Unit 1 –

Introducing Gandhi & His Principles - Experimenting with Love

“We must become the change we wish to see in the world.”
- Gandhi

“If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable. We may ignore him at our own risk.”
- Dr. King
Rationale for the Components of This Unit

**ACTIVITY #1: Introducing Gandhi and His Principles** - p. 13

This activity is designed to make Gandhi’s principles and way of living more accessible to students. They can identify in many ways with “Mohandas the Youth.” Comparing “Mohandas” with “Mahatma” shows students how all of us can become great in our own ways. For an initial sense of Gandhi’s greatness, you can use the funeral tribute in the GANDHI Video, Part I, first 2 minutes. This activity also introduces Gandhi’s basic principles and the two Hindu words he used most frequently to describe his philosophy and way of living, with a look at how Dr. King understood them, before asking students for their initial thoughts on the effectiveness of Gandhian nonviolence. You can return to this initial evaluation at the end of your student to see how the students have changed in their thinking and in their own behavior.

**ACTIVITY #2 - “Experiments with Love or Kindness”** p. 20

This activity is designed to help students relate to Gandhi’s greatness and not be overwhelmed at how far they are from who he became. Most of the time, great historical role models are on too high a pedestal for any of us to emulate. But Gandhi is more accessible to us because of where he started and how he presents himself to us. His process of daily experimentation is helpful for everyone, no matter what our values are. This activity invites students to follow Gandhi’s example of daily experimenting with Gandhi’s values and principles and a way of proceeding through each of the units in this Guidebook. It serves as a repository for their action decisions at the end of each unit.

**AFFECTIVE OPTIONS**

**A Wonderful Story of How Deeply Gandhi’s Spirit Touched Dr. King**

When 30-year-old Dr. King and his wife Coretta visited the Gandhi home/museum in Bombay in 1959, he refused to return to their fancy hotel room as honored guests of India. Dr. King had been sitting in Gandhi’s upstairs bedroom/workroom and had told the museum director that he would call him when he was ready to leave. At the end of the day, Dr. King was still sitting silently in the room. When the museum director informed Dr. King that it was closing time, Dr. King refused to leave. The director pointed out that there were no facilities (toilet or bed) for overnight guests, but Dr. King said – If Gandhi could sleep on the floor, so can I.” The next day, Dr. King announced that he was now spiritually strong enough to take up the leadership of the civil rights movement in the US.

**Video:** The video segments from the GANDHI Video are especially helpful for relating more personally to Gandhi and his principles

**Photos:** from THE GANDHI THE MAN and GANDHI: A PICTORIAL BIOGRAPHY are also helpful.
ACTIVITY #1: Introducing Gandhi and His Principles

STEP 1 - Gandhi’s Journey from Mohandas to Mahatma
- Have students read the quotations (p. 14), and answer the question, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before exploring this journey/transformation as a whole class.
- Use the funeral tribute in the GANDHI Video, Part I, first 2 minutes, for more impact.

STEP 2 - Gandhi’s Principles of Nonviolence: AHIMSA and SATYAGRAHA
- Have students read the quotations on “Nonviolence” and “AHIMSA” (p. 15) and invite clarification questions to make sure they understand what Gandhi meant.
- Have them answer the questions, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before exploring these basic concepts further as a whole class.
- Use the chart to point out the some forms of AHIMSA (corresponding to the units in this study) and the various forms of violence (HIMSA).
- Have students read the definition and quotations on “SATYAGRAHA” (p. 17), invite clarification questions, and then have them write their answers to the questions before discussing them as a whole class.
- To visually illustrate these concepts, use 1 or 2 segments from the GANDHI Video:
  - Gandhi’s call to Indians in S. Africa to resist nonviolently, Part I, 22:00-27:00
  - Indian miners nonviolently resisting the British, Part I, 27:00-31:00
  - March to the Salt Works where Indians are beaten, Part II, 21:00-25:00
  - Gandhi’s fast against Hindu-Muslim violence, Part II, 52:00-1:01:00
- Read ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, Ch. 4, “AHIMSA or the Way of Nonviolence” for more on these two basic principles.

STEP 3 - Dr. King Explains Gandhi’s Principles
- Have students read the King quotation (p. 18) and have them compare King’s quotation with Gandhi’s
- Have them answer the questions, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before exploring these basic concepts further as a whole class.
- For more on King’s principles, read the whole inspiring chapter “Loving Your Enemies” in STRENGTH TO LOVE, pp. 41-50.

STEP 4 - Initial Thoughts on the Effectiveness of Nonviolence
- Have students read Arun Gandhi’s evaluation of the effectiveness of Gandhi and King’s nonviolence (p. 19) and answer the question in writing before discussing it as a whole class.
- Use or refer back to one of the segments in the GANDHI Video in STEP 2.
Gandhi’s Journey from Mohandas to Mahatma

From Mohandas the Youth

Mohandas as a child was very fearful. He was afraid of the dark as a child. He was afraid at school. In his own words: “I used to be very shy and avoided all company. My books and my lessons were my sole companions. To be at school at the stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as the school closed – that was my daily habit. I literally ran back, because I could not bear to talk to anybody. I was even afraid lest anyone should poke fun at me.” AUTOBIOGRAPHY, #15 (quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, p. 5).

In high school, he did well in most of his studies, but didn’t have a high regard for his abilities and was “astonished whenever I won prizes and scholarships. But I very jealously guarded my character. The least little blemish drew tears from my eyes.” He hated gymnastics and sports because of his shyness and, as he put it, “my keen desire to serve as nurse to my [ailing] father. But he did love taking “long walks in the open air.” AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Part I, #V.

Married at age 13, Mohandas described his sexual desires as a “devouring passion” that would have ruined his life had he not also “a burning attachment to duty.” (AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Part I, #IV). He was jealous of wife Kasturba and wanted to control her, and in so doing, gave in to peer pressure. In his own words: “One of the reasons for my differences with my wife was undoubtedly the company of this friend. I was both a devoted and a jealous husband, and this friend fanned the flame of my suspicions about my wife. I never could doubt his veracity. And I have never forgiven myself the violence of which I have been guilty in often having pained my wife by acting on his information.” AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Part I, #VII; quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, p. 8.

To the Mahatma

Gandhi’s Funeral Tribute at the Beginning of the GANDHI Video

“The object of this massive tribute died as he had always lived – a private man without wealth, without property, without official title or office. Mahatma Gandhi was not the commander of armies nor a ruler of vast lands. He could not boast of any scientific achievement or artistic gift. Yet men, governments, dignitaries from all over the world have joined hands today to pay homage to the little brown man in the loin cloth who led his country to freedom. In the words of General George C. Marshall, the American Secretary of State, ‘Mahatma Gandhi has become the spokesman for the conscience of all humankind. He was a man who made humility and simple truth more powerful than empires.’ And Albert Einstein added: ‘Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this in flesh and blood ever walked upon this earth.’”

Question: How is such a transformation possible?
Gandhi’s Principles of Nonviolence: AHIMSA and SATYAGRAHA

“Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of humankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction...” (Harijan, July 20, 1931)

“Nonviolence is ‘not resignation from all real fighting against wickedness.’ On the contrary, my nonviolence is a more active and real fight against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness...” Young India, October 8, 1925; both quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, pp. 77 and 85.

AHIMSA:

A (not) + HIMSA (killing) = Not hurting any living thing

“In its positive form, AHIMSA means the largest love, greatest charity. If I am a follower of AHIMSA, I must love my enemy...” SPEECHES AND WRITINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI; quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, p. 84.

“AHIMSA is not the crude thing it has been made to appear. Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of AHIMSA. But it is its least expression. The principle of AHIMSA is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs.” Quoted in GANDHI THE MAN, p. 154. See the Chart for additional examples of both AHIMSA and HIMSA.

Give some examples of what you think Gandhi means by “the largest love.”

From the Chart on “AHIMSA” and “HIMSA,” explain how each of the examples reflect the meaning of the two words. Write down here other examples of AHIMSA and HIMSA not identified on the Chart.
Respect
Serving others
Embracing diversity (AHIMSA)

Nonviolent Problem-Solving
Seeking win-win solutions (AHIMSA)

Oneness with Earth
Sharing/Simplicity
Environmental care (AHIMSA)

Oneness of Humanity
Challenging domination with loving resistance (AHIMSA)

Constructive Anger
Asserting your rights/needs without hurting others (AHIMSA)

Forgiveness
& Making amends
Restoring relationships (AHIMSA)

Courage/Solidarity
Standing with others treated unfairly (AHIMSA)

AHIMSA
Nonviolence
SOUL FORCE
Enduring Suffering
LOVE
Mutual Relationships

WE ARE ONE

Respect
Serving others
Embracing diversity (AHIMSA)

Nonviolent Problem-Solving
Seeking win-win solutions (AHIMSA)

Oneness with Earth
Sharing/Simplicity
Environmental care (AHIMSA)

Oneness of Humanity
Challenging domination with loving resistance (AHIMSA)

Constructive Anger
Asserting your rights/needs without hurting others (AHIMSA)

Forgiveness
& Making amends
Restoring relationships (AHIMSA)

Courage/Solidarity
Standing with others treated unfairly (AHIMSA)

HIMSA
Violence
PHYSICAL FORCE
Inflicting Suffering
DOMINATION
Selfish Relationships
ME/US

OVER AGAINST

THEM

Verbal Violence
Put-downs
Lashing out (HIMSA)

Hate violence
Racism, homophobia
Discrimination (HIMSA)

Environmental violence
Species extinction
Resource waste/destruction (HIMSA)

Sexual violence
Abuse of women & kids
Pornography (HIMSA)

Economic violence
Poverty
Materialism/Greed (HIMSA)

Emotional violence
Holding grudges
Threats, intimidation (HIMSA)

Physical violence
Fighting
Torture (HIMSA)

Armed violence
Violent repression
War & terrorism (HIMSA)

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SATYAGRAHA:
SATYA (truth) + AGRAHA (firmness, clinging, force) = Clinging to Truth

SATYAGRAHA is putting AHIMSA into action and is called in English “truth-force”, “love-force” or “soul-force”

“SATYAGRAHA and its offshoots, noncooperation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering… Nonviolence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting of one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant.” Young India, August 11, 1920; quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, p. 95.

What do you think Gandhi means by “putting of one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant”? Give some examples from US history and/or your own experience of what this means.

“Up to the year 1906 [in S. Africa], I simply relied on appeal to reason… Since then the conviction has been growing upon me that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone but have to be purchased with their suffering. Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting opponents and opening their ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy the reason; you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in people. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword.” Young India, November 4, 1931; quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, pp. 82-3.

What does Gandhi means by “suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword”? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Why is suffering necessary to change some people’s hearts? Give some examples from US history and/or your own experience.

Do you agree with Gandhi that it is infinitely more powerful than physical force? Why or why not?
Dr. King Explains Gandhi’s Principles

"In his book NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE, Gandhi expressed the idea of love as a transforming power. ‘The force of love is the same as the force of soul or truth,’ wrote Gandhi. ‘Complete nonviolence is absence of ill will against all that lives. It is pure love…’

“As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi, my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform. Prior to reading Gandhi, I had about concluded that the ethics of Jesus were only effective in individual relationships. The ‘turn the other cheek’ philosophy and the ‘love your enemies’ philosophy were only valid, I felt, when individuals were in conflict with other individuals. When racial groups and nations were in conflict a more realistic approach seemed necessary. But after reading Gandhi, I saw how utterly mistake I was. Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. For Gandhi, love was a potent instrument for social and collective transformation. It was in the Gandhian emphasis on love and nonviolence that I discovered the method for social reform that I had been seeking. I came to feel that this was the only morally and practically sound method open to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.” STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 97.

“Somehow we must be able to stand up before out most embittered opponents and say we will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will and we will still love you. Throw us in jail and we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities after the midnight hour and drag us out on some wayside road and leave us half-dead as you beat us and we will still love you. But be you assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process. And our victory will be a double victory.” STRENGTH TO LOVE, pp. 41-50.

Questions:
What does Dr. King mean by saying “Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale”? What’s the difference between “individual interactions” and “social force on a large scale”?

What does Dr. King mean by “soul force”? How did he show it?

How are Dr. King’s actions examples of Gandhi’s principles of AHIMSA and SATYAGRAHA?
How Effective Are Love (AHIMSA) and Soul Force (SATYAGRAHA)?

This is just the beginning of your study of Gandhian nonviolence, but it’s good to get a sense of what you think of it before studying it more deeply.

Dr. King writes:
"...We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force... And we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process. And our victory will be a double victory."

How can “enduring suffering” change others who oppose you?

What is this “double victory” and how does suffering love produce it?

Arun Gandhi, Gandhi’s grandson writes:
“It would be a mistake to suppose that [Gandhi and King] were successful because they were contending with kind, compassionate or conscientious opposition. Ruthless attempts were made to crush their movements in India and in the United States, and both, ultimately, sacrificed their lives to their causes. Nevertheless, by their quiet, patient and sincere suffering in the face of gross injustice, they both brought about deep and lasting transformation in their societies.” Arun Gandhi, THE LEGACY OF LOVE, p. 125.

Do you agree with Arun that Gandhi and King faced ruthless rather than conscientious opposition? Why or why not?

Do you agree with Arun about the power of “their quiet, patient and sincere suffering”? Why or why not?

Why do they all believe that soul force was more effective than physical force? Do you agree? Why or why not?
ACTIVITY #2 - “Experiments with Love or Kindness”

STEP 1 - Gandhi’s Life as “Experiments with Truth”
- Have students read the quotations (p. 21) and invite clarification questions.
- Have students write their answers the questions and discuss their answers as a whole class.

STEP 2 - Your Own “Experiments with Love or Kindness”
- Have students answer the two questions at the top of p. 22, perhaps sharing them in pairs before a discussion as a whole class.
- Discuss the three “Possible Helps for Your Journey” and invite each student to make a decision on how they plan to proceed through this study.
- Introduce them to the “Your Own Experiments with Love/Kindness” Worksheet (p. 23) as an alternative or supplement to a personal journal.
- Explain to them which units they will be considering during this study.
Gandhi – My Life as “Experiments with Truth”

“It is not my purpose to attempt a real autobiography. I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth, and as my life consists of nothing but those experiments, it is true that the story will take the shape of an autobiography. But I shall not mind, if every page of it speaks only of my experiments. I believe... that a connected account of all these experiments will not be without benefit to the reader. My experiments in the political field are now known, not only to India, but to a certain extent to the world. For me, they have not much value; and the title of ‘Mahatma’ that they have won for me has, therefore, even less. Often the title has deeply pained me; and there is not a moment I can recall when it may be said to have tickled me.

But I should certainly like to narrate my experiments in the spiritual field which are known only to myself, and from which I have derived such power as I possess for working in the political field. If the experiments are really spiritual, then there can be no room for self-praise. They can only add to my humility. The more I reflect and look back on the past, the more vividly do I feel my limitations... But as I have all along believed that what is possible for one is possible for all, my experiments have not been conducted in the closet, but in the open; and I do not think that this fact detracts from their spiritual value...” AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Introduction.

At this point, what attracts you to Gandhi’s way of life? And why?

What troubles you about him? And why?

This passage helps us to understand what Gandhi meant when we described his life journey in these words: “I must reduce myself to zero. So long as a person does not of their own free will put themselves last among their fellow creatures, there is no salvation for them. AHIMSA is the farthest limit of humility.” AUTOBIOGRAPHY, p. 616; quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, p. 35

What do you think Gandhi means by “I must reduce myself to zero”? What is the connection between “AHIMSA” and “reducing oneself to zero”?

What would it mean for you to view your life in this way?
Your Own “Experiments with Love or Kindness”

“I have not the shadow of a doubt that anyone can achieve what I have, if they would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith.”
(Harijan, October 3, 1936; quoted in ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, p. 42)

The Challenge - As you work your way through this study of Gandhi, you are being invited and encouraged to apply Gandhi’s experiments to your own life. Because Gandhi understands “truth” as “AHIMSA” which is better understood by us as love, it might be better to think of our journey through this study (and perhaps through the rest of your life) as your “experiments with love” (or “kindness,” if you prefer that term).

Questions:
Do you agree with Gandhi “that what is possible for one is possible for all”? That anyone could achieve what he did if they would make the same effort? Why or why not?

Are you willing to take up this challenge? What obstacles do you foresee?

Possible Helps for Your Journey

A journal. Most people who have accepted this challenge have found it helpful to have a journal to record their thoughts, feelings, decisions, and evaluations of their efforts (“experiments”) each day. Would this be helpful for you too?

A good friend to journey with. Having someone else who is accepting this challenge along with you is really helpful. You can share your successes and failures with one another, your thoughts and feelings. You can try the same things sometimes or work together on a project or action. You can check in with each other regularly and thus hold each other accountable to your own decisions - to follow through on what you decide. Does this appeal to you? Who could you ask to join you on this journey?

Spiritual inspiration. If you have a faith tradition you believe in, use the sacred writings of that tradition. You might seek inspiration from a variety of faith traditions, as Gandhi himself did. The “Prayers for Peace” from twelve world religions (pp. 65-66) and other resources noted on p.60 are a good place to start. If this appeals to you, what is your next step?

“We must become the change we wish to see in the world.”
Your Own Experiments with Love/Kindness
Use this to record your decisions as you experiment with love or kindness
through each unit and/or activity in this course of study;
add any decisions you make for an activity or unit you continue to work on later

Unit 2 – Respect

What random act(s) of kindness do you commit to do and how?

What form(s) of service are you going to commit to do and how?

What are you going to do about becoming a kinder person by challenging put-downs
and hate violence

Unit 3 – Anger

How are you going to curb your impulse to lash out at others when you are angry?

How are you going to be more respectful of those with whom you are angry?
Unit 4 – Nonviolent Problem-Solving & Nonviolent Resistance

What are you going to do to develop the capacity to pause calmly in the midst of a conflict situation?

How are you going to remember to think the best about your “opponent(s)” in a conflict?

How are you going to develop the ability to really listen to what they say and seek solutions that reflect the truth of what each of you are asserting?

What are you going to do about helping to change, using nonviolent strategies, some situation in your school or community that needs changing?

Unit 5 – Making Amends and Forgiveness

Who are you going to forgive first?

What are you going to do to become a more forgiving person?

Who are you going to apologize to first and how are you going to make amends to that person for the hurt you caused him/her?
Unit 6 - Oneness with the Earth & Challenging Materialism

What are your next steps in appreciating and living in greater harmony with nature?

What are you going to do about being kinder to nature by living more simply?

What are you going to do about being kinder to nature by challenging practices at school, in your community, in your country that are harmful to the environment?

How are you going to challenge the "extreme materialism" that threatens the environment, future generations, and your own spirit?

Unit 7 - Courage: Standing with Those Treated Unfairly

Which of the nine strategies for becoming a more courageous person makes the most sense for you at this point in your life? What will be your next step in implementing this strategy?

Name some situations right now in your life where you could challenge a person or practice that is hurting themselves or others?

Choose one of these situations and write out a plan on the next page for doing something about it.
Unit 8 – Confronting the “-ISMS”

What are the most frequent ways that you “participate in the ‘ISMS’”? And what are you going to do about this?

What are you going to do about the sexism around you, especially the problem of dating violence?

What are you going to do to stand with the victims of racism or homophobia and challenge these social problems?

What are you going to do to develop a more inclusive form of patriotism?

What are you going to do about war, especially the innocent victims of war?