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## What A Puppy Taught Me

by Rebbie Straubing

We have a new little nine-week-old puppy who likes to bark all night. His sense of hygiene is noticeably lacking and he wants to eat electrical wires. I have to admit I find myself having thoughts like, "I can't wait 'til he's housetrained." Or "Things will be better when he's not chewing on everything."

First I couldn't wait to get the puppy. Now I can't wait until the puppy behaves better. It doesn't take a great mind to see the pattern here. If I continue as I'm going, we can easily predict that once the puppy is trained I'll be dissatisfied with something

else and will once again think the future holds the key to my happiness. Any fun-loving, in-the-moment, happy-go-lucky puppy can plainly see that I am the one in need of better training!

I'll be happy when... Every time little Yogi begins to relieve himself in the house, I scoop him up and bring him outside to show him where nature's bathroom is. My training begins right here.

Why my training? Because every time Yogi thinks the house is his bathroom, I become a resistant, future-focused puppy-of-life in need of some training. I become a member of the "I'll be happy when..." club. I fall into the trap of thinking I have to wait until Yogi is house-trained before I can be happy. I have traded in the richness of my moment for an empty bucket of future.

I look at Yogi and he becomes my trainer. He wags. He is happy as can be no matter what. It makes absolutely no difference to him what is going on because he is just happy.

Lesson #1 of my training: Every time I catch myself beginning to think the future is a better place than the pooped-filled now, I scoop up my attention and find something to wag about.

Rug Fringe. Few things get Yogi to chomp as wildly as the fringe on the rug. He can flip the corner of the heavy wool rug like a pro. This provides the perfect arrangement for his favorite pastime: fringe-chewing.

He has a toy that has a fringe. Why won't he just chew on that? Every time he grabs the rug with his little pin-sharp teeth, I replace the rug fringe with the brightly colored fringe toy. He gets very happy with the toy until he sees the rug. Then he drops the toy like a hot potato and pounces on the rug fringe. I replace it with the toy. We do this over and over.

Lesson #2 of my training: Every time I catch myself chewing on what I'm unhappy about, I replace my focus with something I appreciate. I get very happy in my state of appreciation until I see or remember what I don't like. Then my mind pounces on the frustrating, aggravating aspects of my moment. I bump that focus and replace it again with something I appreciate. I do this over and over.

A loud noise. Sometimes it takes a loud noise to get Yogi's attention when he's about to eat something like a rock or a cell phone charger. Things that seem delicious in the moment but that he'd probably regret later. The loud noise breaks the momentum that is carrying him toward the pseudo-food. This gives me a split second to introduce the little blue cloth elephant whose ears are just right for chewing.

Lesson #3 of my training. When I've got some momentum going in a direction that I don't really want to go, I startle my-self out of it just long enough to choose a more nourishing focus. How do I startle myself? I remind myself of the price I'm paying for my choice of rejecting the moment. When I remember that the now is really all I've got and I'm spending it on the angst of disconnection, I come to my senses. I realize that this aggravation is way too expensive. Then I have a brief moment to turn my attention to something I appreciate.

Your current challenge may not be as warm and cuddly as mine but I invite you to join me in the puppy-of-life training program:

1. When you find yourself thinking, "I'll be happy when..." trade in your lackful, future-oriented focus for something you appreciate now.
2. Keep doing it every time you start chewing on the problem.
3. Startle yourself by remembering that the now is all you've got and then find more things to appreciate right now.

Before you know it, you'll be well trained and you'll be able to take yourself just about anywhere and find lots of great moments to enjoy.

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Dr. Rebbie Straubing is the author of the on-line program, Miracle Tools for Great Relationships, available at [www.GreatRelationships.net](http://www.GreatRelationships.net). Her free e-course, 7 Secrets for Manifesting Your Heart's Desire is available at [www.YOFA.net](http://www.YOFA.net) and her new meditation recordings are available at [www.AffirmativeContemplation.com](http://www.AffirmativeContemplation.com). To get news and updates on Rebbie's offerings, send a blank e-mail to [yofa@GoldenReports.com](mailto:yofa@GoldenReports.com).

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