

Paws for Thought

Power Struggle

"Willing compliance is only attainable in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust between an authority figure and a subordinate"

We live in a world where we are free to express ourselves. A world full of competition. A world where, unfortunately, it's usually the person that screams the loudest which gets heard and what they say listened to.

As adults, in our relationships, we choose who we want to socialize with. We choose to surround ourselves with others which share similar interests and values... we begin relationships based on mutual respect and a common goal. If, for some reason, we realize that "we are just too different" or the similarities that once brought us together are no longer viable... then we part ways and head in a new direction. You continue on your path, peacefully, and the other (hopefully) does the same.

As a parent and/or guardian of a child, we understand that unless we enforce (positively) and keep reinforcing certain principles and values into our children... they might head in the wrong direction. Our mind is never free of worry - always trying to be "one step ahead" of them, "righting" the wrong even before it happens.

I am sure that, by now, you have noticed how often I compare our "family" structure and our relationships with our loved ones to the relationship and the upbringing of the family pet(s). Truth is... it has EVERYTHING to do with it! And the exact same principles apply! Respect, understanding, patience, love, affection, firmness, kindness... these are all essential in raising your pet(s)

successfully. Much like raising a child in a co-parenting situation, both parents need to be involved and share like-qualities in order for the child to have consistency and to recognize structure. When it comes to your dog, both "parents" and the "pack" need to be involved in raising the animal and giving it as much structure and consistency as possible!

Now... the reality!!! Just because you show respect, understanding, patience, love, affection, firmness and kindness... it does not mean that the boundaries will not be tested! Quite the contrary! The prospect of being "free" and having zero boundaries is quite enticing... to all of us... in both the human and K-9 world! There are always opportunities to "stray". It is the strong roots, the firm upbringing, love, respect and affection shown, along with kindness and understanding, that will always keep everybody focused and on the right track.

The secret is working as a family... working like a "pack". Getting everybody involved, have structure and consistency - consistency with your daily routine, the words and/or commands you use, how and when you use them. Be repetitive... being patient, understanding and firm. There is no need to be aggressive and insulting... this is understood as LACK of control and a great weakness as a leader. You need to make the one(s) relying and looking at you for direction feel safe and secure. They need to understand who they are. They need to know what is expected of them. If they have all this, you will have a confident child or and a confident pet that will realize that having structure and consistency will give them the freedom they need to develop and mature... as a whole.

Behavior Problems?



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