

examiner.com

LIFE / PETS / DOGS

See also: dogs, animal assisted therapy, love dog adventures

The importance of Place

May 12, 2015

7:01 PM MST



After just two weeks, Going to Their Places Calmly

ES

When new clients call me I am always excited. I love to hear what they are experiencing with their dogs and the challenges. Most people have very simple issues but they seem huge to them. Barking, jumping, anxiety all seem overwhelming to the humans but they really are simple to change in the dogs. Issues are circular ... your dog pulls so you don't walk your dog. The less you walk your dog, the worse his behavior becomes on the walks.

So start fresh and make every experience you share with your dog a positive, loving, productive one.

I always send new clients a form to complete before we meet. It tells me all sorts of information from how they feed their dogs, do they walk them, what kind of collar and leash they are using. It tells me if their dogs have kennels and beds for a safe place to go to. I learn about everyone who lives in the home and all other animals. So even before our first meeting I have some idea of what we will discuss at the first meeting and perhaps want to change up.

Then that first class is the most exciting! Because so much is about how the human end of the leash relates to and understands the animal at the other end is what brings about success. Seeing how people view their dogs and how the dogs perceive them is critical and in that first class we learn so much. We learn about how each dog learns. They are not all the same and even litter mates can learn differently.

Two of my favorite dogs now are a pair who were adopted together from a local shelter. They are beautiful dogs. The owners are fabulous people. But their first few months together were very stressful, so they turned to me.

Well after just two sessions the dogs are calmer, the humans are calmer and the household is calmer!

One of the first things I teach is Go to Your Place and have the dogs lie on their respective blankets in all sorts of different areas. Some dogs have difficulty when facing the window. Some dogs need to have their backs against a wall. Some dogs who live together want to be side by side and others the further apart the better.

Once a dog understands his Place you can teach anything and everything there. All obedience is taught from their Place ... sit, down, stay, come, everything.

Most of the time spent in my class is not command driven but communication driven. Learn to speak how your dog hears and you have it made.