

17 Spiritual Lessons From The Dog Whisperer And... The Tao Te Ching



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A few days ago one of my students from Florida told me about this unusual TV program they are showing on the Discovery Channel called The Dog Whisperer! Do you know what it's about? If not I'll tell you about it in just a short while but before that I want to tell you something on a little different tangent.

600 years before Jesus' birth, a man called Lao Tzu lived in ancient China. He was a man around whom many mysteries and myths surround but as far as I can tell from cross referencing history, this man worked for the imperial government as a record keeper or librarian of sorts. According to biographies and legend, he got tired of the city life and the continuous wars and traveled to the west to live as a hermit in at the age of 160! At the gate of the kingdom he was recognized by a guard and the guard requested the old master to write something that would preserve his wisdom. This is the legendary origin of the Tao Te Ching (loosely translated as: the book of the great way). This book, in its 81 beautiful short verses, captures the essence of spirituality like no other text I have personally encountered. Some scholars say that it is one of the wisest books ever written and I very much agree.

The philosophy of this work focused on the following concepts: tao, wu (emptiness), wu - wei (nondoing) and Fu (the return of all things to their origins). The goal of the Taoist philosophy is, to become one with Tao, the great way, by aligning your self with the universal laws and return to origins. But to achieve this, the student has to achieve emptiness and simplicity, practice non-doing, and dedicate his life to the understanding of the great way.

Here is the very first verse of Tao Te Ching for those of you who would like to appreciate the beauty of this master work:

***The Tao that can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao.
The name that can be named is not the eternal name.
The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.
The name is the mother of the ten thousand things.***

***Send your desires away and you will see the mystery.
Be filled with desire and you will see only the manifestation.***

***As these two come forth they differ in name.
Yet at their source they are the same.
This source is the mystery.***

The mystery itself is the gateway to all understanding.

~Verse 1: Tao Te Ching

The reason I am mentioning Tao Te Ching right at the beginning is this. In my journeys and adventures over the years in search of the truth, I have come to understand that there is indeed a great way (and then eventually found Tao Te Ching and many other similar teachings and saw the parallels of my own realizations). You can call it the universal laws, the archetypal patterns, the natural forces or will of God.

This “great way” is simple and observable in all of nature. It is said in certain secret traditions that there is a language of the world that is spoken by everything and everyone. And if you understand that language, there is guidance for you directly from your Source, or the Universe, or God on every step of your life. Unfortunately, most of the time we are too preoccupied in our material pursuit to notice this guidance, and eventually we turn our entire life into one great struggle.

But this guidance, or the great way, or language of the universe exists. And even if on a small scale, I am a living example of someone who constantly follows that guidance or pays attention to that language which shows you the right way at every turn of your life. I am not saying this to boast, there is still a long personal journey for me before I can feel that I have truly mastered this language, but I simply want you to know that this is the truth. I have lived with this for years now and I would be lost if this guidance stopped making itself known to me for some reason. That is just the fact.

Now what has all this got to do with a television show called The Dog Whisperer? Patience my friend... If you have not already experienced my roundabout way of telling stories, you might as well get used to it. Because I don't think I'm changing any time soon :)

So here is the relevance. One of the great realizations that came upon me right from the beginning of my own personal transformations (incidentally through my professional practice of hypnotherapy) is this: the world outside is a reflection of your inside. People, circumstances, animals, relationships, success, failure, work, play etc are all reflections of your inside. All these things and their relationship with you dynamically change according to your own personal and spiritual development. As I keep saying over and over to all my students: *when you take care of the inside, the outside automatically takes care of itself*. The great way shows its guidance through everything and everyone. And according to how the world is treating you, you can tell quite accurately what is happening on your inside, and vice versa.

Now here is one of the best indicators of what is happening on our inside: our dogs! They will always react according to your inner energy patterns. If you are frustrated and angry and have a scrambled energy pattern within you, your dog will be challenging and undisciplined and have a restless energy within them.

We have been living with our dogs for hundreds of thousands of years now. They have walked with us as a committed friend since we lived in caves and hunted the prehistoric animals. They are our personal direct communication module with nature. And they know more about us that we'd like to admit. They cannot tell us in words what they know, but they sure do express themselves which we most times misinterpret. But one man in California, originally from Mexico, Caesar Milan, has decoded this language and brought us some very valuable teachings through his TV show “The Dog Whisperer”.

The Dog Whisperer is a show where Caesar rehabilitates some of the most impossible type of dogs. The dogs that are sometimes so disturbed that they are flagged as “red zone dog” meaning they can actually kill another dog or seriously harm a human being if they get the opportunity. Caesar rehabilitates those kind of dogs and shows over and over that nearly EVERY dog can be the perfect dog that you want them to be: disciplined,

friendly, fun loving, social and able to follow basic instructions. But YOU have to be the leader to lead them to it.

Here are some of the lessons I have learnt from watching The Dog Whisperer about leadership, energy and relationship with our dogs (and children). Please understand these are a combination of my own interpretations of Caesars actions and words and NOT specifically what he says or does. Also a lot of what is given below is literal as well as metaphorical. See if you can find the hidden meanings within them:

Your dog's behavior is a reflection of you. They are our mirrors.

Your dog doesn't care how much money you make or what car you drive or how you look like. They care if you are a balanced individual or not and how happy and contented you are. They can't tell you with words but they reflect your inner being just like a mirror. They feel your energy, not your external personality.

Mother nature does not rule by fear and anger but calm assertiveness. Harnessing calm assertive energy will not only improve your relationship with your dogs, it will improve YOU and your relationship to the world.

Never fight against Mother Nature. Allow Mother Nature to help you rather than dis-empower you.

Every dog can be a great dog (unless it has a neurological problem which is very few). It can be fun, playful, obedient and able to follow basic commands. But it needs to be lead. And your dog needs to be lead by YOU. Remember, just because you and your dog share unconditional love, does not mean you have a balanced dog.

To be a leader you need to be calm and assertive. You also need to make decisions for the well being of the whole pack (or group or family) and lead them accordingly. You need to go above your personal interests and decide what is best for the pack. Dogs get frustrated when you are unable to lead and start challenging you.

Dogs are social creatures, just like human beings. And they are naturally meant to be social, playful, seek to be in packs like human families or groups of other dogs, follow the leadership of the pack leader. If they are hostile, or unfriendly, or hates other dogs, it is because the dog is either scared, or frustrated, or lacks confidence.

Take note of your household: who is the leader? You, your dogs, or your children? Is it truly a happy balanced family where everyone knows their duties,

boundaries and roles? Or is everyday another battle with your dogs and children where they do whatever they like with total disregard to others? If that is the case, understand that it does not have to be that way. (Your young children, by the way, also follow the same patterns as dogs as they too are more sensitive to energy and less with logic and social norms.)

Remember: your dog DOES NOT want to serve the role of the leader. It has been biologically programmed over thousands of years to follow human beings. (Your children does not want to be the leader of the house either. They want to enjoy your guidance and protection and love and affection. They want YOU to guide them towards what is the best for them and not the other way round. And if you fail to perform that duty, they become frustrated and express that frustration in many different ways.)

To live a healthy and balanced lifestyle dogs need exercise, discipline and affection. In that order!

Discipline does not mean bossing over your dog. It means taking responsibility and educating the living being that is in your life. It does not "kill" its spirit or make it less playful, discipline only allows your dog to enjoy a balanced lifestyle. Think about it, what would you rather have? A undisciplined playful dog who is unable to participate in social situations (jumps over people, intimidates others, picks fight, or isn't able to stay still)? Or would you rather have a disciplined dog who is not only playful at appropriate times but is able to accompany you in most social situations as well? It is your DUTY to discipline your dog so it knows its limitations and boundaries. The dog appreciates that because it allows him greater freedom in the long run. (Do you see the parallels with your children?)

Love-love-love does not work. You have to give discipline and boundaries also. Freedom doesn't mean you need a big open area, freedom is a mental thing.

Dogs live in the present. They don't think about the past, or worry about the future. They forgive you quickly and love you unconditionally. When you communicate with your dogs (or little children), over everything else be CONSISTENT and CONGRUENT. If you don't clearly understand what those words mean, do your research, they will do you great good in life. When you communicate anything, keep it simple and precise. Do NOT send mixed messages. If you tell your dog not to chew the carpet, NEVER let him chew the carpet or ignore his mischief just because he's so damn cute. Be consistent. If he has done something bad and you are disciplining him, do NOT immediately follow up with love and baby talk. I know he has big brown sad eyes which makes you want to

hug him like a baby, but remember if you are not congruent with your words and actions, you will only CONFUSE him and nothing else. And next time it will be even harder for him to understand what he did wrong and why you are upset.

Once again, who you are in the animal world is energy, your name and job description doesn't matter. IF you are calm and assertive, they WILL be calm and submissive. If you are consistent and congruent, they will be disciplined and obedient. Your dog can pick up even the slightest bit of negative energy and that can make a ripple effect on its behavior, remember that.

Never deal with your dogs when you are angry and frustrated. Do not hit them. Remember the keywords: Calm and Assertive.

Anytime you expect your dog to fulfill the role of your missing child or spouse, friend or lover, you are putting undue pressure on him. You are taking away his dignity. His dignity of being a dog. While your dog can give you much love and support, he wants to be a dog before anything else. And unless his dog needs (exercise, discipline and affection) are fulfilled first, he will eventually get frustrated and become an unbalanced dog.

Okay, so that's about it for now. I hope this article will help you to see some of your relationships in new light. If you have liked what you read, please share it with the countless mums and dads and dog owners and cat lovers and husbands and wives who are perpetually struggling with their respective relationships not knowing what is going wrong. As you can see, the truth most of the time is pretty simple, but it takes great courage and honesty to accept it.

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