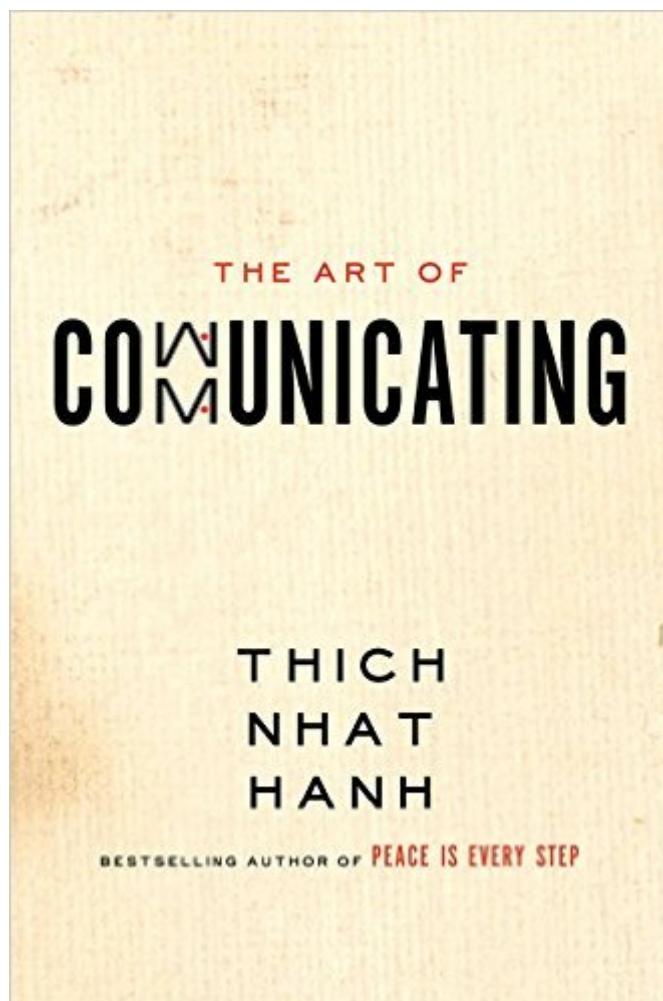


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The Art Of Communicating



Synopsis

Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, bestselling author of *Peace Is Every Step* and one of the most respected and celebrated religious leaders in the world, delivers a powerful path to happiness through mastering life's most important skill. In this precise and practical guide, Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh reveals how to listen mindfully and express your fullest and most authentic self. With examples from his work with couples, families, and international conflicts, *The Art of Communicating* helps us move beyond the perils and frustrations of misrepresentation and misunderstanding to learn the listening and speaking skills that will forever change how we experience and impact the world. A portion of the proceeds from your book purchase supports Thich Nhat Hanh's peace work and mindfulness teachings around the world. For more information on how you can help, visit www.thichnhathanhfoundation.org.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have been on the "spiritual path" for about 10 years now. I have had many spiritual experiences: past lives experienced in meditation, merging with cosmic consciousness and I even watched Joel (the name given to this form at birth) die (ego death). Even with experiencing profound realizations I have had a big challenge in communication. Namely I have always wanted people to listen to what I have to say. I end up talking very fast (usually because I feel like I need to get everything out before someone interrupts me) and have always wondered why people don't really listen to me? For these communication challenges and many more are what led me to this book. I wasn't even looking for a "spiritual communication" book, but now I understand even better that communication is one way

our realizations as a human being may be actualized and lived in our life. This book isn't really "spiritual" per-se, but does have fundamentals based in the Buddhist tradition. The following section blew me away with an insight I had never heard before: "We communicate to be understood and to understand others. If we're talking and no one is listening (maybe not even our own selves), we're not communicating effectively." These two sentences slapped me awake. Listening to myself while I talk? I had never heard of that concept said before. I thought talking meant I was supposed to talk..100%! This talking, without myself actually listening to the words coming out of my mouth has gotten me into quite a bit of trouble in communication. I see now that people don't listen to me very much because they are a reflection of myself! I don't even listen to my own words coming out of my mouth, why would others?

Although I probably won't read this book in its entirety again, I did find value in it. The first few chapters drilled home the idea that I need to communicate (write, speak, listen) to others out of complete compassion and understanding. It also taught that when I communicate the ultimate goal is to cause the receiver of my communication to experience less suffering, which to me, is a brilliant way of filtering all my communication with others from here on out. I particularly liked these statements and ideas from the book as well: You absorb the thoughts, speech, and actions you produce and those contained in the communications of those around you. That is a form of consumption. In a relationship, we are nourishment for each other. So we have to select the kind of food we offer the other person, the kind of food that can help our relationship thrive. Everything - including love, hate, and suffering - needs food to continue. If suffering continues, it's because we keep feeding our suffering. Every time we speak without mindful awareness, we are feeding our suffering. With mindful awareness, we can look into the nature of our suffering and find out what kind of food we have been supplying to keep it alive. When we find the source of nourishment for our suffering, we can cut off that supply, and our suffering will fade. Many of us spend a lot of time in meetings or e-mailing with others, and not a lot of time communicating with ourselves. The result is that we don't know what is going on within us. It may be a mess inside. How, then, can we communicate with another person? We don't tell our fear to go away; we recognize it. We don't tell our anger to go away; we acknowledge it. These feelings are like a small child tugging at our sleeves.

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