

GANDHI - THE ROOSTER'S CROW AND LOVE FOR TRUTH



That day, Teo dashed home after school. He couldn't wait to tell his parents that the quote the teacher shared with them in class was the same one they had read together the day before. Everyone was impressed by how well-prepared the boy was during the group discussion that followed. All the credit went to Mom and Dad! They loved to share inspiring and uplifting quotations and life stories with their children. "Great Souls inspire!", was his father's favorite pet phrase. "We can learn a lot from them!" He would add.

The passage they read was a famous quote by Mohandas Gandhi, a man of an extraordinary character who was revered worldwide for being a bold promoter of Non-violence, and was considered the father of India's Independence from British rule. Gandhi had named his movement "Satyagraha", which meant the "force of truth", or "perseverance in truth": its aim was to uphold non-violent resistance. He considered Truth a sacred and fundamental Human Value. The desire to always abide by it was triggered in him when, as a child, he displeased his mother for having told a lie. Here's how it went: Gandhi's mother was a pious and devout woman, and fervently practiced a daily ritual: she pledged not to eat anything before hearing the rooster crow. She was very disciplined and respected her vow without fail, except once when little Gandhi imitated the cock's crowing to prevent her from going without her breakfast. The boy had been moved by a feeling of concern for his mother, but his dishonest behavior made her feel ashamed and very angry. He regretted having disappointed her so much that on that very day he vowed to always respect Truth. As Gandhi grew up he realized that being sincere is only one aspect of Truth, and that the Value of Truth is rooted in Love.

The Value of Nonviolence has different aspects, too. Nonviolence doesn't only mean to abstain from harming physically (which is already important!). It implies avoiding to act in a violent manner in the way you speak, or look at others, and even by entertaining bad thoughts!

Gandhi was a wise and divinely inspired man who would always act in line with his principles and Conscience, which is why he is known as the “Mahatma”, the “Great Soul”. He was born in India way back in 1869, and moved to England in 1891 where he graduated in law before returning to his homeland in 1915. Thanks to both his professional aptitudes and his deep reverence for Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Nonviolence, he did great things during his lifetime, and will be remembered forever!

That morning Teo’s teacher shared Gandhi’s thoughts with great warmth of feeling with her students who were all deeply touched by them.

***“Humankind can free itself from violence only by resorting to Nonviolence.
Hate can only be defeated with love.
Responding to hatred with hatred only increases the magnitude
and depth of hatred itself.”***

Gandhi

The Truth in Gandhi’s words made everyone think of all the ugly scenes they had seen on TV, or of the sad stories they had heard from family members living in a war zone. The class shared their feelings, hopes and wishes for a better, more peaceful world, and made an unanimous decision: to follow Gandhi’s example. The principle of Nonviolence would guide them throughout their lives!

Teo was happy that his teacher and parents were in tune with Human Values. Knowing that the same values had an important place at home and at school made him feel safe and secure. Gandhi’s life had been a revelation to him and his friends, and they all agreed that “Great Souls inspire!”