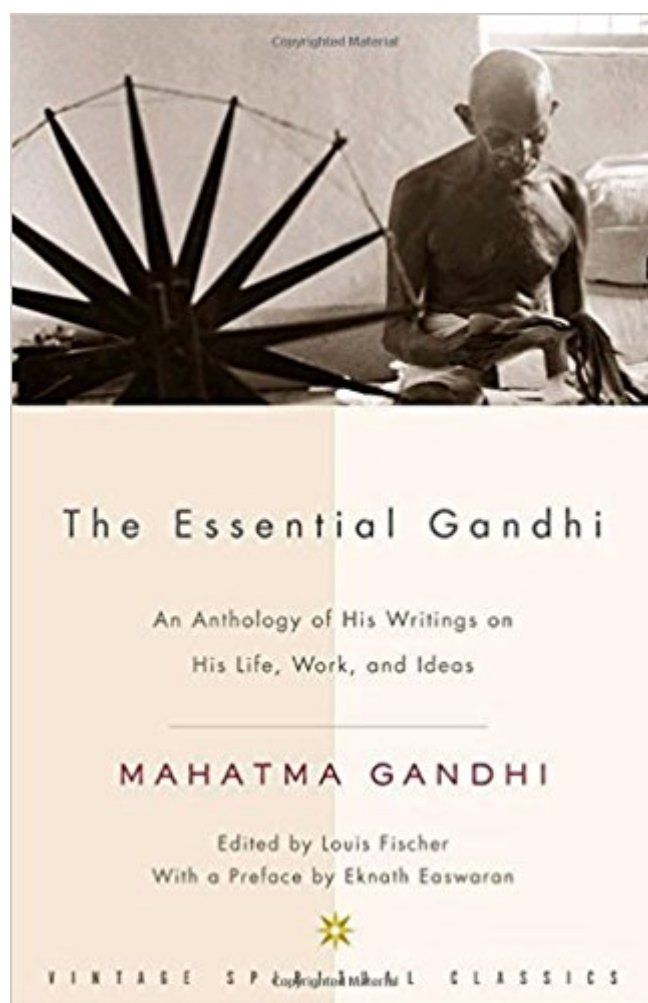


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# The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology Of His Writings On His Life, Work, And Ideas



## Synopsis

Mohandas K. Gandhi, called Mahatma (â œgreat soulâ •), was the father of modern India, but his influence has spread well beyond the subcontinent and is as important today as it was in the first part of the twentieth century and during this nationâ™s own civil rights movement. Taken from Gandhiâ™s writings throughout his life, *The Essential Gandhi* introduces us to his thoughts on politics, spirituality, poverty, suffering, love, non-violence, civil disobedience, and his own life. The pieces collected here, with explanatory head notes by Gandhi biographer Louis Fischer, offer the clearest, most thorough portrait of one of the greatest spiritual leaders the world has known.â œGandhi was inevitable. If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable. . . . We may ignore him at our own risk.â • â “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. With a new Preface drawn from the writings of Eknath Easwaran In the annals of spirituality certain books stand out both for their historical importance and for their continued relevance. The Vintage Spiritual Classics series offers the greatest of these works in authoritative new editions, with specially commissioned essays by noted contemporary commentators. Filled with eloquence and fresh insight, encouragement and solace, Vintage Spiritual Classics are incomparable resources for all readers who seek a more substantive understanding of mankind’s relation to the divine.

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## Customer Reviews

"Gandhi believed in revealing himself. He regarded secrecy as the enemy of freedom-not only the freedom of India but the freedom of man. He exposed even the innermost personal thoughts which individuals usually regard as private. In nearly a half-century of prolific writing, speaking, and

subjecting his ideas to the test of actions, he painted a detailed self-portrait of his mind, heart, and soul."Gandhi was a unique person, a great person, perhaps the greatest figure of the last nineteen hundred years. And his words have been preserved as they came from his mouth and pen."-- Louis Fischer

Mohandas K. Gandhi, called Mahatma ("great soul"), was the father of modern India, but his influence has spread well beyond the subcontinent and is as important today as it was in the first part of the twentieth century and during this nation's own civil rights movement. Taken from Gandhi's writings throughout his life, *The Essential Gandhi* introduces us to his thoughts on politics, spirituality, poverty, suffering, love, non-violence, civil disobedience, and his own life. The pieces collected here, with explanatory head notes by Gandhi biographer Louis Fischer, offer the clearest, most thorough portrait of one of the greatest spiritual leaders the world has known."Gandhi was inevitable. If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable. . . . We may ignore him at our own risk." -Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. With a new Preface drawn from the writings of Eknath Easwaran In the annals of spirituality certain books stand out both for their historical importance and for their continued relevance. The Vintage Spiritual Classics series offers the greatest of these works in authoritative new editions, with specially commissioned essays by noted contemporary commentators. Filled with eloquence and fresh insight, encouragement and solace, Vintage Spiritual Classics are incomparable resources for all readers who seek a more substantive understanding of mankind's relation to the divine.

Gandhi's words have never been so pertinent as they are today. This is an anthology of his writings, edited by topic in chronological order. It's an autobiography revealing Gandhi's evolution from a fearful young man, afraid of the dark, to a fearless leader who feared no rebuke by an empire. More than an aesthete in a modern world, Gandhi's complexity is revealed in each passage as he penitently reveals his transformation into selfless service and living simply. His words and actions inspired others to follow without fear of retaliation and could guide today's leaders to a peaceful resolve. The book reads like a primer on non-violence. Eknath Easwaran's 18 page Preface is worth the price of the 339 page paperbound book.

*The Essential Gandhi* edited by Louis Fischer provides the reader with a solid introduction into Gandhi's life, work, and ideas in his own words. It's not a biography in the conventional understanding of the word, but rather a hybrid mix of biographical note and philosophical articulation

of the principles that have made Gandhi one of the most beloved historical figures of the last century. Gandhi was not a perfect man as illustrated by the sections on meat eating and his early religious struggles in the first part of the book. That's really important because noted historical figures sometimes take on a pre-godly reverence that blinds us to their flaws. Highly recommended book on Gandhi that just may cause one to step back and consider their own life.

I've read a total of 3 books about Mahatma Gandhi, all of them stemming from his own writings. This is the best out of those three books. It is well organized and takes the most crucial parts of his writings and puts them in an order that is coherent and easy to read. The notes by the editor also make it easy for someone who does not know the whole history surrounding Gandhi's plight. She sets the setting and environment with each chapter making sure the reader knows what is going on regardless of their previous knowledge of the situation. This is why I always suggest this book to anyone who wants to start learning about this amazing man. It is very inspirational, and I have highlighted and reflected on quite a few passages. This is one of my most lent books since everyone hears about and references this man, but very few actually know anything about him. This is the best book to allow people to be introduced to his ideas and beliefs.

Reading this, humans are not much different in their struggles for equity than 100 years ago. We face the same biases by the dominant classes, the same challenges in trying to create change, and can use many of the same spiritual and political techniques to work for justice as Gandhi taught. Probably highlighted 1/3 of the book. Yes, read it.

This book is amazing. It's Gandhi's own words from collections of his writings with brief explanatory notes on the historical context as well. The book is an overview of Gandhi's life and philosophy. I don't think it's hyperbole to say that this book, and the words and actions of Gandhi, have the power to inspire anyone. I had no idea Gandhi was fond of Tolstoy and communicated with him.

I love Gandhi - what can I say?

A fantastic compilation of the worlds greatest inspiration.

I have been researching Gandhi for a number of years, so I can claim some expertise in evaluating this book. Simply put, I am not sure why I didn't get to it earlier, as it is a superior collection of

Gandhi's writings, blended in skillfully with some of Fischer's own writings about Gandhi. This anthology goes beyond mere collection in that it also is organized with attention to telling the story of Gandhi's life chronologically. If you know the story of Gandhi well, this book will capture some of the rare gems of Gandhi's thought, as well as his controversial ideas. If you don't know Gandhi's life story yet, start with Fischer's *Gandhi: His Life and Message to the World*, a short, concise summary. The *Essential Gandhi* succeeds in being just that: a treasury of thought of one of the most important men of the past century.

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