

[Precious Precepts](#)

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INSIGHT

Precious Precepts

A basic blueprint to guide the passing of dharma to the next generation

Be they in India or transported to other cultures of the world, today's Hindu youth are routinely tempted by Western ways and tested by other religions. They often face a crisis of faith when confronted with such typical questions as, "What does it mean to be a Hindu? Why do Hindus worship cows? What do you believe?" They too frequently discover they do not know the answers, and they turn to their parents, bewildered. Consequently, loving Hindu parents worldwide have called for a common religious code to teach their sons and daughters. They have asked, "What is the minimum I must do to dispatch my duty to my religion and my children?" The World Hindu Federation of Nepal discussed this need at its international conference in Bali in late 1992. In response, the publisher of Hinduism Today, a member of the WHF advisory board, told the Bali Mahasangha that he would work with his research staff to prepare the minimal duties for parents to pass on the Sanatana Dharma to the next generation. The fifteen slokas on the following three pages are the result.

On the right are the Five Parenting Guidelines, developed with the understanding that children are constantly learning, and that their learning must be guided carefully. Parents provide a

good example to their children, being certain that they are taught the Hindu religious heritage and culture along with pious values, ethics, strength of character and discipline. Their religious education is almost always in the hands of the mother and father. Children need and seek guidance, and only the parents can truly provide it.

On the following pages, the five precepts constitute the essential Hindu beliefs, and the five practices are the corresponding observances performed in expression of these beliefs. The modern Hindu child raised up with these precepts and practices will soon become a fully functioning human being, one who is tolerant, devotional, fair, fearless, obedient, secure, happy, selfless, detached and traditional.

Five Parenting Guidelines Pancha Kutumba Sadhana

1. Good Conduct--Dharmachara

Loving fathers and mothers, knowing they are the greatest influence in a child's life, behave the way their dear children should when adults. They never anger or argue before young ones. Father in a dhoti, mother in a sari at home, all sing to God, Gods and guru.

2. Home Worship--Dharma Svagriha

Loving fathers and mothers establish a separate shrine room in the home for God, Gods and guardian devas of the family. Ideally it should be large enough for all the dear children. It is a sacred place for scriptural study, a refuge from

the karmic storms of life.

3. Talking about Religion--Dharma Sambhashana

Loving fathers and mothers speak Vedic precepts while driving, eating and playing. This helps dear children understand experiences in right perspective. Parents know many worldly voices are blaring, and their dharmic voice must be stronger.

4. Continuing Self-Study--Dharma Svadhyaya

Loving fathers and mothers keep informed by studying the Vedas, Agamas and sacred literature, listening to swamis and panditas. Youth face a world they will one day own, thus parents prepare their dear children to guide their own future progeny.

5. Joining a Fellowship--Dharma Sanga

Loving fathers and mothers choose a preceptor, a traditional satguru, and lineage to follow. They support their lineage with all their heart, energy and service. He in turn provides them clear guidance for a successful life, material and religious.

Five Precepts * Pancha Shraddha

THESE FIVE SLOKAS CONSTITUTE THE MINIMAL HINDU BELIEFS.

BY TEACHING THESE TO SONS AND DAUGHTERS, PARENTS WORLDWIDE PASS ON THE SANATANA DHARMA TO THEIR CHILDREN.

1. God is All in all--Sarva Brahma

The dear children are taught of one Supreme Being, all-pervasive, transcendent, creator, preserver, destroyer, manifesting in various forms, worshiped in all religions by many names, the immortal Self in all. They learn to be tolerant, knowing the soul's divinity and the unity of all mankind.

2. Holy Temples--Mandira

The dear children are taught that God, other divine beings and highly evolved souls exist in unseen worlds. They learn to be devoted, knowing that temple worship, fire-ceremonies, sacraments and devotionals open channels for loving blessings, help and guidance from these beings.

3. Cosmic Justice--Karma

The dear children are taught of karma, the divine law of cause and effect by which every thought, word and deed justly returns to them in this or a future life. They learn to be compassionate, knowing that each experience, good or bad, is the self-created reward of prior expressions of free will.

4. Liberation--Samsara-Moksha

The dear children are taught that souls experience righteousness, wealth and pleasure in many births, while maturing spiritually. They learn to be fearless, knowing that all souls, without exception, will ultimately attain Self Realization, liberation from rebirth and union with God.

5. Veda, Guru: Scripture, Preceptor

The dear children are taught that God revealed the Vedas and Agamas, which contain the eternal truths. They learn to be obedient, following the precepts of these sacred scriptures and awakened satgurus, whose guidance is absolutely essential for spiritual progress and enlightenment.

Five Practices * Pancha Kriya

THESE FIVE SLOKAS OUTLINE THE MINIMAL HINDU PRACTICES THAT PARENTS TEACH THEIR CHILDREN IN ORDER TO NURTURE FUTURE CITIZENS WHO ARE STRONG, SECURE, RESPONSIBLE, TOLERANT AND TRADITIONAL.

1. Worship--Upasana

The dear children are taught daily worship in the family shrine room--rituals, disciplines, chants, yogas and religious study. They learn to be secure through devotion in home and temple, wearing traditional dress, bringing forth love of the Divine and preparing the mind for serene meditation.

2. Holy Days--Utsava

The dear children are taught to participate in Hindu festivals and holy days in the home and temple. They learn to be happy through sweet communion with God at such auspicious celebrations. Utsava includes fasting and attending the temple on Monday or Friday and other holy days.

3. Virtuous Living--Dharma

The dear children are taught to live a life of duty and good conduct. They learn to be selfless by thinking of others first,

being respectful of parents, elders and swamis, following divine law, especially ahimsa, mental, emotional and physical noninjury to all beings. Thus they resolve karmas.

4. Pilgrimage--Tirthayatra

The dear children are taught the value of pilgrimage and are taken at least once a year for darshana of holy persons, temples and places, near or far. They learn to be detached by setting aside worldly affairs and making God, Gods and gurus life's singular focus during these journeys.

5. Rites of Passage--Samskara

The dear children are taught to observe the many sacraments which mark and sanctify their passages through life. They learn to be traditional by celebrating the rites of birth, name-giving, head-shaving, first feeding, ear-piercing, first learning, coming of age, marriage and death.