

Outside the Cage

I was reading an email from somebody who had just seen me on TV. He said, "I just saw you for the first time, and I have never heard anything like that in my life before. And the way I feel, I have never felt like that before."

That's wonderful, because if I can free up that possibility for you, you can taste what real freedom is. Being able to turn left or right at will is not real freedom. Real freedom comes from a true understanding of what freedom is all about.

For the bird that was raised in a cage, its definition of freedom is a bigger cage. And the one that was raised in a bigger cage? Its definition is an even a bigger cage.

When somebody comes along and says, "Think outside the cage, not a better cage," it is not about a brand new cage, gold-plated cage, or leather-lined cage. The world says, "Flash your freedom! Show your cage! Let everybody know your status—that you live in a cage that has LEDs, plasma TVs, surround-sound stereo system, computers, all of these things."



This is what happens in our life, too. Every definition begins with a cage—a better cage. But a better cage is not freedom. Freedom is something else. Freedom is when you feel free, not because somebody says, "You are free!" And then we say, "That's true because I saw it on TV, I read it in a book." Why can't we decipher for ourselves what we feel? Do I feel free? Maybe I've got the fanciest cage and the latest plasma TV, but do I feel free?

When you go to that beautiful place within, that's where freedom is. Don't take my word for it—feel that in your life. When you actually experience it, only then will you be free. When you understand something, you go beyond the ocean of questions. Understand by knowing, not by guessing or taking somebody else's word for it. In earnest, feel. Then you can have the conviction to exist in a very different way, despite the good and bad that comes.

Many people try to get rid of the bad times so that they will never come. It won't happen, by the way, because it's the season. Seasons will come: there will be summer, and then there will be fall. Then there will be winter and spring, and then summer again.

It's not a question of good or bad. This is how it is. Nothing is constant in an inconstant world. All that you see as bad will eventually turn good. People are afraid. Don't be afraid. You have to understand, not be afraid, because fear is crippling. Understanding isn't. Understanding gives you the power, the courage, to look beyond that. You have an option. You can be afraid or you can understand.

That which is okay is always within you. The fear is within you, and the courage is within you. The darkness is within you, and the light is within you. The source of all the joy and wisdom is within you. To be able to go inside and feel that feeling with no limits, just beauty. A silence that is not silent, a feeling where everything comes to an equilibrium. No lists of undone items, no fears, no questions, no discomfort. And yet, a peace. That's what peace is. To be in peace. That is the possibility. It's up to you. Practice that, and you will get good at it.



Maharaji