Slow Dog Movement C.I.C.

'On the Ground' Zine

Issue No.3| February 2023

Stacey Hytrek's *winning entry (shared amongst 3) for our SLOW DOG MOVEMENT C.I.C. 2nd anniversary Photo contest 2023*

Thanks to you, we celebrate 2 years as a C.I.C.!

written by **Laura Dobb**

It's very exciting to celebrate anniversaries, especially of socially minded businesses like the **SLOW DOG MOVEMENT C.I.C.** At just two years old, we are blessed to have a lively Facebook group, a growing PATREON membership, a new Podcast called '**A Dog's Pace**' a book in the writing, a safe and private forum in the making and more surprises in store.

All of these accomplishments with our directors spanning the globe and some of us have never even met in person! The challenges of trying to sell merchandise with BREXIT, Royal Mail postal strikes, directors with busy lives or leaving (Namitha PC left in January). SLOWNESS in almost everything you *don't want* makes our 2nd year an extra special accomplishment.

Continued on page two

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'On the Ground'

Vivimos en un mundo de humanos y perros donde los humanos cada vez son menos humanos y los perros cada vez menos perros . Unos por Ego los otros por Amor .

We live in a world of humans and dogs where humans are less human and dogs are less and less dogs. Some for Ego, the others for Love.

— Santos Salcines Nazabal

Photo credit ***Stacey Hytrek***

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'On the Ground'

Thanks to you, we celebrate 2 years as a C.I.C.! *continued*

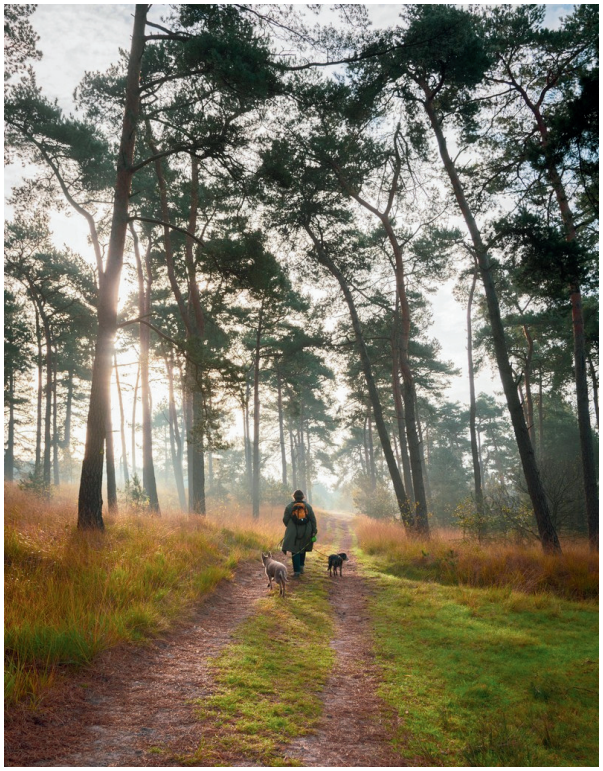
written by **Laura Dobb**

The **Slow Dog Movement** is unusual in a good way. Our directors are all dog professionals who challenge the status quo in the dog world and strive to keep as up to date as possible with the latest research, and, equally as important, our own observations of the human/dog world around us. We are all very busy with our work with dogs and people, so our philosophy comes from a very real place. None of us are paid from the C.I.C. and all of the money we raise goes to our operating costs and future projects.

In this way, we don't really compete with any other dog professionals for clients. You are a part of our movement if you hold our philosophy close to your heart and practice it with integrity. It's not a religion but a carefully considered set of values that come from real life and deep thinking. Who knows, they may change in the future and will likely evolve as well. They are meant to serve the dogs of this world.

We celebrated our 2nd anniversary with a photo contest and received many excellent photos. The theme was 'relaxing with your dog' within the #slowdogmovementphilosophy. Our winners were Orit Heartlight, Stacey Hytrek (both from the USA) and Anne Kuperus from the Netherlands.

Thank you and 'paws up' to our three winners who received a Slow Dog Movement t-shirt. And a HUGE shout out to all the other entrants! So thrilled to report that everyone GOT what 'relaxing with your dog' is all about! Next year we will do it again and make it easier to upload photos by using an app that helps us keep track of which photo belongs to who! Thanks for your patience!



Anne Kuperus - *winner of the photo contest shared amongst 3*

Orit Heartlight *- winner of the photo contest shared amongst 3*

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'On the Ground'

Slow Dog Movement Stories from our Worldwide Community....

photo credit ***Silke Strasser -*** *Silke with Frida*

From Fast to Slow – To Find my Inner Peace and Awareness by *Silke Strasser*

I was born into a society in which standing still doesn`t count – higher, better, more successful counts.

The more money you earn, the more you will be loved by people. The more success you have, the more you will be accepted by people. So, I grew up being socialized with the belief that standing still and doing nothing is a waste of time. No wonder that I was taken away by this big wave called work, very soon in my life. I forgot about my early days when I was connected with myself and nature. The memories of sitting still and observing a bee or watching a sunrise became bittersweet.

I was always in a hurry, always ready to sprint or jump or demand a new project or more work. Yes, I was successful. Everything I did turned into a success. But from a certain point of my life, I was not able to feel it as a success. For me, success should feel different than what people told me it would.

Then I felt down. I felt like I was broken into pieces. A wonderful possibility to reinvent myself presented itself, and so I did. '*Slowness is a superpower*' as Carl Honoré says.

Now, instead of being in a hurry, I walk slowly, aware of every breath and step I take.

Instead of being busy all the time, I sit down and listen to to the sounds of my surroundings. I listen to my soul. Instead of talking, I shut up. I observe my dog, observe the clouds, the bees and feel the warm sun in my face. I give myself choices and I feel free to decide what is important in the moment and what counts in my daily life. I enjoy the time I am able to sit down and doing nothing but being myself.

Now, I am feeling a deep connection to myself which allows me to come in deeper connection with my environment.

Now, I understand what my dogs teach me every single day - being authentic, congruent and aware of yourself and your needs.

Now, success feels like a slow sniffing walk with my dog, Frida. I observe her and try to be aware of all the little wonders that life shows us daily as she is out in nature.

Get to know:

Jonas Thulin

Slow Dog Movement co-director

Jonas Thulin is a *Canine Emotional Health and Well Being Advisor and Disseminator* and Director with the **Slow Dog Movement®**. As far back as he can remember, Jonas has had dogs around, and some of them, more than others, left a mark on him. The first dog he recalls, was an incredibly beautiful Welsh Corgi named Palle. Palle was the joy of his family home. 'He was playful and affectionate like few others and when he left us prematurely it broke my heart. He left us in 1977 and I still miss him.' Then came Fia, a small Beagle girl that gave Jonas the reason to get into the world of dog training and psychology.

A few years ago, Jonas joined an animal protection association and little by little has moved into the canine education game again. At first altruistically and especially organising controlled pack walks for the Happy Galgo association. After some time doing this, he concluded that he should dedicate himself to this professionally and after taking some courses to get new education to catch up, something that never stops, he launched himself into this adventure. #beyourdogsbestfriend.

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'On the Ground'

Vail Meadow of Hunter's Bay

From all in to all out. Our quick journey in and out of traditional training and dog sports. ***by Stacey Hytrek***

photo credit ***Stacey Hytrek***

Early December of 2017 I was hustling around a cute little part of town referred to as Olde Town. I had my little girls with me and we were doing some Holiday shopping. The historic little area was one of our favorites. The shops were all dressed up to welcome shoppers. We decided to go into a coffee shop for hot chocolate and a latte for me. As soon as we entered the shop I saw the most beautiful sight. A young tall woman with model good looks held my soon to be puppy. The most beautiful puppy I had ever seen. The girls and I wasted little time getting to the woman. We asked to hold the puppy. The woman smiled and without hesitation put the baby dog in my arms. The woman was named Molly. She was happy to have a moment of freedom.

She went off to chat with a friend and grab her coffee. This puppy had the softest fur I had ever seen. She had these amazing blue eyes. I loved her. I know that seems far fetched, but I loved her. She looked at me with this look like we were made for each other. I had to have this dog never mind that I had know idea that she was for sale. This was my first time meeting Molly. Molly came back and said that Vail (the puppies name after a Mountain town) was in the coffee shop to meet the friend that would be adopting her.

I said without any doubt that I wanted the puppy. Molly smiled and said she would take my number in case her friend chose a different puppy from the accidental litter.

The litter that came from two frolicking ranch dogs. A blue eyed Australian Shepherd and a border collie/Heeler mix. I gave Molly my phone number and the puppy back. Then I got paranoid she would lose my number. I pulled my cell phone out and asked for her number and email. My daughters were in love as well. They said all they wanted for Christmas was that puppy. I worried about their little hearts being broken and my own.

The next morning I messaged Molly. It was a pathetic message. I sent a picture of my little girls holding a note for Santa Clause. It was a cheap shot. The girls were seven and ten at the time. Still little and cute enough to get into the heart of this college aged girl. Molly replied that she could convince her friend to take another puppy, but she was worried that we might not be the best home for Vail. She asked if I had experience with herding breeds. We had only ever had labradors.

Sure I was a dog lover, but that was it. Immediately I researched the breeds and bought too many books. Molly wanted to make sure that Vail wouldn't just be a toy or Christmas puppy that ended up in a shelter. I had my vet write a letter of recommendation. I sent a picture of the books. Finally I sent her a video of my twelve year old Labrador , Dakota. He had a happy life. Molly then agreed to give me the puppy. She asked for a small payment to cover the vaccinations and some puppy expenses. I was impressed with her love for her dogs. She really wanted the pups to be safe. She was a phenomenal young lady. She did give me these words of advice " Make sure you get that puppy a job. These dogs are smart and need work. She's not an ordinary dog. "

Boy oh boy was that the truest statement. Not the part about her needing a Job but the part saying " she's not an ordinary dog. Vail became my Meadow. I am a preschool teacher. One of my sweet little students had a beautiful sister named Meadow. Meadow the little girl had endured a tough heart surgery. She was as cute as they come. When I met this little girl named Meadow I told her that I loved her name. If I ever had another girl I would have to name her Meadow. My next little girl was here. She was my Meadow. Yes she was a dog, but I knew I loved her as much as another child. Meadow was going to have the best life ever.

I started researching this " job" business. I called local trainers. They confirmed what Molly had said. The dog needs a job. I started to feel guilty that my poor Dakota

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'On the Ground'

Vail Meadow of Hunter's Bay

From all n to all out. Our quick journey in and out of traditional training and dog sports. ***by Stacey Hytrek continued....***

had never had a job (that's another story) Dakota was now an old man. A gentleman, a zen dog, an angel. He embraced Meadow night one. The old sweet boy snuggled with Meadow in his bed. I loved watching them sleep together. But I had already broke the rules. I was supposed to crate train Meadow. Here I was failing. It was ok though. I would get Meadow a job. The first step was a real "call" name. She was what sports clubs called an " All American Dog" purebred or not she was going to have her call name. It hit me like lightning VAIL MEADOW of HUNTER'S BAY. Vail the name from Molly, Meadow her name, and because we met in that coffee shop. I named her after the coffee shop. It sounded great, it looked good on paper. All we had to do was complete puppy training. Then Meadow would go on to have a job. My husband hated the idea.

To be honest this training was out of our budget. I would pick up extra work. My beautiful pup would have the life she needed. I had fallen into a trap or a rabbit hole. So here we go,,,, get ready to go FAST!!!

Meadow and I were in puppy training. I enrolled in the positive reinforcement programs. I have always been against any physical harm or threats towards animals. The puppy training was the redundant and usual: sit, stay, leave it, look at me, down, and stand. Meadow progressed exceedingly fast. More evidence that my baby girl was an Einstein of the dog world. She learned tricks and danced. At about nine months she started agility training. It was all ground work at first. We then got to the obstacles. I was completely overwhelmed.

I have two left feet and memorizing the courses was a disaster. Often at obstacle nine I began to spin in the middle of the course. Where was I going? What came next? Oh wait,,,,, oh no!!! My dog was two obstacles ahead of me. There she was at the A-frame looking back at me. I hated agility. Each obstacle required its own training, I had to walk the course at trials and hope I didn't make a fool of myself. Meadow did great. During this time what I loved most was our Saturday morning car rides to a small pet store. Meadow loved sniffing in the store, getting her cookie. She loved sleeping in the car.

> ***"But for my dog's part, he will always give what he can and the only thing he asks of me is me. He needs to feel that I am with him. Simply that... that I am with him. That when the day ends, my dog can say: Today has been a great day, because you have been with me."***
>
> **— Jonas Thulin**

photo credit ***Stacey Hytrek***

I dreaded Monday and Thursdays. Those were sports days. I had to do it for this brilliant canine.

The thing about sports is that there is always something else you need to do. You should "properly" condition the canine athlete, there are workshops and clinics, and the equipment isn't cheap. I continued this for about a year.

My favorite thing to do was read anything scientific about dogs, sit outside with my family and dogs. I loved how on the weekends we all were on the sofa together. My husband watching football, the girls and I reading. The dogs sleeping and breathing peaceful aside from the occasional snore or snort. This was my happy but I stuffed it away.

Meadow wanted to be with me all the time. She happily did whatever was asked of her. The thing was that the more activities she did the more weird things I noticed. Often she would find books and shred them. She started fence fighting with the neighbors dog, Her barking increased. My own anxiety was through the roof. Trying to make sure each dog and each child had their needs met. The worst was driving on dark nights to the training center.

One freezing day early of 2020 I sat in my car watching this young couple and their dogs. I was parked near a lake. They looked like they had crawled out of bed. Some might describe them as looking like Hippies. They both had travel mugs which I presumed held the liquid of life AKA coffee. They sat on a bench. These two big furry dogs lumbered around sniffing everything. The couple gave no care to anything, but each other and the dogs. The dogs were not leashed. The dogs went down to the lake and waded in. They were all so relaxed. I felt so envious. I wanted that life. Mine was filled with tutors for the girls, dance for the girls, sports for Meadow, making sure old man Dakota had his needs met and his vet appointments.

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'On the Ground'

Vail Meadow of Hunter's Bay

From all in to all out. Our quick journey in and out of traditional training and dog sports. ***by Stacey Hytrek continued....***

photo credit ***Stacey Hytrek***

I was tired and always on the go. I told myself I was efficient. So many lazy people. Here I was raising kids who had very stimulating lives, dogs who had the best food and classes to attend. The house was clean. Who cared if I worked a few extra online jobs in market research to pay for the programs. Oh and I started Meadow in nosework. I heard it was good for her brain and stress level. It would be her lazy day activity. Oh my goodness....

My thoughts back then. I was clueless however I was doing everything with good intentions. Covid hit me squarely in the face. The pandemic although so sad, and detrimental for many was my life boat. March 13th.... My email. Was full of cancellations, no where to go. The girls were home. The only thing to do was walk. We were all together and my husband drove us into the woods. We let the dogs off leash. Nobody was out and we felt free. We were laughing about the stupidest things. The girls played hide and seek with Meadow. She was a different dog. Her face softer, she would sneak in the bedroom and chase the girls. They had made up their own fun. This genius of a canine could come up with plenty to do. The book shredding stopped. I prayed that one day I could repay the library.

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I started reading dog books. Not those dumb training books, but science, ethology , anatomy, the emotional life of the dog. I was addicted to this science. I had time to read.

June of 2020 my precious boy Dakota died. He died outside in our yard surrounded by his family. Again covid was a blessing because he passed happy at home. The vet would only see him in yard. The girls had never experienced death. Dakota had welcomed them each home from the hospital as newborns. The loss was heart wrenching. We flew to nature to grieve.

We told stories about his life. My husband said " Dakota had the best life and he never was trained, he never went to classes, he didn't have a million brain toys." Why does Meadow need all this crap? That weighed on me. I tried to explain the old crap about herders need jobs. My husband called it BS, he said Meadow had a job. She loved being a dog. That kind of resonated with me. These new books were sinking in.

We lived slowly until 2021. We never did go back to agility. I was relieved. I sold the weaves, the canine blow up garbage, the stacks of magazines showing me how to serpentine and back end. Meadow had some minor injuries during agility too. She often got stiff muscles. Once I learned canine anatomy I could say with certainty that Meadow had suffered some strains. Sadly as puppy she walked too much, trained at centers with hard floors. Joint damage would be a repercussion of her short lived career.

We kept up the nosework. A gentle and sweet environment with just a few handlers and dogs. The dogs were aware of each other and friendly. The consistency of the group, the lovely instructor who met us at parks, stores, trails, parking lots. She would set hides. While we waited our turn to search. The dogs sniffed, around, said hello to each other. Meadow and I would often just sit and observe. Nosework was natural and calming. I loved our nosework sessions. We would get another Labrador. He became a big goofy boy. He joined us the fall of 2020. He and Meadow had a great time. He learned from her. He had a perfect recall because she did. They loved going to rivers and lakes. As 2022 came I started wondering what we should all do. Surly we couldn't just continue the phase of doing " nothing"

January of 2022 I agreed to foster this fluffy puppy. I saw a picture of her. She had been abandoned at a shelter at just seven weeks old. She reminded me a bit of Meadow.

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'On the Ground'

Vail Meadow of Hunter's Bay

From all in to all out. Our quick journey in and out of traditional training and dog sports. ***by Stacey Hytrek continued....***

She was a herding breed. With my new found dog knowledge I worried she would be a handful. Trauma so early in life, not enough time with siblings to learn critical skills, what would her life be like? I knew I had to adopt her.

We could get through this. I questioned how we could ever afford to give three dogs the lives they deserved? Loretta Lynn, named after an American Country singer, moved in. We had an infant. The same week she arrived I learned my mother was very sick and was dying. I felt so overwhelmed. Three dogs, two daughters , work. I thought back to that couple at the lake. The peace I felt watching them. I started searching for science about slowing down. I entered something about slow and dogs into google. The **Slow Dog Movement** popped up. I was completely enthralled. I had to know if this lifestyle was too good to be true. What did science say? I reached out to admin who quickly gave me resources.

I read every book, and I started training with The Nordic Dog Training Centre. I took classes with Galen. Books from across the pond were showing up on my porch and I quickly devoured them. The Slow Dog Movement meant honoring the dog, letting them engage in natural canine behavior, respecting their anatomy with exercises that dogs do of their own volition. These dogs were not bored, they were : safe, curious, respected for being dogs, they made choices, they slept comfortably.

The pet parents enjoyed nature, their own hobbies, tea on patios with a dog close by. My mother died February of 2022. Loretta was ripping up cardboard with Meadow looking for treats. Waylon was chewing a bone. The dogs were enjoying new enrichment and that helped me to relax.

I was ready for the next chapter of my life. My oldest was in high school and my second daughter was preparing for middle school. I didn't have to choose between a weekend with the family or entering a trial or competition. We could enjoy this time and just be present. Formal training of any kind flew out the window. I couldn't believe how many times in the past I had asked Meadow to sit or wait. Loretta would never know that. She attended a very gentle puppy class so that she could gain some critical skills. She and a few other pups just naturally explored for a bit. Often I was asked what I would do with this brilliant little herder.. My answer became whatever she chooses to do.

It's been about a year since my mom passed and this past year was slow and intentional. You will all be pleased to know that the dogs don't have any jobs. They decided they preferred unemployment. Ok that's a joke... they are actually dogs. They sniff often. They love our secret places where I let them off leash. They enjoy walks and car rides. They enjoying shredding the boxes that come. They love nosework games. All three adore massage. They follow me. They create mayhem sometimes.

They like to go get my sleeping daughters up. They often steal a sock only to invite one to play. They do not need me to fill their days with the silly stuff humans dream up. They need me to love them, protect them, gently guide them to safe choices. They need me to allow them to be dogs. Dogs are a wonderful and intelligent species. They are misunderstood. Being man's best friend as come at a hefty price. It is time for people to be the best friend to the dog. Time for people to really look at what a dog needs.

Meadow is five now and has some arthritis. It crushes me. I see how it started now, the puppies scrambling on the floor of that top rated training center, being asked to sit over and over, walking on a leash as a puppy and learning to heel. I loved her so much I was going to give her the best. The best was the worst. This backwards teaching goes on. I see the brochures and commercials.It makes me sad how many people like me are fooled into thinking that dogs need all of that. I am now an advocate for protecting our dogs from unnecessary training and from exercise or sports that can be detrimental.

I tell Meadow how much I love her. I ask her to forgive me. She cocks her head, one ear up as I speak " Im sorry baby girl" she licks my face. I rub her back every night. She loves to be brushed. When the brush comes out she's all over me. It took time for her to learn to be slow.

photo credit ***Stacey Hytrek***

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'On the Ground'

Vail Meadow of Hunter's Bay

From all in to all out. Our quick journey in and out of traditional training and dog sports. ***by Stacey Hytrek continued....***

On walks she wanted to know what to do. She studied me for commands. Now we walk and she trots off to find a smell. She will stop and wait for me if she gets too far ahead. Twice now she has warned me of wildlife and we give them a big berth. She honestly herds me away from danger. She insists my daughters walk together. Should they get too far from one another she barks. It is really really cute how she herds them. It is wired in her. She's intelligent enough to find herself some meaningful work. Her gentle herding never bothers a soul. She adores children. She always has. She loves to walk by the school and say "hi" to children. She's sweet to guinea pigs, bunnies, ducks. That old zen dog, Dakota, taught her the ropes. She's just a lover. I do lots now to protect her body and mind. I can't get back the years that I rushed her and overworked her, but I believe our bond was solidified during those years too. The slow moments we did have like waiting in the car at trials with belly rubs. Going for pup cups after sports and watching people, waiting in the field for the girls to get out of school.

Those moments were beautiful. I wish back then I had valued her time in the little pet shop sniffing and seeing her " friends" she got so excited for those things. She was telling me what she loved. I had been brainwashed by consumerism, bad science, and guilted into believing dogs needed all this man made baloney.

Meadow is asleep under my feet right now. She's five years old and a freckled beauty. She enjoys lots of naps. She has too many beds to count, she loves her human and canine siblings. She loves frolicking in a good meadow Her hobbies include, enjoying her beautiful sensory garden, chewing, sniff walks, visiting friends, she loves to get into water, she loves the snow. She loves nosework which is just for fun now. Classes have dissolved and those friends have moved on. Schedule changes, health issues, finances caused the group to disassemble. Truthfully I lost some friends too.

Some were offended with my new view on dog training and sports. That's ok. My life has been filled with new friends from all over the world. I enjoy driving in yoga pants, dogs, in the car, coffee cup in the holder. The dogs listen to country music with me. Sometimes we find ourselves a bench with a view. The dogs scatter to sniff and I watch them take in the world through their noses. I'm like that couple now. I am completely where I want to be. Breathing, living in the moment, safe, slow, intentional, free to enjoy the simplicity and that majesty of just being.

photo credit ***Laura Dobb***

It is an understatement to say that there are many voices offering advice in the dog world. For many, trying to find information that resonates with their experience, as a dog guardian, or even fellow professional, can be a challenge.

At the **Slow Dog Movement**, our directors are lifelong learners. We are contstantly slowing down, observing our dogs and talking amongst ourselves about our noticings. We take part in professional development education, read, and talk to other professionals.

I.

What is becoming increasingly evident to me, is that our members, who really follow our philosophy and have integrated it into their life with their dog, are a wealth of stories and can provide a deeper insight into SLOWING down in your life with your dog and how to practice this idea within your life.

If you would like to contribute to our **'On the Ground'** ZINE or speak on our **'A Dog's Pace'** Podcast, please get in touch with Laura at laura@slowdogmovement.org.

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'On the Ground'

'But they have to say hello, don't they? NO THEY DON'T!' *by Jonas Thulin*

I have been asked why I am avoiding my dogs approaching other dogs, but it is not that I am avoiding it, really. It is more that I am respecting my dogs. And the other dogs.

A couple of weeks ago, my Goku (Greyhound) had an encounter with a Belgian Tervuren Shepherd. The Tervuren was approaching straight ahead. At a distance of some five meters, the two dogs stopped and looked at each other. They then started to sniff their immediate surrounding and both left a urine mark. After that, they switched position, never being less than some three meters between them, and sniffed the mark the other had left. Then they had another glance at each other and continued their walk. Each one minding their own business.

To me it is quite clear that here we are talking about two mature and experienced dogs, that know how to interact with other unknown dogs. Neither one had the urge to come closer to the other. There was no need to sniff the other's behind. They said hello to each other from a certain distance. This entire sequence was a masterclass of canine communication, through eye contact and olfaction.

Another event with Goku, was some years ago. We had a walk on the seafront promenade in Altea and we probably encountered some 20 dogs, during the walk. Goku had absolutely no interest at all in the vast majority of them, but he clearly avoided three. There was actually only one, one out of some 20, he wanted to interact with. This one was a small Shi-Tzu looking dog. It had less than nothing similar to a Greyhound, but it was the one Goku wanted to have a chat with.

To be honest, the only reason my dog has to stop to say hello to another dog is because I oblige him to, or that it is something he has learned he has to do. A study with 13.700 domestic dogs in Finland showed that 17% of the dogs showed fear, when approached by a strange dog. To me this is astonishing. There can only be one reason for this. The dog does not think he has any other option than to approach the other dog.

And if 17% show fear, how many feel discomfort?

Think about it!

photo credit ***Jonas Thulin***

We don't walk around stopping, stretching our hand out and tell our story to everyone we see, when out for a walk. So why do we put our dog in that position?

So, NO!

They do NOT have to say hello.

The Arrogance of the Human Being has no Limit *by Santos Salcines Nazabal*

To think that we can teach a dog to be a dog is impossible. We want dogs to our measure and that is not respecting the character and singularities of each person individual.

I will put an easy example for us humans.

It never crosses our minds to teach a child to be a child. We will try to guide him, be there when he needs us, accompany him along the way until he is able to manage by tripping as few times as possible and until then protect him without putting him in a glass case.

This process is the same that a dog would need to grow, develop its abilities, fit into the world in which we enter from their own learning and freedm of choice.

"Kind canine education is not based on teaching, it is about allowing the dog to choose and that freedom is learning"

sanjana&dogs

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'On the Ground'

Slow Dog Movement Philosophy
***written by* Santos Salcines Nazabal and Laura Dobb**

'The #slowdogmovement aims to foster deeper relationships between dogs and humans, educate by 'showing the right way' (Turid Rugaas), and grow a like minded worldwide community of dog lovers embracing the value of SLOW.'

The **Slow Dog Movement® C.I.C.** is a social movement. We promote ethical values within the dog/human relationship. In keeping with the human ecosystem, we cultivate our respectful coexistence. We consider the deep knowledge of the physiology and needs of the dog.

The **Slow Dog Movement® C.I.C.** is not a forum to find "quick solutions" or "how-tos." Or to deal with a specific problem without knowing the dog, the family, and the environment in situ. For this reason, it is risky for us to answer these queries. They need a complete review by a friendly canine education professional. On many occasions, they should also include a multidisciplinary holistic approach.

The **Slow Dog Movement® C.I.C.** promotes self-knowledge and emotional development. Members can learn through 'master scenarios.' These are where each dog can display the entire repertoire of known natural behaviours. Due to lack of experience, some dogs do not even know these yet.

Dogs and humans often find slowing down complicated. Dogs may have the feeling that they need to protect themselves. How can they be aware when they don't know that they can feel otherwise?

Many dogs do not know that going outside can be slow. They do not know that they can go for a walk without pulling on the leash. Without barking. Without a concerned human accompanying them during the walk.

The **Slow Dog Movement® C.I.C.** promotes and shares values such as:

#circleoftrust
#beyourdogsbestfriend
#forestbathingwithyourdog
#inpraiseofslow
#inpraiseofslowness
#slowwalks

And other 'non-hashtag' ideas!

We also support initiatives like https://www.sensorygarden4dogs.com/, a worldwide project.

What we suggest as guidelines within our philosophy:

— The relationship with our dog is the primary focus.
— It's a dog's choice – choice to walk, speed, play, meeting other dogs, humans, chews, sleep, contact etc. Choice builds confidence and is a dog's right.
— Slow enables observation. It's important to observe a dog and what they are communicating.
— Humans must slow down so that their dogs can do the same.
— Studying the 'dog ethogram' and support of natural dog behaviours.
— The 90% calm, 10% aroused ratio is a suggested aim.
— Focus on movement and activity that supports a healthy body and brain.
— Respect for our dogs as sentient beings and individuals.
— Appropriate equipment – well fitted harness and long, loose leash, minimum 3m.
— Ask yourself why it's important to you to engage in training/commands, whether it be 'positive' or 'fear free.'
— In terms of dogs and sports/hobbies, ask yourself, would your dog engage in these activities if left to their own desires?
— Always fulfil the basic needs of your dog and remember to check their emotional requirements as well.
— Slow walks and other recommended activities on our page can really help rescue dogs and dogs with fear and anxiety.
— Take your time to get to know your dog and support their individual character and needs.

How to find us at the Slow Dog Movement® C.I.C.

http://www.slowdogmovement.org
laura@slowdogmovement.org
FB, IG & Twitter:
@slowdogmovement
#slowdogmovement

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Sold to
sneupenbijwillem@gmail.com

'On the Ground'

> *The slow philosophy is not about doing everything in tortoise mode. It's less about the speed and more about investing the right amount of time and attention in the problem so you solve it.*
>
> — Carl Honoré

Photo credit ***Barbara Dorren***

Sold to
sneupenbijwillem@gmail.com