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KING ARCHIBALD AND THE GEFÜHLSMONSTERS



Little colorful creatures
that no one has ever seen





Preface



Does this sound familiar? A friend complains to you about a terrible other person – and somehow, as you listen, the impression arises in you that the friend also has a share in this problem ...

The first version of this fairy tale was written eight years ago. I had observed the theme of not being aware of one's effect on others again and again in others or in myself and I wanted to encourage people in a metaphorical way to rethink.

Here are a few episodes from my work that show where this topic has crossed my path in my career: In my work at school, I noticed that there were students who "bothered" some teachers and not others, regardless of whether the subject was interesting to them or not. Later, as a trainer for team development and conflict management, I was asked by teachers to get their students to interact better with each other. I almost always found that the way the teachers approached them played an important role. As a mediator, I experienced parents who felt misunderstood by their children and could not see their own part in it. Or that managers who asked me to mediate between their employees, were surprised when I asked to speak to the managers themselves.





Preface

In my preliminary conversations on team development in companies I started to ask the managers at the beginning whether they would be willing to participate in coaching as well. This was often refused. If it then became clear that there was a lack of clarity in the communication of the manager or in the team roles, or that there was an unconscious aversion to individual employees, my hands were bound without permission to also work with the manager.

At some point, I began to negotiate the consulting of the manager together with planning the team development, which led to much more sustainable results of this work. The prerequisite, of course, was an attitude of non-judgment, respect for the leaders and the reasons for their behavior. Then, when a side-by-side approach emerged, together we were always able to find solutions for all involved. Sometimes that included a manager changing careers or employees leaving the team in mutual agreement.

Over time, I found it more and more unfortunate when people reached a dead end because of their bias toward counseling. Students observe teachers very closely and have a very fine sense of fairness, likes and dislikes. It is the same with staff members, who sometimes know us better than we know ourselves. How can we embrace these valuable impulses?





Once upon a time there was a King . . .

Once upon a time there was a king named Archibald, who had a lot of stupid loyal subjects. Unbelievable, how much mischief they created! When the king was in a generous mood, they took it the wrong way and were suspicious. When the king was angry, they didn't even see what they had done wrong and instead gathered in secret behind his back, weaving tales of ill will.

Many times had Archibald summoned a grand assembly of the people, intending to guide his subjects on how to live happily and content in his realm. He meant nothing but kindness towards them! Yet, what did they do? It seemed they had beans in their ears, misunderstanding everything he said and refusing to see the wisdom in his words.

And then his third queen had left him – understand these bewitching women, if you can! Although he was such a benevolent king, and nothing pleased him more than doting on his beautiful queen, she had accused him of lacking empathy for her royal emotions, and that was much too bad.

The king was so desperate that he decided to embark on a journey of wander and wonder, seeking advice beyond his kingdom's borders. He had heard of a distant kingdom where the royal subjects were



very clever, and he wanted to go there to learn from this king how his own subjects could become smart like that. So that he could age gracefully, surrounded by love from all, just as he had always wished in his heart.

After a long, exhausting journey on his horse he arrived at King Frederic's kingdom, was warmly welcomed, fed, and slept soundly in an amazingly soft bed. What had this king done that his servants did such good work? They were friendly and courteous; indeed, it seemed that they enjoyed their work! King Archibald was excited to learn what strategies King Frederic had used to achieve this.

The next morning, he was allowed to attend the king's daily audience as a guest. Unbelievable how polite these people were! As soon as they saw their king, they laughed





happily, reported on their successful achievements, asked him questions that he was happy to answer, and answered his questions. Indeed, they even presented their children, which, as everyone knows, has no place in a royal audience!

Nobody looked around cautiously before they stepped in front of the king, nobody had lowered their eyes or wrung their hands anxiously. It was unbelievable. What a lucky guy! And, to top it all off, he had a beautiful queen by his side, graced with enchanting charm!

This king was so fortunate! If only he could be so lucky, thought Archibald.

While he waited for Frederic to attend to other government business, Archibald went for a walk in the castle's park. He laid down behind a beautiful, large rose bush and fell asleep.

When he awoke, he saw little brightly colored creatures under the rose bush that he had never seen before. As he perked up in amazement, he noticed that they were talking to each other very, very softly.



"Hee-hee," said one of them, "have you heard that a new king has arrived and wants to learn from Frederic? If he just knew! It took so long for Frederic to become a smart king! Will the new king be able to learn? Who knows?"

"Do you remember," they told each other laughing, "how King Frederic used to look at his audience and wondered why his subjects had no confidence in him?"

"Or how he used to tell the queen, when she confided her worries to him, to not take it to heart? Oh, it took quite some time for him to grasp that the queen felt differently than he did, and that his strength didn't ease her burdens either."

"And how annoyed the king was with the master of the manor who misunderstood everything he was supposed to do?"

