

The Five  
Mindfulness  
Trainings:  
**ARISE**  
Contemplations



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A new Paradigm for Racial  
Justice and the Global  
Pandemic Recitation

by Marisela Gomez  
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**ARISE**

Awakening through Race, Intersectionality, and Social Equity

## (BELL) (BELL) (BELL)



Dear Friends, It is now time to recite the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

**The Dharma is deep and lovely.**

**We now have a chance to see it, study it, and practice it.**

**We vow to realize its true meaning.**

The Five Mindfulness Trainings are offered as suggestions to support our mindfulness practice. They provide us with a compass with which to orient our lives. They are nonsectarian, and their nature is universal. All spiritual traditions have their equivalent to the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

These Five Mindfulness Trainings are based on the precepts developed during the time of the Buddha and were the foundation of practice for the entire lay practice community. Thich Nhat Hanh translated these precepts for modern times and the ARISE sangha has further translated them in 2020. With mindfulness, we are aware of what is going on in our bodies, our feelings, our minds and the world, and we avoid doing harm to ourselves and others.

Mindfulness protects us, our families and our society. When we are mindful, we can see that by refraining from doing one thing, we can prevent another thing from happening. When we are mindful, we arrive at our own unique insight. To practice the Five Mindfulness Trainings is to cultivate a way of life that can remove all discrimination, intolerance, anger, fear, and despair. Following this way of life, we are not lost in confusion about our life in the present or in fears about the future.



# First Mindfulness Training: ACKNOWLEDGING BEAUTY AS REVERENCE FOR LIFE



Aware of the suffering caused by oppression and generational harm based on racial, cultural, social, and ethnic inferiority and superiority and its resultant structures of injustices and harm, I acknowledge the beauty and violence inherent in life.

I vow to resist being complicit in systems and structures that continue to perpetuate violence and hatred instead of reverence of life for marginalized groups. I recognize that each person contributes to my individual and our collective awakening, and the co-creation of a world that celebrates and affirms differences and similarities. All living beings can teach me something when I remember to pause, breathe, listen deeply with a calm and open mind and heart, and ask myself: "Is there more?" or "What else is here with me?" I honor and respect all life guided by Right View and Right Energy.

(full breath)

**This is the first of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.**

**Have I made an effort to study and practice it during the past few weeks?**

(3 breaths) (bell) (3 breaths)



# Second Mindfulness Training: BELONGING AND CONNECTING AS TRUE HAPPINESS



Aware of the suffering caused by ignorance and aversion of my own and other's racial, ethnic, cultural, and social history, its legacy, and how this affects me whether I am aware of it or not, I am committed to connecting to these histories. I know that turning toward these histories with an open heart is my journey of awakening to true belonging. I will take the time to learn the history of the racial and ethnic group with which I identify as well as for other socially constructed racial and ethnic groups.

Aware that there is no genetic or biological difference between different racial and ethnic groups, and that these identities were constructed by one group to establish dominance over others, I will turn toward racial and other forms of othering with an open heart and compassionate action. I know that this history has led to fragmentation inside and outside body and mind and brought much suffering to all beings. I vow to transform this suffering through the practice of connecting with an open heart.

I will notice when emotions of belonging and othering arise, and I will ask myself "Why'?" Whatever feelings, perceptions, or mental formations arise, I will embrace and when needed engage with love in action. I am committed to practicing Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood so I can help relieve this legacy of racial and social suffering. I will practice looking deeply to see that true happiness is not possible without true connecting leading to belonging and understanding.

(full breath) **This is the second of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have I made an effort to study and practice it during the past few weeks?**  
(3 breaths) (bell) (3 breaths)

## Third Mindfulness Training: CHERISHMENT AS TRUE LOVE



Aware of the suffering caused by discrimination and oppression, I vow to understand its roots within my consciousness and my body and the collective body of the sangha and larger society. I vow to recognize the ways in which I have benefitted or not-benefitted explicitly or implicitly from systems and structures that foster discrimination and injustice.

I am aware of the legacy of violence, especially unlawful police violence, perpetrated against Black people, indigenous people, people of color, differently abled people, people of various gender identities and expressions and sexual orientation, and others who are marginalized. I acknowledge the lived experience of all people to deepen my capacity for understanding and for greater compassionate action. I am aware that narrowly constructed, prevalent interpretations of intimate relationships constrain how we cherish each other in our expression of love, leaving many further isolated and alienated. I am committed to looking tenderly at my suffering, knowing that I am not separate from others and that the seeds of suffering contain the seeds of joy.

I am not afraid of bold love that fosters justice and belonging and tender love that seeks peace and connection. I cherish myself and my suffering without discrimination. I cherish this body and mind as an act of healing for myself and for others. I cherish this breath. I cherish this moment. I cherish the liberation of all beings guided by the wisdom and solidity of the sangha. This is my path of true love.

(full breath) **This is the third of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have I made an effort to study and practice it during the past few weeks?**  
(3 breaths) (bell) (3 breaths)



# Fourth Mindfulness Training: VULNERABILITY AS LOVING SPEECH AND DEEP LISTENING



Aware that vulnerability is the essence of our true nature, our humanness, I vow to risk listening and speaking non-judgmentally with understanding and compassion to alleviate suffering and support peace in myself and others.

I vow to live with empathy, compassion, and awareness and to listen for understanding rather than disagreement. When I've hurt others through my unskillful action or speech, I vow to practice making a good apology that acknowledges what I have done and offers sincere regret, knowing that this supports the other person and me. I am committed to speaking that aligns with my highest aspiration and encourages honesty and truthfulness. I am committed to generous and courageous listening that bridges differences and supports understanding of others who may be different from me.

I am committed to taking meaningful steps to become a true instrument of peace and to help others to be the same. When I am not able to understand the experiences of others, I vow to come back to my breath and my body, and to offer myself gentle patience while learning to support myself in developing greater awareness and skill. I vow to practice awareness of my beliefs, perceptions, and feelings, aversions, and desires and to take refuge in mindful breathing and in the sangha to support greater stability, peace, and understanding. Through my practices of vulnerability, patience, forgiveness, and deeply listening, I know that my speech will be guided by love and understanding. Practicing in this way supports Right Speech and Right Action and guides me to Right Insight.

(full breath) **This is the fourth of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have I made an effort to study and practice it during the past few weeks?**  
(3 breaths) (bell) (3 breaths)



# Fifth Mindfulness Training: WELCOMING AS NOURISHMENT AND HEALING



Aware of the suffering caused by the consumption of an inadequate history of racial and ethnic forms of social segregation, I am committed to healing myself and the world by welcoming and practicing with this awareness.

I will notice how my thoughts, perceptions, feelings, words, and actions may have been influenced by this inaccurate history. I will look deeply to understand how both physical and mental health, for myself, my family, and my society have been influenced by embracing and denying this racial, social, and ethnic history of inferiority and superiority and its legacy of inequities and injustices.

I will cultivate joy to support me toward individual and collective wholeness. I will practice mindfulness of the Four Kinds of Nutriment to become aware of how edible foods, sense impressions, volition, and consciousness are all influenced by this history. Practicing with Right Energy and Right Resolve, my Right Action of consumption will include awareness of certain websites, electronic games, TV programs, films, magazines, books, and conversations and how they continue to foster wrong perceptions of racial, ethnic, and social injustices. My understanding of interbeing supports my conscious consumption that sustains a healthy understanding of differences, one that does not oppress or discriminate. This Right Insight will preserve peace, joy, and bring healing in my body and consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of my family, my society and the Earth. To assure that my descendants do not live in a racially, ethnically, and socially unjust world, I commit to diligently practicing with true welcoming on this path to nourish and heal myself, the sangha, and society.

(full breath) **This is the fifth of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Have I made an effort to study and practice it during the past few weeks?**

(3 breaths) (bell) (3 breaths)



Friends, we have recited the Five Mindfulness Trainings, the foundation of happiness for the individual, the family, and society. The Five Mindfulness Trainings keep us centered in life's storms and joys and reminds us that life is a precious gift. The Trainings are a path to liberation and transformation. Practicing these Trainings supports us toward racial and ethnic reconciliation and social change and heals deep suffering. The Five Mindfulness Trainings help us cross this shore of suffering and brings us to the side of true awakening and love....We are called forward.

We recite the trainings regularly so that our study and practice of the mindfulness trainings can deepen day by day.

**Reciting the trainings, practicing the way of awareness, gives rise to benefits without limit.**

**We vow to share the fruits with all beings.**

**We vow to offer tribute to parents, teachers, friends, and numerous beings, who give guidance and support along the path.**

(bell) (bell) (bell)

*These trainings originated from the Five Buddhist Precepts and were updated by ARISE (Awakening through Racial, Intersectional and Economic Equity) and Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. More info at [www.plumvillage.org](http://www.plumvillage.org) and [www.arisesangha.org](http://www.arisesangha.org)*

