

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a tunnel. A bright light source is visible in the distance, creating a beam of light that illuminates the air, revealing dust particles. The light is warm and golden, contrasting with the dark, shadowed walls of the tunnel. The overall mood is mysterious and contemplative.

# The Sunlight of Awareness

THICH NHAT HANH



# The Sunlight of Awareness

Thich Nhat Hanh

*“Shine the warm light of awareness  
on your thoughts and feelings ...”*

Observe the changes that take place in  
your mind under the light of awareness.

Even your breathing has changed and  
become “NOT-TWO” (I don’t want to say  
“one”) with your observing self.

This is true of all your thoughts, feelings and habits, which, together with their effects, are suddenly transformed.

From time to time you may become restless, and the restlessness will not go away. At such times, just sit quietly, follow your breathing, smile a half-smile, and shine your awareness on the restlessness. Don't judge it or try to destroy it, because this restlessness is you yourself. It is born, has some period of existence, and fades away, quite naturally. Don't be in too big a hurry to find its source. Don't try too hard to make it disappear. Just illuminate it.

You will see that little by little it will change, merge, become connected with you, the observer. Any psychological state that you subject to this illumination will eventually soften and acquire the same nature as the observing mind.

Throughout your meditation, keep **the sun of your awareness shining**. Like the physical sun, which lights every leaf and every blade of grass, our awareness lights our every thought and feeling, allowing us to recognize them, be aware of their birth, duration, and dissolution, without judging or evaluating, welcoming or banishing them.

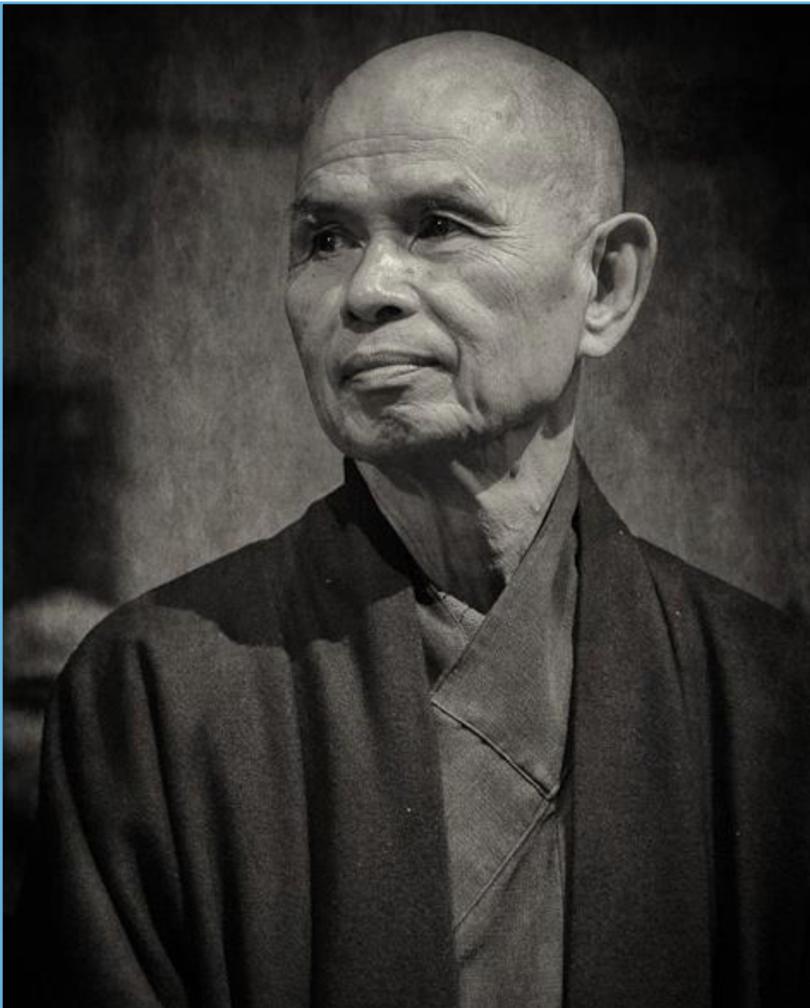
It is important that you do not consider awareness to be your “ally,” called on to suppress the “enemies” that are your unruly thoughts. Do not turn your mind into a battlefield.

Opposition between good and bad is often compared to light and dark, but if we look at it in a different way, we will see that when light shines, darkness does not disappear. It doesn't leave; it merges with the light. It becomes the light.

To meditate does not mean to fight with a problem. To meditate means to observe. Your smile proves it. It proves that you are being gentle with yourself, that the sun of awareness is shining in you, that you have control of your situation. You are yourself, and you have acquired some peace. It is this peace that makes a child love to be near you.

*Adapted from:  
“The Sun, My Heart: Reflections on Mindfulness, Concentration and Insight,”  
published by Parallax Press.*

# THICH NHAT HANH



Thich Nhat Hanh is a renowned Zen Master and poet, the founder of the Engaged Buddhist movement, and the founder of nine monastic communities, including Plum Village Monastery in France. He's also the author of *At Home in the World*, *The Other Shore*, and more than a hundred other books that have sold millions of copies worldwide. Thich Nhat Hanh currently lives in Vietnam.