, the father, brother, the sister and then she went to the little boy, the 7 year old boy, she said "what is your name? Oh, Bill? It's nice to meet you." She shook his hand and asked "and what would you like to order today Sir? Oh you would like this sir, you would

like this sir and you would like this sir and you would like this sir” and when she went away the little boy said “mommy, daddy, she treated me like a human being.”

There was a story of a professor who was teaching at a college in Oregon. He had written a book called the Prayer of Jabez; his name is Roy Wilkinson. He was a new professor and he was in the faculty lounge when the class assignments were being handed out for that semester. As he received his class assignments one of his associates said “Bruce, Bruce you lucky dog.”

“Why is that?”

“You got two Section A classes.”

“What are the Section A classes?”

“Those are the brightest kids; those are the easiest learners. You’re going to have so much fun in those two sections, those classes. You’re just a new professor – I don’t know how this happened. You are one lucky dog.”

And sure enough as the semester went along, the students were a joy; they learned faster, they were quicker to pick up on everything. It was a joy. They got the highest grades on their term papers.

When the next semester was beginning and they were in the faculty lounge again, Bruce was talking to the Dean. Bruce said “boy, I hope I get the Section A classes again next semester” and the Dean said “what are you talking about?” “The Section A classes – the bright kids” and the Dean said “We don’t have any Section A classes Bruce.” “No, No – I was with them, I was with them.” “No, no – We discontinued that program 6 years ago. We don’t have any Section A classes.” Bruce couldn’t believe it. He went back and saw the grades and sure enough, they got A’s and B’s when everyone else got B’s and C’s. Then he did the ultimate test – he weighed their term papers. He weighed them compared to the other sections and they were heavier – they had done more research. They had done a more thorough job and they got better grades on it. So because he set them up with his expectations, because

he hoped for the best, he was rewarded. So why don't *we* do that instead of blaming people and bringing people down? Why don't we envision all that they could be and all that they can be and then step back and watch the fun?

Prabhupada came to Australia in 1970, and I was the Temple President. We had a little store front in Paddington and Prabhupada brought Deities; Radha and Gopinath from the Bombay Cross Maiden which was in the park. He brought these two Deities; he sat them on his lap on the plane, to be installed in Sydney. There was no Temple, it was a rented storefront. There was carpet on the floor; we were new devotees. We didn't know anything. Prabhupada was giving me and some other devotees Brahman initiation and he said "give me the Brahman threads." Give me the Brahman threads? This is like your spiritual umbilical cord. This means that for one year you are free from illicit sex, intoxication, meat eating, and gambling and then you can get the Brahman thread. We said "Prabhupada, what's the Brahman thread?" What's a Brahman thread? Prabhupada was appalled that he was leaving the Deities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in this mleccha desh, this land of low-class people, but he hoped for the best. He didn't say anything to discourage us. He could have nagged us, looked down on us, and said "oh boy, I don't know," but he didn't. We had no inkling. We had no hint whatsoever that he had all these reservations. He hoped for the best and he prayed to Krishna; this was his prayer as he left: "now I am leaving you in the hands of these mlecchas. "Will you please guide these boys and girls and give them intelligence to worship you nicely?" He came back one year later and we had a much bigger facility with land, a new altar. Vaibhavi was decorating them every day. Everything that Prabhupada asked Krishna to do, He did it. And only then, after one year did Prabhupada confide in us about his horror – that he had left Radha and Krishna in the hands of the pagans, the infidels, the moochies, the mlecchas but because he didn't express that and he had faith in us, it turn out all right; we actually arose to the standard.

Now think of your wife, think of that person that you stood in front of the altar with and made a lifelong vow with.

If I knew it was the last time I got to share a day, I'd know I'd make certain it didn't slip away. We assume that we will have tomorrow to correct an oversight, to we'll always have another chance to make everything alright; that there will always be another day to say "I Love You" and there will always be another chance to ask: what can I do." But just in case I might be wrong and today is all I get, I want to say that "I Love You" so that you will not forget. Tomorrow is not promised that we will see another night. Today could be my last chance to love and talk to you. Instead of waiting for tomorrow, show your love somehow; for if tomorrow never comes you will wish you had done it now. That you didn't take the extra time for a smile or a word, instead you were too busy, too busy for the one you now miss. Tell them that you love them and why you hold them dear. Say "I'm sorry," "please forgive me," "you're the best," "it's ok" for if tomorrow never comes, you'll not regret today<sup>1</sup>.

➤ Hope for the best and be ready for the worst.

This is the fourth thing that you must always do if you want lasting love. You have to be ready for the worst. It takes 60 days to create a mushroom and 60 years to create an oak tree. Do you want to be a mushroom or do you want to be an oak tree? If you want to be an oak tree, whatever trials or tribulations or bumps in the road, whatever huge tidal waves come up, you will dig in your heels and you will just hang on. You will just hang on, because marriage isn't for you to be happy, it is for you to

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<sup>1</sup> Poem by Norma Burnett

be holy; it's for you to be purified. The sum of a man and a woman are the adherence to the vows they take in the sacred places. You are the sum total of your vows and your ability to stick to them. That's the sum total of your character, or lack thereof. All marriage counseling can be summed up in just two words: grow up. Just grow up. Stop being selfish, stop insisting what *you* want and stop insisting on it now. People who have been married for 30, 40, 50 years – they are great heroes. They are great heroes, but what consists of the heroism? Heroes are ordinary people who show an extraordinary amount of determination.

➤ Don't give up

So the last thing is hang on; don't give up. Prepare for the worst, but don't give up.

I want to let go but I won't let go,  
There are battles to fight,  
By day and by night,  
for God and the right and I'll never let go.  
I want to let go but I won't let go,  
I'm sick 'tis true and weary and blue and  
Worn through and through  
But I'll never let go.  
I want to let go but I won't let go,  
No I will not yield,  
What, lie down on the field,  
And surrender my shield?  
NO! I'LL NEVER let go.  
I want to let go but I won't let go,

May this be your song  
Mist legions of wrong,  
O, God, keep you strong,  
So that you will never ever let go.

[Anonymous Poet]

Learning to love is the single most important thing we can do in life; it's the reason that we're put here. We need to love Krishna with all of our heart, and all of our soul, and all of our mind. Sometimes we think as devotees, well if I just concentrate on Krishna, if I love Krishna, automatically I will love other living beings. But Krishna wants you to practice. Just as we practice loving Him, he wants us to practice loving other living beings. People say "well I'll love someone when I feel it." No! You love and they you'll feel it. Don't wait until you feel it before you love because you'll never feel it; especially when it comes to the unloved and the unlovely and the unlovable. You practice it, and the less you feel like it the better. The less you feel like loving them, listening to them, showing some kindness and some interest, the better; the more advancement that you will make. Nothing else is as important as this. Nothing else is as important: not awards, not honors, not scholastic achievements, not athletic competitions, nothing else are important.

Some people think "well I'll love in my spare time. I'll do this and this and this and I'll just put that in a corner as an extracurricular activity." No! This should be the main business of the human form of life and everything else is extracurricular. As hard as it gets sometimes, it's never easy. If you want everything perfect, I tell you what - you're in the wrong place and you're with the wrong people. You want perfect, then do your duty here. Practice 40 or 50 years of love and then you will experience unlimited love for all of

eternity. Hang on, don't give up. It's worth it. Krishna says in the Bhagavad gita, "Perform your duty without attachment, surrendering results to the Supreme. That person is not affected by sinful actions as the lotus leaf is untouched by water." And this is a verse:

yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ  
janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇām  
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā  
bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ

[BG 7.28]

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life and whose sinful actions are completely eradicated are freed from the dualities of delusion, and they engage themselves in My service with determination." Notice the last sentence here: they engage themselves in My service with determination. One must have determination. I have vowed before God to stay with this person through thick and thin, happiness and distress, honor and dishonor and by God, I am going to do that and nothing will ever stop me from doing that. That is determination. A good example of that kind of determination is Gandhi. A little guy, 70 pounds, wearing a loin cloth – he determined "I'm going to kick the British out." He made up his mind, and not only that, he determined to do it in a non-violent way. The British were the most powerful nation in the world; the sun never sets on the British Empire. This little guy, this little aesthetic, this little holy man, 70 pounds –he decides he's going to kick the British out of India and do it without firing a shot. It took him 30 years, and he spent 15 years, on and off of those 30 years in jail. He did it; he did it. That is the kind of determination we that need to bring to our relationships. Those of you who are with me on this, those of you who want these kinds of abilities, you're welcome to say – either out loud or mentally – with me this finale:

Lord, I need to feel your love. Today, I am opening myself up in a way like never before. Put your love in every room in my heart. Fill my mind, my life, my body, my hands, and my feet with your love. Thank you for creating me. Thank you for tolerating me. Thank you for the offer of your spirit to become my inner guide. I don't understand it all, but I want to be filled with your love and I want to learn to love you and I want to learn to love the people in my life. Forgive me for my immature love. I want to become a mature lover. I ask for you to do in me and in my relationships what I could never do on my own. I want to learn to offer grace. I want to learn to express faith and trust. I want to learn to expect the best. I want to learn to endure the worst, even in sickness and in health.

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

A little more oomph, if you don't mind:

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