

Anthropomorphism

By dictionary definition, anthropomorphism is “the attribution of human motivation, characteristics, of behavior to animals.” It’s very natural for dog owners to sometimes think of their pets in human terms- we often call our animals by human names and they in turn often become, literally, family members. They eat with us, sleep with us, play with us, and keep us company.

Problems can arise when we take this too far expecting a dog to understand human speech and reasoning - “I’m going out now, but I’ll be back at two and I want you to be good”: “Don’t run in the street or you’ll be hit by a car”: “I’ll spank you if you knock over the garbage again.” or when we assign human emotions to a pet to explain its actions - “He must love you more, that’s why he growls at me”: “Susie’s wetting on the rug to get back at us because she’s jealous of the new puppy.”

If your dog is going to be able to function safely, contentedly, and in a well-behaved manner in your world you must learn to understand it’s actions in canine, not human, terms and communicate with it in a way it can understand.



ACADEMY FOUR PAWS

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