

Story of Two Hawks

.....source unknown (adapted and modified by Amy Fox)

Once, a king received two magnificent falcons as a gift. They were a special breed of falcons, the most beautiful birds he had ever seen. He gave his precious falcons to his chief falconer to train them.

Months passed and one day the chief falconer informed the king that although one of the falcons had flown majestically high in the sky, the other bird had not moved from its branch since the day it arrived.

The king summoned healers and sorcerers from all lands to take care of the falcon but no one managed to make it fly.

Having tried everything, the king thought to himself, "Perhaps I need someone from the countryside who might better understand the nature of this problem" and so he called one of his officials and asked him to bring a farmer to the palace.

The next day the farmer arrived at the palace and was sent to work with the non-flying falcon. Less than thirty minutes later, to the king's delight and surprise, the falcon was flying high above the palace gardens.

At once, the king asked to speak to the farmer.

When the farmer arrived in his court he asked, "Tell me, how did you make this falcon fly when no other trainer, healer or sorcerer could?"

The farmer shrugged his shoulders and said, "It was very easy your majesty. I simply cut the branch on which the bird was sitting".

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & PROMPTS

OPENING CLASS

"Life begins at the end of your Comfort Zone" - Neale Walsch

We've all heard TED talks and motivational speeches about how possibilities open up when you step out of your comfort zone - there's magic out of your comfort zone, they say. But stepping out of the comfort zone isn't easy.

Psychologists define a comfort zone as a state of mind where you are in control and experience the least amount of stress. So, if you stay in your comfort zone, you avoid the pain of stress and gain the pleasure of being in control. No wonder it's so addictive.

But here's the catch: if you stay in your comfort zone too long, you gain the pain of stagnancy.

DURING CLASS

After Telling the Story

We tell ourselves the thing we really want? It's not really worth it. The risk we'd have to take to get it? Well, we don't know its achievable anyways. And so we play small. We create ceilings. We hid behind our fear only to stare at the potential we wish we had.

The reality is that we are all born to fly, but like that second hawk we wait on the branch for next Monday. Or the "right time". Or when we have the money, the relationship, the whatever.

Only when you cut your branch— only when you EXPAND your comfort zone— will you discover your potential and fly.

CLOSING CLASS

You are born to fly, but only when you cut your branch— only when you EXPAND your comfort zone— will you discover your potential and actually take flight.

EXTRAS

The concept of comfort zones was first born in an experiment by Robert Yerkes and John Dodson in 1908. The study concluded that in order to maximize performance we need to be in a state of being just outside of our comfort zone.

This later became known as 'optimal anxiety'. It's a fine balance between being motivated to succeed, but not suffering from too much or prolonged anxiety.