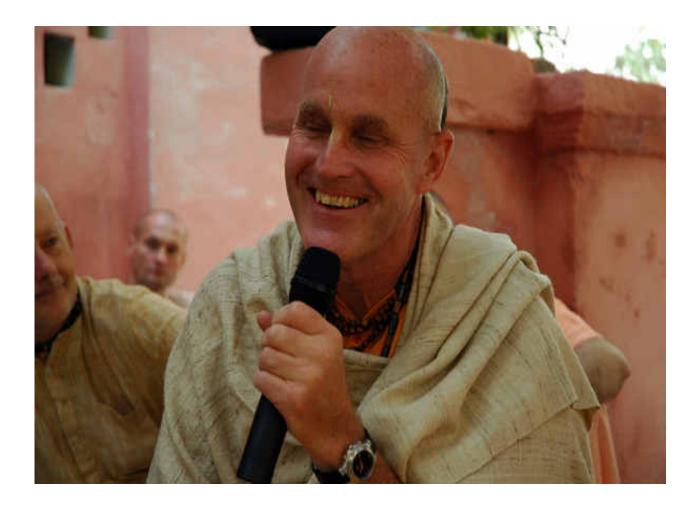
Written by Indradyumna Swami Sunday, 23 October 2011 13:48 - Last Updated Monday, 02 January 2012 06:41



From the mundane view, I was flying home. I was born and raised in San fransisco before joining the Hare Krsna movement in 1970. But there is nothing left for me there now. Both my parents have passed away and my brothers and sisters are scattered throughout the country. Nevertheless, as i looked out of my plane window, memories of my childhood came to mind, bringing with them sentiments not worthy of my attention. I quickly caught myself and came back to reality remembering the words of my spiritual master - reflections on his own family members with the passing of time.

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Where have my affectionate father and mother gone now, and where are all my elder relatives who were my own folk.

Who will give me news of them now I ask you tell me who?
All that is left of this so called family is a list of their names.

As the froth upon the seawater arises for a moment and then subsides, the play of mayas worldly illusion is exactly like that.

No-one is actually a mother or father a family member or relative, everyone is just like foam on the sea water remaining in view for only a few moments.

But all of us are actually relatives, O brothers, on the platform of pure spirit soul. These eternal relationships are not tinged with the temporary delusions of maya.

The Supreme Lord is Himself the ultimate soul of everyone, in their eternal relationship to Him, everyone in the universe is equal.

(Srila Prabhupada - Vrindavan Bhajan - circa 1958)

Srila Prabhupada writes that no-one is our father and mother, but rather everyone in the universe is equal. In other words, all of us are equal as brothers and sisters, because we all have one common father, God. A devotee of the Lord takes every opportunity to remind everyone of this fact. Therefore, although a devotee may renounce the idea that he is part of a particular family, society or nation, he is not at all averse to helping even his own mother and father in Krsna consciousness. In fact, simply having a devotee in ones family, benefits the

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family immensely. Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati writes:

When a great saint, a pure devotee appears in the family, his ancestors and descendents for a hundred generations are elevated. When a devotee of middle stature (Madyam Bhagavat) appears in a family, his ancestors and descendants for fourteen generations are elevated. When a neophyte devotee appears in a family, his ancestors and descendants for three generations are elevated. - Srila Prabhupada Upadesamrita.



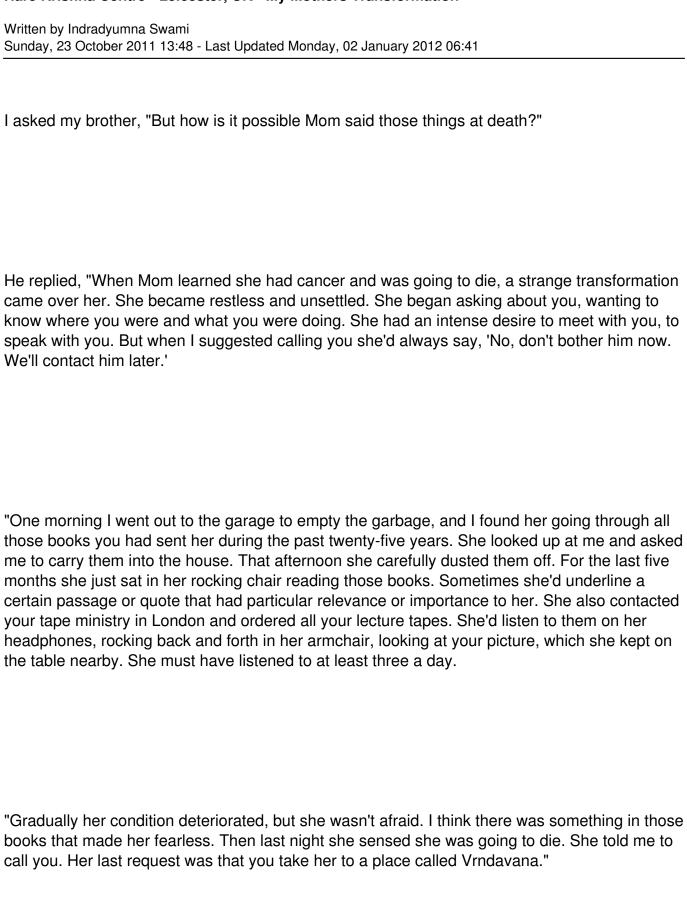
I tried my best to help my own mother in spiritual life. Unfortunately, throughout most of her life she never showed the slightest interest in religion. I once asked her if she believed in God, and she replied, "Something may be out there." Whenever I visited her we would often debate the existence of the soul, life after death, karma, and similar topics. Throughout the years I continued cultivating that little "something" in her heart by sending her Srila Prabhupada's books, which invariably ended up in a pile at the back of her garage collecting grease and dust.

A few years ago she telephoned me late one night. It was an unusual hour to call, and I was



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I was stunned.
"What happened?" I asked. "I talked to Mom only last night!"
"I know," he said. "She had been battling cancer for six months. She didn't want to tell you."
Collecting myself, I said, "Cancer! Did she say anything at the end?"
"Yes, she did," he replied. "She said, 'Don't lament for me! I'm not this body. I'm eternal spirit soul. I'll never die. I'm going to Krsna!' With those words on her lips, she passed away."
I couldn't believe it. My mother, the intellectual who never went to church, who never inquired about God—debated His very existence—was "going to Krsna!"



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