

## Hinduism

### Lesson 4

Point to your left knee. Point to your nose. Point to yourself. Where did you point to? Why was that so tricky?

Hindu people believe that their real 'self' is the divine spark of Brahman inside them. It's not a body part – it's a bit like the part that makes you 'you'! Hindu people call this part ATMAN. Hindu people believe your real self is the divine spark of Brahman inside you – and it is indestructible! When you die your 'atman' either goes back into Brahman or comes back to life in a new body. This is called REINCARNATION.

So now we know who *you* are – who is everyone else? Imagine you have never met these people before. How would you greet them? A hug? Shake hands? Kiss on the cheek? Rub noses? What would be the most respectful way of greeting someone you don't yet know? Why do we have so many ways of greeting people?



**NAMASTE** (said na-mass-tay)



Namaste is a *reverential* greeting - that means it is full of respect and admiration. It is made with bowed head and folded hands, before something, or someone, that you deeply respect for example your grandparents, parents or teachers. The action is also used in prayer at a shrine or temple, before a deity (god). Roughly translated, Namaste means "I bow to the God within you", or "The Divine Spirit in me salutes the Divine Spirit in you".

As a greeting, Namaste is also used between Hindu people because they believe that there is a divine spark within every living thing, especially within every human: the Atman. (The part that makes you 'you')

**Here are some ideas related to the Hindu religion and their respect for the divine in all living things, and the belief that all life is connected as a result.**

Hindus are vegetarian. Many Hindus do not eat meat because some believe people can be reborn as animals. Cows are especially sacred and not killed for meat.

Respect for others. Hindu people respect others, especially the elderly because there is the divine (atman) in everyone

Serving other people. Because others have a spark of god in them, helping others helps you.

Non-violence (ahimsa) Hindu people try never to harm other living things.



**Activity:**

Create folded hands from card

1. Fold the card in half.
2. Draw round your hand.
3. Cut out – make sure one edge is not cut!

Decorate the cover with Namaste and the inside with what Hindus believe.

