

Daily Doga Inspirations for you and your dog

Dogs are in the NOW, but for us it can be unknown territory and overwhelming!

Recently a client asked me to help her simplify her life with her new dog, which really means 4-goals of simplifying life with family, friends, work and training a new puppy. I felt as much an organizer as I did a dog trainer, as the puppy chewed on her foot, then jumped and bit her on nose. She laughed. We've all done things we regret, so with empathy, I'm happy to help.

Lesson with meaning and a smile: laughing at a puppy while they are doing something you do not like tells them it is okay! It is shaping the behavior in the now, and it may be cute. In the future, the adult dog could weigh 85lbs or more, and knock you or someone else on their derriere. You could be nose-less.

When we add a puppy or re-homed dog to our family lifestyle, it is similar to any new edition / transition (baby, new job, death, divorce)! We can feel overwhelmed with emotions. The first thing we usually do is look outside of ourselves, asking, "Why, why, why is everyone picking on me, even the puppy? What toys, books, equipment can I buy and what shows can I watch to fix this?" The answer is "millions."

In almost all instances a puppy or dog can teach us in that moment because that is where they live. If our puppy is biting our shoe and nose, what are others doing? Begin with awareness and teaching the relationship that we want to have with the adult dog, and others! With a child, you'd occupy them with something constructive and healthy.

We can cling to the security of "my Veterinarian said to do this or my Father use to do that, or Cesar Milan said we should go TSST". We can choose to step out of the box and ask what is true for me and my puppy.

Feel as completely naked as the puppy you just brought home. Dogs live in the now and they don't get royalties from the books written about it. The puppy is doing what comes naturally, not wrong. Chewing is healthy and occupies their energy. Chewing comforts puppies.

As overwhelmed as we feel, a puppy feels that in 3D surround. Someone picked them up, took them out of a familiar environment, usually from their mom and littermates, and plopped them into a world of sensory overload (emotions, toys, stuff and children). Imagine being parachuted into a foreign country without any skills?

Try seeing the world through their eyes. They are exploring. They may be yearning over left-over bowl of chicken soup that someone left on the coffee table. They can't leave it, but it smells good. They can't lick it because they'll burn their tongues. Are you there to pick it up and put it away before they try?

I encourage you to be inquisitive like the exploring puppy who is trying to find a place in the new family pack, or a dog finally getting to run free in a safe area.

In that ambiguous moment which seems overwhelming and awkward, trust your instincts and your breath. Right there in the uncertainty of everyday chaos is our wisdom mind. The puppy is teaching us how to step out of our familiar, hum-drum world!

Object Exchange: Have a healthy, therapeutic chew toy available. When your puppy chews your shoe or nose, say, "Ouch, that's mine, here you go, this is yours to chew and in a safe place."

Think of ways you can extend this to other situations in your life. Do you really need to stop everything you are doing because someone called to tell you the same thing you've heard 14 times before? Prioritizing our quality time enhances well-being.

This is my time, but I'll get back to you in 10-minutes. Thank you dogs for resting quietly while I finish the next chapter of Training Your Dog can Change Your Life and this Daily Doga Inspiration.

Enjoy the Journey!