

# [Relationship between satyagraha and swaraj for gandhi](https://assignbuster.com/relationship-between-satyagraha-and-swaraj-for-gandhi/)

The word ‘ Satya’ means ‘ Truth’ and ‘ Graha’ means ‘ Force’, Satyagraha therefore means ‘ Truth force’ or the force obtained by the practice of truth. The term Satyagraha is largely associated with non-violence. Gandhi advocated Satyagraha as a means to attain ‘ Swaraj’ or ‘ self-governance’. Satyagraha is a political philosophy propagated and practiced by Gandhi and his followers. The practitioners of this philosophy are called ‘ satyagrahis’.

The satyagrahis are guided by the principles advocated by Gandhi based on Yoga Sutra; non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity, non-possession and fearlessness.

The essential elements of Satyagraha are civil-disobedience and non-cooperation as a means to attain freedom. Civil-disobedience entailed breaking a law which is found as unjust and courting arrest. Non-co-operation meant “ refusing to co-operate with the opponent, refusing to submit to the injustice being fought” (What is Satyagraha?

). “ Gandhiji felt that laws which were totally against the welfare of the people could be fought peacefully by organizing mass-protests in a civil way’ (Jyotsna Kamat) The basic principles of Satyagraha are essentially based on non-violence.

It is observed as a basic fact that violence brings more violence. Violence causes destruction, damage to people and property and any violent protest, even for a right cause, invariably leaves a negative mark on the society.

Non-violence on the contrary is free from the negative aspects of violence, yet non-violent protests send a very strong message and are successful. Gandhi believed that by demonstrating protests in a non-violent manner it is possible to completely transform the antagonist and effect a positive change. He believed that transformation in the antagonist mindset can only be brought about by non-violent means. He worked to ‘ convert’ the antagonist, to truly transform him from within which forms the core values of Satyagraha.

Thus the political philosophy of Satyagraha with non-violence as its essence is an ideology that came to be widely accepted and practiced. It is a concept that has been instrumental to the independence of India. The concept of ‘ civilized’ protests with no damage to public property and protesting without resorting to violence of any sort is commendable. Gandhi’s idea of civil disobedience and civil non-cooperation emphasizes a respect for the general rule of the law and is focused on protesting only against any law that is felt as unjust.

“ Swaraj lays stress on governance not by a hierarchical government, but self governance through individuals and community building. The focus is on political decentralization” (Wikipedia). The basic idea of Swaraj was to evolve a political system where the power ultimately lies in the hands of the people, building a government ‘ for the people and by the people’.

“ The real goal of the freedom struggle was not only to secure political azadi (independence) from Britain, but rather to gain true swaraj (liberation and self-rule)” (What is Swaraj?) as Gandhi explains “ It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves”. Swaraj is Gandhi’s endeavor to build a political system where the common man is empowered and he had a spiritual outlook towards his political philosophy which is reflected in the principles of Swaraj. According to Gandhi, “ at the individual level Swaraj is vitally connected with the capacity for dispassionate self-assessment, ceaseless self-purification and growing self-reliance”. He believed that it is important for people to rule themselves properly and never be a disturbance to the society.

Swaraj is when everyone is his own ruler and the government facilitates this individual and community development. Works Cited Jyotsna Kamat. 14 April 2005. Mahatma Gandhi: Story of Satyagraha. © 1996-2009 Kamat’s Potpourri. http://www. kamat. com/mmgandhi/satyagraha. htm. 18 July 2009 Satyagraha. Wikipedia Foundation Inc. http://en. wikipedia. org/wiki/Satyagraha. 18 July 2009 What is Satyagraha?. Gandhi Research Foundation. www. gandhifoundation. net. 18 July 2009 What is Swaraj?. The Swaraj Foundation. www. swaraj. org . 18 July 2009