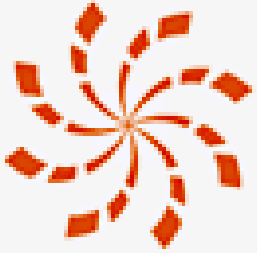


AHIMSA CENTER

NONVIOLENCE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION

www.csupomona.edu/ahimsacenter

2014
NEWSLETTER



FROM THE DIRECTOR

GREETINGS to the seekers and supporters of ahimsa! In this issue of Newsletter, I want to draw your attention to the significance of Care, Compassion and Mindfulness (CCM).



CARE is the concern we feel for the well-being of others and ourselves; of those with whom we have close bonds, and of those with whom we share only the common bond of humanity. Care also extends to our concern for animals and the nature. Care is essential for the health of relationships that make up the web of life, and it is care that makes life meaningful.

COMPASSION is our empathetic response to suffering, which is an inescapable fact of human existence. Suffering arises from hurt and from loss, including a loss of life; at work the causes of suffering may range from physical or emotional injuries to a loss of job. Suffering also results from natural disasters and from human perpetrated calamities such as wars, mass shootings, and acts of terrorism. Compassion can help heal the wounds of suffering, and make life whole again.

MINDFULNESS is attention to one's thoughts and actions as well as to wellbeing of others. It is also self-awareness, including awareness of one's environment –social, political and ecological; and awareness of others' circumstances. Cultivated through a variety of meditational practices, mindfulness makes caring more effective and

compassion more curative. As an integrated whole, CCM is a manifestation of **ahimsa** in practice.

Center's sixth biannual conference will feature scholars, practitioners, and experts drawn from diverse fields who will explore the practical significance of CCM.

On behalf of the Center, I wish to thank our sponsors for their on-going support, the contributors for sharing their ideas, the guest editor for his creative assistance in putting the newsletter together; and to the readers for their continued interest.

Tara Sethia is a professor of history and director of Ahimsa Center. She also serves as a coordinator of the interdisciplinary Minor in Nonviolence Studies, and as an advisor to the Ahimsa Student Club. Her recent

books include **Gandhi: Pioneer of Nonviolent Social Change** (Pearson, 2012) and a co-edited collection of essays, **The Living Gandhi** (Penguin, 2013). Recently, she gave a talk, as part of the Dandi Memorial Project, at the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai.



Bipin and Rekha Shah Conference on Nonviolence
Care, Compassion and Mindfulness
Cal Poly Pomona, Bronco Student Center, Ursa Major
November 7-9, 2014



The Ahimsa Center thanks Rekha and Bipin Shah for their generous and steady support of the Center.

http://www.csupomona.edu/~ahimsacenter/conference/conference_14.shtml

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Sponsorship Opportunities

Several sponsorship opportunities are available, including opportunities for naming a public lecture, a conference, and the Ahimsa Center. Center welcomes donations in any amount.

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Executive Editor: **Tara Sethia**
Guest Editor: **Christian Bracho**



Jaya Row delivered Center's 2014 annual public lecture.

Her talk on "Inspired Living" explored the questions: What does it take to be inspired? How can inspiration be sustained? She pointed the significance of inspired living for human success and happiness and suggested ways which can help sustain inspiration to make life meaningful.

Ms. Row is the founder of Vedanta Vision and Managing Trustee of Vedanta Trust. Vedanta Vision is dedicated to the dissemination of

Vedanta, a school of Indian philosophy. It is a science of living that empowers each individual to achieve success, happiness, growth and fulfillment.

Jaya Row has spent nearly forty years in the study and research of Vedanta. Microbiologist by training, she has had a distinguished management career, which she renounced to devote herself full time to the interpretation of Vedanta for the modern generation. She is the author of numerous books and has been lecturing world-wide.

Setsu Shigematsu is an Associate Professor of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of California, Riverside. She delivered the 2013 annual lecture, "Introducing the Guardian Princesses," and focused on how parents and educators can respond to the negative influence of the mass media and strategically utilize media to teach children ethical principles.

Dr. Shigematsu discussed the work of Guardian Princess Alliance (GPA)--a group of educators, parents, students and artists--who have formed to transform the cultural meaning of the word, princess. The GPA aims to redefine the princess into racially diverse leaders who protect the people and the planet through nonviolence. She is also the author of *Scream from the Shadows: The Women's Liberation Movement in Japan*, and directed and produced *Visions of Abolition*, a documentary film about the prison-industrial-complex. She is the founder of the Guardian Princess Alliance and received her doctorate from Cornell University.



The Center hosted an Ahimsa Concert featuring **Milind Raikar** on Violin. He was accompanied by Hemant Ekbote on Tabla.

Raikar is a renowned violinist in the *Hindustani* tradition of Indian Classical Music. He is founder of Raikar Academy of Violin in Mumbai, India.

At a very young age he began to study Hindustani music with his father, the late Atchut Raikar—a musician, vocalist, playwright and actor.

He started playing violin in Western style, and got trained at the Trinity College of London. But inspired by his father, he came home to Hindustani music, and went on to train with Pandit B. S. Math, Pandit Vasantrao Kadnekar, and Padmashree Pandit D. K. Datar. Later, he became a disciple, and also a concert accompanist of Padma Vibhushan Kishori Amonkar.

He is especially noted for making the violin truly sing like the human voice.

Ahimsa Club E-Board, 2014-15

Ahimsa Club has a new e-board:
From the left: Jasmin Pineda, vice president; Pachet Bryant, Public Relations Officer; Samantha Ingram, President; Isis Quan, Treasurer.
The Center welcomes the E-board.



Congratulations to the Class of 2014

From the left: Jessica Molina, outgoing president of the Ahimsa Club, Sociology major with nonviolence studies minor; Ezekiel Cortez, vice president, Engineering major; and Nestor De La Torre, Political Science major with a minor in Nonviolence Studies.

CENTER HONORS PROFESSOR ANDREW MOSS ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNIVERSITY



Andrew Moss was honored by the Center Director at a farewell reception in recognition of his contributions to the education about nonviolence and peace.

Professor Moss served as an advisor for the Minor in

Nonviolence Studies and offered a course on War and Peace in Literature. He also made guest presentation to teachers at several of the Center's K-12 Teacher Institutes since 2005.

The Center wishes him well as he moves on to a new stage of his life.



From the left: Drs. John Ding, D.D. Wills, Da'an Pan, Pat Defreitas, Tara Sethia, Andrew Moss, Carol Holder, Liliane Fucaloro, and Nirmal Sethia.

In the front are Drs. Anjana Narayan and Sharon Hilles, Dean of the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences.

Ahimsa and Higher Education

Bhutan: A Place Called Happiness

By Vibha Vasi

A small advertisement in a Bhutanese magazine reads, *Happiness is a place called Bhutan*. A brush with the country, a rock between India and China, reveals how the pursuit of happiness is serious business there. While most nations of the world obsess with Gross National Product or warheads, this tiny Himalayan nation revels in Gross National Happiness. A decade ago, the fourth king of this nation coined this phrase and concept and adopted it as a national goal. For this, the country has turned to its history and tradition, while giving a nod to modernization.

Nestled in the green mountains of the lower Himalayas, Bhutan's natural setting is still uncorrupted. People dressed in the traditional Gho or Kira chatter amicably on the streets or the town squares or turn up enthusiastically to watch a game of archery, their natural sport. Schools appear around every bend in the road, and red-cheeked school children chatter their way uphill. The government seems committed to the environment, education and housing. Notices, encouraging environmental awareness, are a common sight in the woods or a road to a hotel or at an environment education center. Taking quick leaps towards development, buildings and roads are being built everywhere. In Wangdue, a new colony for the less privileged, built by the government, looks like a pre-fabricated modern development anywhere in the first world. The Government takes active interest in housing, education, and employment of its citizens. Yet the country consciously preserves its architectural heritage.

While clear mountain streams and rivers shimmer through the countryside, they are also wired for production of hydro-electricity that supplies the nation as well as exports the surplus to India.

The media is hard-pressed to find depressing news and can thus include culture, art and literature in its pages. Some rue the absence of proper medical aid – though that may also be a sign of lower numbers of life-style related diseases. In fact, in one of the country's many newspapers, *The Kuensel*, there is a prominent article about a rabid dog biting a child and the nitty-gritty of how the anti-rabies shots had to be arranged from another town. There is a plea for better medical facilities. Other articles express concern over the absence of trained labor - as a result of which labor has to be imported from Nepal and India. For now, this seems to be the extent of the unhappy headlines.

This must be the long lost Shangrila, then! Many, including Michael Palin of the BBC documentary series on the Himalayas, would have you believe so. In his book, *Invoking Happiness*, Khenpo

Phuntshok Tashi writes, "I always feel so fortunate to have been born in this land of happiness where I am able to drink fresh mountain water, breathe the clean air, and meet so many kind people which (sic) are citizens of this wonderful country." This pride and love for the nation, for the religion as well as for the king seem to be universal. In order to achieve this the country has embraced its history, its traditions and the Buddhist belief that compassion begets happiness.

Bhutan's confidence is also based in an ancient strategy that addresses the material as well as the spiritual. Historically, it began with the dzongs or fortresses built strategically by a saintly king of Tibetan origin, Shabdrung Namgyal. So, respected is he, even today, that his statues and pictures are placed prominently in all Bhutanese temples, chortens, dzongs and even in some hotel rooms. This saint-king successfully united Bhutan into eighteen districts, all of which are graced by a dzong. Shabdrung Namgyal ensured that these strong fortresses - with outer walls which slope up window-less for about half their height - protected both, the political as well as the religious centres of each of the 18 districts they are located in. These dzongs still stand as working symbols of Bhutan's harmony and peace. Today, the Thimpu dzong houses the central administration of the country and the religious wing moves there in the summers from the Punakha dzong – the largest and visually most exquisite fortress.

Apart from conveying strength and yoking together religion and government, the dzongs hold the many festivals which the Bhutanese believe are central to the people's existence and happiness. On the tenth day of every lunar month, a festival which was ordained by their beloved Master, Guru Padmasambhava who brought Buddhism from India to Bhutan in the 7th C, is held in the dzongs. Masked dances accompanied by local music convey history/ oral traditions, mythologies and are not mere symbols of Bhutanese religious beliefs but, equally important, and as they experience it, serve to spread positive, happy, peaceful vibrations. These dances celebrate the victory of religion (still a positive word in Bhutan) throughout the country and the defeat of negative or evil spirits.

One popular enactment is that of Guru Padmasambhava who is believed to have flown on a tiger to a cliff in the mountains near Paro. The spot called Taktshang Goemba (Tiger's Nest) is where he meditated alone for three months and defeated the demons and spiritually liberated the country. In addition, as festivals anywhere in the world do, they encourage people to show up, socialize as well

as initiate the young and the less informed into the old way of living, the Buddhist way which has served them well.

Brought up with this belief system, the Bhutanese easily express compunctions about hurting others. Further, compassion is promoted as a pivotal aspect of one's spiritual graduation. Just as lama after lama speaks about compassion to the common man, the path to enlightenment is also spoken of freely. Enlightenment is seen as a possible goal and this path, via festivals, meditation and self-improvement, is central to the spread of happiness.

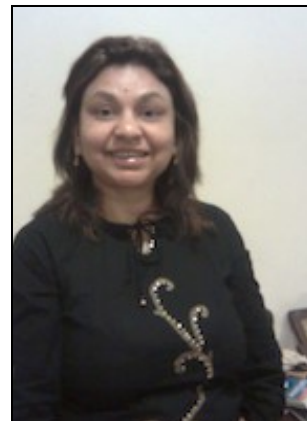
Many Bhutanese saints today are pitching for vegetarianism in the name of compassion. Ironically, despite the desire to cause no injury, Bhutan has its share of non-vegetarians. Also, the country's record on inclusion of ethnic minorities has been questionable. Specifically, in recent history the eviction of a large number of people of Nepalese and Indian origin has tarnished the country's record on compassion and happiness. However, minorities still co-exist, at least, some happily surrendering to such pressures as wearing the Bhutanese national clothes to school and office or adopting the Zohngkha language as their own.

In 2006, when King Jigme Singye Wangchuk abdicated his throne in 2006, deferring to the times and with awareness of Bhutan's mighty neighbors - some with medieval ambitions – King Jigme Singye Wangchuk passed on the mantle of governance to his son and ushered in democracy. With that move politics in all its hues has entered the country. King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk carries on the Wangchuk tradition of the brave, compassionate royal while his father works towards his own spiritual goals and remains his son's closest adviser.

It may seem impossibly idyllic, but Bhutan is a living museum of an old culture which once was practiced in many parts of the world. And as it modernizes and the electoral pitch begins to move from compassion to self-centeredness – whatever its mask, there might just be a tug-of-war between the triumphant forces of religion, monarchy and the, when happiness and compassion were just a way of being.

Until then, it certainly remains a plausible, infectious model for happiness as a nation.

Vibha Vasi is a freelance journalist, writer and teacher whose interest in the human condition is expressed through activism in areas ranging from the environment to marginalized women and children. She holds an MFA from the University of Arizona and a obtained a Ph. D. in Literature from Mumbai University in India.



Gandhi's Use of *Ahimsa* as an Active Force for Social Change

By Veena Rani Howard

India's religious traditions laud *ahimsa* (nonviolence) as the highest *dharma*. *Dharma* literally means, "sustaining principle"; it is generally translated as duty and, virtue. According to Gandhi, *ahimsa* is not merely negation of *himsa* (violence) but a complete control over the wish to harm others. It is a complete freedom from anger, ill-will, and hate. Traditionally, the virtue of nonviolence has been associated with ascetic disciplines and a religious lifestyle, and, therefore, the negation of violence may be understood as merely an abstention from violence. Such an understanding can lead many



Gandhi stated that "the nonviolence of my conception is a more active and real fight against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness."

to choose a life of passivity and withdrawal from involvement in the world. However, Gandhi drew Indian religious traditions, but uniquely used *ahimsa* as a strategy to confront various forms of social and political violence. He interpreted nonviolence as an active principle in the following ways:

1. Gandhi transformed *ahimsa* into a "weapon" that could be wielded against structures of violence. He responded to those who considered nonviolence as "a resignation from all real fighting against wickedness," and stated, "the nonviolence of my conception is a more active and real fight against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness." Gandhi creatively used nonviolent methods of resistance and civil disobedience to obliterate violent laws and systems.
2. Gandhi translated *ahimsa*—a restrictive vow—into tangible expressions of compassion that was intended for all beings. He interpreted them as two sides of one coin: "There is as much difference between *ahimsa* and compassion as there is between gold and the shape given to it, between a root and the tree which sprouts from it. Where there is no compassion, there is no *ahimsa*. The test of *ahimsa* is compassion. The concrete form of *ahimsa* is compassion." Gandhi's rendering included love and compassion for wrong doers as well. He set a high standard: "If I am a follower of *ahimsa*, I must love

my enemy. I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father or son." Even though most would find this directive difficult, it encompasses the essence of nonviolence that has the power to transform evil by love and compassion.

3. Finally, Gandhi made an original connection between nonviolence and justice. He emphasized, "the first condition of nonviolence is justice all around in every department of life." Gandhi's rendering of justice did not involve seeking retribution; it was aimed to destroy structures of violence through creative nonviolent strategies. By interlinking *ahimsa* to justice, Gandhi sought to transform the personal virtue of *ahimsa* into a public responsibility for creating a nonviolent society. Gandhi challenged the status quo of the time: "No person could be actively nonviolent and not rise against social injustice no matter where it occurred.

Gandhi's idea of active *ahimsa* might have seemed to be novel, but it was based in the principle of *dharma*, sustaining harmony and order, in all areas of life through nonviolent methods.

Veena R. Howard is Assistant Professor of Asian Religions at CSU, Fresno. Her publications include *Gandhi's Ascetic Activism: Renunciation and Social Action* (SUNY Press, 2013).

Making Space in Community College Curriculum for Peace

By Katie Zaroni



The notion that violence is a natural and expected part of humanity is one that continues to perplex my intellect and spiritual core. It never ceased to amaze me that the communities of learning I worked with at the

community college arrived each semester deeply embedded in this preconceived notion. After spending sixteen weeks in the Peace Studies program, these same individuals concluded class with a slightly altered perception of humanity, bringing home the realization that the dominant cultural norms that surround us, and the war stories that are woven into our history books aren't painting a complete picture of the possibilities. I believe that my fellow learners, some may call them students, walked out of the classroom at the end of each semester wondering what might be possible if we were collectively able to tap into an alternative

narrative of humanity: one that includes nonviolence as a method to resolve conflict on an individual, national, and international level. A more holistic narrative that celebrates [UNESCO's Seville Statement on Violence](#) and questions the root causes of all forms of violence that manifest in our daily lives.

Whether or not students change their preconceived notions about humanity is not the expected outcome in these courses. However, it is an essential element of the program to give space to the learning communities to "contemplate, analyze, and discuss issues related to peace and conflict on all levels" as well as "to critically think about their role in the world and their possible contributions to a more peaceful world". (<http://www.sdccity.edu/PeaceStudies>) As our learning communities engaged in this academic exercise of critically thinking about our world in relation to peace, an environment was created that invited new possibilities to be considered. It is within this opening that our respective minds grappled with societal norms that manifest a violent outcome and considered alternative societal norms. Perhaps most importantly, learners engaged in personal reflection within the context of formal education that allowed for the word, "peace" to be deconstructed and rebuilt into something that is much more than just a utopian concept.

The origin of the Peace Studies program at San Diego City College evolved through a collaborative process that included faculty, administrators, practitioners and students. Over six years ago a serendipitous meeting occurred where a friend of mine introduced me to an Anthropologist who was aspiring to create a Peace Studies program. From there I was introduced to the rest of the interdisciplinary team of academics who all shared a common vision to develop an Associate Degree in Peace Studies prior to their retirement. I'll never forget the richness of our conversations as we carefully scrutinized the content of the Peace Studies courses we were creating and would later teach. Developing student learning outcomes for an Introductory Peace Studies course from an anthropological, philosophical, biological, and literary perspective is not an easy task. However, together we discussed the importance of core concepts that future peace-builders would be required to know and considered how each of these disciplines offered a complimentary perspective to peace studies. In response to the complex challenges of our world, our team designed a rigorous curriculum that includes an introductory peace studies course, a class devoted to nonviolence as a form of conflict resolution, a team taught course on environmental justice, ethics and sustainability, and lastly an opportunity to engage in fieldwork experience within the community. San Diego City College is now proudly home to the first Associate Degree in Peace Studies in the state of California and successfully put forth a proposal to have Peace Studies recognized as a discipline within the California Community College system.

Continued on page 10

Ahimsa and K-12 Education

Circling Ahimsa

By Maureen West

The image of circle holds my attention. I look for connections that echo circle – zero, nothing, whole, the sun, the moon, and I pause . . . imagining the cycles of waxing and waning, aware of slowly breathing in, breathing out. I feel expansion and contraction as I breathe; witnessing time echoing the moonlight. There is story in this image of moon cycles, speaking the language of transformation. This circle invites the joy and wonder of story.

I teach ceramics in a high school community of 1200 students living at the crossroads of two major interstate freeways. Our community thrives economically through service such as Education K-14 including a two-year community college, State



Government as the capitol of a rural state and one of three strategic missile bases located in the United States. We know that community is as much choice as it is time-bound. We live in transition; some of us moving on, others remaining in place.

As teachers we live with cycles. We are acutely aware of each minute of instruction available to move the greatest number of students towards measurable growth. Growth is measured in cycles of expansion and contraction, awareness and understanding. These cycles permeate all of our lives, marking the passage of time, witnessing comparisons. Each of us lives at the crossroads of moving on and remaining in place. What learning supports the creation of a purposeful place for transformational change?

On my classroom wall is this quote "Some people look for a beautiful place. Others make a place Beautiful" by Hazbat Inayat Khan. I lived at the crossroads of this quote this summer at the Ahimsa 2013 Summer Institute: Dr. Sethia and her invited colleagues were opening our minds, challenging our thinking, inviting personal inquiry. This is not just the inquiry that leads to the right answer. It's the level of inquiry that leads to the right living. Truthfully, it is core knowledge and living with integrity. It is the reflective practice that demands acts of forgiveness and recommitment to habits that sustain us. I am never

sure what this looks like day to day. But I now see it in the eyes of my students who are waking up. They are transforming their lives right before my eyes willing to make their thinking known. I witness students finding their voice for standing for something larger than themselves, to be a part of the whole of our community. We take small steps. We practice forgiveness. We are learning to see thoughtfully. We look for evidence of our knowing transforming into understanding. We practice taking responsible risks. It's the place of empowerment where no one is left behind. It's gratitude for the humanity we share.

Our Summer Institute was a soulful journey of transformative discourse, learning together in a small classroom that kissed the sky. We lived our topic: Gandhi, Sustainability and Happiness. We bonded through sharing our stories of grief, love and hope. We professionally developed as we brought our humanity into sight. We held ourselves close with open palms and open hearts. We lived full-on for two weeks hands, hearts and minds engaged. We laughed and cried. We unfolded our teacher selves into our human selves. We accepted the work as scholars but approached the work as explorers forming bonds of trust as we learned alongside each other. I was raw with emotion and ripe for reflection. I harvested a willingness to actively teach non-violence.

Our last evening together was heartfelt sharing our dinner and the view of the valley from the hillside nearby. We watch the day ease into night. As the moon rises we know we are moving on. But we are moving on with a clearer sense of our place in the world. We expanded our purpose guided by Gandhi's Talisman. We are forever Ahimsakas.

It's not hard to look back because in looking back I see the future unfolding. I still have no answers but I have better questions. My heart is engaged in transformational voice. My story echoes as I wonder. . .



Maureen West is a ceramics and art teacher in Cheyenne, Wyoming. She was a 2013 Ahimsa Fellow in the Institute on Gandhi, Sustainability and Happiness.

For K-12 curriculum produced by the Center's Ahimsa Fellows, please visit

<http://www.csupomona.edu/~ahimsacenter/k12/>

Promoting Balance and Harmony through Meditation in the Classroom

By Tazeen Rashid

Tests, projects, sports, due dates,... no time to socialize, too little time and too much homework!! These were listed as sources of stress by my 7th period IB Economics SL class. It made me question I am doing to promote happiness for my students.

I have become more aware of this question since my presentation and participation at the *Ahimsa and Sustainable Happiness Conference*, in November 2012 at Cal Poly. My presentation topic focused on teaching strategies that promote happiness through education. But the reality is that the course load that I and other IB teachers teach, clearly is not making our students too "happy"---even when we coordinate and try not to give all the projects at the same time, and make room for adjustments. Complaints just don't seem to stop, especially towards the end of the quarter! At times, it seems we are creating more unhappiness in the name of teaching! So how do we help our students achieve the IB Learner Profile of being *Balanced*? How do we weave in more balance in such rigorous courses?

One of the presenters at the conference at Ahimsa Center was Dr. Jarman from FAU. Dr. Jarman has worked closely with Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, the "father" of positive psychology and author of *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. Dr. Jarman presented on how meditation can promote success in school through better attention span and focus. Luckily Dr. Jarman is based right here in South Florida and so I got in touch with him and invited him to my class. When I mentioned this to my class, they were overjoyed! So I took this opportunity to ask my students to write reflective journals for 10 days on the sources of their 'stress'. The goal was to generate adequate amount of *self knowledge* on the topic, so that the session would be more effective.

When Dr. Jarman came to my class I had invited the Principal and another teacher who was interested in the topic. The main idea that Dr. Jarman shared with the students was that the mind needs to be seen as a separate entity and needs to be guided and "reigned". He told the students that every time we try to pay attention and focus on something, the mind tends to distract us. So we need to observe that, be aware of it and then bring the focus back to where it needs to be. To illustrate this, we did a breathing exercise where we simply focused on our breathing for 7 minutes and in the meantime observed where the mind was taking us. Every time the mind took us away from the focus on breathing, we had to bring the focus back on the breathing. In this way, we were guiding our mind

to focus, and were not allowing it to distract us. After the 7 minute session, we discussed our experiences and realized just how difficult it can be. Dr. Jarman emphasized that despite this we need to continue with the process : *observe the distraction,, label the thinking and bring it back to focus.* In this way we can strengthen our minds and develop more focus.

It is a simple process, yet quite revealing at a deeper level. It forces one to be aware of one's thinking process. Dr. Jarman also mentioned how the mind is good at building up stories and thus creating stress. When this happens, we should cut the stories short and focus on what we are doing, instead of focusing on the stories.

The session ended with students reflecting on their list and sharing how this meditative process (of labeling the thought and bring the focus back) can help to bring their focus back to the moment. The students learnt that instead of worrying about all the tests and all the assignments they have to do, they can just focus on one assignment at a time, do it well, and then move on to the next. They also learnt that they needed to be aware of the stories that the mind creates and cut them short in order to avoid panic/stress and the *fight or flight mode!* Moreover, it was also clear that a level or organization and planning can help to keep the focus on what needs to be done.

In the end, we all felt we became more aware of our thinking process, how our mind works in creating stress and how we need to train and control it and not let it control us! We will continue our discussion on this in my 7th period class and assess how well we manage our time and assignments. We also start the class with a 7-minute "decluttering" session, just observing what is in our minds and getting rid of distractions/stories. We may not have reduced the work load but at least we have some tools now with which to deal with it. Most importantly, we learnt that we need to make *time* to de-clutter the mind and bring the focus to where it needs to be!

I would like to thank Dr. Sethia and the Ahimsa Center for creating this excellent opportunity to share these important topics at the *Ahimsa and Sustainable Happiness Conference* at Ahimsa Center, CalPoly and thank Dr. Jarman for sharing his insights with us! Dr. Jarman also has a website where he offers his service to students and teachers. (www.scholarisacademics.com)

Tazeen Rashid is an International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement Economics teacher at Suncoast High School, in West Palm Beach, Florida. She was 2011 Ahimsa Fellow .



Gandhi's Influence on My Teaching Practice

By Michael Csorba

When my colleague suggested I take two weeks of my summer and spend it in Los Angeles studying Gandhi, Sustainability, and Happiness, I thought to myself, "How in the world is this going to be useful when teaching high school English?" Additionally, my background is completely Western; I grew up on Long Island, raised Catholic, studied British and American literature in college, and now teach teenagers the ins and outs of the classic texts in the American and British canon. How would Gandhi influence my life, both personally and professionally?

Despite this skepticism, I took the plunge and headed out to Cal Poly Pomona, met forty educators from across the United States, and began a journey that challenged the very lens through which I viewed the world. (Notice, I used the past tense "viewed.") The

Being surrounded by some of the most inspirational educational leaders I have had the good fortune of meeting at the Ahimsa Center, gave me hope and reminded me that teaching does enhance the human condition.

immersion into the study of Gandhi, Sustainability, and Happiness led me to a new view of my surroundings and my place in it. Not only was I an individual living in this world, teaching students the treasures found between the covers of novels, but I was part and parcel of the world. My connection to the Earth and others demanded I respond accordingly. This connection and challenge was inspired by the life and teachings of Gandhi, and because of the connection I have to the world around me the very notion of nonviolence was questioned. What it meant to be nonviolent in a political sense was always pretty clear to me, but what it meant to be nonviolent in relation to the concept of sustainability was new and demanded a different view than the one I previously knew. Additionally, in order to practice ahimsa, in order to develop my personal swaraj (both ideas were completely new to me) I needed to find freedom in my life from the things that I latch onto. Needless to say, the concept of ahimsa is a work in progress, a journey I am traversing.

But wasn't this supposed to inform my teaching practice? Indeed. Being surrounded by some of the most inspirational educational leaders I have had the good fortune of meeting at the Ahimsa Center, gave me hope and again, reminded me that teaching does enhance the human condition. The original skepticism with which I approached this course was shattered once I arrived. Working with others to help craft new

curricula was powerful and effective. I returned to Massachusetts with two lessons centered on nonviolence. My students read and responded to teachings of Gandhi in relationship to the teachings of Emerson, Thoreau, and King. Through reflective and analytic writing my students expressed the scholarly connections between these great thinkers, as well as the influence that they have had on their own lives. Students found that these ideas rang true for them, forced them to look at their relationships with one another, and were still relevant today. Additionally, after talking with my colleague and former Ahimsa fellow, Laura Hirshfield, I was able to expand my own teaching practice with her ideas. While teaching satire, specifically, Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" I introduced students to Caesar Chavez and his work with the American Farm Workers Movement. After looking at a more contemporary version of injustice and another example of nonviolent peaceful protests, students were demanding to know why they had never heard of Chavez before, why were they not learning about his work in social studies. The lessons I used in my classroom have sparked deep questioning among the students and, quite frankly, why else do we teach? It is more than the mastery of skills and content; is it not to bear witness to the opening of minds and hearts that a future generation is capable of?

The people and connections made between fellows dramatically influenced the lens I know use to see the world. Together, we shared the great joys of self-discovery and the pain of loss. Some of us have reunited to rekindle and sustain the fire that was lit last August. I am grateful that there are three Ahimsa fellows working at my school. This allows for the teachings of Gandhi to continue to percolate and penetrate the lives of teachers and students alike.



Michael Csorba is an English teacher at the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School in Acton, MA.

He was a 2013 Ahimsa Fellow in the Institute on Gandhi, Sustainability and Happiness.



My life is my message.

-M.K. Gandhi

Ahimsa and Community

A Meditation Emergency

By Adam Timm



In the city of Los Angeles, the police force functions primarily through the eyes and ears of the citizens, who are plugged in via the 911 phone lines. To the operators who field the nearly 3 million calls that arrive, cultivating a sense of unattached, yet compassionate attention to

each call is essential, but what happens when these skills are not a part of training? I found out through the fires of experience.

It was another long week. Call after call after call -- about loud parties, children playing football in the street ("they might hit my car!"), barking dogs, a dispute with a neighbor that has festered for years -- grinds on a 911 operator working the non-emergency phone lines. It's not that we don't want to help, it's just that we can't always help in the way the callers demand. To most who call, everything's an emergency. That Friday night, a man called 911 to report yet another loud party. His response to the question, "Sir, is this a 911 emergency?" put it perfectly. "It is to me," he remarked.

So the life of a 911 operator is difficult for a reason other than you might expect. With 70% of all 911 calls in the city of Los Angeles non-emergency in nature, it isn't the emergency calls that are the most stressful. The years of training kick in when an emergency call comes in. It only takes 2 minutes to get the pertinent information necessary to send the police in an emergency situation. A truly traumatic call may only happen once or twice in a 911 operator's career.

Yet day-in, day-out, operators are inundated by the demands of a public who want immediate results, on their terms. And when the demands aren't met, the operator all-too-often receives a vindictive lashing from the demanding caller. This is what really wears on the operators.

On a busy night in LA, depending on the area of the city, it's possible for it to take over an hour for the police to respond on a loud party. It could even take three...four...five...even six hours. No exclamation needed here. It's just the nature of policing the most densely populated areas of the city. The police really are busy handling higher priority shootings, domestic violence and other crimes of violence. A loud party, no matter how annoying, is, unfortunately for those losing sleep, not an urgent police matter. According to the

system of call prioritization, calls that are not urgent and not life-threatening must wait. Unfortunately for the dad who just wants his family to get to sleep.

His impatience grows as he calls back after 15 minutes - the loud music continues, still no police response. He calls back again in another half-hour. The party rages. More anger, more frustration experienced, then directed at the 911 operator.

This angry caller is not unique. He is one of hundreds this evening. It's not easy for the operator to keep from reflecting this frustration - even though it's not personal - and then becoming angry, bitter, and feeling hopeless themselves.

This was my experience. After seven years as a 911 operator, bearing the brunt of callers' displaced aggression, my life felt like a prison. I was chronically stressed, suffering from tension headaches, indigestion, daily feelings of frustration and anger -- burned out and miserable with no apparent escape route.

Then I discovered a pathway to freedom: I took a meditation class. I began sitting and breathing for 15 minutes each day, watching my thoughts and feelings, and understanding how my thoughts were creating my reality. I saw how resistant I was to the words spoken by the angry and frustrated callers. I would catch myself thinking, "Don't they know that they can catch more bees with honey?" Why aren't they polite, respectful? Valid questions, I guess, but questions posed because of my hope and expectation of different behavior. Rather than embracing acceptance, I projected my expectations onto each caller as judgment, and set myself up for struggle. This awareness was huge. It forced me to take action.

I saw that, on a moment-by-moment basis, I could choose surrender. I could choose compassion. I could choose to stop the cycle of frustration, and simply show up in whatever way I was being asked. Things became much easier as I walked this middle way. Within six months of beginning my meditation practice, my life had transformed. I was happier, more content, more present for callers and to my life outside of work.

Struck by the simplicity and accessibility of this pathway to transformation, I wanted to share it with my coworkers. With the blessing of the commanding officer, the first meditation-based stress reduction program at the LAPD was borne. Over 100 operators have come through the program, learning their own pathway to surrender. Their stories are inspiring. Tales of easier times at the call center, less sick time usage, unshakable joy, and more peace at home.

Sara, a mother of three, realized she had a habit of taking on too much and not asking her family for help. She saw that she did this on the 911 lines too, taking on the personal struggles of each caller. Meditation allowed her to relax this tendency and

choose something different. She enlisted the help of her kids and her husband at home, she stopped taking callers so personally. The result? Many more smiles! Less headaches! Her daughter exclaiming, "Mom, you seem so much more relaxed."

This is a hopeful message. An amazing testament to the power of the meditative path. To the power of inner peace. Even the most hardened 911 operators can change in a matter of weeks, just by stepping in their own inner stillness. The ripples of their inner stillness are then felt by hundreds of callers each week, thousands each month. What could happen if this vital tool was taught from training? Or better yet, taught in elementary school?

The path of peace is not alien to any of us. It is our natural inclination. When we practice touching the peace within, we get to take it with us wherever we go, whatever we're doing. Even if we're making a call to 911 for a non-emergency. Instead of getting angry when we're transferred to the non-emergency lines, we can surrender, knowing that the person on the other end of the line is just doing their job.

*Adam Timm is a certified stress management consultant and author of the #1 bestselling book, **Stress is Optional! How to Kick the Habit**. A retired 9-1-1 operator, Adam founded his company, ZenLife Services, to help others escape the daily grind and be happy again. ZenLife's workshops and programs have been used by police agencies, college faculties, and high-stress organizations around the country.*

We are Bundled Together

By Barbara English

"We are bundled together," was the first description of Ubuntu I ever heard. I fell in love with the word, the guiding philosophy for post-Apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and came to select it as part of our organization's name, Living Ubuntu. Most in the Western world have never heard of it, let alone how it pertains to ahimsa.

Desmond Tutu explained it this way: *It is to say, "My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in what is yours."... We say, "A person is a person through other persons." A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed... To forgive is not just to be altruistic. It is the best form of self-interest. What dehumanizes you inexorably dehumanizes me. [Forgiveness] gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanize them.*

Living Ubuntu focuses on trauma and recovery. I have come to think of Ubuntu as how we live when we are in a healthy human state -- trauma interrupts it. Chronic and traumatic stress cause significant changes in our mind and body. The fight-flight system is highly effective for dealing with life-threatening situations, but it is not a good strategy for living. When it persists long-term, we may lose our ability to feel that we belong to a greater whole. When self-survival is dominant, species-survival gets sacrificed.

Peter Levine, international trauma recovery expert, said: *While there are many theories of war, there is one root cause that seems not to have been widely acknowledged. And yet it is perhaps the single most important root cause of the form modern warfare has taken. Its perpetuation, escalation, and violence, at least, can be attributed to post traumatic stress.*

We live in a world of traumatized societies and efforts for peace must begin to address this. In light of numerous global conflicts and natural disasters that impact mass populations, recovery paradigms need to undergo dramatic changes.

Working in collaboration with local refugee organizations, psychotherapists, and university faculty, in 2014, we will launch a pilot project in San Diego, Trauma Recovery for East African Refugees. Our 2012 survey of this population revealed more than 80% suffer from symptoms of trauma. Left unaddressed, ongoing high rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, street violence, and trans-generational trauma would be expected.

Our community-based pilot will include 80 refugees who will be educated about stress, trauma, domestic violence, trans-generational trauma, and recovery. We will also teach Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises (TRE), a somatic trauma recovery method successfully used with large traumatized populations in many countries around the world. For more information, please visit: www.livingubuntu.org



Barbara English is a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist with over 20 years of experience in the field. As a Certified Bioenergetic Therapist, she works from a mind-body perspective, and

utilizes relational somatic methods as part of the process toward healing and a sense of wellbeing. Much of her training has focused on Early Development, Infant Mental Health, and healing after abuse or trauma. She is a co-founder and Executive Director of Living Ubuntu, and a 2009 Carl Wilkens Fellow with Genocide Intervention Network.

A Dawn Within

By Saumi Shokraee



Saumi Shokraee, a junior at Dana Hills High School, was 15 years old when he presented at the TEDx youth event held in 2013, giving a talk about inter-connectedness and Carl Sagan.

You wake up to the light of the sun slowly seeping into your eyes. As you awaken, you begin to hear a soft singing coming from the birds in the canopies above. Your eyes adjust, and you are flooded by a shade of deep green. You look around and see your fellow humans sleeping on the soil of your home planet: Earth. The frigid yet refreshing temperature of the air allows you to see the breath leave their noses like mist. You fill your lungs with a breath of the air of life. This air is light and alive. As the sun rises further and further into the sky, the light peeking through the trees allows you to see that the air is rich in content. You decide to take a walk down to the bluffs: where the ocean kisses the land. You feel a light breeze playing against your face. Sitting on the edge of these cliffs, you contemplate the nature of nature. In front of you stands a vast ocean, part of an even vaster planet that is part of an even vaster universe. Endless questions begin to flood your mind, and you are engulfed by curiosity. You listen to the rhythm of the ocean... wave after wave... almost like the beat of your heart. Could it be that the thing that causes the waves to crash is the same thing that causes my heart to beat? You move your legs around beneath you, and some of the sand on the cliff falls downward. You watch the sand smoothly flow through the nooks and crannies of the rocks... The sand was flowing like water! All of sudden, you are immersed in an astounding realization: it is all connected.

These thoughts occupied my mind over the most insightful week of my life. I had just returned from the "Monterey Bay Field Study", a camping/educational trip run by my school. Throughout this trip, we traveled along the California coastline from Orange County all the way up to Monterey Bay. Our studies encompassed a broad range of fields with a focus on marine sciences.

When I was standing on the edge of that cliff, I found myself buried deep within the ocean. I realized that I was not just a part of the universe, but that I was the universe. The ocean, and the rest of the world, was not only an extension of me but also an extension of every other human being who had ever walked the planet. Gazing out into

the abyss, I felt a deep yearning within me: to return to the ancient times... when we woke up together, without alarms, with the rising sun as one... when the only sounds entering our ears were from nature and our kin, including not only humans but from all other life... when the only light at night was from our campfires and the moon... when we only took what we needed from our mother Earth... when we breathed in nothing but the air she had bestowed upon us.

Now, having been completely immersed in Earth's beauty and fragility for a week, I have truly realized the interwoven network of dependence that links our entire planet into one complex and incomprehensibly intricate web. Never before have I felt so at peace with life... as still as drops of rain on a pond... and as bare and raw as rock... I can only hope that this stillness will be preserved for many generations to come, so that our grandchildren, too, can witness this dawn within.

It has become evident that some of the technologies developed during the industrial revolution have posed a danger to our planetary environment. If we ever do leave our mother because of her death, I can't help but wonder: will living elsewhere in the universe ever be the same? Will our children living elsewhere in the solar system ever look up into their sky and try to find their bright, blue, but dead mother hanging in darkness? Will they even remember their origins? Or care for that matter? Will they have learned from our mistakes? Will they remember us and forgive us? Only time will tell.

When we first ventured to the moon during the space race, we looked back upon ourselves and noticed for the first time how unbelievably fragile we were. Earth, hanging there in all her glory, was gazing into her self and becoming aware of her own vulnerability. In nearly every classroom around the world, there is a globe of the Earth labeled with international divisions. However, from above, there are no boundaries, no barriers, and no borders. Earth was seen for the first time as being one singular entity.

Nature continually brings to our attention the unity of all things. Knowing that we are not separate from nature, we can strive to incorporate this understanding into our everyday lives. We can apply this perspective into building stronger communities and an increased effort towards global cooperation. We are all in this together, and the first step to making this a part of our daily understanding is to admit our unity. All of our self-imagined divisions and separations must be released from our grasp. We must humble ourselves in order to understand that the person living next door is not a foreign being.

As founder and president of his school's science club, Saumi longs to become a scientist who pursues higher knowledge and a deeper understanding of the natural world. Saumi encourages the pursuit of knowledge within the younger generation by teaching an astronomy class at the boys and girls club of San Juan. He is also a member of his school's National Ocean Sciences Bowl team.

Katie Zaroni, cont. from page 5

The success and growth of this program is a testimony to the fact that Peace Studies as a formal discipline is an expanding field that can be institutionalized within academic systems to further credibility and create a viable academic path for learners. As an invitation to all educators, I encourage you to infiltrate the system and create the space to consider ideas of peace and nonviolence in the formal classroom. In my closing days with my recent course on nonviolence, I invited our learning community to set an intention to consider nonviolence in their lives in an effort to create a culture of peace within their community. One student stated, "What I'm going to do to live a nonviolent lifestyle is by getting to know myself. I want to be able to look at myself and see how my lifestyle is and how I could change it into having a nonviolent lifestyle." Another student reflected that he would like to stop engaging in violence, but that there were several challenges in attaining this goal, one being that, "peace studies or the practice of peace...is ignored so it's difficult to try and influence others in these low income areas but not impossible". He concluded that, "someone has to begin to try and influence the community so that we can begin to respect each other and live in a more peaceful world". I leave this student's request as an open invitation to all educators, formal and informal, to seek out opportunities to infuse Peace Studies curricula into courses or schools in order to realize the full potential of peace.

Katie Zaroni transitioned from the non-profit world into the community college system and spent the last six years developing and teaching in the Peace Studies, Sustainability, and Conflict Resolution programs at San Diego City College. Katie is currently pursuing a doctorate degree at the University of San Francisco in International and Multicultural Education with a concentration in Human Rights Education.

Intimate Partner Violence and its Resolutions through Nonviolent Action By Jessica Molina

Domestic Violence studies unanimously find that by far, the group that is most affected by domestic violence is women. The particular form of domestic violence that women habitually experience is called Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). IPV can be defined as physical, emotional or sexual abuse towards a current or former partner or by individuals who are parents to a common child. Although the violence is directed at women, it can also have adverse effects on the children, the perpetrators, and family and

friends outside of the family.

Domestic violence is just one of the many forms of violence. The nonviolent approach to seeking justice is through a confrontational and systematic process of understanding the perpetrator's motivation and purpose for enforcing violent control. The perpetrators lack a sense of social responsibility because they see a difference between themselves and the victims. If the perpetrators could learn to respect others, violence would gradually diminish.

Learning to use nonviolence is not an easy and simple task. Nonviolent action may be a completely new form of thinking that may actually go against traditional societal norms. The victims will need to find compassion in their hearts for the ignorance of the IPV perpetrator. This is representation of *Satyagraha*, a steadfast conviction in a true cause, or "insistence on truth". The victim should feel a sense of responsibility for changing the abuser's need for power. It is the fear that feeds the perpetrator's power. By the control and confidence of the victimized individual to stand against the abusive language and assaults, the perpetrator's power will diminish.

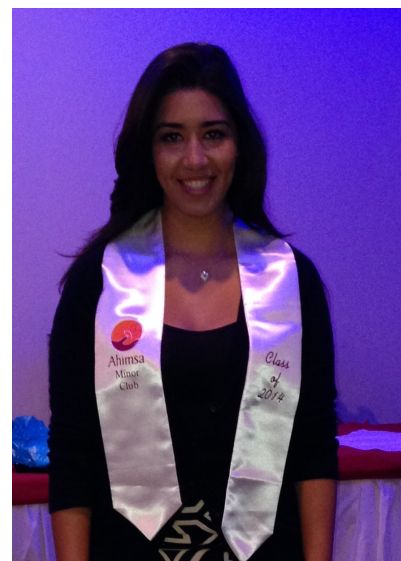
The Dalai Lama speaks to this when he states, "[i]f a person shows anger to you and you respond with anger, the result is disaster. In contrast, if you control anger and show the opposite attitude-anger will gradually diminish." For example, in a physical altercation between a woman and her abuser, fighting back will only fuel the desire of the perpetrator to further dominate the victim. This can lead to physical violence as a normalized way of communication. A victim should of course practice self-defense and protect the children, but arguing and partaking in the physical fight should not be an option. By exposing the children to the idea that fighting is not an act that should be further aggravated, it will instill in them that violence does not produce a healthy resolution. Instead, a victim should call on law enforcement to intervene. Shutting down the violence as soon as it occurs empowers the victim in protecting themselves.

Although the resolution may not sound revolutionary, what is revolutionary is the motivation behind combating the IPV. It derives from a place of individual empowerment and self realization that such actions are unjust. In a letter written in May of 1936, Gandhi wrote "nonviolence is a power which can be wielded equally by all-children, young men and women or grown up people, provided they have a living faith in the God of Love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not be applied to isolated acts." From Gandhi's example, women and children can find the resiliency in nonviolence to become strong-willed individuals. Regardless of an individual's age or status, introduction to the practice of nonviolence can eventually be understood and implemented in daily life.

Nonviolent methods can help the victims overcome their fear, but nonviolent methods can also aid the perpetrators in overcoming their violent ways. An example of the power of nonviolence is that of Angulimala, the murderer, from the novel *The Buddha and the Terrorist* whom by the grace and faith of Buddha shows how reform is possible for anyone. We must remember that "justice being served" is not always the correct way to end conflict. The King tells Buddha, he must seek justice for the families of the killed, but Buddha responds, "[r]evenge and justice are not the same...Forgiveness is superior to justice...True forgiveness and compassion come only when one able to forgive even those who have committed barbaric acts." One must always battle against injustice; however, seeking justice is not always a nonviolent method.

Using nonviolence to combat the injustice of IPV is not just for a select few, but instead it is for all of those willing to make the transformation. A perpetrator of IPV must recognize the wrong they have committed and accept how weak the power they have accumulated is. They must also be mindful of the effects the exposure to violence has had on them personally, their victims, and even witnesses.

As stated in *The Living Gandhi* there must be discipline against instant gratification because nonviolence is a process and path of enrichment. Ultimately, the actions of an individual will reflect how willing she or he is in immersing nonviolence into their values and beliefs. Actions will reflect compassion, courage, and self-restraint. It is not the sole responsibility of the perpetrator to educate themselves and adopt nonviolence, but the victim should also be willing to aid the perpetrator.



Jessica Molina is graduating in 2014 with Psychology Major and Nonviolence Studies Minor. She served as the president of the Ahimsa Student Club, 2013-2014.

2013 AHIMSA FELLOWS

Gandhi, Sustainability, and Happiness: Fifth National Residential Institute for K-12 Teachers

Cal Poly Pomona, July 29-August 12, 2013



Ahimsa Fellows at the concluding banquet. Tara Sethia (center) standing next to the newest Ahimsa Center donors— Rika Shah and Manu Shah in the Center (below the chandelier); Nirmal Sethia, Nancy Ibrahim and Mahmood Ibrahim (from the right in the front); Andrew Moss (back); Christian Bracho (sitting far left in the front), and Susan Milan (back row, behind the Shahs).



Artwork created and gifted to the Center by the 2013 Ahimsa Fellows

AHIMSA FELLOWS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

- Carrie Abel, Los Altos High School, CA
- Diana Benn, Butler Traditional High, KY
- Wilfred Berlin, Daniel Webster High School, OK
- Jode Brexa, Arapahoe Campus, CO
- Cindy Cheung, International High School at Union Square, NY
- Harvey Creggett, Meyzeek Middle School, KY
- Kari Crum, Lake County Middle/ High School, CO
- Michael Csorba, Acton Boxborough Regional High School, MA
- Cheri Donkersgoed, Danube Avenue Elementary, CA
- Paula Dreyfuss, Chaparral High School Continuation, CA
- Aimee Finney, Stephen F. Austin High School, TX
- Elizabeth Flesh, Herbert Hoover High School, CA
- Victoria Hallberg, Graham-Kapowsin High School, WA
- Bonnie Kayser, Clackamas High School, OR
- Katherine Lauher, Austin Meehan Middle School, PA
- Jolene Lockwood, Cheyenne Central High School, WY
- Fanny Machado, Creekside Middle School, CA
- Sam McHale, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, MA
- Melba Neal, Language Arts & Social Justice Magnet, CA
- Catherine Nelson, Twentynine Palms Elementary School, CA
- Angela Newport, McMinnville High School, OR
- Lisa Pate, Palmer Ridge High School, CO
- Lauren Petzold, Fox Meadow Middle School, CO
- Michael Podmore, Yampah Mountain High School, CO
- Nicole Ponti, Salem High School, NH
- Karin Rose, Fremont Elementary School, CO
- Vanessa Savas, Codman Academy Charter School, MA
- Mary Schriener, Cleveland Elementary, CA
- Noel Sill, Point Loma High School, CA
- Maureen West, Central High School, WY

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ABOUT THE AHIMSA CENTER

Established in 2004 in the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, the Ahimsa Center is focused on interdisciplinary teaching and learning about nonviolence and its practical applications at personal, interpersonal, societal, national, and international levels. Educational and outreach initiatives of the Center facilitate an understanding of ahimsa as a positive force informing the ways of thinking as well as living.

The Center provides an institutional forum to innovatively serve and foster synergistic interactions among many important stakeholders.

Educational initiatives of the Center, such as the establishment of the Nonviolence Studies Minor on our campus, help students acquire an appreciation of nonviolence at intellectual and practical levels.

To integrate in the K-12 curricula an interdisciplinary understanding of nonviolence and nonviolent social change, the center has launched a fellowship program for the K-12 educators and offers summer institutions for them. Finally, for the benefits of the larger community, the Center organizes Conference, symposiums, lectures, dialogues, workshops, and special events focusing on a deeper understanding of nonviolence as a way of life.

The Center is playing a pioneering role by fostering a vision in which each individual is an important player in the building and sustaining a culture of nonviolence. It is a vision for cooperation and Collaboration among fellow human beings on the basis of mutual respect, trust, and self restraint. It is a vision where one sees that any violence inflicted on others is a violence inflicted on oneself.

Ahimsa Center
California State Polytechnic University
Pomona, CA 91768
Director: Dr. Tara Sethia
(909) 869-3868/tsethia@csupomona.edu
www.csupomona.edu/ahimsacenter

BOOK LAUNCH OF THE LIVING GANDHI

Hosted by the Aditya Birla Group December 23, 2013, Mumbai, India



Top from Left :

Dr. B. K. Singh, Aditya Birla Group, welcoming all and introducing Mrs. Rajashree Birla.

Mrs. Birla launching the book, *The Living Gandhi*, edited by Tara Sethia and Anjana Narayan and published by Penguin.

Ahimsa Sponsor, Mr. Pravin Mody, who was visiting India, was recognized by Dr. Singh.

Dr. Tara Sethia introducing the book, and the Ahimsa Center to the audience (below).

In the audience are the leading professionals and members of community from Mumbai, including (from left, front row) Ms. Rajni Bakshi, contributing author to *Living Gandhi*, Arun Gandhi (grandson of the Mahatma), Mr. Askaran ji Agrawala and Mr. Sharad Saraf.

