Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Any of you who follow me on Facebook know we had a new puppy join our pack this month. She’s an Australian Shephard-Labradoodle mix and her name is Freya. She’s absolutely adorable and wicked smart. I forgot that having a new puppy in the house is like having a new baby in the house. Phew…it’s a lot of work to properly train a puppy! It struck me that if you are not actively engaged in training a puppy to know what they need to do in your environment, you are actively engaged in training them into something sloppy and potentially creating bad habits in the grown dog. In other words, every moment that puppy is being trained…whether it’s to a good habit and behavior or a bad habit and behavior. This is exactly like what it takes to train our own minds! If we are not actively training our own mind to a positive habit, we are defaulting to a potentially lazy one. This is what I talk about when I say we have to first set boundaries with our own minds before we start looking outside of ourselves with our boundaries. It’s the lack of good boundary setting internally that leads us to train those in our lives to treat us the way they do, to expect from us what they do, and to behave the way they do in our presence. Every second we are engaged in training the people around us and if we are not engaged in training ourselves, that could lead to some negative outcomes.

Here are some field guide tips for training your own mind that I have learned from Freya:

1. Always praise yourself for peeing in the right place. You can remove the word peeing and insert whatever verb you have set an intention for: exercising, eating according to your genetic code and food sensitivity needs, going to sleep on time and getting 8 hours, speaking to yourself in ways that are affirmative and supportive, etc.
2. Always sit before you eat. Ayurvedic medicine tells us that taking a few moments to make sure we are sitting, calm, fully present, and engaged in gratitude and appreciation for our food will enhance our digestive process.
3. Don’t chew on anything but your designated toys. You can remove toys and insert the foods mentioned above…that match your genetics and your food sensitivities.
4. Go for a walk first thing in the morning in order to move your body and release all of your ya yas (or zoomies as my daughters call Freya’s unbridled energy spurts). We walk at least five miles first thing in the morning after Freya and the big dogs eat. This fosters happiness and endorphins in all of us. You can watch the replay for my [Healing Moods Naturally Masterclass](http://www.drkeesha.com/mood) from last month here and learn more about how this training tip is essential for balancing your brain’s hormones.
5. Wag like crazy when you meet someone new, but don’t jump on them. Who wouldn’t want to be greeted like they are the best thing since a meaty bone?
6. Only bark when you see a legitimate threat. Wag more, bark less is another way to say this and I think it’s self-explanatory.
7. Learn what the prompt “snuggle time” means and do it like you are a boss. All of that oxytocin just leads to only good things!

One of the most important things I learned when I had my four children was to sleep when they sleep and play with them when they want to play. It’s been a lot of fun to bring Freya into our home. One more healthy aspect I have benefited from is the frequent belly laughter I get to enjoy as I witness her inquisitive and adventurous nature.

Here’s to being curious and inquisitive!

Much love,

Dr. Keesha