



Ascension

Ascension WI EAP

Why My Dogs Love the New Normal

And What They Have Reminded Me Of

While we have been practicing social distancing, my (and I suspect your) four legged friends have been practicing social synthesis. Whether on my chair, my lap or my feet, they give me the closeness and contact that many of us are missing recently. People might argue that dogs don't have feelings, but they are responsible for many of us feeling loved, and getting through this challenging time. They love the "new normal," and why wouldn't they?

- 24/7 to live in the present moment
- Belly rubs, ball chasing, and naps



- More pool time--in spite of the cool temps
- Run-nap-run-repeat
- Inside/outside whenever they please
- Later bedtimes, later mornings--more naps
- More treats
- More frisbee chasing

- Yard security duty
- Napping in the sun, shade, or grass
- Squirrel and robin chasing
- Time to work on their sniffing skills
- More mailman and UPS treats
- CNN and Fox are equally great for a nap
- Yard quarantine
- Each day is as great as the next.

Watching our dogs has reminded me of many skills for daily living. Dogs are extremely present, and so good at it their existence is a meditation practice. When they are hungry, they eat. When they are goofy, they let it snap. When they are tired, they sleep. They do know their limits, and follow them for the most part. (There is that one goldendoodle that does drive them to distraction.)



I look at them and wonder how they will adjust to “the old normal,” which they seemed perfectly content and joyful in. I am again reminded that they really do live in the present, which is precious. In these unprecedented times that lesson is extremely in focus for me today.

Do you think dogs would make fun of each other for wearing a mask?



My wife was teased for wearing a mask in a cheese factory today (yes, this is Wisconsin). It is important to practice self care in ways that matter to you, and to not judge others for doing their best to keep themselves and others safe. People may mind your business for you (as if it is theirs to mind) but send love and not more judgement to those that may judge you. (She simply told him she was wearing it as a sign of strength, and for his protection.)



It’s your job to take care of yourself in “the new abnormal.” There are many that need you, love you, and need to be petted. And, the furry ones are great examples for how to accept and adapt to change. I hope that you are learning, adapting and not fighting the changes that have entered our lives.

Learn some new skills, and bring out some old ones as well. My wife is learning to kick her left leg when I rub her neck in just the right spot. I think she is faking it to make her neck rub last longer, but I don’t care—it makes us both laugh and seems to confuse the dogs.

