

---

## GANDHIJI'S YOGIC LIFE STYLE

Dr. Hetal Prajapati  
Visiting Faculty, Yoga  
HNGU, Patan

Mahatma Gandhi was a Karma Yogi, Jap and Hath yogi. He tried to put in to practice various Yama and Niyama as Karma Yogi, "UpavasaAndolan" as Hath Yogi and "RAM" Mantra chanting as Japa Yogi. He tried to follow the path of Truth, Non-Violence, Self-Restrain, Brahmacharya(chastity), Asana, etc. Practicing Karma Yoga means accepting that every action has consequence which ripple out, as a pebble thrown in to lack.

Mahatma Gandhiji's Bhajan "Vaishnavajan To TeneKahie Je peed Parayi Jane Re" is the best example of karma Yogi. Mahatma Gandhi also followed "Jap Yoga" by chanting mantra "RAM". He was attached to "Ram Nam" "up till his end –event at the time of his death he uttered "Hey Ram" which certainly gave him liberation.

He followed yogic life rules which guided him through life are

1. Ahinsa(nonviolence)
2. Truthfulness
3. Astey(non –stealing)
4. Brahmacharya(chastity)
5. Aparigrah(non –possessiveness)
6. Shauch (purity, cleaning of body, mind and speech)
7. Santosh (contentment)
8. Tapas (self-decipline)
9. Swaddhyay(study of self and Vedas)
10. Ishvarpranidhan (contemplation of the Ishwar)

Gandhiji kept contact with Yogis of his time like Shri Kuvalyananda of Lonavala and Pandit Shri Pad DamodarSatvelekar of Swaddhyay Mandal, and as advised by them, from time to time, he practised Yoga Asanas, simple pranayama, Massage, drinking water through the nose (Jal-Neti), etc. to keep his body and mind fit and free from diseases. The late Shri Mahadev Desai used to help him in performing Yoga Asanas and Massage.

Gandhiji lived his life with the "aparigrah" policy which means use require things and save unnecessary wastage like water, food, clothes, utensil, etc. so he was the main icon of "SAVE WATER" and "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan". Gandhiji lived his life with main concept of Yoga to serve humanity. Throughout his life, Gandhi performed incredible amounts of work, for he was very little influenced by personal likes and dislikes, whims and fancies. He cleaned his mind of the dross that clutters the mind of most people. Because of this, he was able to view the problems of India and the work that was his duty with pristine clarity. He was able to see only the facts of a situation, without the superimposition of his imagination. His mind was like a magnifying glass- able to see all the details of a situation with heightened clarity. Most people have a mind that is like a misted magnifying glass- only able to see a distorted picture of things because of inner problems.

Mahatma Gandhi was a karma Yogi so he believed in Equality, Purity, Service, Respect, Commitment, Hard work, Courage, Self- discipline, Simplicity, Non-violence, love etc.

Most decision in the world are influenced by personal friendships and enmities. Gandhiji was able to overcome this one-sidedness, and it is through this that he obtained his strength. He had no real personal friends in the usual sense of the world, for all people were his friends, even his so-called enemies. None of his actions were done as a favour. He acted because something needed to be done; the situation demanded it to be so. He did that which benefited people in general, that which was for the overall good of the people of India. Some people say that he was stubborn, but actually he did things because he knew his own mind, could understand the mind of other people and the world situation in a clear light and not in distorted light. He was a politician who had a strong mind, yet he showed deep and sincere compassion for all. By vocation he was a politician; by aspiration he was a great Karma Yogi.

Mahatma Gandhi achieved what he did by cleaning out his mind, by continuous effort, and by Karma Yoga. Because of this, he did tremendous amounts of work, both efficiently and without leaving things half done. He never seemed to tire of his work, unlike most other people who do an hour's work and then lose interest or become fatigued. Why was this? The answer course lies with the mind. Gandhiji, through relentless practice of Karma Yoga, backed up by other forms of yoga including Bhakti and Kriya Yoga, was able to clean his mind. A mind that is calm can do the most intense work for long periods of time without fatigue. It doesn't become diverted by external distraction or inner disturbance.

The combination of concentrated power and detachment becomes almost irresistible. it moves mountains, as the saying goes. Gandhiji clearly illustrated this, and we emphasize once more that detachment doesn't mean disdain for the things of the world. Gandhiji, though he was surely detached, nevertheless felt and expressed overwhelming compassion. Detachment is the attitude of mind where no matter what happens, there is no negative repercussion and resulting mental disturbance in the mind. One does the best that one doesn't allow external events to unbalance or 'throw' the mind. This attitude can be slowly developed and applied as it was shown successfully done by Mahatma Gandhi.

There are many other people, both famous and unknown, who have shown that karma yoga is not just an unrealistic ideal, but that it is possible. Saints like Swami Vivekanand and Swami Sivananda expressed total ego lessness in their interaction with world – perfect expression, perfect response to given circumstances. What this people have done, you also can achieve. The path and the possibility are open to everyone. Each person can develop a powerful one-pointed mind. Each person can become a Karma Yogi. All that is required is the urge to attain perfection, together with relentless and continuous practice.