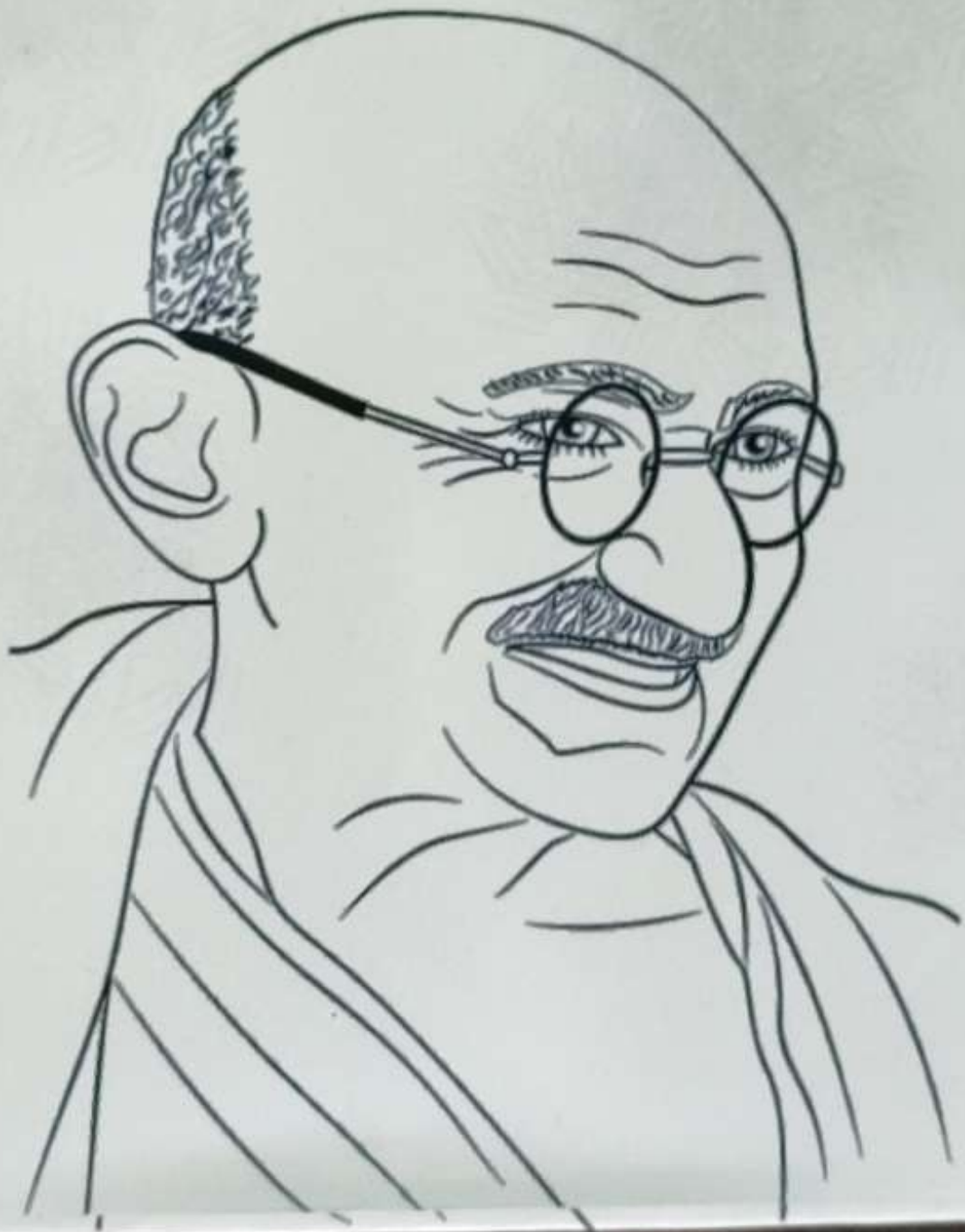


# GANDHIAN

## IDEAS AND PRINCIPLES

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# The Importance of Gandhian Ideology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## **Introduction:**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was not a person as we know from the History books. In his autobiography he mentioned his childhood, his school days and his feelings about his child-marriage. Like many others children he went through the system of that contemporary society but what changed in his life was his observation and loyalty. Moreover, the journey to become a barrister was added experience in this matter, as he went to England all alone. As a vegetarian and married man with a child which was quite odd in England, but as he was naive to stick to his loyalty to his culture gave him innumerable reasons to read why he was sticking to it. This helps him to become what he was later on. So, Mohandas to 'Mahatma' and 'Bapu' and 'Father of the Nation' is a journey to read upon because a great personality of the British India because of whom our nation got its independence whose ideology must be timeless. Therefore, in this paper an effort is made to celebrate his ideology to relate the current century's scenario.

### Discussion:

As a staunch Vaishnavite, he used to be very devoted to his parents and elders from his very childhood. That's why he mentioned in his autobiography that most of the time when he was driven by various mistakes, the guiltless ate him alive. For that reason, later in his life he took the path of Truth and Ahimsa. Because according to him, religion is not always about rituals but about, 'self-realisation' or 'knowledge of self'. Gandhi was so much drawn by Truth and Ahimsa that he mentioned in his autobiography how a Gujarati didactic stanza became his guiding principle:

“For a bowl of water give a goodly meal;  
For a kindly greeting bow thou down with zeal;  
For a simple penny pay thou back with gold;  
If thy life be rescued, life do not withhold.  
Thus the words and actions of the wise regard;  
Every little service tenfold they reward.  
But the truly noble know all men as one,  
And return with gladness good for evil done.”

After he went to England, though it was so important to take meat but he stick to his vow to his mother is another aspect of his ideology i.e 'self-restraint'. As Gandhi read various books on existing religions, this made him a person with religious tolerant. Because according to him, if there have loopholes in Christianity or in Islam then there have problems in Hinduism also. If Hinduism can give oneself salvation and purity then it can apply for other religion also. This led to his work for untouchables. As a staunch Vaishnavite, Gandhi still tried to uplift and speak for the Untouchables which are so much against the upper caste Hindu society. But his liberal thinking was the reason and by respecting the Untouchables he gave a name to them called, 'Harijan'. Another impact of reading books on Gandhi was left by Ruskin's, "Unto this Last". This book left a great impression on Gandhi. Three teachings as he mentioned-

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all,

2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work

3. That a life of labour, i.e the life of the tiller of the soil and

handicraftsman is the life worth living. Gandhi was so motivated by this book and three teachings that later he took up handicraft as a way of living a simple life. Moreover, the love for simple life made him to set up Ashram. To uplift, the condition of handicraft he set up his Ashram in Ahmedabad as the place was popular for handicraft. By setting up the Ashram, he not only appointed the Untouchables but also made his values more worthy. How the philosophy of Aparigraha (non-possession) and Sambhava (Equability) helped him to become Mahatma is another much appreciated chapter. Gandhi gave up all his savings and properties as he thought that the creator has a plan for everyone and if he created human then he will save us. Thus, he thought the creator will save his wife and his family. It created the lifestyle of Gandhi which he carried along till his last hours. Gandhi considered Fasting as an important aspect of protest and to make others realise what they did wrong. Gandhi's concept of fasting is all about to realise one's own guilt. It is easy to get violent, but to solve issues morally a sustainable idea is fasting. That is why his whole concept of non-violence came into being.

#### **Conclusion:**

In the final paragraph of this paper an emphasis is made to highlight all his ideology and how it can be relevant in the present century. From his childhood to his final hours the loyalty towards his duties is an important aspect which could be adapted by the present generation. In a society of religious intolerance, his views towards all religions are another important point to think by the contemporary society. Self-realisation and self-restraint, these both ideologies of Gandhi can be applied for inner peace as the more progressive the society is the more anxious the people become. So, Gandhi's ideology has thousands of reasons to celebrate in the present century.

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