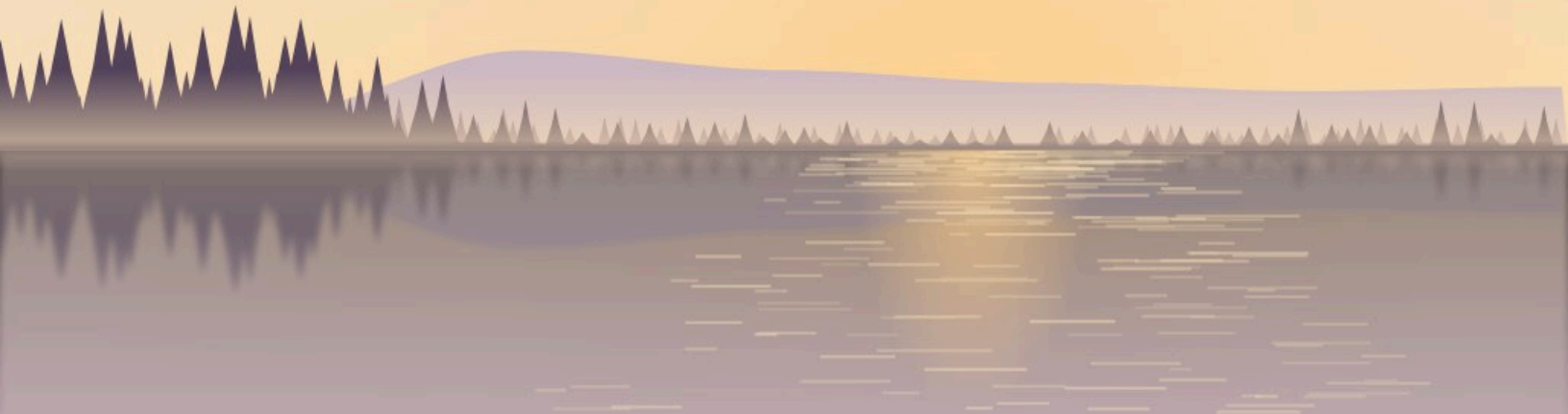
Sujuu

# A small book of Finnish balance

Eight Finnish words for a steadier day



## Hiljaa hyvä tulee.

HEEL-yah HEW-va TOO-leh · Slowly, good comes. A Finnish saying.



Finland is often called the happiest country in the world. Ask Finns why, and they'll talk about trust, fairness and a society that works, long before anything you could buy.





# Make yourself at home

Still, everyday Finnish life holds some good habits: a sense of enough, ease with quiet, the forest close by, the weekly sauna, and neighbours who turn up to help.

This little book gathers eight of them. Read a page, or none, and come back when you like.

The lines in large type are Sujuu's own. The Finnish sayings are traditional.

# Kohtuus

KOH-toos · moderation, fairness

**Find the right spot, then stop.**



Kohtuus comes from *kohta*, a spot or a point. It means the right measure: not too little, not too much, and fair to everyone involved. Finns use it every day, for a fair price or a reasonable request. It isn't about going without. It's knowing where enough is, and stopping there.

TRY

- Choose today's ceiling as well as its floor: three things, or a time to stop.
- Before adding something new, ask: is this below what I need, or above it?
- Ask whether what you expect of yourself is reasonable, *kohtuullinen*.

**Kohtuus on paras makkaraskin.**

KOH-toos on PAH-rahs MAHK-kah-rahs-keen

Moderation is best, even in sausage.

## Smooth, not fast.

2 · WHEN THINGS GO SMOOTHLY

# Sujua

SOO-yoo-ah · to go, to come along

An everyday verb. Said on its own, it means things are going well. Ask a Finn how the work is going and you might hear *Hyvin sujuu*: going smoothly. It's where our name comes from. Smooth doesn't mean fast. It means one thing at a time, a little planning, and no fight with the day.

TRY

- Spend five minutes planning before you begin.
- Ask how this one task is going, not how everything is.
- When you feel rushed, slow the next step, not the whole day.

**Hyvin suunniteltu on puoliksi tehty.**
HEW-veen SOON-nee-tel-
too on POO-oh-leek-see TEH-tew
Well planned is half done.

# Hiljaisuus

HEEL-yai-soos · silence, quiet

**A pause doesn't need filling.**



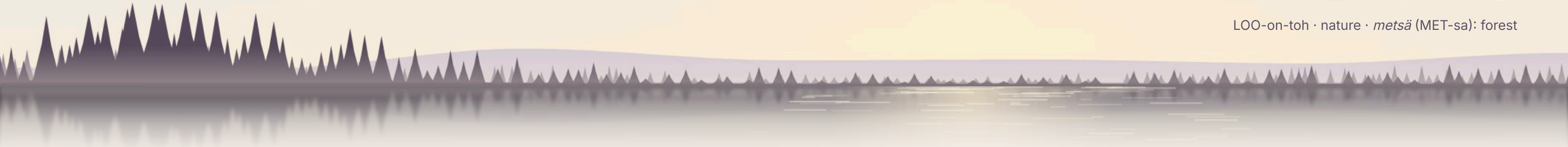
Finns are known for being at ease with quiet. A pause in conversation isn't awkward, and listening counts as taking part. The "silent Finn" is partly a stereotype, but the ideal behind it is a generous one: you don't have to fill every moment, and neither does anyone else.

TRY

- Let a pause in conversation stand.
- Keep one undisturbed hour today, with notifications off.
- When someone asks how you are, answer briefly and honestly.

**Hiljaa hyvä tulee.**
HEEL-yah HEW-va TOO-leh
Slowly, good comes.

## The nearest green counts.



4 · THE NEAREST GREEN

# Luonto

LOO-on-toh · nature · *metsä* (MET-sa): forest

For many Finns, the woods are simply part of the week. Studies in Helsinki found that even a short visit to an ordinary city park or woodland left people feeling more restored than a walk downtown. You don't need wilderness. The nearest trees will do.

TRY

- Sit for fifteen minutes in the nearest green, then take a slow walk.
- Pick a favourite spot, and keep going back.
- Route part of your day past trees.

**Niin metsä vastaa kuin sinne huudetaan.**

neen MET-sa VAHS-tah kween
SEEN-neh HOO-deh-tahn

The forest answers the way you call into it.

# Jokaisenoikeudet

YOH-kye-sen-OY-keh-oo-det · everyone's rights

**Walk lightly; leave it as you found it.**



In Finland you can walk, ski, camp for a night, swim, and pick berries and mushrooms almost anywhere in the countryside, without asking and without paying. The one condition is care: leave no trace, and keep a kind distance from people's homes.

TRY

- Treat the open land near you as an outdoor room, where local rules allow.
- Carry out whatever you carry in.
- Go berry-picking or mushroom-hunting once a season.

Many hands, then coffee.



6 · MANY HANDS

# Talkoot

TAHL-koht · a shared work party

Neighbours gather to rake a shared yard, mend a jetty or clean up a shoreline, and whoever benefits puts on coffee and something to eat. A big job gets light, and nobody keeps score. Finns still hold talkoot every spring.

TRY

- Invite a few people to one shared job, with a clear start and finish.
- If it's your job they're helping with, bring the coffee.
- Help out at a local event instead of only attending it.

# Sauna

SOW-nah · *löyly* (LUR-ew-lew): the steam from the stones




Finland has more than three million saunas for five and a half million people. Sauna is less about heat than calm: an unhurried hour, quiet voices, steam rising from the stones, then a cool rinse or a dip in the lake.

TRY

- Keep a regular, unhurried sauna or warm bath, with no phone.
- Ask before adding steam, and sit lower if it's too hot.
- Cool down, drink water, and keep alcohol out of it.

**Saako heittää löylyä?**

SAH-koh HAYT-ta LUR-ew-lew-a

May I add some steam? The polite question in a shared sauna.

If you have a heart condition, ask your doctor first.



## Sisu for the hard moment, not every moment.

8 · IN MEASURE

# Sisu

SEE-soo · inner strength, grit

Sisu is the strength to keep going when something is hard. Researchers who study it found two sides. Used for a hard moment, it helps. Used for every moment, it wears people down. That's why sisu comes last in this book, and in measure.



TRY

- Spend your sisu on the day's single hardest task, then rest.
- Check in: am I still thinking clearly, resting, and being kind?
- Tell someone when you're pushing hard, or ask for help.

**Sisu se on kuin työn tekee, ei miehen voima eikä suuruus.**

SEE-soo seh on kween TEW-urn TEH-keh, ay MYEH-hen VOY-mah AY-ka SOO-roos

It's sisu that does the work, not strength or size.

# One ordinary day

| | |
|---|---|
| MORNING | Five minutes of planning. Three things, or a time to stop.<br>Sujua, kohtuus |
| THE HARD PART | Spend your sisu on one thing, then rest.<br>Sisu |
| AFTERNOON | One quiet hour, notifications off.<br>Hiljaisuus |
| WORKING | One task at a time. Steady over rushed.<br>Sujua |
| MIDDAY | Fifteen minutes in the nearest green.<br>Luonto |
| EVENING | Stop when you said you would. Leave the day in place.<br>Kohtuus |





# The week and the year

| | |
|---|---|
| EACH WEEK | An unhurried sauna or warm bath. No phone, no alcohol.<br>Sauna |
| EACH SEASON | A walk to pick berries or mushrooms, leaving no trace.<br>Jokaisenoikeudet |
| EACH MONTH | One shared job with friends or neighbours, and coffee after.<br>Talkoot |
| ANY EVENING | A night in with no plans is allowed.<br>From the Finnish joke word kalsarikännit, minus the drink |

## TO CARRY WITH YOU

**KOHTUUS**
Find the right spot, then stop.

**HILJAISUUS**
A pause doesn't need filling.

**JOKAISENOIKEUDET**
Walk lightly; leave it as you found it.

**SAUNA**
The habit matters more than the heat.

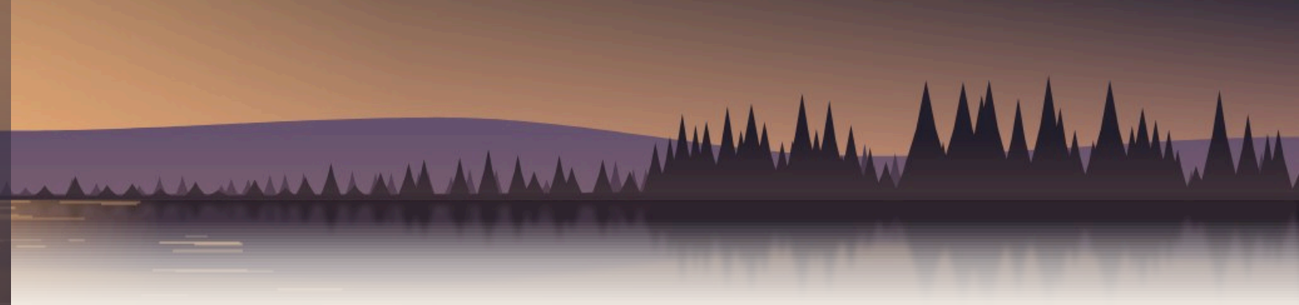
**SUJUA**
Smooth, not fast.

**LUONTO**
The nearest green counts.

**TALKOOT**
Many hands, then coffee.

**SISU**
For the hard moment, not every moment.





## ABOUT THIS BOOK

The Finnish words and sayings are real and in everyday use. The lines in large type and the things to try are Sujuu's own, written with each word in mind.

## WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Finland's happiness ranking is best explained by trust and well-run institutions, not by any one habit. The Helsinki nature studies measured how people felt after short visits. The sauna studies followed Finnish men over twenty years and found healthier hearts among frequent bathers, without proving the sauna was the cause. Sisu research found a helpful side and a harmful one.

None of this is medical advice.

Sources include: World Happiness Report 2020 (ch. 7) and 2026 · Tyrväinen et al. 2014; Ojala et al. 2019 · Laukkanen et al. 2015 · UNESCO, Sauna culture in Finland, 2020 · Finnish Sauna Society · Lahti 2019; Henttonen et al. 2022 · Metsähallitus, everyone's rights · Nyfors 2026 · Olbertz-Siitonen & Siitonen 2015 · Finnish Literature Society proverb archive.

Sujuu

# Kaikki paikallaan.

KYE-kee PYE-kahl-lahn

Everything in place.



**Sujuu** · A calmer daily workspace for client work

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We borrow Finnish words and habits, and we're still learning them. If we've got a translation, a term or a practice wrong, please tell us at contact@sujuu.com. We don't want to take a culture; we want to learn from it and live by it.

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