

Contemporary Crisis and Violence: Significance of Mahatma Gandhi for Peacemaking Interventions

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Abstract

India is embracing rapid changes to match its steps with the world. Contemporary value systems are undergoing metamorphosis bringing with its crash consumerism and undue emphasis on money, power and cut-throat competition. We have blindly embraced a set of value system but have deviated a bit from our own time-tested value system. The outbreak of pandemic has created tough economic, political and social conditions.

Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy in the contemporary world post outbreak of pandemic has increased tremendously. Economic uncertainty, crumbling and shrinking economy putting major strain on livelihood, crumbling medical infrastructure and social distancing and isolation, job loss, financial insecurity in future are leading to discontent and turmoil, flaring up emotions and resultant violence.

As any challenge also opens doors of opportunity, the current pandemic is forcing us to rethink the way we have developed social norms, challenge it and create growth and prosperity based on solid principles. Seven sins of society as visualized by Gandhiji needs being explored once again to bring some order and sanity in the mad race we have entered. A philosophy based on time tested values can have potential to give positive direction to society at large and nation.

As we analyse the current values (seven sins) there are scope for long term and short-term interventions questioning some basic assumptions which have strong roots now in contemporary society. Some changes are radical in nature which requires policy interventions and concerted government and public efforts, from creating awareness to addressing serious violations. There is also scope for each of us to re-examine our own value system, we are keen on others following it, but when it comes to self, we lose courage to take it in the right spirit.

We need to question basic assumptions which are accepted and have deep roots. We need support because fighting might have a well-entrenched value system that can invite backlashes and hardships, and we need courage and resilience in our efforts to create a progressive society for future.

Contemporary Crisis and Violence

The Unusual - There has been something unusual in the air since the last six months (starting March 2020). Roads are desolate, lifeless and idle. Lockdown caged the entire humanity and clipped their wings dramatically restricting every movement. People were confined to the four walls of their houses. Economic activities have been stifled. We see multiple business folding itself, job loss is real, small business becoming unsustainable, indicating protracted economic recession. Some flutter in economic activities are seen after unlock-down started. Some relaxation in movement was given for the people to venture out and start sagging work/business. The Economic Times (Sept 2) reported Indian Gross domestic product (GDP) shrank by a record 23.9% in April-June from a year earlier, against a Reuters poll forecast for an 18.3% contraction. The Economic Times, September 11 quoted Moody's which projects Indian Economy to contract 11.5% this fiscal. 41 lakh youth lost their jobs in India due to COVID 19 pandemic – ILO-ADB report (The Economic Times, August 18).

However, this was an uneasy time. India has seen some flare up inside and outside at the borders. There is unrest at the borders. It is getting aggravated every day creating a war like condition. Parallel to this, lots of hues and cries

are being raised by various media on various issues, mainly violent reactions like agitations, protests and violence. There is a political bickering happening to maintain and save their hegemony, a bitter exchange of words flying uncensored reaching every household through various media in no time. There are cases of family unrest, death, suicide, domestic violence, and child abuse reported in the media every day. Natural calamities like cyclone, earthquake, flood are making headlines. However, special mention can be done about the one of its kind internal migration which rocked Indian sensibilities.

Pathetic plight of the labour force - The pain is written everywhere. Pandemic situation has driven millions of workers from urban economic hubs to their native states and later to their respective places. The journey had been arduous and for some, it continues. Many workers started early with their entire family including octogenarian parents, pregnant wife, toddlers, putting luggage on their head and started their arduous journey on foot under the sun blazing at 40 to 45-degree Celsius, not knowing the exact route to their destination or where the next food will come from. Bluffed by their arrangers, they gathered to board the trains and ended up getting brutalized. Few started getting lucky to either get some arranged busses or travel when the train started plying. Some people found golden opportunities to fleece and bleed the commuters further and encashed on their misery. This mass exodus was unprecedented in independent India, seen only after partition travails. Back at their respective states, they went for another endurance test with procedures of sanitization and quarantine with a stigma of COVID carriers written on their forehead. What lies ahead for many is unemployment and probably rejection and isolation due to pandemic scare. Now after six months, with unemployment and the wolf at door, a reverse migration has been started. Despite endurance and odds of return, in six months' time again a large chunk is daring to move back amongst raging corona statistics.

To move further, another shocking reality is the situation arising out of people pushed back at home either due to lockdown, quarantine or sagging income.

Challenging Domestic scenarios

Recent data released by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) suggest that the nationwide lockdown has led to a rapid increase in cases of domestic violence (Times of India, May 18.) Since most of the activities have come to a halt, recently many horrific news items have got eyeballs of everyone sitting back at their home, a bit scared, hoping for better. The Hindustan Times, July 3, reported surge in child abuse during COVID 19 pandemic – just one-month number of new cases rose by 1493% compared with the same period in the previous three years. Pandemic has impacted both economic and social fabric.

Pandemic scare

There is unprecedented and irreversible change around us leading to a new normal. Everyone is fighting an unknown invisible enemy (COVID 19). The situation is deteriorating from bad to worse every day, with a crumbling economy and medical infrastructure. There is social unrest as no cure is in sight. So far, we do not have control over spiking reported figures (Unreported figures are just mystery). On September 29, reported cases of corona infected people across the globe was 33,682,430 with a death toll of 1,008,518. India amongst second largely infected nations has 6,193,966 cases with a death toll of 96,854.

The reaction

We have seen the entire humanity reacting to the pandemic in a wide range of sensitivity and care... from being very sensitive to being highly insensitive, both exposing humane and demonic faces of humanity.

The Central Government has geared up to move towards Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self dependent India) and with the help of states are trying to push the economy out of the current decline. An economic package of Rs. 20 Lakh-crore has been announced by the Union Finance Minister in five tranches which accounts for

nearly 10% of the gross domestic product (GDP). Corporates are taking risk and trying to bring economic activities back on the track. There have been many NGOs which fed lakhs of people during lockdown free of cost. There were volunteers and organizations coming forward to help people reach their destinations and be with their family. There were lots of corona warriors – doctors, nurses, para-medic, policemen and many administrative agencies who rose up to the occasion and tried to serve people selflessly, many such warriors lost their life in the process.

In contrast to this, other cruder and cruel faces also surfaced. Right after the first lockdown, merciless beating and punishments by police to those who ventured on the streets was sad and sadistic. Mainly homeless, poor or migrating population become targets, along with few wilful violators. Cases of fleecing of patients, mistreatment and refusal to admit despite available beds by few hospitals have also been reported. Tamilnadu government has to step into penalise private hospitals fleecing COVID patients (Deccan Herald, August 1). Some shocking news also surfaced – “COVID-19 patients treated worse than animals, bodies found in garbage: Supreme Court” was the headline of the Hindustan Times on June 12, dead bodies being stacked next to the Covid patients. There were rows over dead bodies, The Week (June 16) reported suffering due to overcrowding at Mumbai, with grieving families waiting for hours in long queues outside crematoriums, at times only to be asked to return.

It really is scary. A true crisis brewing and refusing to subside despite best efforts of the central and state governments and non-government agencies. We need to move beyond immediate transactional bickering to build up a wider vision and big picture of this unusual time.

The Unprecedented times

True Crisis – Herman B. "Dutch" Leonard, Ph.D. Harvard University, Professor of Business Administration and Co-chair of the Social Enterprise Initiative at Harvard Business School in his YouTube video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=levSfmArTRQ>) differentiates between routine emergency and true crisis.

According to him, a true crisis can be characterized by significant novelty which requires innovative problem solving in chaotic situations on a real time basis. In routine emergencies, like cyclones, floods, accidents, earthquakes although impact may be strong, we know what to do and we can plan resources.

We face lots of crises in life which can be threatening and change the course of our life. For example, an accident on the highway, either killing or maiming the breadwinner of a family can bring irreversible change to the entire family badly impacting them in the long run. But this is the crisis we can plan for (Highway police, ambulance), have known remedial measures (hospitals with doctor who know exactly what to do) and known the course of action to follow (under observation in hospital and later recuperating under trained skilled nurse). We also can have medical insurance policy for covering health hazards and life insurance for some financial stability to family in the fatal cases.

But what about the current unique crisis that caught us unprepared and has a huge impact in a short period of time. We have seen pandemics in the past restricted to a nation or a city, but the scale at which COVID 19 has happened is never seen in history and perhaps no one planned infrastructure and remedy for such impact and scale. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) as on September 29, almost 213 countries are impacted with 33,682,966 infected and death toll of 1,008,963, with recovery of 24,988,963 people. The current crisis has brought the entire world to a grinding halt. It is escalating with intense impact and no available cure at the sight. Melinda Gates, a billionaire philanthropist and co-chair of the foundation, said in May that scientists and health officials may find a vaccine that is effective in preventing Covid-19 by the end of this year "if we're lucky." Even if scientists do find a vaccine in record time, they would still need to make millions and eventually billions of doses of the vaccine for the general public, she said. There are more than 7.6 billion people in the world, and some of the vaccines under development require more than one dose, she said. "We have never, never as a globe made a vaccine of this type before nor of this scale before ever. So this is not a quick nor swift process," (CNBC, July 22) With no vaccine in sight and medical infrastructure crumbling down fast, there is helplessness to arrest the damage magnifying every day.

Such an unprecedented crisis brings with it serious challenges of adjustment. As mentioned above, sometimes it instigates uncontrolled violent reactions. Megan O'Donnell, Amber Peterman and Alina Potts (April 3, 2020 blog) mentions about the conditions in pandemic which triggers violence, major conditions are economic insecurity and poverty related stress, quarantine and social isolation, disaster and conflict related unrest and instability, exposure to exploitative relationships due to changing demographics and reduced health services. It is important for us to understand the nature of the violent reaction we are seeing around and find a plausible way to handle it, before it escalates to a chaotic condition.

Types of violence

According to Freud, there are two basic instincts – Eros or life instinct which serves the purpose of survival and racial propagation and Thanatos or death instinct, an unconscious wish to die as all living processes tend to return to the stability of the inorganic world. An important derivative of the death instinct is the aggressive drive. Aggressiveness is self-destruction turned outwards against substitute objects, Hall and Lindzey (1985). Inner turmoil and failure to meaningfully handle agitation inside can pour to the external world.

Leopold Ballek, in the manual for Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) mentioned about the various types of aggression which can be observed. In the current pandemic episode, also we are witnessing various forms of violence, probable reason can be inner turmoil, fear, panic and desperation created through current economic and social conditions.

Verbal – Emotional flare ups leading to verbal altercations are common. We have seen lots of manifestation now in our public and private life in terms of abusive languages and emotional exploitation or blackmailing. Contemporary media narrates the story with strong emotions, many a time debates turning inflammatory and ugly. With limited social space to manoeuvre around due to restricted movement and COVID precaution, high rate of inflammatory media input consumption is becoming another epidemic. Such aggressions are also

common in corporate and personal life, where power imbalance and adverse situations triggers such violence. With social media in overdrive, verbal and abusive trolls are quite common these days. Personal immaturity and instability play a big role.

Physical aggression turns into use of physical force with an intention to hurt. It can be manifested in different ways such as

a. **Physical and Social**, it indicates violence not intended to harm, but help others through strict and firm behaviour as a mother taming the child or police overpowering the criminal. We saw law enforcing agencies found it real tough to restraint wilful violators during lockdown and had to resort to lathi charge.

b. **Physical and asocial**, physical aggression against inanimate objects like breaking glass windows, or throwing objects in tantrums. Many of the reported domestic violence have such aggressions in common.

c. **Physical and antisocial** – Adding to the previous two mentioned by Bellak, the third one has now become a serious threat. Tolerance of people has gone down leading to agitations and bystander apathy. Breaking social norms and laws like spraying bullets on school children, terrorist killing civilians are antisocial acts of aggression. Floyd's death prompted a surge of demonstrations associated with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement that quickly spread from Minneapolis throughout the country. Between 26 May, the day after Floyd's death, and 22 August, ACLED records over 7,750 demonstrations linked to the BLM movement across more than 2,440 locations in all 50 states and Washington, DC. (<https://acleddata.com>). \$1 billion-plus riot damage is the most expensive in insurance history (<https://www.axios.com>).

d. **Destruction** arson and destruction such as Taj Hotel attack with no intention to steal but to destruct huge property for making a political or military statement, Self-destruction by inflicting injury on self or ultimately by committing suicide. There has been an increase in self-harm and suicide ideation among people since the Covid 19 pandemic hit, says a study "Covid 19 Blues" conducted by Suicide Prevention India Foundation (SPIF). The rate of relapse of people who

have recovered from mental health condition has risen and due to spike in need for their services, mental health professionals are also experiencing caregiver fatigue. (<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>).

In the current crisis, as the days are passing by, we see all kinds of violence in private, professional and public life. In this new normal, we must have a strong philosophical base, a guiding force which can sober up the intensity of violence and propel us towards a symbiotic and harmonious living.

“An abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation is normal behaviour” says Viktor Frankl. He survived concentration camp and analysed behaviour of people when they were thrown into a life-threatening environment. A quick look at the same can help us in analysing current scenarios, particularly in India.

Viktor Frankl – Pursuit for Meaning to guide through difficult times (book: Man’s Search for meaning)

Victor Frankl was holocaust survivor, famous for meaning centred school of psychology – Logo therapy. His much famous book “Man’s search for meaning” brings in an approach to survive difficult situations in our life. Viktor Frankl mentioned three phases when we get into challenging situations, endure hardship, and finally get out of it and survive. Although unlike pandemic which is a pan world phenomena it was restricted to a region and group, we can still derive some generalization about the process through which humans survived in a threatening, dangerous and testing environment.

Shock – (Shock as expressed by captives during the initial admission phase to the camp – letting go of the ideas and identity associated with earlier life) – Similar shock waves are making rounds across the globe and India in particular. Emotions are getting flared up these days; in desperation we have started wondering “why me”? Blame game has become vicious, to find scapegoats and target a group for debacle. According to Washington Post, April 2, (<https://www.washingtonpost.com>) “Gatherings last month at the headquarters of a prominent Muslim missionary group are emerging as India’s first “super-spreader” event, complicating efforts to control rising infections in this nation of 1.3 billion people. More than 400 confirmed

cases and at least 10 deaths across the country — stretching from Tamil Nadu in the south to Kashmir in the north — have been linked to people who attended events at the Tablighi Jamaat Centre near a historic shrine in India's capital".

When India went for lockdown, people protested the dictate to stay at home and started going out. Police used force to push them back to their home. Confined to their houses, domestic violence and child abuse cases were reported in few households. It is taking time to come to terms with the new harsh reality. Blatant violation of lockdown rules, like attending parties, throwing birthday bashes, escaping quarantine, was done by those who had affiliations with people in power. Brutal lathi charge by police and later attack on doctors and health workers reflected the agitated mentality of law enforcing agencies and public at large. Gradually as the situation aggravates, shock is converted to apathy.

Apathy – (Apathy after becoming accustomed to camp existence, in which inmates' values only that which helps themselves and their friends survive.) The way we are reacting to the crumbling medical infrastructure, rough treatment of patients in many hospitals, fleecing patients under life threat, showed how people are demonstrating emotional blunting. Disregarding human dignity while disposing dead bodies were in some cases pathetic. Urban insensitivity to deal with labour migration from urban economic centres to rural areas was shocking. The entire sordid events were captured on video and reached every household to showcase such harrowing experiences. Salary cut and job loss also is coming at a time when people need it most. Desperate to start work for economic gain, some people started undermining the importance of safety citing "herd immunity" as narrative. However, prolonged apathy can have unwanted strain on people and can lead to uncomfortable reactions in days to come.

Reaction – (Reaction in form of depersonalization, moral deformity, bitterness, and disillusionment if he survives and is liberated.) Peak and community spread is still to come in India. As lockdown is relieved to accommodate survival and business, chances and threat is looming large. We do not know the time frame in which the impact of COVID 19 can be contained, it may take another few months or a year or two. Economists are predicting fiscal deficits, long economic recession, negative GDP growth, and hardship due to evaporating jobs and loss

of business. We can predict a few impacts after COVID menace is contained. The experience of misery and hardship for a large population during these times may leave bitterness in many hearts and subsequent difficult behaviour from their sides in the future. Moral deformity and depersonalization can lead to overt or covert violence.

It indicates that coming time may be tough, leading to rise in many untoward incidents. We need some strong philosophy to guide us through it if we want to sail smoothly. How to maintain harmony and peace at personal, social, professional, and even at the national level, is the quest with which we really have to struggle. Victor's idea of search for meaningfulness rhymes with ideas of Gandhiji to find values and true-life philosophy to guide us in life.

As we talk about violence and peaceful mediation, Philosophy of Gandhiji can really be appropriate. I wonder what would have been the approach of Mahatma Gandhi, a great crisis leader in current pandemic situation.

Ban Ki Moon quotes Gandhiji on International day of Non-Violence, October 2, 2013 (<https://www.un.org/>) "I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent." (Mahatma Gandhi, Young India, May 21, 1925). How true in the current context, where intolerance level in society has gone up and we are evidencing sporadic violence more often in public life.

His view on peace was equally emphatic making everyone individually responsible for self and collective peace, quoting him "Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances." The world view he advocated is very relevant in the current context. "There is no path to peace, peace is the path" (Mahatma Gandhi).

Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy

He who has a “why” to live for can bear almost any “how” ... Friedrich Nietzsche

We all are looking up to the source of inspirations, as current world view has brought considerable unrest in socio-economic and political fabric. We all are looking for the meaning in a chaotic world.

Contemporary situation has aggravated disharmony with no solutions at hand in near future. New norms need to be explored and we better replace all the glaring social evils with some plausible alternatives to sustain humanity in the long run. As William Hazlitt said, "Those who are at war with others are not at peace with themselves." An unsettled and agitated society can be a potential land mine for present and future. Every crisis is pregnant with the opportunity; it is for the leaders in every field to deliver the opportunity by their concerted efforts. Time has come to format and reconfigure the entire system and pave way for Principle Centred Authentic Leadership.

The philosophy of Gandhiji has stood as the light house for generations to take inspiration and direction. It is now high time to challenge current prevalent wrong basic assumptions and promote authentic principle centred leadership at every sector of the business and every facet of social, political and personal life. If we miss the bus now, we will be guilty of propagating seven sins. "Seven social sins" was first published in Young India magazine on October 22, 2015 by Mahatma Gandhi. Examples of each evil are plenty in contemporary society. Due to current pandemic challenges, it has got further aggravated. I would like to focus on below explanations to look for some basic (long term) solutions for peace intervention. It needs strong political will and concerted efforts of the society to bring harmony in our life. Prescriptions of Gandhiji may not be easy but can be very powerful to give a positive direction to contemporary society. My firm belief is that it starts with the child rearing with high values, character building at an academic institution and fair game, transparency, and honesty in our social, economic, and political life. It connects well with Viktor Frankl's search for meaning. We need higher order compelling meaning for life, rather than transactional cut throat day to day living.

The seven social sins are common practices in all spheres of our life, which we have institutionalized over a period of time by weaving fallacious arguments around it and strengthening wrong assumptions. It has almost become a way of life, unchallenged. This jinx needs to be broken, even if it looks utopian in first place initially right now. I am sure, if we get back to the basics and rectify errors there, we will learn our lessons well from pandemic and will move towards a world order based on principles leading to our growth and happiness.

1. Wealth without work – (Concept: Getting something for nothing, earn even if you do not deserve)

We have now graduated as a generation of gold diggers looking for quick gains in a short period of time managing resources and other human beings for personal profits and gains. It is even better if we do not have to work hard for it. The need of the hour is to build trust in the social and political agencies and institutions like administration, police, judiciary, corporate, academics, banks, and all other fields. Credentials and credibility should be built on fair play, transparency, and honesty. Restoring dignity of labour is critical to success. At macro level it indicates serious reforms if we want to touch the root cause, policies which can eliminate corruption in law enforcing agencies and other service government, corporate and non-government institutions. We have long been dabbling with symptoms and creating records of logging our personal efforts. It will require strong political will and a forward-looking vision to hit the root cause. But we do not always look at the macro level, shirking our responsibilities at the micro level. Nation building and institution building demands concerted efforts of the government and the public.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. Manipulating market (Hoarding, Black-marketing, insider trading)	1. Labour migration and their hardship and exploitation (Cheap labour without obligation).	There is enough for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
2. Tax evasion	2. Instigating riot to get into power and prominence without much public credentials.	1. Building trust in the institution, especially those with high impact public life and social values
3. Get rich quick schemes	3. Scams to get rich fast through short cuts (cheating people on promises of high returns on dubious deals and endeavours).	2. Credentials and Credibility – Hard work, consistent higher value-based performance with sense of fair play
4. Speculation business	4. School fee-paid facility charges not returned in lockdown, but salary cut for teachers.	3. Education and awareness – High need build character, service orientation, and sense of justice
5. Perks without fulfilling responsibility	5. Fake sanitizers sold in market with high price	4. Restoring dignity of labour – Protected through law and enforced strictly
6. Network marketing, over borrowing, credit card	6. Cancelled holidays – no refund, (use deposited money for other purpose, as it is trapped)	5. Block wilful defaulters – It is not government that needs reform, it is public which should be directed to enforce higher values in personal and public life
7. Subprime crisis		
8. Playing stock market		
9. Tenant farmer (Zamindari)		

Relevance to the current conditions – Pandemic has really highlighted rift and gulf in our society, a group of hard-working sincere people and the ones who have created umpire and hegemony, initially through hard work (by few generations) and later by abuse of power and money.

One example that comes out staring us on the face is labour exploitation. It reminds us of the feudal society of zamindars and their bonded labour. Maybe the situation is not that grim, as we have become a more sensitive society with strong law enforcing agencies. But a comfortable easy life and fear of losing our accumulations has made us look the other way, when we need to confront. That makes practical sense, but institutionalized misuse of power. A certain group starts benefiting from cowardice and fear psychosis. Cartel, syndicates, underworld, anti national elements and strong political, administration, police, judiciary and corporate nexus have silenced common man who is too busy to earn their living and survive. This deep rooted problem needs deeper incision and strong hit on the root cause. The shrill cry of the nation must be heard to protect hard working sincere common men from con-men.

2. Pleasure without conscience – (Concept - Immature, greedy, sensuous – What is in it for me WIIFM, look for self-interest with hedonistic tendencies)

Immediate gratification of the needs, inflated ego, and nefarious ambitions sometimes propel us on the path which leads us to ignore sane voices from within and around. Third phase of reaction according to Viktor Frankl leads to depersonalization, moral deformity, and bitterness. If we may get complex social situations in another 6 months, society is unprepared to deal with such complications arising out of the hardships endured during the current pandemic assault. The first victim will be the conscience of mass and leaders and then the entire nation will be subjected to extreme conditions. Deep rooted corruption is one such example, once to give taste of blood, it corrupts conscience and then it becomes difficult to get rid of it for meaner objectives of few.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. Abandoning spouse, children, parents for career	1. Celebrity party during lockdown infecting many in current pandemic times	Pleasure should come from within the soul, excitement from serving the needy.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
2. Sexual harassment at work	2. Smuggling alcohol in government vehicles during lockdown (blatant misuse of government machinery when people are struggling for bare essentials)	1. Change in academic curriculum to build character and higher conscience, sense of responsibility and accountability towards self and others
3. Advertisements inviting executives to indulge in mindless consumerism	3. Harassing animals for tiktok video or fun – video making of victims for cheap popularity and TRP	2. Campaign to create awareness of malpractices and laws to protect by strict enforcements
4. Drug and substance abuse – destroying life of many and encouraging anti national elements to have access to money	4. Contractual appointments of teachers - put to various odd tasks unrelated to teaching	3. Rewarding and recognizing right role models in the society
5. Hunting for fun – getting kick after kill.	5. Disproportionate remunerations and perks of CEOs – compared to their own people	

On a short term basis, a serious awareness campaign and stricter law enforcement is necessary to curb tendencies to transgress social, statutory, government norms and law of the land. However, solution is not short term in nature, when the problem lies deep, merely addressing the symptom doesn't help. We require a next phase of academic reforms focussed to building higher social values.

Decentralization of the economic activities can also bring down pressure from urban hubs, which also have become hubs of vices. Such decentralization can have levelling effect for glaring economic disparity across geography.

Look at the specific example of handling the labour forces migrating to their native places in pandemic times. India has been touted as a country with cheap labour. You can demand world class performance and put them through a demanding schedule, but when it comes to benchmarking wages and other facilities you remember local market norms. Managing a large number of labour force

clambering in urban centres, exposes workers to manipulation by subcontractors and companies alike. It is easy to turn blind eyes to some uncomfortable facts and easy to camouflage reality with cunning arguments. Current pandemic exposed the underbelly. So, leaders want the pleasure of cheap labour to earn margins, but their conscience doesn't prick a bit when the labour force are stranded and exposed. They try to cover up for lapses with narratives from PR agencies and media manipulations.

3. Knowledge without character – (Imbalance between High Intellect and Low Character – HILC – as dangerous as it can, if unleashed on unsuspecting common man)

It is a very dangerous proposition to have an aberration of character when strong intellect is backed with support of high office, money, power, or position. It is like giving a high-powered car in the hands of teenagers high on drugs. Negative impact can be powerful and destructive. Let us take the migration of labour force example once again. Workers are sitting ducks, their own ignorance, their mind whitewashed by their handlers and their pathetic and precarious financial conditions (sometimes on hostile turfs) makes them prey of those whose character makes it easy to use them at their own whims. However, as migration created scarcity of labour, they have started showing open concerns in contrast. There is a paradigm shift in their narrative, exposing their true colour and character. The fight is on an uneven ground and it exposes workers. Pseudo integrity, compassion, care, and honesty are more used as the weapon of manipulation and tact. Events like this force us to reorganize the significance of compassion and high integrity.

It is important to reiterate Stephen Covey who professed differentiation between character ethics and personality ethics - difference is "what you actually are" and "how you appear to be". Issues like integrity, fidelity, compassion, contribution, responsibility, fairness, justice are typical character ethics. Whereas how we manage our look, image, public relations, communication skill, management techniques, influencing skills, dressing sense are personality ethics which can be polished with some care in a short period of time. Character ethics must be

inculcated over a period, while personality ethics can be managed through some intense training.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. Misuse of information and system (Few Doctor threaten to fleece patients creating fear psychosis by providing distorted information)	1. Patients fleeced by medical community (Doctors HI-LC)	Knowledge gives you power, character gives you respect
2. Using authority for personal gain – police and media both have almost institutionalized the same (barring few sane voices everywhere)	2. Ticketing scam for migrant labour (Authorities HI-LC)	1. Public censor for unethical practices – right social norms need to be built up to counter economic reasons for social crimes
3. Exploiting loopholes in the crisis, understanding weakness of system (overcharging for bed in hospitals)	3. Stealing personal data through apps, Spying – (Data management companies HI-LC)	2. Stronger law enforcement as deterrent – Police, administration, media, legislature, and judiciary if made value based and corruption free holds prospects of bright future
4. Degree to earn higher salary, creating book worm with no social skills and values	4. Hacking bank accounts, social media accounts, like twitter, facebook and government portals (IT professionals HI-LC) 5. Cybercrimes – cyber bullying, financial embezzlements (IT experts HILC)	

Public censors for unethical practices and stronger law enforcement can be a deterrent to those who are wilful defaulter and scamsters. Setting the right example in public life is very important. Judicial and police reform can bring confidence in people. People should see demonstration and delivery of justice within reasonable time – justice delayed is justice denied.

4. Commerce (Business) without morality (Ethics) – (Concept – Using questionable means to serve business with an intention to get undue gains through wrong means and practices)

Running a business is like being at war. Some corporate houses with deep pockets can show some facades with their balance sheet magically managed by highly paid accountants, tax experts and auditors. Those with shallow pockets and tough competition fight for survival through innovative techniques of evasion. It is like that experiment with a monkey and its baby put in a tub with rising water. Once the water rises above nose level, the monkey puts down the baby and stands on it to save its life. Morality is there till it serves purpose and end, till the water reaches the nose. Power dynamics are tilted towards those who are in commands.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. Use of unfair means to make money – bribery, embezzlement, theft, extortion, contraband and dangerous substances business e.g., drugs	1. Hoarding for profiteering during lockdown – essentials goods withhold in storage for artificially inflating the price and charging exponentially by creating artificial crisis	It takes 20 years to build reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you will do things differently.
2. Managing and manipulating balance sheet (Corporate Bikini – exposes everything except vitals)– paid accountants and tax experts to dress up balance sheet	2. Forcing staff to travel during pandemic – creating difficult work situation to eliminate staff on trivial grounds	1. Recognizing right practices in public life – a larger proportion of fair game players should overshadow persons with questionable means – need to evolve interventions at national state and local levels.
3. Rationalization and justification for corporate treachery – fabricated as next strategic move to grow business	3. Wilful loan defaulters – we have NPAs created in banks thanks to many wilful defaulters with access to political power centres	2. Positive reinforcement – There is need of role models, but positive role models cannot flourish until protected and supported by right agencies, people and corporate mandate

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
4. Serving customer but mugging employees	4. Siphoning money through dummy companies and chit funds – this practice has been converted into art now, economic cell looks other side	3. Enrolling people rather than stream rolling– people find loopholes faster than new strategy is built for practices based on integrity, narratives and folklore developed connects cunning practices with wealth creation. Role of media with high integrity is tremendously felt in Indian context.
5. Using threat of job loss to overload employees, cut income or incentives and increase working hours	5. Cyber hacking of the company data bases – selling vital client information for profit, ransomware or intentional spreading of virus, hacking financial accounts	
6. Unethical governance structure – created to achieve political end rather than enhancing stakeholder interest – broker selling/buying client shares multiple times for brokerage losing money for client in turn.		
7. Lack of integrity and security – cover up campaign by malingering whistle blower or sane voices		
8. Trade without mutual benefit – exploitative trade practices, cartels to create entry barriers for new entrants		

There is a dilemma between being compassionate and running a business for profit (you are appointed to serve the later). Downsizing, salary cut, freeze on promotions and increment, withholding benefits, removed holidays and increased working hours are ready made and easy solutions to be cost competitive in pandemic times. Narratives declare silent acceptance of such dictates as a sign of loyalty and professionalism understanding business realities.

Instead of a culture of repression, self-discipline and positive cultural intervention can set right role models and examples in society. Recognizing right practices in public life, giving people positive reinforcement can encourage right practices. Over glorification of crime and criminals should be curbed. Enrolling people rather than stream rolling can be key to success. Film industry in India, for example, has always been in the news for being funded by the underworld. To quote Times of India verbatim (September 7, 2011) "According to Jehil Thakkar, Head of media and entertainment for (KPMG), this association stemmed from the financing needs of the industry; until 2000, by government fiat, the industry was ineligible for bank credit, private equity, and other legitimate commercial financing." As a result, films were financed by ad hoc collections of investors, many of whom were from the construction and trade industries, who charged interest rates as high as 60-100%. The industry also welcomed funds from gangsters and politicians, looking for ways to launder their ill-gotten gains, known in India as "black money", said the cable issued by the US Consulate in Mumbai, released by WikiLeaks. Recently, there is upheaval in Bollywood for many issues which should be objectively investigated, with positive intention to clean up dirt, as this industry creates a perception and value pan India which new generation (young impressionable mind) takes pleasure to immolate.

5. Science without humanity – (Concept - Becoming victim of own technology, huge dependence on technology to run life, isolating from human values and contact)

Science is a double-edged sword; it can be a good servant to humanity and help us make our life comfortable. On the contrary, it can be a bad master and cannot only subjugate, but make us dependent on it and can bring devastating changes in life. With advancement of technology we have moved to a different world and every day the pattern of living is changing making pressure on everyone to adjust to new realities. But off lately, we have distanced from humanity and there is increased dependence on technology. Social fabric has gone for dramatic changes. It has created weapons of mass destruction capable of finishing the entire world many times.

If a car breaks down then you can take it to mechanic and he can rectify the error, but if it is frequently breaking down then we need to look for the root cause. Chance is there might be an inexperienced driver, a drunken old man, or a teenager on drug behind the wheel causing such problem. A weapon in the hands of terrorists can be lethal to kill innocents. Science devoid of humanity can be misused and can be detrimental to peace and harmony.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. Social media addiction over mobile and other devices – life has started moving from screen to screen, eating major chunk of our waking life – phone, computer, tablet and TV.	1. Accumulation and use of biological – chemical weapon or weapon of mass destruction – threat perception leads to piling up weapons, many countries thrive on selling such weapons and they show its devastation as USP – unique selling points	Gun don't kill people, people kill people
2. Use of technology to steal personal data and accounts – smart technologies are evasive, capable of extracting intimate and personal details of innocent victims	2. Use of social media to misguide workers for mass assembly breaking social distancing norms – in pandemic spreading rumours and mass mobilizing people in no time was misused many times by unscrupulous elements	1. Creating social order to meaningful life – In Achieving Society McClelland mentions about the content fed to generation leads to motivation in a direction. We need to analyse what educational curriculum, available literature, mass media, movies, TV serials and social media is feeding to generation in India

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
3. Gruesome weapons of destruction– biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, magnitude of destruction can be unimaginable.	3. Mobile games encouraging suicide and other violent malpractices – even the games are not safe, Blue Whale – encouraging suicide, GTA – encourages sexual outrages	2. Technology as an enabler of life, rather than driver of life – when technology becomes a driver of life, they can be bad masters. We as a nation needs to focus on technology to sustain life, by judiciously blending all aspects of life, rather than escaping responsibility by putting it on the next generation's choice. Policy makers have a critical role to be vigilant and inclusive in their approach
4. Cybercrimes and hacking – embezzlement, information tracking, account hacking, cyber bullying and conning are rising	4. Environmental degradation by some highly polluting industries – greenhouse effect, rising temperature and receding glacier lines are threatening	
5. Environmental degradation by polluting industries – the debate question is how much pollution we are ready to sustain as the cost of technological progress.		

With the signs of war looming at the border and in the international water, we are more exposed towards the destructive side of science. A small mistake can prove lethal to humanity, capable of pushing us back more than 50 years.

Creating social-political order to meaningful life, respect of territorial integrity and transparency in international relations are critical. We manage such violent tensions at micro level (state, district, city, village level) with less impact. If any such flare up happens at macro level, everything can be ruined in no time. Solutions to such situations lie in harmonizing international relations accommodating aspirations of smaller countries who cannot fight alone and keeping world opinion in favour.

Technology on the other hand can be used as an enabler of life. The progress in medical science and resultant life expectancy across the globe is one example. Technology in communications, transportation, automation, manufacturing,

banking sector, agriculture, constructions, and infrastructure development sector have really revolutionized our life. We need progressive leadership in every field to bring the human face of technology to enable progressive and happier life.

6. Religious without sacrifice – (Concept - Active in church, inactive in its gospel – religion leaders who mobilize people through their preaching should follow the original principles it advocates)

“Religion is the clearest telescope through which we can behold the beauties of creation” (William Scott Downey). Most of the religion evolved in organized society to give direction to the human race for a better insight into being, evolve noble cause of existence and practice human values. Like politics, even religion is losing its glory, and being associated with extreme views and negative connotations. There are few interested individuals and wrongdoers who with their massive presence in the social and political arena have spread hard-line philosophy of their own interpretation. Quoting Steven Weinberg, “With or without religion, you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion.” Such perceptions are results of massive breach of trust of people by those who practice religion without sacrifice.

We stop at preaching and practice is left to more vulnerable and idealists. Ideal of sacrifice doesn't suit many business and economic/political concerns these days. When preaching and practice are at dissonance, it creates a culture of greed and insolvency. Violators are caught saving their hides and doing lip service. Voices are tactfully silenced, and a narrative built to support apathy. Fixing blames on others makes our own guilt bearable. This is a very sensitive issue, vested interest subject it to their own interpretation to suit their personal interest.

Tolerance and respect for diversity should be inculcated in a child right from childhood, because once an opinion is formed it is difficult to remove it. Academic institutions should be reformed to encourage and celebrate diversity. School curriculum should have mandatory rather than optional credit for social work from school days to teach the value of service to children. But such practices should also be extended in professional life but making it mandatory to extend

compulsory services to needy people. Medical Doctors are already serving rural areas, in line with that social work should be integrated in educational curricula, military/NCC/Scout-Guide training to be made a compulsory part of education. Every profession should have some mandatory work dedicated to community.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. Religion reduced to meaningless rituals – there have always been fights between virtues and vices, and there has been revival of religions in a new form eradicating dirt it accumulates. For long, there is not much changes in a philosophical stand on religion. Long apathy has once again mystified religion which is mainly used as social and political weapon to enrage and misguide people.	1. Religious persecution of a community – There have been religious institutions who allowed gatherings despite lockdown in violation of government guidelines and have set a wrong example for people at large.	It takes sacrifice to serve the needs of other people 1. Practice of having social work from school days – a practice to instil social responsibility from childhood and encourage right responsible citizenship behaviour among children. Form Of basic military training should also be encouraged to build national pride and responsible behaviour.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
2. In name of religion people have spawned more hate and violence than any government – India has seen many Hindu-Muslim violent riots, hate speeches and inflammatory allegations.	2. Instigating riot through inflammatory speech – Many political issues have been turned into religious issues by interested parties, leading to unrest and bad blood among religious groups. Protest against CAA-NRC-NPR ended after 101 days on March 24 at Shaheen Bagh in Delhi after police were forced to vacate due to pandemic scare. Stone pelting and violence on road, police brutality and ugly turn of peaceful protest raised issues muddled with religious and political fervours.	2. Mandatory services by professionals to serve (Doctors in rural areas, Punjabi Langer) – Almost every profession can find a way to serve those who cannot afford and where access to mainstream facilities are minimum. Sense of serving should replace killing for living attitude

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
<p>3. Shameless propaganda about our virtues without translating it into practice (Media management)</p> <p>– Many religious and spiritual leaders have lost their public images by sexual misconducts and crimes of murder. In light of their present character, their speeches in retrospect look phoney, creating disillusionment among followers' huge number who dedicated their life to them.</p>		

7. Politics without principle – (Concept – Politics driven by greed, power, opportunism, and crony capitalism – act of passive violence)

Politics by Aristotle (translated by Benjamin Jowett, 1999) – “Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for mankind always acts in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.” However, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. When politics side-lines or ignores principles with their blatant use of power, falsification and façade, degeneration starts setting up in the system. Abraham Lincoln rightly mentions that “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if they want to test a man's character, give them power”.

Practice	Contemporary Crisis and Violence	Need for peace Intervention
1. No principles - just opportunism	1. Brutality on labour during exodus after lockdown	Get social will, value system aligned with correct principles. 1. Rationalizing VIP culture -streamlining perks and authority, bringing accountability and responsibility with authority
2. Politician spending million dollars for image building	2. Political squabbling over Sino-India face off	2. Encouraging educated group to join politics
3. Horse trading to form government	3. Politics to divide state, caste, and community	3. Public censor of criminal practices / treason / scams / open loot
4. Intrigues to displace rightful heir/ owner deceitfully	4. Politics to support criminal activities and criminals	
5. Politics of vengeance, sabotage, fear psychosis	5. Politics to suppress data of corruption	
6. "Passive violence - which fuels the active violence of crime, rebellion, and war	6. Politics of vengeance to settle scores	
7. An unjust law is itself a species of violence	7. Politics for pure power and hegemony	

Politics can be at the micro and macro level of the system, and does not denote just political parties. Economic concerns of the majority have always sacrificed principles creating dreadful work culture.

VIP culture and lifestyle has isolated many leaders from their duties. Lavish and luxurious lifestyle and uninhibited power has intoxicated many political and

corporate leaders. We need to rationalize VIP culture by streamlining perks and authority, bringing accountability and responsibility with authority. It is important that leaders should be coming from a broader perspective and not the feudal mind-set. Encouraging educated group to join politics and severing the nexus of criminals and politicians are important steps. Political system can be made more transparent by automatizing and digitalizing process and making political transactions transparent subject to public scrutiny. Public censor of criminal practices / treason / scams / open loot needs active citizen group keeping an alert vigil. Current political scenario substantiates quotes of Mark Twain – “*Politicians and diapers must be changed often, and for the same reasons.*”

Principle-centred leadership is the key to eradicate this social evil. Gandhiji himself struggled to overcome so many temptations in his life as mentioned in his book “My experiment with truth”. Like him, those who tried to be in politics with sound principles, became legends in their lifetime.

Seven social sins as mentioned by Gandhiji can be the root of social and political evils. It has potential to create unrest. We need to look at both short term and long term solutions to social evils. Contemporary India is waiting for veterans like Vivekanand, Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar and Dayanand Saraswati to bring the next generation social revolution hammering all the social evils once again and bringing a new order for more symbiotic and harmonious life.

Onus lies on every citizen.