

The Rag Merchant

There once was a rag merchant in a small remote village. He had a cart filled with rags pulled by an old, broken down donkey.

Every day he and his old, sick donkey would walk through the village selling his rags to the villagers. "Rags for sale. Nice rags for sale" he would cry out as he and the donkey wandered through the streets.

This is how he fed his family and this was their only source of income.

One day as the rag merchant was wandering through the village calling out "Rags for sale. Nice rags for sale" his old donkey fell over dead.

The poor rag merchant was beside himself with grief. In despair all he could do was stand there and cry about his woes. "How will I feed my family now" he wondered. He was stricken with fear and grief and didn't know what to do.

As he looked around he noticed at the end of the lane was corral with another old, almost broken down donkey. His eyes lit up and he cried out to his angels.

"Angels! Please, please, please---give me that old, almost broken down donkey to pull my cart. I must feed my family and I know no other way. Please grant my wish!"

Meanwhile, up in heaven his angels were looking down on the rag merchant and said one angel said to the other..."Well, he DID ask for that old, almost broken down donkey, so we have to give it to him because he requested it.

But I'm not sure what to do with these two thoroughbreds we were about to send him."

A Traveler's Tale of unknown origin

A man who had been traveling a long way approaches the gate to a small village. Sitting outside the gate is an old, wrinkled woman.

The man asks the woman "What kind of people will I find here in this village?"

The woman answers "What kind of people did you find in the last village you were in?" The man said, "They were terrible people. Greedy, obnoxious, hateful, rude, thieves all of them. It was awful."

"You will find the same sort of people here then" she answered. And the man hung his head, turned around and walked away.

Later that day another man who had also been traveling a long way approaches the same gate to the same village and sees the same old woman sitting outside the gate. He asks, "What kind of people will I find in this village?"

The woman in turns asks, "What kind of people did you find in the last village you lived?" He said "They were wonderful people! Kind, generous, thoughtful, helpful, loving people. I hated having to leave."

The woman looked at the man and answered "Then you will find the same sort of people here." And the man happily walked through the gate into the village.

Two Wolves

An old Cherokee grandfather is teaching his grandson about life. "A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy. "It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil - he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is good - he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. This same fight is going on inside you - and inside every other person, too."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

The Taoist Farmer

There was once a wise old farmer who owned a prize horse. One day his horse ran away. Upon hearing the news, his neighbors came over to offer their condolences. "Such bad luck," they said sympathetically. "Maybe," was all the farmer replied.

A few days later the horse returned, bringing with it three other wild horses. "How wonderful," the neighbors exclaimed. "Maybe," replied the old man again.

The following day, the farmer's son tried to ride one of the untamed horses, was thrown off, and broke his leg. Once again, the neighbors offered their sympathy, saying "How awful." "Maybe," answered the farmer one more time.

The day after that, military officials came to the village to draft young men into the army. Seeing that the son of the farmer had a broken leg, they passed him by. The neighbors once again congratulated the farmer on how well things had turned out. "What good fortune," they said.

The farmer replied yet again, "Maybe."

A Father, a Son and a Mountain

A son and his father were walking in the mountains. Suddenly, his son falls, hurts himself and screams: "AAAhhhhhhhhhhhh!!! Why did that stump trip me?" To his surprise, he hears the voice repeating, somewhere in the mountain:

"AAAhhhhhhhhhhhh!!! Why did that stump trip me?"

Curious, he yells "Who are you and why did you put that in my way" He receives the answer "Who are you and why did you put that in my way".

Angered at the response, he screams "Coward!"
He receives the answer "Coward!"

He looks to his father and asks "What's going on?"

The father smiles and says "My son, pay attention." And then he screams to the mountain "I admire you!" The voice answers "I admire you!"

Again the man screams "You are a champion with unlimited power!" The voice answers "You are a champion with unlimited power!"

The boy is surprised, but does not understand. Then the father explains "People call this an echo, but really this is life. It gives you back everything you say or do.

Our life is simply a reflection of our thinking. The mental conversation that goes on in our heads attracts and determines our life's circumstances and experiences.

If you are not happy with your life, you must change our mental conversations and your life's experiences will change to reflect our new mental dialogue.

Raphael Brown on Facebook

Your Room in the Palace

By Alan Cohen

A princess was kidnapped at a young age and taken to live as a pauper among fishmongers. Over time she was trained by the fishmongers and she adopted their lifestyle. Years later her parents discovered her whereabouts and they brought her back to her room in the royal castle. There she found a large soft bed, clean linens, flowers, exotic fruit, incense, elegant clothing, and chamber music outside her door. That night the princess lay awake, tossing and turning. "Let me out of here," she beseeched her attendants. "I can't stand the smell, and this place feels weird."

The princess had gotten so used to the smell of fish and a poverty lifestyle that a more refined atmosphere seemed foreign and repulsive to her. Likewise, you and I have forgotten our royal heritage and become too accustomed to a coarse and smelly world. We have accepted lack, loss, and limitation as the norm, when none of these conditions befit the life we were born to live.

Also like the princess, when something wonderful comes along, like wealth, success, or a great relationship, we may feel out of place and subconsciously resist the positive conditions, or even sabotage accepting them.

A friend of mine had a long series of unhappy relationships. When she met a great fellow and their relationship was working well, she told me, "This really feels weird." But there is nothing weird about a great relationship or success. Bad relationships, lack, and failure should feel weird to us because they do not match our nature or our purpose. Yet we put up with them and keep recreating them simply because they are familiar.

Today take some time to consider if you are settling for fish market conditions and denying your rightful room in the palace. If so, take a breath and try to remember who you really are and what you really deserve.

A Tale About Choices

There's a Hole in My Sidewalk by Portia Nelson

Chapter One

I walk down the street
There's a deep hole in the sidewalk
I fall in
I'm lost...I'm helpless
It isn't my fault
It takes me forever to find a way out.

Chapter 2

I walk down the same street
There's a deep hole in the sidewalk
I pretend I don't see it
I fall in again
I can't believe I'm in the same place
But it isn't my fault
It still takes a long time to get out

Chapter 3

I walk down the same street
There's a deep hole in the sidewalk
I see it there
I still fall in...it's a habit
My eyes are open
I know where I am
It is my fault
I get out immediately

Chapter 4

I walk down the same street
There's a deep hole in the sidewalk
I walk around it

Chapter 5

I choose to walk down another street