

Flight and Fight Reactions

TOM AND SAM

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Intent of the Fable

- ✓ *To encourage people to accept things as they are: **Self – others and the happenings of life.***
- ✓ *To realize the harm we do to ourselves when we reject self-others and life*
- ✓ *When we do not to accept reality and things as they are, there are two stances left for us , namely: either we flee from reality, “**Flight Reaction**” or we fight it, “**Fight Reaction**”*

THE FABLE

Once upon a time, there were two huge lovely dogs, Tom and Sam. On a sunny day, they were roaming around in a forest. It was very hot. They were thirsty. As luck would have it, they discovered a pond of clean and crystal water. It shone like a sparkling beautiful mirror. They ran to the pond. As they approached the water, they saw two fierce ugly dogs staring at them. They were startled.

When Tom saw his image in the surface of the pond he got disgusted with it, he disliked that dog immensely; he could not stand it. In aversion and anger he ran away as fast as he could He did not want to see that dog, much less to look at it. He tried to forget it. But in vain!

That image of that dog was haunting him. Every pond, every mirror, every glass, every polished surface he bumped into, kept reminding him of that disgusting dog.. Poor Tom! Trying to keep away from that spiteful animal, the whole of his life was wasted in a futile endeavor!

But, what happened to Sam? Let us hear it. When Sam saw his image on the pond, he also disliked that dog. He could not stand it, he hated it. His instant reaction was to destroy it, to fight it!. He snarled at the intruder. But the intruder dog snarled back at him. Then mad with hatred, Sam jumped into the water to tear that dog to pieces. But, all in vain! No sooner he jumped into the pond, that dog disappeared! There wasn't any other dog besides himself. When Sam got out of the water and sat next to the pond, lo and behold! Again that hated dog appeared! In a fit of madness, Sam plunged a second time into the pond, now more determined than before to cut his enemy to pieces! But again, it was gone!

From that time on, whenever Sam, saw that hated dog reflected in any pond, in mad fury he kept plunging into the water.... Poor Sam, the whole of his life became a useless and painful struggle to destroy that elusive dog that kept for ever appearing to him!

Appendix

By Flight Reaction we mean the stand of flying away from self, from others and from the realities of life, The basic attitude of this reaction is “avoidance” However, running away from self, from others and from life breeds anger, resentments, boredom, depression, neurosis and their likes Life turns to be a continuous and useless flight from reality. In our story, this "Flight reaction" is exemplified by Tom.

By Fight Reaction we mean the stand of those who instead of running away from self from others and from life, fight back. They hate themselves, others and life itself. Unawares, may be, they try - if it would be possible - to destroy self, others and even reality. That continuous fight and struggle causes many ills, like criticisms, blaming, back-biting, revenge, anger, resentments, violence, and unhappiness, even suicide. This stand of “Fight reaction” is exemplified in our story by Sam.

The only healthy and sound way out of this destructive dilemma of “Flight or Fight” is to accept reality, namely, to accept and love ourselves as God made us, to accept others as they are, and gracefully accept life and its events as they come.

To enjoy inner peace and happiness,
we need to love and accept
ourselves
and others
and life itself
as God made it

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Several of maxims below are taken or inspired from the book of
John Powell, s.j. Happiness is an inside job*

- Do not allow others or the external events of life rob you from your inner joy.
- None but you can make yourself happy or unhappy.
- Don't place your happiness on things or on someone outside you..
- Enjoy life now; death will arrive all the same
- Ever trying to be more traps us in perpetual unhappiness.
- Happiness is an insight job.
- Half a loaf is better than none.
- Ideal perfection cannot be contained in human containers..
- If you cannot have what you like, like what you have.
- If you want the dog accept the flees
- Imperfections make us unique
- Love yourself, that's all you have.
- Perfectionism chocks all joy.
- Self accepting people are in touch with reality.
- Self-accepting people accept themselves as they are.

- Self-accepting people are assertive.
- Self-accepting people are aware of their needs and attend to them.
- Self-accepting people are happy people.
- Self-accepting people are open to being loved and complimented
- Self-accepting people are real and themselves.
- Self-accepting people are self-determined people.
- Self-accepting people go out to others easily
- Self-accepting people have a sense of humor and can laugh at themselves.
- Self-rejection and jealousy are twins
- The happy man is not the one who has more, but the one who needs less
- The image others have of us is just a reflection of the way we see ourselves
- The path to happiness is a bridge to be crossed, not a corner to be turned.
- The world treasures originals. You are one!
- There is a lot of good in every dustbin
- There is nothing absolutely perfect in life.
- What cannot be cured should be lovingly endured.
- You cannot run away from yourself.