



EDITION



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A Zen Master's Advice On Coping With Trump

It involves a lot more than meditating.



By Jo Confino

*For HuffPost's #LoveTakesAction series, we're telling stories of how people are standing up to hate and supporting those most threatened. **What will you stand up for? Tell us with #LoveTakesAction.***

What can Zen Buddhism teach us about the art of effective activism in the wake of [Donald Trump's](#) presidency?

Zen master [Thich Nhat Hanh](#), who has been a social and environmental activist for more than 40 years, has said the most important thing for those feeling a sense of despair is to remember that meeting anger with more anger only makes matters worse.

The 90-year-old Vietnamese monk, who is considered to be one of the world's leading spiritual teachers, is known for creating the idea of Engaged Buddhism, a method of linking mindfulness with social action.

His essential teaching on activism is that mindfulness gives people the ability to find peace in themselves so that their actions come from a place of compassion.

"Mindfulness must be engaged," Nhat Hanh writes in his new book [At Home in the World](#). "Once we see that something needs to be done, we must take action. Seeing and action go together. Otherwise, what is the point in seeing?"

"Nonviolence is not a set of techniques that you can learn with your intellect," he goes on to say. "Nonviolent action arises from the compassion, lucidity and understanding you have within."

Drawing from his own experience in seeking an end to the Vietnam War, Nhat Hanh writes that activists must learn to look after themselves if they are to be effective:

[I]f we don't maintain a balance between our work and the nourishment we need, we won't be very successful. The practice of walking meditation, mindful breathing, allowing our body and mind to rest, and getting in touch with the refreshing and healing elements inside and around us is crucial for our survival.

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