

## **COLLABORATIVE LIFE COACHING**

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### **A Foxy Fable about Potential**

Once upon a time there were there fox families living in a small canyon. The Jones fox family lived a life of quiet desperation. Dog Jones hated to return to his cramped 15-foot den at night after hunting for scarce food to feed his vixen and kits. There were never enough squirrels, birds, eggs, and voles to suit him. Vixen Jones resented the time she spent cleaning the den and keeping the kits out of his way. Dog Jones was so frustrated with life that he sometimes lapped up rotten grain at night "to relax". The dog and vixen Jones often barked at one another, and the kits whined a lot.

Dog Smith lived nearby with his vixen and three kits. Their 15-foot linear den was crowded, but fairly comfortable. Dog Smith and vixen Smith had to take shifts hunting to supply their hungry kits with their favorite rabbits and squirrels. They rarely growled within the Smith den, but rarely snuggled either. The kits were mediocre hunters, and hard to motivate.

The Price family of foxes was doing well in contrast. Dog and vixen Price hunted together effectively and usually had extra food in their cache. They were proud of how their kits were learning to be clever hunters. There was often licking, playfulness, and joy in their spacious and organized 15-foot den. The Price foxes often took the whole family to explore the canyon and add new food to their diet.

A great storm hit the canyon one day, filling each den with dirt, then swamping the dens. All three were destroyed, and much of the food supply was killed or ruined. Dog Jones and his vixen were overwhelmed, but determined to get their share of what was left. They abandoned their den, grew hungry and cold, and left the canyon separately. Their kits were left on their own, and found an abandoned wolf den. The Smith foxes were determined to stay together and rebuild. They scraped by with food, but couldn't get a pesky draft in their den to stop, and faced a cold Winter. The Smith kits began staying out to play and hunt, as their parents began growling and snarling at one another in the den.

The Price fox family, in contrast, left their den quickly and explored the canyon and ridges for a place to build a new den. They found a great ledge that was safe from storms, closer to water, and had a better food supply. They build a bigger, warmer den with more escape openings. From their new ledge they watched another pair of foxes hunt strange game; they found they liked it, and learned to improve their hunting skills so their cache was always full. They found they had more time to enjoy life and keep an eye on the kits until they were full grown.

**What is the moral of this fable?** How did the Price foxes succeed in the face of disaster? They "got" the power of possibilities and their own potential. They weren't afraid to explore, ask for help, or take time to play. They chose not to view the rest of the unknown canyon as a place of danger and scarcity, but as a place of adventure with limitless options. Their attitudes and willingness to take action turned a disaster into a time of opportunity. They modified and expanded their talents and skills to fit the new situation.

How can you apply this fable? Looking at your life as a "contribution" to a bigger idea or group turns your mind from self-concern in a crisis to building quality relationships and successes. When you are "contributing", you are open to change, collaboration, and growth. You don't have to defend your expertise, as you admit you have a lot to learn. You don't have to know where the path ends, only how to walk it and how to focus on your goal. Your contribution adds to that of others, and your world expands again.

I wish for you this month a life of collaboration and exploration if you are facing a life transition. Challenges don't have to be catastrophes. Be smart like a fox, and get moving!

To your wellness!

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