



PET PATHS®

PETential Paths L.L.C.

Volume III, Issue III
Fall 2009



Fall is here! And Winter is not far behind, is it?
Hope you have a lot to be thankful for this
Thanksgiving ... Enjoy!

*Please let us know if there is anything else
you would like to see in the
newsletter, because, after all, it is for YOU!*



Pebbles, Executive Editor

Let's Talk Cats!

From time to time we will bring you this column that is designed to cover subjects that could be helpful for your cat. The idea is to alert you for products or services that will be of benefit in the care of your felines, and warn you against problems we find that could be harmful.

And the first falls in that latter category of something that could be harmful ... **Hairballs**. Probably nothing in the animal kingdom, at least as far as cats are concerned, is the butt of more jokes than hairballs. It has been associated with everything from hard rock music to a Sci-Fi blog on the Internet.

Most cat owners realize how their pet swallows fur while grooming, but some aren't aware that this hair is only partially digested in some cases and may continue to collect. If the hairball is too large to digest, it could cause blockage that is life-threatening. Normally the cat will either vomit the hair or it passes in

the stool. Warning signs include retching not resulting in getting rid of the hairball, regular diarrhea, and a loss of appetite.



You've all heard about how you can prevent hairballs by adding petroleum jelly to their food, or purchase a commercial hairball remedy. To prevent hairballs, though, the best thing to do is provide good nutrition for Cleo to begin with. We are not experts in the field of nutrition, but there are numerous books and other sources that you can access.

Having said that, one TTouch you can use in the case of hairballs is the Belly Lift. This not only helps to de-stress your cat by easing her tight belly where stress is often held, but it is also useful for digestive problems. Using your open hand on her abdomen behind her elbows, "containing" her with your other hand in front of her chest, lift up slowly and gently (not lifting her off of her feet and using very little

pressure!). Pause (important!), and then release gently and s-l-o-w-l-y. The rule of thumb is to release twice the amount of time as the lift (e.g., 4 seconds up, 8 seconds down). Releasing slowly is important in order to be effective. Then move one hand-width back on her belly and repeat this process. (Generally we are able to do two on cats—unless they are very small, then one is sufficient.) Note: please take care not to do this TTouch while Kitty is in distress with vomiting, coughing, etc.

Hope your cat stays hairball-free with a good diet and a lot of brushing! But it's good to know that you are not helpless in the fight against hairballs.

"When we say "containing" animals, we are not forcing them to stay in place but rather using our free hand to provide a kind of border in which to contain them. We always say "meet them where they are," so if they move forward, move your hand with them and gently ease them back to you. It is never about force.

Inside this issue:

Let's Talk Cats!	1
Calming Signals,	1-2
Tips & Tails	1
The Golden Rule	2
Linda Says	2
Events	2

Tips & Tails

- When doing TTouch, remember to have both hands connected to the animal in some way to make the circuit complete.
- Keep it positive! Ask the animal what you do want it to do, rather than what you do not want them to do. Picture good things happening, and see how behavior changes.

Calming Signals ... the Language of Peace - Part II

In Part 1 of this two-part series, it was emphasized just how important communications is between animals and humans, just as it is with human to human and animal to animal. With humans there are several ways of accomplishing this, particularly the verbal aspect of talking things out, but our four-legged friends don't share this sensory method so it is up to us to learn their language. And it isn't really hard when you grasp a few basics.

For instance, in a canine pack, members must talk to each other and they do this through sensory input. This consists of visual, sense of smell and auditory, numbering around 30 ap-

proaches, while some dogs have a much larger vocabulary. It is up to the animal owner to realize how these methods work. Failing to do so could result in the animal giving up on the calming signals, possibly turning their frustration into aggressiveness or stress.

In reviewing Part 1 basics, major threatening signals to your dog are to walk right at him or her, bending over to reach for the animal, and worst of all, looking right into their eyes. They will usually respond with calming signals already covered in Part 1 such as yawning, licking, turning away or the play bow, all designed to let you know that something is wrong.

Other signals include choosing to sniff the ground, a method used by dogs when outside walking and someone approaches them, or generally in areas where it is noisy with a lot going on. It can also happen when the animal feels intimidated. Watch your dog in these instances and if you see the slightest drop of the nose to the ground, or turning his side to the one approaching, followed by sniffing, that is a sign.

High rates threatening the result of



of speed are to some dogs, hunting behavior when someone

(Continued on page 2)

PETential Paths L.L.C.

Barbara Dunning
Guild Certified
Tellington TTouch® Practitioner
Cave Creek, AZ

Phone: 602-793-7277
Email barb.PETentialPaths@cox.net

We're on the Web!
www.PETentialPaths.com

EVENTS

KPMG Adopt-a-thon, Saturday, November 14, 2009, from 10 am to 3 pm at the Mesa Riverview Mall, located at the 202 and Dobson. <http://www.pacc911.org/Adopt-A-Thons.html>

Earnhardt Paws for the Holidays Adopt-a-thon, Saturday, December 12, 2009, 10 am to 4 pm. <http://www.pacc911.org/Adopt-A-Thons.html>

6th Annual Walk 'n Roll Dog Walk & Silent Auction, Saturday, January 30, 2010, 10 am to 2 pm at Tempe Town Lake. <http://www.walkrolldogwalk.org/>

2010 Heart to Heart Pet-a-rama, Sunday, February 14, 2010, 9 am to 2 pm at Steele Indian School Park in Phoenix. <http://www.hearttoheartpetarama.com/>

More TTouch workshops and demos are in the planning stages! Let us know if you want to host a workshop or free demo at your place, for dogs, cats, rabbits, & other companion animals. Workshop hosts will be able to attend at no charge! Contact Barb at barb.PETentialPaths@cox.net.



Jasmine

The Golden Rule

How do you approach teaching your dog obedience? Do you see it as "me versus him"? Or do you think of it as a partnership between two intelligent beings? In TTouch, we feel the latter is true and the more humane way to train animals. As Kathy Cascade, one of our wonderful and very talented Tellington TTouch® trainers said, "TTouch is a perfect example of active compassion."

I believe in the Golden Rule. And if you treat your dog with kindness and respect, you will see how cooperative he can be. Sure, there are those "out there" who think that we should rule and dominate the animals. And, yes, that method may get results, but at what cost? Do you really want your dog to be afraid of you? She might do everything you teach her, but then the relationship is lacking in the mutual love and respect we humans so desire. Further, we all know what fear can bring out in an ani-

mal if given the right circumstances ... aggression. This is all so negative and unnecessary.

We love our animals and want them to be happy ... and at the same time have good manners. Right?

If you try TTouch you will see the difference in your animal, and the rewards are countless. He'll have more trust in you, and therefore will be more cooperative. Your animal actually "learns to learn," and once he learns, the cells will "remember." And he will love you for your patience and respect!

Why not try it? It's gentle, and it won't hurt. It may be just the thing your dog needs!



"A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions." -Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Linda Says ...

"Look at the problem through your [animal's] eyes."

"Remember your perfection and trust yourself."

"I do think that insensitivity to animals begins with not having a connection with one's own emotions."



Calming Signals Continued from Page 1

is running straight at the dog they will go into a defense mechanism. Walking slowly is a calming signal used by insecure dogs, and the owner should immediately condition their pace accordingly. Using the slower approach also applies across the board to all calming signals. If your dog responds slowly when you call him, check your tone of voice, or maybe if each time you call him it results in something he doesn't like, perhaps putting him on a leash.



Almost everyone has experi-

enced their pet freezing on the spot. Once again thought to be tied in with hunting behavior based on the movement of their prey, dogs often do this when chasing cats. However, there are several situations where this might be used, one in particular if you act angry or become aggressive toward the animal, which poses an immediate threat. Their freezing action is meant to change your mood to good. If your dog wants to stop when someone approaches, let him.

Sitting down, turning the back, lifting paw, alone or in combination, may be a signal that the dog wants the human or other dog to



perhaps "cool it" and stop doing what they are doing to stress him.

Walking in a curve is a calming signal frequently used when meeting other dogs. If you're out and walking straight at someone, the animal's instincts tell him that is wrong, and if forced, will result in him feeling anxious or actually becoming defensive, possibly leading to aggressiveness. You should let your dog walk in a curve around a meeting dog by keeping the leash loose and let the animal make the decision. Use the walking-in-a-curve method also for approaching aggressive dogs.



Other calming signals include wagging the tail when the animal is obviously not happy, smacking the lips, and lying down with the belly toward the ground.

These are just a few of the ways your dog will

attempt to communicate with you to express their feelings of companionship in a relationship that can be truly rewarding when you work together. The most important aspect of this communication is for the owner to recognize what their dog is saying to them and respond with the appropriate human signal.

If you want to learn more about calming signals, be sure to read Turid Rugaas' books: *Calming Signals—What Your Dog Tells You* and *On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals*.

