

Lessons from Geese

by Your Name

As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an “uplift” for the bird following. By flying in a “V” formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if the bird flew all alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the “lifting power” of the bird immediately in front.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go (and be willing to accept their help as well as give ours to the others).

When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership; with people, as with geese, we are interdependent on each other.

The geese-in-formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking from behind is encouraging-- and not something else.

When a goose gets sick or wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of the formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it is able to fly again or dies. Then they launch out on their own, with another formation, or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as geese, we too will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Now who is the silly goose?

