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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Blind Men And The Elephant

Once upon a time, in a small village in India, there lived six blind men. They had been blind since birth, and as a result, they had never seen the world around them.

However, this didn't dampen their spirits nor their curiosity about the world. They heard stories from the villagers, listened to the rustling of leaves, the flow of the river, and painted their own pictures of the world in their minds.

One day, a traveler passing through their village brought an elephant. The villagers were very excited to see the elephant, an animal so grand and majestic. They spent hours observing it and talking about its massive size and power.

The news of the elephant reached the six blind men, and they became extremely curious about it. Since they couldn't see the elephant, they decided to touch it to understand what it was like. They believed this could provide them with a fresh perspective and an opportunity to learn something new about their world. One by one, each blind man approached the elephant and touched it. The first man reached out and touched the elephant's side. He exclaimed, "Ah! An elephant is like a great, strong wall!" The second man touched the elephant's tusk and declared, "No, you're wrong! An elephant is long and hard, like a spear!"

The third man, upon touching the elephant's trunk, said, "You're both wrong! An elephant is like a thick branch of a tree!" The fourth man, who had grabbed hold of



the elephant's leg, disagreed, saying, "It's like a mighty pillar!"

The fifth man happened to touch the elephant's ear and said, "No, an elephant is like a giant fan." The last man, who got hold of the elephant's tail, argued, "It's not like any of those things!

An elephant is like a rope."

They began to argue vehemently, each convinced of their own perceptions, each believing that they were right and the others were wrong. Their voices rose, and the argument seemed to be without end.

Just then, a wise old man of the village walked by. He had been observing their quarrel from a distance. He approached them and asked, "Why are you all arguing?"

Each blind man explained what they had felt and how the others were incorrect in their understanding of what an elephant is. The wise old man listened patiently and then said, "You are all correct and yet, you are all wrong. Each of you touched a different part of the elephant, and each of you described that part correctly. However, an elephant is not just a wall, a spear, a

branch, a pillar, a fan, or a rope. It is all of these things combined."

The blind men were puzzled. The wise man continued, "Just like you, people see the world from their own perspective, based on their own experiences and knowledge. What may be true for one person may not be true for another. To truly understand something, you must try to see it from all perspectives, not just your own."

The blind men understood the wise man's words. They agreed to stop arguing and, instead, try to learn from each other's experiences. From that day forward, they not only became wiser but also closer friends.

This Indian parable teaches us the importance of empathy, understanding, and open-mindedness. It shows us that our individual experiences and perspectives are just one piece of the bigger picture, and we should be open to listening and learning from others.