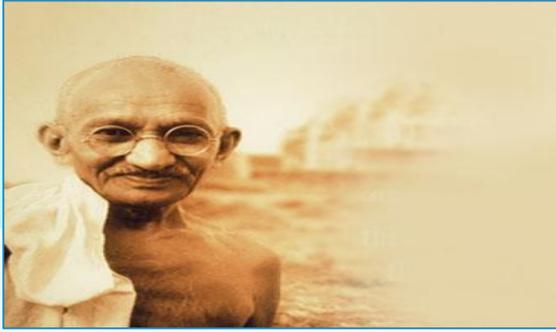


A narrative of an educator and an extraordinary theory



My educator

In this poster, I want to illustrate the story of an educator and an interesting theory. The educator I am discussing here are Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi or Gandhiji. He was an Indian lawyer, politician, social activist, and writer who became the leader of the nationalist movement against the British rule of India. His educational influence does not abide by conventional theoretical tenet, yet his reach was far and wide. All his life was spent in ingeniously creating his life's work following his values, and in transforming others after his high ideals. Children, education, justice, equality, equity, empathy, upliftment of the oppressed was his *raison d'être*. The extraordinary theory that binds his work to 'my living' is the living-educational-theory. I hold Gandhiji's values as standards of judgment as a link to creating my own living-theory.

Living-educational-theory

The living-educational-theory places the living 'I' at the centre of educational enquiries. 'My I' is not an abstract pronoun. 'I' is a real-life flesh and blood person (McNiff, 2001). The 'I' very often exists as a living contraction. The 'I' believes one thing, but the actions carried out are contradictory. For example 'I' value negotiated and democratic education and yet if in my classroom 'I' continue to hold an omniscient position and am thoroughly rigid in my approach towards learning then I am acting in contradiction to my values. To move from the situation of contradiction to live my values in practice 'I' need to follow a methodological approach of the living-educational-theory which takes the following form:

- I experience a concern when my values are not being fully lived in my practice.
- I imagine a way forward and develop an action plan.
- I act, and gather data that will enable me to judge the effectiveness of my actions for living my values more fully.
- I evaluate my actions.
- I modify my concerns, plans and actions in the light of my evaluations.

Acknowledgement

Swaroop Sampat Rawal

My video:
<https://bit.ly/2ySuVG9>

Gandhiji's value – Empathy

Adhering to the *Swadeshi* [a step toward home rule] movement Gandhiji gave up his western clothes to wear Indian garments. He had hoped that Indians would discard British clothing and embrace *Khadi* [homespun]. But he found that the poor could not even afford *Khadi*. Seeing that he wanted to work for the poor of India he decided to wear a simple loin cloth and shawl. To a journalist from the News Chronicle, Gandhiji said, 'Millions of Indians wear only a loin cloth. Westerners call me half-naked but by wearing a loin cloth I communicate my empathy to my people. How can I dress well when my fellow citizens can hardly cover themselves?' The millions of half-starved Indian saw him as one of them; to them he was the one leader who empathised with their misery. Enhancing my skills of empathy enables me to better *understand others' feelings, needs and concerns and makes me a more caring person.*

<https://bit.ly/2zi81Zs>



My student's create Gandhiji's 3-monkey statue:
 Hear no evil, See no evil, Speak no evil



At the Gandhi Museum: Learning about his life



Gandhiji's values- Non-violence

Once during the time Gandhiji spent at the Tolstoy Farm he had beaten his son for his misconduct. However, Gandhiji experienced 'I' as a living contradiction; he believed in the value of non-violence and acted against his values. Gandhiji wrote that he experienced severe remorse. He then strongly set about rejecting the traditional method of punishment in schools. He believed violence, be it physical and/or psychological, was wrong. By his opposition to corporal punishment he stressed the importance of *ahimsa* [non-violence] in education.

A broader sense of *ahimsa* means 'universal love and compassion.'

Emotional-psychological abuse is more damaging than physical abuse; the scars are not immediately visible. In my life skills education through drama class it would be contrary to my values to take any actions that would lower the self-esteem of a student, which any kind of abuse does.

https://www.mkGandhiji.org/towrds_edu/cha_p04.htm

My life is my message- Gandhiji

I believe....

I believe that social change and transformation can be understood in terms of the attempts by human beings to resolve their consciously lived contradictions (Whitehead, 2018). Gandhiji lived his life more fully following his values and he consciously resolved his lived contradictions. By doing so transformed society and made it a better place for others.

Gandhiji's life and his values like *Ahimsa* [non-violence], empathy, *Satya* [truth] instilled the love for humanity in me. He was a frail man yet by sheer mental strength he brought the strongest to their knees. As a life skills educator, his message of empowerment of the weakest is my maxim. But perhaps the most important lesson I learnt is: believing in one's values and taking every step possible to negate one's contradictory actions; this leads to the generation of one's living-theory.

References:

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 Whitehead, J. (2018) Living Theory Research as a Way of Life, Dog Books, UK of Life, Dog Books, UK