

Easing the Pressure

What ever would we do if we didn't have a clock to watch? We go to bed at a certain time so we can be up in the morning at a certain time, this enables us to get to work on time. There is a time for 'tea-breaks' lunch comes in the middle of the working day then its time for home, just in time to eat and go to bed at a certain time.....

Not everyone is bound by set working times. Some work for themselves and therefore, to an extent, can dictate their own daily schedule. But even then there is work to be done before the end of the day and if it doesn't get done it will mean working late, or trying to 'catch up' the next day.

Then there are those who do not have a set schedule at all but are still under pressure. Housewives and mums will have to fit in with meals and school times (they can now shop during the night or on the 'net if they want) but they will still have the pressure of helping everyone else in the family keep to their timetable.

It has to be done of course, if not we would have no form of order and some things would never get done. The hard thing is switching off and in this world of deadlines, timetables and pressure it becomes increasingly more difficult to do. It almost seems as if we like chasing here, there and everywhere and one of the saddest things is we tend to feel guilty if we can't find something to rush for.

It is such a high pressured society that we live in, the 'it should have been done yesterday' attitude. Not that it isn't good to want to get things done, but maybe sometimes we lose sight of what we were aiming for. Why wait for the pension and retirement if a fortune can be made earlier? Great but if the fortune is made, then will that person sit back and enjoy it, or will they carry on to try and make another fortune. 'If I win the lottery I won't change, I will carry on as I am.' Whatever for? If I won it I'd certainly change a lot of things. How often do we hear. 'If I won the lottery I would ensure my future was secure, go on a holiday, buy a car, whatever it takes to feel comfortable and then I will try and do as much good as possible and help others as much as I can?' Not often!

What about the new race of super children? The ones who have passed their A levels when just out of nappies. It used to be considered a problem making sure that gifted children retained their youth whilst studying, but now one could be forgiven for thinking parents of gifted children are competing against each other for the youngest and brightest. Who cares? Childhood is special, children should know what it is like to grow up, they should be able to remember it, not look at it through the study window. The four minute mile was a wondrous occasion but if we carry on breaking records we will be going backwards. Now that is something to think about!

Movies were so obviously movies weren't they? Stilted acting and into one solitary camera. Now they are brilliant, in fact they are so real we are nearly living them!

Holograms are next and then what?

So what has this to do with dogs? Pressure again. Being pressured into getting a pedigree dog, pressured into how to train it, pressured in to when, where and how far to walk it. Even pressured into what breed and what name!

Humans can pretty well stick up for themselves, and if not they know they are living with the consequences, dogs do not get the chance to stick up for themselves. Young puppies are being pushed into 'early training', competitions cater for puppies and many are expected to be doing countless wonderful exercises, but few are well versed on recall and lead walking! What is happening to us? Why can't we let them grow up naturally?

Why is there such importance in which is the biggest, best, prettiest, nicest coloured? There is nothing nicer than a well behaved, well mannered pup having fun doing all the dog things it would do in a pack environment. Playing on its own, making up its own games, amusing itself, learning how to think, watch and be patient without human interference. The trouble is we are so keen not to miss out on any of the puppy stage that if we are not careful we either rob them of their youth or keep them immature. Then of course as soon as they are old enough to do all the things we want to do, off we go again. The pressure is applied, 'You mean you aren't going to compete, that's sad', That's blackmail! 'What a waste having a dog like that and not doing something with it'. That's blackmail as well.

It's not surprising people become confused and don't really know what to do for the best. A little advice is good but then folks should be allowed to make up their own minds. Nobody should be made to feel guilty because they are not competing, don't have the worlds fastest or brightest pup or its father is not a champion. Let me tell you what the old shepherds used to say, 'When they are unbeatable youngsters they are soon worn out. A dog has only so long at its peak so take it to it when it is mature enough to use it and then it is never wasted!' Wise words.

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