



## KṚṢṆA SAMĀDHI

### INTRODUCTION

To be in Kṛṣṇa samādhī means to be absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, to see him everywhere – within and without. Kṛṣṇa samādhī is the total absorption of all the senses into one object: Kṛṣṇa.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda writes,  
*Persons who are constantly engaged in the transcendental meditation of seeing Kṛṣṇa, internally and externally, by thinking of Him playing the flute, entering the Vṛndāvana forest and tending the cows with the cowherd boys have really attained the perfection of samādhī. Samādhī (trance) means absorption of all*

*the activities of the senses in a particular object, and the gopīs indicate that the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are the perfection of all meditation and samādhī. (Kṛṣṇa Book, chapter 21)*

In our Kṛṣṇa samādhī retreat we touched upon some of the ways of focusing on Kṛṣṇa and thus learn the essence of bhakti: to always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget him. In this Amṛta Vāṇī training letter series we are reviewing the main points of the retreat – the jewels we presented in the discovery lectures and workshops. The series consist of six parts:



Amṛta Vāṇī 1	<i>The Foundation – How to Give Up Material Life</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 2	<i>Our Process of Attaining Full Realization</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 3	<i>The Glories of Bhakti</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 4	<i>Bhakti brings Bhagavan</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 5	<i>How to practice Bhakti while Living in this World</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 6	<i>Becoming Absorbed by Feelings of Separation</i>

## THE FOUNDATION – HOW TO GIVE UP MATERIAL LIFE

### GIVE UP FALSE IDENTIFICATION

How is it possible to give up material life? In the Śrīmad Bhagavatam that same question is answered by the Lord as an incarnation of a transcendental swam, Hamsa-avatāra. He was asked how we could be liberated from the tendency of the mind to be attracted to sense objects and developing material desires. The mind has a natural proclivity for entering into material “sense objects” and similarly (even when there are no sense objects nearby) sense objects enter into the mind. So how can one break free from the bondage of this attraction? Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura summarizes the Lord’s answer as follows:

[...] in conditioned life the living entity artificially imposes upon himself the mind and sense objects, which act as covering designations of the eternal soul. Since it is the natural function of the material mind and sense objects to mutually interact, how

*can you possibly endeavor to prevent such a mutual attraction? Since both the material mind and sense objects are useless, they both should be completely given up, and thus automatically you will be free from all material duality.*

(Śrīmad Bhagavatam, 11.13.25, purport)

What Hamsa-avatāra explains is, that it is not possible to achieve liberation by trying to destroy the tendency of the mind to be attracted to sense objects. **The solution is that in order to give up material life, we must give up false identification with the body and mind.** Hamsa-avatāra says, “According to My instructions, one should fix the mind on Me alone.” (Śrīmad Bhagavatam, 11.13.30) As long as we are not overwhelmed by transcendental love for Krishna, the mind will remain occupied with sense objects and the soul will remain asleep. Waking up means to fix the mind on Kṛṣṇa.

## MEDITATION FOR PRACTICING SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

Before starting the meditation exercise, make sure that you create a good atmosphere around your space for meditation. You might like to set up an altar, light a candle, bring fresh air into the room, etc. Meditation is always supported by a *sattvic* surrounding.

1. Sit tall and focus on the sounds you presently hear. Focus on the objects you see. Just become aware of the present reality. This will help you to withdraw your thoughts from the busy day or from any other thoughts and emotions.
2. Now start to focus on your breathing. Become aware of your incoming and outgoing breath. Just observe the flow of your breathing for some time. This practice will calm your mind and prepare you for the next steps.
3. Bring your attention to the heart. Imagine a bright sun there. When you inhale the sun expands: you see a golden color, and feel the warmth and the light expanding. When you exhale the sun contracts slightly. The sun is pulsating with your every breath – expanding when you breathe in and contracting when you breathe out. Stay with this practice for a while.



4. While being in your heart space, remember that you are a soul, a part and parcel of Krishna. You should meditate upon or remember the verses that describe the soul's nature. For example:

*That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul. (Bhagavad-gītā, 2.17)*

*For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain. (Bhagavad-gītā, 2.20)*

*As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones. (Bhagavad-gītā, 2.22)*

*The soul can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind. (Bhagavad-gītā, 2.23)*

5. Stay in this awareness for a while, observe what it feels like and try to engrave the experience on your mind. When you are ready to finish the exercise, remind yourself, “Now I will return to my body with my consciousness. I will experience different situations, but I am always part of Kṛṣṇa, an unaffected soul. As I have experienced expected and unexpected situations in the past, so I will continue to experience life in this body. But it is only my body that will be affected.”

### SIDEBAR: The Emotional Traffic Light

The Emotional Traffic Light can help you maintain your spiritual position on a daily basis. This does not mean ignoring or suppressing emotions but dealing with them in a proper way.

#### This is how it works:

If something happens that disturbs you, switch to red and pause for a moment – do not give in to your automatic response. Then switch to yellow, remind yourself of who you are: the eternal soul! Ask yourself how you can respond so that everyone involved benefits. Then switch to green and act. Apply your realizations.



## USE THE MATERIAL ENERGY FOR YOUR ADVANCEMENT

The answer of Hamsa-avatāra has another implication: in our tradition we do not try to artificially separate ourselves from the material energy as long as we are here. Renouncing everything prematurely will not work. What we try to learn is how to use the objects of the world in such a way that they do not increase the illusion of our identification with the body and mind. We engage with the material energy in a way that supports our development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in other words we try to cultivate *sattva guṇa*. This can be done by increasing the quality of your life physically, mentally, intellectually and spiritually:



### Physically

- Going to bed early and rising early in the morning
- Moderately eating healthy and nourishing food
- Doing physical exercises for the body (e.g. yoga, Pilates, swimming, etc)
- Giving your body enough rest - not overstraining it

### Mentally

- Thinking positive thoughts
- Cultivating positive emotions
- Developing qualities such as compassion, forbearance, tolerance, etc.

### Intellectually

- Reading spiritual literature that can nourish your intellectual side

### Spiritually

- Giving yourself as much spiritual input as possible by investing time in your *sādhana* practices, studying the sacred scriptures, worshiping the deities, going on pilgrimage, and of course chanting the holy names
- Associating with spiritual people

Engaging with the material world in such a way removes obstacles from your spiritual path and ultimately makes you happy. As you make progress, you will gradually come to the stage where you are really free from matter.

### EXERCISE:

During the retreat we asked you to answer the question, “What could I do to act more on the spiritual level, with the awareness that I am an eternal soul, a servant of Kṛṣṇa?” From your list of possible actions, which worked well and which did not? Choose one or two practices from your list which you would like to continue practicing even now, after the retreat.