

THE FIVE MINDFULNESS TRAININGS

Thich Nhat Hahn



The First Mindfulness Training: Reverence for Life

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I vow to cultivate compassion and learn ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to condone any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, or in my way of life.

The Second Mindfulness Training: Generosity

Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, social injustice, stealing, and oppression, I vow to cultivate loving-kindness and learn ways to work for the well-being of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I vow to practice generosity by sharing my time, energy, and material resources with those who are in real need. I am determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others, but I will prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other species on earth.

The Third Mindfulness Training: Sexual Responsibility

Aware of the suffering caused by sexual misconduct, I vow to cultivate responsibility and learn ways to protect the safety and integrity of individuals, couples, families, and society. I am determined not to engage in sexual relations without love and a long term commitment. To preserve the happiness of others and myself, I am determined to respect my commitments and the commitments of others. I will do everything in my power to protect children from sexual abuse and to protect couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct.

The Fourth Mindfulness Training: Deep Listening and Loving Speech

Aware of the suffering caused by the inability to listen to others and unmindful speech, I vow to cultivate deep listening and loving speech in order to bring joy and happiness to others and relieve others of their suffering. Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, I vow to learn to speak truthfully with words that inspire self confidence, joy, and hope. I am determined not to spread news that I do not know to be certain, and not to criticize or condemn things of which I am not sure. I will refrain from uttering words that can cause division or discord, or that can cause the family or the community to break. I will make all efforts to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small.

The Fifth Mindfulness Training: Mindful Consumption

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful consumption, I vow to cultivate good health, both physical and mental, for myself, my family, and my society by practicing mindful eating, drinking, and consuming. I vow to ingest only items that preserve peace, well being, and joy in my body, in my consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of my family and society. I understand that a proper diet is crucial for self transformation and for the transformation of society. I am determined not to use alcohol or any other intoxicant, or to ingest food or other items that contain toxins, such as certain TV programs, magazines, books, films, and conversations. I am aware that to damage my body or consciousness with these poisons is to betray my ancestors, my parents, my society, and future generations. I will work to transform violence, fear, anger, and confusion in myself and in society by practicing mindful eating for myself and for society.