

Walking meditation

**"Walking mindfully on the Earth can restore our peace and harmony,
and it can restore the Earth's peace and harmony as well.**

We are children of the Earth. We rely on her for our happiness, and she relies on us also.

**Whether the Earth is beautiful, fresh, and green, or arid and parched
depends on our way of walking.**

**When we practice walking meditation beautifully, we massage the Earth with our feet and
plant seeds of joy and happiness with each step.**

Our mother will heal us, and we will heal her." --Thich Nhat Hanh



Wherever we walk, we can practice meditation. This means that we know that we are walking. We walk just for walking. We walk with freedom and solidity, no longer in a hurry. We are present with each step. We walk slowly, in a relaxed way, keeping a light smile on our lips. When we practice this way, we feel deeply at ease, and our steps are those of the most secure person on Earth. All our sorrows and anxieties drop away, and peace and joy fill our hearts. Anyone can do it. It takes only a little time, a little mindfulness, and the wish to be happy.

We can learn to move, to walk with awareness. We bring our awareness into our body, to our feet stepping on the earth and to our natural breath, in and out. We relax, enjoying this moment of walking as a free person, and allow the many wonders of life around us to bring us deep happiness. We may like to use a gatha (practice poem) as we walk. Taking two or three steps for each in-breath and each out-breath,

Breathing in "I have arrived"; Breathing out "I am home"

Breathing in "In the here": Breathing out "In the now"

Breathing in "I am solid"; Breathing out "I am free"

Breathing in "In the ultimate"; Breathing out "I dwell"



Nourishing our Body and Mind

Eating with mindfulness can bring you a lot of joy and happiness. In the tradition of Plum Village, eating is a deep practice. First we sit in a stable position, then we look at the food and smile to it. Looking at a carrot, I can see a cloud floating in it. I can see the rain and the sunshine. When I chew the carrot, I am just chewing a carrot, not my worries or my anger. I chew with one hundred percent of myself. I feel a connection to the sky, the Earth, and the farmers who grow the food. Eating in silence, the food becomes real with our mindfulness and we are fully aware of its nourishment. Eating like this, I feel that solidity, freedom, and joy are possible. The meal nourishes not only my body, but also my soul, my consciousness, and my spirit.

Upon finishing our meal, we take a few moments to notice that we have finished, our plate is now empty and our hunger is satisfied. Gratitude fills us as we realize how fortunate we are to have had this nourishing food to eat, supporting us on the path of love and understanding.

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