

Are You Ready for Initiation? (Checklist for Initiation)

HG Mahātmā Prabhu usually waits minimum 1-3 years before initiating disciples.

If you would like to be initiated, the following will serve as a checklist.

For at least two years, you have been:

- Generally steady in your *sādhana* and service.
- Completing your sixteen rounds daily (or if not, making them up the next day).
- Following the four regulative principles well.
- Making an effort to avoid the Ten Offenses while chanting *japa*.
- Rising early enough to have sufficient time for *sādhana* before your day begins (exceptions may be that your work starts very early, but then you dedicate another time of the day to your *sādhana*).
- Regularly attending classes, programs and/or festivals (if you don't live near a temple, these can be done online).
- Regularly reading Prabhupāda books (ideally at least one hour daily).
- Regularly listening to classes by Śrīla Prabhupāda, and regularly listening to classes by Mahātmā Prabhu.
- Doing service, either at home or at your local center (unless circumstantially you are too busy with school or work, handicapped, etc.).
- **Having a 'spiritual guide' (mentor)** with whom you are in regular contact (could be your Bhakti-Vṛkṣa leader, temple authority, or mentor in person/online).
- Submitting monthly **Sādhana Report** at least four times a year until initiated, but you can submit more often and continue to submit after initiation if you like.
- Regularly participating in the disciple group meetings.

In addition:

- You have read all the books Mahātmā Prabhu requested you to read in the documents you received when you first asked to be a disciple.
- You have listened to/taken the courses Mahātmā Prabhu requested you to take in the documents you received when you first asked to be a disciple.
- You are determined to uphold the principles and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the ups and downs of your life.
- Your relationships with other devotees are good.
- Your faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda is deepening.
- You are helping make ISKCON better despite its problems.

If you have any emotional issues, addictions, psychological problems, or other material issues or circumstances that would pose a problem in properly following the above practices, find help to resolve these issues. **Although Kṛṣṇa consciousness can solve many problems, it is not a guarantee that all psychological/emotional issues will be solved solely by the execution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness or that your spiritual master is expected to be your personal psychologist, marriage counselor, etc.** Therefore, it is your duty to be responsible for your personal well-being, self-care and mental health if needed beyond the practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Due to past experiences where devotees who were uncooperative created problems for Mahātmā Prabhu and/or other disciples, Mahātmā Prabhu has decided that **if anyone is in regular conflict with devotees or authorities, or is a disturbance to the sanga of disciples, he would not initiate them until those situations become normalized.** In rare cases, it may even be necessary to prevent someone from participating in the disciple's sanga, either in person or online, if their behavior is deemed unhealthy or inappropriate for the sanga, and this restriction will continue until their behavior improves. Of course, we would help such persons understand the problem and how to improve.

Conclusion

If you cannot follow all of these, either for internal or external reasons, then please discuss with your mentor and/or with us to see how this can be dealt with. Before taking initiation, you should have been following these practices for a long enough period of time that makes you confident that you can stick to these practices fairly well throughout your life. In other words, initiation is not just to be taken as an impetus to follow your principles and practices, but more so it is a confirmation that you are following the above principles and will continue to do so throughout your life.