

# My Conversation with a Seagull



By Jenny Dee

Some of my most profound breakthroughs have been at the beach. I'm an avid "grab-your-journal-and-head-for-the-waves" kind of meditator, and there is just something about where the ocean meets the sand that brings me to inner peace and a quiet that lets me hear my soul speak.

Apparently, it also allows other things to speak to me—specifically, a seagull.

Have you ever looked at a seagull? I don't mean glare at him wishing him away from your sandwich as you're sitting on the sand looking at the water. I mean, have you really look at him?

Why would you? He's a pest. Why would you pay any attention to some nuisance eyeing up your food or crapping on your head? Because in the name of mindfulness, it never hurts to tune into something in your presence for a five solid minutes. You never know when there is a sign right in front of you that is trying to send you a message.

And so one day as I relaxed back into my beach chair and admired the waves, one bold little creature caught my attention and I thought, why not practice some mindfulness in the moment? That little bugger was staring at me and wanted my almond pastry. Immediately, I said, "I love you," (It didn't hurt to be nice) "but if you think you're getting any of this pastry, you're out of your mind."

But then I started to look closely at him, seeing him through different eyes. I spent the next ten minutes studying him, observing him and connecting to him. This plain old pesky seagull – or was he? This is my story as I journaled it in that moment:

I began to look closely at him, and I observed the richness of the color of his feathers. He is actually a breathtaking creature when you take the time to look at him. He is the purest of white with dark gray feathers surrounding his wings, like a gradient of gray getting darker from neck to tail. His beak is a bright orange with a black tip. His eyes beady black yet observant. He seems shy, like he wants to make a move but is scared.

I feel like him. Hesitant and scared, yet not backing down. He wants my pastry in the worst way. He's standing proud and letting his beauty shine through. He's getting a little bolder, coming closer. (Oh, now he's acting like I'm not even here, tough guy).

His legs are little black tree twigs that look like they could easily snap, but hold up strong against his weight, along with his little black flipper feet. The wind is blowing through his feathers, as he stands unwavering. Oh, something has just caught his attention. His neck up right and stiffened, his head erect, looking quickly around his surroundings to identify what captured him. A friend? Competitor? Who knows?

He has now returned to normal observatory position. I am really taken by his beauty and am amazed at this new perspective of mine. Seagulls are always so pesky. But when you truly look at him, you see past the judgment, see his colors, his stature, his peaceful nature, his light and the beauty with which God created him.

He looks like he's ready to be brave. I can see his soul telling him he can do this, you are strong, stop hesitating and go for it. Fascinating.

He's looking around nervously, slowly coming closer. I'm waiting for another white seagull, bigger in size, stalking this little one's territory, to leave – but I think I will throw out a piece of pastry just to show my little one what he's made out of, that he has the confidence to come out on top and get to the pastry first. I was going to throw it in the middle, but first, I turned to him, looked at him and said, 'You can do this. It's yours if you want it bad enough. Let no one bully you away from what you want. Be strong and brave.'

Holy crap, he did it!! Man, he jumped up and caught it midair in this mouth. He stood his ground and looks really proud, his chest is physically all puffed out and now he is walking away and has this air of confidence about him. He's so elated, like he couldn't believe he really did it. Now a number of friends are headed in this direction, but he's owning his territory. Good boy, my little Seagull Buddy. You just owned your worth!

As I watched him walk away and reflected, I knew that whole time I was talking to me. I have been too scared, lacking confidence, always letting those around me, the supposed “stronger” ones take what I wanted, always giving to others and afraid to fight for myself. I actually feel one with this little seagull, I swelled with pride that he did it against his fears, and I just have to remember the little seagull inside me has that same power. Thank you for that very important message; I am glad we had the chance to bond. I now appreciate your plight that much more, and realize we are not so different after all.

So, that was my conversation with a seagull, and also my self. That was about seven years ago, but I can still see his new strut of confidence. It’s what I aspire to every single day: a no-holds-barred attitude with the empowerment to go for what I want.