

Host your own

Online Sangha Session to Honor our Teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh

A brief note from Plum Village: This is an unusual time for everyone in the world. What is most important at this moment of our beloved Teacher's passing is to find ways to come together (online if we cannot do so in person) to have an opportunity to breathe and generate an energy of mindfulness, peace, compassion, and non-fear, as a community. It is also very important to have time to share from our hearts and listen to each other deeply. After consulting with many lay Dharma Teachers, we feel that the following program would be appropriate for a local sangha group to follow online. It takes the spirit and essence of the more formal ceremonies available in the Plum Village Chanting Book and applies it to our needs in the current situation.

1.5 hour suggested program:

- 5" Introduction + welcome**
- 15" 3 Bells + Guided Sitting meditation**
- 5" 1 Bell + Reading: "Contemplation on No-Coming and No-Going"**
- 10" 1 Bell + Another Reading of your choice + Bell**
- 45" Intro + Dharma Sharing**
- 5" 1 Bell + Reading: "The Five Awarenesses" + Bell**
- 5" Closing + thanks + 3 Bells**

Please feel free to adapt to your own sangha's needs and inspiration. Additional resources (meditations, chants, songs, readings, teachings and so on) to support your personal practice can be found on the Plum Village website [Memorial Resources page](#), including [a more formal 45-minute ceremony](#) that you could follow with friends. We hope you'll be able to watch the highlights of the formal ceremonies of our [Five-Day Memorial Service](#) which will be live-streamed.

Full program text on next page...

Online Sangha Session to Honor our Teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh

Greetings & tech check (mute on, gallery-view, etc)

5” **Introduction by facilitator**

It's good to create a warm and relaxed atmosphere before having a clear starting moment with the bell & meditation. The facilitator/s can offer some words of introduction and explain how the time will unfold. The key purpose of this session is to generate a spirit of togetherness, mindfulness, concentration and hope in memory of and tribute to our Teacher. It's not a funeral, and it's not a time of mourning, but a time to connect in a deep way with our spiritual ancestors as a source of energy and aspiration. Before starting the meditation, perhaps everyone on screen can introduce themselves, where they're joining from, and offer a one line check-in on how they are doing.

15” **3 Bells & Guided Sitting meditation**

(2 mins per exercise)

Breathing in, I'm aware of my in-breath.

Breathing out, I'm aware of my out-breath.

In-breath; out-breath

Breathing in, I become aware of my whole body.

Breathing out, I smile to the miracle of being alive in this moment.

Aware of body, smiling to life

Breathing in, I invite Thay to sit with my back.

Breathing out, I invite Thay to breathe with my lungs.

Thay enjoying the sitting; Thay enjoying the breathing

Breathing in, I'm aware of my sadness.

Breathing out, I smile to my sadness with compassion.

Embracing sadness, smiling with compassion

Breathing in, I'm aware of my gratitude for Thay's teaching.

Breathing out, I smile to my joy.

Feeling grateful, smiling

Breathing in, I'm aware of our sangha breathing together around the world.
Breathing out, I take refuge in the sangha, breathing together around the world.
Sangha breathing together; taking refuge in the sangha

5” 1 Bell + Reading: “Contemplation on No-Coming and No-Going”
by Thich Nhat Hanh

*This body is not me.
I am not limited by this body.
I am life without boundaries.
I have never been born,
and I have never died.*

*Look at the ocean and the sky filled with stars,
manifestations from my wondrous true mind.
Since before time, I have been free.*

*Birth and death are only doors through which we pass,
sacred thresholds on our journey.
Birth and death are a game of hide-and-seek.*

*So laugh with me,
hold my hand,
let us say good-bye,
say good-bye, to meet again soon.*

*We meet today.
We will meet again tomorrow.
We will meet at the source every moment.
We meet each other in all forms of life.*

1 Bell

10” Another Reading (text of your choice):
Perhaps “[The Discourse on Love](#)” or “[Limitless Life](#)” or a [short excerpt from one of Thay's books](#) or one of [Thay's poems](#)

1 Bell

5” Brief introduction to sharing by Facilitator

We can invite people to share the ways he has touched our lives, inspired us, helped us heal and transform, or reconcile with others. This is a time to celebrate the impact of Thay’s teachings on our lives, and to cherish the fact we have had a chance to encounter those teachings, in whatever small way. People could be invited to share one very practical “resolution” they would like to make in tribute to Thay.

Tip: *If you have a large group, you can split into smaller break-out rooms (in Zoom) of 2-3 people for 5 minutes or so, to share from the heart (in a more intimate setting) whatever feelings are coming up in their hearts. Afterwards, the whole groups reconvenes and the facilitator can then invite people to share to the whole group what Thay has meant to them or a story of how Thay’s teachings made a difference in their life.*

40” Bell + Dharma Sharing

5” 1 Bell + Reading: “The Five Awarenesses”

We are aware that all generations of our ancestors, including our spiritual ancestors, and all future generations are present in us.

We are aware of the expectations that our ancestors, including our spiritual ancestors, our children, and their children have of us.

We are aware that our joy, peace, freedom, and harmony are the joy, peace, freedom, and harmony of our ancestors, including our spiritual ancestors, our children, and their children.

We are aware that understanding is the very foundation of love.

We are aware that blaming and arguing can never help us and only create a wider gap between us; that only understanding, trust, and love can help us change and grow.

1 Bell

3” Closing words from the facilitator

There are many different ways to close - perhaps with a [song](#), or listening to a [chanting track](#), or with silence and three sounds of the bell. It is nice if the facilitator can thank

everyone for being present and invite them to carry the energy of the session into the coming days.

3 Bells

Goodbyes