



Oprah Interviews Dalai Lama, by Oprah

O: What is our purpose here on earth?

DL: To help one another. O: So the whole reason we are on this planet is to serve each other?

DL: That's right. O: That's big! If we all understood that our sole purpose is to help others, wouldn't that change humanity?

DL: Yes, and understanding that begins with changing our attitude. We must realize that it is best to focus on our oneness, to reemphasize what is the same about each of us rather than dwell on what is different. Yes, there are differences between us. But it doesn't make sense to emphasize that, because my future and yours is connected with everyone else's. So we have to take seriously our concern for all of humanity. When we focus on our individuality, humanity inevitably suffers, each one of us will suffer. For example, a few minutes ago there was a fire alarm in this building. I responded immediately-- not because this building is a part of my body but because I am here, in it. That's why I have to take care of it. Similarly, whether we love humanity or not, we must realize that we are part of it. My future depends entirely on the future of humanity, and so I am compelled to take care of humanity. That is why being compassionate is actually in my own best interest. And a symptom of my own peace of mind is that I can share comfort with others around me. O: Can a person be good without religion?

DL: Yes. And he or she can also be happy. O: You seem to have a lot of joy. What makes you happy?

DL: I don't take myself too seriously! That makes me happy. O: What is a perfect day for you?

DL: There's never a perfect day. There is no perfection in the world.

O: One last question: Every month I do a column in the magazine called "What I Know For Sure." What do you know for sure?

DL: Altruism is the best source of happiness. There is no doubt about that. -- "O" Magazine, to be published in the August issue