

Angelic Dogs



Through your dog's eyes....

Enriching your dogs life.....

Dogs, like humans, need to have something to do, have a purpose, we go out to work, we find ways to amuse ourselves when we are not working. Most dogs were originally bred to work and some still have the need to continue to do this, if we do not provide the work for them they will go out and find their own work, a self employed dog is a disaster waiting to happen.

Their health, physically and psychologically is dependent on the environment they live in. They are motivated to do certain behaviours, searching for food, retrieving, herding etc. If they are not able to perform the behaviours they are motivated to do they may become frustrated resulting in redirected, abnormal or aggressive behaviours occurring e.g. over-reacting, being over-sensitive or being lethargic and inactive.

How does your dog see their environment? Is it an adventure playground full of appropriate stimulation, fun and learning or is it a desert, nothing on the horizon whichever way they turn?

Is the hunt is more important than the kill? What is more important to your dog? Searching for their toy or finding it? For a lot of dogs the doing is more motivating than the end result, for example for some dogs the thrill of the chase is what they need more than the actual capture, or the thrill of the hunt is more rewarding than actually eating.



So how can you create an enriched environment to enhance their well being?

Provide physical and mental exercise

Provide opportunities for play with other dogs

Provide plenty of interactions with humans



Think about your dogs natural behaviours, how social they are, their activity levels and their requirement for mental stimulation.

For example:

Jack Russell Terriers like to dig, track and kill small prey

Border Collies and Cattle dogs like to herd

Labradors like to retrieve

Now devise activities that you and your dog can enjoy together and those your dog can enjoy when they are left alone to entertain themselves.

Here are some examples to get you started:

Pass the parcel for 1 - Make a parcel, lay a sheet of newspaper out, place some of their dinner on it, roll it up, lay another sheet of newspaper out, place some more of their dinner on it then roll this around the previous piece. Repeat until you have a parcel made up of layers of newspaper and food. Let them unwrap and find the goodies.

Hide and play - Hide their favourite toy and encourage them to find it when they do have a play with them. You can use this as a surprise during the day, hide the toy when your dog is out of sight. Get on with your day as normal, a little later give your dog the find it cue, once they find their toy have a game with them and their toy.



Ball Bobbing - Using a children's paddling pool, fill with water and place safe hard balls that float for them to try and grab.

Nose For A Lead - Teach your dog to find a scent. Have two rags and soak in diluted vanilla essence. Show your dog the rag and place it half under something (you want them to sniff it not retrieve it), encourage your dog to sniff the second article to give them the scent then let go of your dog encouraging them to go to the first article, when they sniff the first article praise and reward with a treat. Repeat placing the article in a different place until your dog understands the game, then move on to placing the article completely out of sight but still let them see you hide it. Once they are good at this, place the article out of sight but don't let them see you hide it anymore.

King of the Kong's - Stuff the Kong (or other food toys) with food and hide it somewhere in the house, let your dog know where you hide it initially until they know the game then encourage them to find it. Once your dog knows what to do this can be a game you play as you leave the house to go to work that will give your dog something to do when you leave and tire them out so they are more likely to settle down.



Kong Piñata - Hang a stuffed Kong upside down from a tree providing the ultimate challenge for your dog where they have to turn it over to get the food before it flips back over.

Treasure Trail - Use your imagination to set up an exciting trail of goodies for your dog to follow and when they get to the end of the trail they find the treasure (a Kong stuffed with Cream Cheese for example).

Change of scenery - Give them new sights, sounds and smell sensations by varying where you walk your dog.



Thrill of the hunt - As you are walking with your dog off lead suddenly run off in the opposite direction calling your dog, throw a handful of treats on the floor and pretend you have found something exciting. Your dog will come to see what you have found, reward with playing find the treats on the floor.

Chill out session - Massage, this can be a great way to help your dog unwind and provide the social interaction with you that they require. Sit on the floor with your dog and use long gentle strokes along their body, massage their ears and under their chin.

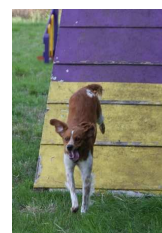
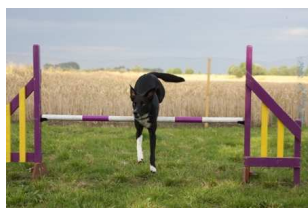
Chew time - Dogs love to chew, give them a variety of safe items to chew instead of them choosing your possessions.



Play Time - Provide them with safe toys on a regular basis. Whatever you use always make sure it is safe for your dog and cannot be eaten, chewed, swallowed or cause choking, is not made of anything poisonous and not made of material which can wrap around your dog and cause injuries etc.



Other activities to do - Why not have fun together and build on your bond by having a go at agility, flyball or heelwork to music, again providing the mental exercise required.



Show Off - Train your dog some fun tricks that you can use to show off to visitors, do chores for you, put into a dance routine you can do together or just have a great time together.

Some examples: give paw, bow, roll over, beg, find my keys, find the TV remote, put your toys away, shut the door or go and get specific person.



There are many many more activities you can do with your dog, if you have any fun activities you would like to share with other dog owners please feel free to write about them on our facebook page www.facebook.com/#/pages/Angelic-Dogs/201532639761

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