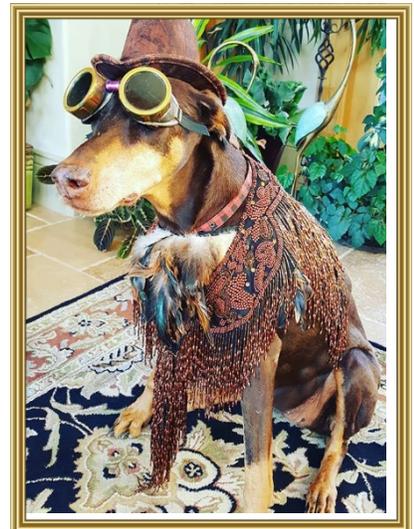
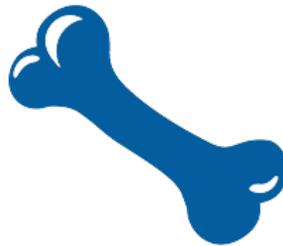
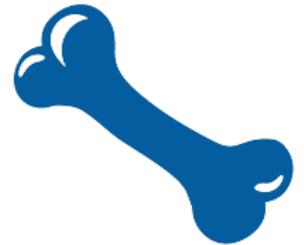
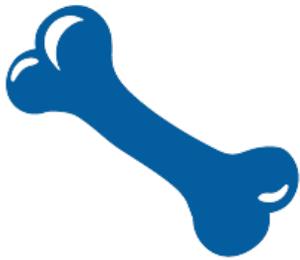


# Ask Emily



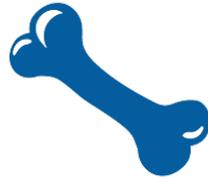
no love like  
**DÖG LÖVE**



## Preface

This little booklet is a compilation of the “Ask Emily” columns that appeared in our Resilience, Inc. newsletters over the past four years. We offer this to you as a gift from Emily. Please feel free to download it, even print it out, give copies of it to your friends, and send it to those who need their spirits revived.

Thanks again to all of you who wrote to me, expressing sympathy at Emily’s passing and sharing your own stories of saying good bye to a pet.



## Forward

My physical relationship with Emily spanned 12 years and it continues today in spirit. She came to live with us on Thanksgiving, 2006 and departed close to Thanksgiving, 2018. During that time she was my beloved companion, a trusted friend, and often a muse for my writing.

Over the last four years, on a monthly basis, I gave Emily a voice through her advice column, “Ask Emily” in our monthly Resilience newsletter. Other dogs (even a few cats) would write for advice and I would try to put myself in Emily’s skin, and answer from the heart of who I knew her to be, giving it as much of a recovery spin as I could. It was often more fun than writing just from my own perspective, and probably to read too. Readers often commented that the first thing they did when they got the newsletter was to scroll down to Emily’s column and see what she was wearing (she always liked to dress up for her picture each month) and what she had to say. Then, if they had time, they would read my comments and some of our “Rise and Shine” news.

A little-known fact is that our newsletter was not Emily’s first foray into the literary world. In 2009 I wrote a book entitled *Offering Wellness: A New Generation of Mental Health Services*. The book clearly needed some character that could create interest and make the reading more fun. So, there was Emily, and she was both *a character* and *very fun*. This was the first experience I had of getting into her skin and offering some fun and a little attitude to the book. By the final draft, she had written a paragraph at the beginning of each chapter. Below is her contribution to the first chapter in *Offering Wellness*.

*Hello,*

*Emily here! I’ll be tagging along as you journey through this book. If you have a good imagination you may get a few whiffs of dog breath along the way, and even see some imaginary dog hairs on your coat tail from time to time.*

*My assignment is to help you have a good time on the journey. You’ll learn how to seize the moment and avoid chasing your tail or barking up the wrong tree. You’ll also find out how to create wellness services without having the tail wag the dog.*

*You'll find now is not the time to let sleeping dogs lie. The time for developing wellness services couldn't be better. Oh, you may get in the dog house now and then, but just shake it off and keep moving.*

*Happy tails,*

*Emily*

There are 12 chapters in the book and Emily comments on each topic before the reader has a chance to get bored. It's a very fun read.



## **Introduction**

As mentioned in the preface, I first met Emily around Thanksgiving of 2006. My friend Karin knew I was looking for a Doberman rescue since my last Dobie had passed away of a blood disease that is common for Dobermans. Karin found her on line –she was in a shelter/rescue center in Colorado. She had been found in a rural area, skin and bones, and very hyper and frightened. The shelter thought maybe she had been traveling with her family and had wandered off when they made a stop along their journey.

Karin connected with the shelter and found that this Dobie was about one and a half to two years old. The center sent a picture and it was love at first sight. Miraculously, the Doberman folks were making a trip to Arizona the next week to attend a dog show and they could bring this dog along with them. She didn't have a name – they just called her "Red."

A few days later, "Red" was delivered and the adventure began. She was very wild and crazy. After the first couple of days, my husband Gene rewrote the story of the lost Doberman. He decided that she had not wandered off from her family, but that they had dumped her because she was so wild and unreasonable.

I named my first Dobie "Lillian" after my grandmother. Her sister's name was "Emily" so naming "Red" after my aunt Emily seemed like the thing to do. It was a sweet name, as was my aunt Emily. However, the first few weeks spent with Emily the dog were anything but sweet. She was so wild and out of control – she basically terrorized us. My neighbor, Roy, kept telling me that Emily was going to turn out to be a really good dog. He said it might take some time.

Finally, Gene got to the point of saying, "It's either me or that dog!" So, I hired a trainer to come to our house and work with Emily and me to see if we could begin to communicate and establish a reasonable relationship. After several hours, clickers, treats, and a few other dog management tools, nothing seemed to work. A couple of her other bad habits were biting people and chasing cars. I kept saying,

“Well at least she doesn’t dig things up in the yard and she doesn’t chew our shoes.” These positive qualities paled in the face of her less attractive characteristics.

Looking beyond her behavior, I could see what Roy was seeing. I saw a being who really wanted to get things right but didn’t know how. She was also suffering from a serious case of PTSD and was very fearful. I didn’t know how to bring out that good dog that was hiding inside of her. The training certainly hadn’t helped so I just decided to love her. That’s all I could figure out to do. Once I started loving her unconditionally (even after buying a woman a new jacket because Emily bit a hole in the one she was wearing) she began to change. She calmed down. She was very smart and once she was able to listen, she tried to cooperate.

So that’s how it all began. A rough start but well worth it given the great love she had to offer. Emily seemed very interested in everything I did so it wasn’t hard to begin including her in things. Chris Martin and his son made a video of her that we use in our training sessions (on YouTube) and as mentioned in the preface, she contributed a paragraph to each chapter of a book I wrote. It was a natural next step to give her a voice in our monthly newsletter, and she had quite a following of dogs, humans and even a few cats.

I hope you enjoy the following columns and that Emily’s amazing spirit can live on, giving us all some joy and some escape from the harsher moments in our lives.



## October 2015

Hello Folks,

As you can see, I'm getting ready for Halloween – Yes – I know I look like Lady Gaga. I will be finding out if in fact “blondes DO have more fun”. In the meantime, if any of you wish to send your treats to me through the mail, feel free. You still have a couple of weeks to get them in to me, AND I will gladly accept late treats if you want to re-gift anything you got while trick or treating.

This month we have a question from my Friend, Mazi (Mazi is pictured below), who is the guard dog at the Recovery Empowerment Network (REN) in Phoenix.

Dear Emily,

I have a new opportunity that I am both excited about and also a little worried about. Our Center is starting a new program for young people (The humans are calling it TAY). I'm looking forward to playing with them but wonder if they will like me. Can you give me some advice on how to make new friends that are sort of young?

Dear Mazi,



It's not always easy to make new friends. I'm not totally good at this myself. I have learned a few things from watching humans make friends with each other. The ones who are good at it seem genuinely interested in those they want to make friends with. They don't seem to be thinking about themselves, but are more interested in the other human. They also take the first step by reaching out to others. They smile a lot and are open minded. I guess the basic advice I have for you is to be interested in the humans you want to make friends with. Look at them quizzically and see if

they will open up. Some humans are more comfortable with dogs than they are with each other, so you could offer a lot of comfort and reassurance to the new comers. When they tell you that you are cute and pet you, smile back at them so they know you appreciate their kindness. This seems to work with humans no matter what age they are.

Emily



## November 2015

Hi Folks, and happy Fall! As you can see I'm dressed in my winter coat and hat and ready for cooler weather. I'm especially ready for Thanksgiving since there are always lots of treats available (under the table, so to speak).

This month we have a question from one of my cat friends, Tess. Beth Stoneking works for Tess and is a responsible staff person, carrying out all orders with reliability.

Dear Emily,

"I am a four month old kitten. Something happened when I was a baby, but I don't know what. My brother, sister and I found ourselves in a cage, huddled together and in the dark mostly. I ended up with this human who loves, feeds and plays with me. I am afraid sometimes and have trust issues, but she is unwavering in her love and care for me. Is this what you call resilience, Emily? Will I be okay?" Tess (now 4 months old).

Hello Tess,

None of us get through life without having some hard times, and yours started out early, as did mine. I was rescued just as you were, so we can give each other a little peer support. Before I began my recovery journey I had established some very bad habits that took time to get over. Sounds like you nipped yours in the bud before they developed into habits that were hard to break. Good for you!

You're right about resilience. By having the courage to trust your staff, you are building resilience. Resilience is not just about bouncing back, but more about springing forward – getting stronger than you were before you experienced a hard time.

Yes, I think you will be OK, but it's entirely up to you. If you keep being courageous enough to accept the love that is being offered to you, you will definitely get better, and not get bitter.

Be strong little one, Emily



**December 2015**

Hello Folks,

As you can see....I am all decked out in my Christmas Best!! Sincere wishes for a wonderful holiday season to all of you!!

This month, I have a question from a dear friend of mine, Fletcher.

Dear Emily,

I, Fletcher Dolezal, am an award winning therapy dog partnering with Cheri Dolezal and her husband Jerry. I have a large following and have had a full career. I'm particularly fond of peers and make a point to meet them when they start a new job. I could retire but I still have so much to do. I have a new little sister, Emma, who could eventually take my place, but I don't think I'm through yet. What should I do?



Dear Fletcher,

So good to hear from you again. I have given thoughtful attention to your question. Yes, you have made a great contribution. But getting old has little to do with stopping the important work you do. As long as you enjoy your work, I'd say keep doing it. You know more now than you ever have, so the older you get the more you have to offer.



Also, this is not my place to say, but from what I've heard about your little sister, she is not even close to being able to take over for you. She's just a kid. I hear she's still stealing food off the counter and also uses the pool cover for a trampoline.

It's important to pass on what we know to the younger ones so they don't make the same mistakes we did. This is your chance to help Emma become a star and make the same contribution you have made. Good luck my friend and have a Merry Christmas.

Emily

January 2016

Hello Friends,

As you can see from my picture, I had a quite a grand time on New Year's Eve. I am however glad that I only get dressed up in sequins and feathers once a year. This month we have a question from my friend Annie about fear. Fear can strangle the strongest among us. We all feel its gnarly fingers strangling us from time to time.

Dear Emily,

I am afraid a lot. Before I was rescued by one of the most wonderful women in the world, Sue Bergeson, the only people I know were mean and scary! Even now I still run away if mom wants to pick me up. Can you help?

Love Andromeda

(Annie for friends like you!)



Dear Annie,

I'm a rescue dog myself so I know how paralyzing fear can be. We learned to be afraid from hurtful things and it caused us to "fight or flea" but now it just gets in the way of us having a loving relationship with those who care about us. I advise you to be brave and do the things that scare you. Courage is about feeling scared, and then doing what you are afraid of anyway. You can do this Annie. You are a strong girl. It's worth it.

Emily

## February 2016

Hello Readers,

I hope you're all set for a great Valentine's Day. I can't get anyone to give me chocolate, but I usually get a special biscuit with fake hearts on it. It's all good. Anyway, this month we have a question from Mugsley and Pugsley, also known as "The men in black". They live with Rita Cronise and her husband in New York. I hope to meet them in person someday because they are so darn cute. So here's their question:

Dear Emily,

As you can see from our picture, we are short. We were OK with this until a few months ago. We were walking in the park and we saw a tall dog playing Frisbee. It looked like so much fun. We tried to join in but were just too short. No way could we jump high enough to catch that darn thing. This makes us sad. What to do?

Dear Mugsley and Pugsley,

AKA men in black, I know what you mean. I used to live with a poodle and she was so glamorous. She had red curly hair and a magnetic personality. I would compare myself to her and just feel awful about my short brown hair and my inability to make friends readily. I really learned how dog-gone miserable I can make myself when I compare myself to others. We are each unique and have our own special gifts. My short brown hair doesn't show up on our brown couch. My loud (some would say agitating) bark may not win a lot of friends, but I get a lot of attention that I can turn into an opportunity to connect with others. Also, just want to point out that there are disadvantages to all of our strengths. For example, being a tall dog, I can't fit in a carrier and almost never get to go on planes. So you guys may be short and not born to be Frisbee champions, but you have other strengths that are wonderful. Make a list and you'll see what I mean. Good luck to the men in black,



Emily



## March 2016

Hello Everyone!!

I'm dressed in my St Patrick's Day outfit to remind you to wear green on the 17th. Wouldn't want any of you to get pinched. Hope you all have a great month, especially on St Patty's Day. I'm already drooling over the prospect of corned beef. Anyway, enough of that. Our guest this month is the lovely blond dog in the picture you see here. She has two kindly black family members as you can see. These three lovely creatures take care of Jill Rowland who is a leading force in the behavioral health scene in Phoenix, Az.

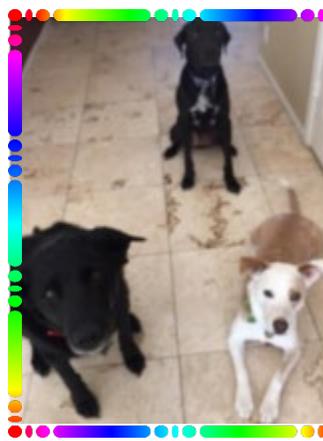


Dear Emily, I have recently joined the Rowland Family. They are very nice people and I think my two dog-mates are nice too. However, I just don't feel like I fit in yet. I don't know the unspoken rules. Can you help me figure out how to find my place in my family?

New Girl

Dear "New Girl,"

Thanks for your question. A lot of us have gone through this when we join a family when we are already grown up. It's easier for kids I think. I went through this myself when I joined my



current family. You seem to have a sweet disposition, so you won't have to get over bad behaviors to fit in. I do have some advice. First of all, be respectful of your new dog-mates, but don't take any crap off of them. If you respect them, they need to respect you too. Try not to be mean about this, just be firm. And of course, the key to all of this working is to love them. Somehow this is the magic that moves us beyond all of our insecurities. Also, it is important to remember that humans go through this too when they join a new group. It's just part of the process. So be strong, yet gentle, you don't have to be the "top dog" or the "under dog." Just be yourself and let your light shine.

Emily

April 2016

Happy Easter Everyone,

Yes, this is last year's Easter outfit! It still fits! I decided to wear my cat-eye glasses for this picture since I am chatting with a very special cat this month. You'll see how relaxed "Momma Cat" looks in her picture, but don't let that fool you. Inside this portrait of serenity boils a cauldron of frustration that I think most of us can all relate to. In spite of being in the lovely family of Deborah DeMasse-Snell, who is the Designated Federal Official for the Center for Mental Health Services' Mental Health National Advisory Council, Momma Cat, otherwise known as "Precious-which she isn't" is frustrated. Let's see if we can be of any assistance.



Dear Emily,

As you can see from my photo, I'm trying to relax on a book entitled "20 Minute Retreats". And, as you can also see, I am trying to take a retreat by napping my frustrations and anxieties away. There must be a better approach. This one is making me fat and lazy. The source of my frustration is that I have a hard time getting the humans in this family to understand me and what I want. They are a bright bunch, but they just don't get me. I need some advice.

Please help.

Yours in frustration,

Momma Cat.

Dear Frustrated MC,

Part of the problem could be just that – you are trying to MC everything. I don't mean to do any "feline profiling" but you cats do have a way of taking charge and running the show. I suggest you begin with a little self-reflection. Ask yourself if you are being reasonable in your expectations. Much to my own disappointment, I find that humans are not good at mind-reading, even other humans. Once you've taken a closer look at yourself and your expectations, here are some pointers that have helped me a lot in my relationships with humans and other species as well:



- To have a friend, be a friend. If we want understanding from others, we can start by being the first to extend it.
- Get up from your book and start doing things that interest others. Once others are interested in you they are much more willing to try and figure out how to be with you in mutually satisfying ways.
- Try purring more often, even when you don't feel like it. Humans seem to be drawn to happiness, especially when they are not very happy themselves. This is a gift you can give them and in exchange, they may just begin to look for ways to make you happier. I wish dogs could purr. It's a great form of communication!

OK MC, I wish you the best and hope you can use this advice to create a frustration-free relationship with your family.

Emily

**May 2016**

Hi Folks,

April showers bring May flowers!! I love this time of year – as you can tell because I’m wearing some beautiful flowers....and looking gorgeous I might add. This month we have a question from a new friend, Janus, who lives with Joanna Davis in Texas. Janus is a beautiful 2 year old Labrador Retriever who was recently adopted. As you can see, Janus has made herself right at home and loves her new family.

Dear Emily,

I recently moved in with my new family and really feel like I’m fitting in and adjusting well to my new surroundings. My Mom says that our match is “picture perfect” and that I’m “spoiled rotten.” When I first arrived, my Mom took me to the doctor for a check-up. All was well and I was given a clean bill of health. I was given a new heartworm medication and I think it is making my skin itchy. Should I be concerned?

Feeling scratchy,

Janus

Dear FS Janus,

Well.....April showers do bring May flowers....and sometimes new medication brings itchy skin.



Okay – so I never said I was a poet. Anyway, using heartworm medication can be connected to skin allergies. Any time we start a new medication it is important to understand the potential side effects, proper dosage and when we should take it. If your itchy skin continues – make sure you scratch right in front of your Mom so that she understands what you are feeling. And if need be, another trip to the doctor is in order to make sure this is the right medication for you. Congratulations on your new family!

Emily



## June 2016

Hi Folks,

“If you’re going to San Francisco, be sure and wear some flowers in your Hair.” Yes, it’s been 49 years since 1967, “the summer of love”. I thought it would be great to have another one this summer so I got my “flower child gear” out and I’m ready to go. We don’t have to repeat the last one, we could love each other more this time around.

And speaking of love, this month we have a question from a very loving fellow, Caleb, who happens to be the guardian of Bill and Camille Anthony.

Dear Emily,

I love my home and I love my humans. Sometimes, I just don’t want to be alone. I get jittery and sometimes frazzled when my family leaves me by myself. I find that I begin doing things that get me in a bit of hot water. I’m not sure what is happening. Like, just last week....I was home alone and before you know it....there was a big hole in the living room couch. I didn’t mean to do....REALLY!! What can I do?

Signed,

Caleb



Dear Caleb,

I can totally relate!! I was a rescue dog and I initially had some fears that resulted in bad habits. Getting used to being alone at home can take time and....I have done my share of couch cushion eating and toilet paper shredding. My mom introduced me to the Five Steps of Resilience. One of the steps is “Facing Fears.” Find comfort in knowing that everyone experiences fear at some point. Our fears will not go away as long as we continue to grow them. So, we must face our fears head on!! When we do this, we push through to resilience.

Good luck my friend!! Flower Child Power and Peace,

Emily

**July 2016**

Hi Folks!!

As you can see, I am patriotic from head to....tail!! Wishing you all a happy and safe 4th of July!! This month's question comes from Mija, who lives with Dale Jarvis. Dale Jarvis - of Dale Jarvis Consulting - is a CPA and premiere expert who for the last several decades has been consulting with behavioral health organizations and systems of care with a focus on managed care and system reform.

Dear Emily,

My name is Mija and my dad is Dale Jarvis. Yes, it's true....he's my dad. He's very important. I can tell because I go to meetings with him and he often stands in the front of the room. Everyone listens closely to what he says. I try to help him out by doing my "meet and greet" to as many of the people in the audience as I can. Most humans like this, but there are a few that don't seem interested. I can't figure this out. How can I do a better job of helping my dad by getting people to smile and be playful?



Oh – and – if you don't mind – I have a second question that I'd like to share with you. I live in Seattle and everyone thinks it's fun to shoot off fireworks around the 4th of July. Whenever one goes off, it scares me to death. I just can take it. And I'm afraid this is going to go on all month. What should I do?

Mija

Dear Mija,



Good questions.

Regarding your first question, I wish I was a good at this, but I'm just now learning how to do this myself. What I've learned so far is that humans don't like to be sniffed, so try to stay away from that, or do it covertly. The other thing I've noticed is that humans can be shown how to act. If you role model happiness and playfulness, they will smile back and talk baby-talk to you. That's a good start. The truth is, lots of humans have forgotten how to play. They take themselves very seriously. This makes it harder for them to hear

what your dad is saying because they are caught up in thinking about themselves. So the more you can get them to smile and play, the easier it will be for them to learn new things. Good luck with this and don't get discouraged.

Second, I hear you loud and clear!! Fireworks appear to be one of those things that humans do as a play activity. I don't get it either – but here are some things that I have done in the past that have helped me on the 4th of July and whenever I hear the “boom, boom, boom” of fireworks. It always makes me feel safe when I am close to my family when I hear those sounds – so generally I snuggle up to my mom and she reassures me that all is okay. If I am at the house by myself when I hear the rumbling of fireworks, I do best when I am in my favorite spot in the house – usually my comfy bed. Stay strong and resilient my friend and before you know it – July 4th will be over for another year!!

Yours in playfulness,

Emily

August 2016

Hello Folks,

I hope you aren't letting the dog-days of summer get you down. I've decided to add a little kick to my summer by going to the August fair and the rodeo. There are lots of smells at a rodeo and I'm going to sniff everything!! This month we have a question from one of the cutest guys I know, Mr. Steinbeck. Mr. Steinbeck is a lucky dog! For the last several years (not telling you his age) He has been a key supporter for Keris Myrick, Director Office of Consumer Affairs at Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Dearest Emily,

We haven't barked to each other for a while –hope you remember me. Anyway, I need your advice. I'm worried that my mom, Keris, is working too much. She's very tired when she gets home. I've tried to role-model nap-taking for her but she doesn't seem to get it. How can I support her to work less and play ball more?

Steinbeck

Hi Steinbeck,

I wouldn't forget that cute face of yours in a million years! You are unforgettable. Anyway, about your mom. I've had to face the same issues with my humans. I too have role modeled napping over and over again and they just don't get it. My humans have a friend, Bill Anthony, who wrote a book about napping. See if you can get your mom to order it. It's got some good tips in it. Humans will never be as good at napping as we dogs are but they can learn – you can teach old humans new tricks! My humans are old and they learn new things all the time, so hang in there my friend. Sometimes you can get them to take a nap with you. You know that saying, "If you lie down with dogs you get fleas" – well, it's not true. That should be reassuring.

Hope to see you again soon.

Emily



## September 2016

Since my guest this month is a fan of Snoopy, I am honoring this hero by dressing up as the Red Baron. Yes I know, the Red Baron was Snoopy's nemesis, but I think the Red Baron brought out the best in Snoopy – taught him how to stand up for himself and to fight for truth, justice and the American way. Without the Red Baron, we would have never known what strength of character Snoopy has, what endurance and commitment to a cause. Every Sunday for many years Snoopy, the World War I Flying Ace, prepared to battle the Red Baron with sincere diligence in the Peanuts cartoon.

This fan of Snoopy, JJ Kuehn-Williams, has been a service dog at Crestwood along with his partner Gitane Williams, who is the Vocational Wellness Educator. They have a solid working partnership and do good work together.



Dear Emily,

I need your advice. If “Snoopy” was here - I would ask him. You will have to do. We here at Crestwood are talking a lot about transformation. I don't really know what we mean by it even though I have my ears perked up – dog-eared you might say. So tell me, what the heck is transformation?

Dear JJ, Fan of Snoopy,

This is a good question. I think a lot of humans really don't know what it means, but they dare not let on. I learned about transformation from caterpillars and frogs.

I thought caterpillars had the corner as nature's demonstration of transformation – going from caterpillar, to cocoon, to lovely flying fluttering beauties. But I now know that frogs run them a close second. Frogs begin as a slimy little egg floating in a pond and soon become a tadpole with gills. Then as they grow, legs and arms form, their tail falls off and they emerge into a new being that can do both land and water. We have a lot to learn about transformation from both butterflies and frogs. First, with both of these little demonstrators of transformation, the process is natural. They stay out of the way of the transforming process. They don't make unending plans to carry out the transformation





process; they don't argue about the right time to begin a change process; they don't seem worried or afraid of change. When humans talk about transformation, they seem to think it's an unnatural process that they have to control. To change is natural. Not to change is unnatural. Change will happen if humans are open to it and clear a space for it and trust it. JJ, I know with that "Snoopy heart" of yours, you can help by loving the folks you work with more. That's what supports transformation.

Your friend,

Emily ~ Channeling Snoopy

## October 2016

Hello humans,

Those of you who are long term fans of my column will remember that last year I dressed up as Lady Gaga for Halloween. It may be true that blonds have more fun because I've never felt as beautiful as I felt in that blond wig! This year I think I may be a canine version of Madame butterfly. Not sure, but I know I look good in orange and I hear that orange is the new black. So it's all good. Our question this month comes from a team of Chihuahuas who try to keep Gloriana Hunter out of trouble. That's a big job! Gloriana is a Population Health Administrator and plays a very important role in the integrated health arena with a focus on identifying and reducing life disparities. Let's see if we can give them some good advice.

Dear Emily,

I am the supervisor of a doggy crew in Arizona, and I am having some teamwork trouble. No one on my team cooperates, so very little sniffing around the backyard gets done. In fact, sometimes it's so bad, I can barely get to my supervisory work of cat and bird chasing. Simon the Noodleboy steals treats from Churchill, and Pepe Ricardo just stands by and stares at them. The other day, Simon barked that Churchill was a wimp and nipped at him. I saw this, so I head-butted Simon in the ribs and sent all six pounds of him flying. But now I think I mishandled it. I tell Churchill to toughen-up, but he doesn't. I tell Pepe to come get me when trouble starts, but he doesn't. I tell Simon to stop bullying, but he doesn't. How do I control this wild pack of incorrigible pooches?

Bella BooBerry Muffin

Dear BB Muffin,

I take it you are the blond in the upper left-hand corner. Nice Hair! Since you have lost two crew members in the last few months, you may need to use some trauma informed techniques to help them get back to being themselves. When team members leave, for whatever reason, the other team members get reshuffled. This can result in stress and in this case grief. If you go to the Resilience Inc. website, you will get some ideas about how to become even stronger and wiser if you learn to use pain to help you grow.



## Dogployee Directory



Bella BooBerry Mufin  
Director, Backyard Security



Simon the Noodleboy  
Stinky Thing Examiner



Churchill  
Patio Inspector



Pepe Ricardo  
Perimeter Prancing Specialist

Now, about your leadership techniques: I have found that there is one sure way of knowing if you are a leader – look behind you – is anyone following you? If not, that is a sure sign. One can only be a leader if others are willing to follow. Humans have found a way around this – they actually pay people to follow the “leader” even when the people don’t agree with this person and even when they know the person is doing the wrong thing.

Interesting huh. Luckily there are better ways that are more effective. The best leaders lead by agreement with the followers. The “top dog” serves the followers by including them in making decisions and they all move ahead single mindedly. Sounds like, in your case, you are not including your team in making decisions so they are not interested in what you think they ought to

be doing. I suggest you ask them what their strengths are and how they can use those strengths to make their best contribution to the work you need to do. Then together come up with a plan to get it done. I think you’ll find they will be good team players.

Best of luck to you!!

Emily

## November 2016

Happy Thanksgiving my friends!

Since this is turkey month, I thought I would honor that great bird by wearing feathers. Also, it's hard to dress up for thanksgiving. Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day – these are all no brainers in terms of what to wear. But Thanksgiving? What are the choices? A full blown turkey outfit (no thanks), a cornucopia (too uncomfortable) a pilgrim (too grim). So I just opted for feathers. Hope you like them, and for all you turkeys out there, this outfit is for you!!!

OK, now to our guests – this is a fine troop of supporters of Shannon McCleerey-Hooper, Peer Support Program Manager at Riverside University-Health System in the office of Consumer Affairs. Her “fur babies” include the lovely cat, Bailey boy; the pug/Chihuahua is Fred-the-Dog and the lady of the house, a Queensland Heeler, is Miss Zoe girl. Shannon is a lucky girl to have these dedicated supporters to greet her when she comes home from a tough day at work. So let's see what they need advice on.



Dear Emily,

We adore Shannon and we would do anything for her. But sometimes we just don't know what to do. Can you give us some ideas on how to be an effective support team? We get a little burned out from time to time but we think it's because we are missing something important in our role as supporters.

Thanks

Partially burned out from Riverside

Partially Burned,

The fact that you are noticing that you are “feeling the burn” and that you think you might be missing something puts you way ahead of most of us. Most of us aren't that insightful about burn out until it's too late to reverse it in early stages.



As dogs and cats, there are some things we can do better than most other humans, and then there are things we can't do at all. So let's look at what we do best – good listening, faithful, loyal, non-judgmental, unconditional love, grateful for treats, and the list goes on. One of the things we can't do, and maybe no one should do these things are: Wanting to see a particular outcome as a result of our support. This is a recipe for burnout. We need to do what we do best and leave the outcome to the Great Spirit. Another thing we can't do

is do things for those we support instead of empowering them to do it for themselves. Once we take on the task we rob the person of the joy for being self-sufficient. Plus, we burn ourselves out. These are just a couple of ideas. If you want more, send me a note and I'll be happy to share more with you. Thanks for all you do to support Shannon. She is a wonderful person doing great work and deserves your love and support.

Emily

December 2016



Happy Holidays one and all! I know this Santa outfit makes me look fat, but underneath I'm my same reasonably fit, slightly plump, loveable self! I hope this holds true in January after I've had my share of treats (under the table of course).

Our question this month comes from Sadie. She and her brother were recently adopted by Pam Hyde and her family. Pam is a former Administrator of SAMHSA and now continues to be a highly respected consultant. Let's see what Sadie has on her mind:

Dear Emily:

I was just recently adopted by two wonderful people who love dogs and who just lost their older dogs a few months ago. They thought I was very sweet and cute. They adopted my new brother at the same time. He's sweet, too, but full of energy and a little rambunctious since he's only 6 months old. I was homeless and on the street a long time before finding a short term home in a shelter and then being adopted. Because of the life I had as a young dog (and a young mother, but my kids were taken away from me), I am very anxious in my new life. I'm hoping you can help me with my anxiety.

Sadie



Dear Sadie,

I too was homeless and spent time in a shelter until I got adopted. I developed many unfriendly behaviors, which caused even more problems (think death row). So, I'm glad you have



remained sweet and cute. Those two strengths will help a lot since they will draw humans to you instead of scaring them away. The more you can relax and soak in the love and adoration of your humans, and even your brother, the easier it will be to stop feeling so anxious. You have been through a lot so there is reason for your worries. Give yourself some time to get over the traumatic events of your past. What helped me get over my past was to begin to see myself as a survivor—a strong dog who was able to survive awful circumstances and treatment; a resilient dog who could use those experiences to get stronger from them instead of weaker. I wasn't able to do this at first because I was too anxious and reactive (think biting) to realize I was safe and loved. Once that sunk in, I

stopped thinking like a victim and began thinking like a survivor. I hope this is helpful for you. So, relax girl, realize your strengths and put them to work for you.

Emily

## January 2017

Happy New Year my friends. How do you like my New Year's Eve outfit? I had so many treats I had to sleep it off most of the next day. The humans were doing this too so I wasn't alone. Our question the month comes from a lovely team of canine cuties who live with the amazing Lyn Legere. My mom admires Lyn and just loves it when they get to hang out together so I'm happy to be of help to her canine team.

Dear Emily,

As you can see we are a five-dog team working under the direction of Lyn Legere -I'm sure she needs no introduction since she is famous. We love working with Lyn. She is a great mom and a good leader, but sometimes we have a breakdown in communication and we need help in sorting this out. The picture of us tells it all. Oh, by the way, that's me – Joey - I'm the one in the middle with my paws on the glass. To my right is Bella and to my left is Lucy and Izzy. Georgie, the fifth member of our canine team tends to distance himself from us when we get in trouble, hence his picture is separate. With introductions out of the way, let's get back to the problem at hand – we take our job seriously – you can probably tell this by the expressions on our faces. We like to really go all out when we have the occasion to greet visitors. We multitask by jumping, licking, crowding, bumping, sniffing, all the time smiling, drooling and wagging. Then, right when we think we are doing the best job of greeting ever, we get exiled to the porch like you see in this picture. We don't understand this. Can you shed some light on why our excellent greeting skills are unappreciated?

Joey

Dear Joey, Bella, Lucy, Izzy and Georgie,

I can soooooo relate to this dilemma. The basic problem, as I see it, is that humans rely so strongly on words to communicate. We dogs have many more ways of knowing things.



Communication is important in relationships. A big part of my recovery has been about learning how to have positive relationships in general, and especially with humans. I've had to learn to listen and see if I can understand what they really want. This takes a lot of patience. The other thing I've had to learn is to not assume that I always know what is best. I've had the same experience you describe of offering a very enthusiastic greeting to guests only to be

scolded for it right in front of everyone. It's embarrassing and it hurts my feelings. Then I have to learn to get over that and be a loyal friend again. It might make you feel better to know that humans have to do this with each other all the time too - it's not just about us. I think the best thing we can do is to try and role model loving relationships for them. I wish you the best in your relationships with humans.



Bella, Joey, Lucy and Izzy



Hey - we were just doing our job....right??



Georgie

Love,

Emily

## February 2017

Hello Folks and happy February!

Last year in February I wrote about Valentine's day and I wore my lovely Valentine's outfit. So, this year I decided to celebrate February by dressing in my Mardi Gras outfit (anything for a new outfit, huh girls). Mardi Gras translates to "Fat Tuesday" and marks the last day before Catholics begin Lent on Ash Wednesday, but it is celebrated around the world and often by people of various beliefs. It is a holiday that's focus on having a good time and enjoying food and drink. What's not to love? So, you can see why I chose it!

Our question this month comes from Scarlett, a city dog who has recently moved to the country. She is the keeper of Deborah Clark. Deborah Clark, a retired professor in the education of children with blindness and visual impairments and is a certified peer supporter. She passionately advocates for advancing peer support as a profession. She does this through advocacy and education. Her focus is on de-stigmatizing mental illness. In addition, she is an active volunteer for iNAPS.



Dear Emily,

I'm writing to you because I can use your wise advice. Although born and raised as a 'city girl,' my Mom moved me to Hicktown, TX. She said it was for 'wellness.' I must agree that I don't miss the traffic, sirens, and vandalism to the dog park. And I believe I am 'in recovery.' However, there are these strange creatures in our yard. Mom calls them 'dough,' '\$\$\$bucks\$\$\$', and [sounds like] 'ear-rings.' (As you know, we canines like it when our humans label things for us). I am trying to 'fit in' to my new environment but I also want to be 'my own dog.' These 'dough,' '\$\$\$bucks\$\$\$', 'ear-rings', and I, often encounter each other in the yard. We usually stare at each other 'in disbelief'. Mom calls the \$\$\$bucks\$\$\$ '4-point,' '7-point,' . . . '10-point' . . . Anything with 'points' scares me! Although I would like to make new friends, I haven't approached them directly to look them 'straight in the eye.' I lack the confidence. I would like to feel more comfortable in my new environment. Should I seek out new friends?

Love, 'Scarlett' Cattle-dog

Dear Scarlett,



This is a great question since it has to do with one of the key points of recovery –relationships. Now, about your new friends. I have those same creatures in my yard and I can assure you they are harmless. Those of us who are in recovery can always use new friends. We sometimes shy away from friends who are different from us, but the truth is – differences are wonderful. We get to learn things from them we would never know about if we just stuck to other dogs. So, my advice is to branch out and make as many unusual friends as you can. When making friends that are different from us we may have to rein in our natural tendencies. In your case, try not to herd these friends (since you are a cattle dog). Just be with them. Let them get to know you. Don't be threatened by their size or other differences. I think you'll find these to be very enriching relationships. Good luck my friend. Just keep that tail wagging and smile.

Emily

PS: I moved from the city to the country a few years back and it made a big difference in my stress level, lowering my anxiety significantly. I was more likable and better able to make friends

## March 2017

Hello folks,

Don't forget to wear green on St Patrick's day. That's my blanket advice to all of you this month. Now let's get down to the serious question that comes in from our guests. The question this month comes from two very charming dogs belonging to the amazing Terry Stevens, a consultant at Focused Business Strategies. WaWa (means persistence in American Native language) and Elliott Ness are two very cute dogs with a question about recovery that is important to all of us who are working on our recovery and hoping to become more resilient. Let's hear what they have to say.

Dear Emily,

We've both had a few things to recover from and we thought we were doing pretty well. But lately, we've noticed that we are slipping. We've even caught ourselves drifting back into some unrecovered behaviors that we thought we had gotten over. We've recently experienced traumatic grief in our family and we wonder if this has caused the slips in our recovery. What do you think?

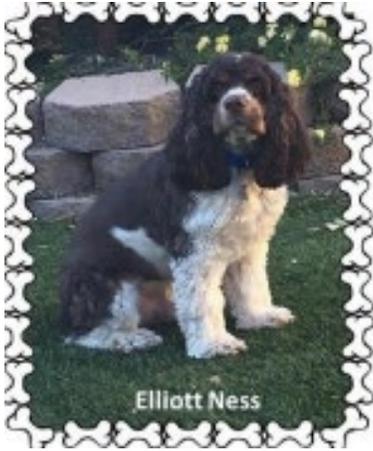
WaWa and Elliott Ness

Dear WaWa and Elliott Ness,

I think you are right on target about the cause of your slippage. Trauma and grief are powerful experiences that can definitely impact one's recovery. So be gentle with yourselves and give yourselves time. You may have a little slippage so just notice it and bring yourself back to where you left off as soon as you can. It's important to keep in mind that trauma and grief can be power growth enhancers. You know how humans say, "No pain, no gain." Well this can be applied to how we handle trauma and grief too. I don't know about you, but when I'm feeling bad or sad, I'm not in the mood to look for ways to enhance my recovery or my personal growth. I'd rather take a bone under my blanket and stay there for a while, feeling sorry for myself. Or sometimes when I feel bad, I want to cut loose and throw my recovery out the window -- take a cooked chicken off the counter and eat the whole thing, or go dig up the yard.

If I can overcome those addictive tendencies, and pay attention to what's emerging, I can often find new ways to think about things that are very helpful. For example, the other day I was in a really bad mood because I got left with a new dog sitter. I thought about being really bad, maybe pooping in the dining room. Then I looked up on the counter and saw a banana. It





looked like a big yellow smile with cookie crumbs in the corners. The more I thought about how happy it looked, the better I felt. I went over to the dog sitter and gave him a big smile. We both left better. So don't get discouraged if you have a little slippage. Recovery is an up and down process to begin with. Just keep getting back up each time you slip and you will be a stronger dog for it.

Yours in recovery,

Emily

## April 2017

Hello Friends,

I love this picture Mom took of me last April so I'm going to use it again. I love those flowers in my ears!!! Don't you?

This month we have a question about peer support from my friend, Timba. Timba takes care of Larry Fricks and his wife Grace. Larry is the Director of the Appalachian Consulting Group (ACG) and Deputy Director of the SAMHSA-HRSA Center for Integrated Health Solutions operated by the National Council for Behavioral Health. Grace is the founder and CEO of Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs, Inc. (ACE), a not-for-profit lending organization that provides microcredit and small business loans for underserved markets. Grace says, "I believe everyone who has that drive and desire – that intangible thing – deserves the opportunity to succeed...." They are lovely people and have done a wonderful job instilling graciousness and generosity in Timba. However, now and then, as you will see Timba gets worried. See for yourself.



Dear Emily,

I am a Siberian Husky and my name in Timba. As you can see from this photo, I was having my afternoon nap on the couch when I was joined by my friend, Benton the boy, who is using my belly as a pillow. Now I am a strong advocate of peer support which I learned about from my family, Larry Fricks and his lovely wife Grace. So, I am happy to provide peer support, but come on!! Using my belly for a pillow? Invading my afternoon nap space? Isn't this a little too much? Next Benton will be wanting part of my dinner. Then he'll want to have people take him for a walk instead of me. Who knows where this will end? I need some help in thinking all of this through. What do you think?

Sleepily yours,

Timba

Dear Timba,

If we were humans, I would begin to lecture you on the importance of boundaries and maybe even dual relationships. Thankfully for both of us, we are not humans, so we can skip all that intellectual stuff. You and I have the gift of being dogs so we don't need to lecture each other. We can just be reminded that we are mans (Benton's in this case) best friends. When we do peer support, we are even more than friends because we are always looking for ways to support the strengths of those we befriend. So I truly understand your feelings about being used as a pillow and God knows what else will follow (by the way I'm sure you know by now what GOD spelled backwards spells).



Anyway, I suggest you just love this little Benton human and try not to think too much about yourself. My Mom says this always works. The trick is to not do things for others that they can do for themselves. Don't rob them of opportunities to experience their own strengths and abilities. And here's a really important point that a lot of people don't understand about peer support. A good peer supporter needs to give those they support ways to give back. This gives the person an opportunity to see that they have a worthwhile contribution to make. I'm sure you won't have any trouble working this out. Give Benton things to do for you. Get him to throw your ball, or give you snacks or take you to the dog park. The possibilities are almost endless. Good luck my friend. I'm going to go take a nap now.

Sleepily yours,

Emily

## May 2017

Hello Friends,

Yes - that's me - surrounded by baby gear!! Oh - I remember those days of being a little pup!! This month's question comes from a friend of ours who has recently been visited by the....stork. "Billy" lives with Chris Martin's family. Chris is the Director of Learning and Facilitation with Resilience Inc.

Dear Emily,

My name is Billy and I am part of Chris Martin's family. My best pal and mate is named Betty. We are Miniature Parti Schnauzers. The name "Parti" means having a predominant color separated by patches of white. It does not mean having a party which is something I really miss having. The way I see things is that it's been getting really ruff around here. The party for me stopped about five weeks ago when these little puppies arrived. I and Betty used to be a close team, playing tag, barking at strangers, and chasing rabbits. But these days, Betty seems to have less time for our teamwork together. It just doesn't make any scents to me. In fact, I'm becoming dog tired of being left out. Take a look at these five little Parti poopers, and you might understand what I'm up against when it comes to me getting attention. Do you see any solutions for winning my old team back?

Yours,  
Billy



Dear Billy,  
After hearing your tail and looking at the five new arrivals, I think there may be another way to see this. When we take a paw, we may find solutions often come packaged in the way we look at something. I see five little packages of opportunity for you. Instead of competing for attention, getting new team members gives us a chance to dig down to our deepest potential by guiding, sharing, and mentoring. And if you really look close enough, you may see how those newbies will make great teammates. They're just begging to help you turn otherwise dogged days into an exciting adventure of partnering, collaborating, and learning. Before you know it, Betty will be right there in the mix because you will have made her job easier. So cheer up Billy and Parti on.... Emily



June 2017

Hello Friends,

Peace to all you cats out there!! With summer fast approaching – I couldn't help but put on my retro flower child threads!! I think I look pretty cool and groovy – don't you agree?

Speaking of cool and groovy - this month's question comes from a real beauty – Roxy – who happens to be the guardian of Kathryn and Keith Puetz in Rolling Meadow, Illinois. Here's Roxy's question.

Hi Emily,

My name is Roxy and I am seeking some advice – and I hear through the puppy grapevine that you are the one to ask!! I really do enjoy being with my family – like all the time. I want to be with them as much as possible. This includes going on car rides. However, each time I get into the car - I get a bit nervous, sometimes I even get a little sick to my tummy and my paws begin to sweat. I really want to be a good travel companion so....why does this happen and how can I get it to stop?

Am I just being a scaredy cat....or....I mean....dog??

Roxy

Hey Roxy,



I hear you loud and clear – you see, I haven't always been as hip and far out as I am now. Several years ago, I had some of the same feelings while riding in the car – just as you are experiencing. My Mom has a real “mean machine” – and I was quite hesitant to jump in. It appears that humans really enjoy using this mode of transportation – whereas I had always been much more accustomed to the four-legged approach when traveling to my destination. However, as my trust grew over time, I became comfortable and now I am completely at ease when my Mom takes me for a spin. Sometimes I even take a “cat nap” while we're on the road. Rely on your inner strength, trust your family and enjoy your valuable time together!!

Peace Out, Emily



## July 2017

Hello Folks,

Hope you are enjoying the dog days of summer. As you can see I have dressed up in my Spiderman digs in honor of the latest Spiderman movie soon to be released. Do you realize how much we recoveries have in common with Spiderman? There are some amazing similarities. Think about it. Peter Parker (the teenager who becomes Spidey) is just a stressed out, awkward, nerdy guy who happens to be bitten by a radioactive spider. He goes through a painful process of learning how to use the powers the “bite” has bestowed upon him. Once he learns how to use his special powers, he turns the pain of the bite into ways to save himself and the world. He grows up. Sound familiar? When we are first stricken by trauma and/or mental illness, we reel in the pain. But once we learn to use that pain to develop the power to recover, we are superheroes too. So here I am, dressed up like Spiderman to remind us all of our special powers. Let’s go out there and save the world!!!



Speaking of this, my guest this month is Jack, a hero who saves his pal, Hope Riley and her husband. Hope is an avid Resilience Inc. – Rise and Shine Newsletter reader and employed with Trinity County Behavioral Health Services in CA. Jack is a little over two years old and as you will see from his question, he is perhaps a little bit over protective.

Dear Emily,

I’m Jack Riley. I can’t tell you how much I love my family. They are the best. I am confused about how to take care of them. I try to protect them, but they seem to have mixed feelings about me growling at those who get too close to them. Can you shed some light on this for me? Jack R.

Dear Jack,



I know exactly what you mean. I used to be this way with my family and got the same response, but it wasn’t mixed. They clearly wanted me to stop biting other humans who came to our house. I had to learn to trust my family to take care of themselves, unless there truly was something very scary happening. When we love humans, we can get over protective. This distracts them from their own journey of figuring out how to handle things. So, if you just can’t hold back a growl or a bark, wag your tail really hard while you are doing it. This will release your stress and help humans accept your concerns. Good luck with this Jack and thanks for your thoughtful question.

Wag on, Emily

## August 2017

Hi Folks,

As you can see, I'm all dressed up to go to Burning Man. There is a note on their website that says, "no dogs" so mom is going to try to get me a press pass so I can be admitted as a journalist. This is a clear case of canine profiling if you ask me. I really hope I can go – do you have any idea how much sniffing there is to do there? A gold mine of smells! Anyway, time to give advice, so enough about burning man for now. This month's question comes from Jade. Jade takes care of Carolyn and Jake Taylor in Rolling Meadows, Illinois. Jade is a 15-month-old Labrador Retriever and she was named after the stone because it is said to carry nourishing energy and can be very healing. Jade is also talkative – and appears to have her own language!!



Dear Emily,

Burning Man sounds so cool!! I'd love to attend. I'm at an age (just recently had my 1st birthday) where I have lots of energy and would love to race around kicking up dust in the desert. Which brings me to my need for advice. I really resent it when the humans keep trying to calm me down. I want to run, chase things, and well, you can imagine. The humans are always trying to shut down my explosive energy. They seem to think I should be ashamed of it but I love it. And truth be told, I really can't control it and I don't want to do that anyway. So, my dilemma is that if I don't get to act wild and enjoy my energy, the humans are controlling me and I resent them for it. Do you have any words of wisdom for me? I'm not interested in being a normal dog. I want to be myself, and I want the humans to appreciate me for who I am in the stage of my life where I am right now. I don't want to resent them. HELP!!!!!!

Jade

Dear Jade,



I can so identify and appreciate where you are coming from. When I was your age I had the same issues. I didn't resent the humans – I just ignored them and acted wild and scary. I finally outgrew it and you probably will too. It's part of becoming a mature dog. In the meantime, try this: Think of the things you CAN do that will help your relationship with your humans. These will be your strengths. Do them as often as you can. They will help balance out the things you can't do –like sit still or keep from running, jumping up on people, etc. The more you practice your strengths, the more the humans will value you and will be more willing to be patient with the things you can't control. Give this a try. It's a way to change yourself and your humans. Good luck and let me know how it goes. Emily

## September 2017

Hi Folks, As you can see I've taken up a new role. I am now in the fortune telling business. As you may know, most of us dogs know what's going to happen long before you humans do, so thought I might as well put these skills to use. If you want me to tell you your fortune, just drop me a line. Trust me, I can do better than most fortune cookies!!

Our guests this month are the two lovely canines who monitor and support the activities of the wonderful Sue Bergeson who is the principal of Recovery, Resiliency Engagement and Activation Partners, LLC. She is working with systems and individual programs to build consumer activation and engagement programs and implement managed care payment for peer support. The lovely canines are Allie, the larger one who is one and a half years old and Annie, who is two years old.

Aren't they adorable?

Let's see what's on their minds.

Dear Emily,

As you can see, we are very cute. Everyone who meets us says, "Oh aren't you just the cutest!!!" No one ever says, "Aren't they smart, or aren't they loyal or aren't they committed to their job." We want to be known as more than just cute. What can we do to help humans understand our true deeper value?

Allie and Annie

Dear Girls,



I'm not so cute so can't relate directly to your concerns. However, after consulting my crystal ball, I can see in your future a shift in your identity. So, take heart! Here's a tip that may help you change the way humans perceive you. First of all, we all tend to identify with what others say about us. In your case, humans keep saying you're cute so if you weren't as insightful as you are, you may come to think this is your most valuable asset. If humans started saying you were mean, you may start relating to that identity and actually become mean. So, the challenge is to know yourself – know what your strengths are and practice them. Don't settle for being "cute" and put your best paws forward. Humans can be a little dense, so give them time to figure this out. You can change the way humans see you which will also change you too.

Emily



## October 2017

Hi Folks,

As you can see, I am going to be a ghost for Halloween. Mom got me these pumpkin glasses to add a little lightness to my scariness as a ghost. I suspect you humans have your own ghost, just like us other animals do. These are things that haunt us and scare us even when we know they aren't real. They scare us and limit our joy and playfulness. I think you call it "Trauma." Whatever you call it, it's not good. My past trauma of being homeless and on death row causes me to be mean and try to bite people. Thankfully I've gotten over that. That's the thing about trauma – we CAN get over it. That makes me happy.



Now, on to our guests this month, Tillie and Gus. They are the comforters of Lisa Goodale. Lisa is a licensed social worker and the Consulting Services Vice President at the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance where she manages training and consultation services for peers, clinicians, and the general public. She served as Project Manager for DBSA's national contract with the Department of Veterans Affairs to train nearly 500 of the VA's newly hired Veteran peer specialists throughout the country. Lisa is also a lifelong Chicago Cubs fan, enjoys singing and eating chocolate. I know dogs aren't supposed to think that cats are cute, but I just can't help myself. These guys are so cute. Tillie is the smaller tabby, and Gus the big gray guy. They are sister and brother, rescue cats. Let's see what they have to say.

Dear Emily,

We like relaxing, but sometimes we find that relaxing can lead to sleeping all the time and feeling isolated. How do we find a balance of rest and meaningful activity to help us maintain wellness?

Tillie and Gus

Dear Tillie and Gus,

I know what you mean. Life can pass us by if we aren't paying attention. I think the best advice I



can give you is to find something meaningful to do for another animal or human.....or find the puuurrfect hobby that helps you to contribute to your family. I hear you are really good at shredding rolls of toilet paper....well....that's a good place to start!! This will get your enthusiasm moving and once you begin to give back, you'll find a natural balance to your lives. So – try

skipping a few "cat-naps" and put yourselves out there – try something new!! I know you will be glad that you did!!

Best of luck, Emily

## November 2017

Hello all you Humans,

You are all probably getting ready for Thanksgiving and so am I. If I can be at the right place at the right time I can really clean up on the leftovers. YUM!!! That's still a few days off, so for now Let's focus on a key aspect of recovery – self-care. During the Holiday season there seems to be a lot of stress and activity. So, we all need to find time to relax and enjoy a sunset. I'm sending you this picture of me relaxing at Lake Tahoe a few weeks ago. I went camping with mom and my uncle. It was heavenly. So, I want to encourage all of you to take time out during the Holidays to relax and enjoy a sunset or two. Another self-care thing I do is stick my head out the window of a fast-moving car and let my ears flap in the breeze. You humans may not do this very often, but you may want to try it. It's very refreshing.



Our guest this month is Pyper, a lovely chocolate lab. She too is struggling with self-care, so you humans aren't alone. Pyper takes care of Liz Smithhart who is the Interim CEO of Recovery Empowerment Network (REN), a peer run program in Phoenix, AZ. Liz is a strong advocate and is very passionate about increasing the quality of life for those she serves. She has devoted over 20 years of community partnership and health care management to the nonprofit community.

Dear Emily,

I am a big sister to 5 puppies that are 8 weeks old. I try to be a good big sister and be there for them, but I'm telling you, these little guys are wearing me out! I want to be there for them but lately I've been trying to avoid them and I'm beginning to get a little resentful. I know this is a bad thing, especially at Thanksgiving when I'm supposed to be grateful. Can you give me some advice on how to handle this before I lose my cool?

Frantically yours,

Pyper

Dear Pyper,

Your question comes at a perfect time since a lot of us are getting ready for the Holidays. This is a time to pay close attention to how we take care of ourselves, so we can take care of those we love and do it with a joyful heart, not a resentful attitude.



My advice is to watch what the humans do. You'll notice that they are not good at self-care. So, don't do what they do. They say they are fine when they aren't. They agree to do things that they really don't want to do. They pretend to have a good time when they are miserable. This violates the first rule of self-care – be honest with yourself about what you need. So, in your case, I think you can have an honest talk with these kids and tell them you are tired, and you need a rest. Don't pretend to be OK when you aren't. Get them to help you with this. Sounds like they love you and would jump at the opportunity to take care of you a little bit. Give it a try and let me know how it goes.

Emily

## December 2017

Hello Folks,

We're at the time of the year when humans go a little wild, so hold on to your Santa hats! The best way I've found to get through this season is to have a good friend you can spend time with, just hanging out and playing. One of my best friends is a dog named Donut. We have fun playing, but we also just chill and snoop around. Sometimes we'll take a nap together. So that's the best advice I can give you. Peer support!

My guest this month is a lovely dog named Snickerdoodle who is Age 6; daughter of a King Charles and a miniature poodle – known as a Cavapoo. Snickerdoodle was born in the mid-west and flew to Seattle at 12 weeks of age. Snickerdoodle is the watchdog for Beth Hammonds. Beth has worked in the behavioral health field for 25 years and is honored to work side by side and learn from individuals who live every day with mental illness and substance use challenges. Beth is a beach girl at heart, who loves to garden, go for walks and eat ice cream. Friends and family are her passion....and Snickerdoodle, of course. Let's see what's on this canine's mind.



Dear Emily,

As you know, I am the watchdog for Beth Hammonds. We have been together for most of my life. She is my favorite person in the whole world. She always gives me a nice Christmas present, but I am never able to give her one back. This doesn't seem fair. Got any ideas of how I can handle this?

Snickerdoodle

Dear Snickerdoodle,



Humans give each other presents as a way of showing love for each other. Well, sometimes they just do it because they think they are expected to and that doesn't work very well. Let's stay with the idea that they give out of a place of love. We dogs don't have credit cards or cash or any other material means of purchasing and giving presents. So, we usually rise to a higher level of giving – we give of ourselves --- usually all that we have whenever we can. So, a way you can exchange gifts with Beth is to just give her extra love and be extra patient with her during the Holiday season. If she is like other humans, she will get extra stressed during this time and could probably use some unconditional love. I have a feeling you are very good at that. Let me know how it goes.

Emily

## January 2018

Hello Folks,

Well here we are at the beginning of the new year. I'm a little tired of writing since I sent you those three email blasts over the past three weeks to help keep you safe during the Holidays. I hope they helped. I've been wanting to tell you about a new dog insight I've had. The insight is about how important it is to just be yourself. To make this point, I am not dressing up this time, just being myself in the nude. Don't worry, I already have my February outfit picked out. I think I told you about my dog friend named Donut. He was found near a Dunkin Donut shop, so that's why someone named him that. Personally, I think they should have named him "Dunkin" but that wasn't my call. How do you live with a name like "Donut"? I have personally witnessed many humans asking, "Donut? He doesn't look like a donut." And he doesn't. Anyway, the point of all this is that I realized I have been comparing myself to him and feeling inadequate. He has all these cute things he does, and the humans just rave about how clever he is.



He can open all the doors to our house by jumping up and pushing the door lever down; He does "hi fives" with both paws upon command, he's way beyond "sit, stay, roll over, and so on". Well I don't do any of those things. Then I realized that my family loves me much more than they do Donut, even though I don't do all those things. I don't even need to do them to be loved. So, if you are tempted to compare yourself to others, forget it. Just be yourself, your best self, and get all the love you can just by being you.

Our guest this month is Bella who has also learned how crazy-making it is to compare yourself to others. Bella is the guardian of Peter Ashenden. Peter is the Vice President of Consumer Affairs for Optum's Behavioral Solutions Business. He is responsible for developing and implementing behavioral health programs that support people with mental illness achieve long-term recovery and resilience. He is also a mental health consumer. Peter is a member of the

Board of iNAPS (interNational Association of Peer Supporters, The Mental Health Empowerment Project, and is a former member of the Consumer Advisory Board for the Center for Mental Health Services a division of SAMHSA. Peter is a tireless advocate assuring the rights of those of us that have a psychiatric diagnosis.

Let's hear what's on Bella's mind.

Dear Emily,

Bella here. I have asked for advice before and it turned out OK, so I'm back with another question for you. As you know, I have a reputation for being somewhat of a "prim donna." Underneath, I am quite down to earth. I take my job of taking care of Peter quite seriously, and consider myself to be a career girl. I would like to be respected for the work I do as a professional guardian and not dismissed as a "princess." Any ideas on how I can make this shift in how I am perceived?

Bella

Dear Bella,

I don't know of any other guardian dog that does a better job than you, and yes, you should be appreciated for the stellar work you do with Peter. The only thing I can tell you is to just be yourself and don't worry too much about what others think of you or call you. Let's give up "people pleasing" – it really gets in the way of being our true selves. You go girl! You've got what it takes to be the best! Don't accept the labels other put on you and don't be limited by them.

Emily



## February 2018

Hello Folks,

How do you like my glasses? I'm viewing the world through the lenses of love, literally!!

We have two special guests this month (Jack and Wally). These lovely cats have recently been adopted by Laverne Miller. Laverne currently works across many projects with the SAMHSA funded National GAINS Center. She provides technical assistance to a diverse group of grantees to assist them in recruiting, hiring, integrating and advancing peer staff in the workplace. At the GAINS Center, Laverne is responsible for developing learning communities for justice involved peers. Laverne is deeply committed to eliminating health disparities and the collateral consequences that any involvement with the criminal justice system has upon an individual's ability to enjoy all the benefits of citizenship. Laverne loves her two new housemates and speaks very highly of them. Yes, it is still the honey moon period, but still....



Let's hear what these two cats have to ask about.

Dear Emily,

We feel so blessed to be in the home of our new owner, Laverne. We are trying to be on our good behavior. We are trying to be entertaining and loveable, cute and happy. We try to look relaxed and at home. The truth is; however, we are a little stressed out by all this trying to be good. How can we ease up on ourselves and enjoy our new home without worrying about being kicked out due to bad behavior?

Jack and Wally



Dear Jack and Wally,

Believe me, I know how hard it is to be good! I used to work on it all the time. Now I relax, maybe a little too much. I feel safe at home and have stopped worrying about being kicked out. This took some time, so don't expect this to happen overnight. First, be as good as you can, but if you slip up, don't worry about it. Just let it pass and start over with all your cuteness and charm. I know cats aren't known for being humble, but you don't have to live up to that stereotype. Let your slip-ups provide a little humility and ask, in your own cat-like way, for a little forgiveness and grace. Humans like this. It actually sort of endears them to you. We all get stuck sometimes in who and what we think we are and what we are supposed to do and be. Try not to let this define you. Just be yourself and try not to automatically act like a cat. (I know a dog should not say that, so pardon the cat profiling, couldn't help myself).

Emily

## March 2018

Hello Folks,

Don't forget to wear green on the 17th or you could find yourself in a pinch! I'm starting early just in case. This month we have a question from "Fudgey," who has taken care of Tony Smith and his family for the past twelve years. Tony is currently the Recovery & Resiliency Advisor for Cenpatico of Arizona. Having a lived experience with recovery, Tony has trained hundreds of Peers across the state of Arizona to work as Peer Supports Specialists. In his capacity with Cenpatico of AZ, he provides strategic planning for Peer Support usage, works to reduce stigma in the community and internally in the behavioral health field. Tony is a tireless advocate for each member's voice and actively works to ensure all Providers honor recovery principles in their service delivery. Fudgey is a handsome German Shepherd mix who loves scratches behind the ear, going for walks....and cheese. So, let's see what Fudgey has on his mind.



Dear Emily,

Thanks for taking my question seriously. I feel a little silly about bringing it up. But here goes! I try hard to do what my family wants me to do. But sometimes I find myself in situations where I just can't resist doing something I know I'm not supposed to do – like swiping food, barking too much, chasing smaller animals, etc. Then I feel bad about myself and my recovery is weakened. Can you give me some advice on this? How can I keep from doing things that I wish I wouldn't do but do them anyway?

Fudgey

Dear Fudgey,

Oh, do I know what you mean. I had the hardest time learning to not chase cars, even though I knew I wasn't supposed to do it. A car would take off, and without even thinking I'd run after it barking like crazy. I could hear my mom screaming at me in the background but just couldn't stop. I haven't been tempted to swipe food, but a dog friend of mine swiped a whole ham the other day, took it out in the yard and ate the whole thing. Then he got thirsty and bit off the sprinkler top to get a drink.



It was divine intervention that kept him from going back to the pound, but that's another story. What helped me stop chasing cars (I have been totally abstinent from car chasing now for over 8 years and am no longer tempted) was the pain it seemed to cause my family. They worried that I would get run over, or cause the car to wreck, plus a bunch of other worries – you know how humans can go down this worried road to the point of no return. As much as I like chasing cars, I loved them more. As long as I held this in my mind, I could pass up a good car chase. The minute I forgot about it, myself self will run riot and my self-centeredness

took center stage. I suggest you try thinking about your family each time you think about indulging in something you know will hurt them. Relationships are the strongest and powerful things. As a dog, you already know this, so just keep your head in your heart and I think you'll see some good outcomes. Let me know how it goes.

Emily

**April 2018**

Hello All and Happy Spring!

Sorry I couldn't get this picture to you before Easter, but better late than never. You'll see that I have our friend Rachele's fuzzy coat on. Mom thought I looked like the Easter bunny in it. I want to introduce you to my new friend, Lola. She works at a dance studio near our home. I happened to be hanging out there last week and she had a question for me that I thought was quite timely, since it was just before Easter.

Dear Emily,

This is a picture of me in my Easter outfit. I've been wondering about a lot of things that have been talked about lately around here. I'll just shoot them off: Why do we get dressed up for Easter? What is the deal with this Easter bunny? Why the eggs – as far as I know, bunnies don't lay eggs. I could go on and on, but you get the point. Can you explain this stuff to me?

Lola

Dear Lola,



Basically, NO, I can't explain any of this. I'm sure the humans have come up with some reason for all of it that goes way back in time. You know how humans are, they always think they have to have a reason or an answer, no matter how lame it is. Thankfully, they haven't told me about any of this. Here's my advice: Just enjoy all of it and don't try to figure it out. If you start trying to figure everything out, you'll be as confused as the humans. Recovery doesn't happen by figuring things out. It's an experience that begins with faith, moves to hope, and then soaks up love. We dogs often skip faith and hope and go directly to love. So just stay there. It's the best place to be.

Emily

June 2018

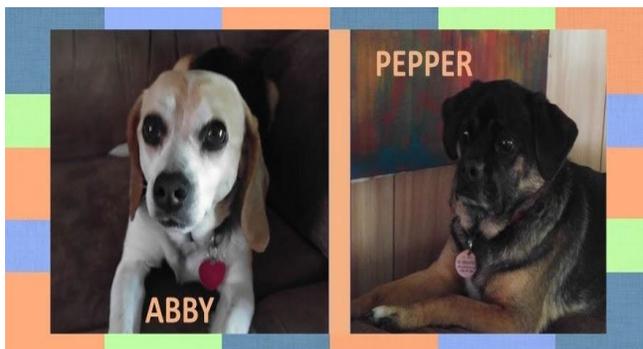
Hello Folks,

Well, it's summer. No doubt about it! I'm ready to go swimming in the river and eat tuna sandwiches, and maybe some PB and J, if available. Anyway, I want to introduce you to two dogs that live on a lake and understand the swimming picnicking thing very well. Meet Abby and Pepper. They, like me, were rescued from certain death. They became the dogs of Steve Harrington and Zack (giving the phrase, "lucky dog" a whole new meaning.) Steve and Zack say these wonderful dogs role model true friendship, affection and support, that is contagious. Let's see what advice they are seeking.

Dear Emily,

We have a question related to barking. We need your advice. When Abby was first rescued, her name was "gabby" so Steve and Zack expected a lot of barking. But she never barked. So Steve and Zack changed her name to "Abby". Well, now she barks all the time. She can't seem to stop. I, Pepper, try to point this out to her but she is in no mood to make any changes. We both think it embarrasses Steve and Zack at times, but...what can we do?

Abby and Pepper



Dear Abby and Pepper,

Barking is our way of communicating, just like humans do their talking. Sometimes they talk too much and, yes, sometimes we bark too much. We like to hear ourselves bark, just like humans like to hear themselves talk. The only one who can really change this is Abby. So Abby, if you don't want to go back to being called

"Gabby", you may want to consider making a change. You've done it before, you can do it again. We often bark when we don't feel safe, again, just like humans. I think you may be barking up the wrong tree because you are very safe with Pepper and Steve and Zack. Just keep reminding yourself of this I think it will help. Emily

July 2018

Hello Folks,

We have a very interesting human/canine team to introduce you to this month – Howie and Anna. Howie is the guardian of Anna-Magdalena Christianson. Anna knows about animals, all kinds including humans. Her undergraduate degree is in zoology and her graduate degree is in entomology (they tell me this means bugs and such). This is all very interesting to me since I have always been interested in bugs. I have been known to sniff behind them as they travel (terrified) along a seemingly important path. They don't return my affection but I still find them fascinating.

More fascinating is Anna's lived experience of surviving and thriving the challenges of mental illness. Here's what she says about it:

"Half my life has been lived while medicated for mental health issues. After 30-plus years and 44 different psychoactive drugs, I finally decided enough was enough. Withdrawal has been difficult, but those difficulties are diminishing. I look forward to thinking, feeling, and caring again, all things medication took from me.

Ten years ago I emerged from my room, motivated by the fear that I was on track to becoming a complete invalid, to apply for a job that had an interesting qualifier - one had to have a "serious mental illness." And I got the job and worked as a certified peer support specialist for 6 years. Then I retired, only to accept a position a year later as executive director of a faltering drop-in center. Three years later the place is unrecognizable - in a very good way."

So as you can see, Howie has important work to do. Let's see what his question is.

Dear Emily,

I met your Person recently. I think you made a good pick. I liked her.

I have a Person, too. I am her Partner, so we go everywhere together (which is how I was able to meet your Person in the Grand Hyatt Denver). You know how we canines are usually pretty predictable creatures. Well, my Person wishes humans were that way, too, or at least that they had forehead screens that spelled out their thoughts. But they don't. And that leaves my Person pretty confused sometimes.



So this is the problem (and I may as well tell you, because that may clarify things a bit, my Person has autism). She is experiencing a very difficult post-acute withdrawal from psychiatric medication and is trying to work through this with a therapist. But that is not going well. She tells me she is really confused because she doesn't know the rules of "the game," as she calls it, doesn't know how to play, or what is expected of her. She thinks maybe one of the prerequisites is to be able to connect with people, something that's difficult for her. So she's just really confused.

My question to you, Emily, is how should I handle this situation? My job is to help her, but this wasn't covered in my training. I want to be a support and help her through this, but I'm rather at a loss.

I would love your advice. Let me know what you think. Thanks!

Howie

Dear Howie,

Good to hear from you. You do indeed have a challenging assignment. Sometimes the hardest things really give us the opportunity to stretch beyond what we think we are capable of. In your case, addressing this challenge will give you a chance to go deep into new territory that will leave you even wiser and more loving.



So that being barked, here's what comes to mind for me. Your human has a connection with you. She just needs to learn how to replicate that connection with other humans. You are going to be her best teacher in learning the things you have listed. Show her how to initiate contact by kissing her when she least expects it. Poke her when you see opportunities for her to connect with others. When you are not in "working mode" you can do a lot of role modeling for her by initiating contact with other animals, including humans. When she is able to reach out, reward her with lots of wags and licks. Also, another thing you can do is to be really friendly with other humans. They will then approach your human with comments like, "What a cute dog. How old is he? What's his name?" and so on. This way you can be a bridge that create chances for your human to make connections.

Good luck, Howie. I know you can do this,

Emily

**August 2018**

Hello Friends,

Since mom is talking about Raggedy Ann, thought I would put on my Raggedy Ann outfit for this picture. I might be setting a record as the first Raggedy Ann dog! We have another record set today – we have a question from the youngest dog who has ever written in for advice. You can see from the picture that he is still just a baby. How cute! This is Joji who is just 9 weeks old and is going to be looking out for a brother and sister, Carson and Lisa, his new owners. Joji is a Pug and he likes to chew on everyone and everything!!



Let's see what this little guy has on his mind.

Dear Emily,

I'm so glad I found out about you and can ask you for some advice. As you can see I'm just a kid. I have joined a family with three older dogs – two are Pugs and the other is a Boston terrier. I'm getting a lot of attention, much more than the other dogs because I'm so new and cute. I want to be friends with them and don't want them to be jealous of me. All the humans in this family dote on me and I love it, but I don't want the other dogs to be resentful. What can I do?

Joji

Dear Joji,



Don't ruin being special by feeling guilty about it. Enjoy it! It is time limited. Once you grow up you will just be one of the dogs and you'll all get treated equally. The truth is, each one of you is special in your own way. Hang out with the other dogs – just be one of the dogs with them. The closer you are to them the less they will feel left out. It's all about relationship pal.

Good luck little friend, Emily

## September 2018

Hey Folks,

Since mom is talking about being brave this month, thought I'd dress up in my super-girl-dog outfit. I believe I have succeeded in presenting a facial expression of strength and courage and determination. I hope you are inspired by it!!!

Anyway, my guest this month is a wonderful dog named Max. I'm including a picture of us on a walk in the woods last week with his mom, Julia Robles-Scott. I would describe Julia to you but truth be told, she is indescribable. She is a minister and a person in recovery; she is the developer of an alternative community; she works with mom and mom says she always learns lots of stuff from her. Now, moving back to Max. We had quite a conversation last week in the woods. Here's a question he wants to discuss with me:



Dear Emily,

Thanks for the walk and the secret kisses. I really enjoyed our time together. The question for me has to do with redefining myself when changes happen in my life. What you told me last week was very helpful. Can you repeat it so I can remember it when I forget who I am?

Max



Dear Max,

I too enjoyed our time together. You are a true gentleman! Thanks for sharing this deep concern you have about losing yourself during changes. I think this is a common issue but most dogs (and humans) don't talk about it much since they think it makes them seem weak. So your courage to share it was quite impressive. I can share how changes feel to me and maybe, as a peer supporter of yours, it will be helpful. When things change in my life, even the ones I like, I have an opportunity to redefine myself. I can use this opportunity in a positive way when I am in a good space, but when I'm fearful I tend to see

myself more as a victim of change and then can't see the opportunity in it. So the first advice I have is to always try to remember who you are, your strengths and achievements and abilities and the joy you bring to others. Then take a look at yourself in this new changed space. What do you want to take with you into this new space and what do you want to leave behind – what things don't define your potential but limit you. Then be brave and bring more intention into the new space and be a better "You." I know I'm making this sound easy but we both know it's challenging – it takes courage and bravery to grow and face new beginnings with confidence and vulnerability at the same time. I'm here for you Max. I love you. Be the dog you were born to be!!!! Emily

**October 2018**



Happy Halloween to all you humans out there,

I have some really good treats for you this month. First of all, as you probably already saw, I am including pictures of me in some of my best past Halloween pictures. I love the one where I am dressed up like Lady Gaga. If you have a favorite, let me know.

The other great treat this month is our special guest from New Mexico, Chance. Chance is believed to be part Lab, Rhodesian Ridgeback and Shepherd mix. Chance and I have a lot in common. We both got lost and then got rescued, and we both found good homes.

Here is Chance's story as told by one of his humans, Katrina of the Department of Behavioral Health Services in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Katrina shares:

Five years ago, Chance came to us through a person who at the last minute decided he did not want detox services or his puppy. Here is what happened....



It was a rare stormy evening in Albuquerque, when a person knocked on our door initially seeking services for detoxification and had a puppy with him. Once we explained our services, he decided he was not ready for treatment and no longer wanted his puppy. He left and refused to take the puppy with him. The puppy was visibly shaking and cold. Staff immediately took the puppy inside, dried him off, and placed him on the detox floor to interact with other participants. The animal shelter was closed for the evening and the puppy was observed to be



mild mannered, playful and a welcome distraction for those participating in the program for drug and alcohol detoxification. The next day, when the director of the facility went to meet the puppy on the detox floor, the participants rallied around him and asked if the puppy could stay and be part of the

community. The puppy was adopted by the program and the participants named the puppy....Chance, because it describes the hope and resiliency of the services at MATS (Metropolitan Assessment and Treatment).

Chance is an official staff member of the MATS Program – DBHS in Bernalillo County, New Mexico....and even has his own badge!! Chance says, "I love to interact with the participants and children and love to give tours of the MATS facility. In carrying out my daily tasks, I am always kind and thoughtful and not spoiled." Sounds like Chance is a great team player!!

What a story!! Thank you – Chance – for being a model of recovery and resilience for all.

Yours Truly,

Emily

## In memory of the amazing Emily

Our precious Emily passed away on October 30th in my arms. I am so grateful I could be right there with her to send her off. She had heart problems, which is a characteristic of her breed. That morning, she was breathing heavily and couldn't stand up. I crawled in her bed with her and held her in my arms. I finally had the courage to say, "If you need to go, it's ok." She just didn't take her next breath.

As you can image, I have been grief-stricken. Grateful for the 12 years she graced our lives but missing her so much. Then very early Saturday morning some relief came through a half-daydream, half night-dream. I saw Jesus walking barefoot in soft green grass. He looked over at me and said, "Thanks for taking care of Emily for the past 12 years. I needed her back to take care of me". Then I saw Emily trotting out in front of Him (She always likes to be in front). She was full of energy and smiling. She looked over at me and gave me one of her long intense looks, and then she winked at me.

So the pain is still in me, but it's mixed with gratitude for being able to spend the last 12 years on my life with Emily. She taught me about unconditional love, loyalty, strength and interdependence.

Thank you, Emily. I love you.

Mom

# The Tail Ends

