



# Dog Talk Weekly

Where we talk about dogs, share stories, solve problems

Issue 10.4.1 – April 5, 2010 *{Issue Year.Month.Week}*

Welcome to the launch of Dog Talk Weekly. This is my first issue and I'm excited. I've planned a lot for my newsletter and I hope you will help me to make it great.

My goal is to provide you with an opportunity to share your light-hearted and fun stories about life with your dog.

Over the coming weeks and months, you will read articles that help you, articles that entertain you and short snippets that are just fun to read. I think you call them dog trivia.

In this first issue, I'm using one of my dogs to illustrate how a dog's upbringing can affect him or her for life. I'll be sharing a story about Kobe – an American Eskimo Spitz who was abused in his first home, feared in his second home and fearful in his third home – mine. He was so badly abused in his first 7 months of life that by the time I got him, he was afraid of humans and difficult to train.

My goal is to make Dog Talk Weekly fun to read, but helpful as well. If you think of something you'd like to see, by all means let me know and I'll see what I can do. I'm especially excited about running some contests, so watch for those.

And now, let's get started.

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## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- 1. Feature Article – how upbringing can affect your adult dog's behavior**
- 2. The Story of Kobe – an abused, fear-aggressive American Eskimo Spitz**
- 3. Regular Sections**

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## **Your Dog's Early Life Will Affect His Behavior As An Adult**

Like human babies, dogs are easily affected by how they are treated when they are very young. This makes sense, since this is the time when their brains are growing and they are learning about their new environment.

It can determine whether they grow up to be aggressive or friendly, and whether they develop mental problems. Anxiety, fear and anger are common problems, as is dependency. Dogs that display these issues have most likely experienced some kind of trauma while they were developing physically and mentally.

The biggest reason dogs are anti-social is because they were not given the opportunity to socialize at an early age. Puppies need to interact with other puppies as well as adult dogs and humans so that they develop confidence. Dogs that are not confident tend to show more fear and aggression against others.

Abused puppies will become very fearful and will show fear aggression as they grow up. It is their way of protecting themselves from things they do not understand. Abuse doesn't have to be hitting or physical torture. It can be mental abuse as well.

Dogs need to see consistency in those around them. If someone is caring one day and out of control the next, the dog will become very insecure.

If your dog begins to show such signs, take a close look at his or her surroundings. Is there something or someone that is scaring the dog? Neighborhood children and even some adults can be quite cruel sometimes. Make sure your dog gets plenty of socialization from the beginning to avoid problems later.

The good news in all of this is that with patience, understanding and a calm hand, you can reverse the damage in many cases. At the very least, you can ease their condition.

### **The Story of Kobe: An abused, fear-aggressive American Eskimo Spitz**

After my American Eskimo died, I took in one that was 7 months old puppy that his owners wanted to get rid of. They told me that he had been abused in his first home. This was evident because he was extremely fear aggressive and hid under the table barking incessantly when I went to get him. After 2 days, he finally calmed enough to come with me.

For months, he frequently tried to bite me and was surprisingly unaware of the human voice. When I talked to him and called his name, he just "didn't hear" me. It took several months of my constant chatter to finally get him to respond when I spoke to him.

For the next 10 months, I worked with him to overcome his fear of people. He hated when I tried to control him, such as bringing him to me by pulling on his leash. That's when he would bite me. But I was very persistent. It took a lot of trial and error to finally figure out the best way to work with him. Sadly, my initial "sympathy" approach was a bad idea. It made him worse.

He had to learn that I was the boss and he must obey me. Until then, he'd made sure he was boss by barking and attacking his owners. By the time he was 2 years old, I was able to give him a gentle hug and he'd learned how to play – at

least for a very few moments before his anger would re-emerge. At that point, I did not force him. He'd had enough and we'd made headway.

And then I introduced him to Cindy, a lab-Chow puppy who had a wonderful, easy-going nature. She was funny, fun and very sociable. She was the perfect solution to Kobe's anti-social tendencies. The change in him was amazing, just to see them play together. He often pretended he didn't want anything to do with her, but she would insist. And the play would begin.

By the time Kobe died at 15, he'd changed considerably and even looked up to me. It was a great feeling to know that he had lived a much better life and learned that he was not alone. He got to discover how wonderful it was to socialize with another dog and a human without fear.

If you adopt such a dog as Kobe, do not give up. Show him who's boss – but with kindness and understanding. Don't push him. Give him a chance to come to you and let him know that it's okay to trust you. Teach him how to have fun. You will be amazed, as I was, at how well such a dog can make a comeback.

### **Regular Sections:**

- Dog Trivia

Hearing Impaired? Did you know that white dogs tend to develop hearing problems more frequently than other dogs?

There's a reason Scottie Dogs are not good trackers. They do not have the scent gene that makes tracking dogs so efficient at what they do.

Dogs do not have ESP. Well, according to the experts, what we think is ESP is actually their keen hearing that sends our dogs running to the door before we pull into the driveway. Test your dog:

My dog, Tyler (a Belgian Shepherd) has ESP – I'm pretty sure. When he is on the deck, he takes about 10 seconds to realize I'm there. Ok. That's probably because he hears the floor squeak. But that doesn't account for the times when he is down the yard or at the bottom of the stairs. Several times, I've arrived at the door and stood quietly for a good minute or two before he suddenly whips his head around to see me. No. I do not make any noise. I stand quietly until he responds. If you ask me, that says he has ESP.

- Member Submissions

Send me your material – your stories, like this one, and I'll publish them in an upcoming issue of Dog Talk Weekly.

- Competitions

I got nothing. But I'm open to suggestions. Send them along and I'll consider them. Make them fun, but easy to organize and track. Remember, this is all via the Internet so there are a number of things we could do: best personal dog-

related web site or blog, best dog photo, best puppy shot, cutest shot, funniest story.

- Free Stuff

Every now and then, I will offer you some free things, such as short videos related to dogs, mini-reports, ebooks, etc.

I hope you have enjoyed this launch issue. Talk with you again soon.

Sylvia

P.S.: Don't forget to send me your stories and ideas for upcoming issues of Dog Talk Weekly. Just send them to me through my contact form here:

<http://sylviadickens.com/contactform/contactus.php>

**Dog Nutrition** is vital to your dog's life expectancy and quality of life. I've written a book on how to make sure your dog gets a healthy, nutritious diet and avoids many of the dangers that come with certain foods. Find out more at

<http://healthydognutritionsecrets.com/healthydogPP1.htm>

**Puppy Parenting Course:** Are you drowning in a sea of questions about raising your puppy the right way? This 24-week course feeds you all the information you need in bite-size portions that you can use during your puppy's early years. Get a free trial today.

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