



Sadhguru

Profound Mystic, Yogi, Visionary Humanitarian and Global Leader

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Accepting the Death of a Loved One

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There was a woman named Kisagotami. She came from a poor family, but married a wealthy man. This man saw the love and kindness in her heart, so despite his family's rejection of her, he married her. It was only when she bore a son that his family began to treat her with any kindness.

But one day, this son died when he was just a small child. Kisagotami was overwhelmed with grief and despair, so she carried the boy's body and went from house to house, asking anyone she could find for medicine to bring her boy back to life. People laughed at her. "He is dead!" they would say. Others took pity,

but no one could help. But she kept on asking and asking.

Finally, a wise man saw the depth of despair in her eyes and said, "Go and see the Buddha. He has the medicine you need." So Kisagotami took her boy and ran to the Buddha and begged, "Please give me a medicine to bring my boy back to life!" The Buddha looked at her and said, "Go into town and find a few mustard seeds, I will bring your boy back to life." Kisagotami was overjoyed. "Mustard seeds! They will be easy to find. Every home has mustard seeds!" Then the Buddha said, "But the seeds must come from a home which has not known death."

So Kisagotami went to the first house she could find and, still carrying the body of her child, asked for the seeds to cure her son. The woman at the door gladly offered the seeds, but when the time came for Kisagotami to ask if there had been any deaths in the house, the woman replied sadly, "Oh yes. There have been many, many deaths." So Kisagotami went to the second house. But this home was also not free from the death of loved ones. So she went to the third house and the fourth house, and many others, and listened to the stories of sons and daughters who had died, husbands, wives, parents and grandparents who had died. Not one house did not know death.

After hearing all of these stories and sharing her own grief, she came to realize the commonality of death; that it is part of the life process. Although she was still filled with great sorrow for her son, she could now

accept his death and laid the boy's body to rest. Kisagotami would come become a disciple of the Buddha, and she went on to share her experience of losing a child in the form of powerful poetry.

Suppose it so happened that a child dies before the parent. It is not something we want to see, but if such a thing did happen, how does one go beyond this grief?

When we talk about going beyond something, it does not mean forgetting about it. One cannot forget the loss of a child. One cannot say, "It is okay; it is natural." When somebody very precious to you is gone, you cannot forget. But the fact of life is, that which slips beyond the realm of what you call "life" right now, once it crosses the boundary, is not yours anymore. What has happened is a reality. It is not with any insensitivity that I say this, but it is time to accept it the way it is.



The process of acceptance is just this: the logical mind flows in a linear fashion, always in a straight line, but life happens like a river. How does a river happen? A river always happens between two banks. Suppose someone stands on the right bank and says, "I don't like the left bank, it should disappear." If the left bank disappears, the river will disappear, and the right bank will also disappear. If the right bank has to be there, the left bank also has to be there. One wants light without darkness, but could there be light without

darkness? Could there be man without woman? Could there be life without death? Would we even have a perspective as to what life is if there was no death? Life is what it is only because death is.

So it is time to look at what we can do with the life that is here. There are so many sons, daughters and grandchildren who have nobody to care for them; there is enough opportunity to express your love and care for them in a million different ways. So if you have a need to find expression for your love and care, please do so. If you don't, your grief will remain bottled all your life.

For one son that you have lost, take up 10 as your own and see that you find full expression to your love and parenthood. You will find that your son becomes a foundation to make your life much more beautiful; you could make your life like that. You have to take that step. Otherwise, you will simply go on with something that you cannot change.

The essence of human life is to strive to change all that can be changed and gracefully accept that which cannot be changed. Coming to terms with the mortal nature of who we are is the most basic requirement for a sensible life.

Sadhguru posts articles covering such topics as health and well-being, cultivating meaningful relationships, living joyfully, enhancing human consciousness and how to make this planet a better place to live.

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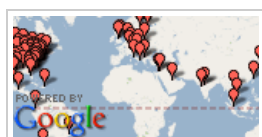
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