PREFACE

HYPOTHESIS

There is no limit to what a learning individual can do or become within his lifetime through the processes of Self-Actualization, no matter where he/she is born.

The life of Mahatma Gandhi is the typical case under investigation.

following objectives were kept in mind:

1. To see Mahatma Gandhi, in all his activities as one whole being—the same person, in all situations, all his life, consciously self-actualizing himself.

2. To challenge the concept of ‘common people’. To dig out some knowledge base, some process of life that can bring ‘the uniqueness of each human being at the centre of humanity, at the centre of the universe as Tagore puts it:

“…that I have come and stood in the midst of this vast universe is a most wonderful event, there is nothing more momentous than it…”

3. This is the task—a huge task to discover how to install that knowledge base to open up and free all human beings into learning, growing, evolving individuals who can have an access to themselves and express their own unique existence into the full bloom of what they are.


1. The present situation is that human tasks have multiplied, become more complicated and sophisticated. Older human settlements are losing their identities and dissolving themselves into a bigger whole. The traditional leaderships that were capable of handling tribes or communities or regions or religions or nations are terribly incapacitated to handle the unification or globalization of humanity and human affairs.

2. Compulsions of today demand big, very big human beings in leadership positions, who are knowledgeable and competent enough to resolve problems afflicting human societies and manage more decently the affairs of mankind to make this world a better place to live for all, particularly for the last and lost ones on earth.

3. The so called developed structures of advanced societies do not answer their own existence or supremacy to those who are getting decimated or rolled over. Human growth is in question and turmoil and finds itself in a molten pot. There is need to handle this transition and transformation with much care and in a very comprehensive way.

4. The time context of this study is very important. These are not the times when people like Mohandas are honoured much in life.

Right now, a different kind of game of power is on.

Right now, most people are getting consumed in creating physical strengths, physical infrastructures that will, hopefully, provide a cradle for upbringing great many human giants, later.

At personal level, it is seen that the power of the material wealth is used to bully away those who possess less or question its legitimacy beyond a point.

At national level, the growth index has become money’s worth.

At global level, the rich are right who have the might.
A finer, superior, bigger human being has, at best, only an aesthetic existence and acceptance, if at all though he is the imperative necessity of present times to help resolve the confusion and chaos created by the power game of ‘mindless money hunters and material possessors’ in leadership roles in all walks of life, everywhere in the world. The stink of the superfluous, excessive surplus surrounding the powerful is spreading foul, suffocating, insatiable and self destructing social processes. Greed is replacing need.

5. The social structures of ‘controllers and the commoners’ are collapsing. Human spirit is seeking free expressions.

6. There is need to create social processes to handle transition and transformation as a continuing process of life.

7. Mohandas is often cited as an example of a giant individual who was living and expressing his self-actualization needs. The simplest way of looking at him from research point of view would be that he traveled through life and tried to answer questions on the way. The biggest tool of his search was his own life. He experimented with it and also with the lives of others and handed over all his findings to the world - 50,000 pages in 100 volumes of collected works and more. For the researcher, it is a treasure of first hand information and a huge data base on the life of one human being universally accepted as a self-actualizing and accomplished individual.

THE ‘CHITWANT CONCEPT’ FOR SELF - ACTUALIZATION

A man’s real self is not visible to ordinary investigation, they say. It appears, as if, he is trying to satisfy a hierarchy of ‘needs structure’ starting with physical to security to social to esteem and rarely to self-actualization. To the contrary,

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observations of the researcher from life and experience in general and the life of Mohandas in particular suggest that the only need one is expressing all the time is self-actualization and that too because one cannot but be oneself. A man is what he is, no matter what.

Although Indian and Western views about self, self perception, personal identity, self introspection, self knowledge, self - realization and consciousness have been used in the process of explaining the concept of self-actualization but there is little research available on how should one self - actualize. The management aspect of the play of expression of the ‘self as a whole - the integrated whole’ of an individual is missing.

“...To achieve desired results,
a person must know what he wants, assume that he can achieve it, take decisions to act on it, get into searching appropriate knowledge and means to accomplish what he wants, acquire necessary management skills and competence to turn that knowledge into reality and adopt a relevant life style to accommodate all that he is doing and living.

To grow and blossom to his fullness,
he will have to own the whole world for his arena, accept creation and respect its principles and stretch himself on the endless continuum, if he wants to discover and live his highest state to be, whatever he can be just by consciously doing ‘a little better everyday’ in everything is what the ‘Chitwant Concept’ for self – actualization is all about.

The ‘Chitwant Concept’ is further interpreted, classified and conceptualized in 7 - internal growth processes and 5 – arenas of self expression.

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6 Hersey, Paul., Blanchard, Kenneth H., Johnson, Dewey E., Management of Organizational Behavior, op. cit., p. 47
7 - INTERNAL GROWTH PROCESSES ARE:

1. Acquiring self – knowledge
2. Creating a barrier less mind
3. Own the earth
4. Mission of life
5. Pursuit of knowledge
6. Management skills
7. Organized life – style

THE 5 – ARENAS FOR SELF EXPRESSION ARE:

- Self
- Family
- Society
- Creation
- Infinite
The Chitwant Concept and Methodology has been dealt with in details in Chapter-II.

A person who is awakened to what he knows and consciously extends into the unknown to discover what he needs to know by doing a little better everyday, will soon acquire the status of a barrier less mind who should be able to grapple with any problem of any size or creed and become competent to discharge all responsibilities his position demands with a simultaneous status of a tranquil existence, taking care of everything that comes on his way. The ‘CHITWANT CONCEPT’ focuses on conscious processes of a learning human being and a conscious conduct of life where an individual develops his own management capabilities to create his own architecture of life; taking care of himself, his family, the society, the creation and the infinite.

MOHANDAS: ‘THE SELF – ACTUALIZING INDIVIDUAL’

The chronological track record of Mohandas, if critically examined in light of above, one finds he started from nowhere and reached nowhere but grew into himself as a ‘learning individual’ and came to be regarded as ‘mahatma’, ‘the

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saint’, ‘the father of a nation’ and ‘one of the greatest men on earth’.

Pearl Buck read him this way –

He is one of the greatest leaders of people, that there have been in human history. Such a leader comes only at the confluence of the people’s need and desire, with the birth of an individual, able by his natural gifts, to fill that need and express that desire. I never doubt for a moment that Gandhi’s purposes will be achieved. He has brought his people to the very gates of liberty. If they are not opened, the people of India will open them.

As J.H. Holms puts it –

We have not yet found our greatest man... what we need is a universal man - a man who is at once an idealist and a realist, a dreamer and a doer, a prophet who sees ‘the heavenly vision’ and ‘not unfaithful to [that] vision’ makes it come true. Is there any such person living in the world? I believe there is – unquestionably the greatest man living in the world today, and one of the greatest men who have ever lived. The man whom I have in mind is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Indian leader of the present great revolutionary movement against the British rule in India, known and reverenced by his countrymen as MAHATMA, ‘the saint’.

When I think of Rolland, I think of Tolstoy. When I think of Lenin, I think of Napoleon. But when I think of Gandhi, I think of Jesus. He lives his life; he speaks his words; he suffers, strives and will someday nobly die, for his Kingdom upon Earth.

This was the stature of this man, accepted universally, while he was still living his roles on earth.

He called himself a reformer.

As a reformer he learnt his game by doing, by experimenting, by making mistakes, learning from them and by struggling for results. And the track he followed became very dear to him because by that route only he had seen

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success. There might have been many routes to success, shorter and superior ones may be, but one that had been proven to him, through his way, was always dearer to him. This decided the course of his life and perhaps his destiny and the destiny of all those men and women whom he took along: the South African Indians, Muslims, Congressmen, fellow Gandhians, other Indians and people from elsewhere.

He did not look at his life as one whole – not in his autobiography, not ever in his life. He lived in parts and projects as his experiments with truth. He wanted to shape the whole world into what he dreamt the world should be. On the way, he effaced all obstacles, all opponents tactfully and mercilessly. He was a tremendous expression of what he was.

He accepted his family - wife and children and other relations on his own terms which he thought was a better care than to accept and do what they wanted. Harilal is a classic case in point.

Mohandas could not have been luckier than being destined to fight all his life for the cause of Indians with a ‘faltering giant player’ on the other side of the game. A tremendous situation nurtured him all along his life starting with his law education in London, first law assignment and grooming in South Africa and rest of the growth in India.

It is a well-recognized and well-understood fact of life that if ‘you engage yourself in a big task, you will grow big in what you are; and when you engage yourself in a small task, it will make you small’. The work helps one go deeper into oneself.

The real game of life starts in the year 1893 with a law assignment in South Africa when Mohandas was barely 24 years old.

He cherished to live like a ‘Londoner’ and not an Indian. When he got kicked

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9 Ibid., Vol. 76, p. 356.
10 Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 166.
11 Ibid., Chronology, p. 3.
12 Ibid., p. 4.
about as nobody in South Africa and received hatred and humiliation by the
tons from the whites: he was forced to realize and accept that he was only a
‘coloured Indian’. South Africa became his first chapter from the ‘book – of
life’ that he read and practiced and preached thoroughly for 21 years.

When rules become discriminatory, when rulers become smaller than their
roles, when people in power fall short of their responsibilities, anyone can walk
unto the stage and prove and expose the unworthiness of their governance. The
story of the ‘making of Mohandas’ had roots in the ‘fall of the British Empire’.
He learned to take the rich and powerful in his support, wooed most Indians
along and proved to the Empire that their governance was partisan, their laws
bad, their stature smaller than their project, their sense of justice faulty and
their fair play was foul. He challenged their existence and forced their
extinction, as they say.

Things were bad.

Indian people, both in South Africa and India would have carried on longer as
they were used to deprivation and humiliation but Mohandas became the major
cause of all trouble to the Empire.

He threw away his western dress and life style [not his knife and fork] and
accepted ‘dhoti and langoti’ as a strategic tool to fight. He became a mahatma
to Hindus and Jesus to Christians.

He did not have any upbringing to live with insult and deprecation; he could
not handle what the ‘Britishers’ gave him. He protested and from housetops.
His protests and cries inflamed harsher reactions and these harsher reactions
generated harder protests and more cries from him and other Indians resulting
in a spiral growth of unrest and wide spread colour war, class war and related
fall out. He did not know how to stop. This singled him out in favour of
Indians. He was made the leader.

He faced two options at the outset of his life: either live as a lawyer for a
livelihood as a commoner or fight against injustice. He predominantly picked the latter. He did make efforts to settle down in law profession in Bombay, India albeit without success. His head and heart longed for the game of South Africa. He shuttled back and forth initially but finally there he was in South Africa kicking and fighting.


He gave up guns but not the fight or aggression or even provocation. When words and wisdom became his weapons he picked them up from here and there and everywhere – from law books of the land, from history, from humanity, from those in power, from scriptures, from God and so on. In the social set up he was placed, suffering had become his lot whichever way he moved. He made self-suffering his weapon. He used self – suffering to whip co-operation from friends and followers. Self – suffering he used to expose and provoke his enemies to strip them naked in their cruelty and injustice. He intellectually and emotionally ragged and rode over every body – men, women, friends, followers and the foes.

Truth and justice became his sole shield. The games continued. He walked on the border of truth and untruth to explore new possibilities and exploited mysticism to his benefit. Experiments with truth became his life extending into anything he wanted to do. One thing led to another. He mastered each move with sincerity and dexterity. So he traveled on from one game to another - winning those that came on the way and leaving others, which he thought were not worth the effort or pursuit.

His make-up was anti-establishment – any establishment because he always insisted on things to be better than what existed. Thus he naturally came in conflict with every system of operation. He had to live in it and fight against.
He was the youngest in his family. He grew up under the protection of her mother whose unbridled love for him made her always willing to forgive him for anything, everything. They were very dear to each other. Being the youngest and fourth child of his father’s fourth wife - no responsibilities ever came to his share in a joint family set up. Early marriage at the age of 12 or 13 meant no family responsibilities of any kind. He just lived and had fun and loitered around with vagabond friends doing everything for which any teenager could be dumped.

As expected, a person in his setting should usually be a bad student in the class room. He grew up on his own as a free bird in a jungle. He developed the knack to go about his way and acquired skills to handle situations to his advantage, often at the cost of disadvantage to the other party. He always enjoyed his life and someone else paid his ‘bills’.

Since he belonged to the jungle, he was a free soul, open and straight in his thinking and actions and a killer by instinct. His upbringing equipped him to become whatever kind he chose to become.

Childhood pranks and boyish mischief apart, as a man starting from simple ‘court-room discourtesy’\(^{13}\) to the humiliated ‘coolie barrister’\(^{14}\) to the ‘suffering Indian’, he grew into the most unwanted Indian in South Africa who could be, should be, lynched\(^{15}\). But he was a fighter. He fought and fought in South Africa and India.

It was a typical fight:

a fight for the people he loved,

a fight of the ‘most obedient servant’ disobeying his masters,

a fight of the ruled against the rulers and

a fight of the mite against the mighty.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 56, 57.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., Vol. 44, pp. 170, 171.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 15.
Mohandas was no big power. He was no perfect being. He had many shortcomings – the biggest one was that he never took things to the climax, so to say, to the requirements of any body. Short of reaching what he was striving for, if he would become wiser and saw the futility or failure in what he was struggling for, he would abandon it and go for one higher mission, only again to realize that that too was not worth his pursuit. The process would frustrate those who followed him blindly and had believed that under his leadership they would certainly achieve what they were struggling for. Whenever the struggle was surrendered, they would attack him in frustration. This happened not once, not twice – every time he launched a struggle, every time people went far with him, every time he surrendered the results, people would get suffering, got angry and attacked him, injured him, even tried to kill him – be it South Africa or India. This went on all his life. He was saved, saved so many times until he was finally shot dead and eliminated.

In this land, as elsewhere, people like MOHANDAS are usually shot dead. The ‘free’ and ‘learning individual’ and the ‘knowledge powered human society’ are still at a very farther point of human evolution.

Unless ‘power driven minds’ evolve into ‘knowledge driven learning individuals’, the crudeness and cruelty of the ‘commoners’ and their ‘custodians’ shall continue to crucify or assassinate people like Mohandas.

The study proceeded to see Mohandas in the frame work of ‘CHITWANT CONCEPT’ FOR SELF – ACTUALIZATION.

“...On acquiring self – knowledge:

Tried to understand his likes and dislikes; integrated his likes and dislikes into larger statements; integrated larger statements into broad fields; integrated broad fields into a whole. Completed and ‘finished’ that whole that described and accepted ‘this is what I am’ and lived it.

16 Ibid., Vol. 60, p. 504.
17 Ibid., Vol. 8, pp. 154 – 155.
On creating a barrier less mind:
Tried to understand where mind says ‘no’ – stopped at barriers; learnt to take barriers head on; did what his heart said – went into ‘bull - fighting’; asked mind to ‘explore safer possibilities’; found alternate routes to ‘bypass barriers’; transcended barriers for a ‘walk – in’ to whatever he wanted.

On owning the earth
As a teenager, he belonged to nobody when it came to do what he wanted to do; gradually learned to own his family; his caste and his community, his region, his country, his religion, whole of humanity and owned the whole earth.

On mission of life
Initially, he had no mission. He was living where he was born. He upgraded his legacy; decided to go for a different profession and life style; sought recognition through new achievements in the chosen field. Consciously, gradually self – actualized him, blossoming into his fullness: became what he could be.

On pursuit of knowledge
He started learning from the ‘book – of - life’; added informal study and created his own library; added formal education in law from London; experimented with his own ideas for unique performances; went deeper and evolved his own ideas, philosophies; created writings, booklets, books etc. and interacted with the top brass.

On personalized management skills
He organized whatever he had; acquired need based resources of men, materials, money, methods to achieve what he wanted; experimented with his STRATEGIES; achieved whatever he wanted to achieve and installed himself in what he was.

On living a life of fulfillment
Started living a life of tradition; moved to organized life as a professional; moved to his ashram; added a unique architecture to his life and its structures and enjoyed the fullness of what he was.

**On taking care of the self**

His sense of care moved from ‘I will do what I will do – I don’t care about anything, any body’ to ‘I will do what I will do – but I will take care of my family’ to ‘I will do what I will do – but I will care of my family, my community, my country and the entire human race’ to ‘I will do what I will do – and I will take care of my family, the whole human society’ to ‘I will also care about the creation and honour its principles’ to ‘while I take care of my self, I will also take care of my family, the human society, the creation and also honour the sense of infinity inside and out side myself’

**On taking care of the family**

Married – created a family; looked after immediate family – wife and children and also looked after blood relations – father, mother, brothers, sisters, etc. He cared for his extended family and friends also. He owned all humans as his own family.

**On taking care of the society**

As a professional he gave his services; went into extra -professional participation in social activities - clubs, societies, institutions etc, got into deeper commitments to social causes along with main profession; made profession subservient to social commitments and committed his life to the service of humanity.

**On taking care of the creation**

Respected all life – believed in ‘live and let live’; protected and cared for his immediate surroundings and the larger environment; valued naturopathy, believed that everything in creation has a scientific, logical basis; honoured creation; related himself to the infinitely vast universe.

**On taking care of the infinite**
Believed and accepted God through the religion he was born in; accepted and respected God as seen by other religions; experienced a personal relationship with his God; accepted omnipresence of God – lived with the infinite: inside and outside himself..."18

It is a matter of satisfaction to have made an attempt to discover a process of self-actualization that Mahatma Gandhi took to be what he wanted to be. More so, because the ‘Chitwant Concept’ of self-actualization extends to lay down basic principles to help everyone process one’s own flowering through a conscious conduct of life.