

June 2011 – Unconditional Love

I have never shared my home with a furry four-legged creature before; even as a kid we only had goldfishes and a turtle. That was true until now. I have a long-haired black and white cat, named Abigail, staying with me for an unknown period of time. A friend has moved into a temporary accommodation that prefers not to have pets so while she lives there I am taking care of her cat at my place. It has been an adjustment with some pleasant surprises.

Arriving home at night to an empty home has been replaced with a warm welcome from Abigail – as the key turns in the lock she must come running from wherever to meet me at the door. She flops down right in my path on her side and starts chirping and purring. As I walk towards her she rolls onto her back and looks at me longingly. If I don't immediately drop to my knees and pet her she follows me closely on my heels purring hoping I'll lean down and pet her. And while she is so wanting for affection I start talking lovingly to her and find that I want to reward her greeting. *The lessons here are to be the person that someone would run to meet at the door when you came home and to spend time appreciating those around you by giving them your attention.*

When I pet her, scratching under her chin she purrs continuously, rolling around, indulging in the attention and pushing her head under my hand encouraging more, giving my hand rough-tongued kitty licks. *The lesson here is to ask for what you need and enjoy it when you get it.*

Abigail spends time playing with her toys – the yellow stuffed mouse, the purple piece of fluff with a bell on it and the feather. She also plays with mundane objects like a paper clip and the empty envelopes from my mail. *The lesson here is to have fun and you can find fun in the obvious and not so obvious places.*

Abigail is not a lap cat, she has never sat on my lap when I have visited her nor does she sit on her owner's lap. Although Abigail is not an old dog, she has learned a new trick since staying with me – she sits on my lap at some point every day, often as a wind down before bed. She paws the blanket on my lap until she is comfortable, nestles in and closes her eyes making me feel warm and cosy. *The lesson is that an old dog can learn new tricks, and it can make you and others feel better.*

What can you learn from a pet? Whose belly could you rub today to make them happier?

Live your potential

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