

The Cracked Pot



There was this water-bearer who had two large pots, each hung on one end of a pole which he carried across his shoulder. One of the pots had a crack in it, 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.

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 accomplishment, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made for.

After two years of what it perceived as bitter failure, it spoke to the water-bearer one day. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologise to you." "Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because of this crack on my side. Because of my flaws, you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

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

Indeed, as they went up the hill, the cracked pot took notice of the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologised to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the 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 walked back from the stream, you watered them. And I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without your being just the way you are, he would not have such beautiful flowers to grace his house."

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

If it weren't for the rocks in its bed, the stream would have no song.
– Carl Perkins