

Meditation Momma Transcript S2 E9

The Wall to Paradise

Hi everyone, welcome back to the Meditation Momma podcast. We're in season two and this is the last episode of our series of teaching stories where we're sharing with you the stories that my students find most useful that they use again and again. And one of the important things to remember about teaching stories is there's our stories that we will hear over and over and what happens is that you're in a situation, you're in a moment, and the story will kind of pop into your head as a way to give you some insight where you can respond with some wisdom and be of benefit in the situation, as opposed to the old habit where we react.

And oftentimes when we're in a reactive place, we actually can make things more complicated. And to use a very simple word worse, we couldn't make it worse. So, so hi everyone, I'm Caren Prentice, founder of Meditation Momma, and I'm delighted you're listening and you're still with us on this series. Today's story is called The Wall to Paradise, and it goes like this.

Once upon a Yogi time, there were three seekers, and they'd been traveling, traveling for years together. And finally they came to the place where they were told that if you just climb up this mountain to the very, very top of this mountain, you will find paradise. You will find everything you've ever been seeking. And so they, they set off and they climbed and they climbed all three of them working together, working together and they made their way up this very steep, hard path. And they got close to the top of the mountain. And as they approached the tippy top, they noticed there was actually a wall.

There wasn't just the Garden of Paradise, there was a wall. And they were a little stumped. And they looked around, there was no gate. And so the three of them were sitting, there was a very tall wall. And they realized that they were gonna have to send someone over to even just see if it really was paradise on the other side of that wall or not. So they agreed with some ease that one person would go over the wall first to see if it was really paradise on the other side. So the two people, one person stood on the one person's shoulders, the other person came and easily, easily made it over the wall.

And as they landed on the other side, the two who were left could hear the, my goodness, it's beautiful. It's everything. It's everything and more. Come, come, join me, join me. It's everything and more. And so the two of them were left and they looked at each other and it was very clear that only one of them could make it over the wall. It was too tall. And so one of them would have to remain on the outside. And they were both standing there and one of them's heart opened and said, "I will lift you up so that you can get over the wall."

And so they lifted that person and they had to lift him up on his arms, on his hands to get him tall enough. And the person reached the top and climbed over and landed on the other side. And just as he was moving, climbing over the wall, all of a sudden the wall dissolved and the person who had lifted both of the others was in paradise. The wall had dissolved and immediately they were there experiencing everything they'd thought and more.

And what I love about this story is it's a reminder that it's really not about the goal. It's who we are becoming in the process of living our lives that matters. And this story to me is kind of the visual, the metaphor for it because this person's heart opened and they wanted to with love, they wanted to help this other person, and in that process their heart opened and they found the paradise. Paradise was revealed.

Who am I becoming in the journey of my life? It's not about the goal. It's not about the goal. It's not about the goal. It's who are you becoming in the process of your marriage, in the process of raising your children? Who are you becoming as you show up every day for your job, your career? Who are you becoming as you show up or don't show up for your family and your friends? Who are you becoming? Are you becoming smaller? More constricted, more judgmental, more critical, more scared, more fearful? Are you becoming more accepting, wiser, recognizing the truth and the reality of life as opposed to trying to fit life into an image you think it should be? Or is your heart getting bigger? Is your heart growing bigger? Are you becoming more compassionate? Do you have a sense of humor? Do people like being around you? Are you getting along better with the people in your life?

You know, that was my teacher's criteria. How's your mediation practice going? He asked. And I was, I just kind of took a deep breath and held my breath. And I didn't want him to call on me because I hadn't been able to meditate every day. I still had four kids at home and I was, okay, I'm meditating, but I'm using it in my life. And for those of you who listened to the first series, I said, I felt like I was cheating, but my life was getting better. But I wasn't sitting every day for an hour. I sat, but not every day. And guess what he said?

He didn't say how many times a day are you meditating. He didn't say how long are you sitting for meditation each day. He didn't say what techniques are you doing. He asked this question. He said, how well are you getting along with the people in your life?

That was the measure. How well are you getting along with the people in your life? And I was able to say, hey, I am getting along better with my husband, with my kids, with my family members. So maybe that's the point, right? The point is, who are we becoming? Who are we becoming? Are we becoming less judgmental, less critical?

Are we becoming less filled with shame? Are we becoming more confident, more accepting of who we are and appreciative of all we've been through? Are we becoming kinder? Are we able to put someone else's needs before ours? Are we able to be inconvenienced and still be okay and enjoy ourselves?

Are we able to release our agenda and the way we thought things should be and the way things thought they needed to go to be the right way? Are we able to let go of all of that and show up for life just as it is each and every day? Show up for the life in front of us right now, right in this moment, and not bring an expectation of how it should, in quotes, should be.

Those are the questions, right? Those are the questions. And so that's the question to ask, who are you becoming? Who are you becoming along the journey? And I suppose maybe the more important way to frame it is are you becoming the person you want to be? That's probably more relevant here, right? Are you becoming the person you want to be, that you dream of being?

And so I want to go back to the last episode, I brought up this phrase, *love, serve, remember. Love, serve, remember.* And on some level that was in our story just now, wasn't it? It was love for this other person that had the person who helped the second one over the wall make that choice. There was a willingness to serve, to not put that person's needs first, it's all about me, a willingness to serve. And there was the beautiful opening of all of it, the remembering. And in that moment, the recognition, the remembering of who, who we are, who we are, who we are.

So that's kind of what I've got. I think I've got one last little tidbit, which you've probably heard before, but I think it's maybe an important little piece, which is that idea that what we do for someone else, we do more so for ourselves, right? I mean, what we do for another, we help them to find paradise. We found it. We found it without even having to go over the wall, right? And so, when we release our judgments of another person, it's helping us release our judgment of ourself. When we are gentle with someone else, when they make a mistake.

We learn how to be gentle with ourselves. When we don't hold thoughts of shame with somebody else, it helps us to let go of the shame that we carry. When we calm and take seriously another person's fears and we don't mock or diminish or call it ridiculous or you idiot. We take seriously our own fear, but if we call someone else's fears ridiculous or idiot, that's what we're doing to ourselves.

So the last little piece of the story that I find so beautiful is the reminder that what we do for another, we're actually doing more so for ourselves. It's that old adage, right? That when I point my finger at you, there's three more pointing back at me. So what I judge you for, I judge myself for even more. What I accuse you of, I do more so, I accuse myself of that even more. And so we learn, we take that principle and we use it and we say, okay, I'm going to be kind. I'm going to not judge you for that. I'm going to try and understand what got you to that point. I want to understand your fear. I want to understand your anger. I want to understand your stress, your anxiety.

And then we can turn around and we can begin to understand our fear, our stress, our anxiety, and as we can understand ourselves, that's when things begin to open up and we begin to heal those places in us that are longing to be healed, to become whole. So there we go. That's a big lesson out of the one story. And I hope that's a lovely way to leave you, to leave you in this remembering that what you do for another, you do more so for yourself. And the question is at every moment, who are you becoming in this journey? Is your heart growing bigger or is it becoming tighter and smaller?

All right, my friends, thank you so much for listening to this series. I hope you found it useful and if there's a meaningful, and if you have any questions or suggestions, please send them my way and I would be more than happy to address them or talk about them in one of our podcasts. Many, many blessings to you and we'll see you on the next series.

Bye everyone, have a lovely week.