

Humility, the inner simplicity that
frees us from the inflated world of ego,
is the very life force of bhakti.



Simplify

Welcome to this Kartik Inspiration.

As the month of Kartik comes to an end, I would like to leave you with an observation that really struck me. It's about humility, or inner simplicity, or freedom from the blown-up world of the ego, which is the life force of bhakti.

This month, I met incredibly advanced souls, some of whom are quite busy. They wake up before four o'clock, then they chant their first installments of japa. After that, they go to the temple—before that, they might have made some flower garlands. Then they circumambulate various holy places in Govardhan, which takes them four and a half hours, or so. Then they come back, and then after a quick meal, they read scriptures, chant verses, and engage in services like sweeping the temples and places. In the evening, when most people are tired, they go to a temple and sing, play instruments, and dance for another hour and a half to two hours.

What is their life? What gives them strength? What gives them the unrelenting determination? That joyful enthusiasm? My dear friends, it's humility. Humility means to not identify with so-called achievements, wealth, strengths, knowledge, beauty, or similar things. No, a person in this school of dainya, or humility, understands that these material attachments are varying degrees of the fever of material life.

Decrease the fever! Simplify your life! Sometimes, it means reaching a “zero point” where you have no material things with you.

So, I'm really contemplating how to take this life force from Vrindavan with me. And I think you'd be so fortunate if you could also imbibe this life force. Practically, it means:

1. Stop building your own grandeur or your inflated view of yourself. We often do this really only out of insecurity because we fear that without the facade people will see nothing of us. No, focus first on your unique gifts, then you can easily let go of the false things you use to validate your life.
2. In your interactions with others, respect everyone for who they are. Respect even differences, where people might have a different opinion from your own. Don't make war over this and try to establish your perspective. After all, it's only a perspective through your lenses, which have your dioptric power.
3. Also, humility can manifest in acts of being there for others and trying to uplift them in any way.

But all of this is only possible if you simplify your life so that you don't have to run around like a wasp and get caught in the hamster wheel of so many extrinsic, or external activities.

I wish you all the best, and see you for the last Kartik Inspiration.

My God, we know it's with both happiness and sadness that I announce this final Inspiration tomorrow.

Ratnanandana Brahm
SACINANDANA SWAMI