

1

Tell the truth.

- ♥ **We don't lie.** We try not to say untruthful things. If we think the truth is too shocking, we find a skillful and loving way to tell the truth.
- ♥ **Sometimes even the most skillful words cause pain. That is okay. Pain can heal.** If your words are spoken with compassion and understanding, the pain will heal more quickly.

2

Don't exaggerate.

- ♥ Sometimes we make something seem very tragic to justify and even feed anger. **In exaggerating what the other has done, you paint a wrong image.** This may seem harmless, but it takes you away from the truth and takes away the trust in a relationship.

The Four ELEMENTS of Loving Speech from Thích Nhất Hạnh

3

Be consistent.

- ♥ In Vietnamese, a **"forked tongue"** means you say something to one person, but to another person you say something different as a way of gaining some advantage.
- ♥ **Right Speech requires being true to your word** and not changing the content for your own advantage or to portray yourself in a better light.

4

Use peaceful language.

- ♥ **Refrain from speech** that's
violent
condemning
abusive
humiliating
accusing
judgmental.

1

Speak the language of the world.

- ♥ We have to use **the kind of language that people speak** and the way they view things.
- ♥ If you don't use the language of the world, most people won't understand what you mean, and **you can communicate only with people who already think like you.**

2

Speak according to the understanding of the listener.

- ♥ We need to keep the truthful content the same while being aware of the perspective and understanding of the person we're speaking to, so **others have an opportunity to really hear what's being said.**
- ♥ You have to **look deeply at the person to see how they perceive,** and speak in a way that takes that into account.

The Four CRITERIA of Loving Speech from Thích Nhất Hạnh

3

Give the right teaching according to person, time, and place.

- ♥ **Think of how to make the truths you hear resonate with your own.** If you were to give another person exactly the teaching you heard, it might not be the appropriate teaching for that person. **We want to share information in a way that people can integrate and use later, even if not right away.** Meet people where they are.

4

Teach in a way that reflects the absolute truth.

- ♥ "Absolute truth" = **the most profound view of things**
- ♥ **We have to be humble and try to look more and more deeply to discover in what way we can talk** about these complex, nuanced, difficult truths.