

GANDHI'S REFLECTIONS...

Echoes of Peace, Non-violence, and Harmony

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MAY 2024



ISSUE 3



2024 – Our Programs and Events to Spread Peace & Harmony

Our Mission: Educating communities on Gandhi's peace and non-violence principles and fostering harmony across cultures.

Kick-off Event - Bill McKibben's Lecture on Climate Control

Gandhi Memorial Day (Feb 2) with Bill McKibben's lecture on "Climate Control," engaged over 400 attendees in discussion on climate change and sustainability.

Essay Project

For high school/post-secondary students
Register - by June 30
Submit Essay - by July 31

Community Services

May 4 Park Cleaning
May 25 Inner Peace Session
June 1 Food Kitchen Service
July xx Tree planting

Monthly Newsletter

"Gandhi's Reflections" - Disseminating Gandhian wisdom, and promoting MGPCO activities.

Honoring our Life Members

Events in May 2024

Upcoming Events in June 2024

Past Lectures (2024-2006)

1. Peace & Nonviolence

- Article: Gandhi's Philosophy (part 2) - Ahimsa
- eBook: Mahatma Gandhi - Peaceful Revolutionary

2. Harmony & Integrity

- Article: Aparigrah
- Video: Aparigrah Explained

3. Sustainability and Reverence for Life

- Article: Mahatma Gandhi's Environmental Vision
- Video: Gandhi and the Environment

Gandhiji's Enduring Teachings

"Gandhi's Principles in Action" Lecture Series

The lecture events will be scheduled during June - Sept, 2024..



June 8 - Earth's Promise - Sustainability for a Brighter Future
Aug - Some talks with an indigenous community organization (TBD)

Would you like to speak, or be a panelist? Please Register.



Gandhi Jayanti 2024

Oct 5 - Garlanding of Statue with singing of hymns & speeches.

Sept 28 (tentative) - Cultural function comprising a slideshow, dance and music performances, followed by dinner.

M.K. Gandhi Annual Lecture 2024

In Nov - Concluding the year with our flagship event featuring one or more distinguished speakers exploring Gandhi's enduring relevance in modern times.

Contribute content for the newsletter and provide your feedback: <https://gandhiji.ca/newsletter>



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AN APPEAL TO THE COMMUNITY

Join Us in Making a Difference

Become a Life Member and Support Our Mission

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

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





The May 2024 Events

Park Cleaning Drive:
Embodying Gandhi's adage, "Be the change you wish to see in the world," we embark on a park cleaning initiative, not only to beautify our shared spaces but also instill a responsibility towards our environment.
Litter Pick up at Water Dragon Park
424 Chapman Mills Drive, Barrhaven
Saturday, 4th May, 2024 (11.00 am to 2.00 pm)

Tree Plantation:
In planting trees, we pay homage to Gandhi's deep respect for nature and his understanding of the Earth as a living entity. This activity symbolizes our commitment to future generations and the sustenance of the planet.
Location & date awaited from the City of Ottawa

Helping with the Food Kitchen:
Gandhi's compassion for the underprivileged manifests in our support for local food kitchens. By ensuring that everyone has access to nutritious food, we embody the essence of community and the spirit of giving.
Shepherds of Good Hope
256 King Edward Ave, Ottawa
Saturday, 1st June, 2024 (8.00 am to 12.00 pm)

Assistance to Homeless Shelters:
Providing support to homeless shelters, we heed Gandhi's call to uplift the most vulnerable members of our society. This act of kindness echoes his belief in the dignity and worth of every individual.

Reflections and Action for Inner Peace (Register):
Guided self-reflection and attentional training session to promote inner peace and understanding. Through a science-informed talk, guided meditation, and discussion, participants will explore directions for personal growth and empathy. This activity strengthens our spiritual foundation, mind-body health, complementing our community service efforts and embodying Gandhi's holistic life approach.
Live Session by Dr. Bhuvanesh Awasthi, PhD, Cognitive Neuroscientist
At Rideauview Community Centre, 4310 Shoreline Dr, Ottawa [Riverside South]
Saturday, 25th May, 2024 (3.00 pm to 5.30 pm) concluding with refreshments

Harmony with Nature & Community: Gandhi's Path

Community Services (Sewa)
[Register here.](#)

Empowering Ottawa Through Cleanliness, Greenery, Nourishment, Shelter, and Inner Peace

4th of May - Park Cleaning Drive:

The City of Ottawa assigned us the Water Dragon Park for the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Council of Ottawa's Park Cleaning Drive, a vital part of our broader community service efforts. A few of our Board members gathered at Water Dragon Park on Chapman Mills Drive in Barrhaven, volunteering to pick up the litter to enhance the beauty and health of the park. Our volunteers were hands-on, meticulously picking up the litter strewn around the park. We collected almost five garbage bags full of litter. Our efforts left the park noticeably cleaner, fostering a sense of pride and community spirit among all who participated.

This activity was a practical application of Gandhi's philosophy, "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

By taking direct action to care for our environment, we not only honor Gandhi's teachings on cleanliness and respect for nature but also instill these values within our community.

The Park Cleaning Drive serves as a reminder of our responsibility towards our shared spaces. It also portrays the impact collective action can have on our environment. Through initiatives like these, we continue to embody the essence of service and commitment to sustainability that Gandhi championed. Such initiatives ensure that his legacy of care and respect for the earth endures in our community's actions.



The May 2024 Events

Reflections and Action for Inner Peace



At Rideauview Community Centre,
4310 Shoreline Dr, Ottawa (Riverside South) - [map](#)
Saturday, May 25, 2024 (3-5:30 PM)

FREE - Limited Seats. Register: <https://gandhiji.ca/inner-peace>



About the Session

Guided self-reflection and attentional training session to promote inner peace and understanding. Through a science-informed talk, guided meditation, and discussion, participants will explore directions for personal growth and empathy. This activity strengthens our spiritual foundation, mind-body health, complementing our community service efforts and embodying Gandhi's holistic life approach.

Lecture - Meditation - Q&A - Refreshments

About the Session Leader

Dr. Bhuvanesh Awasthi, also known as 'Bhuvan', is a cognitive neuroscientist who studies human consciousness, emotions, and decision-making. He has educational backgrounds in consciousness studies, cognitive science, and life sciences from institutions in Australia and India, along with training in yoga and Indian spiritual practices.

For the past twenty years, he has used his extensive knowledge to support spiritual and mind-body practices with proven results. His work on meditation, consciousness, cognition, emotion, and well-being has been shared worldwide through public lectures, workshops, conferences, and academic journals.

Currently, he lives in Ottawa, and works as a Senior Behavioral Scientist for the Federal Government.



Reflections and Action for Inner Peace - A Talk by Dr. Bhuvanesh Awasthi



Summary of the video by ChatTube: The video discusses the academic and research journey of Dr. Bhuvanesh Awasthi, focusing on consciousness studies, cognitive science, and neuroeconomics.

Dr. Awasthi emphasizes the importance of inner peace, discussing definitions of peace, individual actions for peace, and the role of neuroscience in understanding peace. The video highlights the significance of personal reflection, mindfulness, and training the body and mind for achieving peace at individual and collective levels.

How does self-awareness play a role in maintaining inner peace?

Self-awareness plays a crucial role in maintaining inner peace as it involves understanding one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors without judgment. By being aware of their internal experiences, individuals can identify triggers of stress, anxiety, or conflict and take proactive steps to address them. Self-awareness allows individuals to recognize patterns of thoughts and behaviors that may disrupt their inner peace and develop strategies to manage them effectively. By cultivating self-awareness through practices like mindfulness, reflection, and introspection, individuals can gain insight into their inner world, foster emotional regulation, and promote a sense of calm and balance within themselves.

How can mindfulness practice contribute to achieving inner peace?

Mindfulness practice can significantly contribute to achieving inner peace by allowing individuals to focus on the present moment, observe their thoughts and feelings without judgment, and cultivate a sense of awareness and acceptance. Through mindfulness, individuals can learn to manage stress, reduce anxiety, and develop a greater sense of clarity and emotional stability. By practicing mindfulness regularly, individuals can enhance their resilience, improve their ability to cope with challenging situations, and create a more peaceful and harmonious internal state.

Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms.



Upcoming Events in June 2024

JUNE

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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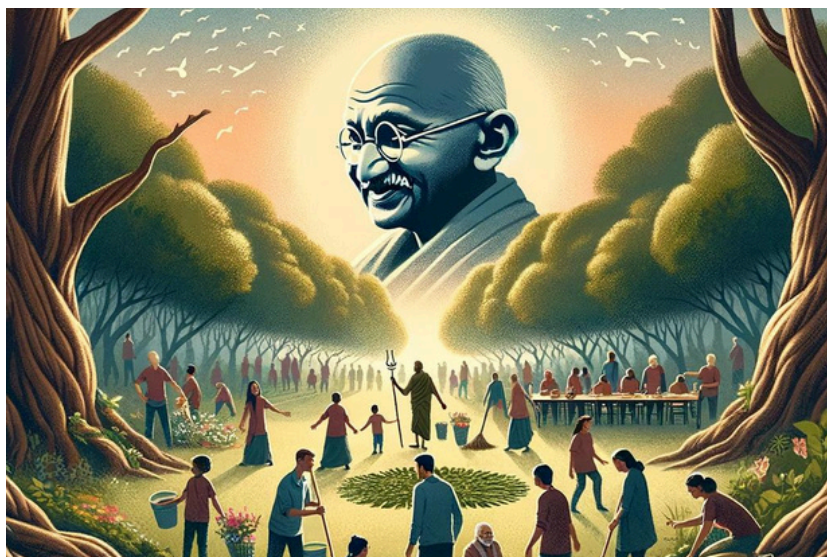


June 1 - Sewa in Soup Kitchen (Shepherds of Good Hope)



June 8 - Earth's Promise - Sustainability Solutions for a brighter Future (Talks + a Movie)





Echoes of Gandhi: Past Lectures Revisited

- 1) 2024 "Notes from the Climate Struggle" by Bill McKibben (Issue #1)
- 2) 2023 "Impact of Jain Religious Tradition on Gandhi" by J. Humar (Issue# 2)
- 3) **[2022 "Peace in a Picemeal World" by Jaya Row \(Zoom Call\)](#)** *(In the current Issue)*
- 4) 2021 "Mahatma Gandhi & Islamic Non-violence" - Panel Discussion
- 5) 2021 "Turning the Tide on Non-violence in Education" by Jill Carr-Harris
- 6) 2020 "Mahatma Gandhi - Beyond the Civil Rights Movement - Panel Discussion
- 7) 2019 "Gandhi and Human Rights" by Vinay Lal
- 8) 2019 "Gandhi in the Modern Times) - Panel Discussion
- 9) 2019 "Jai Jagat: A 10,000 KM March..." by Jill Carr-Harris
- 10) 2018 "Gandhi and the Human Rights to Peace" by Douglas Roche
- 11) 2018 "Reflections on Gandhi, the Great Law of Peace and Indigenous Resurgence" by Taiiaki Alfred
- 12) 2017 "Samdarshana and Sambhava: Gandhi on the Plurality of Religions" by Dr. Bindu Puri
- 13) 2017 "Mahatma Gandhi Today" - Panel Discussion
- 14) 2016 "A Centre for Peace (A Vision for the Sacred islands in the Ottawa River)" by Douglas Cardinal
- 15) 2015 "The Mahatma, the Pope, and the Planet - Gandhian Reflections on the Pope's Recent Letter on Environment" by Dr. Noel Salmond
- 16) 2014 "Gandhi's Solution to Religious Conflicts" by Dr. Arvind Sharma
- 17) 2014 "Non-Violence Conference (A Weapon of the Strong)" - St. Paul University
- 18) 2013 "Gandhi's Religion and the Politics of Hinduism" by Vinay Lal
- 19) 2013 "Gandhi as Social Visionary: The Grassroots Work of Ekta Parishad" by Paul Schwartzentruber
- 20) 2012 "In Search of Pax Gandhiana" by Dr. Anthony J. Parel
- 21) 2011 "Encountering Gandhi on the Rideau River" by Dr. Noel Salmond
- 22) 2010 "Mythic Origins of Non-violence" by Devdutt Pattanaik
- 23) 2009 "The Influence of Vaishnavism on Mahatma Gandhi" by Dr. Harsha Dehejia
- 24) 2008 "Gandhi and Women" by Trichur Rukmani
- 25) 2007 "Gandhi, Religion & Non-violence" by Dr. Paul Younger
- 26) 2007 "Gandhi and the Question of the Worship of Images" by Dr. Noel Salmond
- 27) 2006 "Gandhiji's Ideals: Truth and Non-violence, Religion and Non-Violence" by Dr. Trichur Rukmani

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



Past Lecture # (3)

2022-10-02 PEACE IN A PIECEMEAL WORLD BY JAYA ROW



[Jaya Raw's Talk starts at 17:46]

Summary of the video (by ChatTube app): In this video, Jaya Row mentioned the importance of understanding and embracing the concept of Oneness. By recognizing and appreciating the common humanity that binds us, individuals can foster peace and unity in a fragmented world. When you see others as a part of yourself, you naturally cultivate feelings of love and understanding, rather than hatred or division. By practicing empathy and compassion and treating others with respect and kindness, individuals can create a more peaceful and harmonious world.

The speaker emphasized the importance of cultivating attitudes of giving, love, and understanding to promote peace at a local level. By approaching interactions with the attitude of giving, valuing collaboration over competition, and embracing diversity as a strength, individuals can build strong and harmonious relationships within their community. Additionally, individuals can create a more peaceful and tolerant local environment by practicing non-violence, seeing others as partners rather than opponents, and finding common ground with those who may have divergent views.

The speaker also highlighted the importance of finding peace within disturbances to uphold human dignity and achieve fulfillment. By being able to maintain inner serenity and peace in the face of external challenges and disruptions, individuals demonstrate their strength and resilience. This ability to stay calm and composed even amid chaos is a hallmark of human dignity and can lead to a deep sense of fulfillment. Moreover, by finding peace within disturbances, individuals can navigate challenges more effectively, maintain a positive mindset, and experience personal growth and development.

Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful.



Peace and Nonviolence

Article: Gandhi's Philosophy (Part 2) - Ahimsa

**eBook: Mahatma Gandhi - Peaceful
Revolutionary**

Harmony and Integrity

Sustainability and Reverence for Life



[Gandhi's Philosophy Part 1: Ahimsa, Satyagraha, and Sarvodaya (Newsletter #2 April 2024)]

GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY (PART 2): Ahimsa (Nonviolence)

From Editor's Desk

Synopsis: *Ahimsa, or non-violence, is central to Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy. It goes beyond avoiding physical violence to preventing physical, mental, or emotional harm. This principle, rooted in Eastern spiritual traditions like Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, promotes comprehensive compassion, empathy, and understanding. Gandhi applied Ahimsa in various aspects, including during India's independence movement, through non-violent protests like the 1930 Salt March.*

It also involves verbal non-violence by encouraging truthful and kind communication, mental non-violence through maintaining a forgiving mindset, and environmental non-violence by advocating for sustainable living. Additionally, Ahimsa guides peaceful conflict resolution and everyday actions such as practicing vegetarianism and volunteering, demonstrating that non-violence is a powerful force for social change and personal growth.

Ahimsa, or nonviolence, is a fundamental concept in Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and is central to various Eastern spiritual traditions such as Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. It goes beyond simply avoiding physical aggression and includes refraining from causing harm to oneself or others, whether physical, mental, or emotional. Ahimsa promotes universal compassion, empathy, and understanding.

Physical Nonviolence: Gandhi practiced Ahimsa during India's independence movement by using nonviolent actions such as protests, strikes, and boycotts instead of violent confrontations. A significant example was the 1930 Salt March, during which Gandhi and his followers peacefully opposed the British salt laws, marking a pivotal moment in nonviolent resistance.

Verbal Nonviolence: Ahimsa also pertains to our speech. Gandhi emphasized the importance of speaking truthfully and kindly, avoiding language that could hurt others. He advocated for:

- **Truthfulness:** Always speaking the truth in a way that fosters personal integrity and social harmony.
- **Kindness:** Using words that uplift rather than degrade, reflecting compassion and empathy.
- **Avoiding Harsh Language:** Choosing words carefully to prevent verbal wounds, which can be as harmful as physical violence.
- **Refraining from Gossip or Slander:** Avoid spreading harmful rumors or gossip that can damage individual and community relationships

.... continued

Nonviolence should never be used as a shield for cowardice. It is a weapon of the brave.



Gandhi's Philosophy (part 2) - Ahimsa ... continued

Mental Nonviolence: This aspect involves cultivating a mindset free from negative emotions like hatred or anger. Gandhi demonstrated this during his early years in South Africa, where, despite facing discrimination, he maintained a forgiving attitude towards his oppressors.

Environmental Nonviolence: Ahimsa extends to how we treat our environment, promoting sustainable living and minimal consumption to protect ecosystems and all life forms. Gandhi advocated for sustainable agriculture and living in harmony with nature.

Conflict Resolution: Ahimsa provides a peaceful framework for resolving disputes. Gandhi favored understanding the opposing side's viewpoint, finding common ground, and using dialogue, negotiation, and mediation to reach amicable solutions.

Everyday Practices: Gandhi advocated for incorporating nonviolence into everyday life through acts of kindness, compassion, and empathy. This could involve adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet to reduce animal harm, participating in volunteer work, or simply showing consideration towards others in daily interactions.

Gandhi was deeply committed to Ahimsa, as seen in his famous quote:

"An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."

This quote encapsulates his belief in breaking cycles of violence through understanding and compassion.

Gandhi's life exemplified the power of nonviolent action, particularly evident during the historic Salt March in 1930. Gandhi led thousands of Indians on a 240-mile journey to the Arabian Sea to protest British salt laws. Upon reaching the sea, Gandhi picked up a handful of salt, symbolically defying the oppressive laws. This act of civil disobedience conducted in a non-violent manner, ignited a nationwide movement for independence and showcased the effectiveness of peaceful resistance in challenging unjust systems.

In essence, as Gandhi practiced and promoted, Ahimsa is not passive but a dynamic force for societal change and personal growth. By embracing nonviolence in all interactions and endeavors, individuals can cultivate a world characterized by peace, harmony, and deep interconnectedness among all beings.



eBook: "Mahatma Gandhi: Peaceful Revolutionary"

Written by : Haridas T. Muzumdar

Source [download] <https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/mahatma-gandhi-peaceful-revolutionary.pdf>

Summary:

The insightful work "Mahatma Gandhi: Peaceful Revolutionary" by Haridas T. Muzumdar, depicts Gandhi as an influential leader whose teachings and philosophy continue to inspire leaders and generations globally.

Gandhi's teachings of non-violence (Ahimsa) and truth (Satya) resonate universally, extending beyond India and the 20th century. They remind us of the potential of peaceful resistance and the enduring strength of the human spirit. Nehru said, "The light that has illumined this country for these many years will illumine this country for many more years."

Central to Gandhi's philosophy is non-violence, which he elevated to a powerful tool for social and political change, aiming to convert oppressors and end injustice. He emphasized that true strength lies in the spirit, not physical might.

Gandhi's life was an ongoing experiment in truth and non-violence, an example such as his brief foray into meat-eating to emulate the British, which he abandoned due to ethical concerns and made a lifelong commitment to truth and self-discipline. His transformative years in South Africa, where he developed his method of non-violent resistance, are testaments to his fearless pursuit of justice.

The eBook also explores the significant influences on Gandhi's thought, including Leo Tolstoy, John Ruskin, and Henry David Thoreau. These thinkers played a pivotal role in shaping Gandhi's ideas on civil disobedience and the moral equivalent of war. His Ashrams in South Africa and India emphasized seeking and living the truth (Satya) while inculcating self-control and self-discipline.

Muzumdar's work urges us to reflect on the principles Gandhi lived and died for. Gandhi's teachings offer hope and a roadmap for peaceful resistance in a world still afflicted by violence and injustice. His ability to transform ordinary people into agents of profound change through non-violent means is a powerful reminder of what can be achieved through higher principles.

In conclusion, "Mahatma Gandhi: Peaceful Revolutionary" is indispensable for anyone seeking to comprehend Gandhi's impact and the timeless relevance of his teachings. Dive into this eBook to discover the spirit of a man who remains a guiding light for all humanity.



Peace and Nonviolence

Harmony and Integrity

Article: Aparigrah by Dr. J. Humar

Video: Aparigrah Explained by Laura Goellner

Sustainability and Reverence for Life



APARIGRAH: A PATH THAT GANDHI FOLLOWED

Contributor: Dr. Jagmohan Humar, C.M., Ph.D.

Synopsis: *Dr. Jagmohan Humar's article explores the profound influence of the Jain and Hindu doctrines on Mahatma Gandhi, mainly focusing on the principle of Aparigrah—moderation and restraint. Aparigrah, a core tenet in both Jainism and Hinduism, advocates for non-attachment, self-restraint, and moderation in material possessions and resonates powerfully with Gandhi's lifestyle and philosophy.*

The article outlines how Gandhi's adherence to Aparigrah shaped his views and actions concerning societal ills such as conflict, violence, and ecological destruction. Dr. Humar connects Gandhi's teachings with current global issues, including resource depletion, climate change, and excessive consumerism, emphasizing the relevance of Gandhi's principles in addressing these challenges.

Dr. Humar extends the discussion to include modern perspectives, citing a 2015 encyclical by Pope Francis that echoes Gandhi's warnings about unsustainable consumption levels. The article urgently warns that without adopting a lifestyle of moderation, as Gandhi advocated, the planet's resources will be insufficient to support future generations.

The author suggests that societal shifts towards reduced consumption and an appreciation for simplicity could mitigate many environmental and social problems and foster personal happiness and respect for nature. Dr. Humar argues that embracing Aparigrah holds the key to preserving our ecology and ensuring a sustainable future for the planet, instilling hope for a better world.

Gandhi occupies a unique place among the leaders of our civilization. His concepts, thoughts, principles, and actions contain remedies that could cure society's many ills. Among these ills are increasing conflict, violence, and bloodshed, the insatiable desire for material wealth leading to resource depletion, climate change, and the destruction of our ecology.

Gandhi's concepts and thoughts were inspired by the philosophies and principles of two ancient faiths in India, Jainism and Hinduism. Three categories of Jain principles had a profound impact on Gandhi, popularly known as the three As, i.e., *Ahimsa*, or non-violence; *Anekant*, meaning respect for another viewpoint and a spirit of understanding, reconciliation, and tolerance; and *Aparigrah*, signifying moderation and restraint.

continued...



... (continued) Aparigrah: A Path that Gandhi Followed

Aparigrah is also a part of the five fundamental vows essential to Jain belief. They are *Ahimsā* (Non-violence), *Satya* (Truth), *Asteya* (Non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (Chastity), and *Aparigrah* (Non-possession).

The Hindu Faith reflects parallel thoughts in the five Yamas, or codes of self-restraint, listed in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. The five Yamas are *Ahimsa* (Nonviolence), *Satya* (Truthfulness), *Asteya* (not stealing), *Brahmacharya* (Chastity), and *Aparigrah* (Moderation).

Aparigrah, which variously translates as non-attachment, non-possessiveness, self-restraint, imposition of a limit on material possessions, or abstaining from over-indulgence, is thus a central concept in both Jain and Hindu thoughts. Throughout his life, Gandhi followed the path of *Aparigrah*. He recognized that attachment to material possessions inevitably incites the passions of greed, jealousy, anger, conceit, and ego. *Aparigrah* brings personal happiness; it also leads to a respect for nature, commitment to ecological preservation, and moderation in the lifestyle.

Resource Depletion and Moderation

Gandhi was far ahead of his time in recognizing the dangers of society's insatiable desire for material comfort. The following quote best expresses Gandhi's stress on moderation, simplicity, and self-restraint. "*There is sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed.*"

In June 2015, Pope Francis essentially repeated Gandhi's message in an encyclical letter on the environment. In it, he stressed the need to care for the Earth, asserting that it was impossible to sustain the present level of consumption.

The Pope observed that Christian spirituality proposed an alternative lifestyle capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption, a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little.

The modern ideology closest to the idea of *Aparigrah*, although with no spiritual dimension, is moderation or self-restraint, driven by the spectre of resource depletion. Scientists, political thinkers, and social activists have realized that the existing lifestyle of humans cannot be sustained for long by the resources of the planet Earth.

continued...



... (continued) Aparigrah: A Path that Gandhi Followed

With its rapid growth, the world population is likely to reach or exceed nine billion by 2050. Suppose the underdeveloped and developing countries adopt consumption levels equal to those of the developed world. In that case, it will take five or six Earth planets to support even the current population of seven billion.

Preservation of the Ecology and Aparigrah

Gandhi realized that modern civilization's naked materialism and mindless pursuit of excessive consumerism would degrade the environment and destroy the ecosystem. On the other hand, *Aparigrah*, emphasizing restraint and modesty, would promote respect for the environment.

The industrial and economic growth required to meet the increasing demand for consumer goods and services requires increasing energy use. As a result, the world's energy demand is continuously growing. The average growth rate is about 4% per year. Non-renewable sources, including fossil fuels, contribute most to the growth. Energy use puts additional heat into our ecosphere, leading to climate change and the degradation of our environment. At the present rate of increase in energy use, it will take only three or four generations before our atmosphere is irreparably damaged. This danger to our atmosphere does not even consider that energy use is likely to rise much faster in underdeveloped and developing countries, pushing the global rate beyond the present average.

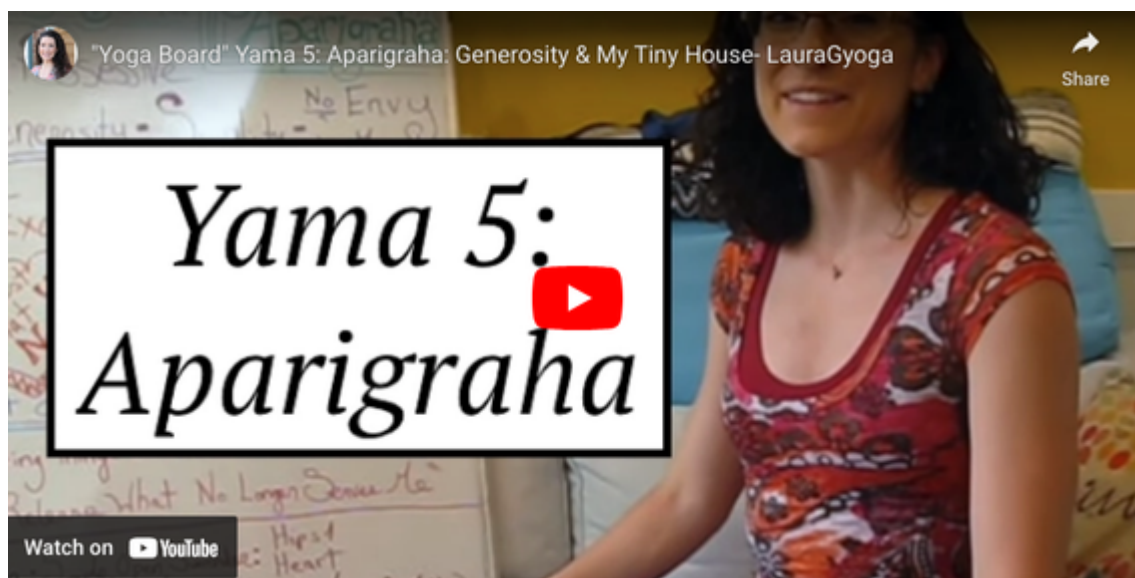
Increased production to meet the demand for material comforts also increases fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change and global warming. Changing climate influences and aggravates natural disasters such as floods, fires, droughts, and hurricanes.

Where is the Solution to our Problems?

The most perverting force working against a sustainable future is society's insatiable hunger for material comfort, leading to resource depletion and ecological degradation. The answers to these problems must derive from human values and morality, and the only tangible solution involves reducing consumption. Society has focussed too long on the supply side of the equation, ignoring that it is the demand side where the true answer lies. At the least, we should redefine what comfort and well-being mean. We should recognize that extravagance and luxury do not bring happiness. A lifestyle of moderation and self-restraint can be pretty fulfilling. These are virtues that, while not measuring up to the deeper meaning of *Aparigrah*, may be the panacea for our troubled world.



Video - Aparigraha Explained by Laura Goellner



Summary by ChatTube: The video discusses the concept of "Aparigraha" which relates to non-possessiveness, generosity, and avoiding excess in physical belongings, leading to financial and emotional freedom. The focus is on decluttering one's life, letting go of unnecessary possessions, and releasing emotions like resentment and anger to create space for growth and ease. Through the practice of yoga and mindfulness, the video highlights the benefits of simplifying one's life and embracing the practice of letting go for personal well-being.

What role does Aparigraha play in fostering contentment? Aparigraha, or non-possessiveness, plays a crucial role in fostering contentment by encouraging us to let go of excessive physical possessions and attachments. When we practice Aparigraha, we reduce our focus on material things that we don't truly need, allowing us to free ourselves from the burden of hoarding and greed. By decluttering our physical space and letting go of unnecessary possessions, we create room for contentment to flourish as we realize that true happiness does not come from external possessions. This practice of non-possessiveness also extends to emotional clutter, such as holding onto resentment or anger, which can hinder our ability to experience contentment. By embracing Aparigraha, we cultivate a sense of lightness and freedom that paves the way for inner peace and contentment in our lives.



Peace and Nonviolence

Harmony and Integrity

Sustainability and Reverence for Life

Article: Mahatma Gandhi's Environmental Vision

Video: Mahatma Gandhi and the Environment



Mahatma Gandhi's Environmental Vision

From Editor's Desk

Synopsis: *Mahatma Gandhi's environmental vision stressed the interconnectedness of humans and nature, advocating for "Sarvodaya," or the welfare of all. He promoted self-sufficiency, local economies, and sustainable farming, emphasizing the importance of nonviolence and vegetarianism in respecting all life. Gandhi also warned against resource depletion and overconsumption, urging responsible Earth stewardship. Today, his principles remain relevant in addressing global environmental issues and promoting sustainable lifestyles, reminding us that small steps and collective efforts can bring about significant change for our planet's health.*

Mahatma Gandhi, the revered leader of India's independence movement, profoundly understood humanity's relationship with the environment and the urgency of sustainability. Although primarily known for advocating nonviolent resistance and social justice, Gandhi's writings and teachings provide valuable insights into environmental stewardship and preserving natural resources. Here, we explore Gandhi's thoughts on the environment and its sustainability for future generations.

Gandhi's Philosophy of Nature

Central to Gandhi's philosophy was the concept of "Sarvodaya," which translates to "the welfare of all." He believed that human well-being was intimately connected to the health and harmony of the natural world. Gandhi rejected the notion of human supremacy over nature, advocating for a holistic worldview recognizing all living beings' intrinsic value. He famously remarked, "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed," highlighting the importance of living in harmony with nature and embracing simplicity.

Concept of Self-Sufficiency

One of Gandhi's core principles was "swadeshi," or self-sufficiency. He emphasized the importance of local economies and decentralized production systems that minimized reliance on imported goods and fossil fuels. Gandhi promoted traditional handicrafts, cottage industries, and sustainable agricultural practices to achieve economic independence while reducing environmental impact. By prioritizing local resources and community empowerment, Gandhi envisioned a more resilient and sustainable society capable of meeting its needs without compromising the well-being of future generations.

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Respect for all Life Forms

Gandhi was committed to nonviolence in human relations and toward all living beings. He promoted vegetarianism not just for health reasons but also as a moral obligation based on compassion and respect for animal life. Gandhi opposed the indiscriminate use of animals for food, clothing, and entertainment, as he believed it contradicted the principles of nonviolence and reverence for life. His advocacy for vegetarianism was not just a personal choice but a reflection of his broader ethic of nonviolence and interconnectedness with all living creatures.

Conservation and Environmental Ethics

Gandhi recognized the importance of environmental conservation long before the concept gained widespread recognition. He was deeply troubled by the rapid depletion of natural resources and the degradation of ecosystems caused by industrialization and overconsumption. Gandhi cautioned against pursuing material wealth at the expense of environmental sustainability, warning that such a path would ultimately lead to ecological collapse and human suffering. He advocated for responsible stewardship of the Earth. He called upon individuals to live in harmony with nature, practicing moderation and restraint in their consumption habits.

Relevance and Sustainability for Future Generations

Due to rapid technological advancement and industrial growth, the world is currently facing unprecedented environmental challenges. Issues like global warming, deforestation, and water scarcity threaten the stability of ecosystems and the well-being of future generations. In this context, it's crucial to consider Mahatma Gandhi's environmental vision.

Gandhi, known for his philosophy of nonviolence and simplicity, provides a relevant and revolutionary approach to living harmoniously with nature. His ideas on minimizing our ecological footprint, promoting local self-sufficiency, and respecting all life forms offer a timeless framework to address the world's most daunting environmental issues.

1. Simplicity and Minimalism

Gandhi believed in living simply. He thought that people should only use what they really need. Today, as we deal with issues like overconsumption and waste,

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his push for simplicity feels more critical than ever. By choosing to live with less, we can reduce our environmental footprint, helping to combat pollution and conserve resources.

2. Local Production and Development

Gandhi also promoted self-sufficiency. He encouraged people to produce their own goods locally rather than relying on imported products. This idea can lead to significant environmental benefits today. Local production reduces the need for long-distance transportation, reducing fuel consumption and emissions. It also supports local economies and promotes community resilience.

3. Right to Coexist

Respecting and valuing all life forms was another cornerstone of Gandhi's philosophy. He believed that all living things have a right to coexist. This respect for biodiversity is crucial as we face the extinction of numerous species due to habitat destruction and climate change. Protecting diverse species maintains ecological balance, which is essential for our planet's health.

4. Environmental Justice

Gandhi was deeply concerned with fairness and equity, which are at the heart of environmental justice. He recognized that environmental degradation often affects the poorest and least powerful. His teachings encourage us to ensure that environmental benefits and burdens are shared fairly and that everyone can access clean air, water, and soil.

5. Inspiration for Action

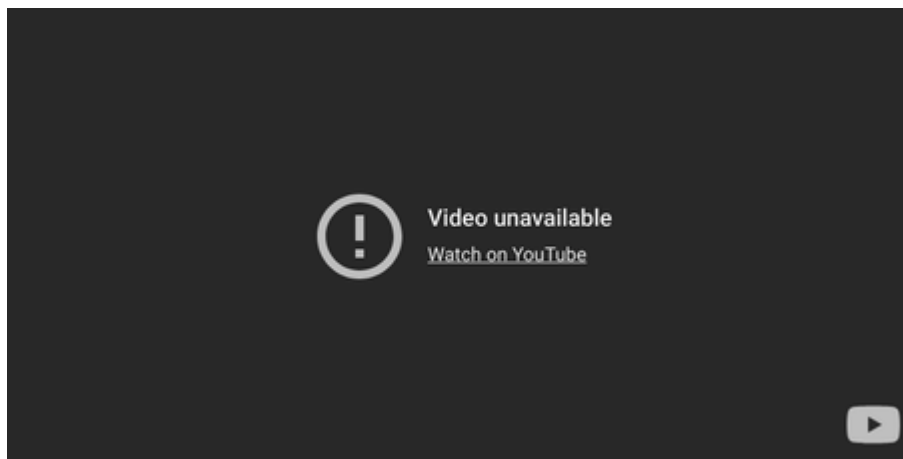
Gandhi's message inspires individuals and communities worldwide to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. Through reducing waste, supporting local products, or advocating for the rights of marginalized communities, following Gandhi's principles can lead to significant environmental and social improvements.

In the face of global environmental crises such as climate change, resource depletion, and widespread pollution, revisiting Gandhi's teachings can offer valuable insights. Embracing his simplicity, self-sufficiency, and environmental justice principles can help us forge a path toward a more sustainable and equitable world. The study and application of Gandhi's environmental philosophy is not only a tribute to his legacy but also a crucial strategy for our survival and the health of our planet. His teachings remind us that every small step counts and collective efforts can lead to transformative change.



MAHATMA GANDHI AND THE ENVIRONMENT

by Razzmatazz Films



Please click to play
this video in
YouTube.

Summary of the video by ChatTube: The video discusses Mahatma Gandhi's environmental philosophy, highlighting his belief in simple living and a harmonious relationship with the earth. Gandhi emphasized that consumerism must not hinder our connection with nature and advocated for the welfare of all (Sarvodaya). The video calls for a rediscovery of Gandhi's environmentalism and emphasizes the relevance of his ecological approach in today's world.

Why is Mahatma Gandhi considered a pioneer in environmental activism?

Modern environmental challenges aligning with Mahatma Gandhi's principles include climate change, global warming, rising sea levels, environmental pollution, and rampant consumerism. Gandhi's emphasis on simple living, sustainable practices, and the idea of the earth providing enough for everyone's needs but not for everyone's greed resonates with efforts to tackle these challenges. By promoting a symbiotic relationship with the earth and advocating for the welfare of all beings, Gandhi's principles offer enduring solutions to contemporary environmental issues. Gandhi's philosophy can inspire us to address environmental challenges holistically and sustainably.

What are the critical environmental principles advocated by Mahatma Gandhi?

Mahatma Gandhi's environmental philosophy was unique in its emphasis on simple living, high thinking, and a symbiotic relationship with the earth. He stood against rampant consumerism, advocating for physical harmony and comfort up to a certain level. His famous quote, 'The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs but not every man's greed,' underscored the importance of sustainable living and mindful consumption. His love for nature and the concept of Sarvodaya, which prioritizes the welfare of all, were also distinct environmental principles he championed.

**What is really needed to make democracy function is not
knowledge of facts, but right education.**



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.

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



Join us as a member of the Peace Council: www.gandhiji.ca/joinus

We invite you to join us and embrace Gandhi's Legacy in 2024.

