

Newsletter

GANDHI'S REFLECTIONS...

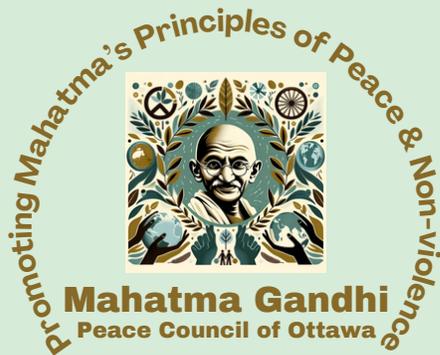
Echoes of Peace, Non-violence, and Harmony

Editorial Team: Anil Agrawal

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ISSUE 21



Our Mission

To educate communities on Gandhi's principles of peace, justice, and harmony across cultures.

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

Our Manifesto

Honoring our Life Members

Past Lectures (Echos of Gandhi - Index)

Video: 2006 Dr. Trichur Rukmani on "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth and Nonviolence"

Video: (November Legacy Talk) - Kameshwar Mishra "Simplicity in a Material World"

Article: Compassion and Forgiveness: by Dr. Jagmohan Humar

Video: Jack Kornfield: 12 Principles of Forgiveness

Book Summary: YOU and Your Own Universe by Silviu Pristavu

Article: The Three Sparks of Light by Anil Agrawal

Video: The Gandhi Tour - Dr. Arun Gandhi's Message of Peace

Book Summary: Mahatama Gandhi: An Enigma by Sain Dass Aeri

Vows for Youth Essays - Index
Essay by Yash Prasad
Essay by Hridyansh Chanana

Gandhi's VOWS: Enduring Teachings

In a gentle way, you can shake the world.... Gandhi

OUR NEXT EVENT

"Gandhi's Legacy Talks & Community Dialogue" Series
(Schedule here)

Speaker: Punita Patel

Topic: Community Leadership – Leading with Gandhi's Values: Empowering Communities Through Truth, Non-Violence, and Inclusivity

Saturday, December 13, 2025 (3:00 – 5:30 PM)
Admission FREE. Register at: <https://gandhiji.ca/2025-12-13>
VENUE: Minto Recreation Complex (2nd flr, Cambrian Room), 3500 Cambrian Rd, Barrhaven (Greenbank Rd & Cambrian Rd) (Map)

About the Session: Leaders in the community are required to foster unity, harmony, prosperity, and happiness within their communities. Punita Patel, a seasoned community leader, will explore:

- What leadership truly means
- The distinction between leadership and management
- The process and functions of leadership
- The universal inner structure of good and effective leaders
- How to engage and motivate people to contribute their best
- How to strengthen the inner foundation of authentic leadership

Leadership thrives where purpose meets people.

The true legacy of leadership lies in creating a culture that endures beyond one's presence—where values, vision, and purpose continue to guide others. Such lasting impact is built not by authority, but by the inner discipline and integrity that define a leader's own destiny.

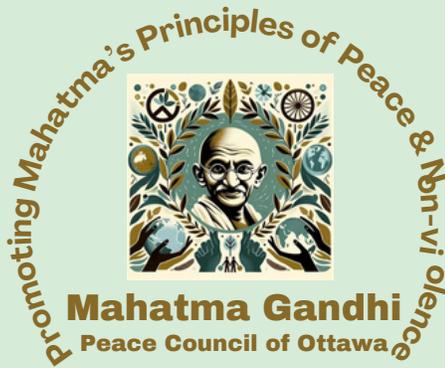
About the Session Leader: Punita Patel is a distinguished community leader and arts promoter whose journey bridges creativity, spirituality, and service. Rooted in India's classical traditions, she brought her passion for cultural expression to Canada, where she quickly became known for her leadership across arts, culture, and community organizations. As founder of Jeevan Jyoti Performing Arts, Punita has produced acclaimed classical cultural events that unite artists and audiences through themes of truth, harmony, and inclusivity.

Her leadership extends beyond the arts—she has served as President of the Gujarati Cultural Association (2009–2011) and the Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Centre of Ottawa (2013–2015), and now leads four cities as Region 3 President of the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization. Professionally, as a material engineer, Punita exemplifies community leadership grounded in creativity, compassion, and collective empowerment.





Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads, so long as we reach the same goal?



OUR MANIFESTO FOR 2025

Initiatives & Activities for Diverse Communities in Ottawa

Lectures/Seminars To Educate Community in Gandhian Principles

Gandhi Memorial Day Lecture 2025 (Jan 2025)

Featuring William van Geest (Ecology Ottawa) on "Why Bother with Local Environmental Action?... on Greening Canada's Capital."

M.K. Gandhi Annual Lecture 2025 (Nov 2025)

Our flagship event (Endowed Lecture) held in collaboration with the College of the Humanities, Carleton University,

"Living Gandhi's Legacy - Talks & Community Dialogue" Series

(Click Here to
Open the Web Page)

- (2025-Feb-15) Fearlessness: Overcoming Personal and Social Challenges
- (2025-Mar-16) Truth as a Way of Life
- (2025-Apr-27) Food and Mindful Living
- (2025-May-31) Personal Peace and Inner Harmony
- (2025-Jun-15) Non-Violence: A Path to Conflict Resolution
- (2025-Jul-26) Power of Equality of Religions (Faiths)
The Ripple Effect of Kindness [rescheduled to Jan 2026]
- (2025-Sep-27) Environmental Sustainability
- (2025-Oct-18) The Legacy of Gandhi in the Modern World
- (2025-Nov-08) Simplicity in a Material World
- (2025-Dec-13) Community Leadership – Leading with Gandhi's Values

Virtual Education Initiatives for the Different Segments of Community

Monthly Newsletter (Gandhi's Reflections)

Educating community by sharing Articles/Essays, Videos, and Book Summaries related to Gandhian Principles and Values.

Gandhi's Vows Education

- Gandhi's Vows for Kids (9-13)
- Gandhi's Vows for Youth (14-27)
- Gandhi's Vows for Everyone

Self-paced Workshops

- **Inner Peace Journey:** Discover how to manage stress, build positive relationships, and embrace social responsibility for a fulfilling life.
- **Cultivating Kindness Society:** Building Compassionate Lives, One Thought, One Act, One Community at a Time

Community Celebrations (Cultural Programs) & Service Initiatives

Bhajan Bliss

Music Concert (Apr 12)

Pandit Kaivalya Kumar Gurav singing classical Bhajans

Gandhi Jayanti 2025 Celebrations

Garlanding of statue (Oct 2)
Cultural Function (Aug 30)

Community Services

Environmental Stewardship
Community Dialogues
Companion Visits
Storytelling/Culture Exchange

Let your thoughts be free of hatred, your actions be guided by truth, and your heart open to all. That is the path to a peaceful society.



Honoring Our Life Members: Trustees, Sponsors, and Patrons

Your unwavering support and commitment inspire us every day.

Trustees/Life Members- **New:**

Dr. Kanta Marwah
Mr. Anil Agrawal
Dr. Nishith Goel
Dr. Jagmohan Humar, C.M.
Dr. Pradeep Merchant, C.M.
(Late) Mr. Kailash Mittal
Mr. Nathan Oxford
Dr. Vasant Rupalia
Mr. Jack Uppal

Sponsors/Life Members - **New:**

Mr. Sain Dass Aeri
Ms. Anjali Agrawal
Mrs. Suman Agrawal
Dr. Indu Gambhir
Mr. Atul Garg
Dr. Rajendra Gupta
Mrs. Rashmi Gupta
Mr. Rajesh Jain
Dr. Uma Kumar
Dr. Vinod Kumar
Dr. Vishwanath Mathur
Dr. Noel Salmond
Mr. Kanwal Talwar

Patrons/Life Members - **New:**

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Mr. Chandrakant Arya
Mr. Edward Atraghji
Dr. Muralidhar Rao Avadhanula
Mr. Beant Barewal
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Mr. Subhas Bhargava
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Dr. Mayurika Chakravorty
Mr. Bhagya Chander
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Mr. Sanjeev Chugh
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Mrs. Aruna Gupta
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Mr. Pawan Gupta
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Mrs. Punita Patel
Dr. Naveen Patni
Mr. Rajan Raj
Mr. Kishore Sampath
Mr. Amitav Sanyal
Dr. Radhika Sekar
Mr. Pradeep Srivastava
Mr. N. Subramani
Mr. Kanwal (Ken) Talwar
Dr. Arvin Telli
Mr. Saif Terai
Mr. Ravinder Tumber

AN APPEAL TO THE COMMUNITY

Join Us in Making a Difference - Become a Life Member and Support Our Mission

JOIN US TODAY: [HTTPS://GANDHIJI.CA/JOINUS](https://gandhiji.ca/joinus)

Your contribution helps us continue to educate and inspire our community with Gandhian principles. Together, we can make a lasting impact.



If we could erase the "I's" and "Mine's" from religion, politics, economics, etc., we shall soon be free and bring heaven upon earth.



Echoes of Gandhi: Past Lectures Revisited

[Click Here To See The Roster of All Events \(2025 - 2006\)](#)

The highlighted talk below is displayed on the following page.

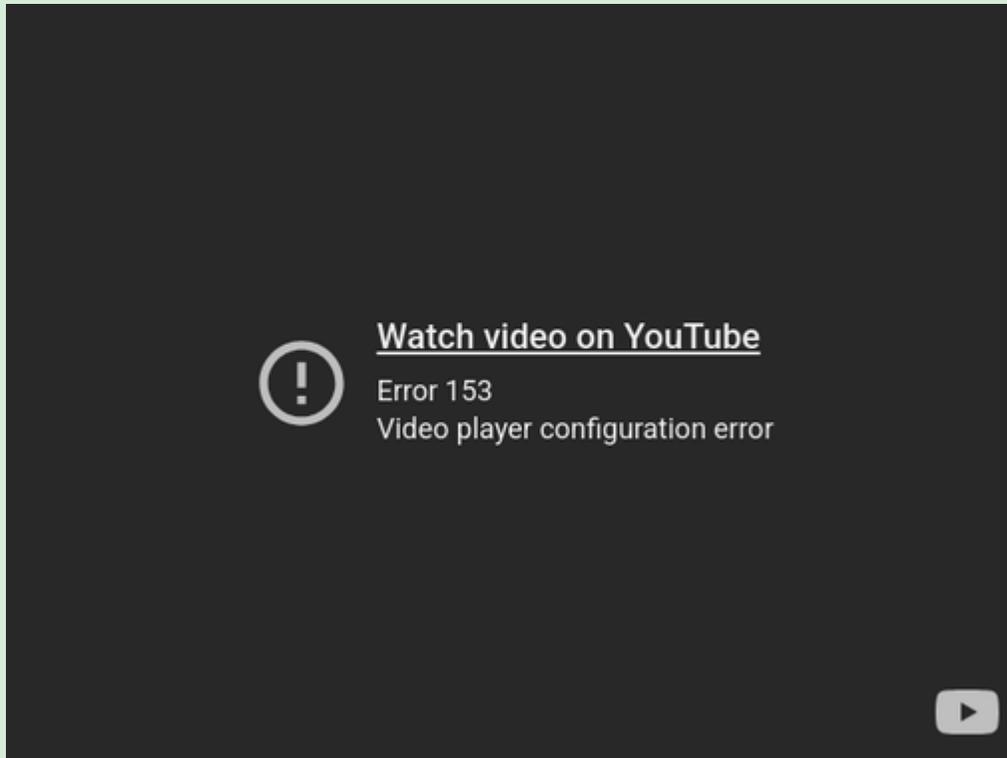
- 1) 2024 "Notes from the Climate Struggle" by Bill McKibben (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue # 1)
- 2) 2023 "Impact of Jain Religious Tradition on Gandhi" by J. Humar (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 2)
- 3) 2022 "Peace in a Picemeal World" by Jaya Row (Zoom Call) (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 3)
- 4) 2021 "Mahatma Gandhi & Islamic Non-violence" - Panel Discussion (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 4)
- 5) 2021 "Turning the Tide on Non-violence in Education" by Jill Carr-Harris (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 5)
- 6) 2020 "Mahatma Gandhi - Beyond the Civil Rights Movement (Panel) (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 6)
- 7) 2019 "Gandhi and Human Rights" by Vinay Lal (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue #7)
- 8) 2019 "Gandhi: His Relevance in the Modern World - Panel Discussion (Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 8)
- 9) 2019 "Jai Jagat: A 10,000 KM March..." by Jill Carr-Harris Talk published in Newsletter-Issue# 9)
- 10) 2018 "Gandhi and the Human Rights to Peace" by Douglas Roche (Published in this Issue # 10)
- 11) 2018 "Reflections on Gandhi, the Great Law of Peace and Indigenous Resurgence" by Taiaiake Alfred (In Issue #11)
- 12) 2017 "Samdarshana and Sambhava: Gandhi on the Plurality of Religions" by Dr. Bindu Puri (In Issue # 12)
- 13) 2017 "Mahatma Gandhi Today" - Panel Discussion [No video]
- 14) 2016 "A Centre for Peace (A Vision for the Sacred Islands in the Ottawa River)" by Douglas Cardinal (No video)
- 15) 2015 "The Mahatma, the Pope, and the Planet - Gandhian Reflections on the Pope's Recent Letter on Environment" by Dr. Noel Salmond (No video)
- 16) 2014 "Gandhi's Solution to Religious Conflicts" by Dr. Arvind Sharma (In Issue #13)
- 17) 2014 "Non-Violence Conference (A Weapon of the Strong)" - St. Paul University (No video)
- 18) 2013 "Gandhi's Religion and the Politics of Hinduism" by Vinay Lal [[Transcript only](#)]
- 19) 2013 "Gandhi as Social Visionary: The Grassroots Work of Ekta Parishad" by Paul Schwartzentruber [[Transcript](#)]
- 20) 2012 "In Search of Pax Gandhiana" by Dr. Anthony J. Parel [[Video in Issue 14](#)] [[Transcript](#)]
- 21) 2011 "Encountering Gandhi on the Rideau River" by Dr. Noel Salmond [[Video in Issue 15](#)]
- 22) 2010 "Mythic Origins of Non-violence" by Devdutt Pattanaik [[Video in Issue 16](#)]
- 23) 2009 "The Influence of Vaishnavism on Mahatma Gandhi" by Dr. Harsha Dehejia [[Video in Issue # 17](#)]
- 24) 2008 "Gandhi and Women" by Trichur Rukmani [[Video in Issue #18](#)] [[Transcript](#)]
- 25) 2007 "Gandhi, Religion & Non-violence" by Dr. Paul Younger [[Video in Issue # 19](#)]
- 26) 2007 "Gandhi and the Question of the Worship of Images" by Dr. Noel Salmond [Issue #20]
- 27) 2006 "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth and Non-violence" by Dr. Trichur Rukmani [[Transcript](#)] [[Video in this Issue](#)]
- 28) 2006 "Gandhi and the Media" by Dr. Richard Mann
- 29) 2006 "Gandhiji's Concept and Dream of Ram Rajya" by Dr. Somesh Bhargava
- 30) 2006 "Mahatma Gandhi's Reverence for Nature and its Relevance to Environment" by Dr. Noel Salmond

***He who is ever brooding over result often loses nerve
in the performance of his duty.***



2006 GANDHI JAYANTI LECTURE

Dr. Trichur Rukmani on "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth & Nonviolence" [Transcript]



If the video doesn't play here, play it on YouTube.

AI Summary of the Video:

The video features Dr. Trichur Rukmani, a distinguished professor and chair of Hindu studies, speaking on "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth and Non-Violence" during the 2006 Gandhi Jayanti event organized by the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Council of Ottawa. Dr. Rukmani highlights the foundational role of truth and nonviolence in society and how these values were deeply embedded in Gandhi's upbringing and spiritual heritage. She explains Gandhi's lifelong commitment to these principles, beginning with his early personal experiments with truth and culminating in his political activism in South Africa and India.

Dr. Rukmani emphasizes that Gandhi saw truth and nonviolence as inseparable and mutually reinforcing, with fear being the root of falsehood and violence.

... Page 2/3

The more we give up our attachment to the physical frame of the person we love, the purer and more expansive our love grows.



(2006 Video): Dr. Trichur Rukmani on "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth and Nonviolence" (Page 2/3)

AI Summary of the Video (continued):

Gandhi's political strategies, including satyagraha and civil disobedience, were grounded in these ideals, as demonstrated by key events such as the 1922 Chauri Chaura incident and the 1930 Salt March. Gandhi insisted on transparency and moral purity in his campaigns, believing that the means must be as pure as the ends.

The talk also situates Gandhi within a broader Indian tradition of moral and spiritual leadership, comparing him to Emperor Ashoka, and underscores Gandhi's unique application of these principles to political struggle. Dr. Rukmani concludes by noting Gandhi's enduring global influence, inspiring figures like Martin Luther King Jr., and the profound respect he earned from contemporaries such as Albert Einstein for his unwavering dedication to truth and nonviolence.

Key takeaways from the video:

1. Truth and nonviolence are fundamental moral values essential for the existence and harmony of any society.
2. Gandhi's lifelong dedication to these principles was deeply rooted in his cultural and spiritual heritage but uniquely interpreted and applied by him.

Key points:

- Society relies on basic moral values: truth and nonviolence
- Gandhi inherited these values from his Hindu and Jain heritage
- Early personal commitment to truth shaped Gandhi's character
- Truth and nonviolence are inseparable and mutually reinforcing
- Fear is the root cause of falsehood and violence
- Gandhi refined his ideals through political struggles in South Africa
- Satyagraha (nonviolent resistance) was Gandhi's key political method
- Gandhi insisted on transparency and moral purity in protests
- The 1922 Chauri Chaura incident tested Gandhi's commitment to nonviolence
- The 1930 Salt March exemplified successful nonviolent civil disobedience
- Gandhi's approach combined spiritual principles with political activism
- True freedom requires inner transformation, not just political change
- Gandhi inspired global leaders like Martin Luther King Jr.
- Albert Einstein praised Gandhi's extraordinary life and ideals

... Page 3/3

***The moment there is suspicion about a person's motives,
everything he does becomes tainted.***



(2006 Video): Dr. Trichur Rukmani on "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth and Nonviolence" (Page 3/3)

Key takeaways from the video (continued):

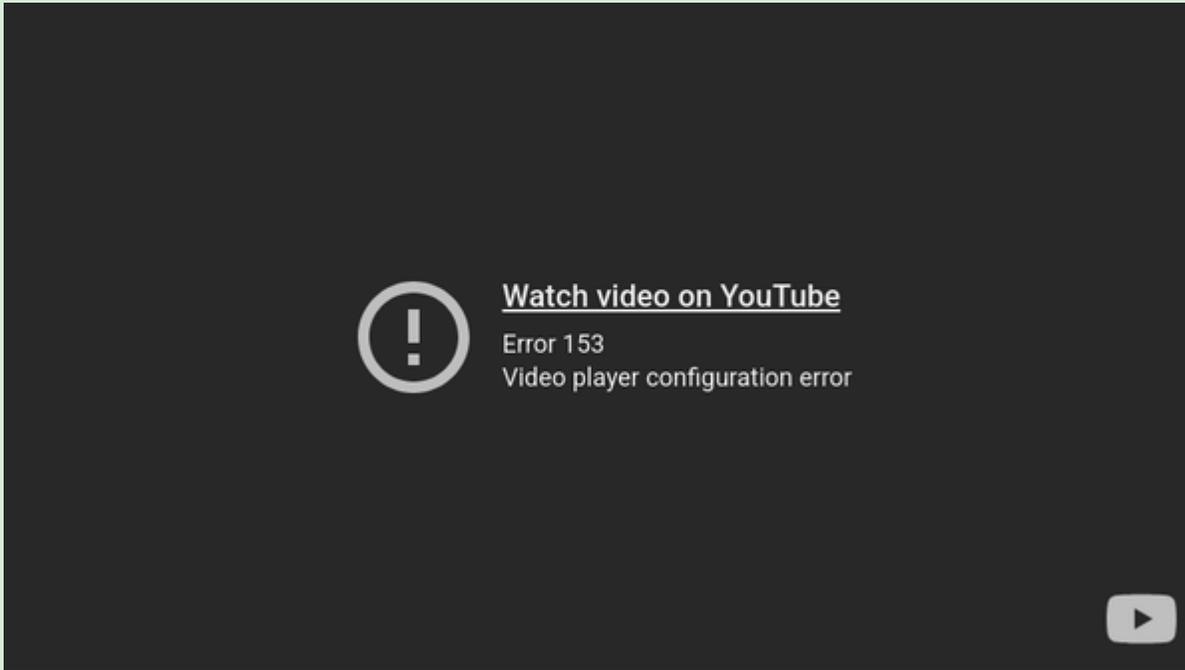
3. Truth and nonviolence are interconnected; practicing one without the other is incomplete.
4. Fear underlies both falsehood and violence, and overcoming fear leads to fearlessness and nonviolence.
5. Gandhi's political strategies, including satyagraha and civil disobedience, were grounded in strict adherence to truth and nonviolence, even under great adversity.
6. The means of achieving political goals must be as pure as the ends; moral integrity in action is crucial.
7. Gandhi's nonviolent resistance inspired global movements for justice and civil rights, demonstrating the power of ethical leadership.
8. True freedom involves not only political independence but also inner moral transformation guided by truth and nonviolence.

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.



Video - Gandhi's Legacy Talk in November 2025

2025-11-08 Kameshwar Mishra on "Simplicity in a Material World... The Joy of Non-possession (Aparigraha)"



If the video doesn't play here, play it on YouTube.

Video Summary by ChatTube (AI):

In the video "Simplicity in a Material World," Kameshwar Mishra reflects on living a simple life amid today's materialistic society. He begins by acknowledging the inspiration he draws from great people connected to Gandhi and other notable figures, emphasizing that perfection is not the goal but rather truthfulness and learning from one's imperfections. Mishra highlights the stark inequalities in wealth and food distribution, urging viewers to consider the difference between needs and greed.

He discusses how ego, ungratefulness, and the desire to show off complicate life and prevent simplicity. True simplicity, he explains, involves detachment—not just from material possessions but also from controlling others and from expectations. Mishra gives examples of wealthy philanthropists like Ratan Tata and Manu Chandaria who live modestly and use their wealth for the greater good, illustrating that wealth itself is not bad if used wisely.

... 2/4

***My religion is based on truth and non-violence. Truth is my God.
Non-violence is the means of realising Him.***



Video (November Legacy Talk) - Kameshwar Mishra "Simplicity in a Material World" (2/3)

Video Summary (contd):

The talk explores various definitions of simplicity, focusing on living with minimal desires, honesty, humility, and alignment of thought, speech, and action. Mishra stresses the importance of positive detachment—caring without possessiveness—and controlling emotions to reduce stress and anxiety. He encourages learning from good company and literature and acknowledges that simplicity is a lifelong journey rather than a one-time achievement.

He concludes with a reading of Rudyard Kipling's poem "If," which encapsulates virtues such as patience, resilience, and integrity that align with a simple and meaningful life. Overall, the video is a thoughtful conversation about how to live with less complexity, more humility, and greater peace in a world often driven by materialism and ego.

Key snippets:

- Embrace imperfection; learn from mistakes
- Differentiate needs from greed
- Control ego and reduce showmanship
- Practice detachment from possessions and expectations
- Use wealth responsibly; give back to society
- Align thoughts, words, and actions with honesty
- Care without possessiveness or control
- Cultivate humility and contentment
- Surround yourself with positive influences
- Simplicity leads to peace and joy

Key Takeaways from the Video:

1. Distinguish Needs from Greed: Reflect on what you truly need versus what is driven by greed or societal pressure. Living within your genuine needs reduces stress and promotes contentment.
2. Embrace Imperfection: Understand that nobody is perfect, including great figures like Gandhi or Ram. Accept your own imperfections and focus on learning and improving rather than striving for unrealistic perfection.
3. Control Your Ego: Ego and the desire to show off complicate life. Practicing humility and reducing ego-driven behaviors can simplify your relationships and mindset.



Video (November Legacy Talk) - Kameshwar Mishra "Simplicity in a Material World" (3/3)

Key Takeaways from the Video (continued):

4. Practice Detachment: Detach yourself not only from material possessions but also from controlling others and from unrealistic expectations. This detachment brings peace and reduces anxiety.

5. Live Modestly Regardless of Wealth: Wealth itself is not bad, but how you use it matters. Giving back to society and living modestly, like philanthropists Ratan Tata and Manu Chandaria, is a model to aspire to.

6. Align Thought, Speech, and Action: Be honest and consistent in what you think, say, and do. This integrity simplifies life and builds trust.

7. Care Without Possessiveness: You can care deeply for people and things without being possessive or controlling, which fosters healthier relationships.

8. Learn from Good Company and Literature: Surround yourself with positive influences and read inspiring works to cultivate simplicity and wisdom.

9. Simplicity is a Journey: It's not about renouncing everything but about gradually adopting a lifestyle that reduces complications and focuses on what truly matters.

10. Find Joy in Simplicity: Simplicity leads to inner peace, less stress, and a more fulfilling life.

In essence, the message is to live thoughtfully, reduce unnecessary desires, be humble, and focus on meaningful connections and actions to lead a simpler, happier life.

For the nonviolent person, the whole world is one family. He will thus fear none, nor will others fear him.



Article

Compassion and forgiveness reduce anger, heal relationships, and strengthen communities. By understanding others and letting go of hurt, we build a peaceful, caring, and genuinely progressive society.

Compassion and Forgiveness: The Heart of a Peaceful and Progressive Society...

How understanding, empathy, and healing help us grow together

By Dr. Jagmohan Humar, C.M.

[The article is based on a review of the author's presentation at the Peace Days Festival events held on September 25-26 at the Saint Boniface Cathedral in Winnipeg.]

Synopsis: *Compassion and forgiveness are vital for building a peaceful and progressive society. Compassion starts with recognizing another person's pain, feeling empathy, and choosing to help. Forgiveness allows individuals to release anger, heal emotional wounds, and liberate both the victim and the wrongdoer. Psychological research indicates that forgiveness is a step-by-step process that leads to inner peace. Meanwhile, various spiritual traditions—such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Jainism—promote compassion and forgiveness as fundamental virtues. When people engage in understanding, offer apologies, show empathy, and practice letting go, relationships become stronger, and communities grow healthier. Even small acts of kindness can create ripples of healing. Together, compassion and forgiveness make society more caring, resilient, and humane.*

Creating a peaceful society goes beyond just having rules and laws; it thrives when we genuinely care for one another. Imagine a community where kindness is the norm and compassion shapes our interactions. When we embrace forgiveness and understanding in our everyday lives, our society can truly evolve.

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The ultimate measure of a person is not where they stand in moments of comfort, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy.



Creating a peaceful society goes beyond just having rules and laws; it thrives when we genuinely care for one another. Imagine a community where kindness is the norm and compassion shapes our interactions. When we embrace forgiveness and understanding in our everyday lives, our society can truly evolve.

What Compassion Really Means

Compassion begins with something fundamentally human: noticing another person's pain. When you see someone suffering, it stirs something within you. Compassion is this feeling, but it goes beyond just noticing; it includes a desire to help and a strong urge to alleviate that suffering. Empathy plays a significant role in compassion. Empathy involves feeling with another person, going deeper than sympathy, which is merely feeling for someone from a distance.

Here's a simple example to illustrate the difference:

- **Sympathy** says, "I'm sorry you're going through this."
- **Empathy** says, "I can't fully understand your pain, but I feel it with you."
- **Compassion** says, "Let me walk alongside you and help ease your pain."

Compassion connects our hearts. It fosters understanding and naturally paves the way for forgiveness.

Why Compassion Makes Society Progressive

A society progresses not only through economic growth or technological advancements but also when people can live without fear, anger, or violence. This transformation occurs when compassion becomes a habit rather than just a fleeting feeling.

A Daily Practice of Compassion

Try one small act each day:

- Pause and listen without interrupting.
- Speak gently, even when frustrated.
- Notice when someone is struggling and offer help.
- Apologize sincerely when you're wrong.
- Let go of a slight grudge today.
- Give someone the benefit of the doubt.

Compassion opens the heart. Forgiveness lightens the heart.

Together, they help us build a kinder, safer, more hopeful world—one action at a time.

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Article: Compassion and Forgiveness: by Dr. Jagmohan Humar (Page 3/8)

Imagine a community where people take the time to recognize and address the struggles of others.

Imagine a workplace where individuals communicate kindly, even under stress.

Imagine a family where disagreements lead to understanding instead of bitterness.

Compassion fosters:

- Less conflict
- More cooperation
- A sense of belonging
- An atmosphere of trust

A compassionate society is inherently caring, and a caring society ultimately evolves into a more peaceful one.

Forgiveness: A Path to Healing

Forgiveness and compassion are deeply interconnected. When someone hurts us—whether through their words or actions—feelings of anger can arise rapidly. The victim often feels wounded and resentful. Meanwhile, the person responsible for the hurt may also suffer, grappling with guilt, shame, and inner turmoil.

Anger is a heavy burden to carry. It drains our energy, disrupts our sleep, undermines our peace of mind, and damages our relationships. Forgiveness offers liberation for both the individual who forgives and the one who is asking for forgiveness.

Psychologists often say, "Holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to suffer."

Forgiveness is the cure.

... continued 4/8

Our national independence is no longer in the hands of a few leaders. It has to be won by the people themselves.



Why Compassion & Forgiveness Matter

- **They reduce anger, conflict, and emotional stress.**
- **They strengthen relationships at home, school, and work.**
- **They help communities grow in trust and understanding.**
- **Compassion builds connection; forgiveness creates healing.**
- **Together, they form the foundation of a peaceful, progressive society.**
- **Every act—small or large—creates ripples of kindness.**

A Psychological Model of Forgiveness

Dr. Robert Enright, a leading psychologist, describes forgiveness as a journey consisting of four steps:

1. **Uncovering the Anger:** Acknowledge that you are hurt. Recognize the anger and emotional pain you feel. This honesty allows the healing process to begin.
2. **Deciding to Forgive:** Understand that holding on to anger harms you more than the person who hurt you. Therefore, you choose to forgive—not to excuse the hurt, but to free yourself.
3. **The Work Phase:** This is when empathy emerges. You attempt to understand the person who caused you pain. They may have been stressed, misinformed, immature, or dealing with their own issues. While understanding their perspective does not justify their actions, it can help soften your anger.

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4. The Deepening Phase: You begin to feel lighter as peace gradually replaces pain. In many cases, forgiveness opens your heart. As people often say, "When we extend mercy to others, we also heal ourselves."

This model illustrates that forgiveness is not an instantaneous process. It requires ongoing effort, but this effort is profoundly transformative.

When You Need Forgiveness

We all make mistakes and sometimes hurt others, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Just as it's important for the victim to forgive, the person who has caused the harm must also take necessary actions:

1. Recognize and admit the mistake.
2. Understand why it happened.
3. Plan how to avoid repeating it.
4. Ask forgiveness sincerely.

Sharing the steps you plan to take to correct your mistake helps build trust. This process also marks your own journey toward healing.

For example, consider a teenager who speaks rudely to a parent during a stressful moment. Later, the teenager realizes their mistake. They apologize, explain the reasons behind their behavior, and promise to be more mindful in the future. As a result, their relationship grows stronger—not weaker—because both parties are willing to forgive each other.

Compassion and Forgiveness in World Religions

Every spiritual tradition views compassion and forgiveness as essential virtues.

Christianity

Compassion reflects the nature of God. Jesus lived a life filled with empathy, healing, and mercy. The Bible encourages believers to imitate this love.

The Lord's Prayer states: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." This links our own forgiveness to our willingness to forgive others.

... continued 6/8



Islam

In Islam, compassion (raham) is one of Allah's central attributes. Prophet Muhammad exemplified mercy in action. Islam encourages Muslims to forgive others if they wish that God forgive them. Practicing forgiveness brings inner peace and strengthens the community.

Hinduism

Compassion (karuna) and nonviolence (ahimsa) guide how individuals should live, speak, and act. The Bhagavad Gita describes forgiveness as a divine quality essential for inner peace and spiritual growth.

Jainism

Compassion and nonviolence are fundamental to Jain ethics. Forgiveness (kṣamā) is considered one of the ten essential virtues that everyone should cultivate.

Jains observe an annual festival—Paryushan or Das Laxan—during which individuals ask each other for forgiveness with the message:

"Michhami Dukkadam" — "If I have hurt you knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive me."

This simple act strengthens relationships and frees the heart from resentment.

Anger, Hurt, and Human Condition

Every relationship—whether it's with family, at school, or in the workplace—experiences misunderstandings from time to time. Frustrated words are spoken, actions are taken thoughtlessly, and expectations go unmet. These moments can lead to emotional wounds.

- However, compassion allows us to pause and reflect.
- Forgiveness aids in the healing process.
- Together, these qualities help us move forward.

A progressive society does not exist without conflict; instead, it recognizes how to address and resolve conflict with humanity.

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How We Can Practice Compassion Every Day

Here are small, simple habits that make a significant difference:

- Listen with attention, not impatience.
- Notice when others are struggling and reach out to help them.
- Use gentle words, even when you are feeling angry.
- Give people the benefit of the doubt.
- Apologize when you are wrong.
- Forgive others even when you are hurt but know you are right.

Remember, even a small act of compassion matters. One study found that *“a single act of compassion can start a ripple effect that touches hundreds of lives.”*

The Transforming Power of Forgiveness

Forgiveness does not alter the past; it changes the present and shapes the future.

It frees our hearts from anger, allowing us to mend relationships and fostering an environment where people feel safe, valued, and seen.

A compassionate and forgiving society is not merely a dream; it is a choice we make each day. When enough individuals make that choice, the entire community can thrive.

As the Jain tradition teaches, during the festival of forgiveness:

“I forgive you, and I seek your forgiveness.”

These simple words possess the power to heal families, friendships, and even nations.

Ponder this!

Compassion and forgiveness are choices that renew the human spirit and strengthen every community. When we understand others, let go of anger, and act with kindness, we help create a society grounded in trust, healing, and hope. Even small gestures can open hearts and make our shared world gentler and more peaceful.



Conclusion

A better world starts with a kinder heart. When we choose to embrace compassion and forgiveness, we open the door to change. Each act of kindness, no matter how small, has the power to ripple out and touch the lives of others. By showing empathy and letting go of grudges, we create an atmosphere where love and understanding can flourish.

Imagine a community where everyone feels valued and heard—a place where differences are celebrated, and support is freely given. As we nurture these virtues within ourselves, we inspire those around us to do the same.

Together, we can build a future filled with hope, where kindness is the norm and healing is possible. Let's take the first step today, for a softer heart can lead us all toward a brighter tomorrow.

For Reflection:

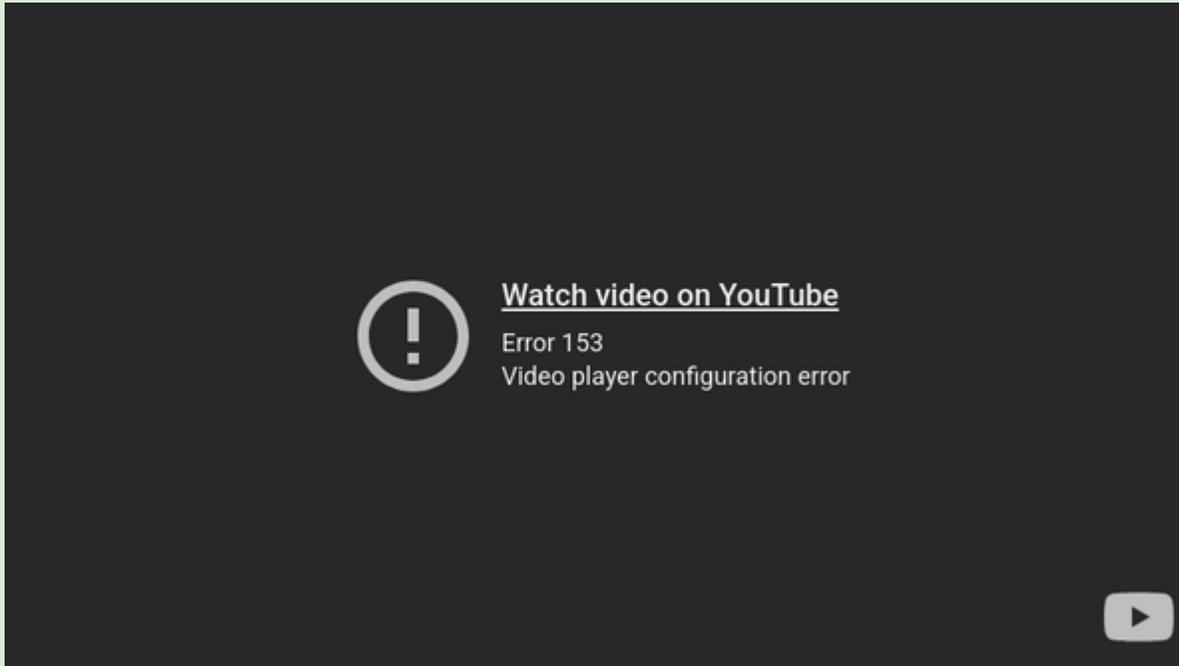
Compassion and forgiveness must become the lamps by which we walk, for they show us the path to peace. A society grows noble when its people learn to feel the suffering of others as their own and cleanse their hearts of anger through forgiveness. This work does not belong to great leaders alone; it belongs to every person willing to take the first step with courage and humility.

When a community commits itself to compassion, it plants the seeds of harmony. When it forgives, it removes the weeds that choke peace. I am glad to see the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Council of Ottawa striving to nurture these virtues in daily life. May each act of kindness and each moment of forgiveness strengthen the foundation of peace in your city and inspire others to follow.



Video

Jack Kornfield: 12 Principles of Forgiveness



If the video doesn't play here, play it on YouTube.

Video Summary by ChatTube (AI):

Jack Kornfield's talk on forgiveness presents 12 principles to guide the journey toward forgiving oneself and others. He begins by clarifying that forgiveness is not about excusing wrongdoing or simply forgetting the hurt, but about freeing oneself from the suffering caused by holding onto anger and resentment. He encourages recognizing the pain that unforgiveness brings and reflecting on the benefits of cultivating a loving heart, which can bring peace, joy, and connection with others and even the natural world. A key insight is that people often remain loyal to their suffering, but forgiveness invites us to release that loyalty and not let trauma define our identity.

Forgiveness is described as a process that requires patience and repeated effort, with the importance of setting a clear intention to forgive. Kornfield highlights the need to learn both inner practices—such as compassion and mindfulness—and outer forms, such as making amends or confession.

... 2/3

Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.



VIDEO - JACK KORNFIELD: 12 PRINCIPLES OF FORGIVENESS (PAGE 2/3)

He advises starting with forgiving those who are easiest to forgive, gradually opening the heart to more difficult cases. Grieving fully and honestly is also essential, as it allows the pain to be processed and transformed.

The work of forgiveness involves the body, emotions, and mind, especially when trauma is involved, and requires cultivating awareness and the capacity to hold complex feelings. Kornfield points out that much of our suffering is tied to repetitive negative thoughts, which can be changed through mindful practice. Forgiveness is also relational and communal; we are not alone in this struggle, and support from others is vital.

Ultimately, forgiveness involves a profound shift in identity, recognizing a deeper self that is capable of love and freedom beyond pain. Expanding perspective helps us see our personal hurt as part of the broader human experience, connecting us with others and the vastness of life. Kornfield's teaching is a compassionate, step-by-step approach that acknowledges the difficulty of forgiveness while offering hope for healing and peace.

Key points:

- Forgiveness is for your healing, not condoning wrongdoing.
- Holding onto unforgiveness causes deep personal suffering.
- A loving heart brings peace, joy, and connection.
- You are not defined by your suffering or trauma.
- Forgiveness is a gradual, ongoing process.
- Setting intention directs your forgiveness journey.
- Practice both inner compassion and outer amends.
- Start forgiving what's easiest to open your heart.
- Grieving fully is essential to healing.
- Forgiveness involves body, emotions, and mind.
- Shift your identity to embrace love and freedom.

Key Takeaways from the video:

1. Forgiveness is not condoning or excusing harm; it's a process for your own healing, not just for the offender.
2. Holding onto unforgiveness causes personal suffering that weighs heavily on your mind, body, and emotions.

... 3/3

I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.

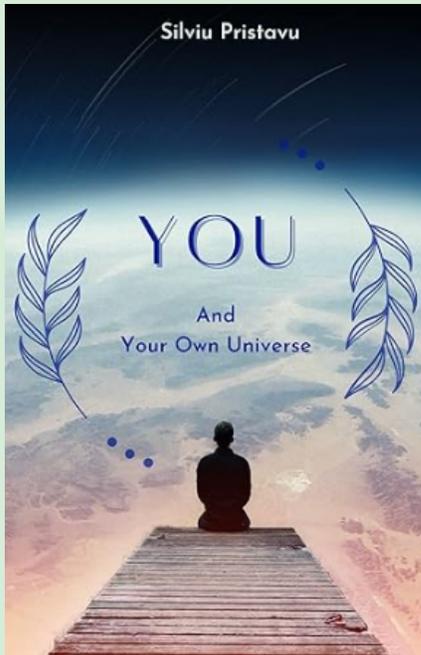


VIDEO - JACK KORNFIELD: 12 PRINCIPLES OF FORGIVENESS (PAGE 3/3)

Key Takeaways (continued):

3. A loving heart brings many benefits, including peace, joy, better relationships, and a sense of connection.
 4. You don't have to be loyal to your suffering or trauma; your identity is not defined by pain.
 5. Forgiveness is a gradual, repeated process that takes time and patience.
 6. Setting a clear intention to forgive is powerful and helps guide you through obstacles.
 7. Learn and practice both inner (mindfulness, compassion) and outer (making amends, confession) forms of forgiveness.
 8. Start forgiving with what's easiest to open your heart, then tackle more difficult cases.
 9. Allow yourself to grieve fully as part of the healing and forgiveness process.
 10. Forgiveness involves working with the body, emotions, and mind, especially when trauma is involved.
 11. Forgiveness requires a shift in identity, recognizing a deeper self capable of love and freedom beyond pain.
 12. Expand your perspective to see your pain as part of the larger human experience, connecting you with others and life's vastness.
- Overall, forgiveness is a compassionate, step-by-step practice that leads to healing, freedom, and peace.

If I were a Christian, I would pray not that a Hindu be converted to Christianity, but that he become a better Hindu, a better Muslim, a better Sikh...



Book Summary

This book reveals your inner power, showing how conscious thoughts, purposeful beliefs, and awakened awareness can transform your life and help you create a brighter, more empowered personal universe.

YOU and Your Own Universe

by Silviu Pristavu

Reference: <https://www.amazon.ca/YOU-Your-Universe-Silviu-Pristavu/dp/B09YN392CD/>

Book Summary:

YOU and Your Own Universe is a gentle, inspiring, and thought-provoking book about understanding who you truly are and the inner power you possess. Silviu Pristavu reminds us that life is not something happening “to” us. Instead, it is something we actively shape. We are more than our physical bodies. We are conscious, aware beings, and that inner awareness influences how we think, act, feel, and respond. In this sense, our thoughts and beliefs are constantly creating the quality of our personal universe.

Pristavu explains that many people live with old fears, hidden doubts, and negative mental habits without even realizing it. These patterns sit quietly in the background, shaping our choices and limiting our potential. They can drain our confidence, weaken our joy, and block the path to success and well-being. Fortunately, he assures us that nothing is set in stone. We can change our inner world at any stage of life. The book offers simple yet effective tools—such as visualization, affirmations, meditation, and gentle mindset exercises—that help replace old limitations with clarity, strength, and a sense of possibility.

... page 2/4

If we are to reach real peace in this world, we shall have to begin with the children.



Summary of the Book (continued):

This is what Pristavu calls “creating your own universe.” It means developing the skill to live from the inside out. You start by becoming aware of what is happening in your mind and heart. You notice your intentions. You choose your thoughts carefully. You learn to hold a steady inner space even when the outer world feels uncertain. External events still matter, but they no longer control your sense of direction or peace. Over time, your inner landscape becomes the trustworthy source of your decisions, your energy, and your growth.

Although the book has a spiritual tone, it is not tied to any religious system. It is written in a simple, encouraging way that can speak to anyone—regardless of age, background, or belief. Its message is universal: every human being has an inner spark of power and wisdom that can be awakened and used.

In the end, YOU and Your Own Universe offers both a fresh way of understanding life and a practical guide for everyday living. It invites you to trust your inner strength, release limiting beliefs, and build a life that expresses your deepest values, highest dreams, and true purpose. It is a call to step into your own potential and consciously create the world you want to live in—starting from within.

KEY POINTS:

- **You are consciousness, not just a body.**
- **Your thoughts shape your reality.**
- **Beliefs act as filters – expand them, expand your life.**
- **Inner awareness is your trustworthy source of power.**
- **Negative thinking blocks possibilities.**
- **Changing your inner state changes your outer world.**
- **You create your experience through intention and mindset.**
- **Visualization and affirmations help align desire with reality.**
- **Self-awareness dissolves limiting patterns.**
- **Your potential is far greater than you assume.**
- **Spiritual growth and practical action go hand in hand.**
- **Peace, joy, and clarity come from within, not from circumstances.**
- **You are the creator of “your own universe.”**



★ Main Insights & Lessons

- **You are fundamentally more than your body – you are consciousness:** The book emphasizes that each person is, at core, “awareness,” “love,” “joy,” and “happiness.” Your mind and inner consciousness are not just by-products of being alive – they are the foundation of everything you experience.
- **Your thoughts, beliefs, and intentions shape your reality:** According to Pristavu, reality is not something fixed “out there” – you have the power to influence it through your inner world. Negative thought patterns, limiting beliefs, and inner resistance block possibilities; by changing your inner dialogue and mindset, you open the door to different experiences.
- **Conscious mindset and self-awareness enable manifestation:** The book doesn’t just propose abstract philosophy – it offers tools like visualization, affirmations, and meditation to help align inner consciousness with outer outcomes. When you become deeply aware of what you want and shift your internal state, you increase the likelihood that those desires will manifest.
- **The mind-body link: mental states influence well-being:** Your mental and emotional life influences your health, happiness, and general life experience. By mastering inner awareness and emotional balance, you can positively impact not just your external conditions but also your inner sense of peace, health, and fulfilment.
- **You have unlimited potential; limitations are often self-imposed:** According to the author, there are no inherent external limits – much of what we think we cannot do stems from internal beliefs, habits or conditioning. By consciously shifting your mindset and breaking internal barriers, you can tap into a vast, often unused, potential.



★ Main Insights & Lessons (continued)

- **Inner transformation leads to outer change:** As you change the quality of your inner life – beliefs, self-awareness, emotional state – your external universe shifts. Life circumstances, relationships, success, health, fulfillment: many of these can be influenced by your consciousness, not only by external efforts or luck.
- **Spiritual approach with practical orientation (non-religious):** While the ideas are spiritual in nature – about consciousness, universal energy, inner awareness – the book is not tied to any specific religion. The approach aims to be accessible to anyone willing to explore and harness the inner self.

Awareness: The Starting Point of Change

The core message of this book is simple yet transformative: your inner world determines the shape and quality of your outer world.

When you become aware of your thoughts, beliefs, and emotional patterns, you gain the power to reshape them. By choosing clarity over confusion, intention over reaction, and inner strength over self-doubt, you open the door to a richer, more meaningful life.

Pristavu shows that personal freedom, joy, and purpose grow from within. When you learn to master your inner universe, you naturally create a brighter, more empowered, and fulfilling outer universe.

Everything begins with awareness



Gandhi's timeless leadership teaches us that true influence comes from authenticity and moral courage—leading by example, standing firm in truth, and inspiring change through compassion and conviction.

The Three Sparks of Light: A Journey from Anger to Peace

By Anil Agrawal

This article is a narration of the author's personal experiences

Synopsis:

This article shares a deeply personal journey of transforming lifelong anger and emotional darkness into inner peace through three transformative "sparks of light": Acceptance, Gratitude, and Forgiveness. A powerful meditation experience revealed that Acceptance allows us to stop resisting reality and respond with clarity. Gratitude softens our hearts, broadens our perspective, and makes acceptance easier. Forgiveness, the most challenging spark, frees us from resentment and helps us reinterpret painful experiences as opportunities for growth.

... 2/6

Our greatest ability as humans is not to change the world, but to change ourselves.



Article: The Three Sparks of Light by Anil Agrawal (page 2/6)

Through these practices, the author overcame decades of anger, healed relationships, and discovered lasting peace. The expanded lessons emphasize that emotional darkness is merely the absence of positive awareness; small sparks can transform our lives; meditation unveils inner wisdom; forgiveness liberates us; and taking responsibility empowers us. The article culminates in a message of hope: anyone can replace inner darkness by choosing these three sparks, one small step at a time.

My Anger Trap – Living in a Dark Room

For almost sixty years, I struggled with feelings that kept me stuck. I often found myself in unhealthy relationships, reacting with anger and holding onto grudges longer than I meant to. These reactions hurt not only me but also the people I cared about. My inner world felt dark, like being trapped in a dark room. I couldn't see a way out. The more I tried to control things through anger, the more helpless I felt.

During my daily meditation practice to better understand myself, I focused on my breath and tried to observe my thoughts without judgment. Then, in 2004, at the age of 59, one morning of meditation changed my life.

The Revelation in Stillness

During that meditation, I felt as if I was inside a pitch-black room, shouting, "Make the darkness go away! I don't like it!" This expressed exactly how I felt—confused, angry, and helpless.

Then, I heard a calm voice say, "Darkness can't be removed because it doesn't really exist."

I was surprised. While I reflected on that, I received another message: "Bring a spark of light, and darkness cannot stay."

In that moment, everything became clear. Darkness is just the absence of light. We can't fight darkness directly; we can only replace it with light. Then, I received three simple but powerful messages:



Article: The Three Sparks of Light by Anil Agrawal (page 3/6)

1. **“Bring ACCEPTANCE.”**
2. **“Bring GRATITUDE.”**
3. **“Bring FORGIVENESS.”**

When the meditation ended, I was stunned. These weren't just words; they felt like keys that could help me escape the emotional darkness I had known for decades.

The First Spark: Acceptance

Understanding acceptance changed how I viewed my life. I realized that my anger wasn't my true enemy; it was a sign pointing to a deeper issue. My real problem was resisting reality.

I resisted how others acted;
I resisted situations I couldn't control;
I resisted my past and parts of myself.

This resistance created tension and stress, like trying to push away the present moment, even though it kept coming back.

Acceptance doesn't mean agreeing with everything; it means recognizing what is happening without fighting it. When I did this, something shifted inside me. I created space to choose how to respond rather than react from old habits.

With practice, I started noticing the onset of my anger. Sometimes I reacted habitually and realized it afterward, but other times I paused and responded more calmly. Gradually, my anger began to lessen. Acceptance became the first spark of light helping me find my way out of the dark room.

The Second Spark: Gratitude

I always thought gratitude was just saying “thank you.” But it's much deeper. It's a warm feeling in the heart when we truly appreciate something—even small things like someone's favour, a good meal, a cozy chair, a smooth road, or a kind word from a stranger.

... 4/6

To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.



Article: The Three Sparks of Light by Anil Agrawal (page 4/6)

Gratitude shifts our focus from what's wrong to what's still good in our lives. It opens up our inner space when things feel overwhelming.

I found that gratitude acts as a bridge, helping us accept life's moments with less resistance. Even in tough times, looking for just one positive thing changed my mood. Gratitude calmed my mind and softened my heart, allowing me to see challenges more clearly.

When acceptance and gratitude came together, my episodes of anger became shorter and less intense. I let go of anger faster—first in hours, then minutes.

The Third Spark: Forgiveness – The Hardest Step

Forgiveness has always been challenging for me. I held onto certain resentments for many years, feeling that forgiving someone meant letting them "get away with it" or denying my own hurt. I equated forgiveness with condoning their actions, and I wasn't ready to do that.

I researched forgiveness to understand it better, which led me to Colin Tipping's book, 'Radical Forgiveness.' It came into my life precisely when I needed it most.

The Breakthrough: Jill's Story

The first chapter of the book—Jill's Story—was so powerful that I read it five times in a row. Each reading softened the heavy resentment I had carried for eight years. The story introduced a surprising idea:

***What if the people who hurt us are part of our soul's plan for growth?
What if specific experiences come into our lives to help us evolve?***

This thought shocked me, yet it felt strangely true. I began to rethink a betrayal from 1996 that had deeply wounded me. For years, I replayed it in my mind, strengthening my anger each time.



Article: The Three Sparks of Light by Anil Agrawal (page 5/6)

Tipping's message was transformative: If my soul attracted this experience for my growth, then the other person played their part. If they weren't truly to blame, then forgiveness—at least in the traditional sense—was no longer necessary. This idea forms the foundation of radical forgiveness.

A Shift in Responsibility

As I reflected on this idea, something shifted within me. I stopped seeing myself as a victim and began to recognize how specific painful experiences had shaped my character, deepened my insight, and strengthened my inner resilience.

This shift was not about blaming myself or excusing anyone else; rather, it was about taking responsibility for my inner evolution. When I accepted this new perspective, my eight-year resentment dissolved almost instantly. The weight I had carried for so long lifted, replaced by a quiet gratitude—not for the pain itself, but for the inner growth it created.

The Ongoing Journey

Since the revelation in 2004, I have continued to practice Acceptance, Gratitude, and Forgiveness. These three principles have become my guiding anchors, helping me stay steady when challenges arise.

My journey is not perfect. There are still moments when acceptance feels impossible, gratitude seems distant, and forgiveness feels out of reach. However, I now know how to navigate these feelings. I understand how to bring light into dark situations, and I have learned from experience that these principles truly make a difference.

As a result, my relationships have improved, and my emotional world is much calmer. The peace I feel inside radiates outward to those around me.

Lessons at a Glance

- *Darkness is absence, not a force – bring light; don't fight the dark.*
- *Small sparks are powerful – acceptance, gratitude, and forgiveness shift everything.*
- *Meditation creates clarity – quiet moments reveal inner wisdom.*
- *Forgiveness frees you – release the past and reclaim peace.*
- *Responsibility empowers – choose your response instead of blaming others.*
- *Peace is a practice – small daily efforts build inner strength.*
- *Your peace affects others – healing yourself uplifts your community.*
- *Light is always near – one spark can begin transformation.*



Article: The Three Sparks of Light by Anil Agrawal (page 6/6)

A Message of Hope

If you feel trapped in anger, resentment, or inner pain, know that change is possible. The three sparks—Acceptance, Gratitude, and Forgiveness—are available to every person, no matter their past.

Your dark room is not permanent. You do not need to fight the darkness. Simply bring in light.

These sparks are already within you. When you choose them, you choose healing. You choose clarity. You choose peace. And that single choice can transform your entire life.

How to Replace Anger with Peace

Lasting peace does not come from fighting our anger or trying to force the darkness away. Instead, it emerges from consciously inviting in light—one small spark at a time.

Acceptance allows us to face reality with calmness and clarity.

Gratitude opens our hearts and shifts our focus toward what is still good and supportive in our lives.

Forgiveness releases us from the weight of old wounds, enabling us to move forward with strength.

These three sparks—acceptance, gratitude, and forgiveness—are simple yet transformative. They have the power to dissolve years of resentment and create space for healing, healthier relationships, and true inner freedom.

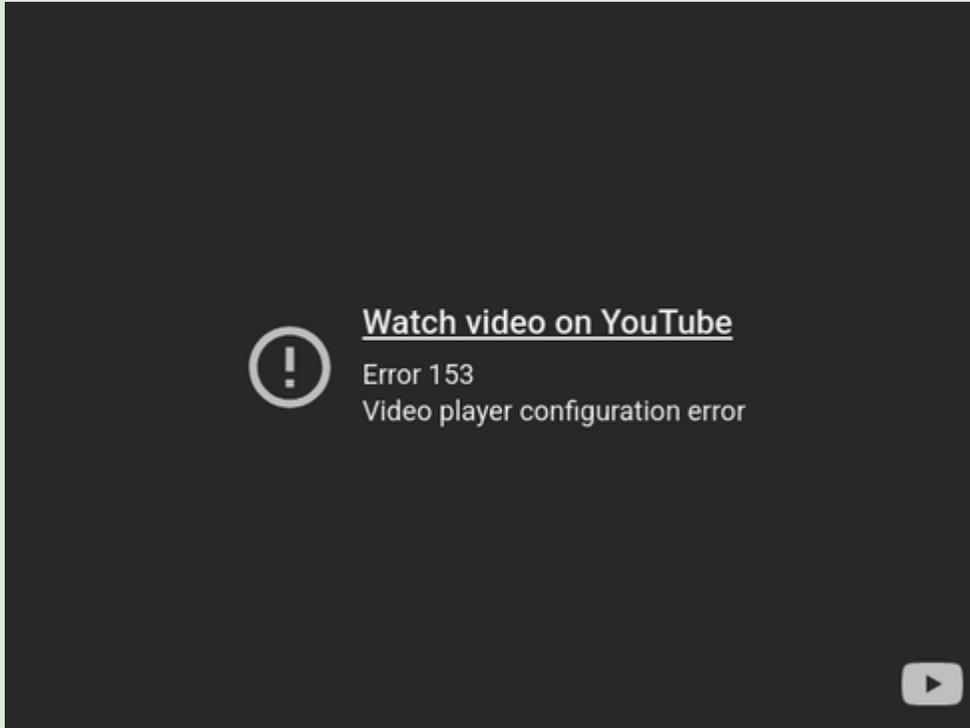
Choosing these paths is choosing peace.

Forgiveness is choosing to love. It is the first skill of self-giving love.



Video

The Gandhi Tour - Dr. Arun Gandhi's Message of Peace



If the
video
doesn't
play here,
play it on
YouTube.

AI Summary (by ChatTube AI):

The key message of the video is the importance of channeling anger positively and promoting nonviolence as taught by Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. Arun Gandhi emphasizes that anger, like electricity, can be a powerful force for good if used intelligently. He advocates for teaching this philosophy to young people worldwide to foster peace and prevent violence. The Gandhi Tour aims to spread this message through modern approaches, reaching especially the youth. Additionally, Dr. Gandhi highlights the need for inclusive economic development that benefits all, reflecting his grandfather's vision. The MK Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence continues this mission by educating people about Gandhi's principles and encouraging peaceful, constructive action.

Key Takeaways:

1. Constructive Use of Anger: Anger is a powerful energy that can be either destructive or beneficial. Like electricity, it must be channeled intelligently to promote positive change rather than harm.

... page 2/2

The soul is the same in all living creatures, although the body of each is different.



Video: The Gandhi Tour - Dr. Arun Gandhi's Message of Peace (Page 2/2)

Key Takeaways (continued):

2. Education in Nonviolence: Teaching children and young people about nonviolence and how to manage anger from an early age is crucial. This education can help reduce violence and foster peace globally.

3. Reaching the Youth Through Modern Means: The Gandhi Tour aims to engage younger generations, who may be less familiar with Gandhi's teachings, by using contemporary methods such as music to communicate his message.

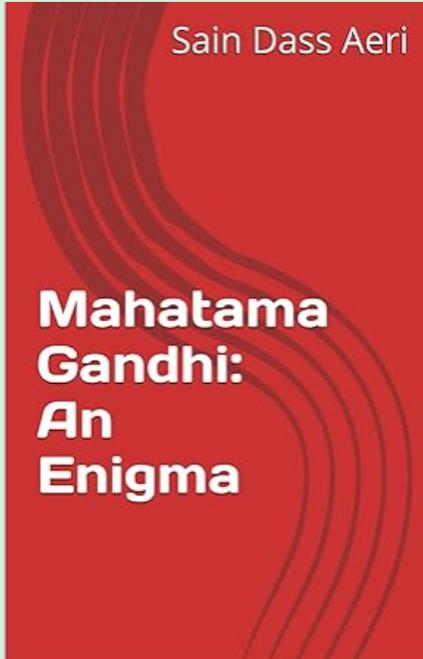
4. Economic Inequality in India: Despite economic growth and globalization, much of India's rural population remains impoverished. Dr. Arun Gandhi stresses the need for development that benefits all segments of society, especially the poor and rural communities, in line with Mahatma Gandhi's vision.

5. The MK Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence: Established in 1991, this institute promotes Gandhi's philosophy and nonviolence through education and outreach, continuing the legacy by addressing issues like prejudice and encouraging peaceful activism.

These takeaways highlight the ongoing relevance of Gandhi's teachings and the efforts to apply them in today's world to create a more peaceful and equitable society.

Key Lessons from the Video:

- Anger can be a powerful force for good if channeled positively, much like electricity.
- Teaching nonviolence and anger management to young people is essential for building a peaceful future.
- Engaging youth through modern methods, such as music, helps spread Gandhi's message effectively.
- True economic progress must benefit all, especially the poor and rural communities, not just urban elites.
- The MK Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence continues to promote peace, understanding, and social justice worldwide.



Book Summary

Gandhi's life reveals that true strength comes from struggle, self-examination, humility, and service. His human contradictions teach timeless lessons on courage, compassion, and principled living.

Mahatama Gandhi: An Enigma Kindle Edition

By Sain Dass Aeri

Amazon Reference: <https://www.amazon.ca/Mahatama-Gandhi-Sain-Dass-Aeri-ebook/dp/B01N0SY15R/>

Summary of the Book:

What the Book Is

- The book is described as an "essay" exploring the more puzzling or seemingly contradictory aspects of Mahatma Gandhi – his beliefs, personality, and actions – thus the title: "An Enigma."
- It aims to dig beyond the simple heroic or saintly portrait of Gandhi, instead engaging with the complexities and internal tensions of his life – what made him human, and what made him extraordinary.

Main Themes & Insights

- **Contrast between words and perception:**

Although Gandhi is widely regarded as consistent and unshakeable, the author argues that aspects of his beliefs and decisions sometimes appeared contradictory—and that these "enigmas" can teach us much about moral growth and inner struggle.

- **Relevance to modern individuals**

The book draws parallels between Gandhi's inner dilemmas and the modern human's spiritual and moral dilemmas – especially relevant in a world marked by moral confusion, conflict, and rapid change.

... page 2/2

***You may never know what results come of your actions.
But if you do nothing, there will be no result.***



- **Reflection, not hagiography**

Rather than idealizing Gandhi, Aeri invites the reader to reflect – to treat Gandhi as a living model whose life was full of struggle, questions, and continuous striving. This makes the portrait more relatable, thoughtful, and applicable to real life.

- **Spiritual-philosophical depth**

The book explores Gandhi's spiritual foundation – his beliefs, his moral conflicts, his convictions – placing them in a broader philosophical context. This helps readers understand not only what Gandhi did, but why he did it.

Why It Matters

- It goes beyond the legend to humanize Gandhi – showing his dilemmas, his inner conflicts, and his striving.
- It makes Gandhi relevant to contemporary readers – especially those grappling with moral complexity and seeking guidance grounded in sincerity, not myth.
- It invites personal reflection – prompting readers to ask: "If Gandhi wrestled with doubts and confusion, can I also aim for integrity while being human?"
- It connects spiritual depth with social action – appealing to both those drawn to inner transformation and those committed

7 Lessons from Mahatama Gandhi: An Enigma

1. Greatness includes struggle:

Gandhi grew through doubt, conflict, and honest self-correction.

2. Self-examination builds integrity: He constantly questioned his motives and actions.

3. Values matter when tested:

Principles gain meaning only under pressure.

4. Spiritual discipline strengthens courage:

Inner grounding made his outer actions powerful.

5. Humility opens the door to truth:

He saw himself as a seeker, not a possessor, of Truth.

6. Leadership is service:

He led by empathy, sacrifice, and moral example.

7. Gandhi remained human:

His struggles make his path accessible to all.



GANDHI'S VOWS FOR YOUTH (14-27) ESSAYS

Essays published in Previous Issues (Click the name to open the Newsletter Collection)

Yashas Naik (Abhay - Fearlessness) (#6)
Grade 12 student, Lisgar Collegiate institute, Ottawa

Manasvi Tiru (Satya - Truth) (#6)
Grade 12 (IB) student, Colonelby High School, Ottawa

Rhea Jain (Ahimsa - Power of Nonviolence) (#7)
Grade 12 student, All Saints High School, Kanata

Abhishek Sinha (Abhay - Fearlessness) (#7)
1st Year Computer Science student, Carleton University, Ottawa

Nidhi Chauhan (Nonviolence and Religious equality) (#8)
Master of Computer Science, University of Ottawa

Abhijit Sinha (Brahmacharya - Self-Discipline) (#8)
3rd Year Translational Molecular Medicine, University of Ottawa

Divya Taneja (Aparigraha - Non-possession) (#9)
Grade 9 student, Bayview Secondary School, Toronto

Sayan Majumdar (Ahimsa - Nonviolence) (#9)
Grade 12 student, Ottawa Technical Secondary School

Pritha Chirag-Shah (Brahmacharya / Self-Discipline) (#9)
Grade 10 student, Earl of March Secondary School

Avni Jain (Abhaya - Fearlessness) (#10)
Grade 10 student, O'Neill Collegiate and Vocational Institute

Sparsho Chakraborty (Aswada / Feeding the Mind) (#10)
Bachelor of Health Sciences, First Year (University of Ottawa)

Anika Jain (Sharirshrama / Body Labour) (#10)
Bachelor of Health Sciences, Second Year (Univ of Western Ontario)

Ammi Paul (Asteya/ Non-stealing) (#10)
Bachelor of Translational and Molecular Medicine, 3rd Year (University of Ottawa)

Moumita Dutta (Abhaya/ Fearlessness) (#10)
Bachelor of Translational and Molecular Medicine, 3rd Year (University of Ottawa)

Nikhila Parameswaran (Brahmacharya/Self-discipline) (#11)
Grade 12, Cairine Wilson Secondary School



GANDHI'S VOWS FOR YOUTH

YOUTH LEARN ONE OR TWO VOWS AND WRITE AN ESSAY.

WE INVITE UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE, AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO UNRAVEL THE POWER OF GANDHI'S 11 VOWS

... and Write An Essay on One or More Vows of Your Choice. Your Essay will be published in an eBook "Gandhi's Vows: Youth Perspective."

Embrace Gandhi's 11 Vows to find balance, enhance mental health, strengthen social connections, and discover purpose and fulfillment.

Pick a Vow, Learn, and Write Essay:

- Register as a participant.
- Browse the [Vows Learning Guide](#).
- Choose a Vow that resonates with you and connects with your experiences and aspirations.
- Write (no AI) a 750-word essay in English or French, describing your perspectives on the application of this Vow in your life, in society, and in the world in modern times.
- Submit your essay online here.

Essay Evaluation & Rewards:

- Essay Evaluation on three criteria: *Presentation, Relevance, Originality.*
- A special ceremony with dignitaries like the High Commissioner of India and Mayor of Ottawa.
- The top three essays will earn an award.
- The top ten essay authors will present.
- A certificate and a memento to all participants to honor their contribution.
- A book/eBook titled "Gandhi's Vows: Youth Perspective" will include all Essays with their author's name, showcasing their work and sharing it with a broader audience.
- Your essays will radiate Gandhi's Vows and your influence throughout Ottawa.

YOUTH PERSPECTIVE IS POWERFUL - POST IT PROUDLY!
For information, contact: Mamata Dutta (613-406-1970) | Anil Agrawal (613-859-8654)

Essays published in This Issue (#21)

Yash Prasad (Brahmacharya / Self-discipline)
DIVYA Group (Grade 10, Maxwell Heights Secondary School, Toronto)

Hridyansh Chanana (Satya, Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, Seva, Abhay, Saral Jeevan)
DIVYA Group (Grade 10, Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School, Toronto)

**You may never know what results come of your actions.
But if you do nothing, there will be no result.**



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Essay on 'Brahmacharya/Self-discipline' by Yash Prasad

DIVYA Group(Grade 10, Maxwell Heights Secondary School, Toronto)



Topic: The Quiet Power of Showing Up - Gandhi's Self-Discipline Vow (Brahmacharya)

Self-discipline is the gap between who you want to be and who you actually are, and it's a gap most of us fall into daily. Gandhi understood this when he created his eleven vows, following self-discipline (Brahmacharya) a practice of controlling impulses, managing energy, and directing focus toward what truly matters. Gandhi believed that "discipline and self-control are the keys to effective living" (Life Architecture), a statement that feels more real than ever in a world where everyone is distracted. This vow isn't ancient philosophy; it speaks directly to the modern struggle of choosing between: what's easy and what's necessary. For me, that struggle shows up every time I sit down to work, whether for school or athletic training.

The areas of my life that need the most discipline are clear: focused work and athletic training. I want to develop as an athlete, but growth requires focus and effort within a limited time. It's not just about showing up to practice, it's about being present, pushing through discomfort, and staying consistent when I'm unmotivated. The same battle plays out when I'm supposed to be studying. I'll be working on an assignment when my brain drifts toward that project I've been excited about, or anything more interesting than what's in front of me.

... page 2/3

Brahmacharya means control of the senses in thought, word, and deed.



Last Tuesday captured this struggle really well. I had a history essay due and training that evening, so I sat down at four o'clock determined to finish first. But my phone was right there, face-up on the desk, and a text came in, then another, then a video notification. "Just five minutes," I told myself, but when I finally looked up, it was 5:30pm, training was in thirty minutes, and I'd written one paragraph. I rushed through both the essay and my workout, doing neither well, and lying in bed that night. I felt frustrated, not because I lacked ability, but because I'd sabotaged myself with my own lack of discipline.

Distractions are relentless, but I've realized they're symptoms of something deeper: I procrastinate with hard things I dislike, even when they're essential for my goals. My phone and social media are obvious culprits, but the real issue is my instinct to avoid discomfort and choose immediate pleasure over delayed reward. For a long time, I thought the solution was to make myself enjoy difficult tasks. If I could just love history or every tough workout, discipline would come naturally. But that's a fantasy. As I read through Gandhi's vows I saw he had a similar perspective. The breakthrough came when I accepted a simpler truth: I don't have to enjoy something to do it, some things are just necessary and accepting this frees me to begin.

With that mindset, I built systems to support discipline instead of relying on willpower. I turn my phone completely off when I need to focus, creating friction between me and distraction. I find quiet spaces, use headphones, and eliminate decisions before I start. The tool that helps most is a simple timer set for twenty minutes, digital or from Walmart for \$5, just works fine. It makes any task feel manageable because I'm not committing to hours of struggle, just twenty minutes of focus. These systems aren't about superhuman willpower, they're about reducing friction and making discipline the easier path.



What's surprised me most is how self-discipline has improved my well-being beyond productivity. When I have better self-control, I'm not reactive to every distraction or setback. Life still throws curveballs like: a bad grade, a tough practice, mounting stress, but I'm learning and I can choose how I respond. This control has improved my relationships too, because I'm more present with friends and family instead of being mentally elsewhere.

The hardest part is maintaining consistency when motivation fades. Motivation is a temporary friend that vanishes when things get difficult, so I can't rely on it if I want to achieve something. Instead, I celebrate small wins: twenty minutes of focused work counts as success. These moments might seem tiny, but they build something bigger, a habit of showing up that doesn't depend on inspiration. I've also created systems that make discipline easier, like organizing my workspace beforehand and setting timers before I begin.

Gandhi's self-discipline vow (Brahmacharya) isn't about perfection, it's about continually redirecting energy toward a higher purpose, even after failure. Sometimes I get distracted and choose comfort over growth, but I'm better at recognizing when I've drifted and pulling myself back. Self-discipline isn't a destination: it's a practice you return to, especially after failure. While writing this essay, the planning process was very frustrating. Every tiny tweak made me want to give up entirely. It was hard, and I didn't love every part of it, but I showed up anyway, determined to produce the best work I could. Gandhi's vow taught me that discipline isn't about dramatic transformation, it's about the quiet power of showing up, one small choice at a time, until those choices become who you are.

Work Cited: Prihandito, Bayu. "84 Mahatma Gandhi Quotes: Truth, Patience & Courage to Live By." Life Architecture, 9 February 2025, <https://lifearchitecture.com/blogs/quotes-affirmations/mahatma-gandhi-quotes>.



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Essay on 'Satya/Truth, Ahimsa/Non-violence, Brahmacharya/Self-Restraint, Seva/Service, Abhay/Fearlessness, Saral Jeevan/Simplicity'

by Hridyansh Chanana

DIVYA Group

(Grade 10, Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School, Toronto)

Topic: Walking with Gandhi in the Modern World... A Teen's Reflection on Truth, Compassion, Simplicity, and Inner Strength



Mahatma Gandhi's legacy has inspired generations throughout the world not only because of his position as the father of Indian independence but because he demonstrated how his disciplined character and, in some cases, flawed character paved the way to a more moral, socially introspective society. The Gandhi's Vows for Youth program calls the youth of today to relate to the same vows of truth, non-violence, discipline, service and responsibility which Gandhi lived in his own life and extended to history. His life vows he made and lived by in honor and in struggle are just as applicable to today's youth - vows which can help cultivate character development and social responsibility when on a path of struggle much like Gandhi did in his own youth. **Even if you are a minority of one, the truth is the truth.**

The vow of **truth (satya)** was one of the most popular, championed vows by Gandhi. To him, truth was not just being honest in speech - but an entire lifestyle which required follow through in honesty as well. Today, we live in a world riddled by social media and an overwhelming abundance of information that is mismanaged and facilitated in ways that make people pretend to be who they're not. Practicing truth for me means acknowledging weaknesses instead of showing a perfected Instagram profile to the world. Practicing truth means owning up to my failures when I don't hand in an assignment on time, instead of failing to take responsibility and blaming someone else for my shortcomings. Practicing truth means succumbing to

... page 2/4

Brahmacharya means control of the senses in thought, word, and deed.



Essay - By Hridyansh Chanana (Satya, Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, Seva, Abhay, Simplicity) (Page 2/4)

peer pressure instead of rising above it. By practicing truth, I practice personal responsibility - I understand that what I do impacts my reputation and how others perceive me and treat me. Gandhi expressed to be empowered by truth; now, more than ever, youth need a sense of empowerment, and championing truth as a vow can empower so many to face their day.

With **non-violence (ahimsa)**, Gandhi considered non-violence one of the greatest virtues. Non-violence should not only be understood as physical manifestations of violence that are absent, but rather, kindness of thought, word and deed. Violence manifests itself in many ways in the modern world - from cyber bullying to harsh language, oppression, bigotry, intolerance, and impatience. It's not fighting like a child means learning how to express oneself effectively, how to empathize with others, and learning to bite one's tongue when someone yells in their face instead of preparing to punch that person in the mouth. Such a pledge encourages moderation and emotional development. If children can learn not to punch when they're supposed to (express how they feel) then there will be fewer physical fights in classrooms, less emotional disagreements on community and social media and fighting can be avoided by ideas instead of hate.

If Gandhi can sway nations with his non-violence, imagine what children can do with it on a day-to-day basis. Furthermore, Gandhi supports the pledge for temperance, especially regarding vices and lusts getting in the way of people's dreams. In the *Vows for Youth Learning Guide*, **self-restraint** is relative to no smoking or drinking, getting too addicted to the internet, no drugs, etc. Young people are presented with temptations and vices and excess - they're addicted to social media, they're exposed to bad snacks, they're playing video games instead of doing their homework. Self-restraint is not deprivation of life; it's empowerment of life. By creating boundaries for ourselves and what we think we can get used to doing - excess spending, social media use, excess eating - we empower ourselves to have more time for our goals, studies and self betterment. Gandhi believed that self-restraint allowed for inner freedom; thus I believe a young person can only reach their potential if they know how to control their mind and impulses.

... page 3/4

***Nonviolence is a power that can be wielded
equally by all.***



Essay - By Hridyansh Chanana (Satya, Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, Seva, Abhay, Simplicity) (Page 3/4)

Gandhi advocated for the value of **service (seva)**. Not that you serve others to serve your own heart and body, but to serve your own and to empower the community. Even the simplest acts of service hit the hardest: Driving a friend somewhere, volunteering, doing the dishes for mom or dad, serving lunch one day at school, transforming a community for the better. But far too many youths feel isolated. Service fosters community. It fosters empathy, it fosters humility and it fosters gratefulness. Youths in service learn to put themselves and their problems on the back burner to assess what's best for the overall population. This is especially true with Gandhi's notions of being the change he wants to see because as much as he based everything on personal change, he realized it would be most appropriate for all.

The final vow which should define every young mind is **fearlessness (abhaya)**. Gandhi asserts that the mind is imprisoned by fear but liberated by courage. For this reason, far too many young minds remain imprisoned - fear of not being liked, fear of failure, fear of not being good enough. Fear imprisons minds and brings mental health issues. Fearlessness is not rash; it's a recognition of faith and ethics. For instance, fearlessness is applied if one is about to confront another due to something unfair done in the past, or if one gives into peer pressure but knows it's wrong, or if one pushes to such lofty personal expectations. Fearlessness is the key for young people to become masters of their destiny. The support of Gandhi exists - if the littlest man can stand from the inside and do what he has to do, not to mention, such fearlessness extends into society as well.

The second youth vow is **fearlessness (abhaya)**. Fear closes the mind; bravery opens the mind. Ultimately, people fear not performing to standards and being told they cannot do this or that, or finally getting removed from their position only for someone else to take the position and no longer eligible for the next opportunity. Fear is stress, fear is anxiety, fear is insecurity. Abhaya does not mean to do stupid things; abhaya means to give oneself credit and do the right thing. The youth will either need to step up when it is not right or do the right thing because no one else can think of it in that moment. It can also mean

... page 4/4

The moment we fear, we cease to live.



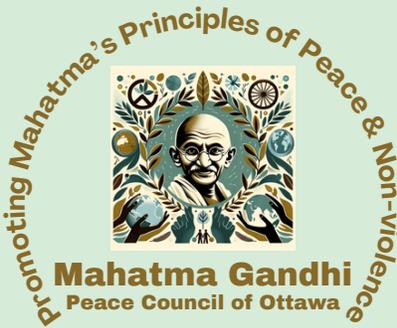
Essay - By Hridyansh Chanana (Satya, Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, Seva, Abhay, Simplicity) (Page 4/4)

starting a company based on absurd dreams and fantasies. The youth should be able to do anything they want without fear of what will become of it. If one coward is free to think on the inside and that makes him valorous, then all valorous actions bring us closer to social equity. After all, Gandhi was a coward who showed how if a coward can bloom from something so small, then it's in everyone's character to be without fear.

Ultimately, the vows teach **simplicity** because why should we be privy to everything when we have nothing? In a capitalist world where branding is key and we have x amount of shirts, x amount of applications, x amount of followers and likes, it's easy to forget what simplicity means. Simplicity means that we are okay without excess. Simplicity means that we spare ourselves the excess stress of needing an alternative if we don't have enough time to get what we want. Simplicity means appreciation of what we have; no more means a simplified, stress-free life where only the basics apply. For the less that we have, the less that we need to have and stress about and the more time we can make and learn and breathe. For Gandhi, simplicity was never degrading but instead a beautiful, devalued way to live.

Ultimately this logic has nothing to do with one's own character to reign supreme over others but instead empowered an educated youth and community that boast such prowess. The community deserves good children sprung from truthfulness and fearlessness, compassion from non-violence and simplicity, integrity from temperance and service and emotional reciprocity from valiant service-oriented simplistics. It's easy for me to look at myself through these imperatives and truths because I'll be a better student or better friend; but if these morals make me a better person in general, then according to Gandhi's credo that youth will carry the torch for the future, I'd like to carry his values and ideals as well as his legacy and those around me from a community and society based on Gandhi's ideals for justice, peace and ethical living.

Gandhi's vows are not outward rules; they are inner disciplines for self-purification.



The Enduring Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhi's 11 Vows:

1. Nonviolence (Ahimsa):

Commitment to non-violence and harmlessness towards all living beings.

2. Truth (Satya): Pursuit of truth, both in thought and action.

3. Non-stealing (Asteya):

Refraining from taking anything not freely given.

4. Chastity (Brahmacharya):

Practicing self-discipline and control over desires.

5. Non-possession (Aparigraha):

Embracing simplicity and minimizing possessions to only what is necessary.

6. Body-labor (Sharirashrama):

Valuing physical labor as a means to sustain oneself.

7. Diet (Aswada):

Advocating for a simple and healthy diet, mindful of the impact on the body and environment.

8. Fearlessness (Abhaya):

Cultivating courage to stand by one's convictions and truth.

9. Equal respect for all religions (Sarva Dharma Samanatva):

Promoting religious tolerance and understanding.

10. Economic strategy (Swadeshi):

Prioritizing local economies and self-sufficiency.

11. Untouchability (Asprishyatanivaran):

Opposing caste discrimination and advocating for equality and respect for all individuals, regardless of their social status.

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"Be the change
you wish to see in
the world."

This simple statement reflects Gandhi's belief in personal responsibility, action, and the power of individual transformation as a catalyst for societal change.

The above statement urges everyone to embody the values they wish to see in society, emphasizing that real change starts with oneself.