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Hindus are passive and apathetic, they say. I say different. In India, to await right timing is judged wiser and more workable than knee-jerk reaction to threats. One South Indian sage said it well over 2,000 years ago, "The patient restraint of the powerful man is like the drawing back of the mighty fighting ram before it smites the stunning blow (Tirukural 486)." I would say every Hindu is passively aggressive. Apathetic, no. There is no apathy in Hinduism. Hinduism is life itself. Every Hindu knows this. To let the aggressor play out his hand cannot be called cowardice. It could be judged intelligent, wise, life-saving and good business. To rely on the divine laws of dharma, artha, kama and moksha duty, wealth, pleasure and liberation-is a practical psychology that all Hindus naturally follow. I was always taught that India is the cradle of civilization, the birthplace of Hinduism, though we can't say the eternal religion ever had a birth. So, the diaspora of Hindus, the scattering of the Hindu people here and there and everywhere around the planet, is natural. And it is natural that others, who are not born in India, awaken into the eternal laws of the Sanatana Dharma and become Hindu in name, philosophy and culture. This has happened time and time again through history, and it is happening now in ever greater numbers. There was a diaspora during the Chola Dynasty, when Hindus went into Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and elsewhere. The Balinese people, for instance, are one part of this diaspora. Time and again, this healthy diffusion of Hindus has occurred through trade routes, employment, or just the adventurist spirit of one world, one God, and the daring to challenge the Eternal to open new doors and change the consciousness in whatever country their business or their fancy leads them to, first by example, then by philosophy, then by sadhana but never by active, suppressive aggression. Hindus are wise in taking the attitude of passivity, born from the security of being in tune with basic laws of nature, of God, Gods, souls and the exterior world. We could compare this to the attitude of the mature billionaire. He is not overtly aggressive. He is secure. He needs no more. His life now is to serve the community. He is passively aggressive. Whereas, others, who do not exemplify the Hindu wisdom, like many of the impoverished and the nouveau-rich, are actively aggressive. They are insecure. They need, no matter how much they have. They yearn to acquire. They will hurt when challenged, because they are themselves hurting. What is passive aggression? Passive aggression is a slow, unrelenting, unintimidating, spiritual force of persistence which comes from the soul itself, not from the intellect or the

instinctive mind. It is a benevolent, progressive power, a slow, steady push. The maturation of the soul produces the soul power of passive aggressiveness, waiting for the proper timing for the inner door to open and the blessing of the Gods, for prayers to be answered, for enemies to die, obstacles to be overcome, for situations to defuse, but never ever giving up. It bestows the wisdom to give in on small matters but to hold firm on important issues of dharma, righteousness, duty. Hindus in the last twenty years have been criticized as being apathetic and even submissive, uninterested. But what has been the outcome of their so-called passivity? We can see that during this time, slowly, very slowly, they have manifested temples in nearly every country of the world, spread their teachings within and outside their communities around the globe. There are more swamis, acharyas and other religious leaders outside of India and within India than ever before. Everywhere, Hindus are among the most prosperous, well-educated and well-adjusted people in society. Passive? No, patient. Slow, benign aggressiveness, waiting for the proper time to act, as in the great Hindu renaissance and diaspora we are experiencing in this century. This complex phenomenon has proved that the eternal laws of the Sanatana Dharma, known today as Hinduism, are as vibrant and practical now as they were 8,000 years ago, when the Vedas, the four great books upon which all Hindus place their total allegiance, were breathed out of the mouth of the Divine.

There are two kinds of souls in the world today, old souls and young souls. The old souls accept discipline. The young souls resent it. The old souls have refined qualities of observation, deduction and conclusion. The young souls don't. The old souls take on and carry responsibilities, and when they master them are ready for more. Young souls shun responsibility. There is still another way of looking at the development of souls, based on the nature of their beliefs and religious training from life to life. In this sense, we find that there are Eastern souls in Western bodies, Western souls in Eastern bodies, Eastern souls in Eastern bodies and Western souls in Western bodies. The latter two find themselves at home in the religion and culture into which they are born. The former two are in unfamiliar surroundings. The Western soul has spent many lives imbibing the truths and practices of the Abrahamic religions. An Eastern soul has experienced many lives maturing philosophically while practicing yoga and performing various other kinds of sadhana. So we can see that the diaspora occurs within the reincarnational cycles, too! At this time, during this diaspora, it is useful to reevaluate the children so that we do not expect too much from the young soul or from a Western soul born in an Eastern body. The raising of children outside the traditional extended family is difficult enough, but almost impossible if they are looked at and treated as all being alike-or as a reincarnated member of the same family, as was prayed for and accomplished in generations past. This is not possible once the dynastic extended family has been dispersed. Another-and closely related-way to judge children, to get to know them better, is to observe whether or not they are passively aggressive, as a mature soul would be, or actively aggressive-the sign of a young soul. This

insightful understanding has proven very helpful to many Hindu families who could not otherwise understand why their children are so rebellious, disobedient and not attracted to Hindu ways and wisdom. Those who have gone through these experiences-seen aggression and impatience in their children, in their friends, in their nations-know exactly what I mean. n