

Opening Introduction by Lynnea Bylund, Ahimsa Peace Institute:

Namaste, everyone! It's a privilege to be here today, and I'm thrilled to introduce someone very special—Tushar Arun Gandhi. I've had the honor of working alongside Tushar and witnessing firsthand his unwavering dedication to keeping his great-grandfather's legacy alive. He's truly inspiring.

To give you a bit of background, Tushar is the great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, grandson of Manilal Gandhi, and son of the world-class peace farmer Arun Gandhi, whom we sadly lost last year. Here's a glimpse into the incredible legacy Tushar carries.

In 1914, Mahatma Gandhi left South Africa after 21 years but left his second son, Manilal—Tushar's grandfather—in charge of his first ashram in Durban and *The Indian Opinion* newspaper. *Interestingly, Gandhi departed South Africa on July 18, the same day Nelson Mandela would be born four years later.*

Tushar's father, Arun, was Gandhi's fifth grandson, born in South Africa in 1934, where he lived until 1956. After his father's passing, Arun went to India to immerse his ashes and fell in love with Sunanda, a nurse—Tushar's beloved mother. They married, and Tushar was born on a train on January 17, 1960—a dramatic entrance, indeed!

In 1985, Tushar married Sonal, and they have two wonderful children: Kasturi, named after Kasturba, and a son, Vivan, a lawyer following in Mahatma Gandhi's footsteps.

Arun and Sunanda moved to the U.S. in 1987, where they continued spreading Gandhian values. Arun passed away on May 2, 2023, in India. He was an extraordinary man who devoted his life to peace and nonviolence—just like his father. As Rajmohan Gandhi, Arun's younger cousin, said so poignantly, there are now only five Gandhi Grandchildren left and he noted that Arun passed just five months before Gandhi's birth anniversary. We honor Arun's life and the indelible mark he left on the world.

Transition to Tushar:

Now, let's turn to Tushar, who not only carries his family's legacy but continues to shape it in new ways. Tushar has dedicated his life to activism, philanthropy, and spreading nonviolence worldwide. He founded the Mahatma Gandhi Foundation dedicated to keeping Gandhian values alive in today's complex world.

In 2005, Tushar organized a 241-mile walk to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the 1930 Salt March. Six hundred marchers from India, Pakistan, the U.S., and other countries participated. That same year, the Mahatma Gandhi Foundation received the first 'Mahatma Mahaveer Award' for promoting Gandhian ideals.

Tusharji is also an author and a champion for justice and peace. He wrote the bestselling *Let's Kill Gandhi* and *The Lost Diary of Kastur, My Ba*, and has fought against religious intolerance and communal violence. He even appeared as himself in two Bollywood films—how cool is that?

Closing:

Tushar leads life-changing journeys through the heart of Gandhi's India, offering deep insights into nonviolence. Before I hand things over to Tushar, I want to express how grateful I am to have had the opportunity to experience Gandhi's India and South Africa, learning from Gandhi family members and legendary anti-apartheid activists. Much like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rev. James Lawson traveled to India to study nonviolence, the journey is a travel opportunity of a lifetime, open to everyone.

Tushar's passion, wit, and wisdom are contagious, and I'm sure today will be no different. Today is a wonderful opportunity to ask him about growing up in a family that's part history, part legend!

So, without further ado, I'm honored to introduce the one and only, Tushar Arun Gandhi!

Books by Tushar Gandhi

Let's Kill Gandhi - <https://www.gandhiforchildren.org/lets-kill-gandhi-tushar-gandhi>

The Lost Diary of Kastur, My Ba - <https://www.gandhiforchildren.org/diary-kastur/>