

LETTER FROM SATSVARUPA DASA GOSWAMI PREPARED IN CONSULTATION  
WITH THE GBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

May 1, 2004

Dear Maharajas and Prabhus,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

There has been gathering exposure that I, Satsvarupa Maharaja and a female therapist had a short-lived romantic involvement about one and a half years ago. As many of you may know, I have tried many therapies over the years to try and cure what is a severe case of “anxiety disorder anticipatory migraine.” In one such effort a godsister was helping me as a counselor, and regrettably I held sessions alone with her. And so the relationship developed.

I certainly committed a mistake, and I felt relieved when I wrote a letter of confession to the ISKCON sannyasa minister. He asked me if she and I had sex intercourse, and I honestly said “no.” Krsna saved us from that.

I feel like I want to explain what steps I’ve taken to protect myself from further problems. The saying “once burnt, twice shy” certainly applies to me. In addition to any consequences endorsed by the GBC, I feel great personal shame. On the other hand, this has increased my intimacy with Krsna in prayer. I know, for example, that a sannyasi should never be alone with a woman. I am suffering third-degree burns by disobeying this simple first instruction for sannyasis. I’m determined to never make that same mistake again. I am praying constantly to Prabhupada and associating with my Godbrothers in a humble mood.

My health is not good, but I don’t wish to dwell on it here. I’m under the care of an expert psychiatrist MD and an authorized counselor who is helping me with my anxiety issues. I consider my status to be semi-retired. I will not be initiating any new devotees. I am serving the devotee community by writing books and also answering letters. I served in a very active capacity for about 40 years and I can’t keep it up. I am not avoiding the society of devotees. I simply can’t travel in cars or planes to go to temples or festivals, to sing or dance or give lectures. Maybe each of you will reach that stage sooner or later.

I am profoundly sorry that I slipped and fell on the road this way, a 64-year-old sannyasi who had no other brush with a woman. I thought for sure I'd get through to the end with a perfect record. Krsna must have seen I was proud. I pray He allows me to remain in ISKCON and follow the rules and regulations to my dying day. I heard that Sridhara Swami told a Godbrother just before he passed away, "Be who you are and make a contribution." I think I have written this same sentence in my books. I fall at the feet of all devotees and ask their forgiveness.

Yours in the service of Prabhupada,  
Satsvarupa das Goswami