

Thich nhat hanh
being peace



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

What is the true power of a smile? Does it really have the ability to bring happiness to another person? If you are a Buddhist practitioner it does. Mindfulness is central to the Buddhist religion here in America and all over the world. That includes being mindful of everything that is around and inside of you. Buddhism teaches that life is filled with suffering, but also with happiness and as Thich Nhat Hanh uses the analogy of a television in his "Being Peace," we have the choice of what channel to be on, the channel of happiness or suffering. To follow the Buddhist path, described by Hanh in his book "Being Peace," would lead to a more positive and peaceful life. In my case, it would create many positive changes in my life, including less stress, more awareness and happiness. Like many college students I live a very busy life. If I am not active and doing something, I immediately feel that I am wasting my time and that I am a spectator in the world rather than a participant. This is quite the opposite to Hanh's description of how a productive life should be lived.

If I was to follow Thich Nhat Hanh's method of truly living life, I would change my idea of what productivity is, and perceive it as quality and not quantity. In other words I would focus more on the things I do by reducing the amount so that I won't be overwhelmed with too many activities and at the same time completely enjoy the few that I do. Everyday there are things in my agenda that I accomplish, but if a person was to ask me what I did last week, it would take me a while to remember exactly what I did.

Why is that? I did many things last week; it should be easy to remember at least one. The reason is because most of the time I am not aware of what I am doing. In fact, a considerable portion of my time is run by an "autopilot."

In his "Being Peace," Hanh speaks of awareness and that in order to achieve it one must live in the present. Because of all the things in my agenda, I am constantly thinking and stressing over the next thing to do, rather than enjoying what I am doing in the present.

This is caused by my lack of awareness, and becoming aware would lead me to live a less stressful life by thinking only of the present. Thinking back to the happiest moments of my life, I recognize one central thing, and that is mindfulness. What I mean by mindfulness is being aware of everything that was going on at that moment, every smell, every sound and every picture. It was not necessarily a special day, or a day in which I accomplished a lot, but merely a day when I was aware of every detail. I will use an example I experienced not long ago.

I have always thought of the rain as simply a phenomenon that nature must go through. A couple of days ago, in the midst of rain, I sat down to relax for a couple of seconds that would turn into minutes. At first, I looked at the empty sky, and realized how beautiful it looked in its obscurity. The smell of wet concrete rose up to my nostrils and it gave me a pleasant smile. Before I knew it, I was listening to an orchestra of rain drops hitting different surfaces simultaneously, and I realized how much I enjoyed the rain.

It was the happiest event of that day, and it consisted of taking a seat and being aware of the rain. Therefore, being mindful for a couple of minutes brought happiness to my day, and I believe if I followed this path Overall, the Buddhist teachings of mindfulness expressed in Thich Nhat Hanh's "Being Peace" consist of being aware of everything around us. By applying these

teaching to daily life, one can attain pure happiness and productivity.

Personally, my life would become peaceful and virtuous.