

Lokanath Swami on minding your mind

Certainly the location that you have selected for this program would help you to mind your minds. I am very happy to see you all. You have assembled here in good numbers from all over. So it is very important that you have taken out your valuable time, not just little time but several days. So the topic is 'minding the mind.' Certainly it is related to yourself. Self is not just the body. We always heard from our parents, "take care of yourself". But they didn't really tell us who that 'self' was. The purport that I could gather or understand from my parents' saying was that 'take of yourself means take care of your body". We were told how we should carefully by the side of the road to avoid accident or how we should eat properly etc. But all those concerns were boiling down to the body.

But we are not just the body. There are more things, which are part of that self. The dictionary meaning of the word self also includes those things. Of course the 'self' does include body. The mind is also part of that self. Intelligence is part of self. Certainly most importantly, the soul is the 'self' or the real self. Generally in the world, we talk about the body as self. We do take some care of the body, and little bit of the mind. I don't know how much we take care of the intelligence and generally, we do nothing at all for the soul.

The topic is minding the mind. But the goal of course is the soul. And that is us. What good it is if we lose the soul? The bible says, "you gain the whole earth, you gain the kingdom but you lose the soul. What have you gained?" Means you have lost everything ultimately. This topic is also the subject matter of **Bhagavad Gita**. **Bhagavad Gita** talks about the topics of body, mind, intelligence and the soul. In **Bhagavad Gita**, the Lord has not ignored the topics of body or mind. He does

talk about our bodies, of our minds and about our intelligence, even though He quickly wants to get to the topic of the soul. Yukta ahar viharasya: The Lord also talks about our ahar and vihar – food and recreation. Coming to places like this is a vihar. On the bank of lake here, spending a few days, this is relaxation, this is recreation. Lord wants us to take care of us like that. Some balanced life. Lord has not ignored our bodies and minds. But the goal is the soul.

Yesterday I read this slogan “Just do it”, meaning don’t even think. Just do it. If you feel good, go ahead and just do it. And this is a very dangerous thing to do. **The mind functions in two ways; one is sankalpa (acceptance) and another is vikalpa (rejection).** Is it not the reason for your being here? You are here for sankalpa. Taking some vows, returning to your respective places with some resolutions, some determinations. “I will do it, this is my goal, from now onwards, I will do this, but I will not do that.” Accepting some things and mind is also rejecting something. Acceptance and rejection, mind is going through this all the time. Day and night, at every minute, the process of acceptance and rejection goes on. If we let the mind function on its own, then mind is going to take dictations from its neighbor. The neighborhood of the mind is the senses. They are five in number – To see, to hear, smell, touch and to taste/talk. **“Manah sasthanī indriyāni” (Bhagavad Gita, 15.7: Due to conditioned life, the living entities are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind). Krishna in Bhagavad Gita has counted mind also as a sense, the sixth sense, or even as the king of the senses. Mind lords over the senses, gives dictations.** The senses are in touch with the world around. The world is also made up of five sense objects. If there was another sixth sense object, there is no way we could realize its existence, because we have only five knowledge acquiring senses. If there was a sixth object, there is no way that we would know about it because we are allowed to relate to only five kinds of sense objects, or perceive them or exploit them or do different

things with them, deal with them.

The five sense objects are shabda (sound), sparsha (touch), gandha (smell), rupa (form), and rasa (taste). All around us are these five things; the world is filled with them. We are mounted or our bodies are mounted with five senses. These five senses come in contact with respective sense objects and the mind accepts or rejects. Some sankapa and vikalpa goes on.

However, **mind alone is not competent to make all the best decisions on the earth, best decisions in our favor or in favor of the soul, that is what we are or in our best interest.** In the shastra, there is something called shreyas and preyas. Something of the immediate benefit is called preyas. The shreyas means long term goal. So mind usually goes for what I feel good now (preyas). If the feeling is good, then the mind continues to do it. By doing one thing, over and over again, the habit is developed. You do the same thing over and over again and then get into the habit of it. For example, getting up late in the morning. It is a bad habit. But who is going to tell the mind that it is a bad habit?

Lord talks in **Bhagavad Gita** (7.4) of the eight elements – ***“bhumir apo nalo vayuh, kham, mano, buddhir eva cha; ahamkaram itiyam me bhinna prakritir ashtadha”*** (Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego—all together these eight constitute My separated material energies.) **The earth, air, water, fire and ether are called five great elements or ‘pancha maha bhutas’.** Then there is mind, intelligence and the false ego. Prakritir ashtadha. Lord says, these are My energies, My eight kinds of nature. It is external energy of the Lord.

So mind is there. In us there is mind, there is intelligence and there is the self and in conditioned state, the soul is covered over and it is called false ego, not the real ego. So we cannot leave everything up to the mind. So by “just do it”, they want to suggest that do not even think, just do it. Your

mind is in touch with the senses and the senses are in touch with the sense objects; and you feel good. I feel good now with the garland here. Just because I feel good, it smells good, I accept it. But I would immediately reject it if there was a little bomb inside there. Sometimes people give you to smell something but then you feel dizzy. Then they rob you off, take all your money.

So this is where we always talk of living simply and thinking high. Simple living and high thinking. But when you are talking of 'just doing it', how much thinking you are talking about. You may say, oh, it is low thinking. But I would say there is no thinking. You are talking of just doing it, meaning, don't even think, simply do it.

So we need help of intelligence. **This intelligence is compared to a driver.** In a vehicle, or say in boat, who is the most important person? The driver of the boat or in an aircraft, it is the pilot. Others could sleep in the back or do different things or even fight. But does the pilot afford to do this? If he would do such a thing, then there would be a disaster. So intelligence has a vital role, most important role as the driver in our lives.

So what is the function of the intelligence? What does intelligence do? What do you do with intelligence? We just said that it is a bad habit to get up late in the morning and getting up early is a good habit. We said one is good and the other is bad. Who is deciding? Intelligence is deciding. This is power of discrimination. **Power of discrimination is the power of the intelligence; not power of the mind. Mind cannot decide.** As soon as the mind is in contact with the senses, it is lost. Only intelligence could say, "hands off, don't touch it". Mind is like the children. They play with the fire. The elders have to say, "no, no, don't do this. I say no." Wise people, elders, well wishers tell the child what to do and what not to do. Similarly, intelligence tells the mind what to do and what not to do.

Minding the mind means taking charge of your mind, taking charge of your life, taking charge of your destiny. Just as the big boats moving in the middle of the ocean get closer to the country, town or sea shore, they look for light house for guidance. In life, we are also in a kind of boat. We take some sankalpa with the help of programs like this, we take help of Krishna, **Bhagavad Gita**, and the sadhus (saintly persons). We learn that this is good for me and I will do this. So my goal is set. I have to go to this destination. They act as the light house for us. When that is determined, then I will keep going towards that goal. Otherwise I will go round and round. There is no destination.

This is what is happening everywhere. Of course, this is happening with us and this is called kala chakra (cycle of time), sansar chakra (cycle of material life). ***"Punarapi jananam, punarapi maranam, punarapi janani jathare shayanam"*** (again and again take birth, again and again die and thus take repeated slumbers in a mother's womb). ***"yaha sansare khalu dustare, kripaya pahi pare Murare"***. (this material life is wrecked and difficult. Oh, Murare, Krishna, please protect me from this). So we are in big trouble, in deep waters if we don't take help of intelligence.

Besides the two broad functions of the mind, namely sankalpa and vikalpa (acceptance and rejection), there are other functions of the mind like thinking, feeling, willing. But again intelligence has to keep watch on what thoughts are going through the mind – good or bad?

Again with the help of intelligence, we need to discriminate between the body and the soul. This is body, this is soul. How would one come to conclusion? Again, it is with the help of intelligence. This is pious activity, this is impious. Like that so many types of discriminations, decisions, that we need to make in our lives. For this, in **Bhagavad Gita**, there is the whole hierarchy. Krishna says, superior to the dull matter are the senses. (**Bhagavad Gita 3.42 Indriyani parani ahur,**

indriyebhyah param manah, manasas tu para buddhir, yo buddheh paratas tu sah. The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence.) There is someone superior to the intelligence. And that is the soul; that is you, that is your soul, that is you proper. Is there somebody above you or are we all in all? Is there someone above us? Supersoul is above us, above soul. Krishna says, "**Mattah parataram na anyad kinchid asti**". (Bhagavad Gita 7.7 – there is no truth superior to Me). Lord has made the declaration: No one is equal to Me and no one is superior to Me. "**a-sam a-urdhva**" No equal and no superior. Such a claim could be made only by the Lord. We are subordinate to the Lord. So this is the hierarchy. There is dead matter, above that are senses, above that is the mind, then intelligence, then soul and above that is the Supersoul.

Now how to obtain the best intelligence, the spiritual intelligence, the best power of discrimination? Otherwise the cat is also given the power of discrimination. Everyone is given the power of discrimination. The cat sits with eyes closed close to the milk pot and opens eyes from time to time to check out whether someone is around, if someone is watching the milk. As soon as there is no one around, immediately the cat goes, and drinks the milk. There is power of discrimination – when to drink and when not to drink. The cat knows that it will not be allowed to drink in presence of owner of the milk or person around. So the cat waits until there is no one around and then drinks. This is the power of discrimination. But this is only mundane intelligence. It distinguishes only one sense of object as better is than another sense object. This is all material business. This is fruitive intelligence.

However, the human being is known for or is distinguished from the rest of the beings for the spiritual intelligence. We are given the capacity to know who we are and that we are spirit

souls. This kind of intelligence we receive from the Lord who is most intelligent personality around. Lord or Bhagavan means one with six opulences and one of them is being most intelligent personality. That Lord is promising in **Bhagavad Gita, tesham satata uktanam bhajatam priti purvakam, dadami buddhi yogam tam yena mam upayanti te** (**Bhagavad Gita 10.10** – To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.) I will give the intelligence, I will provide intelligence to that person who renders some service unto Me, unmotivated, uninterrupted service unto the Lord, and when you do that, what do you get – most important item in your life – you get intelligence. With that intelligence, you take charge of your life, you take charge of your mind and then you move on, you carry on successfully in your life. Otherwise, the mind will always bother, always keep us or bring us in some troubled situations.

Sometime, people in general, or students experience depression. They don't see any meaning to the life, and go to the extent of committing suicide. Mind could kill you. The mind that is not controlled, the mind that is not purified, is full of ideas to enjoy and exploit this world and sense objects. The mind needs to be purified. We do of course that purification by chanting **Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Ram Hare Ram, Ram Ram Hare Hare**. The people in general experience the stress and strain because they don't use much intelligence. "Just do it" is the formula. So the stress and strain is there.

Recently, I read our president's book about his vision for the year 2020. He has vision for 2020. By year 2020 he wants to see that this country becomes great nation, one of the leading nations, scientific, materialistic, with strong industrial economy, technological advancement, computerization and what not. Scientist as he is, he says we are not less than Americans, or Europeans. He wants to march this country ahead.

Somehow I had the book in my possession and I read it during the day and then I was driving to evening program. The person who was driving me was a psychiatrist. One who cures the minds or deals with the mental disorders, gives medicine for the mind's stress and strain. He was that kind of doctor. As we were talking in general, he started describing from his experience how the country's, situation is real bad, very grave. He was talking with gravity. He said the kind of mental disorders people would get in their 40s or 50s now the same sickness is being experienced in our country by people in age of 20s -30s. Young people are experiencing more mental disorders and this is going to get worse and worse. He said by 2020, things are really going to be real bad. So there is our president's vision the country's progress by 2020, but the other side is very bleak, dark future of our nation. We would see that if we don't mind our minds; if we don't take care of our minds and if we don't purify our minds. One out of every five Americans is just fit for mental hospital. This is statistics, this is all surveyed, and it is not my imagination. The other statistic is that the sickest country in world is America, the land of opportunities. The mantra "just do it" is an American mantra.

But then of course some people are coming to the senses. Once a person came to me and said that they are using a "KISS" formula. The KISS means, he said, keep it simple, stupid. O stupid, keep the things simple. Don't make things complicated for your life, for your mind. We are stopping this "just do it" business. Think and proceed. This is what the king of the forest, lion does. It is called simha avalokan. Simha is lion; avalokan is seeing. Lion walks, jumps or runs some distance and stops and takes a stock of just now done, reviewing his performance, looks around, behind, ahead and then proceeds. It is considered as good quality of a leader. Leaders do simha-avalokan. Like leader of animals, king of forest, lion does, likewise good human leaders do this, they use their intelligence from time to time to review.

Even we could do similar review to see how the mind is functioning, what bad habits have I developed in the meantime. Take some new resolutions; take charge of life, so that one would never lose the sight of or goal of life, which is Krishna. Become God conscious, Krishna conscious and that does take care of everything else. When we talk of **Krishna Consciousness**, as we said in the beginning, Krishna also talks of your bodily needs, mental needs, (*yoga kshema vahami aham* – I preserve what they have and I provide what they lack) There is lot of logic, lots of food for thought.

So **Krishna Consciousness**, as **Prabhupada** used to say, is like having a hundred Dollars or hundred Rupees bill. Then all your needs of 5 rupees, 7 rupees, 10 rupees are taken care of; meaning they will be complete. When you have **Krishna Consciousness**, then you have everything. That cares of your soul, intelligence, mind, body, studies and everything else.

Try to understand the benefits of this controlled or purified mind. **When you mind your mind, then your mind will be more focused, you will have concentration on what you are studying.** You don't have to study ten times. With focused mind, you will need to read only one time, and get it right away. You will have concentration like that. Otherwise mind is chanchalam (flickering). While studying you are not really there. Some of the kids in our devotee families, children of devotees follow this Krishna conscious process and when they go to schools and colleges, they get extremely good success. So many brilliant boys and students we have all over the world. Youngest PhD on earth is our Radhikaraman, one Ravi Gupta. He is the youngest PhD in the world. He chants his 16 rounds of Hare Krishna and he is only takes Krishna Prasad, gets up early morning, studies **Bhagavad Gita** and he does his PhD also. Others are busy watching the films and movies and making minds dirty and fluctuating. This is one of the worst things for students. Your mind gets dirty.

One of the dirtiest things is this man-woman business,

connections and illicit thoughts and relationships. **So if you are a brahmachari, you don't have to wear saffron, it means your mind is in brahmacharya, your mind is pure, clean, chaste.** Then you know your power will be so strong. You take some decision; you will stick to it because of your sankalpa, the brahmacharya sankalpa. It is called brihad-vrata. You take vows. Following principles of brahmacharya, the mind remains clean, focused, and there are lots of benefits. **Prabhupada** gave credit to Mahatma Gandhi because Mahatma Gandhi was following the principles of brahmacharya. **"Ahimsa, satya asteya brahmacharya asangraha"**. Mahatma Gandhi went for these principles and one of them was brahmacharya. Because he was following the vow of celibacy and he had great determination and he was successfully able to drive away the British. No compromising, he was just fixed. His mind was fixed because of this brahmacharya.

There are so many things that can affect the purity of your mind. Food that you eat, the kind of literature or books you read, your association all these have a lot of effect on your mind, on the pollution or purification of your mind. Some of these things are good, and some are bad. So what is good, and what is not good? We should be able to determine. Mind cannot do it, you need intelligence.

If you don't have intelligence then what do you do? You borrow. Buy, borrow, or steal intelligence! Same thing happened with Arjuna. At one point in time, Arjuna went through some depression. Such a great worrier, but he was depressed and oppressed. He was crying, trembling and lost the concentration and focus. Then what happened, who helped him out? Lord Krishna gave him all the intelligence. What happened at the end? He was normal again. He said yes to Krishna (**Arjuna uvacha, nasto mohat smritir labdhva tvat prasadat mayi Achyuta, sthito smi gata sandeham karishye vachanam tava: Bhagavad Gita 18.55**: Arjuna said: My dear Krishna, O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my

memory by Your mercy. I am now firm and free from doubt and am prepared to act according to Your instructions.) No more doubts, I am established, fixed. No illusion. Everything was clear. This was the result of **Bhagavad Gita**. That **Bhagavad Gita** is available here, now and here. You could also study that **Bhagavad Gita** with the help of devotees. That is what this **ISKCON Youth Forum** is all about. Advising, guiding students, giving them intelligence with the help of **Bhagavad Gita** and **Bhagavatam** and giving the whole process of purification of mind. The result is purified mind, clean mind. Then you could employ that mind in your day to day life, be that study or your profession or whatever. Once you have a trained mind, once you have right thoughts and intelligence, it will help you the rest of your life.

You must attend this type of programs more frequently. As soon as the battery is lower, charge it again. Or you form a group, wherever you are, form a group. Keep reminding of the talks that you had heard or understood. Krishna advises in **Bhagavad Gita: *bodhayantah parasparam*** (**Bhagavad Gita** 10.9: My pure devotees derive great satisfaction and bliss from always enlightening one another and conversing about Me.) It is Krishna's advice. So many bases are being established all over India by our **ISKCON Youth Forum**. We need association, we gain strength from association. There is a saying, "***sanghe shakti kalau yuge***". You get shakti (power) through association. So form more and more sanghas all over the country, then you will be able to retain that shakti or revive or increase it. There are various ways and means to communicate in this day and age, like telephones. You could talk, use the phone, get in touch with your counselor. This literature is there. And the Hare Krishna is always with you, where ever you go, Krishna's name goes with you. It is right there and then ***Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Ram, Hare Ram, Ram Ram, Hare Hare***. Immediately you are connected with the power house. It is called yoga. It is bhakti yoga. Holy name is the Lord Himself through devotion. With some sincerity as we pray,

we cry out for help, Krishna helps in the form of His holy name, holy scriptures, holy Prasad, holy association. So see how you could be in the vicinity of some of these sources of inspiration.

“Sthavar jangam dekhi, na dekhi tara murti, sarvatra haya nija ishta-deva-sphurti” (Caitanya Caritamrita, Madhya 8.274: The maha-bhagavata, the advanced devotee, certainly sees everything mobile and immobile, but he does not exactly see their forms. Rather, everywhere he immediately sees manifest the form of the Supreme Lord.) In advanced stage of **Krishna Consciousness**, even though the whole world exists, good bad exists, male-female forms exists, gambling exists, person only concentrates on the Lord. He is always inspired from within by the Lord and his power of discrimination is always intact and he only chooses what is best for him. This world is there, always with dvandva (good bad, male female, rich poor, young old and like that) This world is there. Some fault of ours that we ended up in this world. You could get out of this and you could stay out of it. Next five, or ten thousand years' period is golden period. This golden period is ahead of us. ***Prithivite jata nagara adi grama, sarvatra prachar hoibe morn am.*** (In **Caitanya Caritamrita**, **Caitanya Mahaprabhu** said, “In every town and village, My name will be sung by all creatures.”) In every town and village, the Lords name is going to be chanted and only charnamrita will be available, no other kind of drinks, only charana amrita available. So those days are ahead. This world will go up and down. Satya yuga is best, and worst time is kali yuga.

Instead of complaining about the world, just consider that you have fallen into the deep dark well. So what would be your thought, as you are deep into the well? What is the only thought you are going to be thinking about? How could I get out of here? Not how deep is the well and when did I fall etc. Only one thought – how to get out of here. **So this world is made difficult. It is difficult. But Lord is also very kind**

and He has given us this human form of life. So let us engage our minds in serving the Lord. ***“bhaja hu re mana Sri Nanda Nandana abhaya charanar vindu re”***: My dear mind, please you try to worship the son of Nanda, who is abhaya-carana, whose lotus feet are secure and fearless). So somehow we should think of lotus feet of the Lord in our minds and get closer to Him and transcend the mind, transcend the world.

Thank you. Hari bol.

/em“Punarapi jananam, punarapi maranam, punarapi janani jathare shayanam”strongPower of discrimination is the power of the intelligence; not power of the mind. Mind cannot decide.
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