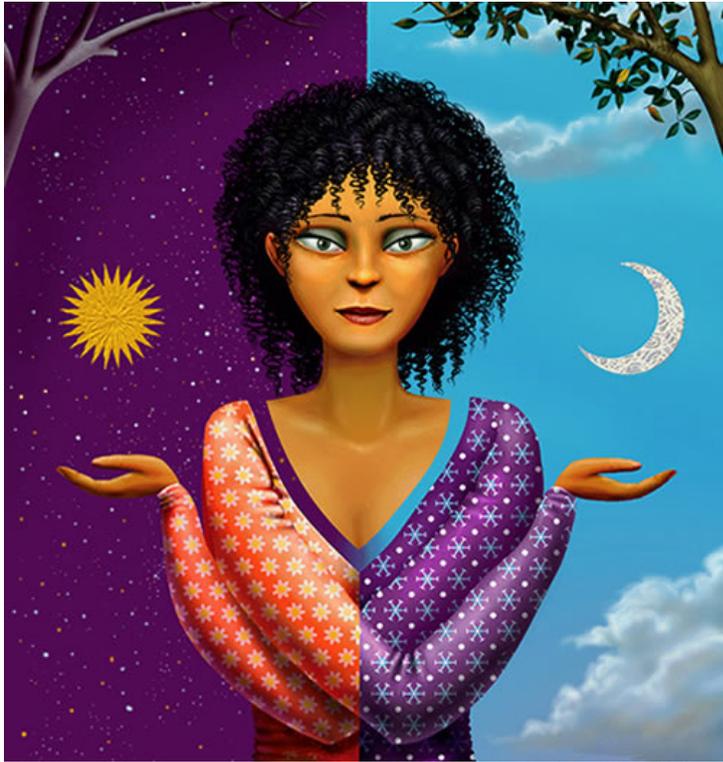


The Principle of Acceptance

“If day and night, summer and winter are well with you, you have surpassed the contradictions”



This **Principle** deals, in a figurative way, with situations where there are opposites. However, such apparent opposites can be reconciled if one changes one's point of view about the situation or the problem.

The excessive heat of summer makes us think of the cold of winter as a compensation, and then the excessive cold of winter makes us think of the warmth of summer. Every difficult situation make us remember or imagine an opposite one. But once we are in this opposite situation, discontent again arises. Then this new compensation leads us back to the opposite point. Whenever suffering appears, a compensation begins. But this compensation does not itself

overcome the suffering.

A person who is oriented by a well-defined meaning in life will have a very different point of view and behavior when facing difficult situations from someone who does not. If a person believes that their life has meaning and that everything that happens to them serves for their learning and self-improvement in this direction, then they will not simply try to avoid the problems that arise by compensating in the usual way. Rather, this person will take on these problems, trying to discover some usefulness in them. The cold of winter can be made use of, as can the heat of summer, and when each arises this person will say, “How do these different seasons oppose each other, if both are useful to me?”

Here is an old story that illustrates this point of view:

There was a man called Job, upright and fearful of Jehovah; his offspring and his riches were great, and in everything he was subject to the will of God.

One day, the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, and among them also came Satan, the Devil. And Jehovah said to Satan, “Where do you come from?” And Satan answered, “From going around the earth, and from walking upon it.” And Jehovah said to Satan, “Have you not considered that there is no other on earth as just as Job?” To this Satan replied, “To the work of his hands you have given blessing and his estate and his sons have increased. Extend now your hand, and touch all that he has and you will see if he does

not blaspheme you to your face.” Jehovah then allowed the Devil to put his hand upon all the possessions of Job, but not upon his person.

Then the sons of Job were killed by highwaymen; a fire consumed his sheep; the Chaldeans stole his camels; a great wind destroyed his house.

Knowing all this, Job mourned and fell to the ground, saying, “Naked I came out of my mother’s belly, and naked I will return there. Jehovah has given to me and Jehovah has taken from me. Blessed be his will.”

Then Satan asked permission from God to touch Job, and Jehovah gave it to him on condition that he would not take his life.

An itch hurt Job from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. And he took a roof-tile to scratch himself with, seating himself in the midst of ashes.

Thus, for years, affliction and illness fell upon the head of Job, and his wife cried out to him from afar, “Even now do you still retain your simplicity? Bless God and die!” To which Job responded, “We receive the goodness of God. Why should we not also receive his harm? Holy be his name and his will.”

His friends and acquaintances also withdrew from him, and many were those who had been comforted by him in their time who now told him, “Good and evil are distributed through life. But who, apart from a sinner or a hypocrite, could receive so much evil? Because there are evil men who enjoy benefits; likewise there are good men. The evil and the good also receive the wrath of God upon their heads. But who is there who suffers from heaven so much evil in return for his praise? Or is Jehovah unjust?”

To this Job responded, “Who am I to judge the designs of Jehovah? He has given me, he has taken from me. Blessed be his will.”

So Jehovah attended to Job, and doubled all the things he owned.

Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and all those whom he had known before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house and gave him condolences, consoling him for all the evil Jehovah had brought upon him. And each one of them gave him a gold coin and a golden earring.

And Jehovah blessed the end of Job more than his beginning; he had fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels and a thousand pairs of oxen and a thousand donkeys.

And he had seven sons and daughters. And women as beautiful as the daughters of Job could not be found in all the earth.

And after this, Job lived a hundred and forty years and saw his sons and the daughters of his sons, till the fourth generation.

And Job then said, “Jehovah has taken from me; Jehovah has given to me. Blessed be his will.”