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Hindu Terms Are in the Dictionary

Sri Chinmoy, renowned spiritual leader, author, poet, artist, musician and athlete

Self-surrender is the supreme condition of winning the universal life. Men will part with their wealth, their rights, and even their lives, at the call of religion. But when you ask them to exchange their human self for the divine self, which is exactly what all great religions want them to do, they refuse. For the wine of mortality has a terrible fascination for most of us--and yet by flinging myself into the blazing fire of Universal Reality, I do not lose myself. I emerge out of the ordeal, shining and deathless. Brothers and sisters, come, let us strive to become immortals by losing ourselves in the Supreme Light. Mahakavi Subrahmanya Bharati (1882-1921), great Tamil poet and Indian patriot

Have you ever thought what would happen if temples were Americanized? Two types of prasadam, or blessed food, will be available--normal prasadam and diet prasadam. The priest will not ask for your name and birth star before an archana anymore. Your home page URL will do. No more aratis due to fire hazard. No more bells due to noise pollution. Sound and light will be delivered via headphones and virtual reality goggles. The puja tray passed around for donations is equipped with a credit card scanner. Dog-eared Sanskrit priest manuals are replaced with laptops. Sponsors of pujas will be allowed to display a banner ad on the temple website. As soon as the technology is available, priests will do home blessings by holographic projection without leaving the temple. Similarly, busy devotees will be able to be present at mandatory family ceremonies from their office.

India of the Vedas entertained a respect for women amounting to worship; a fact which we seem little to suspect in Europe when we accuse the extreme East of having denied the dignity of woman, and of having only made her an instrument of pleasure and of passive obedience. Louis Jaccoliot (1837-1890), French author of the Bible in India: Hindoo Origin of Hebrew and Christian Revelation

Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened. Winston Churchill (1874-1965), Prime Minister of England during World War II

Joys and sorrows are time-born and cannot last. Therefore, do not be perturbed by these. The greater the difficulties and obstructions, the more intense will be your endeavor to cling to His feet and the more will your prayer increase from within. And when the time is ripe, you will gain mastery over this power. Anandamayi Ma (1896-1982), God-intoxicated Bengali saint

We must respect other religions even as we respect our own. Mere tolerance thereof is not enough. Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Swami Bua Ji, age 115, asked a devotee: What is the Magna Carta of Hinduism? Devotee: I don't know, Swamiji. SB: Then what is a Magna Carta? D: It is a law, Swamiji, and it means "Great Charter." SB: What does it contain? D: This English document contains freedoms and lofty ideals of governance. SB: Right. Then the Magna Carta of Hinduism is A no bhadrāh kratavo yantu vishvatah (Rig Veda 1.89.i), which means "Let noble thoughts come to us from every side."

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. From A Return to Love by Marianne Williamson

76% of doctors in the US believe in God (83% of all Americans do). But compared with the general public, M.D.s are: 26 times as likely to be Hindu, 6 times as likely to be Buddhist, 5 times as likely to be Muslim. Journal of General Internal Medicine

Mud thrown is ground lost. The monotony and solitude of a quiet life stimulates the creative mind. Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

At a national and international level, we will enjoy more peace as we become more tolerant. Religious leaders can help by teaching their congregations how to live in a world of differences without feeling threatened, without forcing their ways or will on others. World bodies can make laws which deplore and work to prevent crimes of violence. It is only when the higher-nature people are in charge that peace will truly come. There is no other way, because the problems of conflict reside within the low-minded group who only know retaliation as a way of life. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001), founder of Hinduism Today

Avoidance of Killing

Tirukural 322: Of all virtues summed by ancient sages, the foremost are to share

one's food and to protect all living creatures.

Tirukural 324: What is the good way? It is the path that reflects on how it may avoid killing any living creature.

Tirukural 327: Refrain from taking precious life from any living being, even to save your own life.

Tirukural 328: By sacrifice of life, some gain great wealth and welfare, but great men scorn such odious gains.

Tirukural 329: Those whose trade is killing creatures are deemed defiled by men who know the defiling nature of being mean.

Did You Know?

Words like ashram, chakra, dharma, guru, karma, mantra and yoga have been fixtures in the English language for decades. But did you know that they are in the English dictionary? Since the advent of online dictionaries, Hinduism Today's editorial staff has periodically looked up Hindu terms, noticing a steady growth in the number of them which have officially become part of the ever-growing English language. This is likely because of the higher profile of Hindu studies and interest in yoga, meditation and ayurveda in America. We also find this expansion of the English vocabulary significant because it bears on a traditional convention among printers and publishers, which we follow, of italicizing words which aren't in the main language of the text. For example, archana is not in the English dictionary, so it is typeset in italics. As soon as a word appears in the dictionary, such as puja, it loses this special treatment.

Not only are there over a hundred Sanskrit words in the English dictionary now, they

are in most cases accurately defined. For example, the Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary defines moksha as "release from samsara and liberation from karma together with the attainment of Nirvana for the Hindu or kaivalya for the Jain; salvation from the bondage of finite existence." It defines prana as "a life breath or vital principle in Vedic and later Hindu religion; any of the three or more vital currents; the principle of life moving in the human body." Sadhana is defined as "Hindu religious training or discipline through which an individual attains samadhi."