

## I Want to Be the Person My Dogs Think I Am

Jennifer Aniston and Lady Gaga may have more money in the bank, firmer abs, and better PR, but they've got nothing on me when it comes to adoring fans. Every day when I come home, Gus and Yogi, my Australian Shepherd and Corgi, welcome me like I'm the greatest human being they've ever met.

Now granted, I *am* the one who feeds them and supplies them with tennis balls and various rubber things that squeak, but beyond that, my dogs seem to think I am absolutely wonderful. Sometimes I simply accept their unconditional love, but sometimes I have to wonder what it *is* they see in me. I am far from perfect, but they don't seem to realize that, or maybe they do and couldn't care less.

At any rate, when I look at myself from *their* perspective, I see the person I want to be.

### **I'm Capable and in Control**

I think my dogs see me as someone who is capable of doing anything. I mean, I have thumbs and can drive a car and put out fires that start in the toaster oven. To them I must really seem like the alpha dog. But most days I don't feel like the alpha dog of my own life. I feel like I'm always chasing after control like my dogs chase after squirrels.

I want to be as in control and capable as my dogs think I am. Perhaps what's missing is the same belief in myself that my dogs have in me. I could attempt to build a time machine out of nothing more than tin foil and a couple of paper clips, and my dogs would look up in adoration, their big, wet brown eyes gazing upon me with absolute certainty that I will successfully build that time machine. Maybe if I believe in myself the way they believe in me; if I just accept that I am capable of doing anything I set my mind to, I'll find that I actually am.

### **I'm Patient**

Boy, I'm really pulling a fast one over on them with this one. Or maybe the truth is I'm actually very patient with them, just not as patient with myself. When I walk my dogs and they look for that perfect spot to relieve themselves, it can take quite a long time until they find it. I haven't a clue what makes one tree better than another, one patch of grass the absolute ideal spot on which

to do their business, but I never rush them. I simply wait patiently until they've found their ideal bathroom.

Why is it then I can't show the same kind of patience to myself? Why do I expect *me* to learn a new software program or instill a new good habit immediately? Why do I put an unnerving amount of pressure on myself to do better, be better, smarter, thinner, happier **NOW**? Perhaps if I showed *me* the same kind of patience I show *them*, I would actually accomplish more in whatever timeframe it took.

### **I'm Attentive to Their Needs**

I'd like to tell you that I sat down and wrote this blog post in one fell swoop, but there have been various interruptions from my two canine friends. But it doesn't matter, I love them and so I'm attentive to their needs.

I need to be more attentive to my own needs. The older I've gotten, the more I have realized that helping others is wonderful, but helping myself is equally if not more important. It's okay to put me first more often. In fact, as much as my dog's needs are my responsibility, so are my own.

### **I Love Trying new Things**

When I walk my dogs, I usually let them pick which route we take. If they pull left, we go left; if they pull right, we go right. Once we even took a little path that cut through a park that we had never been through before. At one point we got a little turned around but eventually found our way home. I'm sure to them I'm someone who likes to try new things and is open to unlimited possibilities. And, to a certain extent this is true. But, if I'm going to be really honest, I think I could be more of a risk taker.

When I'm walking my own life's path, I want to have the same sense of adventure my dogs think I have. Life can get a little dull if you always go left or always go right. I want to be the person who shakes things up now and then and tries a totally different path knowing, even if I get a little turned around, I'll eventually find my way.

### **I'm Generous**

I can't tell you how many times I have been enjoying the most delicious sandwich or bowl of macaroni and cheese; each bite filling me with profound joy; when I notice two sets of pleading eyes looking up at me, wanting so much to experience the same joy. Now, more often than not, I really don't feel like sharing. You know when you get down to those last couple of bites of a delicious meal, and you just want to savor them? Well, in my house, those pleading eyes get me every time and I share my last two delicious bites with Gus and Yogi. To them, I must seem like the most generous human in the world.

Like most people, I often deny myself joy. Why? I'm human I guess. I want to be as generous with myself as I am with my dogs. I want to show me that my joy and happiness matter.

I am grateful to have such wonderful companions in my life; ones that not only make me smile each and every day, but show me that I have tremendous potential and am worth the work to become the person I truly want to be.