

## Hinduism

INTRO: One word could be used to describe Hinduism: that word is Different! Hinduism recognizes a fundamental truth about humankind; people are different

### PATHS TO GOD

Hinduism recognizes four basic human temperaments; for each type there is a different path to God; which is called a **yoga**

(1) the path of knowledge

- for people who are intellectual in bent; they are encouraged to meditate, and contemplate ideas that will shift their focus from the small personal self to the infinite self within

(2) the path of love

- for persons who primarily receive input through their emotions; emphasizing single-minded devotion to God; holds Christianity in high esteem (p.342)

(3) the path of work

- for persons inclined to action; emphasizes "**what** one does is relatively unimportant; **how** the work is done is key to success" (p.343)

(4) the path of psychological experimentation

- for the scientifically inclined; appeals particularly to the western mind

## **FOUR STAGES OF LIFE AND FOUR WANTS**

Hindus believe that humans progress four stage in life:

- (1) student - where content and character are imparted
- (2) householder- begins with marriage ; focus is outward
- (3) retirement- the person must turn inward for answers to life
- (4) sannyas - the person has reached detachment from the world and has joined the infinite

As a person progresses through these stages of life they pursue four wants:

- (1) sensual pleasure
- (2) worldly success- fame, power, etc.
- (3) desire to serve others
- (4) desire to be one with God

## **DEVELOPMENTAL NATURE**

Hinduism is developmental in nature; stresses the development of the soul; uses the concepts of reincarnation and karma:

- (1) reincarnation - also known as transmigration
- (2) karma- "what ...sow...reap"; theoretically a person pays for the sins of a past lifetime in the present life

## **CASTE SYSTEM (pp.345-346)**

This is a very controversial part of Hinduism; which was originally based on natural inclination toward occupation.

## **BELIEFS AND PRACTICES(see handout from Beliefnet)**

### **COUNSELING**

(1) building a relationship with a Hindu client

- do not assume that because a client is from India, they are Hindu
- if they are, spend time learning how they practice their religion

(2) the Indian immigrant tends to be:

- well-educated; middle or upper class SOE class
- professionals, especially medical doctors
- potentially guilty over leaving family in India

(3) devaluing of psychology

- Hindus and Indians, in general, assume that the family should take care of personal problems

(4) clinical issues - always assume that the family is psychologically present

- most problems center around relationships (353ff)

EX: arranged marriages; no dating; no divorce, etc.

(5) the younger generation: those adolescents raised in the west, but whose parents were born in India, are basically caught between two cultures

(6) karma: emphasizes personal responsibility, can be used therapeutically