THICH NHAT HANH

HOW TO LOVE

'THE FATHER OF MINDFULNESS'
IRISH TIMES

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About the Book

‘True love gives us beauty, freshness, solidity, freedom and peace.’

Thich Nhat Hanh brings his signature clarity, compassion and humour to the thorny question of how to love. Here are thoughts on physical intimacy, on romance and on our close relationships. He shows us how to open our hearts to ourselves and embrace the world.

About the Author

Thich Nhat Hanh is a world-renowned writer, poet, scholar and Zen Buddhist monk, who lives mostly in the monastic community he founded in France. The author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Anger* and the classic work *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, as well as numerous other books, he conducts public workshops and peace-making retreats throughout the world. He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967.

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By the same author

Silence

Anger

Being Peace

Breathe! You Are Alive

Creating True Peace

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Old Path, White Clouds

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Present Moment, Wonderful Moment

The Art of Communicating

The Sun My Heart

Transformation and Healing

True Love

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Notes on Love

HEART LIKE A RIVER

If you pour a handful of salt into a cup of water, the water becomes undrinkable.

But if you pour the salt into a river, people can continue to draw the water to cook, wash, and drink. The river is immense, and it has the capacity to receive, embrace, and transform. When our hearts are small, our understanding and compassion are limited, and we suffer. We can't accept or tolerate others and their shortcomings, and we demand that they change. But when our hearts expand, these same things don't make us suffer anymore. We have a lot of understanding and compassion and can embrace others. We accept others as they are, and then they have a chance to transform. So the big question is: how do we help our hearts to grow?

FEEDING OUR LOVE

Each of us can learn the art of nourishing happiness and love. Everything needs food to live, even love. If we don't know how to nourish our love, it withers.

When we feed and support our own happiness, we are nourishing our ability to love. That's why to love means to learn the art of nourishing our happiness.

UNDERSTANDING IS THE NATURE OF LOVE

Understanding someone's suffering is the best gift you can give another person.

Understanding is love's other name. If you don't understand, you can't love.

RECOGNIZING TRUE LOVE

True love gives us beauty, freshness, solidity, freedom, and peace. True love includes a feeling of deep joy that we are alive. If we don't feel this way when we feel love, then it's not true love.

REVERENCE IS THE NATURE OF OUR LOVE

There's a tradition in Asia of treating your partner with the respect you would accord a guest. This is true even if you have been with your loved one for a long time. The other person always deserves your full respect. Reverence is the nature of our love.

LOVE IS EXPANSIVE

In the beginning of a relationship, your love may include only you and the other person. But if you practice true love, very soon that love will grow and include all of us. The moment love stops growing, it begins to die. It's like a tree; if a tree stops growing, it begins to die. We can learn how to feed our love and help it continue to grow.