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## Values and Principles of Mahatma Gandhi

Dr. Neeta Chakravarty  
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Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi commonly known as Mahatma Gandhi. In India he is generally regarded as Bapu and Raashtra Pita, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869. It was the preeminent leader of the Indian independence movement in British-ruled India. He led the struggle for India's independence from British colonial rule. Gandhi was 24 when he arrived in South Africa in 1893 to work as a legal representative for the Muslim Indian Traders based in the city of Pretoria. He spent 21 years in South Africa, where he developed his political views, ethics and political leadership skills. Gandhi returned to India in 1915. He brought an international reputation as a leading Indian nationalist, theorist and organiser. He joined the Indian National Congress and was introduced to Indian issues, politics and the Indian people primarily by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Gokhale was a key leader of the Congress Party best known for his command and control, Mahatma Gandhi was a multifarious character with a clear vision and exact approach to the political issues that Asian country of his time sweet-faced. Gandhi's vision of politics includes a deep relation with faith. He declared that the full of his life was saturated with spiritual spirit. He can't live for a second while not faith Gandhi himself evidence that politics could be a tool for social amendment. This variation should to be through self suffering or selfless service.

### Gandhian Values and Principles:

**Truth:** Gandhi devoted his life to the wider purpose of discovering truth, or Satya. He tried to achieve this by learning from his own mistakes and conducting experiments on himself. He called his autobiography The Story of My Experiments with Truth. Bruce Watson argues that Gandhi based Satyagraha on the Vedantic ideal of self-realization, and notes it also contains Jain and Buddhist notions of nonviolence, vegetarianism, the avoidance of killing, and 'agape' (universal love). Gandhi also rented Christian-Islamic ideas of equality, the brotherhood of man, Gandhi declared that the most important battle to fight was overcoming his own demons, worries, and insecurities. Gandhi summarize his beliefs first when he said "God is Truth". He would later change this statement to "Truth is God". Thus, satya (truth) in Gandhi's philosophy is 'God'

### Nonviolence :

Another important principle of Gandhiji was Non-violence. Gandhiji considered this ideal primarily as a weapon for moral regeneration and reorientation. With the help of this unique weapon of moral power he drove out the Britishers and fought the ills of society in all spheres of life. For Gandhiji, Non-violence is the law of life. According to him, it must saturate the whole being and should not be applied to isolated acts. But this law should also be practiced both at the individual and national basis. Gandhi was an ardent follower of the principle of Non-violence in both theory and

practice. The whole life of Gandhiji was directed, regulated and molded by the spirit of Non-violence. In fact, the principle of Non-violence was the breath of his life. Gandhi had said: "For me Non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle, it is the rule and breathes of my

Although Gandhi was not the originator of the principle of nonviolence, he was the first to apply it in the political field on a large scale. Gandhi explains his philosophy and way of life in his autobiography. Gandhi realized later that this level of nonviolence required incredible faith and courage, which he believed everyone did not possess. He therefore advised that everyone need not keep to nonviolence, especially if it were used as a cover for cowardice, saying, "where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence.

### Swaraj:

Gandhi was a self-described philosophical anarchist, and his vision of India meant an India without an underlying government. He once said that "the ideally nonviolent state would be an ordered anarchy." While political systems are largely hierarchical, with each layer of authority from the individual to the central government have increasing levels of authority over the layer below, Gandhi believed that society should be the exact opposite, where nothing is done without the consent of anyone, down to the individual. His idea was that true self-rule in a country means that every person rules his or herself and that there is no state which enforces laws upon the people.

This would be achieved over time with nonviolent conflict mediation, as power is divested from layers of hierarchical authorities, ultimately to the individual, which would come to embody the ethic of nonviolence. Rather than a system where rights are enforced by a higher authority, people are self-governed by mutual responsibilities.

An independent India did not mean merely transferring the established British administrative structure into Indian hands. He warned, "you would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englishtan. This is not the Swaraj I want." Gandhi saw democracy as more than a system of government; it meant promoting both individuality and the self-discipline of the community. Democracy was a moral system that distributed power and assisted the development of every social class, especially the lowest. It meant settling disputes in a nonviolent manner; it required freedom of thought and expression. For Gandhi, democracy was a way of life.

### Nai Talim, basic education:

His educational policies reflected Nai Talim ('Basic Education for all'), a spiritual principle which states that

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knowledge and work are not separate. It was a reaction against the British educational system and colonialism in general, which had the negative effect of making Indian children alienated and career-based; it promoted disdain for manual work, the development of a new elite class, and the increasing problems of industrialisation and urbanisation. The three pillars of Gandhi's pedagogy were its focus on the lifelong character of education, its social character and its form as a holistic process. For Gandhi, education is 'the moral development of the person', a process that is by definition 'lifelong'.

#### Social Justices:

Gandhi was committed to justice for all. For the establishment of justice he not only called on people time and again, but launched non-violent actions and some of them remained exemplary from the success viewpoint. Through them he introduced an adaptable and effective way to the world. How could he then minimize the importance of people's rights? He categorically spoke of social, political and economic growth and prosperity of all. He led the way to Sarvodaya through his worth mentioning ideas of decentralization of power and Trusteeship. Hence, for us it is beyond imagination that a person like Gandhi could overlook the question of fundamental rights of the peoples.


In this way Mahatma Gandhi has given us important moral principles.

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