

From chapter, The trunk of 'now'

Brimming with joy, Malti would go to meet the tree of happiness every day. She was eager to converse with it, to exchange thoughts and feelings and to share these precious moments. Inspired by spring and nature which was once again being reborn, inspired by all the external beauty, but most of all by the inner wealth of the tree of happiness, Malti opened her heart, revealing all of the buds that were ready to blossom within her soul. I am living one of the most beautiful and complete periods of my life with this teacher, she would later write. Thus began the 'happiness lessons' between the teacher and the tireless student.

During the days, Malti absorbed the tree's words like parched soil, turning them into new seeds of happiness which would sprout in her life. Each night, she wrote incessantly, filling the pages of the book which the breeze had offered her. The knowledge given by the tree, as well as all the experiences from her life and the work she had done with herself, were written in that book which she named 'the child of my soul'.

"My dear Malti, you should know that happiness is a state of existence," the tree would tell her.

"It is an ensemble of meanings which function independently and in a complementary manner, in absolute harmony.

"As you can see from me, my trunk, my branches, my leaves, my flowers and my fragrance may appear to be separate and independent in their existence and function but, in essence, one complements the other.

"The same holds true for happiness. I want you to know that we create happiness, like the seed that created this here tree. In people, happiness is born from the seeds of consciousness that they plant in their life. "In you humans, happiness is an attitude in life. The more a human lives with consciousness and observation in his life, the happier he is. "And when I say consciousness, I mean awareness. Awareness of the moment you are living, awareness of the 'now', of your everyday life. Awareness is the basis for a happy life.

"Awareness, Malti, is directly bound with the connection you have with yourself. I'll explain what I mean. When you have awareness in your life, you perceive, you sense, you feel every moment as you live it. You are in the present, you live in the 'now'. "Just like my trunk is the basis from which my branches, my leaves and my flowers sprout, in life as well, the 'now' is the trunk for the happiness which will blossom within you. The 'now' is the only certain moment in your life. "Live in the 'now', Malti! Happiness is in the present moment... not in the future nor in the past. Don't search for it in situations and events which will come or which have passed. The past is a memory, it is over. The future is hypothetical and unpredictable. "As a result, how can you base your happiness on moments that don't exist? If you 'see' happiness in that way, you will always lack something, you will lack your base, your trunk. The branches, the leaves, the flowers and the fragrance of your happiness will be detached from earth itself, from your existence. You will lack the roots of serenity and calmness that life in the 'now' offers. "Most people let their life slip through their fingers because they are focused on the past and future. And arriving at the end of their journey, they realize they haven't lived. They are so absorbed in their memories and their future plans that they forget to live. They never enjoy the present moment. Because their life, centered around the inexistent moments of the past and the future, fills them with more

and more stress and less and less satisfaction. As soon as they finish one thing, they begin the pursuit of a new plan in their life. They have no time for anything. "Not even time to breathe, not even time to enjoy life, to smile, not even time to love. They are constantly waiting for something else, something other than what they have. "Since the minds of most people have been conditioned to always want something more, to always be striving for something, to compete and to battle. Their minds focus only on external stimuli, individuals or situations, and the accumulation of goals, which always concern the tomorrow. Such an approach in life can offer anything else but fulfillment. You always feel that nothing is ever enough. What kind of life is that?

"External stimuli don't bring happiness, only temporary satisfaction and joy. In contrast, true happiness has a permanent and sound base. "It comes from the knowledge of yourself, from the knowledge and understanding of your thoughts, of your feelings, of your behavior in life. True happiness is expressed by a sense of fulfillment that floods your whole being, without it meaning, of course, that you will never experience pain or sorrow again.

"No, when I say permanent, I don't mean stagnant. I mean that happiness is flexible, that, being focused on the 'now' and on the present moment, it can adapt to the conditions and changes of life. It is this quality that gives happiness the depth and breadth of its meaning. It is these characteristics that give it its immense power. The sense of fulfillment you feel as a result of this happiness comes to illuminate every moment of your life.

"When you live in the present with consciousness, everything around you can be converted into happiness. The mistake most people make in life is that they 'look' around them but don't 'see'. They don't see that happiness lies in the simple, everyday things. You will be surprised, Malti, when, by simply changing your perspective, you realize about how many everyday things you can feel happiness. "When you realize that nothing should be taken for granted.

"When you realize the miracle called life.

"When you realize the perfection of your existence, the workings of your body, the opening of your heart, and the breadth of your spirit, then you will acquire a different and more meaningful approach in life. "From the moment we wake up in the morning till the moment we drift off to sleep, we can consciously live many moments of happiness.

"There is no need to always be doing something in order to feel happiness. Happiness doesn't lie in constant effort, but in the consciousness of your existence. You may be sitting quietly alone and still be happy, enjoying life, feeling its pulse. For happiness is not a pursuit of something you don't have, it's a way of life. Happiness is being present in your life, living in the present.

"Malti, I stand here in this meadow enjoying life. I feel blessed each time I see the new leaves and buds sprouting on my branches, I feel blessed when the fragrance of my flowers wafts freely over the blossomed plains. I enjoy the sunrise, I enjoy the blue sky, I enjoy the shimmering of the stars at night, I enjoy the raindrops caressing my trunk, I enjoy the chirping of the birds perched on my branches, I enjoy the dancing of the bees as they flirt with my blossomed flowers.

“Learn to acknowledge and enjoy every moment of your life, Malti. Feel blessed that you exist. Feel your unity with the whole of existence. Observe how I function autonomously, but at the same time in conjunction with all of existence. Exactly as you do, my dear Malti.

“Live the ‘now’, what you have here, at this very moment. Enjoy whatever life gives you. At whatever moment you are in, feeling joy or sorrow, there is always something positive to discover if you turn and look at your life through the eyes of your consciousness. Because... in life...nothing is black or white.

“Look at the meaning of time in your life, Malti. Look at the duration of time and tell me, what is certain at this moment of your life?”

“I myself, my tree, my existence.”

“Precisely, Malti! You have understood that in the ‘now’, the only certain thing that exists is you. The only living moment in your life is the ‘now’.

“Look at me. My trunk tells me who I am. Through my roots I am connected with life itself. If they uproot me from the ground, if they cut my roots, nothing will be of value. Nothing will live without my trunk and my roots, not my branches, not my leaves, not my flowers, not even my fragrance. My trunk connects me with existence. Everything else grows and blossoms because of this trunk, now, at this present moment.

“Through my trunk I get to know myself. I get to know my uniqueness. I am me – I don’t compare myself with anyone else – and you are you, only you, and you can’t be anyone else. No one is inferior, no one is superior.

“What you need, Malti, is to be creative, to live in love and awareness, after having got to know yourself.

“Create for the joy of creation.

“Create to communicate with those around you.

“Express yourself through your talents and abilities. There is no living existence which doesn’t have some particularity within it. We all have a plethora of skills which we will acknowledge and which will blossom within us once we get to know ourselves.

“Become the artist, become the creator of your life. Give yourself wholly to anything you do, each moment, each day. Create your own paradise here and now.

“That is happiness. To be so absorbed in what you are doing, to transform your life into ecstasy, into meditation.

“Live with your whole ‘being’, live through your uniqueness, listen to the wisdom of your body, feel, laugh, dance like no one else can, simply because you are unique, like all humans on Earth are unique. Because existence itself is unique, copying none of its creations.

“Love with all your ‘being’. The better you know yourself, the greater the opening of your heart. The greater awareness you have in your life, the greater spirituality you will acquire. The more you come into contact with existence, the more you will be able to see the divine part within you. You will be able to see God in everything that surrounds you, in life itself.

“For to get to know and love God, you must first get to know and love his creation, Malti. Namely, you yourself... your body, your soul, your spirit. Be present in your life and try to develop the material-physical part of yourself as well as your emotional, your intellectual and your spiritual part. This is called completion. This is called progress. This is called evolution.

“And the more you evolve through a life with consciousness, the more you will understand yourself and improve as a person. With every new day, you will discover something new within you, you will notice your progress. “And the more you improve, the more happiness you will feel and, as a result, you will spread more and more happiness around you.

“If each of us does this, all of humanity will be happier.”

“I understand, my tree. What you wish to say is that self-knowledge is the core of life and happiness, for me and for others around me, isn't it?”

“Exactly, Malti. Look at me. If my trunk doesn't exist, what will support the other parts of my existence? “The same goes for you. If there is no self-knowledge, there will be no trunk in your life and nothing will be able to blossom on and around you. “Through the circle of life, the seasons come and go. Spring, summer, autumn, winter; easy and difficult moments constantly alternating in the circle of life....

“How will I face them without my trunk? “My trunk is my support. The juices of life that flow within me are the juices of my self-knowledge, which will nourish the rest of my tree.

“How will I create the branches, the leaves, the flowers and my fragrance if I don't know who I am? “The same goes for you, Malti. How will you be able to develop, how will you blossom if the juices of self-knowledge don't flood your existence?

“Get to know yourself, your body, your soul and your spirit. Listen to them. They all have something to say to you. They have something to show you, about your evolution.

“You have a rare seed within you, Malti.

“Cultivate it.

“Allow this seed to become your own beautiful tree of happiness.

“Allow it to bloom, allow its fragrance to waft all over the world.

“Get to know yourself.

“Become the happiness of existence.

“Become 'light'.”