

# HH Badrinarayan Swami Maharaj

*Q What important instructions and leadership examples of Srila Prabhupada do you feel should be preserved and shared for the longevity and solidarity of ISKCON moving into the future ?*

So few thoughts on that, I actually asked Srila Prabhupad. I was on a morning walk and I was all of probably 22-23 years old I was a young Temple president .of michigan US college town 40000 students .We made, by Krishna's grace 36 initiated devotees in three and a half years, which in America is pretty good, you know. Many of them college students. Vraj Bihari came from there, Anuttama Prabhu came from there. So I was feeling I am a Temple president Very important Small little temple. And Prabhupada so i was on a morning walk and i asked Srila Prabhupada, What does it mean to be one of your temple presidents? And Prabhupada . I thought Prabhupada would say oh you are one of my leaders, you are one of the generals in the Army of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and so many things No Prabhupada stopped .put his cane down, sized me up quiet for a minute and then he said it means if anything goes wrong it's your fault. So I was asked one time .. somebody said –oh why you are a gbc member? It's all the power and Prestige . I was thinking I have heard of what you have been for the last 20 years there . but power and Prestige eh, it's not there. I was standing next to our Temple president in San Diego one time and Sunday feast so many people coming and going we were in the front hall and his name is Kirtanananda Maharaj, he used to be a very nice Sanyasi a very nice devotee. And so he was the temple president at that time and someone.. a gentleman asked who's in charge here? so Kirtanananda Maharaj said well that depends he said if you are for complaints, here is our GBC . he said if you want to make a donation, I am in charge. So I was very nice our duties were properly delineated. So if one's motivation is from you know prestige or power or having your name on the desk or you know getting the ghee lamp first. That's not what it means to be a leader in ISKCON and you won't last and you won't be able to do the job properly. You have to So in that conversation Prabhupada said if anything goes wrong it's your fault we have to take responsibility. But Then I said, Prabhupada you know sometimes it can be difficult working with the devotees..you know.. so many I was in the shower one time as the temple president and taking care of business, so

I was in the shower and a devotee got on a box, stood up and called into the bathroom window into the shower. I was a householder at that time he said- Badri Badri can I talk to you? I said to the devotee I am in the shower ! the devotee said, oh I don't mind like you know like .I the concept of my having the right to a little private time, a little personal space was not on the radar then I had to take a shower the devotee would tolerate that inconvenience and this you know ridiculous.. I said, well I mind give me 5 minutes you know. So I was trying to express that to Prabhupada that you know sometimes it's very demanding. and Prabhupada laughed you know after giving me a strong answer that brought me back to my position. Prabhupada chuckled himself, because he knew and Prabhupada said actually you should remember that you're blessed that you get to serve the devotees and in my saner moments if you approach your service, if i approach or if we approach our service that actually we are very fortunate. we get to serve the Vaishnavas and as the temple president you have so many opportunities so if you have and it's an oft used phrase and I hope it's not tired and you know worn out by use . but the sense of a service leader you really need to have that because Prabhupada so off the track but it's okay we are in detroit, the detroit airport and it was a hub system . there was a you wait for your plane and so many gates like spokes on a wheel and it was in the morning and all the businessmen were commuting for catching their flights, they are flying you know to Chicago and this and that and from detroit to here there. So they are in a hurry, they have to catch their connecting flights. So they through from one gate to another they have to come to this hub area . and then Prabhupada was waiting for his flight. We are all there three hundred devotees plus. 15 mridangas, you know 30 pairs of kartals sprinkling flowers rose water i mean just you know booming kirtans!. i mean the walls were shaking you know you have got these businessmen coming off their plane and this is 1974 .75 .maybe 76 .in America they had no idea what's going on and you know they were in a hurry to get into their plane and they have got devotees offering full dandavats . you know the whole prema dhvani prayers and he is waiting for the devotee to get up so the pressure was building up and some of the businessmen were trying to push the devotees out of their way understandably so.. and the devotees were thinking this is a pure devotee of Krishna and we know one eleventh of a second and who are you pushing back and it was heating up you know and it's America, where people were passionate john wayne spirit and somebody was going to hold of and hit somebody and it was going to be a brawl it was just building up like water about to boil. So Rupanuga Prabhu was the chairman of the GBC at that time and he stood on one of

the chairs at the airport cupped his hands and said "All ISKCON devotees" All ISKCON devotees please clear the terminal. Nobody moved, not one single devotee moved what is this you know Prabhupada is here and we are chanting . you know the only devotee to move? Prabhupada Prabhupada had this little bag with him he took his little bag and with his papers inside, Srila Prabhupada started Rupanuga said to Prabhupada you stay, they have to move so Prabhupada was feeling himself you know I am a member of the ISKCON movement.. you know.. Prabhupada never asked us to do anything that he was not willing to do himself.

I remember being a book distributor and we would think that it would be hot it would be freezing cold and you will know what it's like and it can be a very humbling experience. and then we think about Prabhupada going in the tea stalls and trying to distribute his back to godhead and you know Prabhupada had passed of the sunstroke on the road in Delhi. In the heat some man found Prabhupada collapsed on the street, helped to bring Prabhupada into the shade. So there was nothing that Prabhupada asked us to do that he didn't do himself to the nth degree so if we remember that . if we want the devotees to do something, but we have to be willing to do it ourselves and doesn't mean that you have to clean the toilets but if it needs to be done you have to do it and devotees have to know that they have to know that you are working as hard as they are. There is a saying in America that you can't just demand respect but you have to command respect and command respect from the devotees means when they see that you are working as hard as they are as surrendered as they are you sadhana is strong then they will respect you. But it's not that just because you have got a position that they are going to do it it's a voluntary movement it doesn't work that way.

Also Prabhupada said that every devotee has their own genius so not everybody is going to do everything the way you want them to do it. If they get the job done.. like jayananda he people respond to their better angels Generally speaking, people who join the krishna consciousness movement are sincere souls..i mean we get people who are in need of money people who are distressed four types of people surrender to me but generally speaking what is the fourth Prabhupada said those who are seeking the absolute truth. so generally speaking people who stay as devotees certainly those who stay they are sincere and they are intelligent and they want to do the right thing they want to serve krishna they want to grow, they want to advance and if we encourage them like they say one of the business tips is you catch people doing something right. And you know Prabhupada said that the

art is to see the spark and to fan it. You see some spark and you fan it. So sometimes we have to correct you know . sometimes we have to chastise but more importantly it's that devotees feel that you care about them. and if you do you have to care about . you cannot be a leader in ISKCON you cannot last. Power and prestige you know the desire for these things will only carry you so far. But if you generally, as we have received the mercy If we consider the mercy of the Acharyas I mean Krishna himself comes as a devotee. I forget who the song is burned gives up keshav his beautiful hair, he shaves his head. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Krishna comes himself.. you know Radha Krishna combined. They leave Goloka, come to this world.

So anyway we look at it you know Prabhupada went even to New York City. People were so impressed you know the skyline in wall street. and Prabhupada . his observation in New York City was like that the whole place smells like dog's stool. He was not impressed, he didn't like it. It was a cold, bitter, unwelcoming place. So but he did it out of love, he did it out of profound love and concern so if we think how much mercy we have received how can we not want to give at least some mercy to others? As we have received we should be willing to give. So if that's our mood as leader in iskcon, that I have received so much mercy, then we try to transmit some of that to others. and let me serve the vaishnavas this is purifying for me.

And now another thing just from the top of my head that . Prabhupada gives the example that in a family, when the older children take care of the younger children, the parents become very pleased with that older child. So similarly if we want to get mercy, i mean you could go into the bushes in Vrindavan and go to Radha kund and pray oh Gopi Gopi this that but if you really want to get because yasya prasada bhagavat Prasado it comes from the mercy of one's spiritual master. And if we want to get that what is it that what is it ekeha kuru nandana What is it Vyavasayatmika budhhir ya.. that one's fixed intelligence means let me execute the order of my spiritual master. And then all the gates, all the floodgates of mercy open. So when we take responsibility, Prabhupada said you know they i'll serve you here i'll serve you there but not India Prabhupada said one time, you know but Prabhupada said i am looking for someone who will sit down tight and develop a place. So to sit down tight, to take responsibility, to develop a place to take care of the devotees it's worth it. What is it that happiness in mode of goodness little bitter in the beginning but nectar in the end. You get so much mercy. Krishna within the heart tesham satata yuktanam bhajatam priti purvakam sarvasya cha aham hridi sannivisto so many verses that Krishna within the heart of a sincere devotee who takes

responsibility for pushing on the mission of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu His sankirtana movement.. Krishna gives so much mercy in the form of realizations. So anyway if one it is being a leader in ISKCON taking the responsibility of temple president, global duty officer, regional secretary whatever it is .taking responsibility you attract the mercy of Krishna Krsna says yes here is a sincere soul let me give him some mercy. And that mercy comes in the form of deep realizations. So it is not that oh spiritual life nurturement of my personal spiritual advancement, that is one thing and my service is something else, my service is something that i have to do out of duty to spiritual master, therefore i have to take up this bitter task, but may be my make spiritual advancement comes from another portion of my life. That other portion needs to be there too but it's a fact that by taking responsibility and by taking care of other devotees and pushing this Sankirtan Movement, that in and of itself intrinsically a medium of self realization it is not separate from springboards or sources of spiritual realization. It is in and of itself because Prabhupada said.. after all the institution is spiritual.

***Q Please share some of your personal principles and practices which you have held on to in your journey through ups and downs in various leadership roles in ISKCON ?***

You have to chant nice, serious, undisturbed, peaceful japa in the morning. We hear it all the time. But i am telling you umm. devotees used to because this you know unless the building is on fire Devotees would come to me you know i am chanting Japa after mangala Arati and would tell them do you want a Krishna Conscious answer or un-Krishna Conscious answer? What would you say? if i would tell you that you want a Krishna Conscious answer or un-Krishna Conscious answer? What would you like? Krishna Conscious answer! So then i would say Let me finish my Japa. Let me just finish my Japa. Because we get so much strength and you get you know if you are just on the mental platform something comes and agitates you and you make a quick solution, you act in the mode of passion. It's really an investment in making good decisions. It's not a time lost oh, well i have got to do this this and i will squeeze my japa on. Does not work like that. if you chant nice Japa and by that i mean if you have your heart is you know we all have our anarthas but your heart is as pure as can be . and you have that time that you just bathe your mind in the purity of the Holy Name. What is it? Rupa Goswami I don't know how much Nectar these two syllables have When i chant Krishna I wish I had unlimited millions of ears and when it dances on tongue, millions of tongues and when the Name enters the

courtyard of my heart, the mind becomes conquered and the senses become inert. So if we chant nice Japa solid and pray to Krishna, we find that we have much more spiritual strength. you can when the the verse i like you know it's from Light of the Bhagavata from that section Autumn season in the tenth Canto and it compares a mountain and the storm pounds on the mountain . the clouds but the mountain doesn't move.

So in devotional service if you are leader, there are times when it's going to pound on you things you know events, things are going to happen and if we are deep in our Krishna Consciousness, if we are getting happiness or if we have a taste for the Holy Name and you know Brahma-bhuta prasannatma if we are deeply anchored in our relationship with Krishna then we can take those pressures when those pressures hit us. And we don't just respond emotionally or from false ego. So it's not again it's seamless our spiritual life and our service are actually seamless. And if you have to chant nice peaceful, deep prayerful japa in the morning or you will not last and you won't do as a good job and you won't be happy.

Okay another thing i wanted to say is you are on a ship the ship hits a storm and it's a stormy weather and the waves are big. The sailors all looked at the the captain, they will pick up the mood of the captain. And if the captain is at the helm and the captain is he is full in (unclear) we are going to get through this you know he is at the helm, (unclear), then the sailors will calm down and they will do their duty. So, we as leaders have a duty to not always express if we are in anxiety or under pressure whatever it is the devotees will take their cue from us. And if we are strong in Krishna Consciousness and if we faith that Krishna will get us through, you'll find that the devotees would be running around and they will do the needful, they will help you. Devotees will rise to the challenge, if they have good leadership that cares about them.

So solid Japa and also you know Prabhupada said in Kali Yuga we should work collectively. And you know the example, Prabhupada gives example the Chinese example. You break one stick, you put a bundle together you can't break it. As a leader, certainly in Kali Yuga it's very good and i would say essential and much more satisfying to work as a team collectively, to work by consensus. I mean sometimes the Temple President has to make the call. Should we do this, should we do that? the devotees are uncertain. The temple leadership sometimes meets okay you make the call. you take the responsibility and you make the decision okay we are going to go in this direction. So there are times like that. But if you can build consensus for especially difficult decisions or or or deep and significant decisions, it's going to be much you know if

you have your group of temple presidents you are working with or if you have different department heads if you are a temple president and first you have an idea and they all disagree hey guess what! you might be wrong, it's possible. If you enter into my sanner moments, i have learned over the years to enter into discussion i might be wrong or the truth might be in the middle, there might be you know let me let me hear what the other devotees have to say. And low and behold! if you probably come up with a better idea by everyone adding something and changing and shifting And certainly if you come to if it's just your decision and you try to implement and there are difficulties Those who don't have intellectual, psychological, emotional (unclear 20:54), then they are not going to support you. It wasn't their decision, they didn't really agree with it. So when it gets difficult to execute it you are going to be standing all alone. So either for practical execution it's good a-you will come up with a better decision and b- and you are going to get help in implementing it if you work collaboratively, collectively and by consensus as far as possible. You'll go much further, you'll have a much happier team.

And something also i was going to say about that oh also let others take the credit. You may train up the cook, you may give fifteen menus and you may you know and if you're standing there and . in the hallway or in the serve or at the feast Someone comes up and says "that was a great feast" and you are standing next to the cook and you say "ya i i taught the cook how to do it" okay, that's true! he did it because i trained him. Okay that's true. but if you step back and say " ya here's our cook and he's been there since seven o'clock in the morning and he has started planning the sunday feast menu on the wednesday. and you just step back and let that devotee take appreciation, let Krsna knows And if the temple is going nicely and your zone's going nicely, you'll get credit, you'll get appreciation. But if you step back and let the devotees take the credit, they feel satisfied, they feel loved and appreciated. And it just works better. People, when they are loved and appreciated, they are going to do more. So, let let others take the credit don't worry about it Krsna knows and if things go well you'll get credit automatically. So that's something not learnt by doing by not doing it.

***Q Please recount your best and most successful projects (or initiatives) during your tenure as leader /GBC. What were the key success factors in terms of leadership and managerial decisions or approaches which contributed to the success of these projects ?***

As again i said earlier, devotees might i mean sometimes you have the

rascals there are you know it happens in any organisation. But generally speaking, devotees will rise through a challenge. So rather than criticizing them for shortcomings, if you give them a positive view and give them a way forward let's again take the Sunday feast the Sunday feast is just not very nice you know and the preps are you know you can chastise the cook what's wrong with you? you know what (unclear 23:31) okay that's one thing. but if you can say, hey you know i covered your duties hey you you can go to LA and learn how to cook quantity have some fun, learn some recipes go to LA and Radhabhushan will train you, who is a very good cook in LA you know. And make it fun for the devotee. and he'll go there and he'll learn and he'll come back happy. So if you give them challenges and support to come to a higher level that you are going to be much much more successful than just criticizing. Because people become defensive with criticism. It only takes so much. But you give them a positive challenge and the means to reach it, i find that most devotees will take that and come to that level (unclear 24:15)

Devotees see hypocrisy devotees will not they are not dummies they joined Krsna Consciousness they are the smartest you know perceptive and if there's hypocrisy, if you are asking them to do something that you are unwilling to do or you are telling them to go for the morning program and you are not at the morning program, they are not going to do it. they they It is human instinct. Krsna says that everyone follows an example. you know whatever so you will lead by an example. that's what people would do. They won't do just because you say it, they'll do it because you do it.

***Q Which Leadership Values should be included in the training of future ISKCON leaders ? (please mention atleast 3)***

..With quiet confidence you have to be humble i mean Who are we? we are insignificant jivas being kicked like a football. I told the story in the class here, but i'll say it again. Tamal Krishna Maharaj told me this personally and anyone who doesn't know Tamal Krishna Maharaj what is the saying you know we stand on the shoulders of giants. So we those early heroes of our society, who Prabhupada depended on Tamal Krishna Maharaj for so many he got our land in Mayapur i mean so many things Tamal Krishna Maharaj did. So he was a young man. This must have been maybe nineteen sixty eight, something like that. He was made the temple commander of our Los Angeles temple which was the even the current building was (unclear 26:01). And maybe thirty devotees were living in the temple. I think probably at that time, it was



the largest temple in ISKCON. And he was the temple commander, he wasn't even the temple President. We didn't have the GBC then. he wasn't the temple treasurer. he wasn't the..you know he was like third or fourth on the higher queue of the management in the temple. But he was the temple commander. And he went to Srila Prabhupada and said, "prabhupada i have this very powerful position, very important position. You have made me the temple commander and i'm afraid i may get puffed up and i don't want to become arrogant and proud and How do i avoid this powerful position intoxicating me?" Prabhupada said, "you think like this. You think that in the spiritual world Krishna expands into Mahavishnu. And he lies down in a portion of the just a portion you know.. we say one quarter of the spiritual world. He lies down as Mahavishnu and from His breathing one exhalation and one inhalation so many universes coming from His pores, coming from His breathing like as many stars in the sky or as many grains of sand on the beach. Just on breathe! And in each of those bubbles He expands again as Garbhodakasayi Vishnu. And from His navel comes the Lotus and Brahma tene Brahma hridaye Brahma creates all the planets." So Prabhupada said so you keep this picture and you remember and then every planet there's so many continents and every continent there's so many countries and every country so many states every state so many divisions, provinces whatever. Every province so many towns every town so many streets every street so many buildings every building so many rooms and in one of those rooms Tamal Krishna is thinking I am very important.

So, if we keep that you know Is that issue really so important? i mean for Krishna everything is important, our service is important but do i really need to get completely done out of shape and am i so important? So, if we keep that humility that by somehow or other, by the Grace of Krsna i have been allowed to offer some service. If we think like that at the same time there should be a quiet confidence there should be that i have been given a position as a leader, Krsna will help me. i have to have goals and my duty is to improve and to expand. It's something that's just static, it goes stagnant. Motion is required Prabhupada said mission of a leader is to continue to create challenges for the devotees so they grow and they like that. So we have to Prabhupada was always pushing. Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur as soon as they had money, he spent it and put them in debt again. They pay off the debt, he spent it and put them in debt again. So there was always a challenge. So, we need to be humble and we also need to lead. We need to create vision and challenge and see growth.

So that's one value..umm Selflessness like i said that we have to not be

concerned that we get the credit or you know we are the big leader or everyone is going to praise us that will come automatically. What is it that Prahlada Maharaj says just as the distress comes nobody likes the distress distress comes. Similarly, happiness will come whether we seek it or not. Similarly, praise respect that will come automatically. If you do nice job it will come automatically. Don't be hungry for it. Just selflessly do your service and everything will come. And it will come in a way that doesn't intoxicate you. We are also meant to be noble, the Vaishnavas have a noble character. There is there is dignity in life. we are not meant to be just scratching out the existence to fill our belly or to maintain a small family or just to maintain our building and get some rice or ring some bells. we are not meant for that. Prabhupada said, my disease (Prabhupada's joking) is that i cannot think small. We are meant to you know . in every town and village a Bhagavatam set in every home. We are meant to spread Krsna Consciousness all over the world. Prabhupada said, they should turn to us. When it comes to matters of moral issues, economical issues or political crisis, they should turn to Vaishnavas for advice. And that is there the potential is there we certainly have the answers in the Bhagavatam. And people are certainly looking for them and our answers presented properly are the answers they are looking for.

So there should be a nobility, a dignity that i am a Vaishnava, i am Krsna's servant, i am not just like these . not not arrogance. There's a profound difference. It's not arrogance but there should be a quite, humble confidence and nobility. We should be honest. We should be compassionate you know all the qualities of the We should be poetic, we should care about aesthetics. Things should look nice for Krsna. So, Nobility because you asked about values Devotees should be kind. Srila Prabhupada said our reputation, our measure is that we should be strict with ourselves and lenient with others. And you know Prabhupada when had to chastise he would chastise but sometimes when you made a mistake and you are trying and Jayananda was the same way you know jayananda one of our heroes he made it understandable you know a devotee is trying, he makes a mistake If you draw without and make a big deal out of him and chastise him, you can break a devotee's heart and some enmity so some scar some pain will remain in the relationship. But you know you tell a devotee to do something you give a clear instruction and they blow it if you point it out in a gentle fashion. if you if they sense kindness oh well you know hey Prabhu what happened and you make it understand you give them a way they can deal with the situation and maintain their dignity, they'll love you for it. They'll appreciate, they'll take instruction from you. So, it's just another

so anyway there should be kindness.

So, courage i talked .. When you're the leaders sometimes you have got to take a risk you have got to step out and you have got to take a challenge. And if someone challenges Krsna if there's a fight, Prabhupada said you know look at Prabhupada in Juhu. I mean that's why these things happen no one has a battle like Prabhupada had in Juhu. you know there's one Prabhupada's evening class Prabhupada says everyone is going back to Godhead. Then he stops and kind of chuckles and says "except for Mr. Nair". You know so Prabhupada he was a fighter. And Prabhupada they gave the land back. I mean i am waiting for Giriraj Maharaj's book, as it's going to be a just a gem about the Juhu battle. You know but there's one point they got completely bewildered by Mr. Nair as attorney gave the money back. You know and Brahmananda whoever was called Prabhupada solved the whole thing we got out of the deal. You know we have given the land back and Mr. Nair is not going to sue us I think Prabhupada just hung up you know. But anyway ultimately Prabhupada said you can all leave you can all go away. he said we will take the money we had for the temple, we will buy buses and we will travel all over India and we will distribute books, you can all leave. But we will park those buses on this land in Juhu. And Prabhupada said.. you get me a chair i'll sit in that chair and i will not leave. When Prabhupada said that . they are not just going to leave Prabhupada sitting in a chair in Juhu you know if Prabhupada's not going then iam not going. There's a famous saying of course that would not have actually happened, it's propaganda. But during world war-II in the darkest days of battle of England. There was a plan that the king of England should leave or first they thought they should send children of the Royal family, they should atleast go to Canada or Australia. And so they said to the queen Mary at that time they said atleast people were sending their children to Canada they are sending them to Scotland where they won't be affected by the bombs. So they said, shouldn't you move your children out of London? And they said she said, the children won't leave London without their mother, me and she said, i won't leave without the King and the King will never leave London. He is going to stay, he will not leave, he refuses to leave. So when they see that the leader is strong and the leader is brave and the leader is courageous, the devotees will pick that up. And we have that from Prabhupada and Prabhupada was like a lion when he was (unclear 35:05). So we need to have courage and we need to be brave, we cannot just be timid. We have to challenge Maya.

Umm ..There is the Forest of material enjoyment. You are going to be criticized as a leader, just accept it. And the more important your

position the more criticism you are going to get. And Prabhupada says in Bhagavatam that in the section of forest of material enjoyment. He says criticism is like crickets and owls. You can't see them, but they cause you distress. And the other place he compares it to mosquitos. You can't see them, but they bite and cause pain. So criticism is going to be there. but Prabhupada gives a nice analogy that if you are a young man and you marry a good wife she is good, noble, faithful good wife, good cook very important. So you marry a nice wife. When you marry the wife the relatives come I was a householder, i was married for so many years. And then the relatives come. They are not all sweet and friendly. You know get you get those who just want money from you, those just criticize whatever you do. As soon as you get the Mother-in-law who just causes havoc so many problems. But Prabhupada says if the wife is good, then you just accept well it's part of the package, i'll just take that, the relatives come with it. Prabhupada said whenever you stand for a principle when you stand for a principle there're going to be people who don't agree with you and are going to criticize you. it's just the way the world works. And therefore if the principle is good you just accept or tolerate the criticism. You just accept it. So, don't be discouraged. Prabhupada said that the dogs may bark but the caravan goes on. This doesn't mean you are blind to hearing good advice. Prabhupada quoted Chanakya Pandit a King without good advisors soon comes to ruin. So you want to take advice, you want to work collegiately. You want to listen to your temple presidents, your spiritual master, your GBC whatever your department heads if you are a temple president you want to listen. At the same time, once you have collectively made a decision as a group and you are marching down the path, don't let the criticism . undue, unjust, inappropriate, unfair criticism don't let it get to you. Krishna knows, the devotees know and just sail forward So you have to be actively tolerant. What is it utsahan niscayad dhairyat Rupa Goswami says. You got to be enthusiastic, you got to be patient and you got to be determined. And that will come from good japa.

And there should be again back to this principle of nobility. Umm i mentioned it in class, i will say it again. Sudama prabhu told me that he's passed away now but Sudam said he was and anyone who went to airport with Prabhupada I described the detroit airport It was just amazing you know, Prabhupada had such you know he had the way of his noble profile you know cocking his head back and he was just without arrogance such a dignified, noble saintly transcendental person. And he would say all through the airport with the . it was literally just like these lights are on (unclear 38:24) and you turn the lights back, when you stop filming you know it kind of goes back to normal. You fill

that...lights they call you know whatever it is. When Prabhupada would walk through the airport it was just as all these lights were out just effulgent you know. So Sudama said, Prabhupada when i am walking with you, sometime i sometimes i feel proud. And he said, is that good or bad? Prabhupada said- No, you should feel proud, you should feel by the grace of my spiritual master i am no longer a fool and a rascal. And Prabhupada said - a devotee knows who is who and what is what. So, we should have that dignity, that quiet Vaishnava courage and confidence. That i am we should remember that we are representatives of the Sampradaya. It also means we have to act properly you know But also we should have that confidence that we are representing the Timeless Truth of Srimad Bhagavatam. I have the mercy of my Guru Maharaj, i have the mercy of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. And we may succeed, we may not succeed. There may be difficulties, but we should know that we are doing the most noble work. We should be doing it. We shouldn't be just cheating people and making money. you know drinking water from the river on a fast day if we are Jayadvaita Swami told me and he's an American and i so hope you follow. He was getting some money changed in the JFK New York Airport. And you know new Yorkers, they have their own kind of gruff way of speaking. So she saw him as he was changing the money the clerk she saw Jayadvaita Swami dressed as a Sannyasi, Hare Krsna. So she said- that's what i like about you hare krsna people. She said - you are what you pretend to be. She meant to say - you are what you are supposed to be, you know. So we shouldn't be whom we pretend to be, we shouldn't be pretending to be sadhus, pretending to be you know whatever it is. but if we are, whoever we are supposed to be dedicated Vaishnavas, living message of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu there's nobility in that. And there should be that sense of yes i am on a mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Prabhupada would not anyway i don't want to say the wrong thing. But don't get the wrong idea. But Prabhupada of course, Prabhupada is unique. But i think it was the Mayor of Paris and it is the etiquette that you are supposed to stand up when the Mayor But here you have the the man's a meat eater, and a womaniser as everyone in the material world is you know drinking you know whatever it is. passing stool and not even taking a shower no idea what the goal of life is. And here is Prabhupada Prabhupada didn't stand up. Prabhupada did not stand up and they waited. there was a (unclear 41:14) pause there, when they were Prabhupada came and there were waiting for Prabhupada did not stand up. So, not that . we capture people by our humility, don't get the wrong idea, but within the core of our heart we should have that confidence that i am serving Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission.

***Q Which leadership skills must be included in the training for future ISKCON leaders ? (please mention atleast 3)***

Just practical skills i wish i had learnt earlier and that assumes i haven't even learnt them now. but i wish as i said the way i was trained up. They just handed me the keys at two 'o'clock in the morning and temple president was out of town and i was the temple president. So i wish i had learnt listening skills. The ability to and empathetic listening you know. Just like the art of somebody says something especially if it's an emotional conversation and repeating back to them saying you know i are you saying or i heard you saying it seems to me you are saying and mirroring back what they said, quite often well adjusted. Even though you say just what they said, they didn't really express themselves fully. So just the art of empathetic listening and you know asking them back, you actually find more will come out well i didn't really mean to say that, i don't really you know, i don't mean that the temple commander is just a nonsense. I know he is sincere but he is too heavy you know. So if i had i wish that i had learnt earlier, empathetic listening skills and i believe it's extremely important.

Mediation skills how to get . you know how to deal with you know emotional confrontations and bring people to consensus. So, i wish i had learnt mediation skills. I wish i had learnt team building, how to really develop a team. That's extremely important to motivate a team and to keep the team on course that's a very valuable skill. I wish i had learnt what else was i thinking? oh, a strategic planning. you know.. how to set a goal and to keep a team on it. that's you know otherwise you just drift and you wake up to five years have gone by, what have you really accomplished? okay, the bills were paid that's good! But you know, you could have built on that. So i wish i had learnt strategic planning, i wish i had been trained in fundraising. Because if you don't have money i mean fundraising i am sorry.. because everything is because i know Krsna is Madhav, the husband of the Goddess of Fortune. I know the philosophy and i lived it. but i wish you know putting together a solid fundraising team and how to manage money asset management. How to make sure you have a little bit of savings, how to set aside money for different projects, how to build up a reserve fund. All of those, Prabhupada did that. Prabhupada did that for BBT. The BBT was our adjustment bank that built this so many temples were built by the money from the BBT purchase. So i wish i had learnt fund development,

asset management. i really do, because that's when you are dealing with a lot of stuff and you need money. And if you have got money.. of course, i know money depends on Krsna's mercy and purity of heart. Fine, it's not mutually it's not the tyranny of or you know it's not i am spiritual or iam material., No it's not that. but if i good fundraising and solid financials.. it makes a devotee poverty brings out all the bad qualities in man and people you know Chanakya Pandit says that if you have a nice financial base, you can grow, you can develop, you can maintain things nicely. People feel devotees feel protected i am in a stable institution, that's, you know, respectable. So, money's important. Those are some things, the practical skills that i wish i had learnt.

***Q Please visualize your dream for a very successful worldwide ISKCON movement 25 years from now What all do you see in that vision ?***

Well i can i am a member of the organisation development committee which was grew out of strategic planning which grew out of a meeting we had in Italy, i don't know how long ago something like ten years ago. And it's a basic seed where do we you know what if to keep doing same thing and expecting different result is one of the signs of insanity. do the same thing and expect a different result and you you get the same thing.

So, where do we want to be in ten years? where do we want to be in fifteen years? What kind of movement? we are all certainly, those of us who are GBC members . now most of us who are feeling the age, we are nicked and scraped by time. What are we going to hand off to the next generation? What kind of institution both philosophically, ethically and physically are we going to hand off? So there was the so out of that, those questions came the beginning of strategic planning, one of the aspects of strategic planning is organizational development one example of that is the GBC colleges come out of that. the development of zonal super (unclear 46:29) and global duty officers has come filling in the infrastructure to carry Lord Caitanya's mission forward. So, lot of the things i wanted to see, i actually we are actually walking down that path. We are not there yet. But we are i am actually very confident about the future of ISKCON now because we are actually putting structures in place and visions and goals are placed that will create that work.

So, what are some of those . just as far as planning when i joined i was coming in 1969, i joined in 1970. And we had an idea, there was a sort of mood that if you thought too much, if you planned too much, you are

trying to be the controller. And really, you should kind of be a free spirit and let Supersoul guide you. You know with a little mix of hippie-dom. And so if we forgot to pack the books and we went out on Sankirtan and we forgot the books well Krsna just wanted us to chant the whole day. Must be Krishna's arrangement. And if we forgot the instruments or we have He just wanted us to distribute books the whole day. If we ran out of gas in empty field somewhere there must be a soul here somewhere that Krsna wants us to deliver you know we say if the 'E' doesn't stand for empty, it stands for eternal you know we just try to run out of gas it's Krsna's arrangement. So he was killed in a car accident next day, he was (unclear 48:02) very nice devotee smart guy, college student. It's just that you sit right with him (unclear 48:09 to 48:12) it is someone's a play in the hands of God or we are supposed to be you know. So he wrote to Prabhupada and he didn't quite maybe he asked in class, I forget which one it was because Prabhupada was there in LA at that time. But this happened quite often. We didn't quite get the question out right, but the Prabhupada could see where we are trying to go and either he would jump and give the right answer. So, all of this was in the back of his mind you know maybe it's just the best way that we are supposed to just you know stumbling around you know waiting for Supersoul. So, we asked Prabhupada - what does it mean to surrender? But this was the context. And Prabhupada said - surrender means to use intelligence. Use your brain you know use the intelligence Krsna has given you.

So, to see strategic planning and you know where do we want to be in seeing these things coming into places. Global Fundraising how are we going to support the work of the GBC and the work of strategic planning. We should be able to pour money into China right now. We should be able to pour money into Cuba and places there are opportunities. If we have the planning and the money when the former USSR collapsed, the weaker of the... of stuff you know. And opportunities are coming all the time. We need to plan and be prepared for those so strategic planning. And i see as putting those things in place. I would like to see one concern before i say that there is the danger, while we need not need, we have to put proper systems in training in place. And there needs to be accountability starting at the top. There needs to be service descriptions, and accountability and a systematic assessment and review. So many things. But we also need to be very careful that we don't lose that selfless, spontaneous spirit. if i if my goal is to climb up the corporate ladder and we find this in Iskcon and i'll tell you frankly, we find this everywhere. We find that a lot in India. Because India has opulence. India is one of our you know i think probably the most



sophisticated and wealthy at yatra. I mean you are in the land of dharma i mean not to discount the horrible kind of devotees but you know it's a very positive place and people you have a lot of money and you have a lot of facility. And there are people Prabhupada..it's a long story, the short version was Prabhupada was in dynapone negotiating for the printing of the Krsna book and Back to Godhead magazine. There was one time, one point of the negotiations but Prabhupada completely blew the minds of dynaponic exec's of the Japanese Publishing house. they went out to talk. They left a minor junior executive just as a minor, just to be with Prabhupada and Tamal Krsna Maharaj who was maybe a brahmana at that time . to in case they wanted any water , juice or needed anything while they recuperate from Prabhupada just blowing their minds. so Prabhupada asked the the man didn't speak much English Japanese he was Japanese man. So Prabhupada asked him "What is your goal in life?" maybe he asked the translator, but the guy got it. And previously the businessmen had put all the different exec's from dynapone and put their business cards on the table and everyone exchanges cards and contacts. So he went around and took one of the each of the cards this Japanese junior exec and put them on a stack and to make his point he ceremoniously took his card out and put his card on top. In other way, his goal was to climb to the top of the corporate ladder. And i remember my father, that was his goal and materially you know that's they need climb to the top. But if that becomes the mood in ISKCON let me get a title on the door and the biggest a better office and and and more people reporting to me you know and i get the latest phone, i get a new car and you know i have a driver and my car's better than and i see the danger, i see it happening already. if we just become a functionary I do the job, i am officially a manager, temple president. If we lose our evangelical spirit, if we lose that sense of surrender if lose that sense of the need for personal spiritual growth and advancement, then we will become corrupt and opulent you know fat, big and successful. but we won't be the Hare Krsna movement. We won't have the mercy of the Acharyas, that mercy will flow somewhere else. And we'll have our big buildings but we will have no heart. So we have to be Prabhupada said - one of the aspects of intelligence is the ability to balance opposing points within the mind. Like acintya bheda abhed tattva it starts from that. To be able to say two apparently opposing things and to see the synthesis of them how they balance, how they fit the comprehensive picture. So all these things i am saying about management, skills and all that yes . but at the core of the heart we have to be a humble devotee, trying to please the Parampara and advance personally and to deliver the conditioned souls. if we lose that

burning compassion and humility, then what are we? you know And we won't have the mercy.

So that said, as i said what do i want to see? i want to see a strong funding base. I want to see us with plenty of money. i want to see the tithing system the people i mean the norm is you don't get 10 percent and he gets net May be it's gross but i don't know what it is. if you don't give ten percent of your income you cannot even come to the your church to the tabernacle you can go to your local thing but you can't the big temple you can't even have your ceremonies, you can't have a wedding. You are just you are just considered you know a deficient. Whatever so i am not saying that. But i am saying that there should be a solid tithing system, there should be we need to work on that, i want to see ISKCON well funded and strong financially. So we do the things we need to do.

I want to see social stability we need to If you are a mormon, their philosophy is scratch. it's just you can poke a thousand holes in it. But they are one of the fastest growing if not the fastest growing religion in the world. And they have a great social network. If you go on a mission, if you are a young man and you go on a mission for two year, when you come back, they will help you find a wife. And the quality girls won't marry a boy if he has gone on a mission. So, if you go on a mission and you go out two years preaching mission, they'll help you find a wife. They'll help you get a mortgage for a house. They'll help you find a job. They got a strong social network. So i want to see you know a booming householder community with a sense of commitment. I want to see i would like to see an investment bank that can donate give money to just start-up householder businesses. Because those we we should be booming in the Prasadam everything to have to do with food. You know packaged food, restaurants, catering, delivery you know.. sold in stores. We should be all over Prasadam distribution. Every single aspect of that people should look and there should be a Govindas brand and people think Govindas hey quality those are the Hare Krsna people. i know it's going to be clean, i know it's going to be quality, i know it's going to be good. i know it's cooked in good consciousness. You know hey what brand you go for? Iam looking for Govindas brand, i know that's the best brand. We should be all over the food business in every possible it will provide funding , it's a fantastic preaching avenue. i want to see as the leaders in ecological or green movement. We should be right you know the king of Bhutan even he is speaking from the United nations. he is speaking to the you know London school of economics. He's speaking at the United nations, he's getting ovations. because he's talking, instead of measuring by gross domestic product we should be measured by

gross domestic happiness. We should have net balance of (unclear 56:59) you know they are making plans. And people are dying for this. We have the answers, we have the ethos we should be we should be out there on the cutting edge and people should think hey Hare Krsna's man, they are ethical, they are cutting edge, they are sharp.. and they know what's going on. So, i want to see us in environmental movement, i want to see us in Prasadam distribution. We should be all over the internet. There was a insignificant cult i think shumbela it's called it's based in bolder colorado i may not have the name right, but there there you know of so many Buddhist scripts, they practice nothing in america . they were practicing nothing. They went online and they started offering courses, different types of quality courses and support they are huge! They are making millions of dollars they are who knows how many people they are influencing all online. So i want to see us cutting edge online because the question is what do i want to see. That's where the world's shifting and we should e out there on the top of it.

So, i want to see a first class educational system. People put their kids in catholic schools, they don't even even jewish people put their kids in Catholic schools because it's quality education. So we should have quality education and our children should be proud of their educational system. So we see that happening with the GBC college but we should invest in first class education. And anyway, there are so many reasons. We need first quality the gel.. the help that what is it? St Ignatius head of the (unclear 58:42) educational system and his strategy was he said - you give me a child till twelve or whatever the age was and that child will be ours for life. By teaching Catholic education, quality education, Catholic values and they are with them for life. Now, Catholic churches have gone off the track in so many ways. But we should have a first class educational system. And that will help in what could be a preaching tool and will make devotees and keep devotees and will get quality devotees.

Because you asked for vision obstacles. As i said already you know and it's causality connect the dots. Because we have a lack of money, we have a lack of staff. Because we have a lack of staff, we have a lack of implementation. We have a lot of great ideas. But we don't have the money, we have the idea. We have the goal, we have the idea, we even know the means. But we don't have the money to get the staff, to get the thing implemented. So we have got to work on money because you asked about obstacles we also, we have always done it that way. that's just the way we have always done, we have always done it that way. that's just how we are. We are the Hare Krishna's and this is the way we do things. No we need to learn, we need to grow, we need to learn from other organisations. We have to be have that innovative, creative.

Prabhupada was a transcendental entrepreneur. Prabhupada knew how to catch an opportunity and how to build on it.

We do need to have a fear of bureaucracy and becoming a functionary and killing the evangelical spirit and the compassion and it just becomes a job you know i punch-in, i punch-out, i do my job. At the same time, we shouldn't be afraid of bureaucracy and administration. We have to worry about pride, we are talking about obstacles so just becoming functionaries, just becoming you know this is our job you know a corporate a corporation. We have to watch out for that, there is a danger. There is almost a you know there is a charismatic, evangelical by that i mean a very dynamic pure hearted religious spiritual leader. He gathers some followers. Initially, it's tried that the accepted religious institution tries to crush it. Eventually they become converted. Then there's a (unclear 61:09) real dynamic (unclear 61:10) way that institution is motivated and generated by that pure spirit reformation whatever it is you know. And then in due course of time, it's almost inevitable the effects of time it becomes what will we call it, the . regulization or the systemization or the static of that charisma and it just becomes another institution. And it becomes dry and corrupt. And then eventually there becomes another revolutionary who comes and So it's almost a cyclical thing you know that there is It becomes it starts of fresh, bright, strong. If it's crushed, it becomes a part of the institution. Then it becomes lazy, fat and then it just becomes another so this is sick. So we have to be aware of that and watch out for that . that we don't become just dry and stiff and well oiled machine with no heart. We have to worry about pride and factionalism. Well you know India for India or Europe for Europe. if you look at our history India is booming now. But India was started with American money, American money and American devotees. We poured money. The Brooklyn temple and the New York Temple they worked for ten years and saved the money. Prabhupada had to take the money out of that and purchase the Juhu land. We took the money we sold spiritual sky, which was supporting householders and has a booming and Prabhupada was right. We took that, we sold that came from America and that purchased the Juhu temple. And you talk to the old timers in India, they'll tell you everything we have got (unclear 62:49) because we could show the Juhu temple. hey we have built this people have been there and seen this. They said ya, it's okay i'll fund you you know in Ahmedabad or i'll fund you in Calcutta and i'll fund you in Hyderabad because i saw what you did and Prabhupada was right. This is Prabhupada's strategy and it worked. But it came from blood, sweat and tears of others. Similarly, you know.. we don't think India for India or America for America.

Prabhupada said that the world's first and your local nation, your local area's second. So we should be thinking about China we should be thinking about South America. We should be thinking, so we need to make sure that we have that worldwide vision and we don't just settle into our our place and our faction. Some may say it's racism you can be you know forget Africa or you know well India, we don't care for these western whites or no whites and you know Forget it, that's not our . well you know. So we have to be careful because this insidious seed is there. Nationalism, racism, factions. Umm.. And another thing and it's cornerstone and I people roll their eyes when you say it to some people.

We need to have, we need to implement Varnashrama dharma and by Varnashrama dharma i am not saying like cambodia and you know (unclear 64:07) send everybody to the country i am not saying that. But we need to have a stable social system. people all over the there was a top Harvard professor, he did a study. You can measure healthy societies, you can measure. You can measure society's in distress. What's the divorce rate, what's the suicide rate, what's the drug addiction rate, what's the criminal rate, what's the . whatever. you can measure a society is under social stress. And if you measure that the top GDP, the top nations you know.. as far as economic development many of those are the leaders in social chaos, they have the highest incarceration rate, they have the highest divorce rate, high suicide rate, high you know. Something is not working, the equation is not working. And smart people . you know they are looking for sustainable economies, they are looking for different social models. You have got it in America, you have got the one percent, then the ninety nine percent. And you have got a social rage building in America. It's building, it's building and sooner or later it's going to burst. I don't know either it is going to be completely ghettoised that you have got the one percent everybody else is just a working pleb you know kept on a leash. Or we could have a social revolution, something is going to give in America. I don't know what Krsna's plan is. But you cannot, you know so smart people are looking for an alternative social model. And there's a danger, because we want to be accepted, we want a seat. When i was a kid, they used to have this kid's table, like you have a big family gathering. And all the adults, they are all sitting at one table and there was a kid's table, right And it was a little table and you have little seats and have a little you know that's how it was in my family. you know and we all , kind of wanted to sit at the it was a big deal when you got to sit at the adult table. you are old enough that you got to sit at the adult table and be a part of the adult conversation. It was a big deal you know and it was fun and we looked forward to that.

So, because we care about the world i don't want to have to say that the intention is wrong because we care about the world, because we want to influence events in the world, because we want the message of Caitanya Mahaprabhu respected, there is a desire to sit at the adult's table, to be included in you know.. the interfaith circles and to be invited to the Vatican council and to.. you know.. when they have their academic study, we don't want just the Vedanta society to be there. We you know Hare Krishna devotees, ISKCON should be there. So, we there is a stream in Iskcon that thinks that the way to do that is to accept the western social models. I won't get into the Krsna west thing, i don't care what people were. But, but the Psychology well you know you know i don't want to preach my point of view, but we need to figure out what is our social model? and we don't need to that's an essential goal. because what foundation, what do we rest on? And if we don't have a secure social model, stable families, stable marriages, stable businesses. We don't have stable brahmachari ashram, stable sanyas ashram which all rests on the ethos and values of and understanding of Varnashrama. And we need to have a discussion, what is our society? How does varnashrama apply to ISKCON and the modern world. We have not had that conversation. We have had conversation, let's develop our farm and everything Fine, great. But who are we socially? Or there's do men have different role than women? How does it work? We need to have that conversation, we need to figure out who we are and we need to offer the world an alternative social model because the world is crying for it. There's a problem now, in my personal this is editorial content now, you can cut it out if you like.

But the we there is a danger of jumping in a sinking boat. The western cultural models are failing. And the symptoms of the creaking, sinking boat are there. Smart people are getting off that boat and looking for other boats. We can offer that, but instead of offering that, we are getting on that sinking boat! We are jumping into those social models and it's a sinking boat and we are the last people to buy a ticket on it. We are like the last one running up the gang plane on the titanic. But that Titanic's sinking, you know. So that's something we need to work out, what the answer is exactly, i am not claiming to know but we need to have that discussion.

So that's something i wanted to see in because it's a very just like the Mormons . because they have a stable social system. it's very attractive to people. So if we have a stable, fulfilling that people there's no question for exploitation or feeling.. you know.. kept down. if we have a social model where people can feel challenged and grow to their highest potential, fulfill their own personal creative spirit within social models

that are satisfying, that is such and the world's crying for it.