

The Two Pots

An elderly Chinese woman had two large pots, which she hung on the ends of a pole that she carried across her neck. Every day she would make the long walk to a stream to fetch water for her home. One of the pots was in perfect condition, and always delivered a full portion of water. The other pot had a crack in it, from which water leaked. As a result, by the time the woman returned home, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For two years the woman made her daily trek to the stream, each time returning with only one and a half pots of water.

The perfect pot was proud of its condition and of what it could do. The cracked pot, however, was ashamed of its imperfection and of the fact that it could do only half of what it had been made for. One day, the cracked pot, overwhelmed by what it perceived to be its bitter failure, spoke to the woman at the stream.

"I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The old woman smiled at the pot and replied, "Have you noticed that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path. Every day, on our walk home, you water them. For two years now I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace our home."

Each of us has our own crack, our own unique flaw. It's these cracks and flaws that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding, and it's often these cracks and flaws that enable us to do good. Accept people for what they are; look for the good in them and the good that they do.

And don't miss the flowers on your side of the path.