

GANDHI

Jayanti

2nd October



M K Gandhi was born in Gujarat, India. The impact of Jainism on Gandhi was quite profound and played a significant role in his spiritual as well political journey. Gandhi was influenced by the overall Jain environment in Gujarat, his mother Putalibai's association with Jainism and his interactions with prominent Jains like Shrimad Rajchandra, often referred to as Gandhi's spiritual guru and Virchand R Gandhi, fellow lawyer who would go on to represent the Jain tradition at the first World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893.

Gandhi was a Jain in spirit as his life encapsulated qualities such as nonviolence, fearlessness, truth, forgiveness, non-possessiveness and simplicity, celibacy, vegetarianism, self-discipline, tolerance and religious pluralism. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent resistance or satyagraha was greatly influenced by Jain principles of ahimsa, truth-seeking, simplicity, self-discipline, and selfless service.

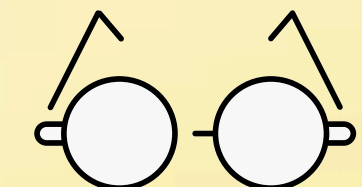
Gandhi viewed Ahimsa not only of an ethical importance but recognised its political importance in securing India's freedom from British rule. Gandhi's greatest contribution to Jainism was that he made Jain principles practical by applying them on a large-scale involving mass. He was the first man to apply Jain principle of ahimsa to solve social and political problems of his time.



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Our greatest ability as humans
is not to change the world,
but to change ourselves.
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Mahatma Gandhi
Parliament Square, Westminster





Quote from Shri Arun Gandhi:

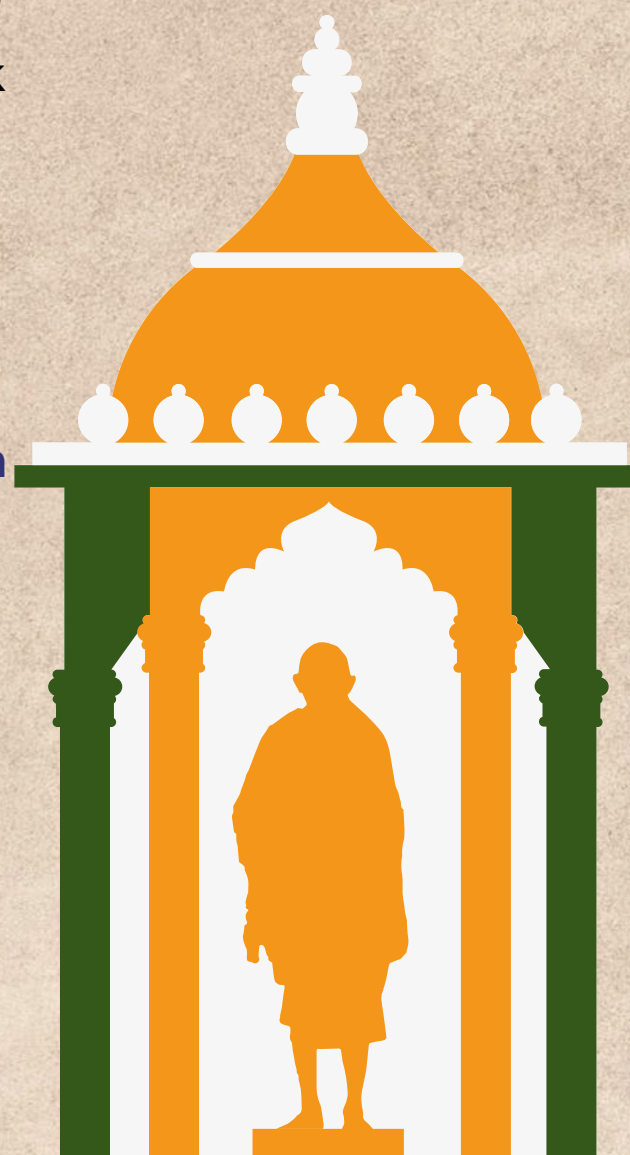
"I was walking home from school with my notebook and pencil. It was only a little butt of a pencil and I thought I deserved a better one. I threw it away on the ground thinking of course grandfather (Mahatma Gandhiji) will give me a new one.

When I asked him he started asking me loads of questions. How did it get so small? Why did I throw it away? He made me look for it in the dark with a flashlight. I spent three or four hours searching!

Then he said to me he wanted me to learn two lessons.

The first lesson was that in making such a simple pencil many important resources had been used; throwing it away was violence against nature.

The second lesson was that we over consume and waste natural resources depriving others of those resources; this was violence against humanity."



STORY OF GANDHI & SUGAR

A woman walks with her son many miles to see Gandhi. She is worried her son is eating too much sugar. She asks Gandhi: "Please, sir, can you tell my son to stop eating sugar."

Gandhi says, "Bring him back in two weeks." Disappointed, she takes her son home.

Two weeks later she makes the long journey again. Gandhi says to the boy, "you must stop eating sugar. It's very bad for you." The boy has such respect for Gandhi that he stops and lives a healthy life.

The woman is confused and asks, "Why did you want me to wait two weeks to bring back my son."

Gandhi said, "Because before I could tell your son to stop eating sugar. I had to stop eating sugar first."

Lessons to learn:

- To be honest with yourself, and not tell others to do what you're not prepared to do yourself.
- Advice is freely bandied about in our world. What really matters, what really changes the world, is not your opinion but your example. The efforts you make to be better in yourself truly count – and for everyone around you.
- Be the change you wish to see in the world.

