




THE LOTUS BUD

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Dear Sangha,

There is suffering in life and our practice is concerned with the reduction of suffering. But there is not only suffering, there is also wellbeing and we practice to water the seeds of happiness in us. And as Thay often says, we have more than enough to be happy right here, right now, if we stop to be mindful and see what we already have that form the conditions of our happiness.

"It is possible to live happily in the here and now. So many conditions of happiness are available—more than enough for you to be happy right now. You don't have to run into the future in order to get more."


— Thich Nhat Hanh 

Chris / True Dwelling of the Mind

Suffering is not enough

Life is filled with suffering, but it is also filled with many wonders, like the blue sky, the sunshine, the eyes of a baby. To suffer is not enough. We must also be in touch with the wonders of life. They are within us and all around us, everywhere, any time.

If we are not happy, if we are not peaceful, we cannot share peace and happiness with others, even those we love, those who live under the same roof. If we are happy, if we are peaceful, we can smile and blossom like a flower, and everyone in our family, our entire society, will benefit from our peace. Do we need to make a special effort to enjoy the beauty of the blue sky? Do we have to practice to be able to enjoy it? No, we just enjoy it. Each second, each minute of our lives can be like this. Wherever we are, any time, we have the capacity to enjoy the sunshine, the presence of each other, even the sensation of our breathing. We don't need to go to China to enjoy the

blue sky. We don't have to travel into the future to enjoy our breathing. We can be in touch with these things right now. It would be a pity if we are only aware of suffering. 


We are so busy we hardly have time to look at the people we love, even in our own household, and to look at ourselves. Society is organized in such a way that even when we have some leisure time, we don't know how to use it to get back in touch with ourselves. We have millions of ways to lose this precious time--we turn on the TV or pick up the telephone, or start the car and go somewhere. We are not used to being



with ourselves, and we act like we don't like ourselves and are trying to escape from ourselves.

Meditation is to be aware of what is going on--in our bodies, in our feelings, in our minds, and in the world. Each day 40,000 children die from hunger. The superpowers now have more than 50,000 nuclear warheads, enough to destroy our planet many times. Yet the sunrise is beautiful, and the rose that bloomed this morning along the wall is a miracle.

Life is both dreadful and wonderful. To practice meditation is to be in touch with both aspects. Please do not think we must be solemn in order to meditate. In fact, to meditate well, we have to smile a lot. Recently I was sitting with a group of children, and a boy named Tim was smiling beautifully. I said, "Tim, you have a beautiful smile," and he said, "Thank you." I told him, "You don't have to thank me, I have to thank you. Because of your smile, you make life more beautiful. Instead of saying, 'Thank you,' you should say, 'You're welcome.'"

If a child smiles, if an adult smiles, that is very important. If in our daily life we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we, but everyone will profit from it. This is the most basic kind of peace work. When I see Tim smiling, I am so happy. If he is aware that he is making other people happy, he can say, "You are welcome." 

Thich Nhat Hanh
[Online source](#)

All you need, you already have

There is a famous stone water basin (or "tsukubai") outside of the even more famous Ryoan-ji Temple in Kyoto, with four characters that read: "ware tada shiru taru."

This is a Zen saying that can be translated in a number of ways, all to do with contentment. But my favorite translation is:

"All you need, you already have."


I think it's such a lovely way of looking at life.

As you sit here reading this article, pause and take an assessment of your life right now. Chances are, you have enough food, clothing, shelter, and other basic necessities in your life. You might also have loved ones, people who care about you. You are (mostly) comfortable, without any desperate needs. All you need, you already have.

And yet we don't see life this way ... we are dissatisfied, looking for more comfort, more love, more knowledge, more certainty, more possessions, more food, more entertainment, more validation. I do this too — I'm not criticizing anyone. We don't often embody the idea that we *already have enough*.

If we remember to do so, we can give thanks for what we have. We can appreciate the beauty, the preciousness, of every moment, of being alive. It is a miracle, and we don't have to take it for granted.

So to me the question is: how can we learn to embody this idea?

"All you need, you already have." 

Learning to embody enough-ness


It's nice to say that we have all we need, but what does this mean in practice?

What actions can we take to help us remember this?

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I find it helpful to try to remember a few principles in my daily life:

Appreciation. If we have all we need, the problem is that we forget this simple fact. So we can develop the habit of noticing what we already have, being thankful for it, not taking it for granted. We can appreciate the people in our lives (instead of complaining about them), the possessions we already have (instead of thinking we need more), the food we get to eat (which might mitigate our desire for yet more food pleasures), the simple moments that we often take for granted (instead of needing even more entertainment and distraction). 

Respect. If we appreciate something or someone, we might treat them with respect. In the Zen tradition, bowing to others and even to your meditation cushion are a deep part of practice. It shows a respect for the world around us, which supports us and which we are deeply a part of. You might not want to bow to everyone you meet, but you can

make a mental bow to them, offering respect internally even if you don't make any sign that you're bowing. It will show in your other actions.

Turning towards others. If we already have enough ... why worry so much about ourselves? Why not see what we can do for others? There are others who are suffering, perhaps starving or facing violence, or perhaps just sick with anxiety or depression. We can't solve all of these ills alone, of course, but if we do our best to help others as much as possible, perhaps we can contribute towards the betterment of the lives of all beings. This doesn't mean you need to spend every waking hour devoted to helping other people, but even considering whether your motivations are other-facing or for yourself is a good practice.

So how do we learn to embody these principles? Through habits and rituals. 


Leo Babauta

Rituals to embody enough-ness

It's hard to remember to be present and grateful and filled with enough-ness throughout the day, with all that we have going on, with all of our distractions and internal stories.


So I recommend forming little rituals that help us remember.

Here's a list of *ideas* for rituals, but I don't recommend trying to form all of these rituals, and especially not all at once — try one at a time and see what helps you:

- Wake up and say a little prayer of thanks for what you have in your life.
- Keep a one-paragraph gratitude journal every evening.
- When you meet someone, bow to them (in your mind) out of respect. You might touch your heart or offer them a smile if that helps.
- When you eat, say a little prayer of thanks to everyone who made your meal possible (farmers, cooks, transporters, their families, etc.). Appreciate every bite if you can.
- Before you start a new activity (a work task, a workout, a meeting), pause and ask yourself what your intention is for this activity. Is it focused on helping others?
- When you are done with an activity, show respect for others, your environment and your equipment by respectfully and mindfully cleaning up, instead of rushing to the next activity. 

There are other rituals, of course, but these are a good start.

You might also ask yourself, before you buy something ... whether you really need more or if you have enough. Ask yourself, before you go to an app on your phone or a website on your computer ... whether you are doing it to help others or to fulfill a "need" that you don't need fulfilled. Ask yourself, as you interact with someone else, whether you're showing them deep respect and appreciation, whether you're focused on helping them or protecting yourself.

Ask yourself, regularly throughout your day, whether you have all you need. I think you'll find that you do, and by appreciating that fact more often, you can see what a profound miracle that is. 

Leo Babauta

[Online source](#)

WHO WE ARE

The Communities of Mindful Living are inspired by the Buddhist teachings of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh (pictured).



We aspire to live fully in each moment for the peace and happiness of ourselves and all beings. We meet regularly to observe the art of mindful living and to foster a supportive community of practitioners. 🍵

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We would love to hear from you.
We want the The Lotus Bud to be a place for sharing our experiences and building the Sangha; so why not write a short piece about your experiences with mindfulness ?

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Reading bell

As you read this magazine you have an opportunity to go back to the present moment.

You will notice a bell: 🍵
throughout the magazine.

When you come to each bell, you may like to stop reading, clear your mind and return to your breath before continuing.

Our activities

Wednesday Mindfulness
Meditation
Sydney, Inner West

We welcome all to come join us for meditation practice. We meet at 7:30 pm each Wednesday at the Buddhist Library, Church St, Camperdown, Sydney.

Meditation and monthly
Mindfulness Days at
Canley Heights 🍵

Southwest Sydney - 7.30pm
Friday Night Meditation and
Monthly Mindfulness Days.
85 Queen St
Canley Heights.

Mindfulness Days at Nhap Luu
(Entering the Stream)
Meditation Centre
221 Maria's Lane
Beaufort VIC 3733
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Online sources for articles in this Issue

<http://www.redrat.net/thoughts/wtc/suffering.htm>

<http://zenhabits.net/tsukubai/>