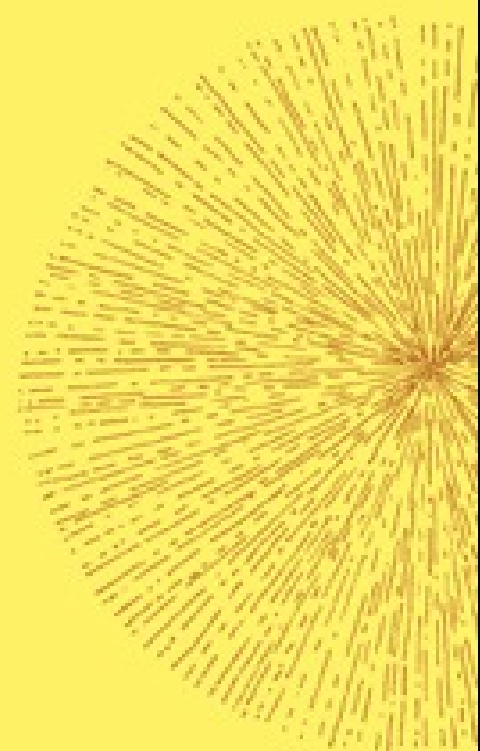
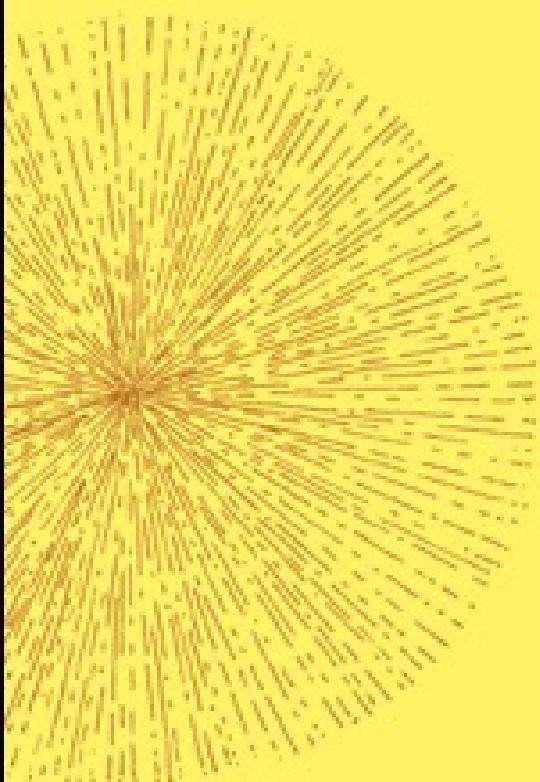
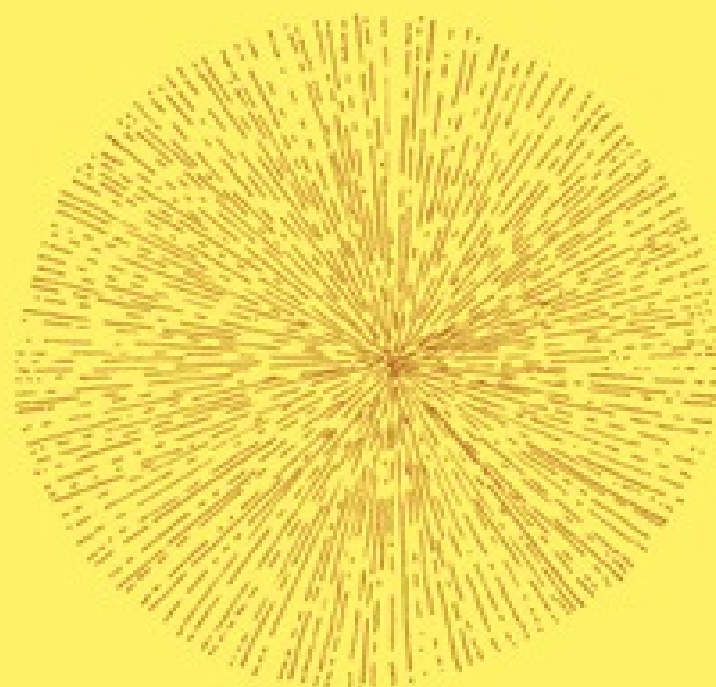


moments of mindfulness

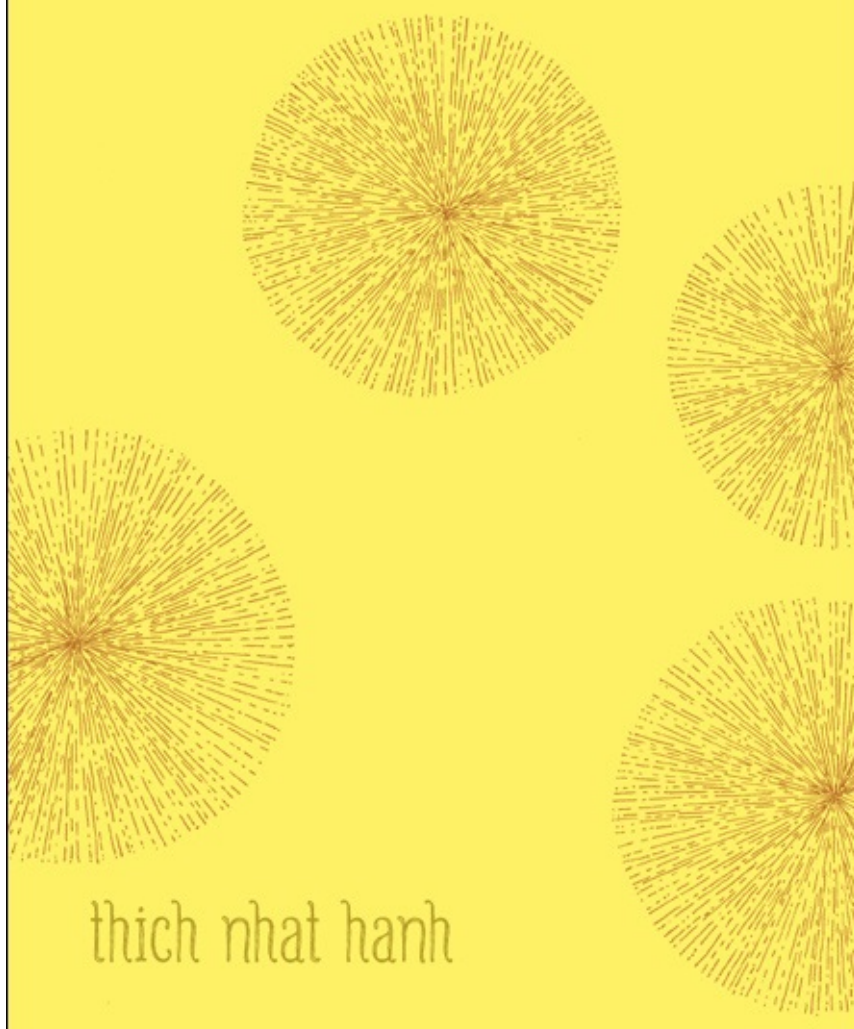
— DAILY INSPIRATION —



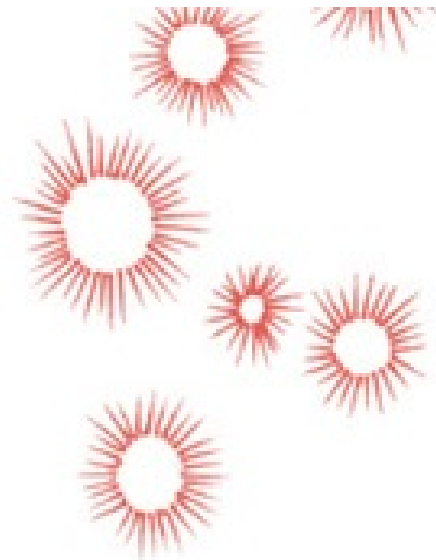
thich nhat hanh

moments of mindfulness

- DAILY INSPIRATION -



thich nhat hanh



moments of mindfulness

— DAILY INSPIRATION —

thich nhat hanh



PARALLAX
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Berkeley, California

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Thich Nhat Hanh: Monk, Zen Master, Poet, and Peace Activist

Please Call Me by My True Names

Don't say that I will depart tomorrow—
even today I am still arriving.

Look deeply: every second I am arriving
to be a bud on a spring branch,
to be a tiny bird, with still-fragile wings,
learning to sing in my new nest,
to be a caterpillar in the heart of a flower,
to be a jewel hiding itself in a stone.

I still arrive, in order to laugh and to cry,
to fear and to hope.
The rhythm of my heart is the birth and death
of all that is alive.

I am a mayfly metamorphosing
on the surface of the river.
And I am the bird
that swoops down to swallow the mayfly.

I am a frog swimming happily
in the clear water of a pond.
And I am the grass-snake
that silently feeds itself on the frog.

I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones,
my legs as thin as bamboo sticks.
And I am the arms merchant,
selling deadly weapons to Uganda.

I am the twelve-year-old girl,
refugee on a small boat,
who throws herself into the ocean
after being raped by a sea pirate.
And I am the pirate,
my heart not yet capable
of seeing and loving.

I am a member of the politburo,
with plenty of power in my hands.
And I am the man who has to pay
his “debt of blood” to my people
dying slowly in a forced-labor camp.

My joy is like spring, so warm
it makes flowers bloom all over the Earth.
My pain is like a river of tears,
so vast it fills the four oceans.

Please call me by my true names,
so I can hear all my cries and laughter at once,
so I can see that my joy and pain are one.

Please call me by my true names,
so I can wake up
and the door of my heart
could be left open,
the door of compassion.

THICH NHAT HANH, 1978

The Practice of Mindfulness

“Mindfulness shows us what is happening in our bodies, our emotions, our minds, and in the world. Through mindfulness, we avoid harming ourselves and others.”

—Thich Nhat Hanh

The emphasis in Thich Nhat Hanh’s teachings is on the practice of mindfulness. To practice mindfulness is to be conscious in each moment of our lives. The opposite of mindfulness is forgetfulness and Nhat Hanh emphasizes bringing mindfulness to what we tend to consider “automatic” activities, such as walking and breathing. Right Mindfulness is the continuous awareness of our bodies, emotions, and thoughts.

In the Sutra on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness, the Buddha offers four layers of mindfulness practice: mindfulness of the body, of the emotions, of the mind, and of the objects of mind. Practicing mindfulness at each layer can be the foundation of well-being and happiness. When we don’t practice mindfulness, we suffer in our bodies, our minds, and in our relationships. Practicing mindfulness, we become a peaceful refuge for ourselves and others. Clarity flows from mindfulness. With the energy of mindfulness, we can always return to our true home, the present moment.

The Chinese character for mindfulness reveals its meaning. The upper part of the character means now, and the lower part stands for mind or heart. The Vietnamese word for mindfulness, *chan niem*, means to be truly in the present moment. Mindfulness helps us to come back to the here and now, to be aware of what is going on in the present moment, and to be in touch with the wonders of life.

The Seven Miracles of Mindfulness

Thich Nhat Hanh describes seven “miracles” of mindfulness that we can experience every single day.

The First Miracle is to be present and to touch deeply our surroundings, including the blue sky, a blade of grass, or a loved one’s smile.

The Second Miracle is to be able to be aware of our surroundings, so we can see the sky, the grass, and our loved ones more deeply.

The Third Miracle is to nourish the object of your attention with your full awareness.

The Fourth Miracle is to relieve others' suffering.

The Fifth Miracle is looking deeply into the true nature of self and others.

The Sixth Miracle is understanding. If we're mindful of the present moment, we can see deeply and things become clear. With understanding, the desire to relieve suffering and give love will awaken within us.

The Seventh Miracle is transformation. With mindfulness, we touch the healing and refreshing aspects of life in us and around us and begin to transform the suffering in ourselves and in the world.

Mindfulness as Energy

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: "We have the ability to work wonders. If we live mindfully in everyday life, walk mindfully, and are full of love and caring, then we create a miracle and transform the world into a wonderful place." He compares mindfulness to a seed, which, when watered, grows into enlightenment, understanding, compassion, and transformation. The more we practice mindfulness, the stronger this seed will grow.

Living in the Present Moment

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: "Our true home is the present moment. If we really live in the moment, our worries and hardships will disappear and we will discover life with all its miracles."

Real life can only be found and touched in the here and now. This is because the present moment is the only moment we can actually live, the only moment we can actually influence. The past is over and the future has not yet arrived. Since the present moment is the only real moment for us, we can always return here to get in touch with the wonders of life.

Living in the moment is the key requirement for one's own freedom. Nhat Hanh says, "As long as we are consumed with our everyday problems—distress, regrets about the past or constant worries about the future—we cannot be free people; we are not able to live in the here and now."

Eating and Drinking Mindfully

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: "A very important exercise is to eat in silence and calmness, even if only for a few minutes. It keeps us away from distractions that get in the way of having real contact with our food."

The practice of mindfulness encompasses all spheres and activities, including ordinary actions. We can be aware that we are drinking a glass of

water, without thinking of anything else. In this way, we are drinking with body and mind.

The same applies to eating. While eating, we can be aware of how we feel and of how we consume. Eating is a deeply spiritual exercise. Nhat Hanh suggests giving a meal our full attention, and being appreciative of all that goes into its creation.

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: “We see the meal as the representative of heaven and Earth. When I look at a bean, I see a cloud floating in it. I can see rain and sunshine and I recognize that this bean is a part of heaven and Earth. When I bite into the bean, I am aware that this is a bean, which I have just put in my mouth. There is nothing else in my mouth, no worries or anxiety. When I chew the bean, I just chew the bean, not my future plans or my anger. I chew with awareness and concentration. While I involve myself in this process one hundred percent, I feel a connection with heaven and Earth, with the farmer who grew these beans, as well as with the people who cooked them. Eating this way, I feel that strength, freedom, and pleasure are attainable. This meal does not only nourish my body but also my soul, my consciousness, and my mind.”

Eating mindfully, we have the opportunity to sit with people we love and enjoy precious food, something that is often scarce for many people in the world. Eating mindfully, we don't have to go to a temple or a church to practice compassion and awareness. We can practice right at the dinner table.

Breathing Mindfully

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: “No one can be successful in the art of meditation without having passed the gate of breathing.”

We often assume breathing is just a natural skill; everyone knows how to inhale and exhale. But breathing is a miracle. In the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing, the Buddha taught his followers sixteen exercises for mindfulness of breathing. Being aware of our breath not only helps us manage the difficulties in everyday life, it also helps develop our wisdom and compassion. Based on the sixteen exercises, Thich Nhat Hanh made the following short phrases, called *gathas*, which he suggests we use in our practice of mindful breathing.

Breathing in, I know I'm breathing in.

Breathing out, I know I'm breathing out.

Breathing in, my breath grows deep.

Breathing out, my breath goes slowly.

*Breathing in, I feel calm.
Breathing out, I feel ease.*

*Breathing in, I smile.
Breathing out, I release.*

*Breathing in, I dwell in the present moment.
Breathing out, I know it is a wonderful moment.*

To remember this breathing exercise more easily, the gathas can be shortened to just the key words:

*“In, out;
deep, slow;
calm, ease;
smile, release;
present moment, wonderful moment.”*

The reason we use gathas is that they're a simple poetic tool to help us to be aware of and enjoy our breathing. Above all, mindful breathing should be pleasurable!

Walking Mindfully

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: “Life is not about getting to a certain place. Life is a path. Walking meditation is a way to practice walking without a goal or intention.”

Mindful walking simply means walking while being aware of each step and of our breath. As with mindful breathing, mindful walking is a form of meditation, which brings us happiness right away. Since no preparation is necessary, it can be practiced anywhere, whether you are alone in nature or with others in a crowded city. You can even practice mindful breathing and walking meditation in between business appointments or in the parking lot as you walk from your car to the grocery store.

Walking on our planet is a joy. Mindful walking allows us to be aware of the pleasure of walking. We can keep our steps slow, relaxed, and calm. There's no rush, no place to get to, no hurry. Mindful walking can release our

sorrows and our worries and help bring peace into our bodies and minds.

We can practice walking meditation alone, with another person, or with a group. Placing our footsteps one after the other, slowly, and in silence, we can create joy with each step.

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: “If we take steps without anxiety, in peace and joy, then we will cause a flower to bloom on the Earth with every step.”

How to Smile at Yourself

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: “When we practice smiling peacefully and calmly, our peace can permeate the entire universe. The source of a true smile is an awakened mind.”

As with mindful walking, smiling can be a conscious practice. Nhat Hanh calls this exercise “Mouth Yoga.” Just as a spontaneous smile goes along with a feeling of happiness, there are times when a conscious smile can create relaxation and pleasure.

The human face contains more than 300 muscles, which tense as soon we feel anger or fear. If we link mindful breathing with a conscious smile, we can release much of this tension immediately. Instead of waiting for a moment of pleasure to cause a smile, we can let the smile come first to create this positive feeling.

Developing Understanding and Compassion

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: “Look at flowers, butterflies, trees, and children with the eyes of compassion. Compassion will change your life and make it wonderful.”

Compassion requires understanding. When we are able to understand that someone else is also suffering, that this person has troubles, fears, and worries, then we want to relieve her suffering. When we are mindful as we go about our daily activities and in our interactions with others, we develop the space and awareness to nourish compassion and understanding.

Compassion is the heart of our practice. It is only with compassion that we can embrace and transform violence. Only when we treat ourselves with compassion, can we begin to be free in the present moment. This is true in relationships between individuals as well as between nations.

Thich Nhat Hanh’s teachings are simple, but they can create so much joy in our lives. By living mindfully, we’re filled with compassion for ourselves and those around us, and we can begin to be the peace we want to see in the world.

Ideas for Meditation Practice

Each of the fifty-two meditations on the following pages carries a unique and beautiful message of mindfulness. These meditations can provide valuable inspiration for any day or any situation.

You can keep this book in your bag or back pocket and turn to any page, any time. The meditations are there for you.

A Year of Mindfulness

The book is designed so you can focus on one meditation as your practice for the week. You can carry this meditation with you throughout the whole week. You can either memorize the meditation, carry the book, or write the meditation on a scrap of paper and keep it with you. The saying can help you to remain more mindful, aware, and happy even under difficult circumstances. You can read this meditation each morning right after waking up and again before you go to sleep. There are fifty-two meditations, so you can begin at any point in the year and continue with a different meditation each week for a full year.

Problem Solving

You can also use the meditations for problem solving. When you are troubled or feeling a particularly strong emotion, you can pose a question to yourself, either silently or out loud, and then open the book to a meditation and use that wisdom to gain understanding of your particular question.

Some examples of questions you might ask include:

- What is the root cause of my problem? What can I do to solve it?
- In which aspect of my life should I pay more attention?
- Which characteristics should I develop more in order to become more mindful, relaxed, and satisfied?
- How can I make my work or home life more satisfying?

Personal Meditation Practice

These meditations can also be a focus and inspiration for your own sitting or walking meditation. Read the meditation you have chosen. You may want to

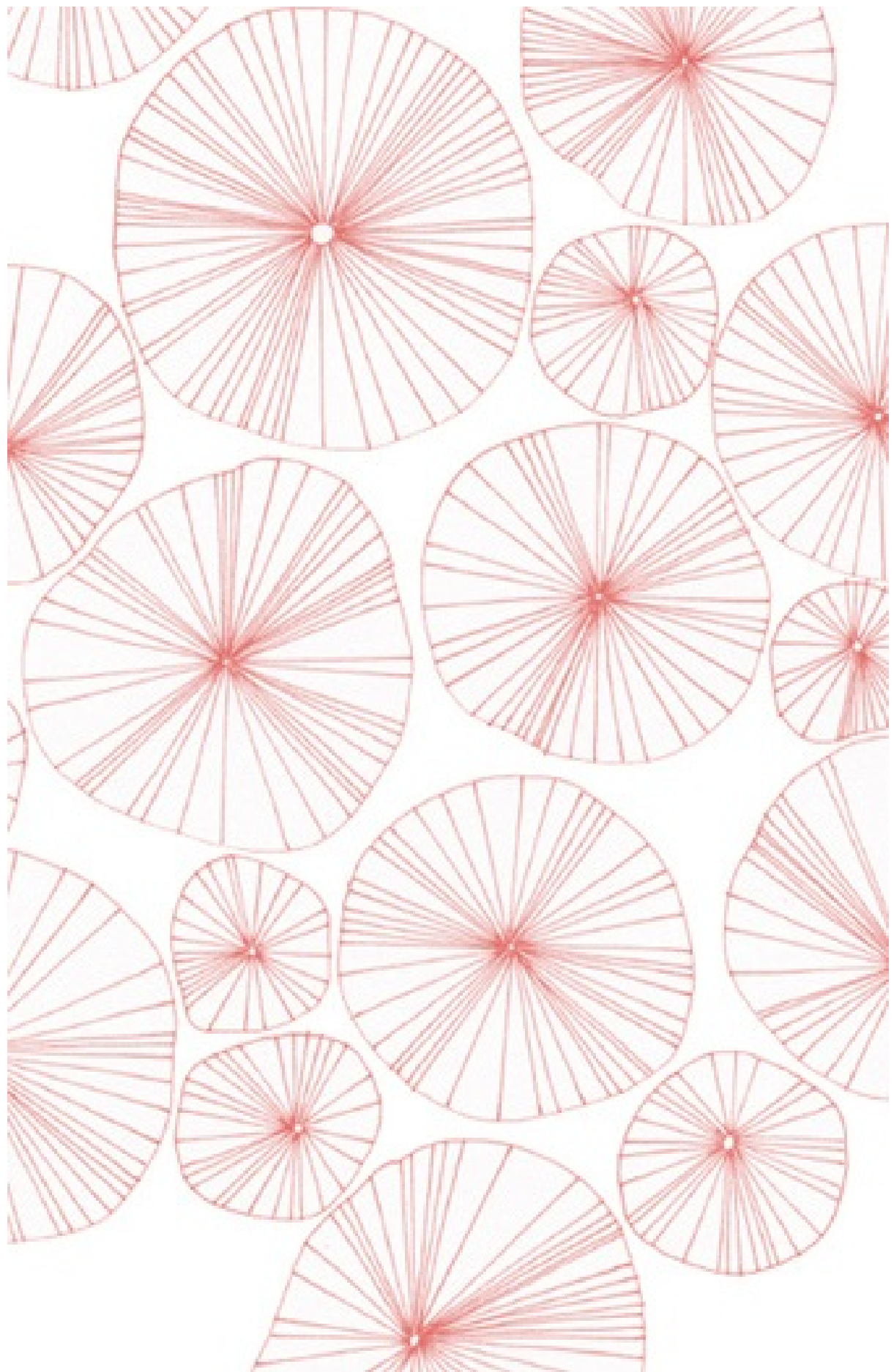
read it more than once. Close your eyes and follow your breathing. Notice the emotions, pictures, and thoughts arising in your consciousness without evaluating or classifying them. Let your thoughts and attachments roll past you, like twigs in a river. Let yourself meditate for at least five minutes. If you have more time, pick an amount of time in advance and commit to being there with yourself for that time. When you open your eyes, look around you. You may want to read the meditation again. After your own quiet contemplation, its insight might be available to you in a new way.

Group Inspirations

These meditations may also be used in a group setting. People can sit quietly together and take turns reading a meditation aloud, one person at a time. After each meditation is read, the group can sit quietly for a minute or more and then, if they desire, go around in a circle, each person taking a minute or so to say what insight, questions, or thoughts the meditation inspired.

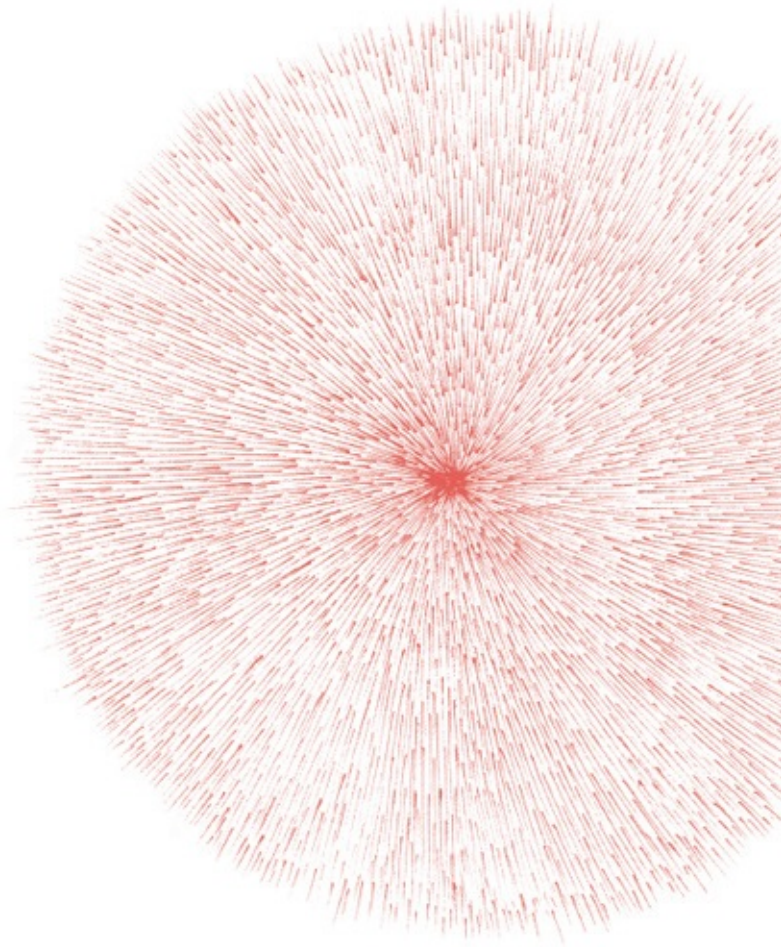
These are just four suggestions. These meditations are here for you to integrate into your own life in the way that works best for you.

52 Mindful Meditations



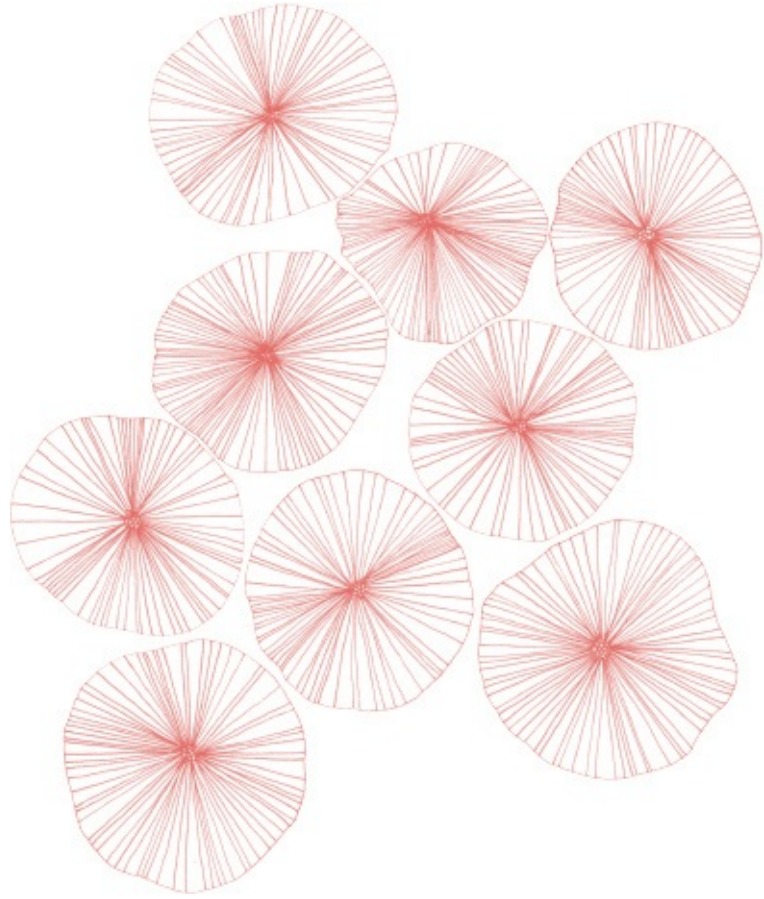
ONE

The mind can go
in a thousand directions,
but on this beautiful path,
I walk in peace.
With each step,
a gentle wind blows.
With each step,
a flower blooms.



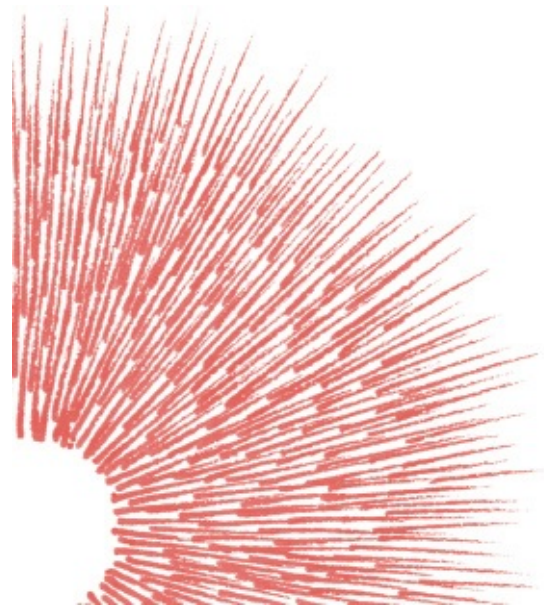
TWO

Learn the art of making
one person happy,
and you'll learn to express your love
for the whole of humanity
and all beings.



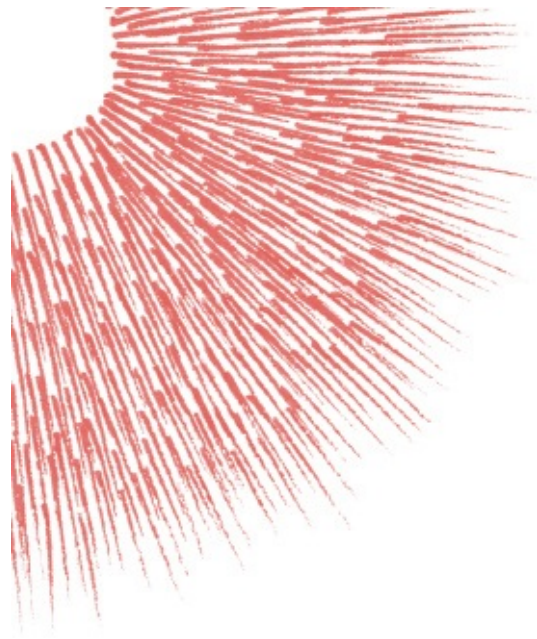
THREE

There is no distinction
between the one who gives,
the one who receives,
and the gift itself.



FOUR

There are thousands of channels
in our consciousness;
it's up to us
to choose the channel.



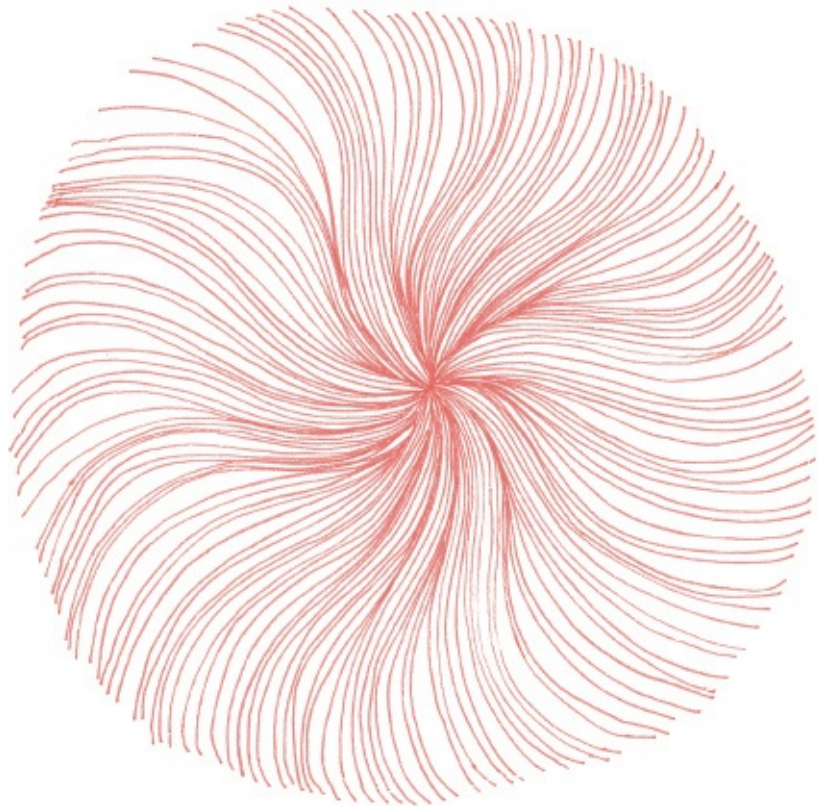
FIVE

If you are a poet,
you will see clearly
that there is
a cloud floating
in this sheet of paper.



SIX

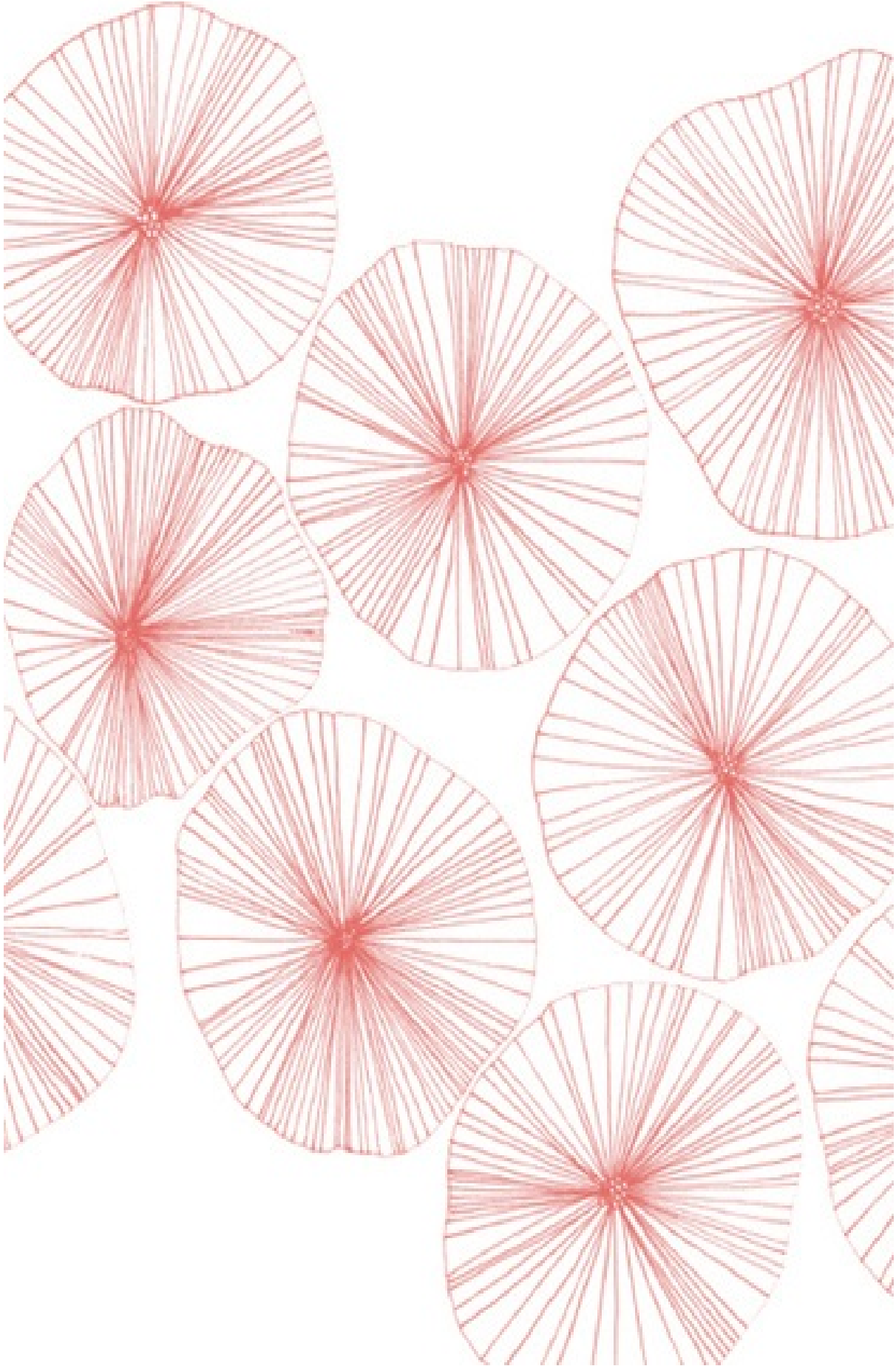
If we are peaceful,
if we are happy,
we can smile and blossom
like a flower,
and everyone in our family,
our entire society,
will benefit from our peace.



SEVEN

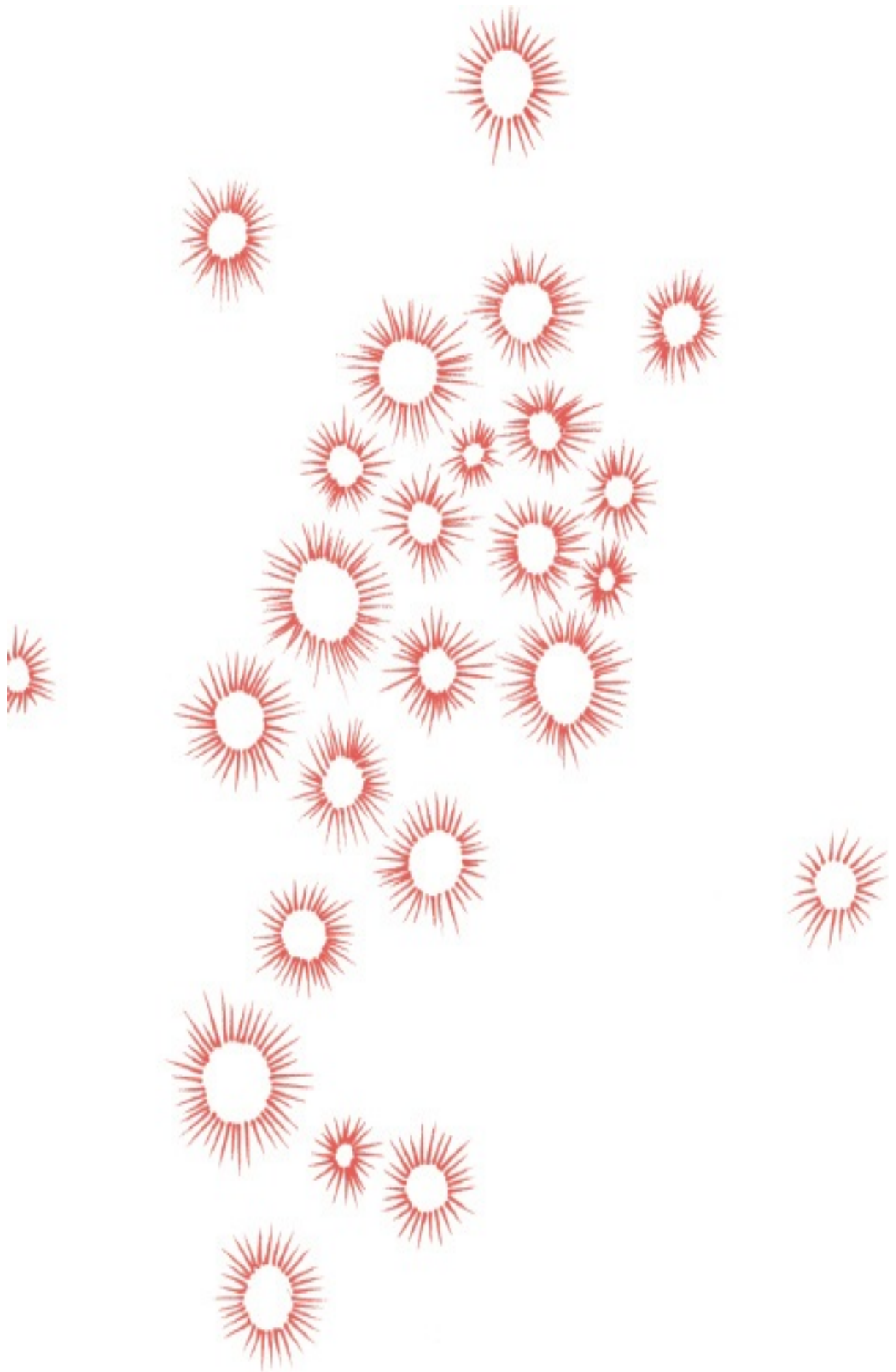
If we align ourselves
with one side or the other,
we will lose our chance
to work for peace.

Reconciliation
requires understanding
both sides in order
to bring about peace.



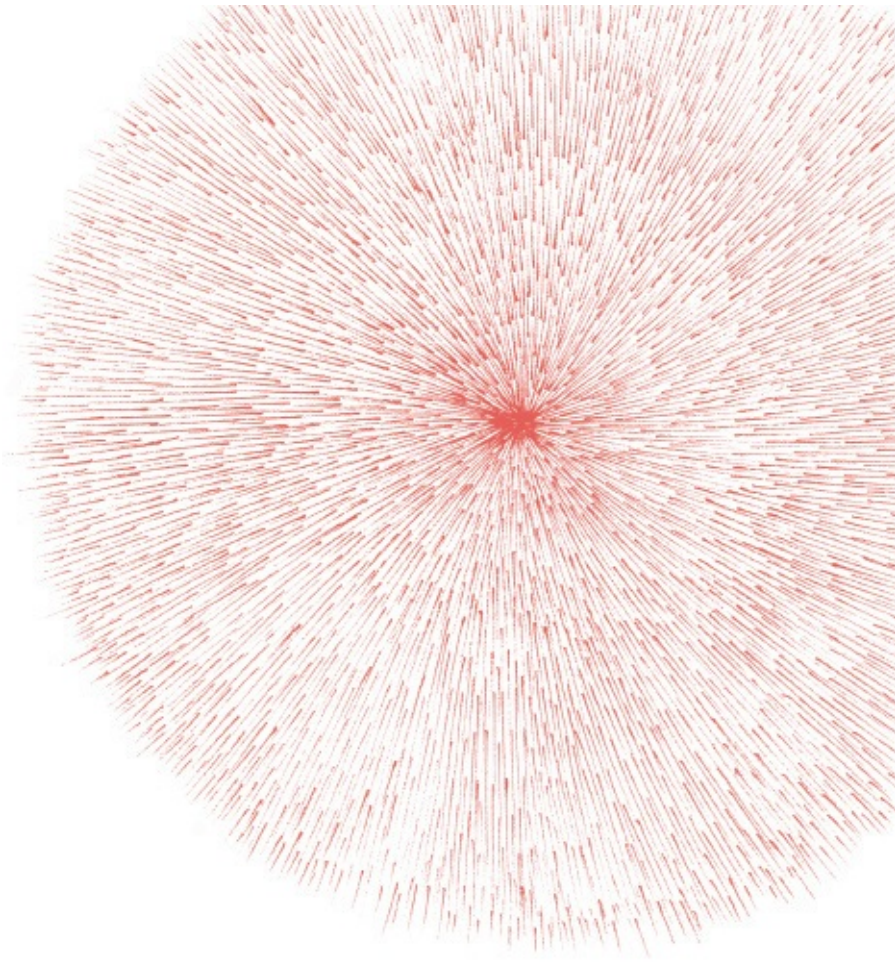
EIGHT

Everything we are looking for
is right here
in the present moment.



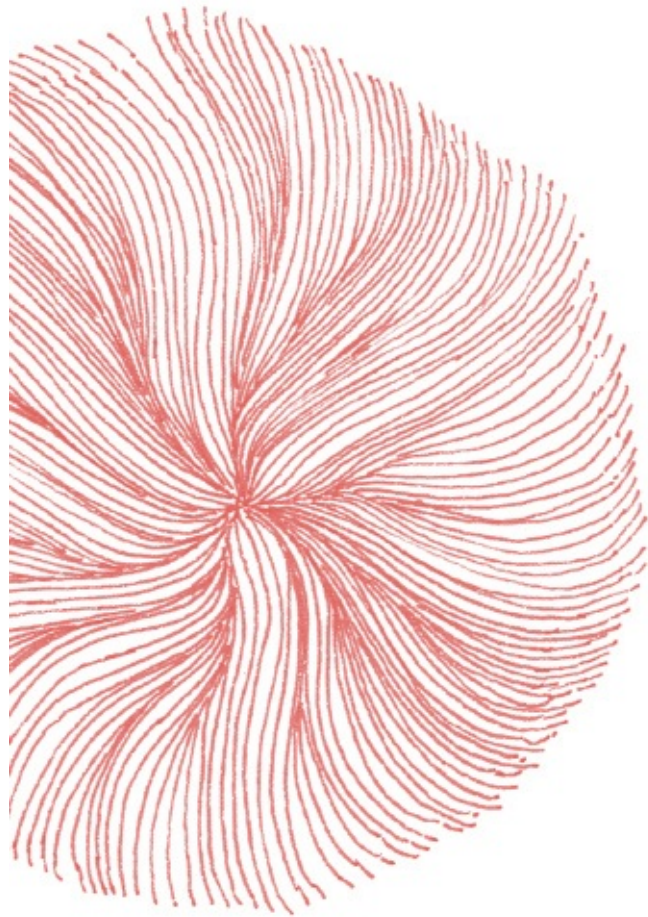
NINE

We don't have to go anywhere
to obtain the truth.
We only need to be still
and things will reveal themselves
in the clear water of our heart.



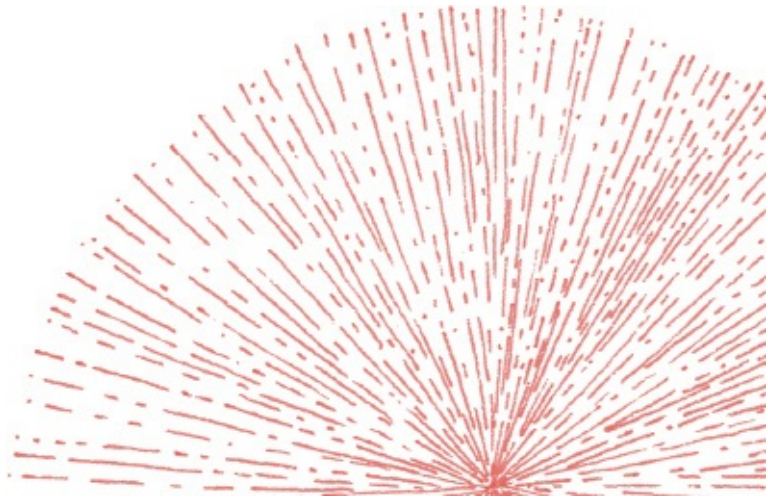
TEN

Every day we are engaged
in a miracle
we don't even recognize.



ELEVEN

Enlightenment is not separate
from washing the dishes
or growing lettuce.



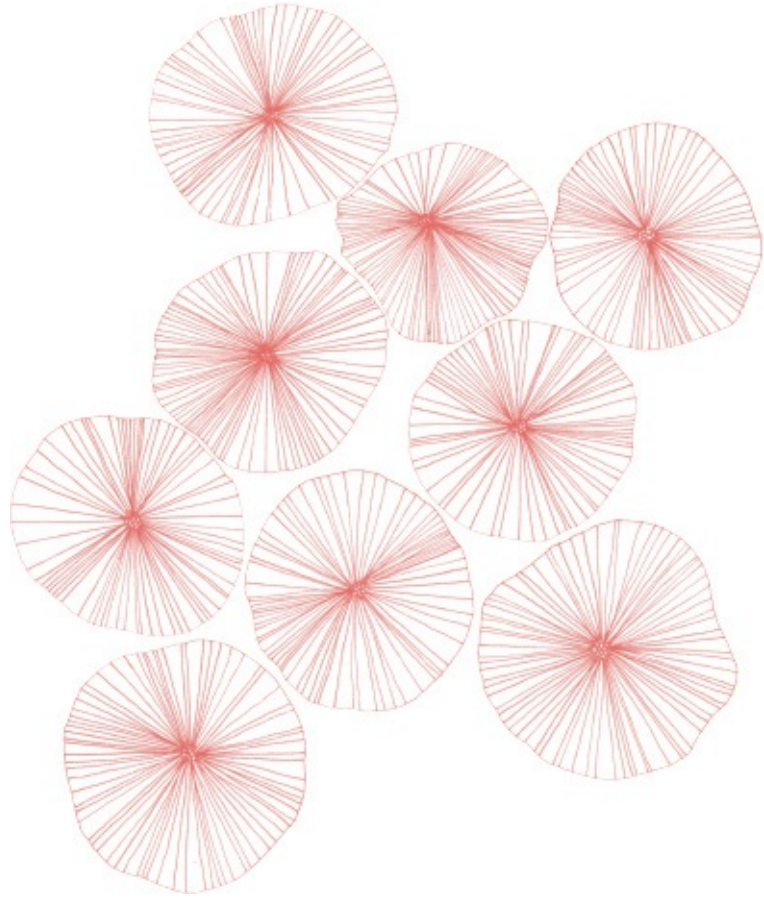
TWELVE

Each bite of food
contains the life of
the Sun and the Earth.
The whole universe
is in a piece of bread.



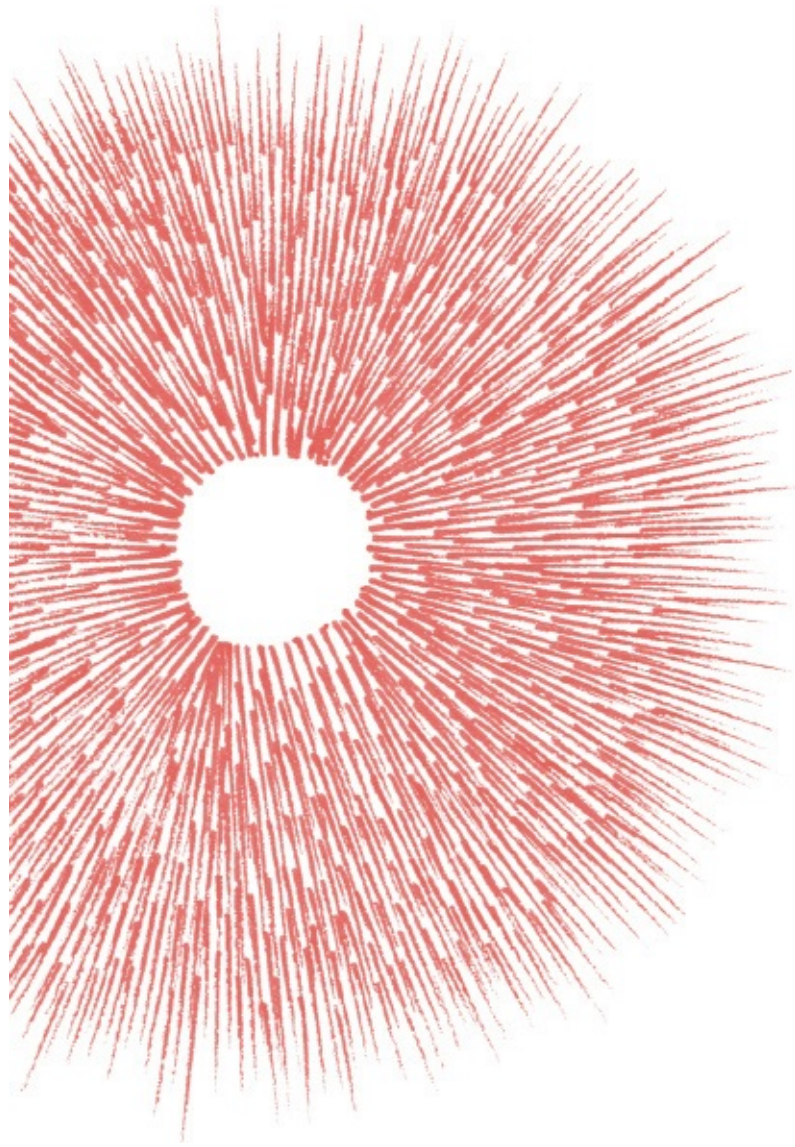
THIRTEEN

Don't chase after your thoughts
as a shadow follows its object.
Find joy and peace
in this very moment.



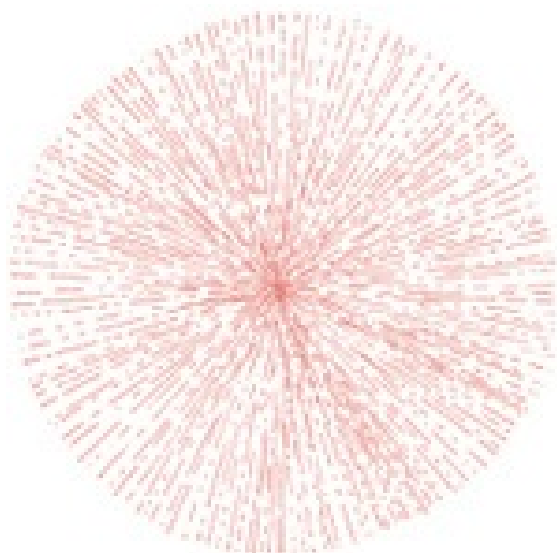
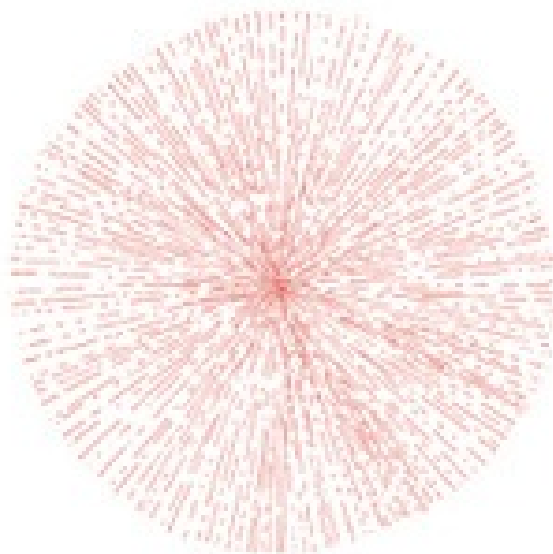
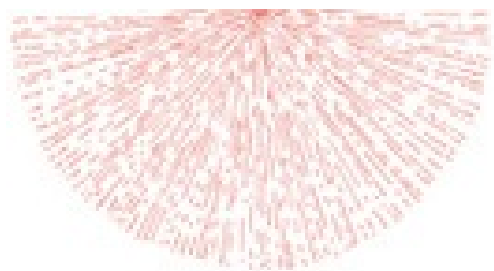
FOURTEEN

Compassion
is a beautiful flower
born of understanding.



FIFTEEN

All the wonderful things
that you are looking for—
happiness, peace, and joy—
can be found inside of you.
You do not need to look
anywhere else.

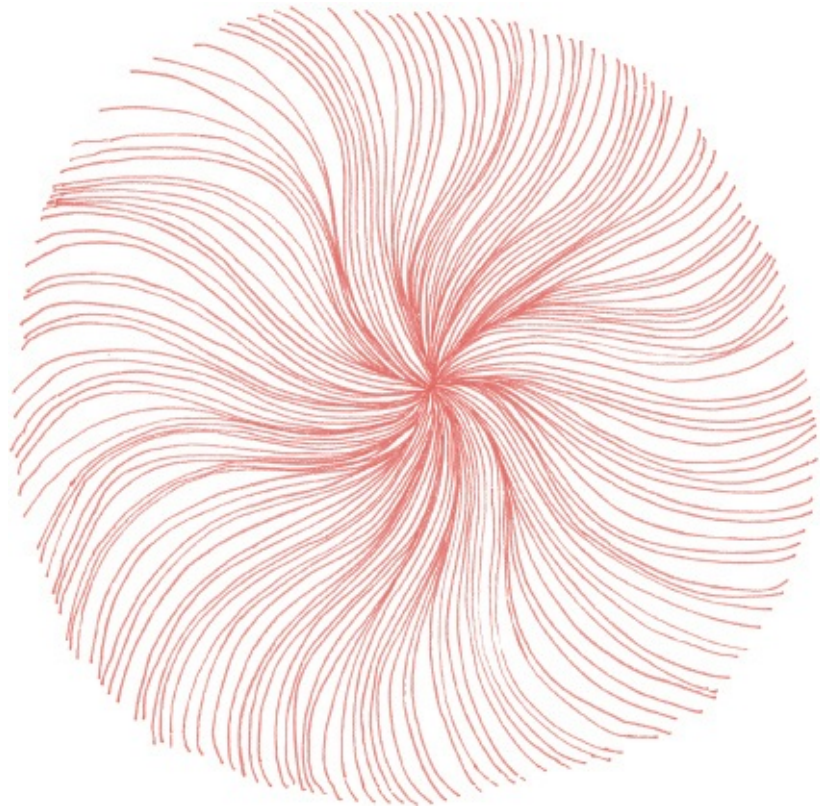


SIXTEEN

A tiny bud of a smile
on your lips nourishes awareness
and calms you.

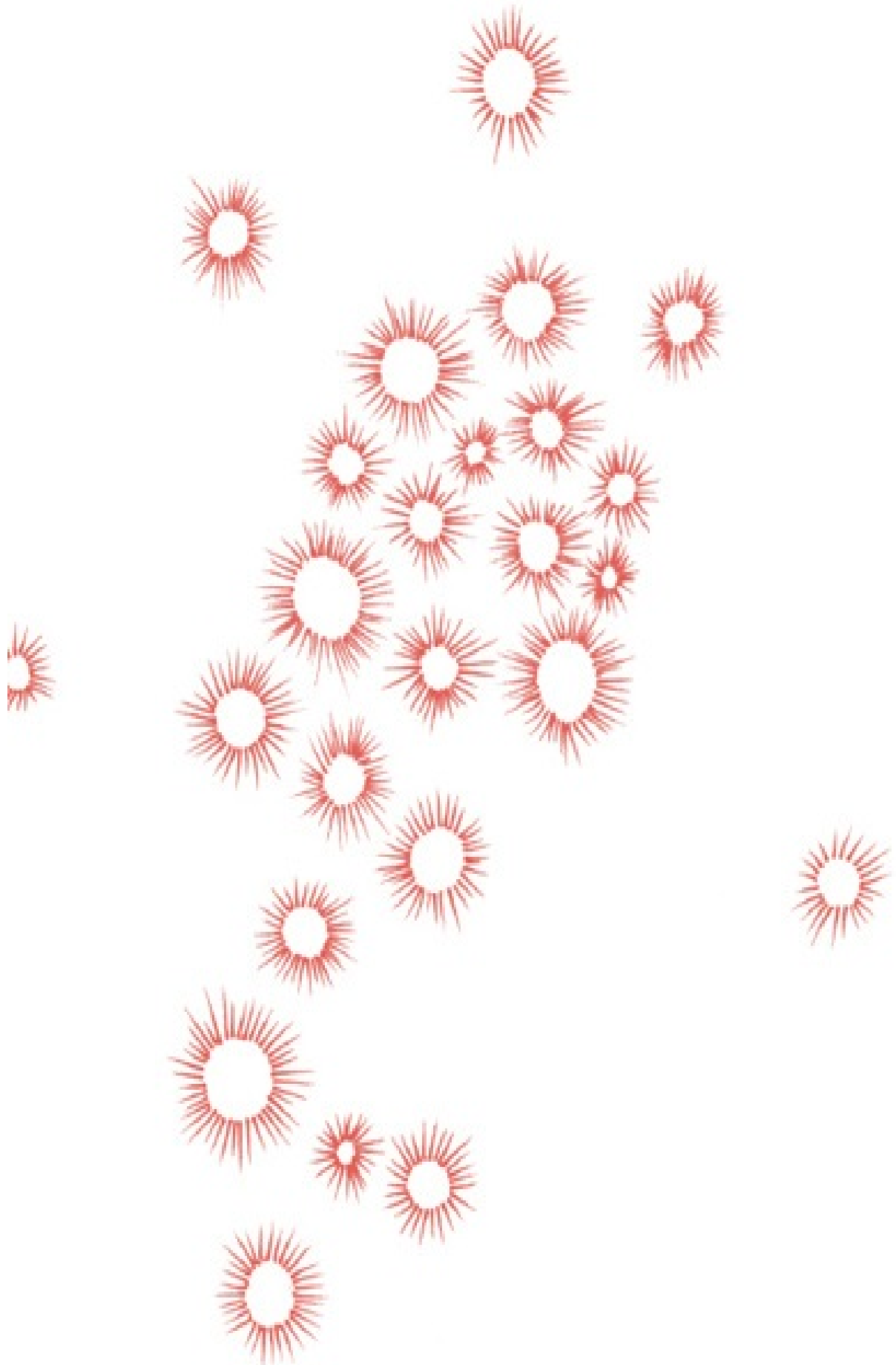
It returns you to
the peace you had lost.

A smile is
the most basic kind
of peace work.



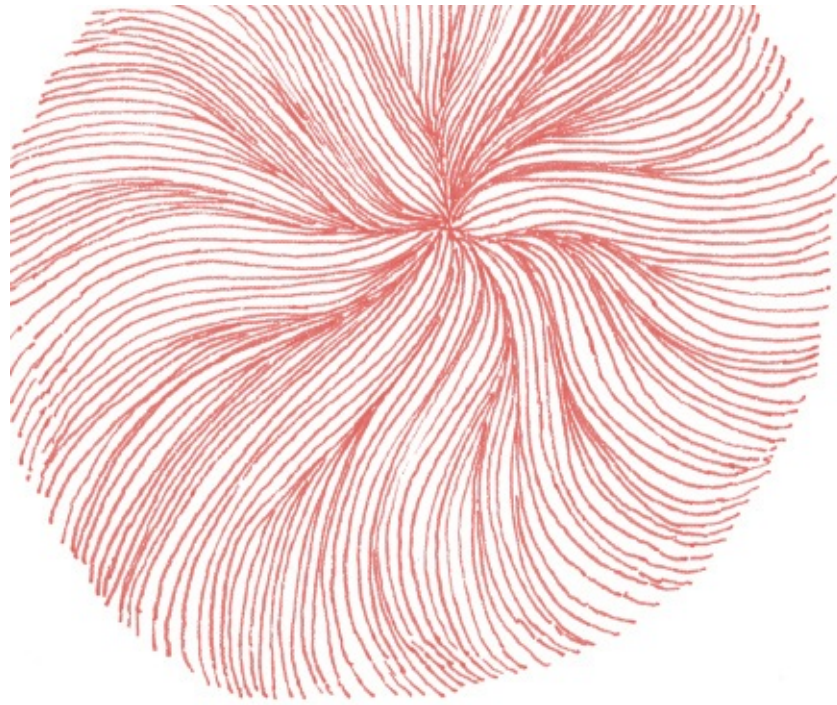
SEVENTEEN

A flower
does not have to
do anything
to be of service,
it only has to be a flower.
That is enough.
A human being,
a true human being,
is enough
to make the whole world
rejoice.



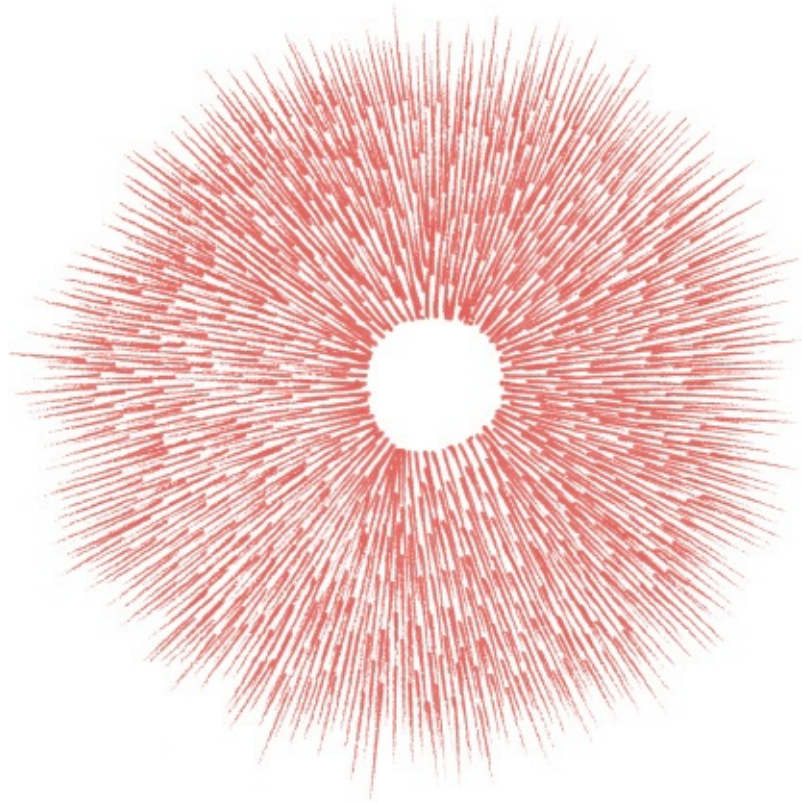
EIGHTEEN

It is not necessary
to throw away your
tradition or your family.
Keep everything
and introduce mindfulness,
peace, and joy into it.
Your friends will see
the value of mindfulness
through you—
not through what you say,
but through your being.



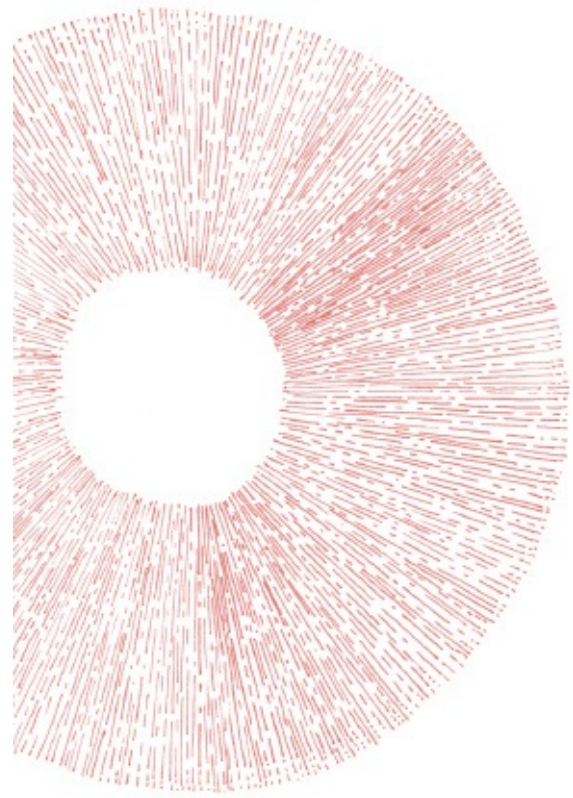
NINETEEN

The Earth
will be safe
when we feel safe
in ourselves.



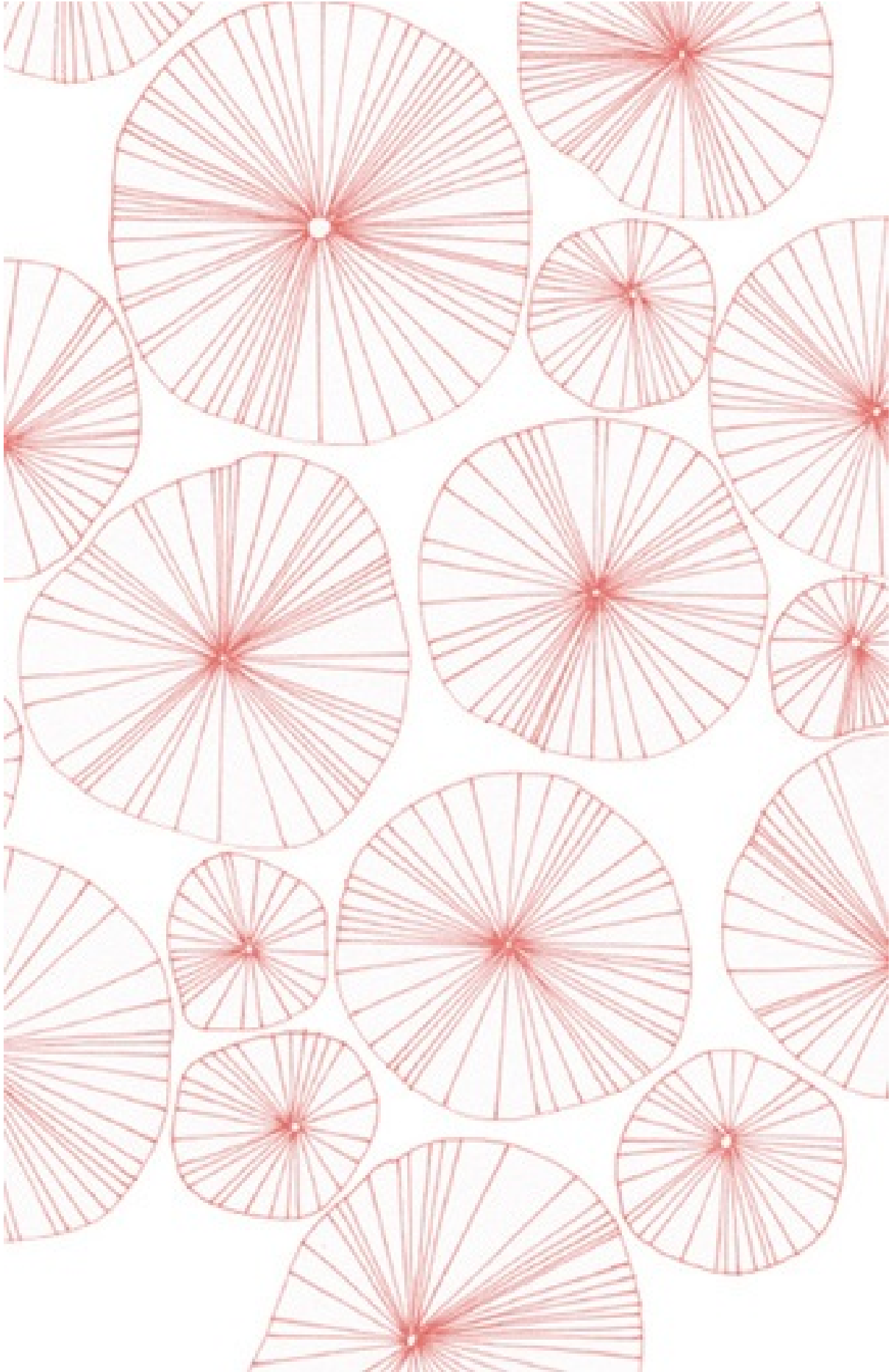
TWENTY

Patience
is the mark of true love.
If you truly love someone,
you will be more patient
with that person.



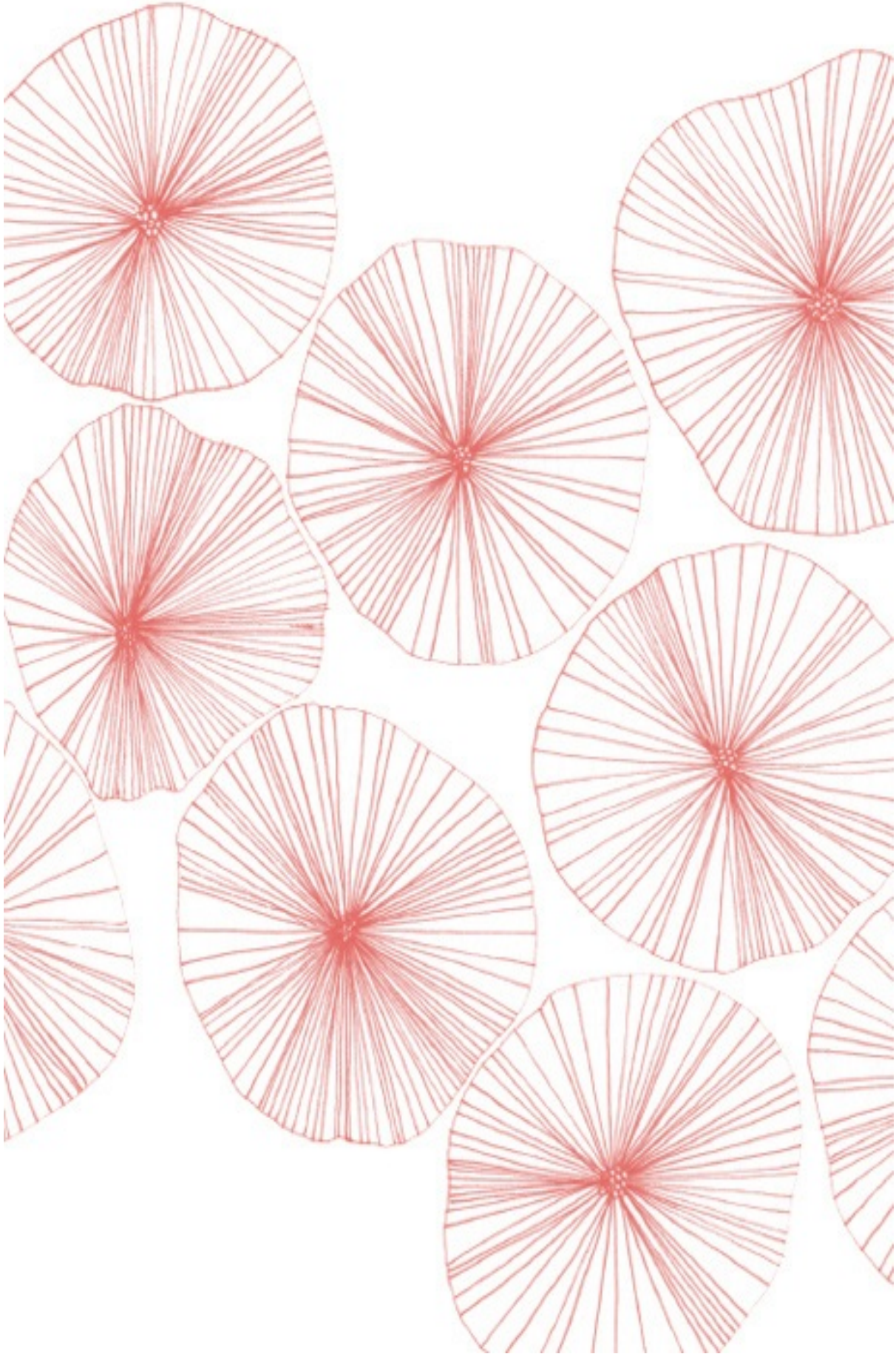
TWENTY-ONE

Our breath
is the bridge
that unites
body and mind.



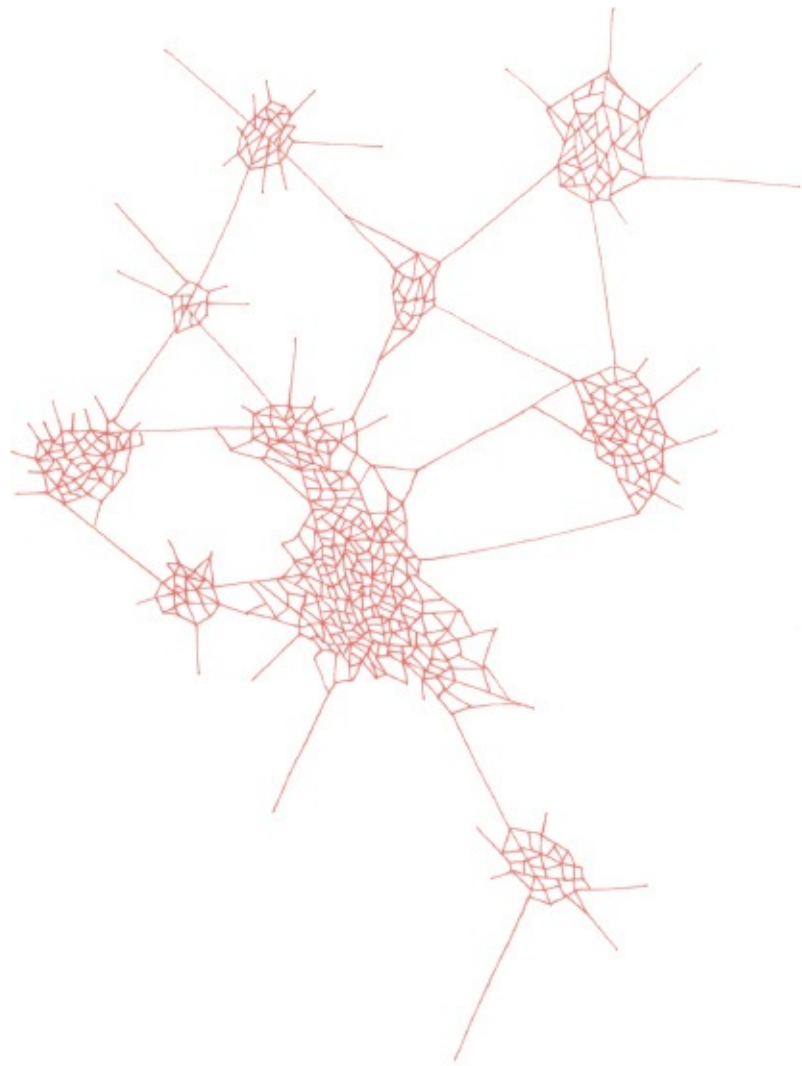
TWENTY-TWO

Life is filled with suffering,
but it is also filled
with many wonders,
like the blue sky,
the sunshine,
and the eyes of a baby.
To suffer is not enough.
We must also be in touch
with the wonders of life.
They are within us
and all around us,
everywhere, any time.



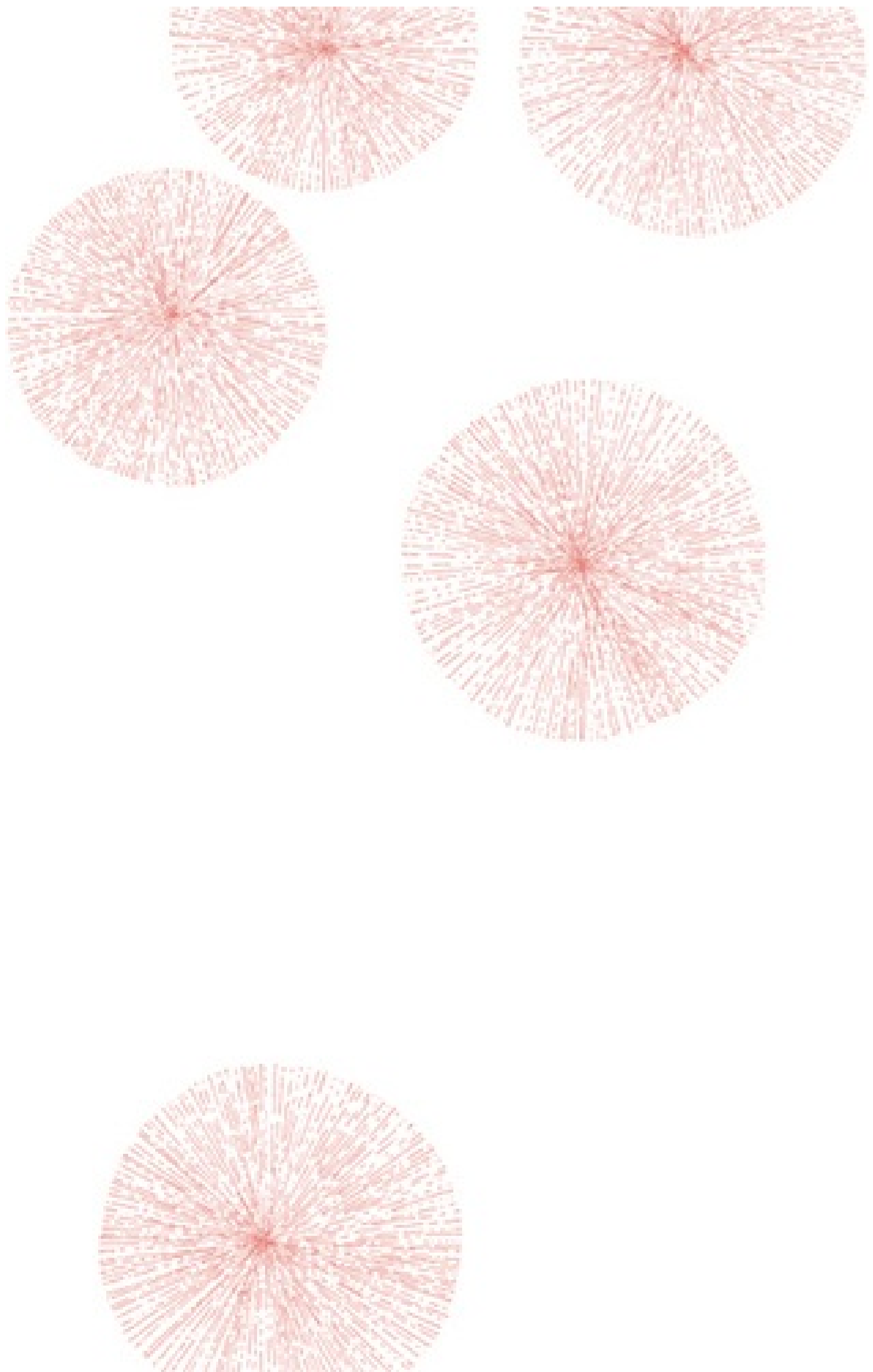
TWENTY-THREE

You already are
what you want to become.



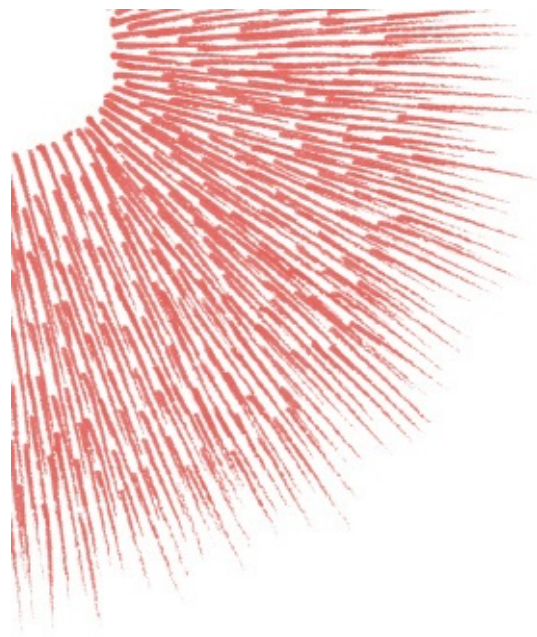
TWENTY-FOUR

Yesterday is already gone.
Tomorrow is not yet here.
Today is the only day
available to us;
it is the most important day
of our lives.



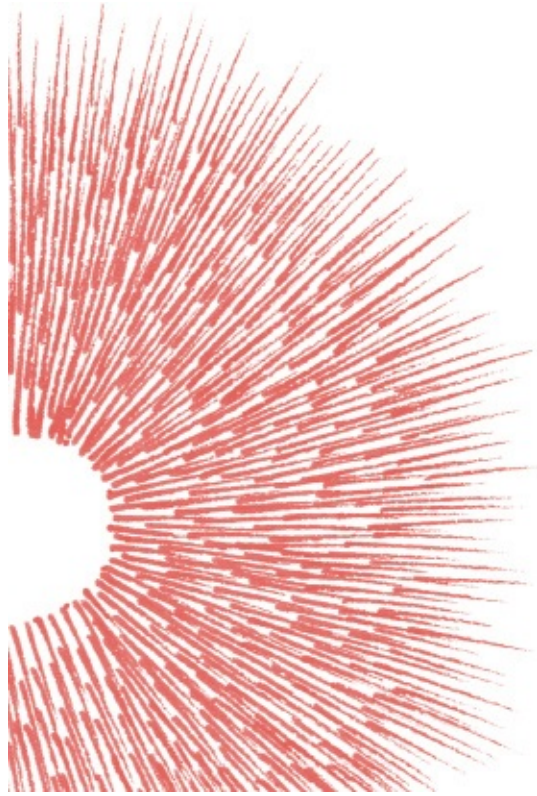
TWENTY-FIVE

While you are walking,
smile and be in the here and now,
and you will transform
that place into paradise.



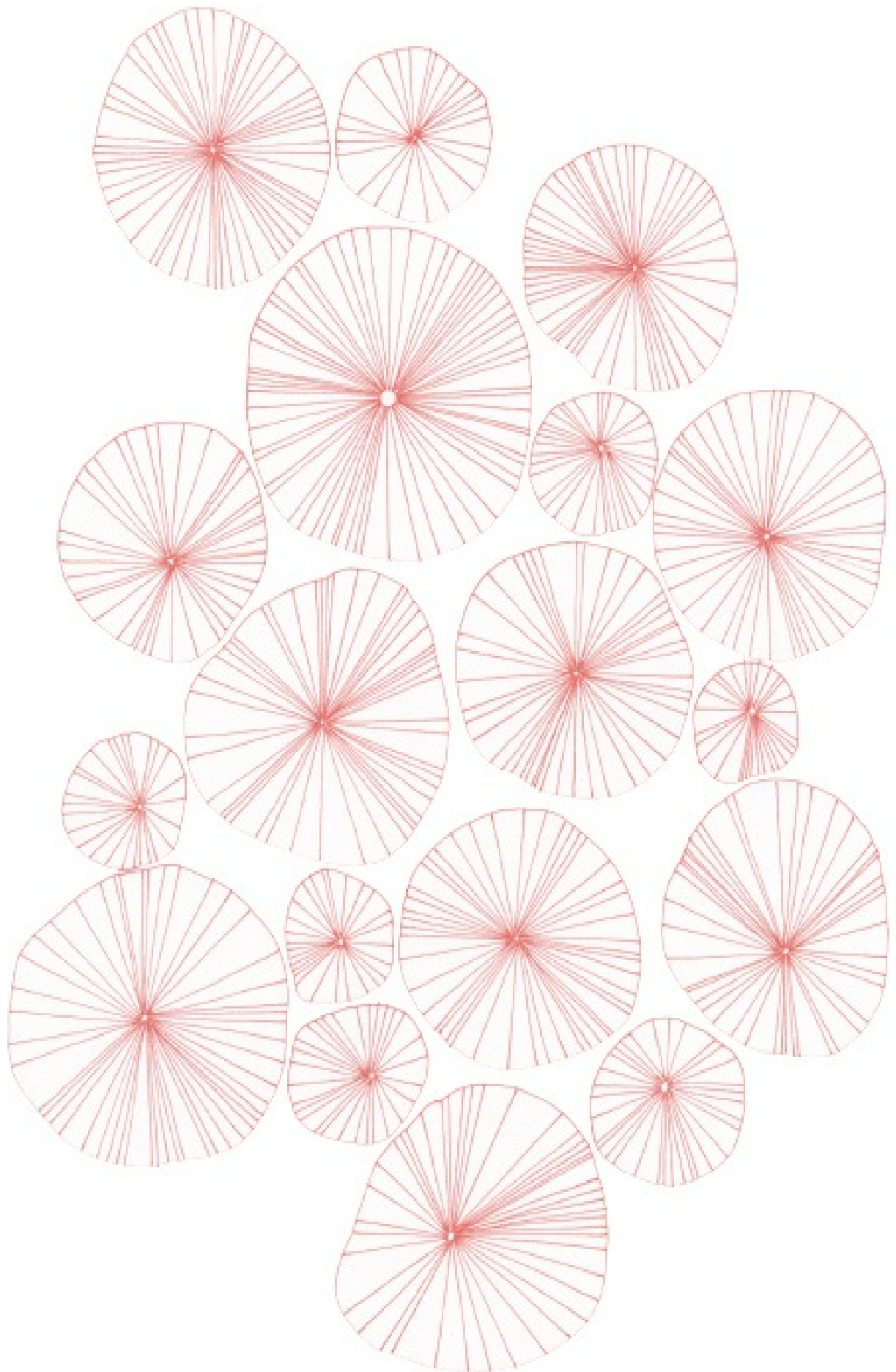
TWENTY-SIX

We have inherited great wealth,
but we behave as if we are poor.
We have a treasure of enlightenment,
of understanding, of love,
and of joy inside us.
It is time to go back
to receive our inheritance.
Being mindful will help us claim it.



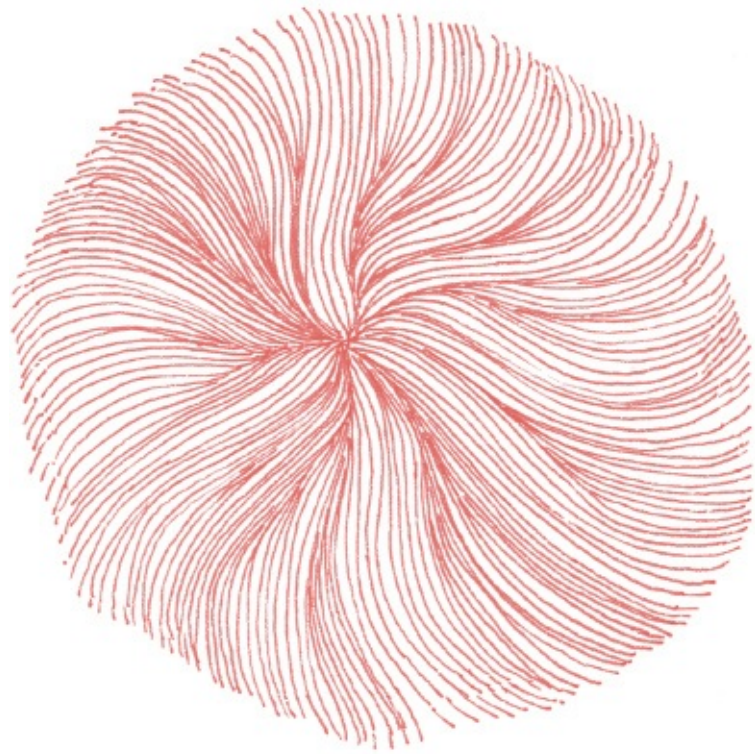
TWENTY-SEVEN

We can live our daily lives
in such a way that every act
becomes an act of love.



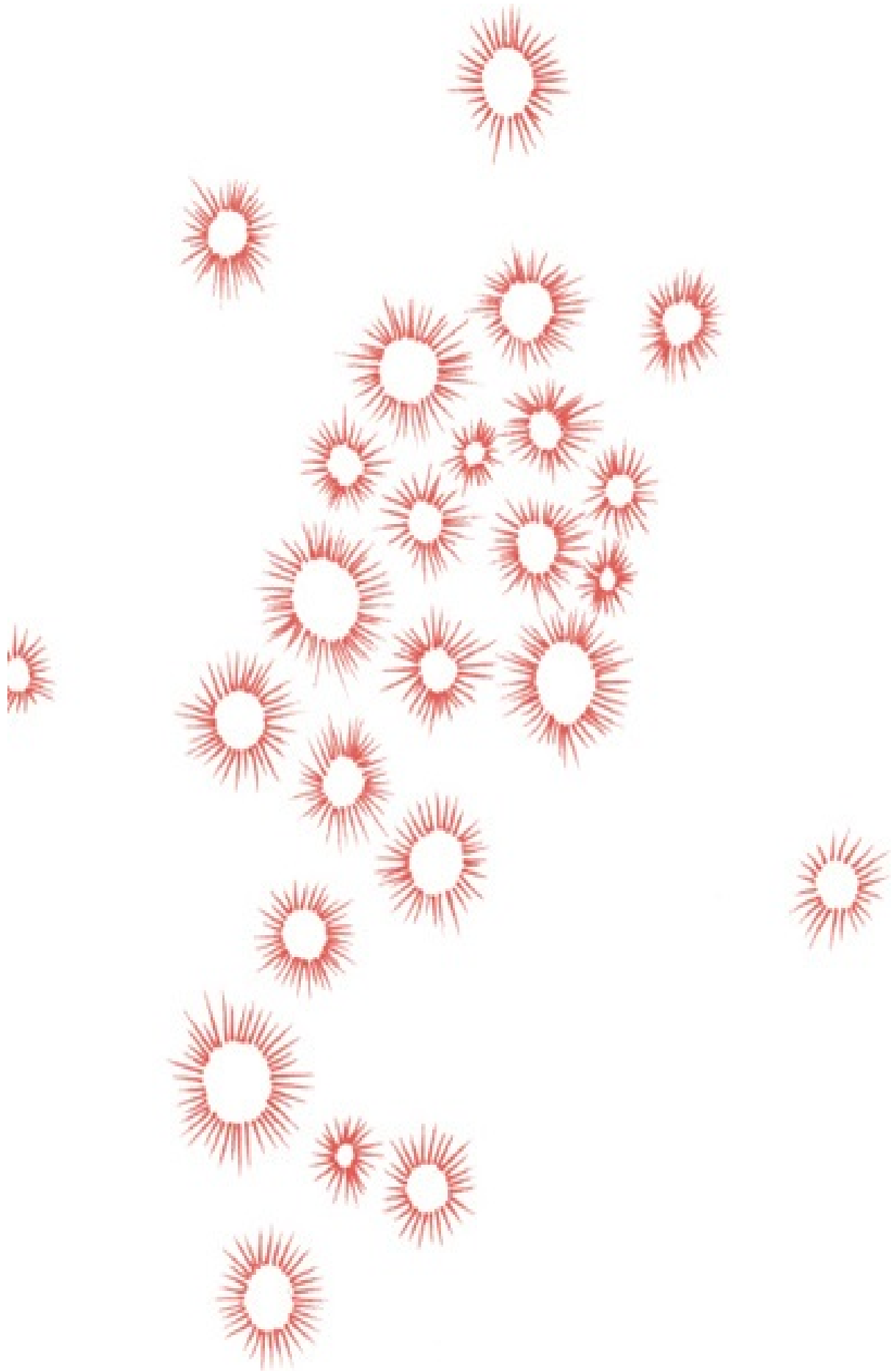
TWENTY-EIGHT

We are related to each other.
By taking care of you,
I take care of myself.
By taking care of myself,
I take care of you.
Happiness and safety are not
individual matters.



TWENTY-NINE

Walking meditation is like eating.
With each step,
we nourish our bodies
and our spirit.
When we walk with anxiety
and sorrow,
it is like we are eating junk food.
The food of walking meditation
should be of a higher quality.

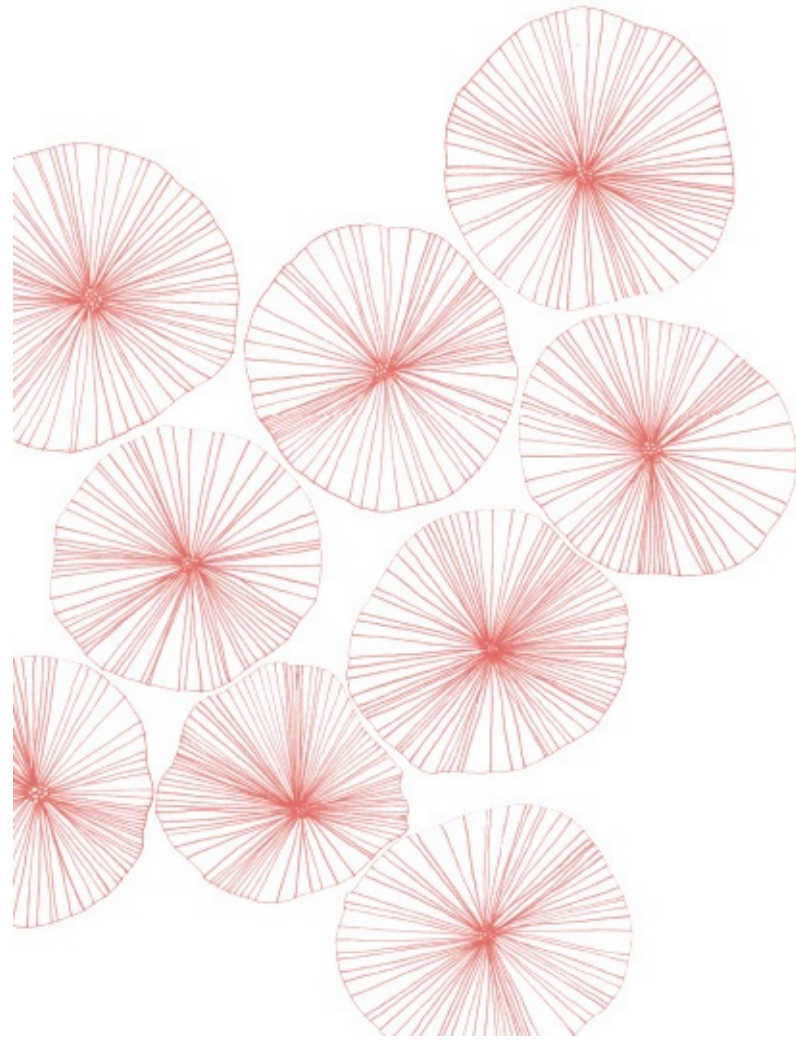


THIRTY

Walk slowly.

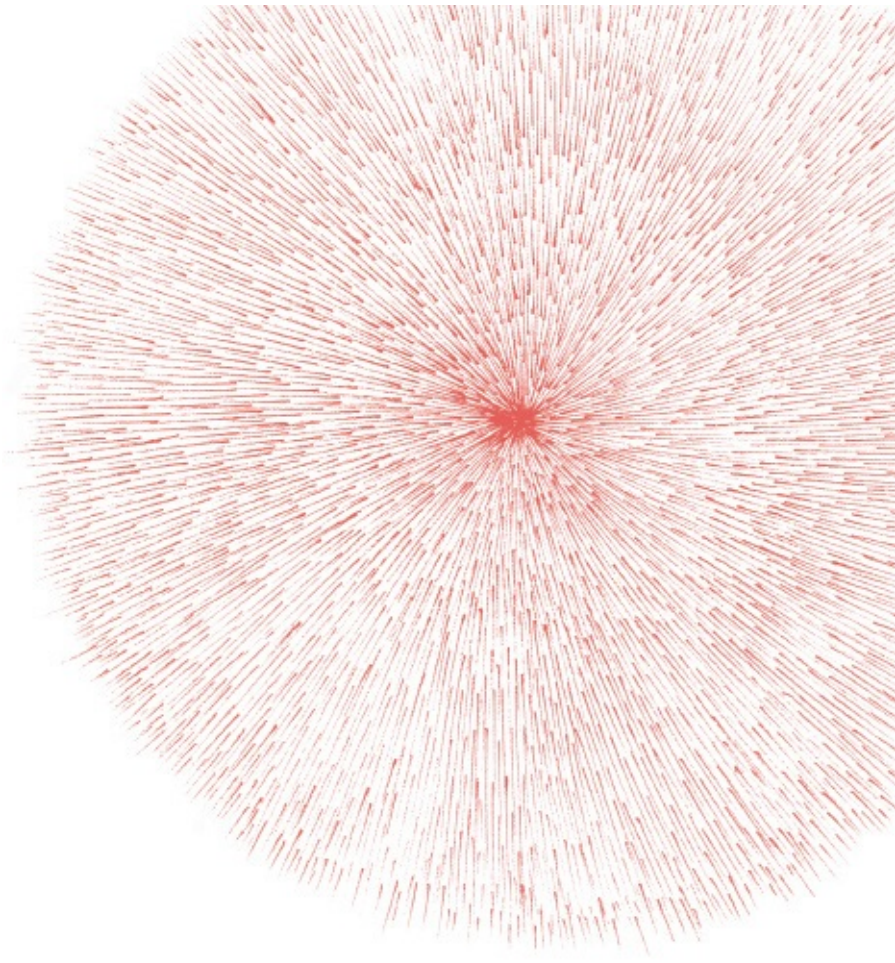
Don't rush.

Each step brings you
to the best moment of your life,
the present moment.



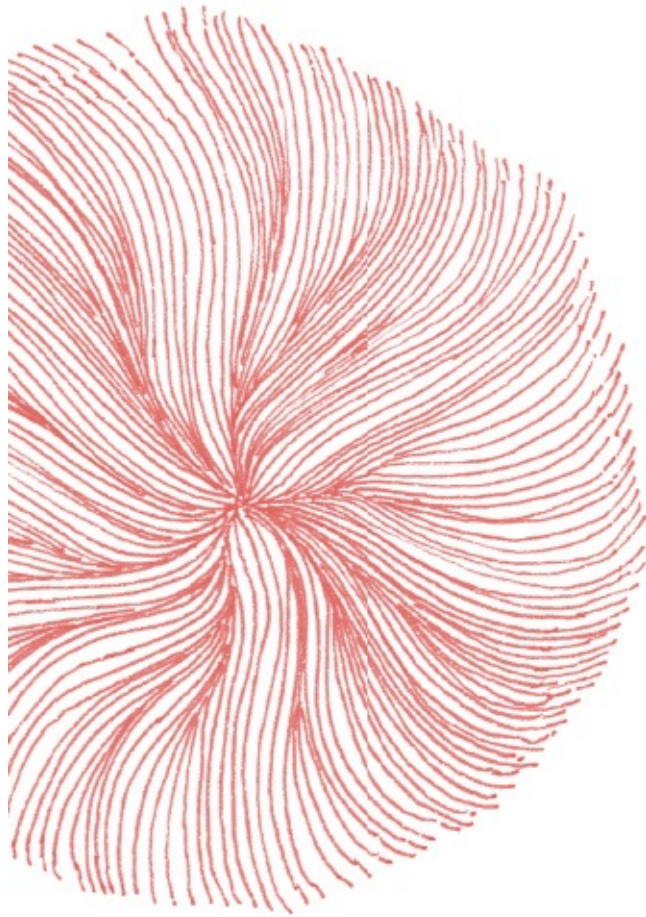
THIRTY-ONE

Understanding is
the foundation of love.



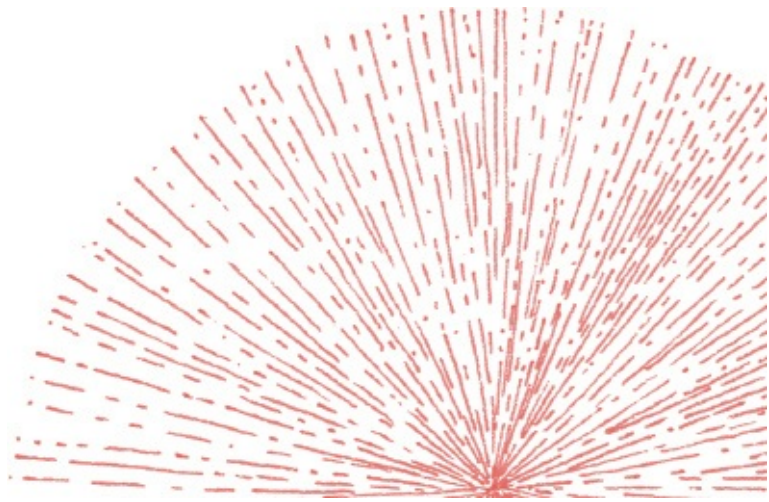
THIRTY-TWO

True love
takes a lot of courage
because it is a commitment
to help remove suffering
and offer well-being.



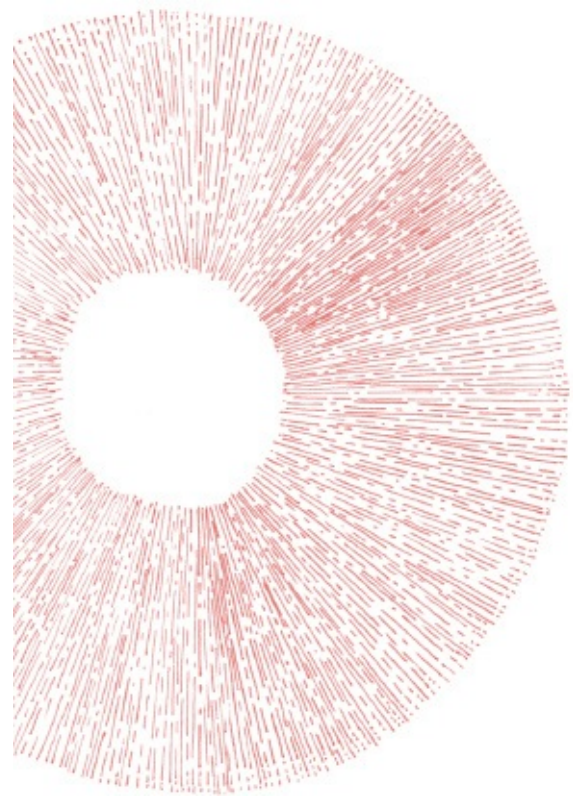
THIRTY-THREE

Through mindfulness,
you will find
that you have
even more reasons to be happy
than you thought.



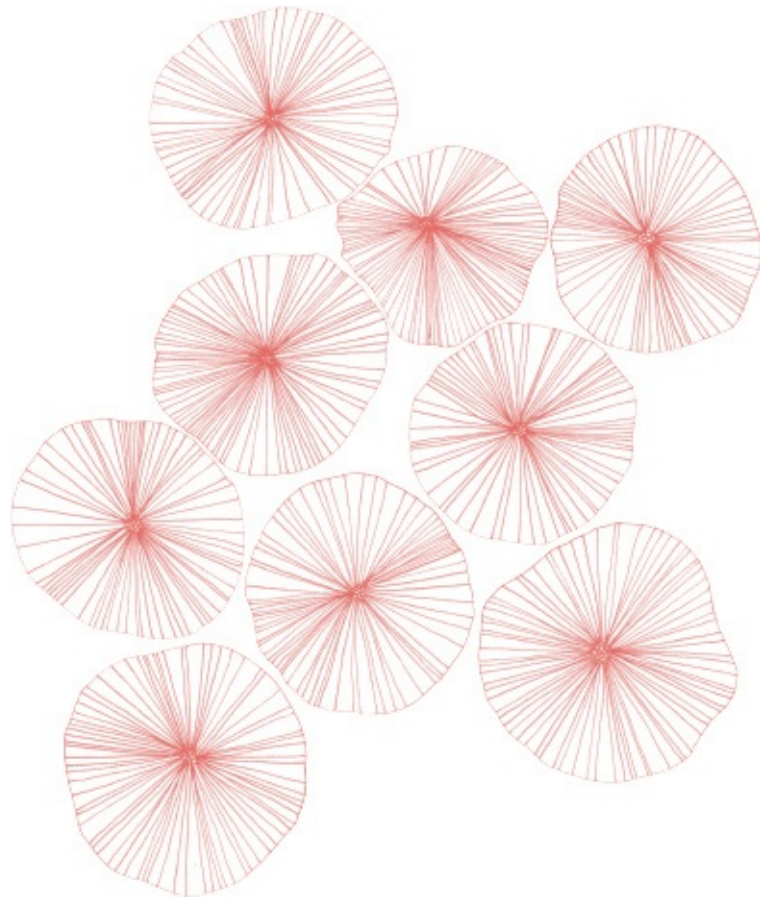
THIRTY-FOUR

If in our daily lives we can smile,
if we can be peaceful and happy,
everyone will profit from it.



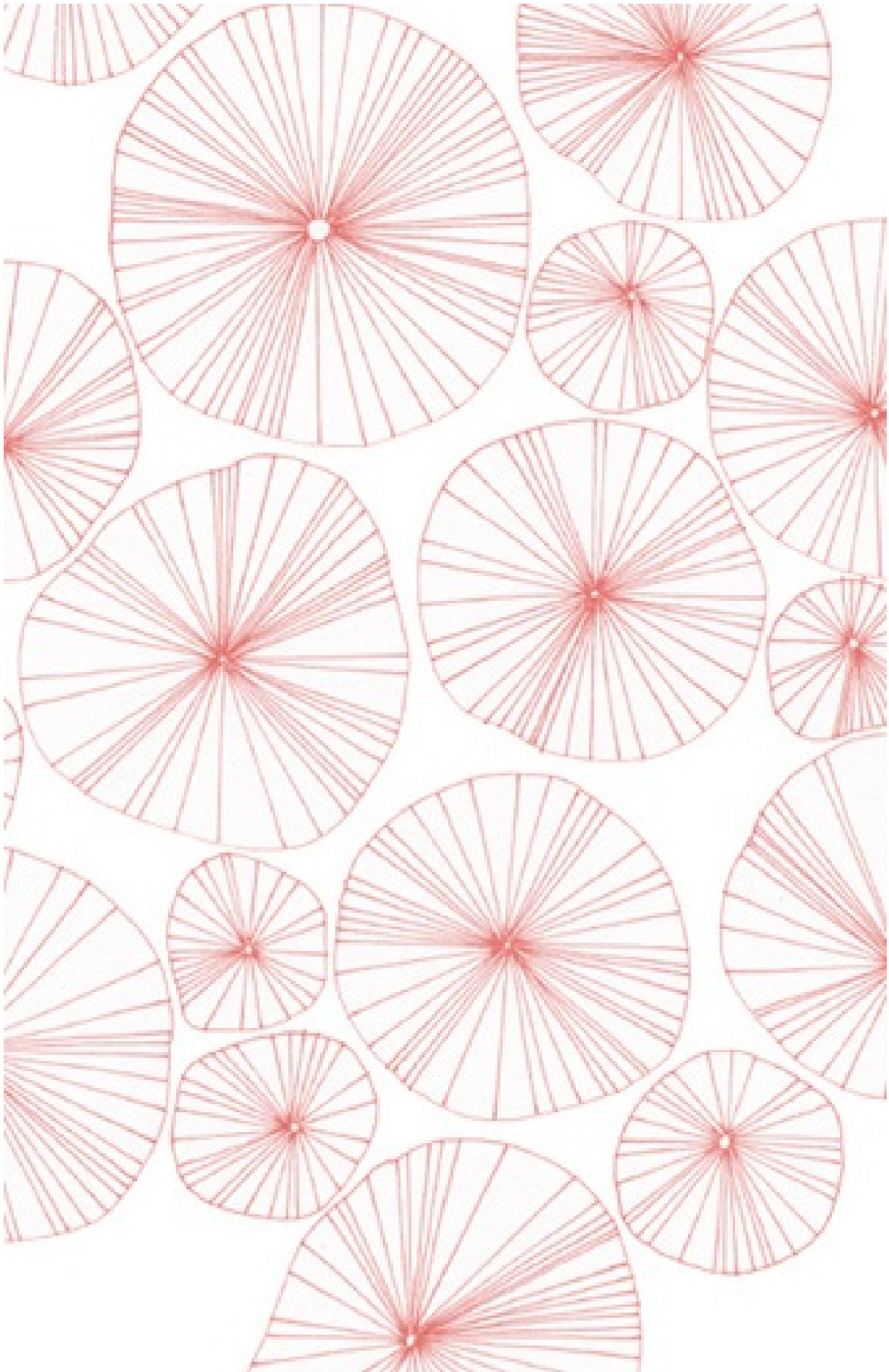
THIRTY-FIVE

A smile makes you master of yourself.



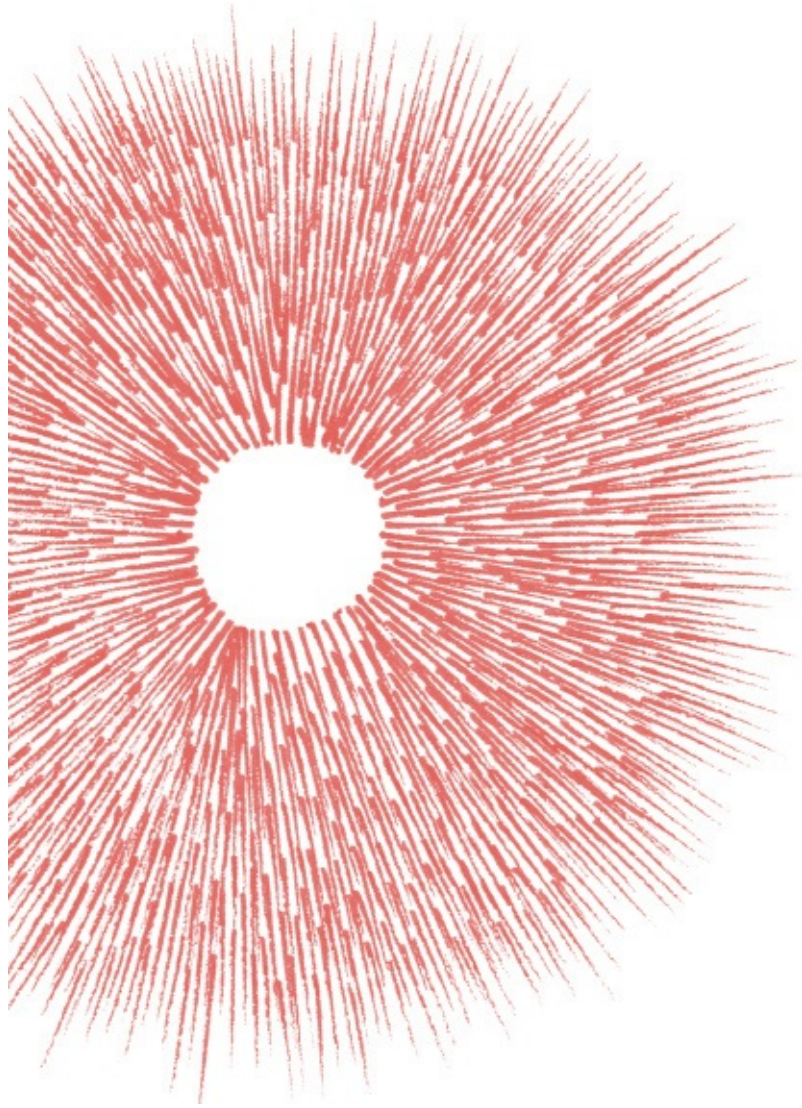
THIRTY-SIX

Everyone
has the capacity
to wake up,
to understand,
and to love.



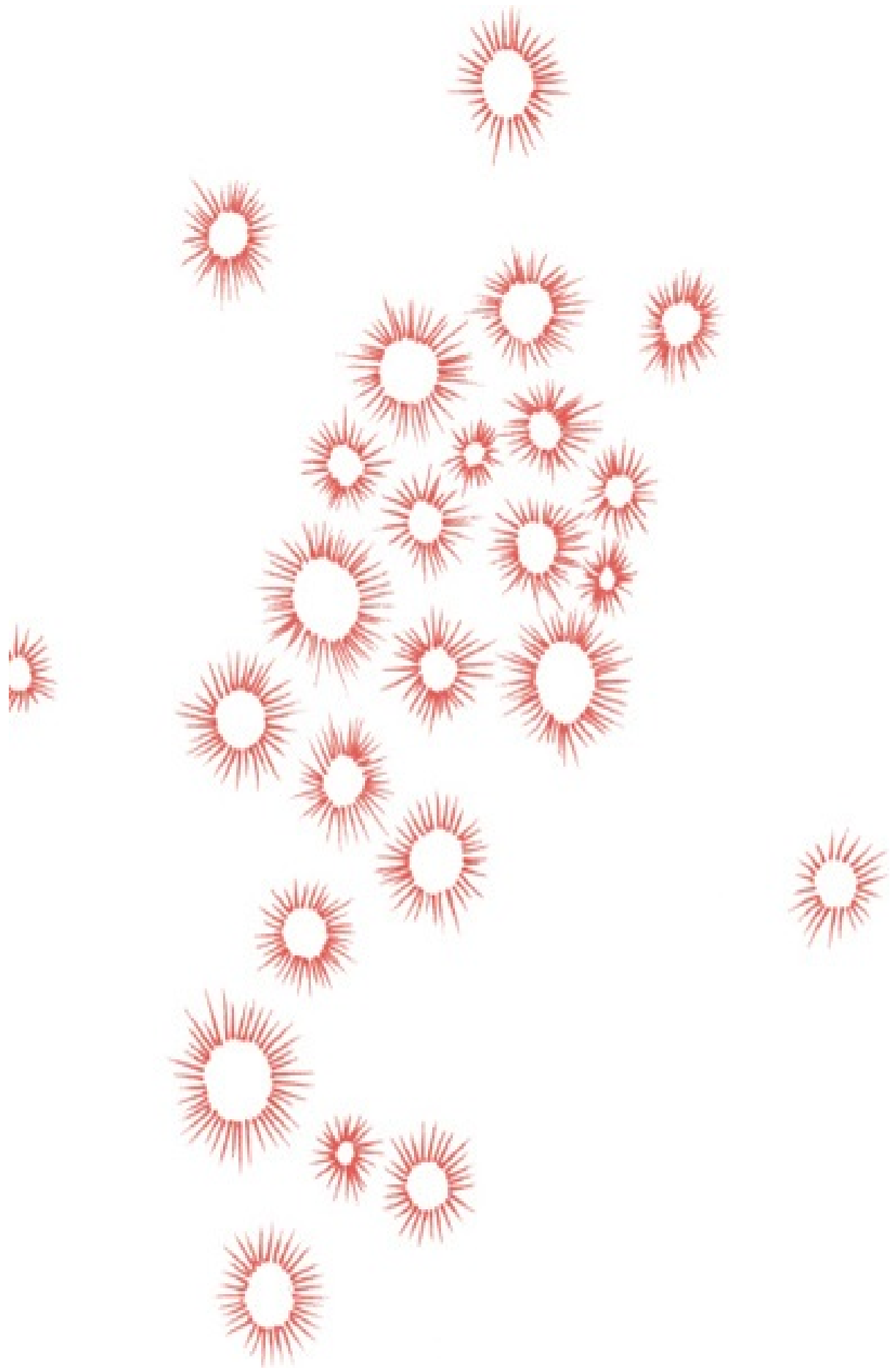
THIRTY-SEVEN

Understanding
and love
aren't two things.
When you understand
you can't help but love.
And when you love,
you act in a way
that can relieve
the suffering of people.



THIRTY-EIGHT

When you meditate,
you do it for the whole of society.
You seek solutions
to your problems
not only for yourself
but for all of us.



THIRTY-NINE

Peace is all around us
and within us.

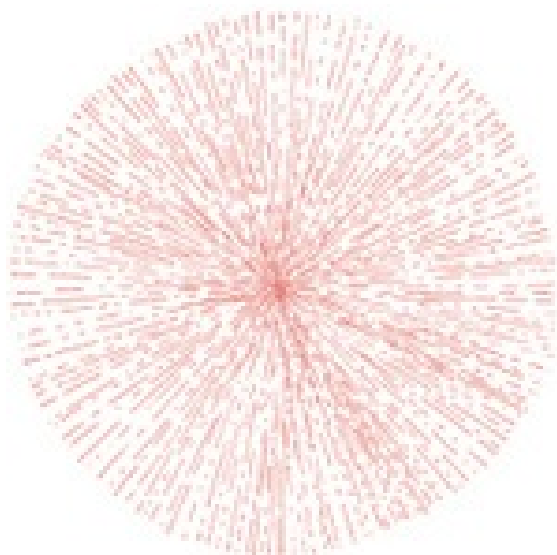
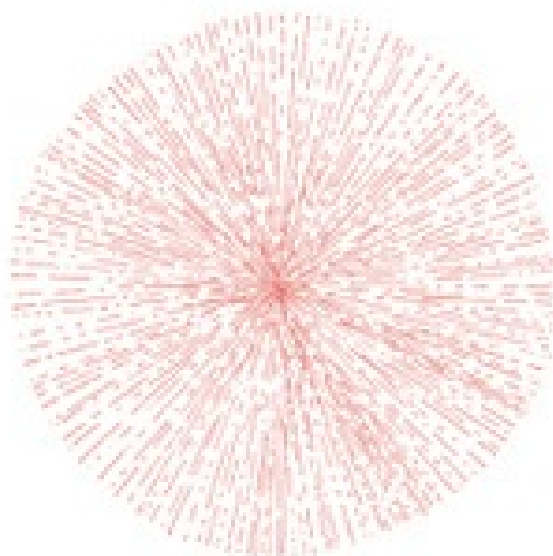
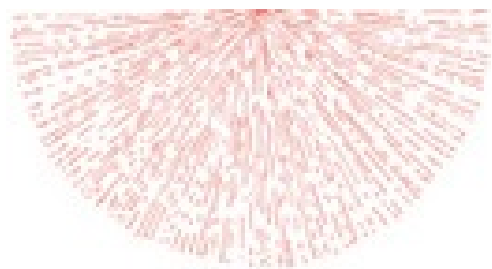
Once we learn
to touch this peace,
we will be healed
and transformed.

It is not a matter of faith;
it is a matter of practice.



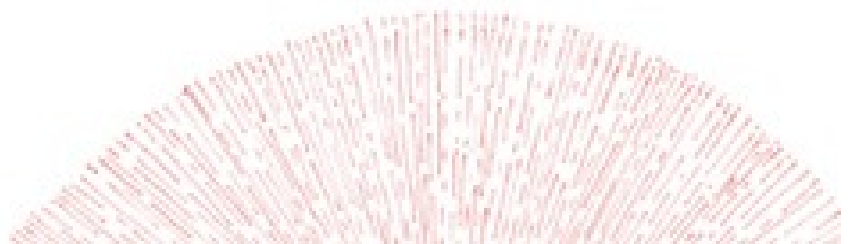
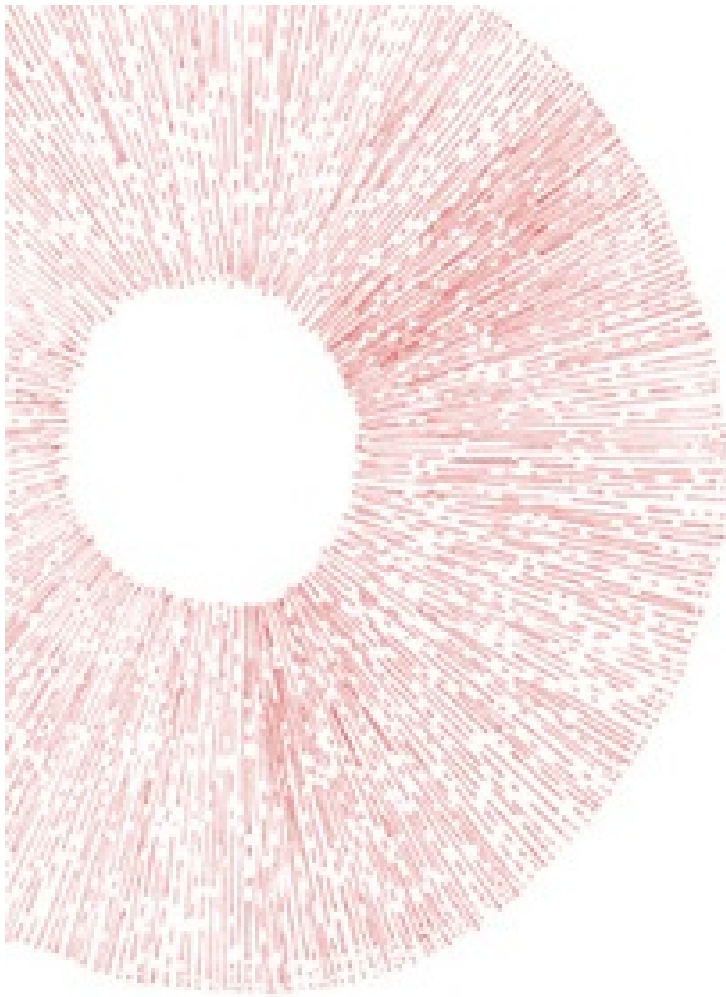
FORTY

We should be able
to be our true selves.
This means we should be able
to be the river,
the forest.
We must do this to understand,
and to have hope for the future.



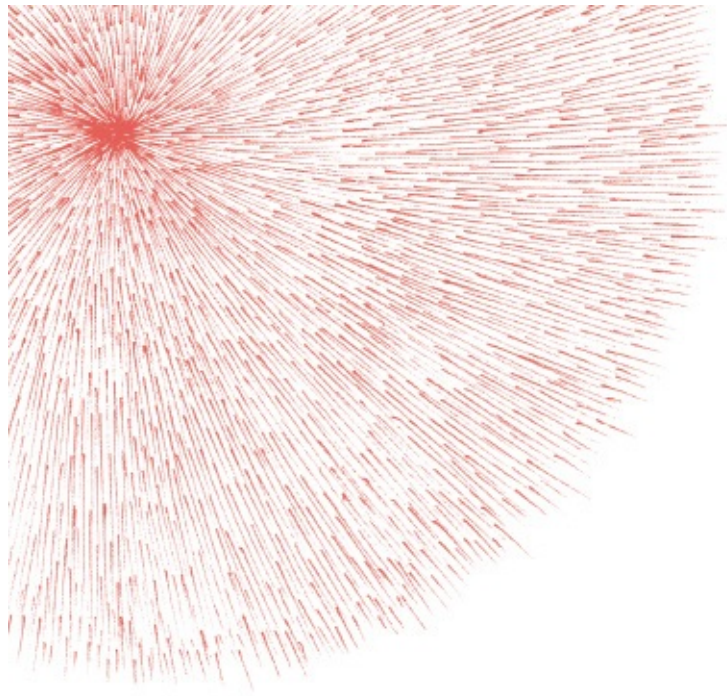
FORTY-ONE

Everything
we think,
feel, and do
has an effect
on our ancestors
and all future generations
and reverberates
throughout
the universe.



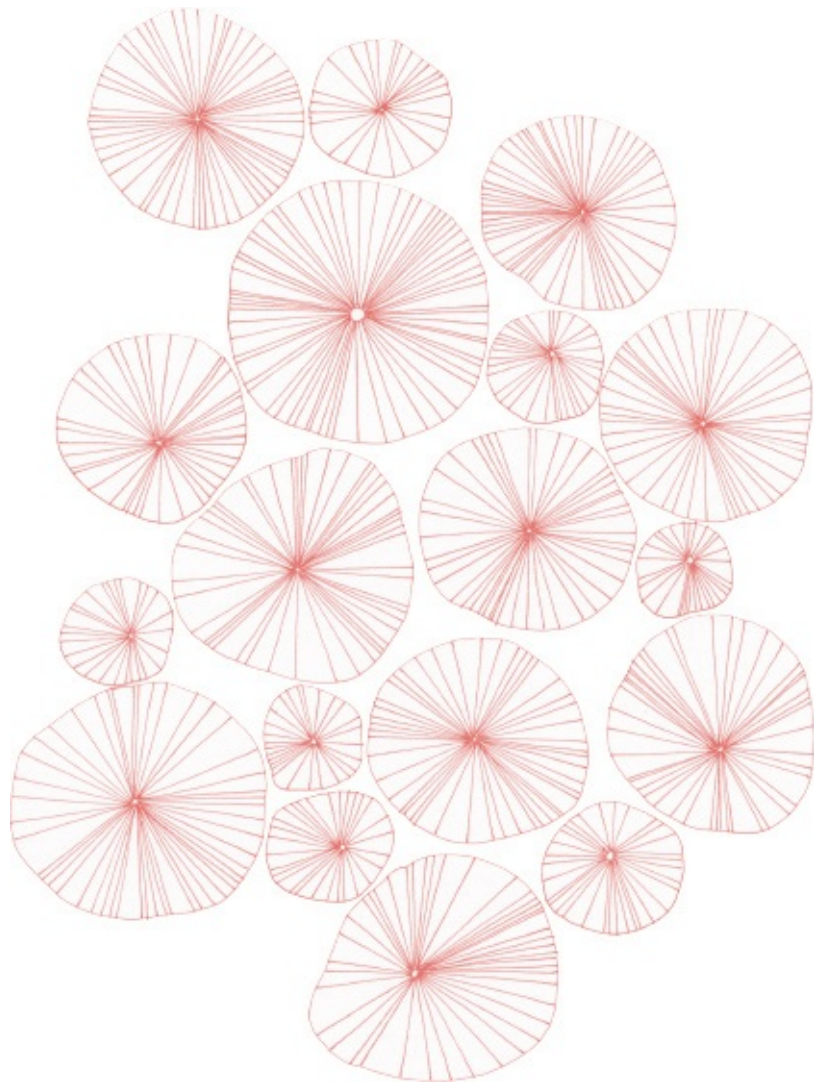
FORTY-TWO

Your body is not yours alone.
It belongs to your ancestors,
your parents,
future generations,
and to society
and all other living beings.
All of them have come together
to bring about the presence
of this body.
Keeping your body healthy
is an expression of gratitude
to the whole cosmos.
If you are healthy
physically and mentally,
all of us will benefit.



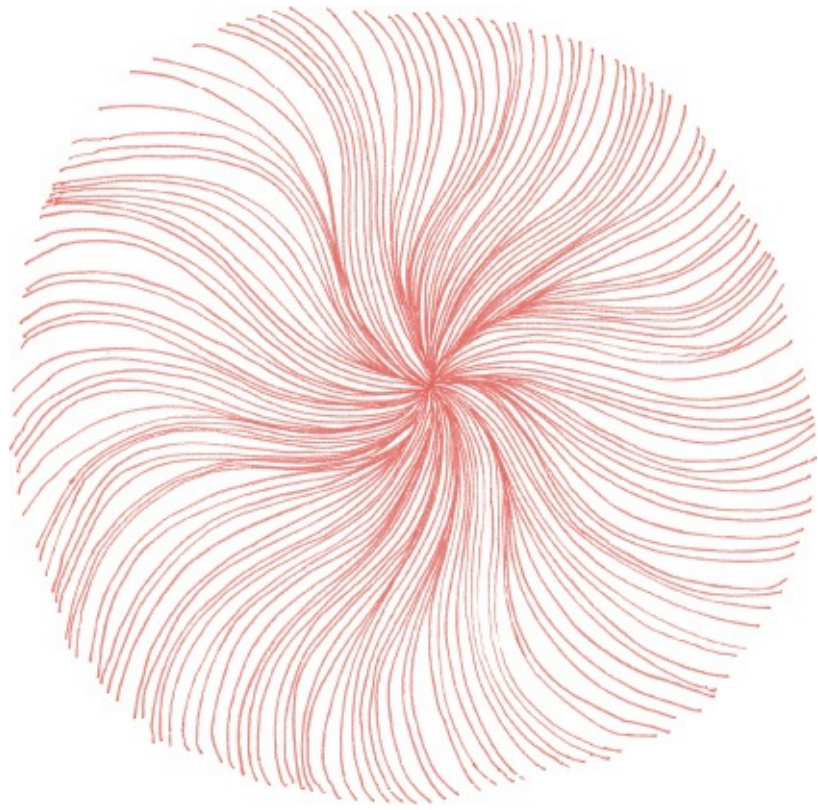
FORTY-THREE

People say
that walking on water
is a miracle,
but to me,
walking peacefully
on the Earth
is the real miracle.
The Earth is a miracle.
Each step is a miracle.
Taking steps
on our beautiful planet
can bring real happiness.



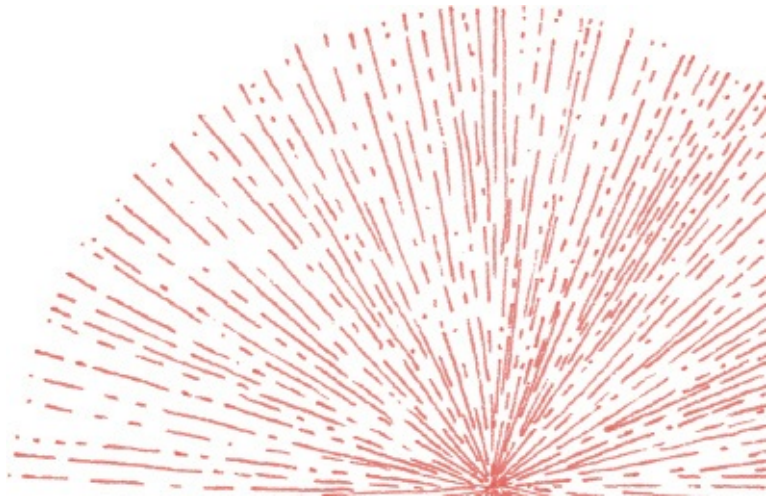
FORTY-FOUR

We should live
our daily lives
seeing everything
in the light of interbeing.
Then we will not be caught
in our small selves.
We will see our joy
and our suffering
everywhere.



FORTY-FIVE

The ground for action is to be.
Walk, sit, and eat
in such a way
that peace is possible
in the here
and the now.



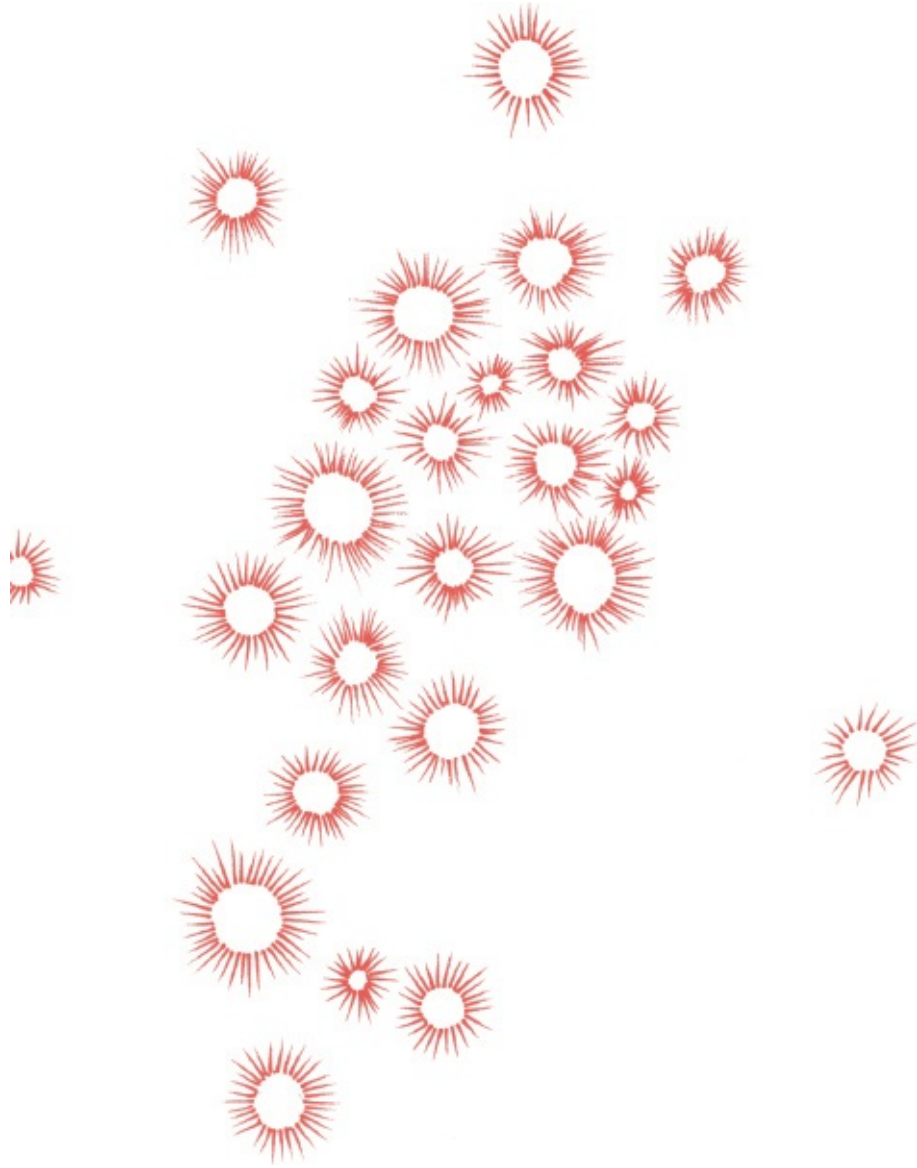
FORTY-SIX

Everything can be
a bell of mindfulness,
including suffering.



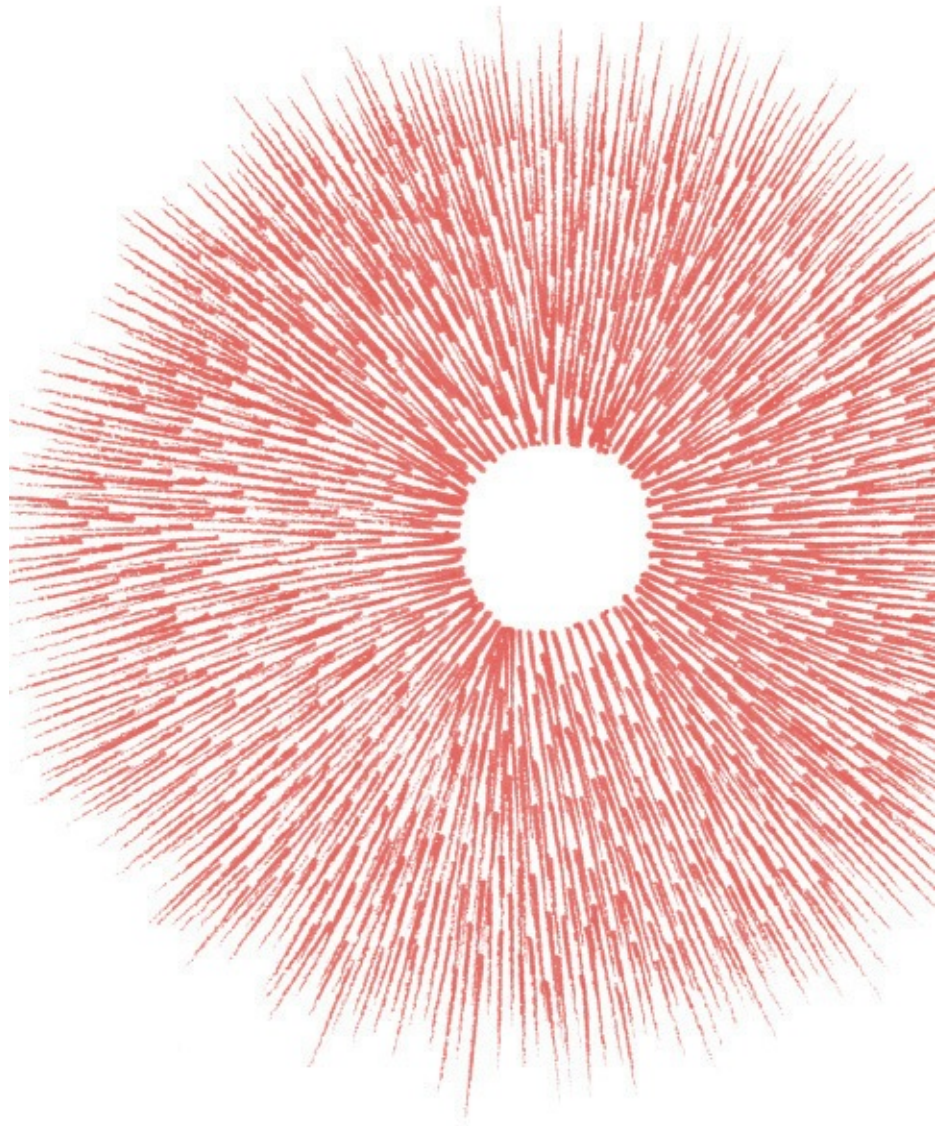
FORTY-SEVEN

Planting a seed,
washing a dish,
and cutting the grass
are as eternal,
as beautiful,
as writing a poem.
I do not understand
how a poem can be better
than a peppermint plant.



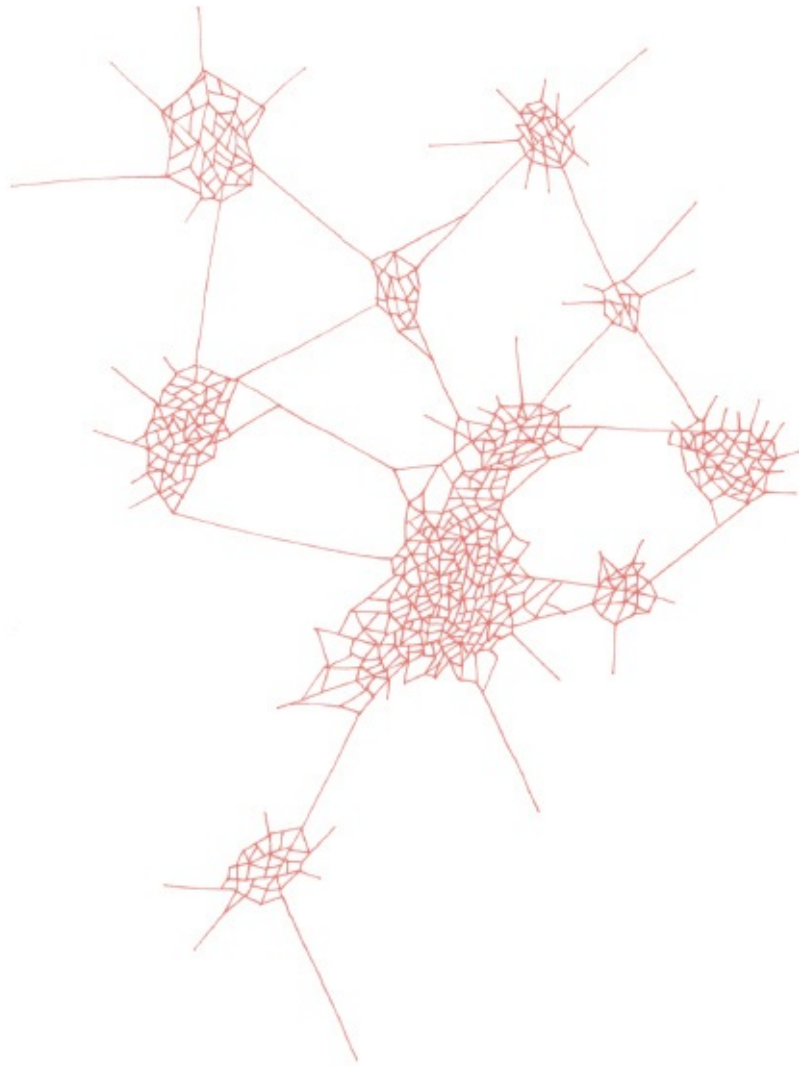
FORTY-EIGHT

Whether we can
wake up or not
depends on whether we can
walk mindfully
on our Mother Earth.
The future of all life,
including our own,
depends on our mindful steps.



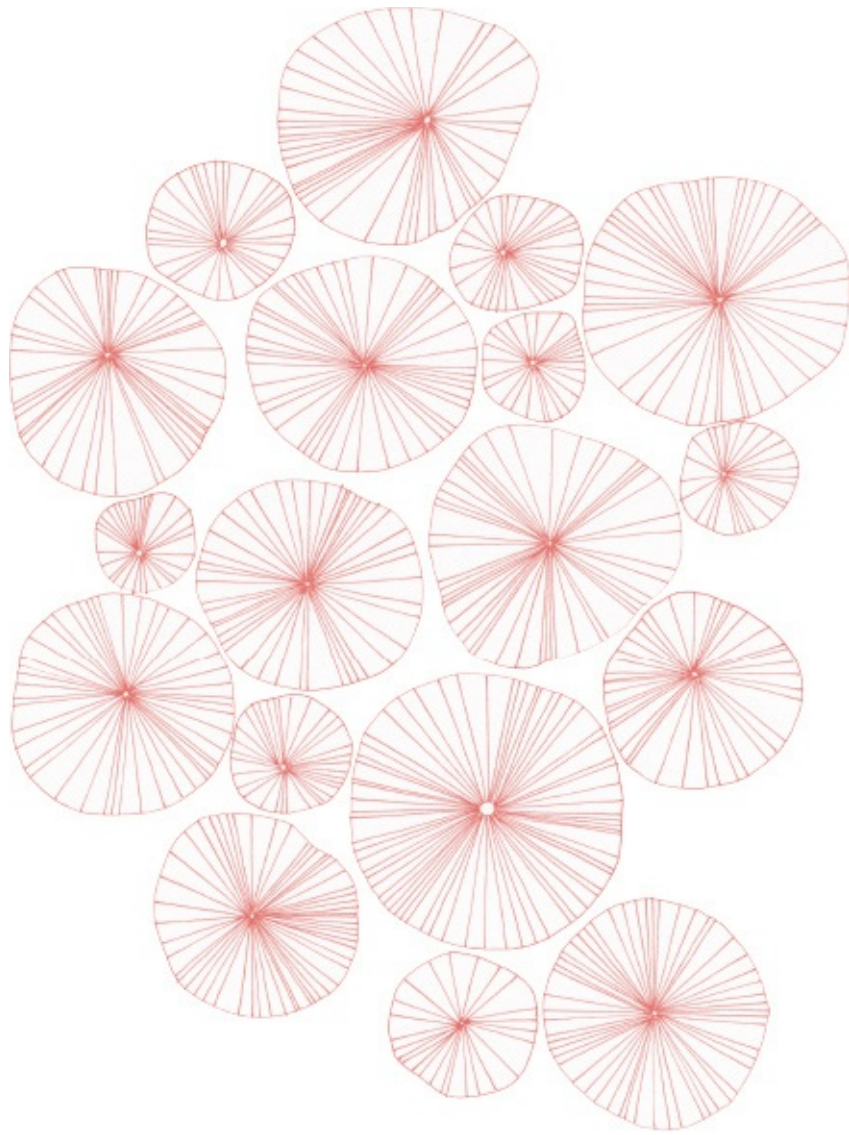
FORTY-NINE

Meditation is not an escape.
It is the courage to look at reality
with mindfulness and concentration.
Meditation is essential
for our survival.



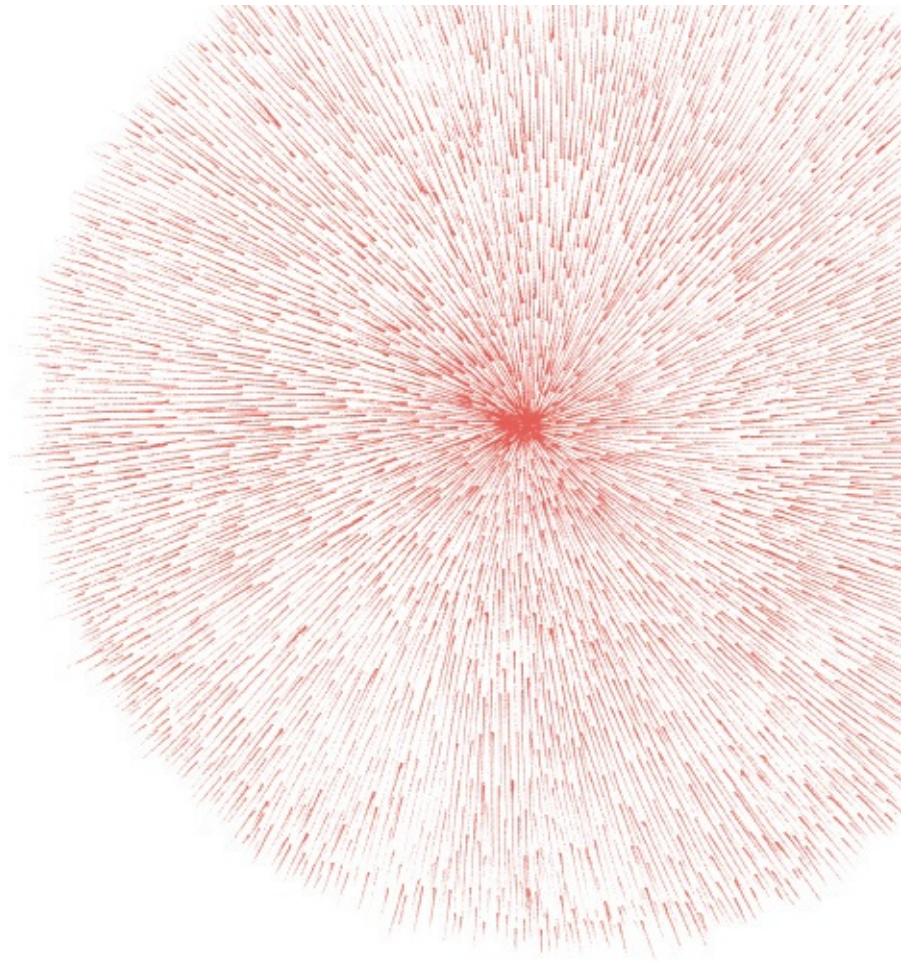
FIFTY

There is no phenomenon
in the universe that does not
intimately concern us,
from a pebble resting
at the bottom of the ocean
to the movement of a galaxy
millions of light years away.
All phenomena are interdependent.



FIFTY-ONE

Our message is
first and foremost
a nonverbal one;
our message is
our own action.



FIFTY-TWO

We are children of the Earth
and not separate from the soil,
the forests,
the rivers,
and the sky.
We share the same destiny.

Thich Nhat Hanh Monk, Zen Master, Poet, and Peace Activist

**“Thich Nhat Hanh writes with Buddha’s voice.”
—Sogyal Rinpoche**

Born in Vietnam in 1926, monk, Zen master, and poet Thich Nhat Hanh now lives in southwest France. Along with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he is considered one of the most significant teachers of Western Buddhism and a leading spokesperson for the Buddhist peace movement. His unrelenting advocacy for peace, human rights, and social justice, as well as his special gift for transmitting the teachings of Buddhism in a simple and engaging manner, are acknowledged worldwide.

In all his teachings, Thich Nhat Hanh places a high value on relating ancient wisdom to problems of everyday modern life. He focuses on how to stop and be conscious in every moment. “There is no enlightenment outside of everyday life,” Thich Nhat Hanh says. Being present in the moment, he says, is what will bring us happiness. By bringing one’s body and mind together in the present moment, we can experience peace and a unity with humanity and with all of life.

Martin Luther King, Jr., who nominated Thich Nhat Hanh for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967, wrote: “Thich Nhat Hanh, in his modesty and devoutness, is a saintly man. But he is also a savant with significant intellectual skills.” Stephen Batchelor is certain that Thich Nhat Hanh will forever be considered one of the leading teachers and interpreters of Western Buddhism. Richard Baker-roshi says: “If someone can be called a ‘living Buddha,’ it is Thich Nhat Hanh.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama said of Thich Nhat Hanh: “He shows us the connection between a person’s inner peace and peace on Earth.”

Thich Nhat Hanh is not only an exceptionally gifted speaker, but also a prolific writer. His descriptive and sensitive, poetic style enables the reader to easily follow and comprehend his spiritual ideas. Thich Nhat Hanh’s poetic and philosophical work is directed to everyone who is interested in peace, love, and learning the art of happiness.

His Life and Its Influence

Thich Nhat Hanh was born Nguyen Xuan Bao in 1926 in Vietnam. At the age of sixteen, he joined a Zen monastery, Tu Hieu, in Hue, in central Vietnam and began his education as a monk. This monastery belongs to the Linji School of Zen Buddhism. He might have become the abbot of a monastery, but he responded to another calling.

During the bloody war that was dominating Vietnam, he worked with others to renew Buddhism and make it more responsive to the needs of society. He also felt that if all the Buddhist groups could unify, they could offer an alternative vision of society, one based on the Buddhist principles of compassion and inclusiveness. In 1949, soon after his full ordination, he left Hue to go to Saigon. There he helped found the South Vietnam School of Buddhist Studies. In 1955, he became the editor of *Vietnamese Buddhism*, a journal that was inspirational for young peace activists.

In 1954, Vietnam had been divided and the repressive Diem regime was established in the south. Diem instituted harsh policies against Buddhism. There were nonviolent protests and many monks, nuns, and laypeople were arrested, especially in the early 1960s. In 1963, Nhat Hanh's commitment to nonviolence and his efforts to renew Buddhism brought him the offer of a fellowship to study at Princeton University. A year later he was invited to teach Buddhism at Columbia University in New York.

In 1964, he returned to his home country, to Saigon where he founded the School of Youth for Social Service (SYSS), which trained young monks, nuns, and laypeople as social workers, helping rebuild villages and relocate refugees and in other ways addressing the social damage of the intensifying war. Many SYSS students were attacked and even killed. Thich Nhat Hanh also barely escaped an attack. In 1966, he founded the Tiep Hien Order, the Order of Interbeing. The Order dedicates itself to the support of Buddhism, mindfulness, social responsibility, and nonviolence. Soon after founding the Order, Nhat Hanh traveled to the United States to inform people of the effects of the war and to call for peace. He met with officials in the U.S. government and went on an extensive speaking tour of North American cities. When word of his efforts reached Vietnam, he was refused permission to return home.

In 1969, Thich Nhat Hanh set up the Buddhist Peace Delegation at the Paris Peace Talks. After the war, he continued to travel extensively in Europe, Asia, and America, sharing his teachings. He hoped to return home after the signing of the 1975 peace agreement that ended the Vietnam War. But the governments of both North and South Vietnam considered him an enemy because he would not take sides, and he was forced to remain in exile.

Thich Nhat Hanh and his associates from the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation offered to raise money for hungry children in Vietnam through the

embassy in Paris, but the Vietnamese government refused. However, the work went forward. Thich Nhat Hanh and friends raised money and sent it to Vietnam, where it was distributed by SYSS social workers who continued to work in some of the poorest areas of the country.

While in Singapore for a conference, he heard of the plight of the Vietnamese boatpeople. Singapore, Malaysia, and other countries rejected Vietnamese refugees, who were often pushed back out to sea in ramshackle boats. Nhat Hanh headed an effort to rescue boatpeople in the Gulf of Siam and tried to publicize their plight so that countries around the world would raise their refugee quotas.

In 1982, Thich Nhat Hanh founded Plum Village, a meditation and retreat center near Bordeaux, France. Monks and nuns from many countries live together year-round as a Sangha, or a spiritual family. Living together, monastics focus on being the peace they would like to see in the world. The center also welcomes lay practitioners and families, bringing together people from all over the world.

Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings have grown in popularity and his books have been published in many languages including Spanish, French, Korean, and Vietnamese. *Being Peace*, *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, *Be Free Where You Are*, and *Anger* are some of his most popular books. For a few weeks each summer, Thich Nhat Hanh holds a large retreat in Plum Village for families and individuals. His teachings reach people of all ages and from all walks of life. In January 2005, for the first time in almost forty years, Thich Nhat Hanh was allowed to return for a three-month visit to Vietnam.



JENIFER KENT makes drawings inspired by systems and patterns of movement and growth. She received her BFA from Rutgers University and her MFA from Mills College. She lives in Petaluma, California and teaches at San Francisco University High School. Her work has been exhibited nationally and is represented by Dolby Chadwick Gallery in San Francisco. See more of Jenifer's artwork at www.jeniferkent.com.

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