

The Five Remembrances

by Thich Nhat Hanh

When you deny the reality of life, you appreciate it less. Meditate on the Buddha's Five Remembrances and rediscover the magic of life just as it is.

I am of the nature to grow old.

There is no way to escape growing old.

I am of the nature to have ill health.

There is no way to escape ill health.

I am of the nature to die.

There is no way to escape death.

All that is dear to me and everyone I love
are of the nature to change.

There is no way to escape being separated from them.

My actions are my only true belongings.

I cannot escape the consequences of my actions.

My actions are the ground upon which I stand.

[from Wikipedia] The Upajjhatthana Sutta (“Subjects for Contemplation”) is a [Buddhist](#) discourse ([Pali](#): *sutta*; [Sanskrit](#).: *sutra*) famous for its inclusion of **five remembrances**, five facts regarding life’s fragility and our true inheritance. The discourse advises that these facts are to be reflected upon often by all.

According to this discourse, contemplation of these facts leads to the abandonment of destructive attachments and actions and to the cultivation of [factors](#) necessary for [Enlightenment](#). According to the Ariyapariyesana Sutta (“Discourse on the Noble Quest” [MN26](#), the first three remembrances are the very insights that led [Gautama Buddha](#) to renounce his royal household status and become an [ascetic](#) after experiencing strong feelings of spiritual urgency ([saṃvega](#)).