

## **Preface**

“I can’t believe you’re still with us. You’re a special puppy. We’re going to find you a good home.”

*I like you. I’ve never met anyone who could talk.*

“Everyone can. They just don’t know it.”

*But you’re different. I can feel you. I can’t feel everyone.*

“It’s only because I’m open. You can feel my heart.”

I’ve been communicating with animals for more than a decade. My friend and teacher, Jill Estensen, showed me how to quiet and focus my energy and connect and communicate with animals on an intuitive level using their form of language—telepathy. Telepathy is one of several intuitive abilities. It’s like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it becomes. While some people view telepathy, or the ability to connect on the intuitive level and communicate through thought, as rare or unusual, it is a trait that each of us possesses. But most people don’t realize this or believe in it.

When I first started communicating with animals, it was a challenge. I strained for the smallest tidbit of information. I walled myself off in a quiet room, shut my eyes, and concentrated hard. Sometimes I wouldn’t hear anything. Sometimes I would hear a message, but I wouldn’t understand it. With practice, words began to come, then phrases. Sometimes I would see a picture. Sometimes it would be more of a feeling or an impression and an entire concept would become clear.

Using The Geometries of Creation, a divination deck Jill created, made it easier. If I couldn't get answers in my head, through telepathy, I would use her cards to help me understand the issue or situation.

It took years to develop my telepathic and intuitive ability, but I finally got to the point where it became easier. But there are still times when I don't hear anything. Sometimes I'm blocked. Then there are times the words come so fast it's like a waterfall of words and I can't make them out. And I don't always know whether I'm hearing the dog's "voice" or translating it to something that makes sense in my world. Sometimes people ask me if I'm making it all up. All I know is that I hear what I hear.

I'll never forget a conversation I had with my horse, Bear, not long ago. We were taking a sabbatical from dressage, and I was going to attempt to train him in the methods of Liberty Training, a playful process where the horse is free but mirrors every movement of its human. I marched purposefully toward his pasture, his black nylon halter tossed casually over my shoulder. He lifted his head and watched me approach, black eyes intently fixed on me. I stroked his glistening white nose and said, "I'm going to teach you to do something new today."

*I love how you humans think that we don't know anything until you teach it to us.*

"Funny man Bear."

*So what is this new thing you're going to "teach" me?*

"It's called Liberty Training," I said and then explained the concept.

*I find it interesting that you want to do Liberty Training.*

"Why?"

*Because you are so often trying to suppress my liberty. If you were truly interested in liberty, there would be no such thing as saddles, bridles, or the bits you humans use to control us.*

He had a valid point. Our animal companions often do. And it's part of the lesson I wanted to share when I wrote *Finding Forever*. When Blitz, my beautiful German shepherd, died, it was months before I was emotionally ready to search for another dog. Finally, it was time, and I hoped to find one that might be like him. I discovered the Coastal German Shepherd Rescue organization and their weekly adoption events. I spent week after week, event after event searching, and I came to know the volunteers. Many became my friends. In two months, I morphed from a prospective client to a volunteer.

Little by little, the dogs eased my grief as I attempted to comfort them back. As I spent time volunteering, the dogs' stories unfolded. Some were inspiring, others sad, and others humorous. I'd share them with friends, one of whom encouraged me to write about my experiences. And so a book was born.

I have a dream. I dream that one day there will be no abuse or neglect. That one day there will be no puppy mills or backyard breeders whose only intent is profit rather than the welfare of the dogs. That one day animal shelters will be properly funded and staffed so that they are equipped to do their jobs. I dream that one day animal rescue organizations and shelters will no longer need to exist. I dream that one day everyone will be able to communicate with their animals.

It is my hope that this book and its stories inspire, educate, and raise awareness in regard to the complexity and intelligence and higher order of the animal kingdom and to what they sometimes endure at the hands of humans.

*Finding Forever - Houson*

I've been deeply touched by the wisdom and dignity these dogs possess and inspired by their ability to forgive and love unconditionally in the face of ignorance, abuse, and abandonment. And I've been humbled to witness the selfless work and tireless efforts of the volunteers that comprise Coastal German Shepherd Rescue.

Animals are here to teach us. Not the other way around. If we could suspend the veil of disbelief or skepticism, open ourselves to their guidance, and follow their example, we would be rewarded beyond anything we dreamt possible.