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en·thu·si·asm  (ĕn-th zē-ăz'əm)

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n.

1. Great excitement for or interest in a subject or cause.
2. A source or cause of great excitement or interest.
3. *Archaic*
 - a. Ecstasy arising from supposed possession by a god.
 - b. Religious fanaticism.

[Late Latin *enthūsiasmus*, from Greek *enthousiasmos*, from *enthousiazein*, to be inspired by a god, from *entheos*, possessed : *en-*, in; see [EN-](#)² + *theos*, god; see **dhēs-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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