

Swami's Guidelines for Devotional singing

1. Bhajan is a Saddhana (spiritual discipline) for all who share in it. Sing familiar Bhajans, so that all can share the Ananda (bliss)
2. Pay attention to the tune, the meaning, the variety, the voice, the raga (notes), the tala (rhythm) and other fine points of the Bhajan.
3. The Bhajans must be sweet to the ear. If your voice is not pleasant or sweet, keep quiet; that is the best service you can do. Do not cause discontent, discord or disharmony, insisting on singing because you are an-office bearer.
4. Do not monopolize the time in Bhajans in singing one song for six or ten minutes, repeating the same line often. Repeat each line only twice and no more. Have only two speeds - one slow and the other fast. In this way you can have more songs in one hour of Bhajans.
5. When you sing Bhajans dwell also on the meaning of the song and the message of each name and form of God.
6. Bhajans have to be sung and offered to God in an attitude of utter humility. They have to please the Lord, not your fans.
7. Unless you sing Bhajans for your own joy, you cannot bring joy to others. Only when the devotional feeling arises in the singer's heart, the song will appeal to the hearts of others.
8. Bhajan has to be a thrilling experience, which must leave the participants full of pure energy and elevated enthusiasm. With each Bhajan song the mind must be rendered purer, freer from passion and stronger in faith.
9. People should return from Bhajan carrying the elevated, uplifted and sublime mood created by the atmosphere at the Bhajan. Therefore, after the Bhajan people should disperse quietly, maintaining silence. Then the joy and peace derived at the Bhajan will linger and abide in the heart.