

**VEDANTA.** In Sanskrit, the classic language of India, *veda* means 'knowledge' and *anta* means 'end' - so the literal meaning of the term Vedanta is 'the end of knowledge'. **T**raditionally the term is used to refer to the Upanishads, the philosophical text of Vedantic Hinduism that is part of the Vedas; as the largest spiritual text from ancient India, the three thousand year old Vedas enjoy a place of honour. **M**ore generally Vedanta is a school of philosophy that concerns itself with the study of the true nature of reality. Vedantic philosophy shuns ritual in favour of the quest for truth through meditation and one's striving for an ethical lifestyle. **A** central teaching of Vedanta - the aspect that signifies its usefulness in our daily lives - is that we can't change events; we can only change our attitude and reaction to events.\*

*\*In the spirit of Vedanta, this is a pertinent aphorism:  
'Life is not about what is happening to us - but about  
how we deal with what is happening to us: get real.'*

*A variant on the above saying is equally relevant:  
'It is not our circumstances that are important -  
what is of importance is how we deal with them.'*

San·skrit

*... is the historical language of Hinduism and Buddhism and - from the 4th century BCE on - one of the twenty two official languages of India. Its position in South and Southeast Asia is akin to Latin and Greek in Europe. Its oldest roots date back to 1500 BCE.*

*Hindu scriptures are divided into four groups, the Tantras, Darshanas and Smriti - with its law-books and epics, such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita; the fourth group are the Vedas (Rig-Veda etc), with the Upanishads, also known as Vedanta.*

Upa·ni·shads

*... are the core scriptures of Vedanta, dating to the 1st millennium BCE, with the latest of them composed in the medieval to early modern period; they had a great influence on Indian philosophy and are considered one of the most influential books ever written.*

*The Upanishads foster the belief in a universal spirit, Brahman, and an individual soul, Atman. They form the heart of Hinduism and address the mysteries of such questions as: Does life have a purpose? What is its meaning? What does it mean to be spiritual?*

*Maharishi Mahesh Yogi was the popularizer of Vedanta in the West, as he strove "to create world peace by unifying all nations in happiness and prosperity".*

*To this end he developed Transcendental Meditation, the Science of Being and Art of Living designed to calm the mind, give energy and raise consciousness.*