

Learning about Love and Loyalty

by Lisa McKimm



Do your kids have a pet? Our family have always been more dog-lovers than anything else. We've managed to avoid having cats (I'm allergic), and mice (Thank You God) or any other small crawly vermin-like critters.

We have a Boxer called Max. Most of the time he lives at our daughter's house now because he has always shadowed her footsteps. When we first got him we named him Baldrick - because 'he was so cunning you could put a tail on him and call him a weasel' (think Blackadder!). But his name was eventually changed to Max and it has stuck. Max was always a master of the chew and spew technique. Anything and everything - especially if we DARED to exclude him by going out without him.

His odd behaviours on these occasions included collecting everything that he could from the property and stacking it under a tree - plant pots; shoes; toys, you name it. He also jumped up and got a wet suit that was drying in a tree once, and then munched the whole thing into bits of rubber no bigger than fifty cent pieces. But we loved him anyway. He only had to tilt that cute little Boxer head of his to one side and we were guaranteed to melt faster than a Mr Whippy on a hot day.

He's nine years old now and slowing down a bit. But when I think of all the great things that Max has taught our family, it makes me want to share them with you.

1. When you are sick and lying in bed, just having another body breathing in the same room is comforting.
2. Having a watchful eye on you or a warm body snuggled up to you makes all the difference.
3. There is nothing that makes you feel as powerfully connected to another as unconditional love.
4. It's good to have someone to 'watch your back' when you are walking at night time.
5. You don't have to vacuum around the dining table as often when you have a dog.
6. The warm spot in front of the fire is more fun if it's shared.
7. Drool doesn't actually kill you.
8. It's sometimes helpful to smell things before you eat them!
9. Sometimes it's good to go to the piece of carpet where the sun is streaming in and go to sleep on it.
10. Life should be mostly about eating, resting, exercise and loyalty.

I think that in Peter Pan's 'Darling family' household - they knew exactly what they were doing having a big loving dog for the nanny!

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