

# LESSONS FROM A SEAGULL

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It's pretty obvious that almost everyone on the planet would characterize seagulls as less developed than humans. But are they? Certainly, they can't read; they can't write; they can't do math, so they must be inferior, right? Not so fast.

Today, as I was sitting on the breakwater at Dana Point Harbor, California, enjoying the ocean, the balmy weather, the boats on the water and the beautiful blue sky, my attention was directed to a seagull perched on a large rock just beyond the shore. Occasionally, he would fly off, surveil the ocean, spy a fish, dive into the water and nab the unsuspecting prey for his meal. It's the way of the wild—the relentless survival drama of life and death, predator and prey, hunter and hunted.

As I watched this live drama unfold time after time, a lesson from this seagull reverberated in my mind. How strange, I thought, that this seagull understood a fact of life that many humans have yet to grasp. What was this fact the seagull instinctively knew about life?

*My Life; My Responsibility* was an ingrained characteristic of that seagull, as it is in all seagulls. He wasn't waiting for the flock to bring him food. He wasn't demanding of the flock an easy life in which he could sit back and let others take care of him like a baby in a crib. He wasn't screaming or screeching or flapping his wings in protest of his condition, acting like a three year old child in a temper tantrum. He wasn't destroying the property

of the humans in the area or threatening to dive bomb them in order to frighten them to get them to feed him, to take care of him, to indulge him with everything his avian heart and passions desired. No. The seagull was doing what every adult soul (seagull or human) understands intrinsically—that this is *his* life and it is *his* responsibility to take care of it . . . *himself*, sans assistance from the good will of others.

How contrastive is this to many humans today who have not learned this basic fundamental principle of life—that as individuals this is "Our life and it is our responsibility" to take care of it. Not someone else's. Not the government's. Not the next door neighbor's. Not anyone's. Ours.

This is how mature adults behave—they take care of their own business. Seagulls automatically understand this fact of life, but humans? Some do, others don't, a lot of others, and this should be concerning to all people who desire to live a free and independent life, especially those who abdicate their individual sovereignty to the throes of societal subordination. They are the ones most at risk for losing their freedom.

That seagull I saw today will eventually die, and he will die with dignity. The same cannot be said for those who live a life begging to be taken care of. We're not talking about those individuals who occasionally need support. We're talking about those who live a lifestyle of perpetual imploration.

It is, unfortunately, axiomatic that many people today demand, through some misguided notion of entitlement, that others take care of them; provide for their every desire—free this, free that, free everything from free college education, to free food, free housing, free birth control, free monetary monthly assistance from the government; free access to anything and everything they want and desire.

Such adolescent behavior, and it is adolescent, does not exist in the seagull lifestyle. Seagulls are taught in their early months after birth that if they want to survive they

must look to themselves and their own survival skills and to not rely on others in the flock. Seagulls do not live an entitled life. They lead a natural life of self-responsibility.

Yet, such adolescent behavior does exist within a portion of the human species. This lack of self-responsibility and maturity generates critical societal issues. There is an ever expanding amalgam of souls in this world who don't have the common sense God gave a seagull and without common sense, one cannot solve common problems. Thus, society suffers. And we think that seagulls are not as developed as humans?

We need to think again about emphasizing a basic tenet of life, as seagulls do. That tenet of life—to understand that *this is our life and it most certainly is our responsibility* to care for it; not someone else's. It is far better to live a life and die trying than to live a life and die begging. As Saint Kabir remarks:

*O! let none take to begging, for begging is as mortifying as is death. Prefer at all times death to going begging. That is the teaching of the Perfect Master.*

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