

HIMALAYAN HERITAGE

For lovers of Sanatana Dharma,
the Eternal Religion,
kept for all the world by the
Himalayan sages and
great masters of India

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Who would not love Sanatana Dharma once they were exposed to it and understood it? By its very definition, *Sanatana Dharma* represents that which is actually true in all religions. It is not just an Indian religion, but a religion which has been preserved for the world by the Himalayan sages and great masters of India. It is as broad and as vast as the Divine Spirit Itself.

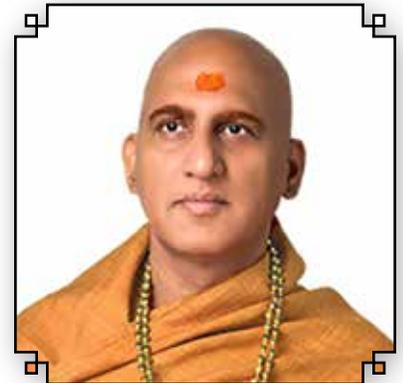
The following nine tenets are offered by *Hinduism Today* magazine as being representative of most followers of the Hindu religion:

1. There is one all pervasive Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent.
2. The universe undergoes endless cycles of creation, preservation and dissolution.
3. All souls are evolving toward union with God and will ultimately find *Moksha*: freedom from the cycle of rebirth and oneness with Spirit. Not a single soul will be eternally deprived of this destiny.
4. The *law of karma* exists, by which each individual creates his or her own destiny by their thoughts, words and deeds.
5. The soul reincarnates through many births until all *karmas* have been resolved.
6. Divine beings exist in unseen worlds, and worship and rituals, as well as personal devotion, create a communion with these *devas* and gods.
7. A spiritually awakened master or *Satguru* is essential to know the Absolute. Just as a lamp is lit by another lamp, a true Guru lights the flame of God-consciousness in the disciple. Also required are the disciple's good conduct, purification, self-inquiry and meditation.
8. All life is sacred, to be loved, revered and protected, and so practice *ahimsa*, or non-injury.

9. No particular religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others. All genuine religious paths are facets of God's pure love, deserving tolerance and understanding.

In an interview, the saintly Swami Avdheshananda Giri, preeminent spiritual leader and *Acharya Mahamandaleshwar* of the *Juna Akhara* (the largest branch of the Sanatana Dharma's complex monastic system consisting of 500,000 *sadhus* and 2 million *sannyasins*), spoke these words:

"Hindus believe in the family system. Hindus are non-aggressive, not attackers. Hindus will never harm anyone. There are four reasons why I say this. The first is our principle of *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*, which means the whole world is one family. For us, the whole world is a big family. Second, *par dāra matravat*, meaning



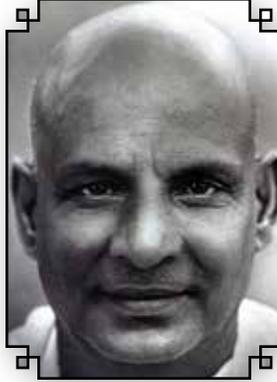
women of others are like our mothers. Hindus are known all over the world to maintain the purity of relationships. Third, Hindus believe in *sarve bhavantu sukhina*, let all be happy and blissful. We want the whole world to be harmonious and joyous; we want the welfare of all beings. The fourth principle is *atmavrata sarvabhuteshu*: treat others as they would treat themselves.

"Hindus are believers in one God. This God is present everywhere and in every being — formless but also on Earth. Hindus are flexible and generous. They mingle freely with everyone... I have worked to realize my dreams of a better world with better people. Another dream I have is to convey the spirituality of India to the Western world. I want to let them know that Indian spirituality has the human *dharmā* defined for the welfare of all beings of the world... Only the spirituality of India has the power to overcome anything that mankind will face."

The great Swami Sivananda declared:

“There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. There is only one religion, the religion of love. There is only one commandment, the commandment of truthfulness. There is only one law, the law of cause and effect. There is only one God, the omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient Lord. There is only one language, the language of the heart, or the language of silence.”

— from *Bliss Divine*



When we read such exalted words our hearts, our minds and our souls leap with the thrill of remembrance. It is the declared purpose of this publication to remind everyone to honor and uphold the great spiritual legacy of Sanatana Dharma as taught not only in scripture but through

the lives of the countless saints, sages and devotees who have walked (and are walking) this path of joy for the welfare of all beings. May we put God first in our lives, and by doing so unfailingly discover our own *swadharna*, that path in life which is unique to each individual soul and by which we may most quickly resolve our *karmas*, be of service to others, and return to our ever-new joyful home in God.

At the end of Chapter XXXII of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, by Mahendranath Gupta (Master Mahasaya), the following words are from Sri Ramakrishna's conversation with the author:

“The Hindu Religion alone is the Sanatana Dharma. The various creeds you hear of nowadays have come into existence through the will of God and will disappear again through His will. They will not last forever. Therefore I say, ‘I bow down at the feet of even the modern devotees.’ The Hindu religion has always existed and will always exist.”

Satya Dharma ki Jai!

WHAT IS POSSIBLE

BY STEPHEN KING

In the December 27, 2013 issue of *Entertainment Weekly*, Stephen King ends his review of the book, *The Interestings*, by Meg Wolitzer, with this:

The *Interestings* addresses one of fiction's great themes: how we make peace with our own shortcomings and make the best of ordinary lives.

Like most people, I've seen countless friends and acquaintances aim for careers and stardom in creative fields like acting, singing, painting and writing, only to end up frustrated and disillusioned. The cold, hard truth is that most of them lack the talent to succeed in such pursuits. Yes, with enough time and effort and a willingness to learn and grow, sometimes what talent they do have can be developed enough to get them where they want to go. But all too often, these starry-eyed dreamers either lack the capacity to make good on their dreams or the dedication and discipline required to sufficiently develop their skills.

We are always telling our children that they can do whatever they want to do with their lives, that they can be whatever they want to be. Such simplistic and unrealistic encouragement can do more harm than good unless we also emphasize the thousands of hours of practice that they will have to put in before the world will take them seriously.

All of which brings me to the point of this post: Even if you never develop the talent to be the superstar you imagined you could be, that doesn't mean you're doomed to live an ordinary life. You can lead a rich, fulfilling and rewarding life by dedicating yourself to become something that any of us and all of us are capable of becoming: a pure instrument of divine love.

I know this to be true from my own experience. The kinder I am to others, and the more loving and compassionate I become, the happier I am and the more good I do in the world. If my books never become bestsellers, if I only ever make enough money to barely scrape by, so be it. The riches of the kingdom of heaven are already mine because I have touched the lives of

hundreds of people and left them better for it.

You can do this too. Yes, by all means pursue your dreams, but at the same time, dedicate yourself to be the living embodiment of kindness, compassion and generosity of spirit. By doing so, you can make a greater impact on the world than by doing anything else you ever dreamed of.

A few days ago, I ran into a young man named Kunal. I had met him once before at a gathering of devotees of the spiritual path I follow. Each time, we only spoke for a minute or so, but the impact he made on me is significant. The divine joy and peace he radiated were almost palpable; his eyes shone with love and compassion. If anyone judges him on any criteria other than who he has become as a human being, they will be missing the point. He inspires me to be a better man. The world is in desperate need of virtuous, kind-hearted people like Kunal whom others can gaze upon and think, *So that is what's possible.*

Yours was not meant to be an ordinary life. The secret to living an extraordinary life is transitioning from living selfishly for your own happiness to living selflessly for the happiness of others. A funny thing happens when you do that. You will find that acting selflessly is paradoxically a selfish path because it is a gateway to personal peace, fulfillment and more joy than you ever could have imagined.

*“I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.”*

— **Rabindranath Tagore**