

Open yourself up to receive...

# Guidance from our Animal Friends

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Modified for brevity.*

One of the most difficult lessons I am still learning is letting go of the feeling of regret, seeing all situations as learning opportunities, and then taking the paths of least resistance to acceptance and compassion. Staying in my heart when life appears to be working against me isn't always easy, and I have felt a lot of emotional upheaval lately making itself known for healing. So along with trying to find balance with the equalities of acceptance and compassion, I am seeing more and more that Unconditional Love for ourselves is the cure all. It seems that we need to fall down enough times, while learning to transcend, so the addition of good humor is also helpful when it all becomes too darn serious.

This is where my "work" is such a blessing. I have daily invitations to watch my somewhat stubborn thought patterns as I take walks with my dog partners, and have the gift of observing the simplicity of a pet's life and the teachings they provide.



I can't tell you how many times I went to pick up my beagle friend, Sunshine, for our leisurely walk to the park, and she greeted me at the front door with a pair of underwear or dirty socks in her mouth. As much as I love my clients, the idea of pulling these things out of my four legged friend's mouth is far from appealing, but I manage to do this "prop and drop" method – prop the mouth open, and then she drops the "treasure." During the process, I can't stop laughing. Her tail is wagging, she knows that there are plenty more goodies ahead, with no lack of abundance in her surroundings... Then we move forward onto our plan of exercise and fresh air.

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Before seeing Sunshine, on many occasions, my thoughts were not in a joyful place, yet with one interaction, she broke the spell. This is the freedom, the humor... This is being in the moment; and this is a dog's life.

As for unconditional Love, when the perfection of creation seems far from the way I would like it to be, a loss of faith can occur. But new fears can easily be intercepted with a teaching and guidance from a wise animal, in this case a cat.

The other day, I was trying to be kind to myself for any so-called mistakes, and as I picked up a dear cat brother named Doophie ( yes that is really his name) and held him directly in front of me; he literally pressed his head against mine and just held it there. I wasn't feeling my true nature that day, yet within that moment, Doophie had the wisdom. If there was a transfer of information from this cat being it was "I love you, all of you, just as you are." The past was the past, it didn't matter in that moment; it was just pure light, and loving and I broke into tears.

A part of me was tearful because I felt an emanating Love from this cat and I realized I wasn't being fair to myself again, while another part was being taken aback by the positive emotion I was feeling just by "being." And as the attraction law goes, I felt it bounce from him and back to me and back again so my friend Doophie helped

me to find balance and my true nature without any words spoken.

I am sure you can relate to being with someone special in your life, a friend, a teacher, a co-worker, just someone like-minded, and during your meeting of the minds, you could say that you feel no judgement with these people. You can be yourself and feel honored to be in their presence. Sure, sometimes there are moments where you may get triggered into an automatic response – that is inescapable with human beings. But there is a realness about what matters, the freedom and lightness of energy that motors back and forth... It is really beyond our human vocabulary to describe and maybe that is why animal companions can help teach us our true nature – where spoken words are not even needed, just a knowing of all-that-really-matters.

I can see a simplicity that we can choose to accept life's punches at times with laughter and find compassion for our learning curves, with Unconditional Love for ourselves and for others. And I practice this approach daily, as my true self finds its way – in the flow of a wagging dog's tail like Sunshine, or within the loving purr of a cat friend like Doophie. And so it is!

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