Quotes & Quips
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The Process of Reincarnation

Swami Chinmayananda (1916-1993), renowned teacher of Vedanta, founder of Chinmaya Mission

A Hindu devotee asked God, in the form of the multi-armed Lord Narayana, this question: "My dear Lord, I understand that you have innumerable inconceivable potencies. But out of all of them the energy of light seems to be the most amazing. Light pervades the spiritual world, it illuminates the material universes, and life is impossible without it." He continued, "I would like to know how you make it work." "Oh, that's easy, " came the reply. "Many hands make light work."

The real change must happen within us. For only when conflict and negativity are removed from within can we play a truly constructive role in establishing peace. Mata Amritanandamayi Ma, India's Kerala-based hugging saint

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Once upon a time a man whose ax was missing suspected his neighbor's son. The boy walked like a thief, looked like a thief and spoke like a thief. But the man found his ax while digging in the valley, and the next time he saw his neighbor's son, the boy walked, looked and spoke like any other child. Lao Tzu (ca 600 bce), author of Tao Te Ching and founder of Taoism

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I know great earth changes have been predicted for the future, so if you're looking to avoid earthquakes, my advice is simple. When you find a fault, just don't dwell on it. Swami Beyondananda

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His Divine Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, leader of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, was asked: "If you are trying to convince someone and they remain stubborn and don't accept what you say, then do you lose your temper?" He responded: "What will we achieve by losing our temper? We try to talk to them, but if they don't listen, then we have to step down! After all, we are God's devotees and so is he!"

In Sanatana Dharma, there is no single life, no single judgment, or eternal punishment. There is more than one life and, of course, there is no single judgment. In fact, there is no judgment at all as such, for the idea is to help and not to judge and condemn. The inner dynamics of incarnation is not reward or punishment but self-improvement, and ultimately self-discovery and self-recovery, moksha. Ram Swarup (1920-1998), a foremost spokesperson of Hindu spirituality and culture in India

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Swami Vivekananda: I am the disciple of a man who could not write his own name, and I am not worthy to undo his shoes. How often have I wished I could take my intellect and throw it into the Ganges! Student: But, Swami, that is the part of you I like best. Swami Vivekananda: That is because you are a fool, Madam, like I am.

If slaughterhouses had glass walls, everyone would be a vegetarian. Paul McCartney, British singer, musician and songwriter, member of The Beatles

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And so, for the first time in my life perhaps, I took the lamp and, leaving the zone of everyday occupations and relationships where everything seems clear, I went down into my inmost self, to the deepest abyss whence I feel dimly that my power of action emanates. But as I moved further away from the conventional certainties by which social life is superficially illuminated, I became aware that I was losing contact with myself. At each step of the descent a new person was disclosed within me of whose name I was no longer sure, and who no longer obeyed me. And when I had to stop my exploration because the path faded from beneath my steps, I found a bottomless abyss at my feet, and out of it comes--arising I know not from where--the current which I dare to call my life. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), controversial Jesuit paleontologist and philosopher

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Nothing can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not. The world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan "press on " has solved and will always solve the problems of the human race. Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933), 30th president of the United States

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Who could not love a religion in which there is no such thing as a heretic, no such belief as blasphemy and no such place as an eternal hell? Anonymous

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Every morning I stay in bed for ten minutes to ponder my place in the universe; then I wash my face and check my karma. Drew Barrymore, Hollywood actress

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After death, the soul goes to the next world bearing in mind the subtle impressions of its deeds, and after reaping their harvest returns again to this world of action. Thus, he who has desires continues subject to rebirth. Shukla Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.6

Death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come. Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Bengali poet and Brahmo Samaj philosopher

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Hinduism is the most dynamic religion on the planet, the most comprehensive and comprehending. The Hindu is completely filled with his religion all of the time. It is a religion of love. The common bonds uniting all Hindus into a singular spiritual body are the laws of karma and dharma, the belief in reincarnation, all-pervasive Divinity, the ageless traditions and our Gods. Our religion is a religion of closeness, one to another, because of the common bond of loving the same Gods. All Hindu people are a one family, for we cannot separate one God too far from another. Each in His heavenly realm is also of a one family, a divine hierarchy which governs and has governed the Hindu religion from time immemorial, and will govern Sanatana Dharma on into the infinite. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001), founder of Hinduism Today

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BASICS OF HINDUISM

Reincarnation, punarjanma, is the natural process of birth, death and rebirth. At death we drop off the physical body and continue evolving in the inner worlds in our subtle bodies, until we again enter into birth.

Through the ages, reincarnation has been the great consoling element within Hinduism, eliminating the fear of death. We are not the body in which we live but the immortal soul which inhabits many bodies in its evolutionary journey through samsara. After death, we continue to exist in unseen worlds, enjoying or suffering the harvest of earthly deeds until it comes time for yet another physical birth. The actions set in motion in previous lives form the tendencies and conditions of the next. Reincarnation ceases when karma is resolved, God is realized and moksha attained.