

The four-leggeds need us two-leggeds to understand ourselves...

See Your Dog, See Yourself

by Jennifer Scalia

My dog is one of my greatest teachers. As I look at her fears, I see my fears. When I look at her reactions, I see my own. Now as I work on self healing, change, and growth, I watch my dog begin to transform.

Everywhere we look, there are mirrors with lessons and our pets are one which we may overlook. If you decide to explore this idea, you may discover something new about yourself, opening an opportunity to develop a stronger relationship with your pet.

Many pets are trained to commands and taught tricks. Others are taught to "behave" and their humans can be disappointed when ideals are not met. Some pet parents seem to feel that their "kids" don't listen, are hyper, or are just spoiled too much and there is no resolution. These situations can be exhausting and it seems easier to give up. I learned this the hard way. It took me five years to become my dogs' leader. I thought I would just love her and teach her boundaries, but she needed security from a different approach. That is when her behavior began to change.

I learned that my fears of the world had invaded my dogs' energy field and she absorbed them like a sponge. She was reacting to her surroundings with my own projections. No matter what training I chose to teach my dog, I had to look at myself first.

Now I observe my dogs' behavior problems change as I change my own behavior and self defeating patterns. As I become the master and leader in my own life, my dog also has a leader allowing her to feel a sense of safety. Now she can relax and be a dog!

It must be frightening for a small animal to look up to a two legged like myself and feel that they have to be the leader. Like a wise trainer has said, "I rehabilitate dogs, I train people." Once I began to look at myself, I began to understand and connect with my dog differently, creating a new bond.

I walk to the park with my dog almost daily. I begin to relax as we sit together and gather nature's energy all around us. I feel a sense of peace and my dog feels a sense of peace. We are together and without any obvious interaction between us, there is an unspoken form of communication that we are both happy and content, in the moment. ■

Jennifer offers pet services, Elemental Pet Care. She can be reached at 314-239-4878, jenzpets@yahoo.com.