

Paws for Thought

**Depression. Aggression. Hostility. Aggravation. Lethargy.
Anti-social. Indifference. Irritable. Short-tempered.
Unstable. Unpredictable. Erratic. Anxious. Volatile.**

In all my years as a dog behaviorist, it never ceases to amaze me how perceptive both children and animals – specifically dogs- can be with what is happening in their environment. I have studied and met with the best, my mentors being Cesar Milan (The Dog Whisperer), Dr Ian Dunbar, Robin MacFarlane, The Monks of New Skete, Brian Kilcommons and Martin Deeley, just to name a few. I have travelled around the world and back... but the same principles apply everywhere.

We face situations... we have to face reality. That is what I do – I help people and families face their realities. When I assess a new client, I do not only take into consideration what is happening with the dog. The dog, much like a child, needs structure and guidance... needs stability. I take a serious look at their environment and family structure. We do not expect children to raise themselves... we should not expect our loved animals to either.

When dealing with separation, divorce... or even abandonment issues, the emotions we feel and actions we produce (because of them) are endless. We, as humans... as grown adults... look for and seek professional help – knowing very well that “balance” in life is the key to happiness.

Dogs are sensitive to their owner's emotions... they are social animals that bond. What affects us, affects our dogs. That is why

I do what I do. That is why I take my profession so seriously. The responsibilities that I choose to take on are huge. Working with families and dogs that are subject to legal issues, abandonment issues, separation anxieties, loss of a loved one in the family, sickness or health-related problems within the family structure or sometimes simply a breed which over-powers their owners. Whichever way... they are all just as important and deserve the utmost respect and dedication.

Dogs can become lethargic, anti-social and indifferent when they are depressed. They can become irritable, unpredictable and short-tempered when misunderstood. They feel emotions and know reactions... as much as we do! The difference is; we, as humans, can define them. They cannot. We, as humans, seek help. They cannot. I made my decision... to study them, to train them. To bring stability and comfort to dogs and families that need a little bit of help. I do not turn my back on anybody that is prepared to walk on water with me when it comes to working with their dogs each and every day for the rest of their dogs lives... this is my life's work.

That is why I do what I do. I am able to relate. I am able to see beyond “just the dog” and dive into what is most important: how we, as humans, act and react, how we interact, how we love, how we decide... how we lead.

Chewing? whining? digging?



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