Half-smiler (Colorado)

Every morning during the three-week period 13 April - 1 May 2015
I will be walking around Aspen focused on developing
the half-smile, as described by Thich Nhat Hanh.

Anyone is welcome to meet me at the gazebo in Paepcke Park any day at 8:37*.
I'll offer a brief orientation, and then we'll will set out, separately, to
walk/hike for some hours as agreeable, focused on developing the half-smile,
and then meet again to have a convivial simple lunch.

the half-smile is both autonomous and intended toward other beings and things,
the half-smile is not a grin or a smirk,
the half-smile is both a substantial commitment and an easy employment,
the walking is both a substantial commitment and an easy employment,
the walking is not competitive or documented,
the walking is both regardless of and regarding the weather,

*lazy-day variation: Thursdays 10:07

Helen Mirra

in the context of the exhibition *Second Chances* at the Aspen Art Museum

APPENDIX

Thich Nhat Hanh, notes regarding walking and half-smiling,
from Peace is Every Step (NY: Bantam, 1990)

–

Your steps are the most important thing. They decide everything.

–

In our daily lives, we usually feel pressured to move ahead. We have to hurry. We seldom ask ourselves where it is we must hurry to. When you practice walking meditation, you go for a stroll. You have no purpose or direction in space or time. The purpose of walking meditation is walking meditation itself. Going is important, not arriving.

–

We seem to move forward, but we don't go anywhere; we are not drawn by a goal. Thus we smile while we are walking.

–

A tiny bud of a smile on our lips nourishes awareness and calms us miraculously.

–

If you can take one peaceful step, you can take two. You can take one hundred and eight peaceful steps.

–

Stand on one foot, and be aware that it is resting upon the earth; see the great sphere upon which it rests. See it clearly – how wonderfully round it is. While walking, anticipate the ground where you are about to place your foot, and when you do, mindfully experience your foot, the ground, and the connection between your foot and the ground. Think of your foot as an emperor's seal.

–

And walk as if you breathe with your own feet.

And walk as if you kiss the earth with your feet.

–

a friend wrote this poem:

> I have lost my smile,
> but don't worry.
> The dandelion has it.

If you have lost your smile and yet are still capable of seeing that a dandelion is keeping it for you, the situation is not too bad.

–

APPENDIX

Ad Reinhardt, excerpts from ART IN ART IS ART-AS-ART, first published 1965, reprinted in Art as Art (Berkeley: University of California, 1991) pp 63-68

–

The beginning in art is not the beginning.
Creation in art is not creation.
Nature in art is not nature.
Art in life is not life.
Life in art is not life.

–

Knowledge in art is not knowledge.
Learning in art is not learning.
Ignorance in art is ignorance.
Art-schooling is not schooling.
Unlearning in art is learning.
The unschooled in art are unschooled.

–

The substance of art is not substance.
The matter of art is not matter.
The subject of art is not the subject.
The object of art is not the object.
The manner of art is not the manner.
Technique in art is technique.
Qualities in art are qualities.

–

Limits in art are not limits.
No limits in art are limits.
Discipline in art is discipline.
Sameness in art is not sameness.
Variety in art is not variety.
Monotony in art is not monotony.
Balance in art is not balance.

–

The morality of art is not morality.
The religion of art is not religion.
The spirituality of art is not spirituality.
Humanism in art is not humanism.
Dehumanism in art is not dehumanism.
Bumpkin-Dionysianism in art is Bumpkin-Dionysionism.
The iconology of art is not iconology.
The iconoclasm of art is iconoclasm.

Darkness in art is not darkness.
Light in art is not light.
Space in art is space.
Time in art is not time.
Evolution in art is not evolution.
Progress in art is not progress.

The beginning of art is not the beginning.
The finishing of art is not the finishing.
The furnishing of art is furnishing.
The nothingness of art is not nothingness.
Negation in art is not negation.
The absolute in art is absolute.
Art-in-art is art.
The end of art is art-as-art.
The end of art is not the end.

–

What is walking for? Walking is for nothing. It's just for walking.

Thich Nhat Hanh, Shambhala Sun, July 2012