

How to minimize an animal's stress

Being an animal lover, I would like to share some of my personal feelings with you. It is my hope that many of you have similar sentiments towards our furry friends.

We, as humans, are born with the abundant ability to feel, think, and communicate our every hope, desire, and fear. We have an enormous capacity to express ourselves. Animals must communicate their needs to us by using their body language, their voice or by 'acting-out'. But to fully understand an animal's mind, feelings, or issues, we have to be capable to engage them.

We have all experienced the confusion and apprehension that a new job, a house relocation or unfamiliar event can have on us and our lives.

Questions turn in our mind: What will the new workplace be like? Will the people be nice? Will we have quiet neighbors? These thoughts may cause us appetite loss, weight gain or loss of sleep.

Our animals can suffer similar feelings of confusion when they must cope with a new house, a change of family, a boarding experience or additions to the family. They may communicate their stresses to us through such means as a loss of appetite, by developing compulsive behaviors or by 'acting out' through inappropriate behavior. Many of these symptoms can be easily avoided or eliminated without medications or drastic approaches.

From a young age growing up on a farm, to present day, I have always been surrounded by animals. They have been excellent teachers and have taught me valuable insight into their emotional and behavioral make-up. I now realize that the most effective way to help them reduce their potential or realized stresses lies in communication and the sharing of compassion.

To help our companion animals, it is important for us to realize that they are capable of understanding us. When we sit with them quietly and take the time to explain things to them - be it as a word, a thought or a picture - rest assured that they are receiving the information to some degree, and usually a great deal more than we realize.

Children and animals react similarly to unexpected events. They both have the capacity to understand information to some degree when we explain to them in detail such things as: we are moving house, what will it be like, and what they can expect there.


A child would feel confused if we left them at a new daycare center for the first time without offering any details, explanations or the all important 'We will come back to pick you up'. The animals need us to provide them with information also, to help them cope as stress free as possible with life's changes.

In the rare event that I have a new cat that is demonstrating an inability to deal with the stress of a kennel situation, I take the time to communicate with the animal and find out what the issues are. The answers that I hear most often are 'Why have I been abandoned', and 'I am angry with my family. Why didn't they take me with them?'

We need to prepare the animals beforehand about what to expect when big 'unknowns' arise. We must do this in a calm, worry-free, and guilt-free fashion. If we feel anxious, they will pick up on this and it will make them feel anxious too. Thoughtfulness and kindness will always be appreciated by animals, and people too.

Melanie Walker is an animal communicator and the owner of Pet Bed and Breakfast Inc. Her kennel is the very first fully cageless boarding facility for cats. (Sorry, no dogs). She started the kennel in 2001 with one clear goal in mind, 'To provide cats everywhere with the feeling of freedom and personal safety while they are boarded'. She believes her cagefree environment offers cats the lowest stress kennel option.

The Pet Bed and Breakfast is located at 5460 Canotek Road, Unit 101, Ottawa, (Mtl Rd & Qwy). View the website for more information, television footage and photos of this truly unique cat kennel or contact the office at 613-748-3585.



MELANIE WALKER
5460 Canotek Rd. Unit 101
Ottawa ON Canada K1J 9H1
Phone: (613) 748-3585
melanie@petbedandbreakfast.ca

Business Hours:
Monday - Friday: 9-11am, 1:30-6pm
Saturday: 9am-12pm; Sunday & Holidays Closed

**"The future of
CAT BOARDING
is CAGELESS"**
Melanie Walker

www.petbedandbreakfast.ca