



No Mud, No Lotus: The Art of Transforming Suffering

Thich Nhat Hanh

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The secret to happiness is to acknowledge and transform suffering, not to run away from it. In *No Mud, No Lotus*, Thich Nhat Hanh offers practices and inspiration transforming suffering and finding true joy.

Thich Nhat Hanh acknowledges that because suffering can feel so bad, we try to run away from it or cover it up by consuming. We find something to eat or turn on the television. But unless we're able to face our suffering, we can't be present and available to life, and happiness will continue to elude us.

Nhat Hanh shares how the practices of stopping, mindful breathing, and deep concentration can generate the energy of mindfulness within our daily lives. With that energy, we can embrace pain and calm it down, instantly bringing a measure of freedom and a clearer mind.

No Mud, No Lotus introduces ways to be in touch with suffering without being overwhelmed by it. "When we know how to suffer," Nhat Hanh says, "we suffer much, much less." With his signature clarity and sense of joy, Thich Nhat Hanh helps us recognize the wonders inside us and around us that we tend to take for granted and teaches us the art of happiness.

No Mud, No Lotus: The Art of Transforming Suffering Details

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From Reader Review No Mud, No Lotus: The Art of Transforming Suffering for online ebook

Robin says

Thich Nhat Hanh has a very simple writing style, so it makes one feel as though the concepts he conveys are simple too. In some ways, they are. To paraphrase: Be present, now, with your in breath and your out breath. Bring your attention to this moment, and acknowledge what you feel. If you suffer, recognize it. Listen to your own suffering as deeply as you can. Whatever the nature of your suffering it, by knowing it and embracing it, you can transform it into greater compassion. Is someone you love suffering? Be present for them, and immediately ease their suffering by offering your presence and compassion.

This slim little volume could be read in an hour or two, but ought very much not to be. Instead, it is best consumed in smallish pieces over a longer time, the better to fully absorb the practices and try them out and see what speaks to you most effectively. In particular, the end section of the book, called Practices for Happiness, can be overwhelming if read all at once. Each of these practices, sets of mantras, or philosophies could spawn a book of its own.

I hope, for myself, to read this book many times and absorb more of it into my own mindfulness practices each time.

Becca says

This small book was packed with so many interesting ideas and concepts. It's one that I will ruminate on for quite awhile. I can't say that I grasped every concept, but I'm okay with that. I don't have much prior knowledge of Buddhism and I'm only slightly familiar with the practice of mindfulness. But don't be intimidated at all. The author's writing and presentation was simple and enjoyable. I'd recommend it, and I will be reading more by this author.

David says

No Mud, No Lotus: The Art of Transforming Suffering is a book written by the Vietnamese monk and peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh, which focuses on various aspects surrounding the concept of transforming suffering. The meaning behind the title is that without mud, the beautiful lotus flower could not grow. This is an analogy to life—without suffering, there cannot be happiness. The key is to develop a keen ability to transform one's own suffering, for which Hanh lays out a detailed plan with various helpful techniques.

In the very beginning of the book is a quote and approach which resonated with me that can be used when someone asks a difficult question about suffering that has no end in sight. Hanh explains that during the Vietnam war, when someone would ask when the war would be over, he knew that he could not tell a lie and say that it will be over soon, nor could he say "I don't know", which would only cause the person to despair even more. So he would answer, "Everything is impermanent, even war. It will end some day." I appreciated this advice and will try to put it into practice when addressing others' suffering.

Hanh discusses the question of whether or not the Buddha suffered by saying that since he had a body, feelings, and perceptions (like all of us) he also experienced suffering. Although both physical suffering and suffering of the mind is inevitable, we can suffer much less by "not watering the seeds of suffering inside us." The act of consuming in order to cover up our suffering does not work; we need a spiritual practice to develop the skill and strength necessary to look deeply into our suffering and make a breakthrough.

There are many mantras, meditations, and techniques in the book that can help address suffering. For example, there is the concept of being a mindfulness bell for a loved one—gently squeezing their hand whenever there is something that may trigger their anger or sadness during a difficult conversation with someone else. Or the morning verse for happiness, which is a daily reminder to breathe and become aware that we have twenty-four new hours to live each morning when we wake up.

According to my records, this is the sixth book by Hanh that I have completed. I enjoy his books a lot, and have gotten much benefit from them. However, I do feel that they borrow a lot of content from one another (granted, he has written a myriad of books, so this is to be somewhat expected) and have a lot of overlapping stories and advice between them. I enjoyed this book, although there wasn't much in it that I couldn't have gotten from reading one or two of his other books. I do plan to continue reading Thich Nhat Hanh's works, and I wouldn't hesitate to suggest his books to anyone else. They are very quick and easy to read, and are very helpful. Please do check one of them out when you get a chance.

Lorilin says

Such a short book, but it took me forever to read because there is so much to think about. I'm still trying to wrap my mind around everything I learned. I don't feel like writing a huge review for this one, but it was a life-changing read for me. There is a lot of insight in these pages--and a lot of genuine, practical advice for calming yourself down and finding general peace with life. I really enjoyed it.

Mark Robison says

This is a distillation of teachings into very direct statements and recommendations. As such, it's not all that great for reading but is fine as a reference book. Excerpt: "The most effective way to show compassion to another is to listen, rather than talk. You have an opportunity to practice deep, compassionate listening. If you can listen to the other person with compassion, your listening is like a salve for her wound. In the practice of compassionate listening, you listen with only one purpose, which is to give the other person the chance to speak out and to suffer less. ... Hold on to your true purpose and remind yourself: 'Listening like this, my sole aim is to help the other person suffer less. She may be full of wrong perceptions, but I won't interrupt her. If I jump in with my perspective on things or correct her, it will become a debate, not a practice of deep listening. Another time, there may be a chance for me to offer her a little information so that she can correct her wrong perception. But not now.' That kind of mindfulness helps you to keep your compassion alive and protects you from having the seed of anger in you touched off. Who knows, you may be the first one who has listened to her deeply like that."

Nora|KnyguDama says

Dar viena knyga iš mano pamiltos "drobin?s" "Tyto alba" kolekcijos. Dar šiek tiek budistini? tekst? sielai ir protui pamaitinti. "Kur auga lotosai" - plona knygel?, parašyta budist? vienuolio Thich Nhat Hanh, kuris aktyviai kovoja už taik?, veda paskaitas apie tik?jim?, daug dirba su žmon?mis ir yra paraš?s daugiau nei 100 knyg?. B?tent ši knyga kalba apie kan?i?. Tiksliau apie tai kaip pamilti savo kan?i?, kaip su ja susigyventi ir galiausiai paversti džiaugsmu.

Pagrindin? knygos mintis yra ta, jog džiaugsmas kaip ir kair?, dešin? - vienas be kito b?ti negali. Nežinai kas yra kan?ia - niekad nepatirsi tikro džiaugsmo. Vienuolis moko, jog ir kan?ia yra dovan??. J? reikia ne apeiti, vengti ar ignoruoti, o išgyventi ir priimti. Ir angliskas knygos pavadinimas tikslesnis - "No mud, no lotus: the art of transforming suffering" ("N?ra purvo, nebus ir lots?: kan?ios transformavimo menas"). Knygoje pateikta labai daug graži? min?i?, pamokym? ir patarim? kaip susitaikyti su savo skausmu, kaip juo viduje pasir?pinti. Knygoje taip pat pateikta 16 kv?pavimo pratim?, bei 6 mantrų pad?si?ios atrasti dvasin? ramyb?.

Ši knyga - nuostabus atradimas tam žmogui, kuris b?tent dabar jau?ia didel? kan?i?. Tuomet j? tikrai galima laikyti gydomuoju šaltiniu sielai, ramyb?s uostu. Pati "Kur auga lotosai" skai?iau ne tokios b?senos, tad to didžiojo efekto nepatryiau. Esu daugiau nei šimtu procent? ?sitikinusi, jog išankstin?s prevencijos didžiuliam skausmui, kan?iai n?ra. Gali kalb?ti, ruoštis, skaityti, bet kai b?da užgrius, nuo t? vis? žini? skausmas nepalengv?s. ta?iau kai tai nutiks (beldžiu ? med? tris kartus...) šios mažut?s knygos tikrai imsiuos. Skaitysi labai 1?tai ir bandysiu ?kv?pti vidun kiekvien? žod?. Tad jei savam rate žinote ken?iant? žmog?, skausmo valgom? šird? - padovanokite jam "Kur auga lotosai" ir galb?t ?vyks stebuklas.

Elaine says

Great title. Shame the content didn't live up to the promise. Perhaps I'm being a little harsh here but not everything can be fixed with breathing and mindfulness. Or maybe I'm just not doing it right.

Robin says

This slim little book is huge with wisdom and and insight just what my heart needed.

♥ Ibrahim ♥ says

His books pretty much say the same thing, same message but in different contexts, and I love to hear it repeated over and over again. Some people you like to hear for the spirit with which they communicate, regardless of getting something new every time or not, that is besides the point. And I love hearing this guy talk and I can hear him say the same thing over and over and always feel refreshed and adapt this message into my own life in practical, concrete terms.

Gregory says

Brought me back to my center. Extremely helpful.

Justin says

Here's the thing, if you have read any of Hanh's books, you have pretty much read them all. He teaches the same few lessons in different and new ways. This book focuses on suffering and the need to move through suffering, rather than avoiding it. How mindfulness, letting go, simplicity, etc. Basic Hanh teachings in each of his books. This doesn't make it a bad book, in fact it is a very good book because it is important to keep coming back to his teachings as one is reminded to come back to one's breath. As long as you are not doing a marathon read of all his books in a row, this one deserves space on your shelf, but it isn't new teaching, but simply new stories. Good stuff.

Halle says

No Mud, No lotus is a great read that offers practical ways to deal with suffering in the world, no matter how big or small. Thich Nhat Hanh, through simple exercises and thoughtful metaphors, teaches "the art of suffering" and how one can suffer mindfully and experience happiness in suffering. This book is helpful and will bless all who read its pages!

Kirtida Gautam says

This is the 2nd book of Thich Nhat Hanh I have read. Every time I read him, it's like someone is applying balm on my emotional pain. His writing is so soothing.

Jim says

To live is to suffer. We all yearn for happiness, but have unreasonable expectations that happiness can take root and stay forever, whereas it is only the flip side of suffering. Thich Nhat Hanh has written a number of books to each us that mindfulness is the key to overcoming suffering and enjoying happiness. Nothing he teaches relates solely to any particular religion: rather, it is a technique for helping us live in the moment, which is the only time and place we will encounter happiness.

Naomi says

Accessible, clear teachings on suffering and happiness and ways to cultivate greater happiness in the world through greater mindfulness. Good for individuals, small and large group study and practice.

