

One Hundred Happy Ideas

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

GN Press, Inc.



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Persons interested in the subject matter of this book are invited to correspond with our secretary.

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PROLOGUE

I dreamt I was in a college library and found a handmade booklet by Allen Ginsberg called “One Hundred Happy Ideas.” It began like this:

“One of the editors of
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami’s
books told me this:
‘When the Swami wakes,
his eyelids are heavy with sleep
but he’s already plenty dancing.’”

I was happy to find this affectionate reference to Śrīla Prabhupāda and even considered stealing the booklet from the library (I couldn’t borrow it because I wasn’t a student). I left the library without the book and the dream then took a turn for the worse, with me getting lost, wandering without shoes, and trying to find a Hare Kṛṣṇa center. No one I met would help. Finally, I woke up.

But I remembered the booklet, *One Hundred Happy Ideas*, and decided to try to write one of my own. I expect Ginsberg’s booklet would have contained some obnoxious stuff, although he did have a section in the back called “For the Grandchildren” with games for kids. Some of his pages, I remember, were printed sideways. Anyway, I’ll write my own and it will be Kṛṣṇa conscious. It’s too good an opportunity to let pass without trying to present the world my own compilation of *One Hundred Happy Ideas*.

—June 9, 1997

1

A dream told me to write a
book of "One Hundred Happy Ideas,"
but I can't think of even one.

I don't mean I'm unhappy,
but to be happy, an idea—
wouldn't it need to include a program
for everyone's peace and prosperity?

How can I claim, "This is
happy?" Stick a glad-face
on your silent mug
returning from the walk.

2

Vidura asked Maitreya,
“What is happiness?”
A common question.

If I’m sensually happy
is that happiness?

Happiness could be a wish—
“Let everyone become Kṛṣṇa
conscious in California and
New York!”

“But if everyone in California became
Kṛṣṇa conscious, what about the
prisons? Would there be enough *mṛdaṅgas*?
Could the gays stay gay?
Could women
come as they are or do they
have to become Hindus?
Who would be in charge?
What if it turns into a disaster?”

As a dream it was simple:
an unread book with a nice
opening line about Prabhupāda.
As a reality . . . I am willing to discuss
if you are . . . but just as ideas.

3

It's a happy idea to live
forever in Vaikuṇṭha,
to die peacefully and go to
Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā.

It's a Platonic
ideal, an abstract idea.
"No, it's a survival theory,"
said the professor.
I'm not talking of
idears, Mac,
but facts.
Believe it or not it's a
happy idea.

To improve, to be happy,
to live and to serve in this world
and the next, defeating the
enemies of the soul—
it's the happy ideal and
necessity of this soul to please
guru and Kṛṣṇa.
But I don't know
what to do
to achieve it before I am over.

Happy is the man—what
does Cāṇakya say?—
who doesn't have to leave home,
who is not in debt, whose
wife is chaste, his son
a devotee.

“Happiness is a warm puppy.”
Charles Schulz said that and
there's plenty more where that came
from.

Our program for happiness should be
eternal or it's illusion.

What made you happy today?
Joanna Field experimented in her
diary—she found that odd moments brought
ecstasy. She became herself.

Devotional service is *su-sukham*,
but what if it's not?
We're happies, not hippies,
but what if we're glum sometimes?
That's real enough.

The ocean of tears is dried up,
the agonies are taken away,
Cupid's lusty trip conquered,
by the glance, the smile,
the raised eyebrows of the handsome young Lord.

5

You get happy ideas in
the bathroom. Notice it.

Prahlāda Mahārāja said you get happiness
and distress without even trying,
so use life to attain
Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It's the
one thing you're free to do.

I smell the fragrant rose—
but happiness in this world
ends with gnashing of teeth.

Please be happy, I tell
myself, with whatever He
sends. And I come to the
reading desk wishing I could
be happier with
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

We'll go no more arovin',
be happy in old age with
just a little peace.
Do more.
So many people are unhappy.
You should help.

6

“Are you happy?” a Harvard student asked Prabhupāda.

He replied, “If I say yes, will you believe me?”

“No,” the student answered.

“Then why do you ask such a question?”

Another time in the Boston storefront he was asked the same thing and said, “I have many levels of happiness.” He gave a simple example: “I used to have several sons in householder life but now that I’m surrendered to Kṛṣṇa as a *sannyāsī* I have many sons and they are better than my other sons.”

Are you happy, Prabhu?

“Yeah.”

Sort of, you mean.

It's happy that I dreamt
 Allen made a book of one hundred
 poems beginning with a memory of Prabhupāda
 who woke up already
 dancing in his *saṅkīrtana* movement.
 He slept on his mat and
 we could see into his room,
 while his holy form lay down,
 and to remember it now . . . to

recall his affectionate
 care for us each
 and the stories—Raphael
 promised to fix the door lock
 but didn't, Steve gave
 three hundred dollars and
 got initiated on September 22, and
 Don sent apples.

“Let someone go to Alaska,
 someone to Moscow, let
 there be chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in
 every town and village!”

Swami's going to San Francisco in '67 January
 didn't seem a good idea—but
 when you are limited in vision
 you don't know what's good.

There is material and
Brahman happiness and above that,
bhakti. Even among *bhaktas*
there are upward varieties.

“Is there happiness here in America?
Is there happiness in *vaidhi*?
Are only the topmost (*gopis*)
happy? Or are they sad?”

Death is
not happy unless you are going
to a spiritual, better next life and
you are pretty sure of it. Die
happy.

Secret happiness—don't
tell anyone or it will go away.

Stay high forever
in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“If it's good, why not
tell everyone?”

But there is still a secret,
subterranean
artesian
happiness:
Kṛṣṇa is mine and
I am Kṛṣṇa's.

I keep it to myself and
hint to others how
they can find it—
chanting, hearing, serving—
I can't quite convey
something so nice.

10

Green grass, pines out
the window.
Prabhupāda *mūrti* . . .
Are you adding this up
to equal happiness?

I take rest before 7 P.M.
Hurry, ten minutes before bedtime.
Sleeping bag mummy style,
tape recorder set
with *japa* tape,
urine bottle for relief
during the night.
Calm and quiet.

While I try to sleep,
Madhu will spend three hours in
the bathroom singing and
composing. I won't hear—
ear plugs . . .

Keep out noise and disturbing thoughts
preserve this simple version of life
while you can.
Tomorrow I
will read what happens
to a miserable self who
is born again in human form.

11

I am happy to
chant 16 “good” rounds.
Happy to have the
day to serve Kṛṣṇa,

to walk
pain free. Religion makes
me happy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Is everything all right?”
We: “Yes!”

“Now that You are here we
are happy but when You go,”
said Queen Kuntī, “then our
name and fame will vanish.
Unless You glance upon us we
cannot be happy.”

12

Happy tones
move along in groove.

Prabhupāda is ready for me
to take off his woolen day
cādar and put on his
heavy evening one,
his warm hat.

I have a plan
to read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
It's up to the *Bhāgavatam*
whether he will have me.
Don't spit me out, please.
I used to type and edit this 3rd
Canto. I have a right
to read it and write notes.

I have a right . . .
Prabhupāda is right to call them rascals.
He knows he's right
and so do I . . .

My words are running down
as they should at this hour
to a rhythm that coaxes me
to sleep . . . that's all I
want . . . this night,
to sleep in His bosom.

13

The happiness of *brahmānanda*
is like the puddle made by
a calf's hoof compared to
the ocean that is love of God.

Go downstairs now into the cold
bathroom. Brush your teeth.
Say hello and obeisances to Madhu
as he's heating up water for
my bath.

Happiness is being able to write.
At midnight it went faster and
more than usual, my pen hand steady.
"I have not forgotten to free-write."

We aspiring devotees know
something others don't,
but we'll each be tested.

14

There's a vise in my head.
I'll go to bed early.

Happy ideas: write a
lot. Stay here in
Ireland or a country like
it and they can know
you are here but you
won't come out.
You may sell your van.
Don't advertise you are here
but decide on it
and they can know.
Face yourself
in your cell.

Read *Bhāgavatam* every day.
When vise comes, ease
out of the routine.

This is for myself but the
main idea is for everyone!

Happy to have Kṛṣṇa consciousness
to sing about.

Happy to chant and read,
even though

I don't do it right.

I got the right thing.

Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana
with His *pāriṣats*.

Holy name,
muttering, uttering, clear
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.

Put "Kṛṣṇa"
and "Caitanya" in your poem
and it's redeemed.

These open secrets—
"Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme."

Happy with all things in this life
especially a lone peace
to write and read and draw.

Little things like exercise by
the open window on a
June morning, sky
clear blue
with clouds—Ireland.

Anticipating the Sunday lecture.
Hearing how the others are
doing, Madhu's
singing career growing.

Midnight and the life
of reading—sitting up for
the next verse and purport and
thus coming to know Him
secretly, gradually.
If I get wrenched
away may I never forget
and always be grateful and
greedy for more.

Happy-sad-indifferent-
don't know—check one—
or none of the above.

No ideas but things.
Nada-nirvāṇa,
beyond all that is
supreme form of supreme
truth.

Now here's happy idea #42:

no foolin' chant Hare Kṛṣṇa,
count on beads.
Read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, live
with devotees. Love
Vṛndāvana. Worship the
Deity. Be prideless. Don't
waste time. Of
nine limbs of *bhakti* . . .
do one.

Prabhupāda
comes back to me after my
performance at lecture in the schoolhouse.

Prabhupāda wearing
his silk soft saffron
Swami hat, warm *cādar*
looks upon me.
Soon I'll start the worship—
massage him, bathe him,
dress him again.

Happiness is absence of pain
and obvious danger and suffering.
There's deeper happiness.

Ideas for making money and
for preaching—opening a
restaurant, doing *nāma-haṭṭa* on a
computer, going to England to sing at
Hare Kṛṣṇa festivals, writing a
book. Making money, purifying it
yourself. Telling others good ideas
they can use.

Flowers dead in vase,
cow lowing in pasture
where she's kept for
slaughter. Can you be happy
amid cruel nature
and men?

“Women have a different psychological
make up,” he explained. We tried
to understand “Women are less
intelligent” in a way that would
not offend.

I'd say I'm okay but you'd
misunderstand. Words fail and
that's okay too. I want to
be known as a blissful
devotee. Served his
guru, Prabhupāda.

A happy idea: to wake and read
the words of Devahūti in the
last chapter of Third Canto, then
start the Fourth. Alone in the house
all day but not lonely except
in a Kṛṣṇa conscious way.

My gremlin doesn't
like a plan for "One Hundred Happy
Ideas." He wants at least
one unhappy fact to counter
the foolish happies.

But his time comes later. Lord
Brahmā created Rudra who
immediately began to destroy everything
with his hordes. Brahmā
said, "Go. Perform austerities
and wait until the time of
annihilation.
Don't interfere
with creation."

A natural, clear
sentence. What about the
temporary—appetite and
lunch (three different preps of potatoes
on Ekādaśī)? What about
a joke? They are *asat*.

Pure bliss *ānanda* in form,
loving Kṛṣṇa.
Sometimes I just repeat it.

These helpful hints, man-made
are small-time.
The Great Idea in the mind of
God is loving service.
He wants to submit Himself to
best devotees. He's
bhakta-vatsala, inclined to them.

Of all God's glories that's
the best. I want even a
little of His glory to brush over
me, assurance of His love.
They say pain has to
come first, but main thing is
nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo . . .
Only to one whom He chooses
does He give His mercy.

A happy idea:
"Surrender to Me."

Okay, Captain, take off this plane
called Morning Schedule:
heat water in the kitchen,
take a bath, back up here
all within half an hour.

Happy ideas for sale free.
Hey, you ought to first
live out your ideas before
peddling them.

A good Vaiṣṇava idea is worth a
thousand Chinese sayings.

Kṛṣṇa conscious ideas and actions—
even if you only think
eternal God, that's
a form of service absolute and if
you serve Him with body mind and words,
that's more. As you bathe and
work and eat and think.

The satisfaction
of pleasing Kṛṣṇa. You don't
know if you did that? But you
tried, working in *paramparā*.
Prabhupāda is here.

Queen Kuntī said,
“You come to us in danger.
So let the dangers remain
because when we see You—
apunar bhava-darśanam,
we’ll see no more of birth and death.”
“That is real happiness,”
said Śrīla Prabhupāda.

24

A voice is chattering inside.
The mechanical man crosses his legs,
takes off his wool cap and scarf.
He's aware he's sitting in front
of Prabhupāda.

A Jagannātha tune
in my head.

A *mahā-mantra*
or I'm dead.

This happy thought we plant in your ear:
serve God there.

Grin crooked.

I don't want to go to Him,
not yet. I don't know who
I am or what I love.

Happy ideas:
keep searching gently, take a
morning walk, read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* even
if you don't love it.

You say, "I don't want to go yet
to where my spiritual master is but
I am with him now every day listening
to his speeches and reading his books."

I don't know what will happen.
"Trust in Kṛṣṇa."

Is it happy to rush and be
excited? Was Madhu happy
to perform Kṛṣṇa songs of his
own composition on stage?

Temporary is misery, illusion.
Philosophy is another source
of solace.
And my “Dear Abbey,”
practical tips on bliss.

List: Bliss Bars (if you
can chew them);
money in the bank (should
be spent for Kṛṣṇa);
bona fide guru
(follow Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa);
chant Hare Kṛṣṇa—and even if you are
not immediately in bliss be
happy you found it.
“Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy.”

The *gopīs*' joy is the
happiness of Kṛṣṇa.
They desire it intensely.
Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī says, "If
Kṛṣṇa takes pleasure in making
Me miserable, I will
consider that misery
the greatest happiness."
Who can understand this?

I'm happy to be chanting.
I wish you all well.

Be—happy, sad,
remember
too. Give people
Kṛṣṇa consciousness wherever you are.
This is the best idea
and that's why He gave it,
Lord Caitanya.

Color comes from God
blue-yellow-brown-
red—take your turn.
I once saw purple-blue in
an ocean wave
in January New England.

Plaid and plain
the mountain, sky, office,
be a Buddha or
a fool intelligent
normal person.

Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa.

Is a devotee's
life simpler, less stressed?
Maybe not, but he or she's
got Kṛṣṇa, chanting, the
faith, the philosophy, and if
lucky, a few close friends.

God is Kṛṣṇa in the book
and everywhere. We don't have
to speculate.

It is most unfortunate
when we don't talk of
the Vaikuṇṭha world
and instead hanker and lament for
here and now.

Pātrī tells me about his liver deteriorating. We both have chronic diseases. Mine seems to be easy. He says he's putting off getting a transplant. Told the doctor, "I just want twenty more years."

Rain. Talking in the kitchen.
 "And how are you bearing up?"
 I don't want him thinking
 I am free of it.

Now I hear his feet on the gravel,
 leaving me alone for the day
 with *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Chant and
 draw pics—nothing
 new.

Be happy in this life and
the next. Transmigration's a mystery
but you believe it.

Tick-tock, I hear my
American Tourista clock—
tick-tock and the wind.

Here's my idea: breathe
and wait. Hear scripture.

Is that happy? It's serious.
A devotee is grave, *gambhīrā*.

He's not negative but it's
sad that he still cannot
enter loving Kṛṣṇa as he
reads and chants.

Right path not wrong.
This leads back to Godhead.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura said, “Difficulties
I meet while serving Kṛṣṇa,
I’ll consider the greatest happiness.”

Saint Francis of Assisi said, “Perfect joy
is to be driven away from
the monastery door on a rainy day.”

I told you what Śrīmatī
Rādhārāṇī said.
Devotees asked Śrīla Prabhupāda what
would make him happy.
He said, “If you love Kṛṣṇa.”
The preacher is unhappy seeing
the unhappiness of others.

Writing down these sayings,
and publishing them
like in my dream—
Kṛṣṇa gives ability to man.

Happy ideas
that could never happen:
all ISKCON members
become pure devotees by 1999 and
convert the whole world to
Kṛṣṇa consciousness by the year 2000.

But there are facts:
the spiritual world where
all beings live in eternity bliss and knowledge.

The cartoonist of "Peanuts"
 coined many happy sayings like
 "Happiness is a warm puppy."
 And then there were parodies:
 "Happiness is getting a new money-
 making idea while on the toilet passing stool."
 I have been quoting excellent
 sayings from sastras.
 But there are little epiphanies
 and reliefs in striving for
 Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
 I don't know if they qualify as
 "happiness."

When the headache comes down,
 the enduring, the waiting—seeing the
 bright grass growing on the front lawn
 and knowing all your work can be taken
 away from you by a higher power.
 How long is this going to take?
 Is this a foreshadowing of death?

Cheering up a friend,
 cheering up myself.
 The truth.

We will all benefit to hear that
there is one happy man.

“I’m the most happy fella
in the whole Napa Valley.”

And what is it that makes you happy?
Can you be shaken from it?
You’re afraid it’s not enough?
Then how can you be happy?

Turn on the radiator. Rain
on the roof.

“But all joys want eternity!
Want deep, profound eternity!”

From sun up to sunset everything
is lost.

The world will end.
Souls shuffle off into
Mahā-Viṣṇu, then come out again.
Everything is under the control of God.
Viśvaṁ pūrṇaṁ sukhāyate:
the whole universe is happy.

The *mahā-bhāgavata* sees it.
I just see the tiny opening,
like a pin of light in the dark tunnel.
Overcoming fears, remembering
Kṛṣṇa at the end is all I hope for.

The rye grass starts
with a hard long head and then flowers
into the plumes that give
solace to the soul.

Just now briefly the
sunlight is out. A rook
is croaking.

Coming to terms with my doubts
in guru, Kṛṣṇa and myself,
I'd like to go into
the *Bhāgavatam* often, each day, and then
come out fully believing.

Look at the rye grass and
remember Dhruva and Nārada
or Prabhupāda saying the topmost
perfection is—what? Following
guru. Surrendering. Giving up all else.
It's pure devotional service to
the Supreme Person.

Going in and out like
the sun in Ireland.

When I proposed
to our congregation that they should
simplify (quoting Thoreau)
one man objected.

He said, "That's
nirjana-bhajana. We need to work
and form a society." I said I'm
not against that, I'm just reminding
us not to leave out chanting and hearing
on the plea of money-work.

"That's good for you but not
for me." Or—"Who is he to
tell others to be happy? He
chews his fingernails. He's a do-
nothin' worrier."

Say His names. Go ahead
say any name of
God you find in your
religion. Say it with love.
Just say it.

The rabbits go after the
green blades.
Ireland is cool
so the rabbits have a good coat
even in summer.
But they are tasty
to the carnivores.

Being alone is nice if you
have friends nearby. It gets
dry and you have doubts but
you reason it out:
I'm okay reading and
later I'll travel and be with
people.

What about NATO and African
countries?
If one person becomes
a pure devotee he could transform the
whole world.
Anyone want to go for it?

There are many
spiritual virtues in the *śāstras*.
How many do you possess?

You ought to be friendly, silent, poetic,
grave, attached to the Absolute,
tolerant, merciful,
a good preacher . . .

It's a good idea to be silent
sometimes, to pray, but later to go
out and tell people about Kṛṣṇa.
Groping your way . . .

Take the remnants of the pear.
It's *mahā-prasādam*. The *ācāryas*
have given us these happy ideas:
if only I could feel them
as real as the pear.

For The Grandchildren:
They grew up and became angry
at what we did to them
in *gurukula*.

I can't write for them.
What about the new little ones?
They write, "We saw llamas in
a cage. I petted one. We stayed
at an inn because our van went
too slow. I didn't like the
prasādam at the Manor—too spicy.
Then we went back to Ireland."

For the Grandchildren: please chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.
We gave you the best thing, we thought. It
was what Prabhupāda gave us. We were
immature and incompetent and very sincere, fanatical.
We're sorry.
Do you have a better idea?
Kṛṣṇa consciousness in one form or another?

Child abuse: I didn't know
 anything about it in my office
 on Gurley Street. I was happy because
 Prabhupāda was pleased with our
 pioneering school.
 I campaigned that parents should
 stay away.
 Left that place and took *sannyāsa*.
 Ex-kids are angry now.

That's another reason to stay apart,
 watch the rye grass,
 no choice but to hear the rooks
 and the buffets of wind.

Spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Like jam
 on a piece of bread? Like pushing it into
 their heads? No, by loving acts and
 vigorous preaching—the holy names,
prasādam, sanctified temples and farms,
 examples of elders and young
 leaders too.

Go on your own, forward with friends,
 don't unnecessarily kill
 animals, read about Dhruva Mahārāja and
 everything in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,
 don't skip anything.

Happy is the man who
dies, Gārgi, knowing the eternal self.
Happy the person who realizes
his loving connection with Kṛṣṇa—
bhakti.

Happy the conditioned soul who meets
the bona fide spiritual master,
who recovers his eye-glasses
after the monkey has
stolen them (provided they're still
in working order). Happy the
detached person who can accept
his fate philosophically—either
I get a house or I don't. The
main thing is to be able to chant
on my beads.

A little while ago I felt I was going batty
banging my mind again and again
on Svāyambhuva's speech to
Dhruva, telling him how great
God is.

Thought I was loony
spaced out, asleep or grogged
or just bewildered but
loving the doggedness of
the attempt and knowing
I won't give up.

Dhruva is a perfect gentleman, a
great warrior and devotee. He'll
stop killing the Yakṣas.

Śrīla Prabhupāda says, "We are absolutely
incompetent."

It's a happy idea to think
at some point your mind will surrender
and go along with devotional service.
Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings, "Then
everything will stop and you will
be eternally happy."

Struggling
with those little voices within.
Even as you bitch and
raise doubts, you go on
applying your mind to
hearing from *śāstra*, chanting
the names.

It will change
for the good. You'll become
a devotee without even noticing it.

I should give out happiness.

Emanate, radiate, “I’m happy.”

Brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā.

“If you are morose,” Śrīla Prabhupāda said,

“you can know that you are not

Kṛṣṇa conscious.”

Be happy.

Are you happy?

Yes, it’s as easy as a morning walk

in a beautiful place.

The heavy, cold wind
chills the house,
seems strange or wrong for almost-July.
But it's normal for
Ireland, especially Rathdangan
in Wicklow. The house is
rattling with the buffets.
The pine trees nod.
Rabbits have buried themselves in
the grass as if to keep warm,
wind ruffling in
brown-grey fur.

Life is not an idea only.
Neither is it only happy.
It's a mixture of body and soul,
misery and illusion of happiness.
That's what the *sāstras* say.
We're each a spiritual spark,
eternal servant of God who
invites us back to Godhead.
You can take it or leave it,
you've got that free will.

It was good to honor the
dream and let the conscious
self go with it.

He can give a million happy
ideas and their consummation
in a moment.

God is Truth,
Love, Beauty.
All fear and bad comes when
you forget Him, when you
doubt and disobey.

We're each
persons, not impersonal.
We differ.
Let us not fight,
or kill, hurt.

Many admissions
come out
in a poem of happiness,
and I hope
something useful to
the solitary reader.



