

# THE FOUR ASHRAMAS OR STAGES OF LIFE

AGE	STAGE	DUTIES OR SVADHARMA
0 - 25	<b>Brahmacharya/ Student</b>	This is the time of introduction to dharma, learning life's higher purpose, ethical guidelines, personal responsibility, and duties. Education in values, positive lifestyle, and commitment to discipline.
25 - 50	<b>Grihastha/ Householder</b>	The householder life is focused on service to family and community. It is a time for putting the spiritual principles to work in the world, learning how to love and serve, make a positive contribution to life as a path of awakening.
50 - 75	<b>Vanaprastha/ Hermitage; Forest-dweller</b>	This time correlates with the Western model of "retirement" where one leaves behind the outer striving of supporting a family or building a career. Instead, the emphasis is on the inner life with a deep focus on spiritual practice, simplifying life, and mentoring. The goal of liberation takes on new significance.
75+	<b>Sannyasa/ Renunciate</b>	All striving is released, and one lives free, unburdened by activity. A joyful life focused purely on spiritual goals ensues.