



There is an ancient story in India:

A henpecked husband asked somebody, "What to do? My wife is so dominating." The friend suggested, "You should not have allowed it from the very beginning, but now it is difficult. Still it is not too late. Today you get drunk so that you can have courage. Then go and shout and knock on the door and enter into the house and throw things and let her feel that you are a man. And beat her, give her a good beating! Settle it once and for all."

So the man got drunk, although he was afraid that, "These things seem to be impossible -- I cannot do it. But maybe the drink will help."

He drank and he felt really great, puffed up, but as he approached the house, slowly slowly he became sober; the effect of the alcohol was disappearing. The fear was arising, but he kept himself courageous by repeating, "The man is a wise man, and at least if I can do it once it will be finished forever. And it is worth doing it."

So he knocked on the door, shouted, entered inside, started throwing things.

His wife was very angry. She was so angry she cut off the nose of the man with a knife. Now without a nose it was very difficult to live in the town, so the man escaped from the town in the night -- that same night he escaped. But wherever he would go, people would ask, "What happened to your nose?"

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So he became a SADHU, he became a monk, he renounced the world. He said he had

renounced the world, the wife and all. And he had to find a rationalization for his nose, so he said, "This is the latest technique of attaining, of realizing God. The moment you cut off your nose... it is the nose that is the barrier!" And he philosophized about the nose and he said, "The nose represents the ego." And it is right -- the nose represents the ego. You can see the ego on the nose; nowhere else it is so apparent!

So he convinced a few people. And the method seemed so simple -- just cutting off the nose and you get the ultimate truth and the bliss -- and he used to look so blissful. He pretended, but what else to do? -- without a nose he had to save face somehow! And without a nose it is difficult, but he laughed, danced, and he was always ecstatic.

A few foolish people became ready to cut off their noses, so he would take one person into the forest, cut off his nose, and would ask him, "Can you see God?"

The man would say, "I can't see anything, and my nose is gone."

And the man would say, "Neither can I see, but now it is better that you don't tell anyone, because your nose is gone just the same way as mine is gone. Be part of the conspiracy now. "Tell others... become ecstatic and tell others that you have attained to God."

What else was there to do now? The nose couldn't be put back; in those days there was no plastic surgery possible. This seemed to be the only rational way. So the man would go dancing in the town and would tell others, "That man is the greatest master -- I have seen God. What an experience! I am so blissful and the bliss goes on showering on me! Twenty-four hours I am ecstatic and God is with me." And he would talk of great things. And Indians are very much capable of talking of great things; for centuries they have talked and talked and talked.

A few more people became interested, and slowly slowly he had a gathering. The more people were with him without noses, the more his theory was gaining ground. Even the king became interested: "If there is such a simple method" -- almost like Transcendental Meditation! -- "Why not try?" But the prime minister was a little doubtful, skeptical. He said, "You wait, don't be in a hurry. Let me first inquire."

So he got hold of this man, gave him a good beating, and told him, "Tell the truth, otherwise we will kill you!"

So he had to tell the truth: "It is because my wife had cut off my nose, and what else could I do? I had to find some way to save my face, and this seemed to be the most simple, attractive way. And I am perfectly happy now: I have a following, my needs are taken care of, and you will be surprised -- even my wife who knows perfectly well that she had cut off my nose, she has come to see me the other day and asked me, 'What is the matter?' And I said, 'Although you had cut off my nose... but the moment my nose dropped I saw God!' And she is contemplating becoming a follower and I am just waiting for her. I want to cut off her nose! Let me cut off her nose, then you can kill me or whatsoever you want to do to me. Let me take revenge first!"

And what a spiritual way to take revenge!

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You go on following others, although you see them living in misery.  
You go on

following the powerful, the rich, the wealthy, although you see their faces are sad, their eyes are dull. They don't seem to be intelligent either; they don't have any grace, any joy, any beauty.