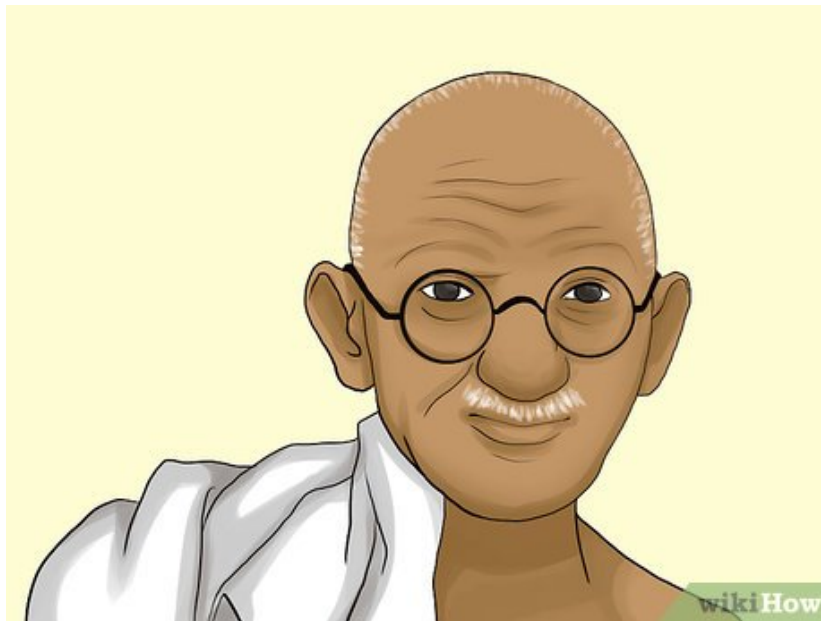


How to Live As a Gandhian

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi, was a famous figure who helped lead India to independence. After returning to India after studying in South Africa, Gandhi began spreading his philosophy, and many Gandhian ideas...

Learning About Gandhism

1.



Learn about Gandhi. Learning about Gandhi and how he lives his life can help you learn how to better live as a Gandhian, as Gandhi exemplifies the values outlined below.

2.

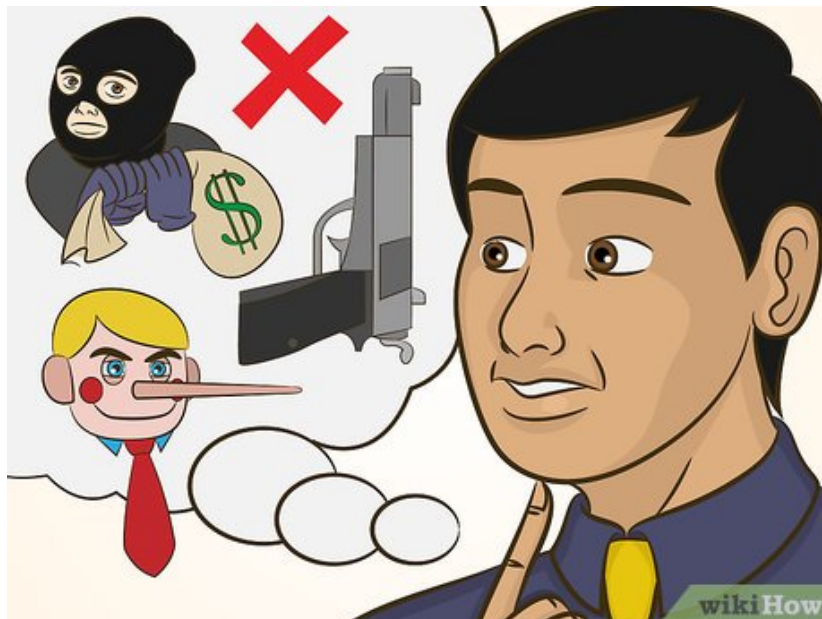


Read Gandhi's works. Read through Gandhi's works and discourses to familiarize yourself with Gandhian philosophy. Some books to consider reading include:

1. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* is Gandhi's autobiography, and a must-read for anyone wishing to learn about Gandhism. In it, Gandhi writes about his life and how he developed his ideas.
2. *Discourses on the Gita* is a book written by Gandhi that deals with faith and one's relationship with God. If you're planning on reading this, be sure to read the Bhagwad Gita first.
3. *The Words of Gandhi* was written by the director of the award winning movie *Gandhi* and is a compilation of essays, letters, and discourses by Gandhi.

Living By Gandhian Principles

1.



Prioritize means over ends. Gandhi strongly believed in the primacy of means over ends. Even the noblest goal must be pursued only through the right means, even if it means it takes longer to achieve. For instance, Gandhi highly valued nonviolence, and chose to attain his goals only through nonviolent means. [1]

1. Before taking any hasty action, ask yourself - am I going about this the right way? Can I be sure that my action does not violate the fundamental principles of truth and nonviolence?
2. Don't avoid concerning yourself with ends altogether. The realization of truth and pursuit of *Brahman* are not incompatible with pursuing noble goals.

2.



Center your life around the search for *satya*, or Truth. Gandhian philosophy lays heavy emphasis on searching for the truth and centering your life around it. The realization of Truth, according to Gandhi, comes from devoting your life to the search for truth, even at the expense of other worldly things. [2]

1. Avoid falling prey to material pleasures. While they may be tempting, such things only distract one from the search for Truth.
2. Practice meditation. Meditating helps you focus and be at peace with yourself, and aids the search for Truth.

3.



Practice *Ahimsa* or Nonviolence. The idea of nonviolence is central to Gandhi's philosophy. Throughout his fight for independence, Gandhi stressed the importance of passive and nonviolent forms of resistance. *Ahimsa* is not limited to action alone - Gandhians must cause no harm to any living creature, in thought or in deed. [3]

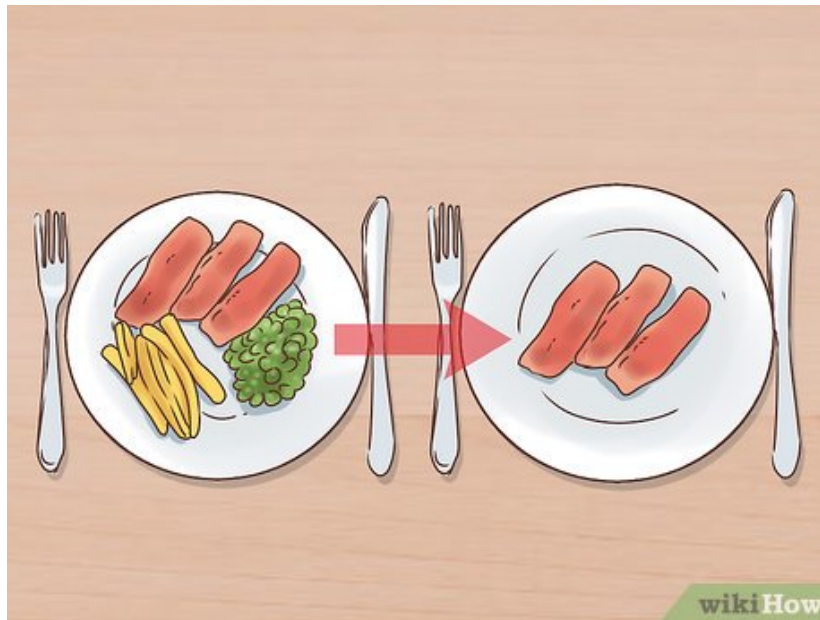
1. Transition to a Vegetarian Lifestyle, if you haven't already, so as to not indirectly hurt other living creatures.

4.



Practice *Brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya*, or the search for *Brahma*, is a complex concept that preaches celibacy, faith in God, and a mastery over one's own actions such that one does not fall prey to the pleasures of the flesh. To practice *Brahmacharya* is to renounce activities that have no place in the path to *Brahma*. [4]

5.



Practice fasting. To Gandhi, fasting was a way to cleanse and discipline the mind, body, and soul. It helps develop the mental fortitude necessary to practice Gandhi's teachings. Gandhi himself fasted several times in his lifetime.^[5]

6.



Respect all religions. Gandhi believed in religious pluralism as a way of uniting people. Be open to all belief systems and respect them all. ^[6]

7.



Teach yourself to be self sufficient. Gandhi's ideas of *swarajya*, which he outlined in his work *Hind Swaraj*, emphasize self-sufficiency and independence. Some ideas -

1. Learning to sew your own clothes can be a great first step. Gandhi used a spinning wheel, or *charkha*, to make *khadi*, a kind of homemade cloth.
2. Grow your own food. Gandhi was against the industrialization that makes most of our ready-to-eat food possible, so try to grow your own produce to use while cooking.

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