

What I Learned About Spirituality from the Dog Whisperer

My husband and I have watched almost every episode of "The Dog Whisperer" (Cesar Millan) **and we don't even have a dog!**

For those of you who haven't seen "The Dog Whisperer" it airs on the National Geographic Channel. (Cesar Millan was just on Oprah last week).

Those of you who have seen this show can attest to Cesar Millan's way with dogs.

Episode after episode, dog owners seek out Cesar Millan as a last resort to help them with their dog "issues." Many dog owners come to Cesar after having their dog flunk out of obedience school or after having severe behavioral problems for many years. And time and time again, Cesar "rehabilitates" the dogs in a matter of minutes. (Cesar's famous phrase is "I rehabilitate dogs and train people.")

He primarily does this through his "energy." He calls it calm-assertive energy. Around dogs, Cesar is always calm and centered. He is not "reactive." He does not show fear, aggression or anxiousness.

Cesar has stated over and over on every show that the energy we put out, is the energy we get back. If we're "hyper" and emotional, we have hyper and emotional dogs. The way to change the dog's behavior is to change the owner's energy.

Isn't this interesting? And how can we apply this principle to our human relationships? Doesn't the same wisdom apply to us?

Have you ever been around someone at work who's really high strung, stressed out and goes a mile a minute? And have you noticed your "energy" after being around this person for a while? Maybe after you left the vicinity of this person, you noticed that you were moving at a faster rate and felt anxious.

On the contrary, have you ever been around someone so peaceful and centered that you felt more peaceful and centered? (I feel more centered after just listening to an audio of Eckhart Tolle).

We reflect one another's energy. So it's important that we project into the world what we want to have as our experience. **If we want calm and peace, it's important to project that energy.**

The other interesting thing I noticed from watching many episodes is that when **owners are "reactive" to a dog's "negative" behavior, it only reinforces that "negative" behavior in the dog.**

For example, when a dog is hyper active and ready to bite the mail carrier, to yell and to freak out, only reinforces that behavior. Likewise, when a dog is hyper active and licking excessively or demonstrating some other annoying behavior,

when we react by tickling or petting the dog and telling it not to do that with an excited tone, we are also enforcing the behavior.

Cesar's technique is to withdraw attention away from the negative behavior (by using various techniques) and then when the dog is in a calm, submissive state to reward it with love and affection, thereby reinforcing that state of mind.

Cesar insists over and **over that if we react with anxious "energy"--or panic energy, or aggressive energy--we are only ADDING to the negative state of the dog.** We are worsening the situation.

After hearing this over and over on the dog whisperer I had the thought that maybe my "reactive" energy to situations on the news, was only adding to the "problem." What if my "reactiveness" was worsening the situation, as is the case of reactive energy enforcing the negative behavior in dogs?

From the perspective of Eckhart Tolle (Author of *Power of Now*) if I'm reacting to a situation, I am "unconscious." And that same unconsciousness is the cause of all violence and suffering.

So when I hear about a "negative" event on the news, which is the result of unconsciousness, and I "react" to it by getting all wound up (which is also unconsciousness), **I am only adding to the problem.**

The change in our world will come from a shift in consciousness (from unconsciousness to consciousness). Lasting, true change will come from a shift in our energy.

Just like the Dog Whisperer shows us how our energy effects the dogs we co-habitate with, **our energy also has an effect on our outer environment.** Do we want to be part of the problem, or do we want to be part of the solution?

Once I had this realization that my "reactivity" could be adding to the problem of "unconsciousness" or "negativity" **I began to shift my energy.** I went to that "calm state."

Now I can act from this place. If I am upset about a situation, I can work to change it from that place of being, rather than from a reactive state. That way I'm not adding my "reactive" or "unconscious" energy into the situation. And when we all "act" from a place of calm, centeredness, what will our world be like?

Can we be "people whisperers" and bring our calm, peaceful energy into the world and transform our life situations?

Hmmm...I'm really learning a lot about spirituality from the Dog Whisperer.