

Mastery in Action – Advanced Techniques of The One Command

The Magic of Metaphors Week 5

A Traveler's Tale

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

Cherokee tale

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."

We Are Always Our Self

From Be As You Are: Teachings from Ramana Maharshi by David Godman

A lady had a precious necklace around her neck. Once in her excitement, she forgot it and thought that the necklace was lost. She became anxious and looked for it in her home but could not find it. She asked friends and neighbors if they knew anything about the necklace. They did not. At last a kind friend of hers told her to feel the necklace around her neck. She found that it had all along been there and she was ecstatic. When others asked her later if she found the necklace which was lost, she said, 'Yes, I have found it.' She felt that she had recovered a lost jewel.

Now, did she lose it at all? It was all along around her neck. But judge her feelings. She was as happy as if she had recovered a lost jewel. Similarly with us, we imagine that we will realize that Self some time, whereas we are never anything but the Self.

The Rag Merchant

Author unknown

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."

Two Seeds

From Be As You Are: Teachings from Ramana Maharshi by David Godman

The first seed said, "I want to grow! I want to send my roots deep into the soil beneath me, and thrust my sprouts through the earth's crust above me. I want to unfurl my tender buds like banners to announce the arrival of spring. I want to feel the warmth of the sun on my face and the blessing of the morning dew on my petals!"

And so she grew.

The second seed said, "If I send my roots into the ground below, I don't know what I will encounter in the dark. If I push my way through the hard soil above me I may damage my delicate sprouts. What if I let my buds open and a snail tries to eat them? And if I were to open my blossoms, a small child may pull me from the ground. No, it is much better for me to wait until it is safe!"

And so she waited.

A yard hen scratching around in the early spring ground for food found the waiting seed, and promptly ate it!

The Taoist Farmer

Taoist Parable

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

Raphael Brown

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.

Old Folktale

Author unknown

A wise woman was traveling in the mountains, when she came upon a beautiful, clear stream. Thirsty, she cupped her hand, reached in, and brought the water to her mouth. After she had drunk, she noticed a precious stone in the palm of her hand. She held it high and it glittered in the sun. Delighted, she tucked the treasure into her bag. The next day the wise woman met a hungry fellow traveler, and without hesitating she opened her bag to share what food she had. Immediately, the traveler caught sight of the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without the slightest hesitation.

The traveler left, rejoicing in his good fortune. This stone was surely worth enough money to provide a lifetime of security. But only a few days later, he came back his brow furrowed, and returned the stone to the wise woman.

"I've been thinking," he said. "I know how valuable this stone must surely be, but I've brought it back to trade for something even more precious. Please give me what you have within you that enabled you to freely give me the stone."

Your Room in the Palace

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 Disciple and His Teacher

Remez Sasson

A disciple and his teacher were walking through the forest. He asked his teacher, "Why do only a few possess a calm mind?"

The teacher spoke, "An elephant was once picking leaves from a tree. A small fly came buzzing near his ear. The elephant waved it away with his long ears. The fly came again, and the elephant waved it away once more.

This was repeated several times. The elephant asked the fly: 'Why are you so restless and noisy? Why can't you stay for a while in one place?' The fly answered: 'I am attracted to whatever I see, hear or smell.

My five senses, and everything that happens around me, pull me constantly in all directions and I cannot resist them. What is your secret? How can you stay so calm and still?'

The elephant stopped eating and said: 'My five senses do not rule my attention. I am in control of my attention, and I can direct it wherever I want. This helps me to get immersed in whatever I do, and therefore, my mind is focused and calm. Now that I am eating, I am completely immersed in eating.'

Upon hearing these words, the disciple's eyes opened wide. He looked at his teacher and said, "I understand! My mind will be in constant unrest if my five senses and whatever is happening in the world around me are distracting me. On the other hand, if I am in command of my five senses, I can disregard sense impressions, and my mind will become calm." "Yes, that's right," answered the teacher. "The mind is restless and goes wherever the attention is. Control your attention, and you control your mind."

The Zombie

Robert Fritz

One morning a man awoke convinced he had died during the night. Since he was awake, it was clear he had become a zombie. He told his wife about this state of affairs.

"You're not a zombie," she said. "I am a zombie," he answered.

"What makes you think so?" she asked. "Don't you think zombies know when they are zombies?" he answered.

Realizing she wasn't persuading him, she called his mother to tell her what was going on. "Let me speak to him," she said.

When the man took the phone, she said, "I'm your mother. Wouldn't I know if I gave birth to a zombie?"

"You didn't. I just became a zombie last night."

"I didn't raise my son to be a zombie, or to think he's a zombie," his mother said.

"Doesn't matter. I'm still a zombie."

Later, his wife tried getting help from their minister.

"You're not a zombie," the minister said. "Probably just going through a mid-life crisis." "Zombies don't have mid-life crises," the man said.

The minister recommended a psychiatrist.

The psychiatrist said, "So you think you're a zombie?" "Think? You're kidding," the man said. "Know. I know I am a zombie."

"Tell me," the psychiatrist asked. "Do zombies bleed?"

"Of course not. We're the living dead. We don't bleed!"

"Watch this," the psychiatrist said. He took a pin and pricked the man's finger. A small drop of blood welled up. "There," the psychiatrist said, "what do you think of that?"

The man stared at his finger and said nothing for a few minutes. "Well, what do you know," the man said after a while. "I'll be damned. Zombies do bleed!"

There's a Hole in My Sidewalk
Autobiography in Five Short Chapters
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.