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**In-Home Services:** Animal Communication, Dog Behavior, Reiki

### **Puppy Love by Lorraine May, M.A.**

In the United States, we love puppies and puppies love us. The power of these mutually beneficial relationships warms our hearts, compels us to spend gazillions of dollars, and improves our health and quality of life.

If this is true, then why are we seeing so many 10 month to 2 year old dogs in shelters, no longer adored? Why do people fall out of love, willing to give up on a being they recently could not live without, relegating them to a cage, temporary home, or worse, unless someone else commits to their care, which often includes rehabilitation?

There are, of course, as many reasons as there are individuals, ranging from relocation and financial issues, to life changes and changes of heart. The reasons I will focus on in this article relate to the life saving benefits and ethical responsibilities of education and training - training early and training well. It doesn't have to be like this.

*Loving a puppy is not enough!*

\*Educate yourself and plan - this could be a 15 year commitment to a living being. Learn what puppies need developmentally to grow healthy and confident and socialized to our human world. It does not happen automatically.

\*Choose your puppy well - what fits for your family and lifestyle. Most shelters and rescue groups have knowledgeable adoption counselors who can assist in a forever match.

\*Utilize the experts - create relationships with professionals you trust: veterinarian, homeopath, holistic or Reiki practitioner, groomer, trainer, acupressurist, massage provider, animal communicator, chiropractor, kennel owner.

\*Training as part of real life - what does your dog need to know to have a happy life? Do you expect her to take walks, jog with you, go to dog parks or day care, spend quiet time while you work, play games, get along with your friends' dogs, be safe with children? It is your ethical responsibility to teach this, or to have someone help you, so it makes sense and is relevant to your dog.

\*Behavioral problems need to be assessed and addressed immediately - what may be considered cute behavior for a puppy may be considered extremely annoying or even dangerous behavior in a mature dog. It just isn't fair to wait for the problem to resolve on its own. In some circumstances there may even be an urgent underlying medical cause.

\*Don't give up! Remember, you have enjoyed and benefited from this first amazingly adorable year of your dog's life; if you don't want him anymore, what makes you think someone else will? Please, get help.

The following highly recommended books and booklets are positive and user friendly. You can order most through our Dogwise link and Misha May benefits <http://www.mishamayfoundation.org/shop.html>.

#### *Specifically Puppy:*

Your Outta Control Puppy: how to turn your precocious pup into a perfect pet! - Teoti Anderson

Puppy Primer - Patricia McConnell

Way To Go!: how to housetrain a dog of any age - Patricia McConnell

#### *Specific Training and Behavior Issues:*

Mine!: a practical guide to resource guarding in dogs - Jean Donaldson

Beginning Family Dog Training - Patricia McConnell

The Cautious Canine: how to help dogs conquer their fears - Patricia McConnell

Feeling Outnumbered?: how to manage and enjoy your multi-dog household - Patricia McConnell

Feisty Fido: help for the leash aggressive dog - Patricia McConnell

I'll Be Home Soon: how to prevent and treat separation anxiety - Patricia McConnell

#### *About Dogs:*

Dogs are From Neptune: candid answers to urgent questions about aggression and other aspects of dog behavior - Donaldson

Inside of a Dog - Alexandra Horowitz

Culture Clash: a revolutionary new way of understanding the relationship between humans & dogs - Jean Donaldson

The Dog's Mind: an inclusive and relevant book on how the canine mind works - Bruce Fogle, DVM

On Talking Terms with Dogs: calming signals - Turid Rugaas