

Rabiya's Needle

One evening, Rabiya was searching for something on the street in front of her small hut. The sun was setting, and darkness was descending. A few villagers gathered. They asked the old woman, she was a famous Sufi mystic and tailor, Rabiya, what are you doing? Have you lost something? What are you searching for?

I have lost my needle replied Rabiya.

One of the villagers said, ok, but the sun is setting, and it will be very difficult to find the needle. We will help you. Where exactly has it fallen? The road is large, and the needle is so small. If we know the exact place it will be easier to find it.

It would be better if you don't ask me that question said Rabiya. Because in fact it has not fallen on the road at all! It has fallen inside my house.

The villagers started laughing and one said: we always thought that you are a little mad! If the needle has fallen inside the house, then why are you searching on the road?

For a simple, logical reason: inside the house there is no light and on the outside a little light is still there.

Laughing, the villagers started to disperse.

Rabiya called them back. Listen! This is exactly what you are doing. I was just following your example. You go on seeking bliss in the outside world without asking the first and primary question: **Where have you lost it? And I tell you, you have lost it inside. You are looking for it in the outside, for the simple, and logical reason that your senses open outwards. There the light is a little brighter.** Your eyes look outwards, your ears hear outwards, your hands reach outwards; that's the simple reason why you are searching in the outside. I can tell you from my own authority, **you have not lost it outside.** I've also searched outside for many, many lives, and the day I looked inside I was surprised. There was no need to seek and search; bliss has always been there.

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Osho, excerpted from *The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha*, Vol 8  
Chapter title: Be in the world and be holy