

[Let's look at the word "Understanding"](#)

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PUBLISHER'S DESK

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Subramuniaswami, Sivaya H.H. Understanding is the word that everyone today is struggling with as we become more and more of a one world. Understanding comes from insight, penetrating into and comprehending our own mind as well as the minds of others. That's easy to say, but how is this done?

For one thing, self-reflection is essential. As individuals and as a global spiritual family, Hindus must hone to a fine edge the ability to see oneself as we really are. Too often we perceive ourselves as we think we are, as we wish we were, as others tell us we should be or as we hope to be. How much more difficult, and essential, it is to comprehend ourselves clearly, flaws and fortes alike. So the first step toward understanding is perfected self-awareness.

Next comes experience. Experience is a strict instructor which teaches us life's lessons. Some people go to school without really gaining much knowledge, while others derive all the benefits. We need to be like the good student in embracing and absorbing life's lessons. We need to learn from our difficulties, to grow strong in the cauldron of experiences that are joyful and painful and often neutral. Live and learn is a good motto. To live and not learn is a sure sign of immaturity and a sure way to repeat hardships and confusions again and again. Once they are understood, they will naturally not have to be repeated. That is the law of life's lessons.

Commitment is another requirement for understanding. We have to give some time out of our being centered in our own personal concerns to open our minds to others' points of view. This has always been the Hindu way, but it has not always been the way of Hindus. Though tolerant of other religions, some Hindus are very

intolerant of each other. There are good reasons for this, but no good excuses. We need to draw together in our love of Dharma, work shoulder-to-shoulder in mindful and one-minded effort. That is the only way Hinduism will flourish in the future.

Now that Hindus have migrated into nearly every corner of this planet, they are finding that they need each other. More and more, we notice, differences between north and south are being settled. Differences in language and religious points of view are being overlooked and issues are no longer raised of division. There is more talk of unity these days.

We have been told time and time again that Hinduism Today plays an important roll in uniting Hindus from east to west and north to south. We are almost beginning to believe it ourselves. Starting as a simple public service to show our gratitude to our great religion and the people within it, Hinduism Today has grown in strength and prestige. This is why we feel the Maha Sangam outlined in last month's Publisher's Desk is needed now.

We thank you for your response in helping us create a body of traditionally ordained swamis who are competent to guide, advise and provide the spiritual stability and one-mindedness needed to take us one step further into the future. Several swamis have already come forward and pledged their services in blending their energies and intelligence with the five swamis of our sannyas order who write, edit and publish this big/little newspaper.

What exactly is a sangam? A sangam is a collection of people, religious people, who are of one mind, who have the ability to work in concert, in harmony. A sangam is a spiritual body who sit together to create, to talk of deeper things or to make policy. The Maha Sangam that is being formed to help guide Hinduism Today is such a group. We know that in future years much good will be done through the grace of God and the Gods. Again this month we invite you, our valued readers, to put us in touch with swamis and gurus who may be able to participate in the Maha Sangam for a better, more insightful tomorrow for Hinduism.