

# Commemorating the Inauguration of M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya

# Newsletter

Issue 01 ■ October 18, 2023



I will give you a Talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him.

—Excerpt from Gandhi's last written note



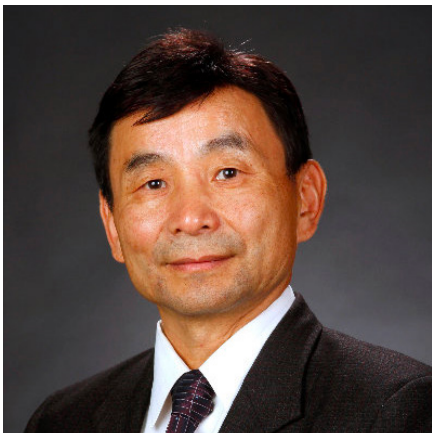
“I congratulate Fresno State, Dr. Sandoval and all of the folks who have allowed Fresno State to be the first and may it be the beginning of the Academy recognizing the Gandhian intervention of the 20th century of the science of nonviolence. The most significant intervention of the 20th century and the one most urgently needed by all of the human race.”

**Rev. James M. Lawson Jr.**  
***Civil Rights Leader and University Professor***



“His [Gandhi's] philosophy of nonviolence changed the course of human history by illuminating a path for lasting and meaningful social change... His ideals of peace, equity, and Sarvodaya are intertwined in the vision and values that drive Fresno State's mission.”

**Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval**  
***President, California State University, Fresno***



The vision of the M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya is consistent with Fresno State's educational values of supporting all students, faculty, and staff, and finding creative ways in helping them to advance toward their goals. Gandhi's avowal for the care of all (Sarvodaya) almost 100 years ago is still relevant today, and it will remain relevant in the future. It invites our current generations to work toward uplifting all. The practice of cultivating personal inner peace is essential to social transformation. Fresno State shares the Gandhi Center's dedication to the values of peace, equity, dignity, and care for all. Congratulations on the opening of the Center in the library.

**Dr. Xuanning Fu**  
**Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**  
**California State University, Fresno**



## M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya: Fresno State’s Academic Monument for the Study of Inner Peace and Uplift of All

*Message from  
Dr. Veena Howard  
Director of M.K. Gandhi Center*

**A**s a scholar, I have dedicated over twenty years to studying various aspects of Mohandas K. Gandhi’s life and work, including his personal disciplines, religious ideologies, the nuances of his nonviolent struggles, his global impact, and critical appraisals of his critics. At this momentous occasion of inauguration of the M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya at the Fresno States Library, I reflect on how to view Gandhi in our contemporary context. It would be prudent to see Gandhi—over 154 years since his birth—as an idea. For me, he has come to represent a particular moment that marks the shift in the arc of humanity: a shift from the convention of authoritarian control to the conviction in people power. A shift from pervasive helplessness to collective empowerment.

The establishment of the M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya is timely as we face challenges of unrest and continuing inequities and violence. The Center provides a space to reflect

on the idea of the connection between inner peace and uplift of all; the connection between holding on to one’s truth and respecting the truths of others; and the connection between self-care and uplift of all. This is also a place where many theories about Gandhi’s life, critical evaluations of his practices and choices, as well as the principles of Sarvodaya and inner peace can be explored through academic analyses.

Fresno State’s Peace Garden is situated in the heart of the campus. With the monuments of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr, Cesar Chavez, and Jane Addams, the Peace Garden is a representation of the university’s commitment to a culture of peace and education that is concerned with the goals of justice, equity, and diversity. The Peace Garden belongs to our Valley; it is frequented by students from local elementary schools and various colleges, as well as community members.

The Peace Garden offers inspiration for building peace, and the newly established M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace

and Sarvodaya encourages the study, analysis, and applications of Gandhi’s philosophy of self-transformation and social change. The focus of the Gandhi Center encompasses interdisciplinary study and programs in the areas of developing inner peace, working toward uplift of all, and building a culture of harmony, all of which connect with various subjects including, philosophy, religion, peace and conflict studies, business, social work, music, and arts.

The Gandhi Center is aptly located in the Fresno State Library, a place for study, critical thinking, and reflection. This is also a place where many theories about



Gandhi's life, methods, and impact can be analyzed. At the dawn of the 20th century, when diversity, equity, and inclusion were not part of any public or private discourse, Gandhi envisioned a diverse society free from all forms of exploitation and violence. The historic partnership between the campus and community members is a testament to the shared commitment to education. Furthermore, it is a significant effort toward achieving the common goal: building a citizenry dedicated to critical thinking and creating social, political, and economic structures that hold the values of diversity, inclusion, equity, and uplift of all.



### The M.K. Gandhi Center Graphic Explained:

**Sarvodaya:** A Sanskrit term, Sarva+Udaya=Uplift of all; Welfare of all; Progress for All

**Wheel:** Represents the Cycle of Life; Dharma Wheel (connoting universal moral order); the circle of life with interconnected spokes; Gandhi's spinning wheel, connoting self-reliance and economic empowerment for all

**Hands:** Represent the need for human efforts for upholding truth, peace, and care for all

**Flame:** Resilience; light of trust in collected efforts; inner peace and centeredness



# Did you know...

## October 2nd is International Day of Nonviolence To Commemorate Gandhi's Legacy

*Author: Sydni Weller  
Third Year, Graphic Design,  
California State University, Fresno*

Every year, on October 2nd, people worldwide come together to observe the International Day of Nonviolence, a day that pays tribute to the enduring legacy of Mahatma Gandhi. This date is more than just a birthday celebration; it's a reminder of the transformative power of nonviolence and the incredible impact one person can have on the world.

The International Day of Non-Violence is marked on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence. The General Assembly, in a resolution adopted on 5 June 2007, established the International Day as an occasion to disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness. The resolution reaffirms the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence and the desire to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding, and non-violence.

Gandhi's unwavering commitment to nonviolent resistance paved the way for significant social and political change, not only in India but across the globe. His principles of truth, compassion, and nonviolence were the cornerstones of his philosophy.

Gandhi's influence transcended bor-

ders, inspiring leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and countless others in their quests for civil rights and freedom. His methods demonstrated that dialogue, empathy, and moral courage could achieve more than violence ever could.

On this International Day of Nonviolence, people from all walks of life come together to celebrate Gandhi's teachings. It's a day for reflection on the power of peaceful protest, education on conflict resolution, and a call to action for a more harmonious world. This year, on the occasion of the Day of Non-Violence, the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations will host a special event on 2 October at UN Headquarters, where the President of the 68th session of the General Assembly, Ambassador John Ashe, and the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, will join UN delegations, staff, and guests to celebrate non-violence and the 114th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. By observing this day, we reaffirm our commitment to building a society where differences are resolved without violence, injustice is challenged, and the spirit of Gandhi's nonviolence lives on to inspire future generations. Gandhi's legacy continues to shine as a beacon of hope and a testament to the transformative potential of nonviolence.





# Gandhi and His Fasting: Lessons for our Current Times

*Author: Alireza Saffarian,  
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**M**ahatma Gandhi has been known by many as an “ascetic activist,” meaning he abstained from basic pleasures in life for developing self-discipline and bringing about social change. As Gandhi started gaining some popularity, he attempted to utilize self-disciplinary practices in order to strengthen himself and also to inspire his fellow Indians to peacefully overthrow British rule. Although at times Gandhi primarily used his ascetic disciplines for self-empowerment and as strategies to fight for Indian independence, additionally there are numerous positive health benefits of these disciplines. These benefits have been verified by scientific evidence, which can be derived from his practices even today, specifically from the discipline of fasting

I will share my own experiences with water fasting and its unexpected results on my health. Fasting was used as a tool by Gandhi to reach positive and meaningful outcomes. Gandhi did go on hunger strikes (although he did not call them hunger strikes) in order to bring attention to injustice and violence. But he also fasted to strengthen himself mentally and spiritually. It proved to people that he placed Indian independence and wellbeing of people over his own need to eat. Above all else, for Mahatma, it gave him the discipline and the opportunity to detach from simple pleasures, to dial in his spiritual goals, to align with his values, to empathize with the untouchables, and to

connect to a higher power. His disciplines also symbolized his dedication to his own principles. During his fasts, he did not have the slightest chance to harm any plants or animals and was able to see things from a clearer lens. Gandhi emphasized that through fasting, both nonviolence (ahimsa) and the Truth, which Gandhi has emphasized, can be attained.

## **Personal Experiments:**

Prior to learning about Gandhi’s practices, I personally went on a 50-hour water fast where I came to tremendous realizations and changes that I could relate to Gandhi’s experience.

Just to mention a few, I realized that eating feeds into our desires and fulfilling short-term pleasures, and fasting forces our mind to focus on the discipline of doing the work to attain long-term satisfaction. I was able to see the world around me for what it actually was, not blinded once by the temporary pleasure of eating food. The amount of mental clarity and different state of mind I was in throughout this experience was also extraordinary.

This is especially because after the 24th hour, your body shifts to burning fat which is a much steadier process of energy release compared to the mood swings or food coma you get from eating food. Furthermore, I was able to truly empathize with people in the world who don’t have easy access to food. Putting my anecdotal conclusions aside, experts have found the real physical benefits that come from

fasting (specifically a 48-hour fast) which include, increased metabolism, immunity, brain function, digestion, human growth hormone, and insulin sensitivity, along with reduced glucose levels, inflammation, blood pressure/sugar levels, aging, as well as a trigger of autophagy which reduces the risk of chronic diseases. The correlation between Gandhi’s experience fasting and mine is evident. Additionally, if it wasn’t for his asceticism, he might not have been as mentally strong to create the radical changes in society that he managed to make. Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated at the age of 78, at a period in time when life expectancy in India was below 50 years old. Undoubtedly, Gandhi would not have been able to achieve what he did without his fasting practices or other ascetic disciplines. The easiest way to have insight into his thoughts and way of life is to fast yourself. Build self-discipline, make the sacrifice, and realize new truths.



Artwork By:  
Melanie Garcia

# Gandhi's Influence on the American Political Leader Cesar Chavez: Personal Reflections



*Author: Bianca Mendez  
Fourth Year, Communications,  
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Gandhi's legacy is continued to be felt throughout the entire world as he demonstrated the practical methods of nonviolent and passive resistance to bring about political change. He challenged the British rule in India through mass nonviolent mobilizations. He inspired many leaders and movements worldwide committed to secure justice and civil rights. One of these leaders was Cesar Chavez. Chavez used nonviolent methods to improve the lives of Mexican American workers and reduce the exploitation of these farm workers in California.

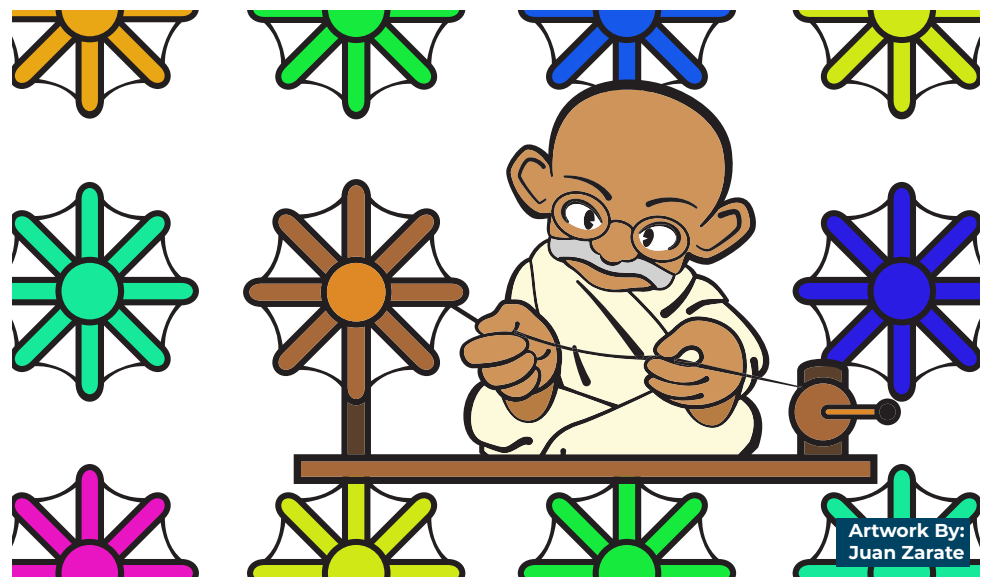
If it were not for Gandhi's influence on Cesar Chavez, my own life would be drastically different. I am indebted to him and his practice of "ahimsa" or "no injury; he protested with universal love. Cesar Chavez saw how Gandhi's practice of nonviolence was incredibly effective in creating positive change and it encouraged him to commit to the Gandhian principles as well.

Gandhi encountered a lot of discrimination in London and South Africa in his early stages in life. But it was in South Africa where he developed his concept of active nonviolence to combat the injustices. He made many personal sacrifices and initiated a non-violent, non-cooperation movement. Cesar Chavez was inspired after learning about Mahatma Gandhi's movement when he was just 21 years old and how he was able to achieve great success without using violent force.

Cesar Chavez struggled with the ex-

ploitation of Mexican agriculture workers who had to suffer from harsh conditions and being treated as subhuman. He combated this by initiating Worker's Right Movements with nonviolent tactics like marches, boycotts, strikes and civil disobedience. He believed in Gandhi's teaching in that approaching violence with nonviolence was the best way to gain broad support and bring about change. He shared his belief in nonviolence with Gandhi. Both Gandhi and Chavez endured suffering and were arrested for their resistance. Chavez also fasted just as Gandhi did as a form of protest, going on long hunger strikes which helped bring public attention and support. If it were not for Gandhi's influence on Cesar, my life would be different. When my grandfather first came to the United States he worked in the fields for very low pay and terrible conditions. My grandpa goes on to tell me as they were working, the police came in and chased

them down, beat them and arrested them. While in the back seat of the police car he managed to kick open the police car's metal screen and ran away. Unfortunately, this wasn't the last time this happened, and he had to hide in the fields, and the authorities kept searching even though they were just working. Thankfully, Gandhi's actions inspired and guided young Cesar Chavez to take the necessary nonviolent action to bring about change. This change made it possible for me to be where I am at today: studying and working on my education at Fresno State without the fear of exploitation. While things might not be perfect and many workers still get exploited, Gandhi and Cesar Chavez have helped show how to bring about positive change through the act of nonviolence.



# Gandhi and Jainism

*Author: Kiana Ross Castro,  
Second Year, Biochemistry  
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**M**ahatma Gandhi was an Indian lawyer who became famous because of his social and political activism. He became the leader of India's freedom movement during British rule. Gandhi is renowned globally for his belief in nonviolent resistance methods (satyagraha). Gandhi is also a philosopher; his ideology was deeply rooted in the principles of Jainism. Although Gandhi also drew inspiration from other religions including Hinduism, Sikhism, and Christianity, it is apparent that his convictions as well as his actions bore an intense resemblance to the teachings of Jainism. Jainism is a belief system that does not have a central god, but instead focuses on nonviolence and personal enlightenment.

I see that Gandhi's philosophy has a profound connection with Jainism, which is highlighted by the way his ideas and actions are influenced by Jain principles. Gandhi was committed to ahimsa, also known as the practice of nonviolence. Jainism has the core belief of ahimsa, which emphasizes the sanctity of all life forms. Gandhi was greatly affected by this ideology. He made nonviolence the central focus of his philosophy and the primary means of achieving social and political change.

Gandhi adopted the philosophy and transformed into nonviolent resistance methods for resistance violence and injustice. He applied this principle in many ways, one of them being

leading mass protests (the Salt March and Quit India Movement) and practicing fasting. This was a strategy he used in order to achieve peace without violence. His commitment to nonviolence was an inspiration to millions and played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence. Through his actions he influenced other movements for civil rights and social justice around the world.

Another important principle in Jainism is satya, also known as the pursuit of truth. In Jainism the truth is regarded as an essential virtue as well as justification for existence. Gandhi adopted this emphasis on truth into his life. He believed that truth is not only a moral virtue, but also a means of achieving social change. Where there is truth there is knowledge. His commitment to the truth is evident in his practice of satyagraha, a word he coined to describe his method of nonviolent resistance. Satyagraha is translated as "truth" or "force." This was based on the idea that speaking and living truthfully (doing right things) could transform a society and create change.

Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence and truth holds principles that are deeply rooted in Jainism. He gathered inspiration from the Jain teachings of ahimsa and satya. These principles became the center of his philosophy and activism. Gandhi's commitment to nonviolent resistance as well as the power of the truth were directly corpe-

related with Jainism's core principles. Gandhi's life and philosophy continue to serve as a testament to the enduring wisdom of Jainism and its timeless values.



Artwork By:  
Mia Luna



# Gandhi's Swaraj and Sarvodaya: Reflections on their Connections with Dharma



*Author: Shorya Chabra,  
High School Student  
From New Jersey*

“...Power that comes from the barrel of a gun can be effective only for a short time. In the end, people’s love for truth, justice, freedom, and democracy will triumph. No matter what governments do, the human spirit will always prevail...”

## **His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet**



The 20th century was a time of change, with the emergence of free nations and abolishment of the world’s largest empires. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a father figure of India, played a key part in the struggles of Indian Independence. Gandhi emerged as one of the serious critics of the so-called democratic systems put forward by the West (which he himself saw rooted in various forms of violence), and as the biggest supporter of authentic empowerment through a decentralized self-government. Hind Swaraj was a book published by Gand-

hi in 1909, which was immediately banned by Britain upon publication, due to its fierce critique of modern civilization and Western Imperialism. Gandhi also presented swaraj, a new, more improved version of “self-rule”, based on Hindu philosophical ideas including dharma (duty), vairagya (passionate detachment, especially from materialistic things), and atman (the principle of unity of all beings). It has always struck me as interesting when I compare the meaning of “self-rule” (political independence) in the Western world to the meaning of swaraj as envisioned by Gandhi.

To most, “self-rule” means political independence from a foreign, dominating power. To Gandhi, swaraj was a spiritual model which was based on pure moral stability and moral independence, which included things like nationwide financial independence, access to education, abolishment of the caste system, etc. Gandhi was focused on upliftment of the social structure of Indian society where one would take responsibility for their work to improve the community around them. This self-discipline factor helps prove that through swaraj, anyone could achieve inner peace by recognizing the divinity in themselves. and creating a harmonious society where individuals govern themselves with a sense of self-restraint.

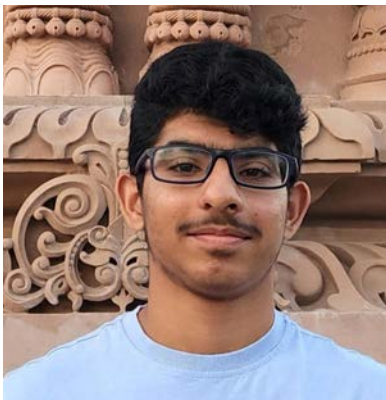
While other “like minded freedom fighters” focused on independence from Britain, Gandhi immersed himself in a bigger picture, where political independence was the seed, and swaraj was the tree. Note that Gandhi considered himself a Satyagrahi, or a practitioner of a form of nonviolent resistance that aims to overcome both political and social obstacles.

Swaraj is deeply intertwined with multiple profound Hindu philosophical principles. More specifically, the idea of Dharma is a



very important concept that underlies most of Gandhian philosophy, including the core of swaraj. In Hinduism, dharma encompasses a character of righteousness and duty, in relation to both social harmony and discipline. When looking at the tapestry of swaraj woven by Gandhi, it is important to see that the threads of Dharma create a vibrant pattern, proving to be a core part of the design of swaraj. However, the concept of dharma is not just chained to being a set of ethical guidelines. On a cosmic scale, dharma is meant to orient individuals with their true nature and to give each a unique meaning of life in this intricate web of existence. Similarly, to achieve that mellifluous peace that Gandhi envisioned through swaraj, individuals would have to align themselves with the needs of their community. By practicing dharma, Gandhi intended to make a reality

where the recognition of one's place in society, and the societal agreement that the duty of serving others (Sarvodaya) would lead to the achievement of self-rule, embracing all diverse forms of life and all it has to offer.



*About the author:* Shourya Chhabra is a high student from New Jersey who is passionate about the intersection of modern philosophy and religion, along with the field of religious studies. As a first generation Indian-American, he is inspired by his Indian roots and is especially keen on discovering more about things that outline Indian culture and philosophy. At a young age, he was very interested in Gandhi and his philosophy. He admires the legacy that Gandhi left, and Gandhi's ability to stand up against British imperialism through the form of nonviolent resistance when no one else could. He is also fascinated by Fresno State's M.K. Gandhi Center, and its focus on analysis and application of Gandhian philosophy in the modern world is something he wants to be a part of for the rest of his life. Upon meeting and working

with the director of the center (on zoom), Dr. Veena Howard, an esteemed individual whose kindness and guidance is limitless, Shourya has developed a newfound respect for her expertise, dedication, and impact she is making on the world. He hopes to meet her some day in person.

# American Peace Leaders on Gandhi

*Fresno State's Peace Garden*



“No man living on the planet today has done more than has Mahatma Gandhi.”

**Jane Addams**

**in her essays about human rights, 1985**



[An]y objective observer must report that Gandhi is not only the greatest figure in India's history but that his influence is felt in almost every aspect of life and public policy today.

**Martine Luther King, Jr. 1958**



I was eleven or twelve years old, and I went to a movie. In those days, in between movies they had newsreels, and in one of the newsreels there was a report on Gandhi. It said that this half-naked man without a gun had conquered the might of the British empire. ... It really impressed me because I couldn't conceive of how that had happened without guns. Even though I had never heard the name Gandhi before. ... since then, I have made a life project of reading about Gandhi and his message.

**Cesar Chavez, 1990**

## We Walk with Gandhi

*Author: Juan Felipe Herrera 10/13/23  
Poet Laureate of the USA, Emeritus*



*Ahimsa Ahimsa Ahimsa*  
the rivers open their song

Your truth walks with us  
we walk on

The trees and leaves agree  
Your truth blossoms  
It drenches all beings, Gandhi

Your truth walks through hate  
And on the coals  
and embers of suffering, Gandhi  
All borders, boundaries & souls

Ahimsa we chant, non-violence we  
chant  
Ahimsa in your name our name now  
All of our lives across all continents  
we meditate, we pray, we sing out loud

The root of love the source  
of wisdom, the buried dreams  
the inner ocean of peace, your song  
We find our way, together, we belong

Your heart, your determination  
Your melody of peace across the lands  
for peace for all, oceans of unity  
and tides of compassion  
We carry and cross the waters,  
Violence melts as we hold our hands

At the highest mountain, we say  
Let us save all beings  
All is fire, all is war, all is fury  
We sit, we meditate, we protest  
Gandhi, this is our way

Ahimsa Ahimsa Ahimsa we breathe  
We walk, we fast we put on the Dhoti

The hand spun yarn, we walk humble  
we speak kindness, kindness only

We follow the road of peace for all  
In the storm of wars, we persevere  
in the hurricanes of vengeance, we  
chant  
under the skies of fire, we follow you

We continue, Gandhi  
We hold each others' life  
Our mouth is dry, our eyes wet  
Our heart sings and brings  
the thunder of sisterhood,  
the rains of brotherhood

What shall we do now, we say  
Where are we now, we say  
Will we drown in the massacres?  
All is still, all is waiting, all is

Ahimsa, we say, Ahimsa, we chant  
We will not turn back, Gandhi  
We will walk, we will protest



*Become love*



Towers of hatred, walls of violence  
tremble and fall as we go with you

We are made supple  
Or voices of flowers in the darkness  
Our heart of honey & incense in the light  
Ahimsa, Ahimsa, Ahimsa all is bright

If we suffer, we suffer for others  
If our wounds are open  
We shall close them for others  
If we are lost and falling  
we will stand to heal others,

We follow your teachings  
Let us save all beings, Gandhi  
So we walk endlessly  
Each life into each life  
We lift up all hearts

We shall bring peace  
to all, Gandhi  
We shall struggle,  
For all, Gandhi  
We shall offer our love  
to all, Gandhi

Now is the time Gandhi  
As it has always been  
Infinite and divine

We walk with you  
We wear your garlands of all life  
We water the buried flowers  
They will blossom Ahimsa Ahimsa

Non-violence, non-violence  
In each petal in each breath  
In each grain of rough-cut salt

We hear your voice from afar, Gandhi  
***Become Ahimsa, become non-violence***  
***Become peace, become kindness***  
***Become truth , become each other***

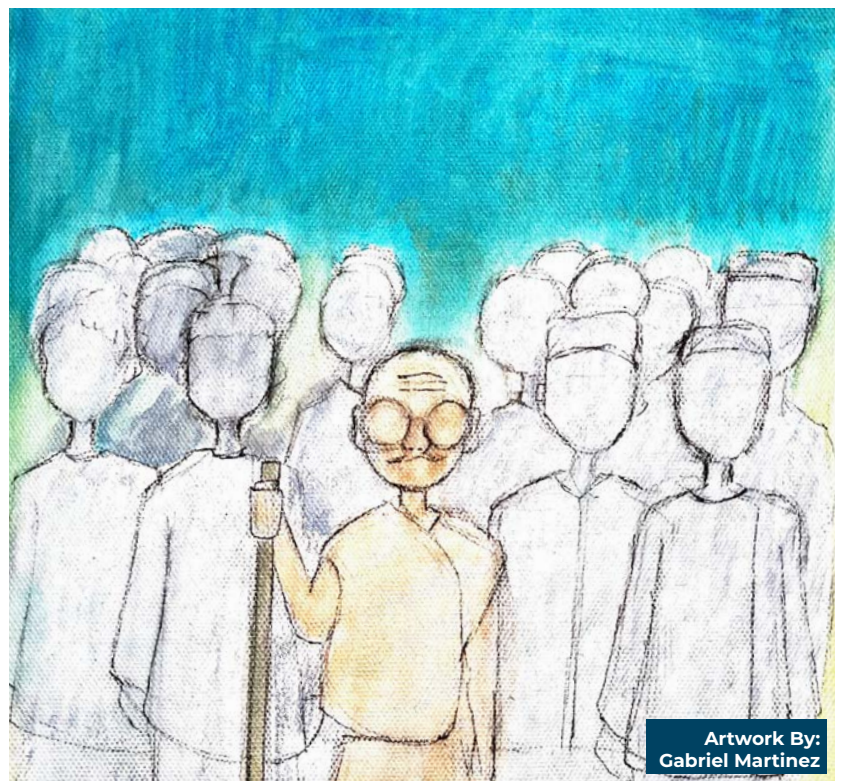
Walk with courage, we say  
Walk with strength, we sing  
Strength of Gandhi, we chant

Our Redwood trees hear you  
The Giant Sequoia carries you  
Let us bow, to Gandhi, they say

The time is now  
We shall flourish  
Ahimsa, Ahimsa, Ahimsa  
Through the fires & the bombs

Today, today, today  
We walk with Gandhi  
We continue with your garlands of  
peace  
We shall heal the world, song by song

We walk with you,  
Great teacher, Gandhi  
We bow to you at the highest mountain,  
Peaceful, humble and strong



Artwork By:  
Gabriel Martinez





“When I first heard of the concept of Ahimsa, I did not understand how powerful it was until I read about Gandhi’s actions with this Jain Principle. I remember hearing about it first in my Philosophy in Action class with Dr. Howard, and it inspired me to look at what I am doing and how it affects those around me. With Gandhi, he took a principle and made an action. He proved that religious concepts and principles require effort and adherence, but when a person believes and sticks to something so firmly, it can create a movement that will inspire students for years to come!”

**Faith Van Hoven**  
**Philosophy Major**  
**ASI Senator for the College of Arts and Humanities**  
**California State University, Fresno**

## The President's Lecture Series

*In collaboration with the M.K. Gandhi Center, President Saúl  
Jiménez-Sandoval proudly hosts*



### **Mallika Chopra** **Author and Public Speaker**

*5 – 6:30 p.m. PDT, Wednesday, October 18*

Mallika Chopra is a mom, media entrepreneur, published author, and a notable voice in the fields of parenting, meditation and the power of intention. She is the author of 8 books, including “Living With Intent—My Somewhat Messy Journey to Purpose, Peace and Joy” and the “Just Be Series” —“Just Breathe”, “Just Feel”, and “Just Be You”—a trilogy of illustrated how-to books for children (and the adults in their lives). These books provide simple tools to understand and support social and emotional knowing, resilience, meditation, mindfulness and self-reflection. In her newest book, Buddha and the Rose, she and illustrator Neha Rawat breathe life into this simple but poignant story of awareness, wonder, and the joy of being present and open to seeing the world in new ways. Mallika has taught meditation to thousands of people, and is currently a mindfulness consultant for the animated series, “Stillwater” , on Apple TV+. She enjoys speaking to audiences around the world about intention, balance and living a life of purpose. Mallika has a BA from Brown University, an MBA from Kellogg Business School, and an MA in Psychology and Education with a mind body spirit concentration from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Moderated Q&A following the lecture.

The Ruiz, Lynda and Stewart Resnick Student Union

Registration is not required to attend in person.

A livestream option is also available.

Fresno State is committed to providing universal access to all our events. Please contact the Office of the President at .559.278.0178 to request disability accommodations.

This event is in collaboration with the M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya. The center is housed in the Department of Philosophy at Fresno State and encourages the study, analysis, and application of Gandhi's philosophy of self-transformation and social change through the practice of inner peace and uplift of all (sarvodaya).

For more information, please contact the Director of the Gandhi Center, Dr. Veena Howard, at [vehoward@csufresno.edu](mailto:vehoward@csufresno.edu).

## Message From Campus Leaders



The Division of Equity and Engagement (DEE) has been created by the inaugural University Diversity Officer, as the foundation to motivate and galvanize the campus community toward a shared vision of an institution that is welcoming, inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination, intolerance, and harassment, where all can thrive. The grand opening of the Gandhi Center followed by the “Living with Intent” lecture by Mallika Chopra, perfectly aligns with the mission and vision of the DEE and provides a reminder that we all must be intentional with advance peace and unity.

**Dr. Rashanda R. Booker**  
**University Diversity Officer**  
**California State University, Fresno**



Sarvodaya is connected with the principles of equality, dignity, and progress for all. Gandhi proposed ideas that elevated all aspects of human life, developing moral citizenry, and interfaith harmony. Libraries also seek to meet the needs of those who feel excluded and alienated in our world. We strive to provide a welcoming space, access to education, opportunities to question and discover, and a shared community. This synchronicity of purpose makes the Library the ideal home for the Gandhi Center on our campus, two entities living symbiotically and standing together to uphold the principles of integrity, peace, and mutual benefit in the very heart of our university. Congratulations on the Gandhi Center opening!

**Dr. Bernadette Muscat**  
**Dean of Undergraduate Studies &**  
**Interim Dean of the University Library**  
**California State University, Fresno**



## A Message from the Dean

Today's grand opening of the M.K. Gandhi Center is the culmination of a dream first expressed to us by Dr. Naina Patel two years ago. She and Dr. Ravi Patel had a vision for promoting nonviolence, inner peace, and upliftment here in the San Joaquin Valley, and we are so grateful to them and their family's foundation for trusting Dr. Veena Howard and Fresno State to carry out this laudable goal.

Since being named Director of the M.K. Gandhi Center in Spring 2022, Dr. Howard has worked assiduously towards fulfilling this vision through her teaching, scholarship, and community outreach through symposia, lectures, and programming for the public as well as editorials drawing attention to events.

After over a year of planning and construction, we are thrilled to be welcoming you to the opening of a physical space for the M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya on the third floor of the Fresno State Library. We envision everyone, including our students who study at the tables nearby, growing curious about "Sarvodaya" on the logo emblazoned on the Gandhi Center's window and stepping inside this welcoming space to learn more.

We hope that our campus and community will be inspired by this beacon of hope to embrace Gandhian principles and do as our colleague, former Poet Laureate of the United States Juan Felipe Herrera, has encouraged us:

*Become Ahimsa, become nonviolence*

*Become peace, become kindness*

*Become truth, become each other.*

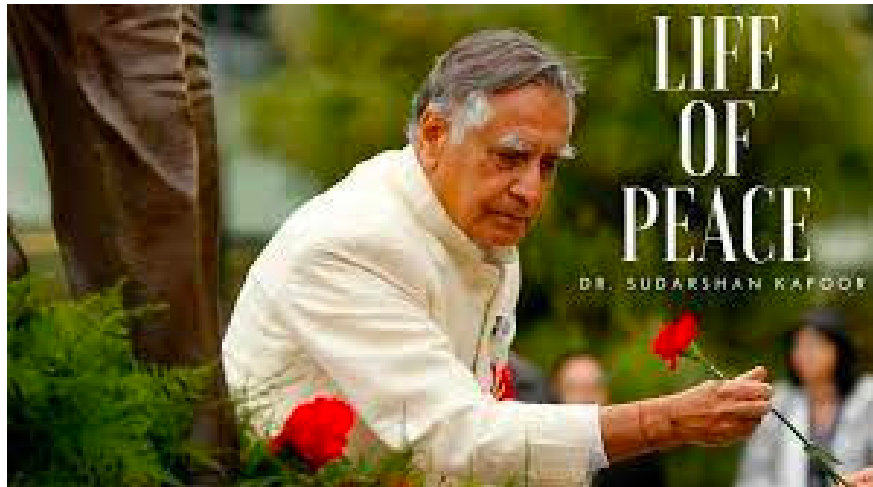
**Sincerely,**

**Dr. Honora Chapman**

**Dean, College of Arts and Humanities**

**Professor of Classics and Humanities**

**California State University, Fresno**



Congratulations for establishing the GANDHI CENTER at Fresno State. Thanks for your leadership and dedication which made it possible for the CENTER to come into existence. It is long overdue. The Center, as you have visualized, will provide unique opportunities to all the members of the campus community (students, faculty, staff and administration) to learn about meditation in a peaceful setting. In addition, the Center along with the PEACE GARDEN will be a positive force on our campus and will be a perennial source of energy and inspiration for promoting Gandhian values such as community service, reverence for all faiths, mutual respect, solidarity with the poor, compassion for the suffering humanity and nonviolent conflict resolution, just to mention a few. I am confident that the Center will help to realize Gandhi's vision of Truth and Nonviolence as the foundation of a non exploitative and just social order which Gandhi called SARVODAYA (Welfare of All).

My best wishes for the success of Center operations under your leadership.

'WE MUST BE THE CHANGE WE WISH TO SEE '

**Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor**  
**Professor Emeritus**  
**California State University, Fresno**





## About the M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya

Established in 2022 through the inspiring generosity  
of the Ravi and Naina Patel Foundation

### **Vision**

The M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya seeks to enhance Fresno State's larger education goals by inspiring and providing tools to our students for personal transformation and dedication to serve our larger community.

### **Founding**

Created in 2022 through a generous donation from The Ravi and Naina Patel Foundation, the M.K. Gandhi Center is dedicated to interdisciplinary exploration and programming centered around peace, the betterment of all, nonviolence, and personal and societal transformation. These themes intersect with a range of subjects such as philosophy, religion, peace and conflict studies, social work, business ethics, music, theatre, and the visual arts.

## Special Thanks

In the spirit of gratitude and appreciation, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed to the success of this inaugural newsletter. I would like to thank our student contributors who submitted their essays and artwork for this special issue. I am thrilled to include an excerpt from an essay that was submitted by Shourya Chabra, a high student from New Jersey. Your support, dedication, and enthusiasm have been instrumental in making this edition of our newsletter a valuable resource for our readers.

We want to express our special gratitude to the following individuals and groups:

***Sydni Weller:*** Our newsletter's visual appeal owes much to the remarkable talent of our graphic designer, Sydni Weller. Your creative contributions and dedication to our cause have made a significant impact on the quality of our newsletter. Your creative flair and ability to transform ideas into impressive visuals have elevated the aesthetic of our publication.

***Professors Virginia Patterson and Martin Valencia:*** We have the privilege of showcasing the exceptional talents of the graphic designers in Professors Virginia Patterson's and Martin Valencia's courses. Their extraordinary artwork is the soul of our publication, adding beauty and depth to our content. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for sharing their remarkable talents and making our newsletter an artistic treasure.

***Fresno State's Marketing and Communications Team:*** I am grateful for your commitment to quality and creativity. My special thanks to Adriana Knutsen, Todd Graves, and Ashley Ilic for the support in creating the graphics for the Gandhi Center. It took many iterations, but Adriana stayed persistent and committed.

Thank you all for being a part of this amazing journey.

Dr. Veena Howard, Editor  
Professor, Chair, Department of Philosophy  
Endowed Chair in Jain and Hindu Dharma  
Director, M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya  
<https://cah.fresnostate.edu/philosophy/centers/gandhicerter/index.html>



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