

The Sparkling Bowl



I'd like to relate a little story that actually happened. When I was in the Pacific on tour, somebody from Sri Lanka, one of the places severely hit by the tsunami, sent me a bowl. With it was a note explaining that this bowl had been in their family, and a few days before the tsunami, they had decided to clean it. They got into it, polished it, made it really shiny.

Then the tsunami hit, and everything they had was destroyed, washed out to sea. The next day, they went to see if they could find anything, and amongst all the garbage that had floated up was this bowl, shining in the sun. The ocean somehow had given back that bowl, and there it was in the sand, in the middle of all the garbage—shining.

Why is that story important? This is your life, your existence. Shine it impeccably, because you never know when that tsunami is going

to hit. The question is not *if* it is going to hit—it *is* going to hit. And when it hits, so much that we are proud of, so much that we have stamped as ours, so much that we think belongs to us, gets lost. It is like a house made out of cards built upon each other. It is very delicate. One little wind will bring it down.

I see the contrast that, in the middle of devastation and garbage, a bowl is shining—not hiding itself—shining. And it's shining bright because somebody took the time to clean and polish it. Each one of us is a bowl. Is this bowl shining or not? Is it tarnished by all the good and bad, by all the ideas, by the list of all the things not there in our life? If it is, take the cloth and shine this bowl so that it can reflect the clarity, because that's what it is: clarity.

What is it that we have set out to accomplish? We are more interested in our agendas than the very thing that will facilitate all the lists we have made—life. Without life, there is no agenda. The things that we think are the glue in our life are not; they only appear to be. Regardless of what you do—whether you're trying to be good at business, be a good mom or dad, or be a good friend—what is at the root that is driving you, that wants you to evolve?



What is the most important thing for *you* as a human being? The most important thing is the coming and going of this breath. That is it. Without that breath, for *you* there is nothing. "That's it?" That *is* it, because in that breath lies my truth, my wisdom. That is my clock, that is my rhythm, that is my song, that is my drum beating that I need to dance to.

This is all that I have been given. Everything else is like holding onto helium balloons. As soon as you let go, off they go. Away and away and away. Let me admire what I have been given. Let me clean my bowl so that it will shine and even the tsunami could not take it away.

Let your life be like that. Let it sparkle. That's the possibility. Peace is the possibility. Joy is the possibility. Fulfillment is the possibility. Accept that in your life. Understand that. This is what we are here for.

Maharaji