

The Parable of the Cracked Pot



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Once upon a time there was a water-bearer in India who had two large pots, each hung on each end of a pole which he carried across his shoulder or neck. One of the pots had a crack in it and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house. The cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pot full of water in his master's house.

Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made.

But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water-bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself and I want to apologize to you."

"Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"

I hate being able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work and you don't get full value from your efforts, the pot said.

The water-bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path."

Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path and this cheered it up some.

But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of your path, but not on the other pot's side?"

That's because I have always known about your flaw and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."

Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and warding. You've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them.

Lesson: It's your Imperfections that Define Who You are