

Centered and Safe – 4.6.8 – Just say Stop!

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Keeping your energy field balanced, especially with our dogs, helps to avoid picking up unwanted negative energy flow.

Energy is all around us. People who love pets are oftentimes more sensitive. This sensitivity can overflow to our dogs. Technology and too many choices can challenge us, causing us to suffer sensory overload. If we are overloaded, imagine a dog with senses 75 times greater than ours.

We are receptive to the energy of the people and environment around us. Raising awareness by observing our dogs while engaging in activity can resolve so many issues (chewing, barking, lunging, excitement). When something happens around us, our body and mind react or responds. We want to be part of situations that involve people and pets, especially today when socialization means Laptop, You Tube, or HD dog training. We can enjoy media, stuff and our dogs, without becoming exhausted or owned by it.

With a few simple strategies we can entertain, socialize, work and support friends and family, without losing ourselves in someone else's energy. We don't have to give ours away freely. With a little practice, a little time, 468 and Stop, stress and overload take on a new perspective. We are in control. We are able to care without ending up *like a balloon slowly losing its helium*.

The whole purpose of a self-care ritual with our dogs is to stay strong in potentially draining situations (transitions of life – the environment). Whether planning a workshop, party, changing jobs, volunteering, grieving, recovering, working or walking with our dogs, take time to be aware of [body language](#) and stress signals. Prepare yourself in whatever way relaxes you. Writing your thoughts is cathartic. Dogs can't write, so what relaxes them? Massage, a special toy or no expectations, just being. Organizing and planning how you will respond, and setting boundaries, knowing when enough is enough, helps.

Your story is your own reality, not someone else's. In psychology, they call it narcissistic and grandiose to think that YOU know what your brother or friend needs. [Is that really true?](#) Before deciding that Uncle Sam or Aunt Mary, this friend or that family member need you to pre-create situations for them, try living your own story, leave others to theirs. If you care or are concerned, ask, don't assume.

Any thought or activity that gives you comfortable or uncomfortable vibes is an intuitive message. Listen to it. You can let it bother you or not.

Get lost with your dog (or alone) for a few minutes, several times a day to calm the chaos. Take a brain break. Lose yourself in that inner sanctuary that no-one owns or can penetrate unless you let them. Allow thoughts to continue. Forget rules about meditation or what thing you or your dog needs to fix or cure. Say stop and flow with 468 breathing. "I'll call you back in a few minutes."

Be still with your dog for a moment. This takes practice because there is always something we have to do isn't there? No, not really, not right now, not for a few minutes. Breathing in for 4 counts, with your dog, holding for 6,5,4,3,2,1. Exhaling through your mouth 8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 ... while thinking or saying "so calm." What is your dog doing? Have a puppy or adolescent that won't sit still? Gently hold the collar, or leash, or hand on side. If you listen and observe, engaging with your dog like this will teach relax.

Create a mantra such as "I am calm, centered and safe" or "I can flip the switch and deal with this later." Imagine your dog peaceful, relaxed with no one to protect, no child to play with, no ball to chase, no one to visit; simply calm for a few moments.

Choose to turn the energy volume higher or lower with a metaphor like "switch" or "shield". If it becomes too intense, switch to "safe shield", as if a bubble is protecting you and your dog. You are inside, observing, witnessing, but no-one can enter the bubble, until you say, "you may come in".

This may give you the time and space you need to check in with yourself, being aware of energetic imbalances.

Patience is a way to de-escalate aggression and its accompanying pain. This is to say that when we're feeling aggressive—and I think this would go for any strong emotion—there's a seductive quality that pulls us in the direction of wanting to get some resolution. We feel restless, agitated, ill at ease. It hurts so much to feel the aggression that we want it to be resolved. Right then we could change the way we look at this discomfort and practice patience. Pema Chodron