



Nothing to Do, Nowhere to Go: Reflections on the Teachings of Zen Master Lin Chi

Thich Nhat Hanh

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The Zen school of Mahayana Buddhism contends that each one of us is already a Buddha — the enlightenment we seek is always within us, waiting to be realized through mindfulness and concerted spiritual work. This truth pushes us toward practice, in the hopes that we may awaken our potential and live up to what is inside us. This is a notion taught widely by ninth century Zen Master Lin Chi, and in his tradition Thich Nhat Hanh employs the teachings and writings of Mahayana Buddhism to discuss specific topics in Buddhist study and practice. With these teachings, readers have the tools to awaken the Buddha within.

Nothing to Do, Nowhere to Go: Reflections on the Teachings of Zen Master Lin Chi Details

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Marigold says

This book is of a rare sort. In the beginning, reading the actual "Records of Master Linji," I followed the introduction's suggestion that I treat the short stories/teachings as 'marvels in a museum, to look upon lightly' before the meatier explanations in the second part of the book. What a comical and bizarre museum it was! Monks shouting and beating students while carrying on strange and unfathomable conversations, speaking of how wonderful each individual is while beating down the ladders of their mental scaffolding for how the world works. Being entirely new to this style of Buddhism, I gawked. But then the explanations! They added the props to the stage that gave context to the martial arts and riddles. What wonderful understandings. While they did sometimes refer to things I simply don't know about as a layperson, I simply read quickly over these bits to get to the jewels, like a kid without a dictionary at hand who still enjoys the action scenes in their chapter book. So worth it. Everyone, including me, and you too, can BE a buddha. There is no need to strive, and no need to ever feel you are far from home. Breathe and know that you are breathing. Be comfortable in your skin. Wherever you go, you are your true self. The final section of suggested practices and poems to use as skilful means to bring about mindfulness was a lovely touch. Peace.

Dave says

breathing in
coming home
breathing out
feeling safe

spirituality for me is the art of letting go. i assume that master linji is a favourite of thich nhat hahn and between them they emphasize mindfulness and staying connected to ordinary life. master linji never allows us to forget that knowing is not being. on first reading he hints that all we can know is sickness and medicine. a slight contradiction but maybe not. maybe there is a use to all this thinking and knowing and figuring out. give someone a hand and stop chasing rainbows.

this is a book i will keep an eye on.

Mariana says

This book is a little hard to get into but has some real gems.

Nicole says

Do not be fooled by the cover and title: a concise--and compassionate--lesson in Zen Buddhism. I took a lot

of joy and instruction from Thich Nhat Hanh's commentary on Master Linji's record.

Adam Keller says

whoa dude

Sally says

The concerns of 9th-century Zen Master Linji are still relevant today: over-intellectualization and doctrines, texts, ideas, study, ambitions, and discussions as roadblocks to spiritual attainment. The commentary is very helpful and practical.

Nathan says

Quite a critical book, in the sense that it turns what you understand of the world, of concepts, upside down.

Jeffrey Gardner says

Despite the fact that they packaged it like a self-help book----a fantastic read. I come back to this one fairly frequently.

Tim Desmond says

Support for not getting lost in the teachings.
