

# Gandhian Conflict Norms

As systematized by Johan Galtung, *The Way is the Goal: Gandhi Today*,  
Gujarat Vidyapith Peace Research Centre, Ahmedabad, India, 1992

## 1. Goals and Conflict

- 1.1 Act in conflicts!
  - Act now!
  - Act here!
  - Act for your own group!
  - Act out of identity!
  - Act out of conviction!
- 1.2 Define the conflict well!
  - State your own goals clearly!
  - Try to understand your opponent's goal!
  - Emphasize common and compatible goals!
  - State the conflict-relevant facts objectively!
- 1.3 Have a positive approach to conflict!
  - Give the conflict a positive emphasis!
  - See the conflict as opportunity to meet the opponent!
  - See conflict as opportunity to transform society!
  - See the conflict as opportunity to transform yourself!

## 2. Conflict Struggle

- 1.1 Act non-violently in conflicts!
  - Do not hurt or harm with deeds!
  - Do not hurt or harm with words!
  - Do not hurt or harm with thoughts!
  - Do not harm the opponent's property!
  - Prefer violence to cowardice!
  - Do good even to the evil-doer!
- 2.2 Act in a goal-consistent manner!
  - Always include a constructive element!
  - Use goal-revealing forms of struggle!
  - Act openly, not secretly!
  - Aim the struggle at the correct point!
- 2.3 Do not cooperate with evil!
  - Non-cooperation with evil structure!
  - Non-cooperation with evil status!
  - Non-cooperation with evil action!
  - Non-cooperation with those who cooperate with evil!
- 2.4 Be willing to sacrifice!
  - Do not escape from punishment!
  - Be willing to die if necessary!
- 2.5 Do not polarize!
  - Distinguish between antagonism and antagonist!
  - Distinguish between person and status!
  - Maintain contact!
  - Empathy with your opponent's position!
  - Be flexible in defining parties and positions!
- 2.6 Do not escalate!
  - Remain as loyal as possible!
  - Do not provoke or let yourself be provoked!
  - Do not humiliate or let yourself be humiliated!
  - Do not expand the goals for the conflict!
  - Use the mildest possible forms of conflict behavior!

## 3. Conflict Resolution

- 3.1 Solve conflict!
  - Do not continue conflict struggle forever!
  - Always seek negotiation with the opponent!
  - Seek positive social transformations!
  - Seek human transformation!
    - of yourself!
    - of the opponent!
- 3.2 Insist on the essentials, not on the non-essentials!
  - Do not trade with essentials!
  - Be willing to compromise on non-essentials!
- 3.3 See yourself as fallible!
  - Remember that you may be wrong!
  - Admit your mistakes openly!
  - Consistency over time not very important!
- 3.4 Be generous in your view of the opponent!
  - Do not exploit the opponent's weaknesses!
  - Do not judge the opponent harder than yourself!
  - Trust your opponent!
- 3.5 Conversion, not coercion!
  - Always seek solutions that are accepted!
    - by yourself!
    - by the opponent!
  - Never coerce your opponent!
  - Convert your opponent into a believer of the cause!