Srila Prabhupada on the Importance of Conflict Resolution

1. We have so much work to do, we cannot lose our solidarity. Do not cause a crack there with any fighting spirit or competition. Whenever I hear complaints or disturbances in our centers my mind becomes too much disturbed and I cannot properly translate my books. So please spare me from such disturbance by cooperating all together Godbrothers and Godsisters.
2. I am very concerned, however, that in the midst of such good reports, the devotees there are quarreling. This report is not very good.
3. You have dedicated your life for Krsna and therefore you should be ideal. We are introducing Krsna Consciousness movement for the harmony and good will of humanity. But if you yourselves are suffering from the very ills we are trying to remove, how can the people be influenced favorably? Stop this fighting, tolerate.
4. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Krishna, the prime entity.
5. Remember the story in Aesop's Fables of the father of many children with the bundle of sticks. When the father asked his children to break the bundle of sticks wrapped in a bag, none of them could do it. But, when they removed the sticks from the bag, and tried one by one, the sticks were easily broken. So this is the strength in unity. If we are bunched up, we can never be broken, but when divided, then we can become broken very easily.
6. It is not so much that because there may be some faults in our godbrothers and godsisters, or because there may be some mismanagement or lack of cooperation, that this is due to being impersonalists, no. It is the nature of the living condition to always have some fault. Even in the Spiritual World there is some fault and envy-sometimes the Gopis will quarrel over Krishna's favor, and once Krishna was so much attracted to Radharani that by mistake he tried to milk the bull instead of the cow, and sometimes when the Gopis used to put on their dress and make-up for seeing Krishna, they would be too much hasty and smear kumkum and mascara in the wrong places and their ornaments and dresses would appear as if small children had been trying to dress themselves and they were not very expert, like that. So we shall not expect that anywhere there is any Utopia. Rather, that is impersonalism.
   People should not expect that even in the Krishna Consciousness Society there will be Utopia. Because devotees are persons, therefore there will always be some lacking-but the difference is that their lacking, because they have given up everything to serve Krishna-money, jobs, reputation, wealth, big educations, everything-their lackings have become transcendental because, despite everything they may do, their topmost intention is to serve Krishna. "One who is engaged in devotional service, despite the most abominable action, is to be considered saintly because he is rightly situated.'' The devotees of Krishna are the most exalted persons on this planet, better than kings, all of them, so we should always remember that and, like the bumblebee, always look for the nectar or the best qualities of a person. Not like the utopians, who are like the flies who always go to the open sores or find the faults in a person, and because they cannot find any utopia, or because they cannot find anyone without faults, they want to become

void, merge, nothing-they think that is utopia, to become void of personality. So if there is sometimes slight disagreements between devotees, it is not due to impersonalism, but it is because they are persons, and such disagreements should not be taken very seriously. The devotee is always pessimistic about the material world, but he is very optimistic about the spiritual life; so in this way, you should consider that anyone engaged in Krishna's service is always the best person. I am very pleased that you are assisting your godbrothers so nicely. Yes, this is our real position, to be servants of the servants of the servants.

7. Letter to Balavanta December 13, 1972
   Now I want that we shall recruit more and more our men amongst the intelligent class of men. They, because they are little educated or they have got some wealth or fame or ability, so they will be sometimes little puffed-up, but that is all right, they deserve it. Now we shall have to learn the art how to approach such higher-class of men and attract them to apply themselves to this Krishna Consciousness process of self-realization. That requires much tact, and we shall have to expect to meet all challenges by sharp minds. But if we remain always absorbed in remembering Lord Caitanya, how He converted so many intelligent men, even sitting for three days and nights to hear them speak without Himself speaking anything, and if we remember how Krishna was so much patient to explain everything to Arjuna, even Arjuna was speaking like a fool--in this way, being always tolerant of others and appreciating their points-of-view, it will be easy matter for us to convince them gradually to join us.
8. Disunity between individual souls is so strong within this material world that even in a society of Krsna consciousness, members sometimes appear disunited due to their having different opinions and leaning toward material things. Actually, in Krsna consciousness there cannot be two opinions. There is only one goal: to serve Krsna to one's best ability. If there is some disagreement over service, such disagreement is to be taken as spiritual. Those who are actually engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot be disunited in any circumstance.
9. Now this displeasing of godbrothers has already begun and gives me too much agitation in my mind. Our Gaudiya Math people fought with one another after the demise of Guru Maharaja but my disciples have already begun fighting even in my presence. So I am greatly concerned about it.
10. Material nature means dissension and disagreement, especially in this Kali yuga. But, for this Krsna consciousness movement its success will depend on agreement, even though there are varieties of engagements. . In the material world there are varieties, but there is no agreement. In the spiritual world there are varieties, but there is agreement. That is the difference. The materialist without being able to adjust the varieties and the disagreements makes everything zero. They cannot come into agreement with varieties, but if we keep Krsna in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity. I am therefore suggesting that all our men meet in Mayapur every year during the birth anniversary of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. With all GBC and senior men present we should discuss how to make unity in diversity. But, if we fight on account of diversity, then it is simply the material platform. Please try to maintain the philosophy of unity in diversity. That will make our movement successful.

11. The householders are specifically responsible for seeing that the laws of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are maintained, without fighting between men, communities, societies or nations. Human society should properly utilize the gifts of God, especially the food grains that grow because of rain falling from the sky.
12. Both King Indra and Maharaja Prthu were envious and angry with each other, but since both of them were Vaisnavas, or servants of Lord Visnu, it was their duty to adjust the cause of their envy. This is also a first-class example of cooperative behavior between Vaisnavas. In the present days, however, because people are not Vaisnavas, they fight perpetually among one another and are vanquished without finishing the mission of human life. There is a great need to propagate the Krsna consciousness movement in the world so that even though people sometimes become angry and malicious toward one another, because of their being Krsna conscious such rivalry, competition and envy can be adjusted without difficulty.
13. Prabhupāda went on to explain that cooperation is the essence of the movement. Quoting a line from Ohe Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura he told them, "The purport of the verse is that even Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu—He is God himself, Kṛṣṇa Himself—He felt, alone, unable to do this task. So this is the position. You are cooperating; therefore I am getting the credit. Otherwise alone what could I do?
"Ekakī āmāra nāhi pāya bol. Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself wanted our cooperation. He is God, Kṛṣṇa. Therefore cooperation is very important thing. Nobody should think that 'I have got so great ability. I can do.' No. It is simply by cooperation we can do very big thing. 'United we stand; divided we fall.' So be strong in pushing on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and Kṛṣṇa will help. He is the strongest.
"Still, we must be combined together. Saṅkīrtana means many men combined together chanting. That is saṅkīrtana. Otherwise kīrtana. Bahubhir militvā kīrtayeti saṅkīrtana. Bahu means many; many combined together. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission—combined together. All nations, all persons, they should combine together. There is hope in our society, combination. There are Hindus; there are Muslims; there are Christians; there are black, white. Combine them. That looks very beautiful, just like combination of many flowers."
14. “I do not know why our students who are supposed to be the leaders of this movement will fight amongst themselves for supremacy. Our whole process is of surrendering. A leader has to lead others very tactfully and intelligently. Kindly therefore do not quarrel but go on with your duties progressively.”
15. Indra decided to fall down at the lotus feet of King Pṛthu, but the King was so magnanimous a Vaiṣṇava that he did not want Mahārāja Indra to fall down at his feet. Instead, King Pṛthu immediately picked him up and embraced him, and both of them forgot all the past incidents. Both King Indra and Mahārāja Pṛthu were envious and angry with each other, but since both of them were Vaiṣṇavas, or servants of Lord Viṣṇu, it was their duty to adjust the cause of their envy. This is also a first-class example of cooperative behavior between Vaiṣṇavas. In the present days, however, because people are not Vaiṣṇavas, they fight perpetually among one another and are vanquished without finishing the mission of human life. There is a great need to propagate the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the world so that even though people sometimes become

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16. (CC 1.2.109-120):
    That same Lord Kṛṣṇa, the fountainhead of all incarnations, is known as the son of the King of Vraja. He has descended personally as Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore Lord Caitanya is the Supreme Absolute Truth. To call Him Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu does not add to His glory. But such words from the lips of a sincere devotee cannot be false. All possibilities abide in Him, for He is the primeval Lord.
    All other incarnations are situated in potential form in the original body of the primeval Lord. Thus according to one's opinion, one may address Him as any one of the incarnations. Some say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is directly Nara-Nārāyaṇa. Others say that He is directly Vāmana. Some say that Kṛṣṇa is the incarnation of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. None of these statements is impossible; each is as correct as the others. Some call Him Hari, or the Nārāyaṇa of the transcendental world. Everything is possible in Kṛṣṇa, for He is the primeval Lord. I offer my obeisances unto the feet of all who hear or read this discourse.
    Kindly hear with attention the conclusion of all these statements. A sincere student should not neglect the discussion of such conclusions, considering them controversial, for such discussions strengthen the mind. Thus one's mind becomes attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. By such conclusive studies I know the glories of Lord Caitanya. Only by knowing these glories can one become strong and fixed in attachment to Him. Just to enunciate the glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I have tried to describe the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in detail. The conclusion is that Lord Caitanya is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of the King of Vraja
17. Lord Kṛṣṇa replied: Because all material elements are present everywhere, it is reasonable that different learned brāhmaṇas have analyzed them in different ways. All such philosophers spoke under the shelter of My mystic potency, and thus they could say anything without contradicting the truth. SB 11.22.4