

This is 'Wisdom Stories From Sufi Sources' ver 1v00. It came from
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The Frogs

A group of frogs were traveling through the woods, and two of them fell into a deep pit. All the other frogs gathered... and they saw how deep the pit was. Most of the frogs thought... no hope. The two trapped frogs tried to jump out, but failed again and again.

A few of the meaner, more sadistic frogs told them that they were as good as dead. One of the frogs ceased jumping.

The other frog continued to jump. A small crowd of frogs gathered at the pit edge and watched. The trapped frog jumped even harder. The small crowd of frogs jeered and sneered, but the frog kept jumping and jumping. By jumping again when he hit the side, the trapped frog escaped the pit. The mean-spirited frogs were embarrassed, but the escaped frog was all smiles and thanked the noisy, nasty frogs individually for their cheers and encouraging words.

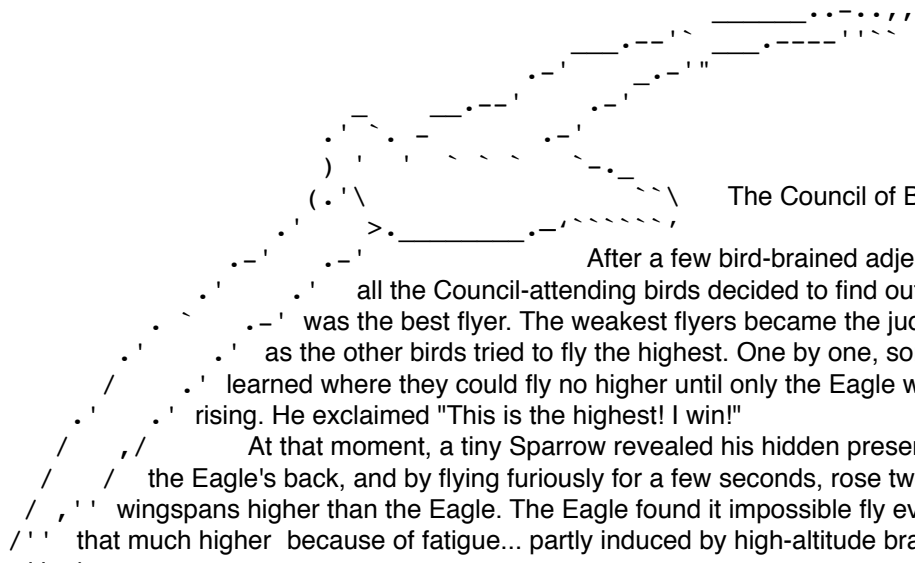
A good-hearted but confused frog had heard what the small crowd was saying--and afterwards, that frog quietly asked the newly-freed frog how he could possibly appreciate the sneers and jeers.

The reply?

"You'll have to shout--I'm nearly deaf."

The power of words is hard to control, but it is easily used by anyone--for good or ill.

The power of words comes from those that hear them.



The Council of Birds

After a few bird-brained adjectives flew, all the Council-attending birds decided to find out who was the best flyer. The weakest flyers became the judges as the other birds tried to fly the highest. One by one, some birds learned where they could fly no higher until only the Eagle was still rising. He exclaimed "This is the highest! I win!"

At that moment, a tiny Sparrow revealed his hidden presence upon the Eagle's back, and by flying furiously for a few seconds, rose two wingspans higher than the Eagle. The Eagle found it impossible fly even that much higher because of fatigue... partly induced by high-altitude bragging at high altitude.

The Council of Birds met afterwards to decide the winners. The Sparrow got a prize for being clever, but the Eagle did the actual flying so he won the height competition--and also won one for endurance, since the Eagle outflew all the other competitors with the Sparrow on his back!

A man was chased off a cliff by a tiger. He fell, and just managed to hold onto a branch. Six feet above him stood the tiger, snarling. A hundred feet below, a violent sea lashed fierce-looking rocks. To his horror, he noticed that the branch he was clutching was being gnawed at its roots by two rats. Seeing he was doomed, he cried out, "O Lord, save me!"

He heard a Voice reply, "I will save you. But first let go of the branch!"

a story from the sufi Jalal-Uddin Rumi

Four traveling companions had one silver coin.

The first was a Persian. He said: 'I will buy some angur.'

The second was an Arab. He said: 'No, because I want inab.'

The third was Turk. He said: 'I do not want inab, I want uzum.'

The fourth was a Greek. He said: 'I want stafil.'

Because they did not know what lay behind the names of things, these four started to argue.

They had information but no knowledge.

One man of wisdom reconciled them all, saying: 'The requests of all of you can be granted with one and the same coin. Your one coin will become as four; and four at odds will again become as one united.' The man of wisdom knew that each man, in his own language, wanted the same thing... grapes.

There were four towns. In each town, people were hungry.

Each town had a bag of seeds.

In the first town, no one knew what seeds could do. No one knew how to plant them. Everyone starved.

In the second town, one person knew what seeds were and how to plant them, but did nothing about it for one reason or another. Everyone starved.

In the third town, one person knew what seeds were and how to plant them. He proposed to plant them in exchange for being declared the king or ruler. All ate, but were ruled... knowledge became power.

In the fourth town, one person knew what seeds were and how to plant them. He not only planted the seeds, but taught everyone the art of gardening. All ate, and all were free and empowered.

A man once heard a nail ask him a question.

The nail said: "During my years inside this wooden panel, I've wondered many times what my fate will be."

The man said "Perhaps I'll tear you out with pliers, or perhaps a house-fire will burn the wood you're in, or perhaps that panel will rot around you. So many choices!"

"I should have known better than to ask such foolish questions!" said the nail. "Nobody can foresee the future. Those predictions are all so unlikely."

So the nail now waits, hoping someone more informative and less threatening will come to speak with it.

But... does the nail really want to know its fate?

A man being followed by a hungry tiger, turned in desperation to face it, and cried: "Why don't you leave me alone?"

The tiger answered: "Why don't you stop being so appetizing?"

It is related that Mahmud of Ghazna was once walking in his garden with a friend when he stumbled over a blind dervish sleeping beside a bush.

The stumbled-upon blind dervish said "Have you no eyes, that you must trample upon the sons of men?"

Mahmud's companion shouted at the dervish. "Your blindness is equaled only by your stupidity! Since you cannot see, you should be doubly careful of whom you are accusing of heedlessness."

"If by that you mean that I should not criticize a sultan, it is you who should realize your shallowness."

Mahmud was impressed that the blind man knew that he was in the presence of the king, and he said mildly, "Why, O dervish, should a king have to listen to abuse from you?"

"The shielding of people from criticism appropriate to them will cause their downfall. It is burnished metal which shines most brightly, the knife worked with a whetstone which cuts best, and an exercised arm can lift the most weight."

One guru tells another, "Always say things that cannot be checked."

"Why?" asks the second guru.

"Because if you say 'Mars is peopled by millions of indiscernible beings, and I have met them,' people will not dispute it. But if you say, 'It is a nice day today,' some fool will always reply, 'But not as nice as it was yesterday'. And if you put up a sign saying WET PAINT, who will take you at your word? Many fingerprints mean many doubters!"

There once was a village with two regions bordering each other. One day, a traveler was walking through one of the regions. The man had tears in his eyes because he was eating a raw onion.

Some children mistook these tears for tears of sadness, and somehow, a rumor was started that the man was crying because someone from the other region had died from a contagious illness. This rumor also spread to the second region, only over there, it was about an illness that was spreading in the first region. Soon, people from each region were terrified of the other region, and no one dared to communicate with or observe the other side. Eventually, both regions decided that conditions were too dangerous, and they both moved out and started another village somewhere else.

Centuries later, each village had their own ancient story about how their town originated from somewhere else, where the people had to flee from some sort of perilous condition.

A meditating dervish heard another dervish from across the lake yell a chant "Ah Yah Hoo."

Since the customary dervish chant is actually "Yah Hoo," the meditating dervish was concerned that the other dervish was wasting his efforts, so he decided to boat across the lake and inform the other dervish of this.

When he got to the other side, he said, "Excuse me, but you are saying that chant wrong. It is actually 'Yah Hoo,' not 'Ah Yah Hoo.'"

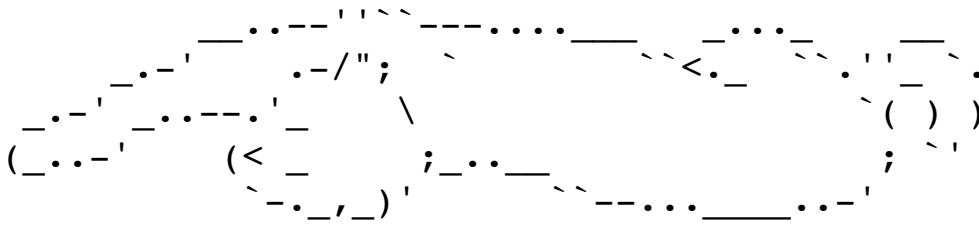
"Thank you for telling me," the other replied.

Then the meditating dervish began sailing back across the river... he thought he'd helped that man. who was wasting his efforts with the wrong chant. but now that I have set him straight, he can develop all the various powers that derive from that chant. And perhaps one day he can even reach the advanced stage of being able to walk on water."

But just minutes later, the dervish heard the other dervish once again chanting "Ah Yah Hoo."

The first dervish thought to himself, "Some people can be perverse and persistent in error."

A splashing noise alerted him to the other dervish, who was walking on water directly to the sailboat. Soon, he said "Excuse me, but I forgot how to say that chant properly. Please tell me again!?"



A man, beset by seemingly insurmountable problems, made an oath that if his problems were solved, he would sell his possessions and give the proceeds to charity.

But when his problems were solved, he wanted to find a way out of his oath. He decided to offer his possessions for sale for one gold piece, but only under the condition that the purchaser would also have to buy his cat for one thousand gold pieces. He soon sold the items, kept the thousand gold pieces, and gave the one gold piece to charity.

When learning, most people use their new knowledge as the man did.

An Emperor was very sick, and no doctor was able to cure him. He grew distraught over his sickness, and sent his people to far off places looking for an effective treatment.

One of them brought back a Sufi named El-Arif, the disciple of El Ghazali. El-Arif examined the Emperor, asked about all the treatments he tried, and then announced to the emperor and to his entire court, "The Emperor can be cured with faith."

One of the courtiers responded, "He has faith, but that has not cured him."

El-Arif replied "If that's the case, there is only one other treatment that might work. But I am reluctant to even suggest it, because it is really a terrible thing. In fact, I will not say it."

He finally relented. He told them, "The Emperor can be cured by taking a bath in the blood of 300 executed children."

Everyone was extremely distraught to hear these words. However, after

thinking it over, the royal councilors eventually advised the Emperor to do as El-Arif said. They said "The Emperor is essential to our kingdom's safety and prosperity. We have to try this cure."

An announcement was made throughout the city of what was to happen. The people were horrified to hear this. When the people heard this, they came to beg for their children's lives, and more people came to plead as the news spread. Some cursed the Emperor for demanding the children's execution while others prayed that the Emperor would be healed in time so that the children's lives would be spared.

The Emperor, meanwhile, just could not bear the slaying of innocent children, and became tormented with the thought of going along with the plan. After too much time had passed, he finally declared that he would now reject El-Arif's suggestion. The children were safe! When he declared this, his illness also disappeared.

Some people attributed his recovery as a reward for his good deed of sparing the children's lives, while other people felt that it was a divine power caused by the relieved mothers of the children.

They asked El-Arif what he thought, and he remarked, "He did not have faith, so I gave him something equal to it. It was his focus and purposefulness, combined with the feelings of the mothers who wanted his disease cured."

He also said, "An effect can take place when there is a way made to attain it within a certain time period."

A man caught a bird, and the bird offered him a deal. "Release me, and I will give you three valuable pieces of advice. I will give you the first when you let me go, the second when I fly up to that branch, and the third when I fly up to the top of the tree."

The man agreed, and let the bird go. The bird said, "Do not torment yourself with excessive regret for mistakes."

The bird then flew up to a branch and said, "Do not believe anything that goes against common sense, unless you have firsthand proof."

And then the bird flew up to the top of the tree and said, "You fool. I have two huge jewels inside of me, and if you had killed me instead of letting me go, you would have had them."

"How can I have been so stupid?" the man asked. Bird, can you at least give the third piece of advice as a consolation?"

The bird replied, "I have been hoaxing you. And now you are asking for more advice, yet you have already disregarded the first two pieces of advice I gave you. I told you not to torment yourself with excessive regret for mistakes, and I told you not to believe things that go against common sense unless there is some kind of firsthand proof. And yet, you just tormented yourself with excessive regret for letting me go, and you also believed that somehow there are two jewels inside of a tiny bird like me! So here is your third piece of advice: 'If you are not using what you know, why are you so intent on seeking what you do not know?'"

There once was a merchant who had a bird as a pet that he kept in a cage. One day, the merchant said to the bird, "I am going to India on business, the land that you are from. Do you want me to bring anything back for you?"

"Can you at least go to the jungle in India and tell the free birds over there about me? Tell them I am in a cage, so I cannot return."

The merchant agreed and complied with the bird's request when he got to India. The only response was one of the wild birds fell to the ground. The bird on the ground looked like the one the merchant had in the cage.

"This may be a relative of my bird," he reasoned. "Perhaps the sadness of hearing about the bird I keep in captivity has caused him to die."

When the merchant arrived home, the bird asked what happened. The merchant reluctantly told his tale. "When I spoke about you, a bird that looked like you collapsed immediately as if dead."

When the bird heard this, it too collapsed in its cage.

The merchant thought, "The news of his relative's death has killed my bird!"

Saddened, he opened the cage door. Quickly, the bird bounded up and out the window. It perched on a tree branch well out of reach and said "A possible way to free myself was sent by my relative through you--and it worked." The bird flew away and never returned.

A grocer had a charming parrot who talked and amused all of the grocer's customers greatly.

One day, while the grocer was away, the parrot accidentally knocked over a bottle of oil on the grocer's coat. When the grocer saw this, he became enraged and hit the parrot on the head, and the lost feathers never re-grew.

Greatly traumatized from this, the parrot did not talk anymore. Soon the grocer grew guilty and regretted what he'd done, as the parrot's charming talk once attracted many people to visit his store. The grocer tried to please the parrot and get him talking again--he prayed, he gave the bird treats, and he even sang to it—but nothing worked. The parrot stayed silent.

Then one day, a dervish with a shaved head came in to the store.

When the parrot saw the dervish, it spoke. "Did you also knock over a bottle of oil and upset the grocer?"

A learned man was in a storytelling mood, and began describing to several others about fruit from a special tree in India. He said, "Anyone who eats the fruit of that tree will have perpetual life and youth."

A king heard this story and was intent on eating fruit from the tree. He sent his servant to India and told him, "Find that tree and its fruit, no matter how long it takes, or how difficult it is to find. I will support you by sending money."

The servant followed his demand, and for years he searched high and wide throughout India for the tree—but alas, he hadn't found it. And whenever he asked anyone about it, some people would just take him for a psychopath, while others toyed with him and said, "Yeah, you can find the tree in so-and-so region, and it is quite a sight," and so on.

The man continued to search while the king sent him money for support, but eventually, the searcher decided that he had had enough, and decided to quit and go back to the king crying in frustration. On his way back, he met a shayk who noticed how sad he was, and asked, "What is the matter?"

The servant told the shayk about his unsuccessful quest to find the tree that would give perpetual life and youth, to which the shayk responded, "The way you are searching, the tree you seek is farther than far. Yet in actuality, it is as close to you as you are to yourself."

“You have searched for the appearance of such a tree, but have missed the actual essence of it. In fact, it is not necessarily a ‘tree,’ for sometimes it is the sun, sometimes it is the sea, and sometimes it is the clouds. It is the essence that is limitless and all encompassing. It is in you, too. Why search for one form or another? You will miss finding it, and instead find disappointment. Don’t pursue the name—pursue the source, and it shall be found.”

A rich man named Amir had an exquisite and beautiful horse. When the King saw it, he became mesmerized by it and was convinced it had divine qualities. He ordered his officers to get the horse from Amir.

They went to Amir’s house and told him about the King’s request, and said, “Bring the horse to the royal palace tomorrow.”

Although Amir esteemed the King highly, he did not want to give up the horse, so he tried to devise a way out. He went to his advisors, and then the next day, he brought his head advisor, a vizier, to the royal palace with the horse.

The King then said to the vizier, “Isn’t this an exquisite horse? I have never seen anything like it.”

The vizier replied, “Your highness, your fondness for this horse has made you mistake a demon for an angel. This horse might appear to you as exquisite, but its nature is like a vicious predator that is a threat to your power.”

When the King heard this, all of a sudden he changed his mind, and decided that the horse might not be as great as he thought it was.

Two friends encountered each other traveling in opposite directions on a street.

They each asked where the other was going. One said, “To see a woman,” and the other said, “To a religious gathering.”

The first friend said to the other, “Why are you going to go see that woman. Come to the religious gathering—there will be a preacher, and singing, dancing, storytelling, and more.”

The other replied, "You should come with me. I can hook you up with my woman's sister—she is really hot."

They both presented their cases, but both friends decided to go their originally planned way.

When the first friend went to the religious gathering, he was preoccupied thinking about what a good time his friend must be having with his woman, and he regretted his decision to come to the religious gathering.

And while the second friend was with his woman, he was preoccupied thinking of how his friend was having fun at the religious gathering and doing a good deed, and he regretted not going with him.

There is a saying: a person will not give up this world for the other, nor will he give up the other world for this one.

There was once a small boy who banged a drum all day and loved every moment of it. He would not be quiet, no matter what anyone else said or did. Various people who called themselves Sufis were called in.

The first so-called Sufi told the boy that he would perforate his eardrums if he continued to make so much noise. Since this reasoning was too advanced for the child (neither a scientist nor a scholar) it was ignored. The second sufi, also ignored, tried to explain that drumming was a sacred activity and should be done only on special occasions. A third sufi offered the neighbors plugs for their ears; a fourth gave the boy a book; a fifth taught the boy meditation exercises to make him placid. Like all placebos, each of these remedies worked for a short while, but none worked for very long.

Eventually a real Sufi came along. After asking a few questions, he handed the boy a hammer and chisel and said, "I wonder what is *inside* the drum?"

(The best weapons the enemy uses upon himself. — Sun Tzu)

Once... a teacher had twenty students all able to recite complicated texts, but only one of which made much progress.

The teacher asked each student to bring a chicken. Then the teacher asked the students go someplace where they could not be seen, then kill the chicken and return. Soon, nineteen students brought back dead

chickens... and one student carried a live bird. This student was asked to tell everyone why his chicken still clucked.

“Teacher, you told me to go to a place where I could not be seen, but I remember you told us that God sees all. Since I failed to find such a place, this chicken still lives.”

One student acted in accordance to his own beliefs. [Perhaps some Sufis thought that only one person in twenty is capable of such accordance.]

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”

Mohandas Gandhi

Non \$€rviam!

“The only thing that you can control, and you must therefore control, is the imagery in your own mind.” Epictetus

"Men are disturbed not by things, but by the view which they take of them." Epictetus

"Tis nothing good or bad / But thinking makes it so." Shakespeare

An intellectual is someone whose mind watches itself. Albert Camus

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.” Mohandas Gandhi

“There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.” Albert Einstein

We see things not as they are, but as we are. anon