

Shifting your Perspective – Deepening your Connection

by Bruce Butcher

It is my belief that there exists a “third language,” the language of telepathy, which the animals can use to communicate their thoughts and feelings. This language appears to be part of a Universal energy that interpenetrates and is woven through all of creation and all living things. When I contact an animal, I am connected to the eternal living presence of that individual.

It makes no difference whether I am physically present with the animal, whether the animal is sleeping, or whether the animal is in physical form. The conversation takes place in the subtle energy frequencies to which most humans are not attuned. We humans generally look to the body language of an animal as a basis for drawing our conclusions. Eye contact is a good example of how we humans can misread the intent of an animal by applying our rules of body language to their world. For example, maintaining eye contact is an important indicator of listening in human-to-human interaction, but it is rarely an accurate measure for gaining the attention of the animal’s soul essence. In many species, direct eye contact is a challenge for power. We humans seem to require eye contact as evidence that we’ve gained another’s attention before we begin to communicate. This requirement is but one of the difficulties we create when we expect our human rules to be understood and followed by the animal kingdom. In most human-animal relationships, we require the animal to learn our language, modify its rules, lower its complexity and submit to our control. In essence, animals come into a world and agree to live by someone else’s rules. How many of us humans would be willing to live by someone else’s rules? I have tremendous reverence for this animal quality.

Humans with companion animals -- pets -- sometimes engage in training in efforts to create another neutral system of communication. The system isn’t derived entirely from human rules or animal rules but is foreign to both realms, a meeting in the middle. These methods vary in one basic way -- the degree to which the animal must be *dominated or obey*. Animals maintain their full spirit when training takes place in a manner that shapes the animal’s behavior by reinforcing its choices. The animal is simply motivated by the human to offer behaviors that are functional to all involved parties. The end result is a self-motivated animal that chooses the behaviors that the human finds most desirable. I initially learned to train dogs using the choke chain and aversive methods, but noticed that when I raised the expectations for my Great Dane, Baron, he began losing his motivation and his spirit. Advanced obedience titles are nice but I valued Baron’s spirit more. As I changed to positive reinforcement methods of training that focused on the areas *he* found interesting, I witnessed Baron’s spirit soar and our relationship move to higher levels. I learned the characteristics that a good pack leader exhibits and changed *my* behavior in order to be perceived as a leader figure. Dogs have an instinct to challenge the leadership whenever the leader becomes weak, that is, when the leader fails to take care of the pack’s issues satisfactorily. My dogs lost their need to challenge once I learned and demonstrated awareness of, and fair treatment regarding, all the pack issues. We were able to then focus on the individual needs and desires of each animal. What is important in their lives? What do they really like or dislike? What have they not yet experienced that they would like to? What have they incarnated to work on? For what purpose are we together? What do they want to tell me about my life and my lessons? The tension settled and a refreshing wind of life’s greatest possibilities swept through our lives.