**INSPIRATIONBASE**

*A collection of ethical leadership speeches*

Thích Nhất Hạnh

Thích Nhất Hạnh is a Zen Master, global spiritual leader, peace activist, poet, calligraphy artist, and bestselling author. He is well respected for his teaching and efforts to bring Buddhism and mindfulness to the West, and for traveling the word to spread his message of peace and brotherhood. In 1966, returning from a trip to the U.S. and Europe, he was denied re-entry into his home country of Vietnam because of calling to end the Vietnam War. In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize, calling him “an apostle of peace and non-violence.” In France, he founded the community “Plum Village” in 1982, which has become the largest and most active Buddhist monastery in the West, welcoming thousands of visitors each year. He has also led mindfulness events for politicians from around the world, and has called for action regarding violence, war, and global warming. After many years in exile, he now lives in Từ Hiếu Temple in Vietnam.

(<https://plumvillage.org/about/thich-nhat-hanh/biography/>)

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| **TNH 1*.*** *The Miracle of Walking on the Earth | Thich Nhat Hanh* |   |
|  The first human being who touched the moon with his foot is an American. His name is Neil Armstrong. He was very aware when he made that step, touching the moon. That was in 1969. I remember. And he said, “This is a small step for a man, but a giant leap for mankind.” So he was very aware of that step he made. We know that on the moon there are no rivers, no clouds, no trees, no birds, no grass. And many of our scientists who spend and work six months, one year in a sky lab are very happy every time they come back to our homeland Earth. It’s so beautiful down here. And walking meditation, namely mindful walking is a delight. Mindful walking means you touch the ground of the planet Earth mindfully, and you touch all the wonders of life. […] Every step can be healing. Every step can be nourishing. Every step can free us from the past and the future so that we can truly enjoy the present moment. And there are those of us who are capable of healing ourselves just by mindful walking. It’s much more pleasant to walk on Earth than on the moon. And if we walk like that, not only can we heal ourselves, but we can also help heal Mother Earth, the planet.   |
| **Date**  | 3/5/21Accessed on 7 May 2021 | **Source** | Plum Village App on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmvMmSKiut8>), min. 0:30 - 2:33, 3:18 - 3:59; close captioning available |

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| **TN 2*.*** *Stop Borrowing and Be Happy Now | Thich Nhat Hanh*  |   |
|  Every step is a miracle. Every step is nourishing. Every step is healing. The Zen Master Línjì said that the miracle is not to walk on thin air or fire. The miracle is to walk on Earth. To be alive and to be walking on this planet is a miracle. And you can perform that miracle at any time you want. Imagine you are an astronaut and you have spent two months up there in the sky. And you miss home. You miss the planet. Now you have landed back on the planet. And you see the grass, the trees, you hear the sound of the creek, and you enjoy it so much. You enjoy walking on a small path, and each step brings you happiness and joy. And you see that the kingdom, your home, is really there for you. And that is thanks to mindfulness and concentration. Therefore, we say, that mindfulness and concentration are a source of happiness and peace. […] This planet belongs to our children. We have borrowed this planet from our children. We have caused a lot of damage to our planet. We don’t know whether we can give it back to our children the way we want. But who are they? They are our children. They are our continuation. They are us. It means we have borrowed from ourselves, and not much is left in ourselves. That is the present situation. With the practice we can do otherwise. With the practice of mindfulness, going home to the present moment, we know that there are so many wonders of life. There are many conditions of happiness that are available. We don’t need to borrow anymore. The planet cannot take it anymore. Our children cannot take it anymore. We cannot take it anymore. Stop borrowing. Because we don’t need it. When we go back to our body, to our mind, to the present moment, we see that there are still conditions of happiness available. If we know how to get in touch with them, we can be happy, satisfied, fulfilled right here and right now. This is the teaching of the Buddha, the practice recommended by the Buddha: living happily in the present moment. When you go on vacation, when you go on a retreat or a picnic, you might use a tent. You can live live ten, twenty days in a tent. You have to go and fetch water. It’s not as comfortable as your home, but you are very happy living in a tent. And living in a retreat, you don’t suffer at all. And yet you know, at home you are more comfortable, with running water and everything. So it is the fear in us that prevents us to be happy. We can very well live a simple life and be happy also. […] Many of us are afraid that we cannot continue with the lifestyle that we have because of the economic crisis. And that fear is an obstacle. That fear does not allow us to live happily. The fact is that Bhaddiya [a rich governor who joined the Buddha to become a monk] found that the life of a monk, very simple like that, can be a very happy life. A lot of freedom, a lot of brotherhood, understanding, and compassion. That is why the problem is not whether you can recover from the economic crisis, or whether we can do something to change the economic situation. The problem is how to deal with our fear. And if we can remove that fear, then happiness will be possible right away, even if we have to live a little bit more simple. Only when you liberate yourself from that fear, you can truly come home to the here and now, and enjoy yourself, enjoy life, enjoy the Kingdom of God that is available. And walking meditation is one of the ways to taste the kingdom, to taste the here and the now deeply.  |
| **Date**  | Nottingham Retreat - U.K. Tour 2010, 14/8/10Uploaded to YouTube on 30/10/20Accessed on 7 May 2012 | **Source** | Plum Village App on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lM3S99RqFU>), min. 0:00 - 2:00, 4:14 - 7:17, 11:33 - 13:38; close captioning available |

Collected by Daniela Ribitsch