

'On the Ground' Zine

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photo credit **Natxo García Legaria**

It's finally Spring! written by Laura Dobb

Spring is finally upon us and I am thrilled to announce that our very own **Pennie Clayton** has written a beautiful book entitled '**A Dog for All Seasons.**'

With better weather to enjoy with our dogs, this book couldn't come at a better time. Pennie is one of those rare writers that can blend storytelling, common sense information, and solid research

into a highly enjoyable read. Pennie brings readers through the seasons, as the title says but the level of detail she goes through will have you wondering why you didn't know these valuable insights before. Pennie has been working with and observing dogs for years and her experience is poured into these pages. The book is sold on AMAZON at a very reasonable introductory price of £6.99.



photo credit **Santos Salches Nazabal**

'On the Ground'



Tenemos perro para llenar nuestros vacíos . Necesitamos ese amigo imaginario de niño , que un día nos hicieron quitar de nuestra vida . Necesitamos meter en nuestra vida un “comodín.” Alguien que esté siempre , que no nos juzgue , con el que podamos ser “nosotros mismos” aún en nuestro peor día . Alguien que haga nuestra foto de cada día ÚNICA . Tenemos perro para que alguien dependa de nosotros , eso nos encanta. Pero lo que no pensamos es que tener perro es de las pocas cosas que son “de verdad “ en esta vida.

Photo credit Yogita Daurby Sharma

We have a dog to fill our “emptiness.” We needed that imaginary friend as a child, and one day, they made us remove this friend. We need to have a “joker” in our lives. Someone who is always there, who doesn't judge us, with whom we can be “ourselves” even on our worst day. Someone to make each day's memory, UNIQUE. We have a dog so that someone depends on us, we love that. But what we don't think is that having a dog is one of the few things that is “real” in this life.



#slowdogmovementphilosophy

#whatdogsteach

— Santos Salcines Nazabal
Sanjana&dogs



'On the Ground'

We are making a film!

written by Laura Dobb

The **Slow Dog Movement** is Crowdfunding for a film project! It makes sense, since we endeavour to 'show the right thing' that the film medium is the best way to share our philosophy and vision.

In the summer of 2022, while on a dog walk, I met a well known filmmaker and educator, Lorianne Hall, who works at the University of York. I literally 'hounded' her to put me in touch with film students who may be interested in making a film for the **Slow Dog Movement**. Late last year I connected with Charlie Travers from **Polychrome Studios**. He and his partners 'got' our movement's message straight away and I started the very SLOW process of preparing the Crowdfunder project page. The link is on our 'Press and Resources' tab under 'Learn more.' I have shared the link on our socials and everywhere I can, and I urge you to share it too! If you can make a donation, there are fabulous gifts for those who do, including having your name included in the credits!

The Crowdfunder.co.uk campaign will run for six weeks from the 17th of May and we are aiming for £1000 for this 2-3 minute film to be made.

It will be so beneficial for dogs and humans around the world to learn about the **Slow Dog Movement!**



At the **Slow Dog Movement**, our directors are lifelong learners. We are constantly 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.

What is becoming increasingly evident to me, is that our members follow our philosophy and have integrated it into their lives with their dogs. Our members 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.

Join our email list:
slowdogmovement.org

'On the Ground'

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



photo credit **Silke Strasser** - Frida

'How I became a SLOW dog' by **Silke Strasser**

How I became a *slow* dog and huge fan of our movement. Hi everybody, my name is Frida. I am an eight and a half year old mixed breed girl. I work as a dog behaviourist and teacher, and I am an Ambassadog for the Slow Dog Movement.

At age one and a half years, I came to Graz and met Diego and Silke – now I am living with Silke and two crazy cats. When I arrived here, I was a 'so-called' ball-junkie. I was full of zoomies, jumping around, running like crazy and barking like no tomorrow. Standing still and observing – no! Sniffing a lot and slow walking – no way! Doing naps and resting – nope!

My target was a flying ball, pulling on the leash, eating as quick and as much as possible in a short time. And being ready to do something. Some would call it restlessness and a high stress level.

It was an astonishing scene when I arrived at my new home and met my new family, my housemates. They lived a completely different lifestyle. It was so quiet and calm. Instead of chase games, they did sniffing games, like treat-search or enriched environments. With no commands for me or Diego – commands free zone. So, I observed Diego, what he is doing and did the same thing.

They did so-called 'down-times', napping, chilling, resting, and sleeping. It was easy for me, because I am a social sleeper and I loved the down-times immediately. Fourteen to sixteen hours a day, what a marvelous feeling!

I heard people saying that Diego is a fear-dog and reactive. For me, Diego was a wonderful teacher, patient, gentle and strong and doing things together was such fun! When he felt unsafe and uncomfortable, he changed his mood. Then we were strong for him and tried our best to let him feel safe.

On our walks they walked slow – not me! I ran left and right, forward, and backward, here and there, but Diego and Silke just stood still, they didn't move at all – hey folks!!!! But, oh my dog, they didn't move, 'til I decided to calm down and my leash was hanging. Such strange behaviour. I had no idea why they behaved like that in this situation. But my inner voice told me that there would be a reason. I was curious enough to dig deeper and to understand why they reacted like that. Humans get curious about the why's. Every why is an invitation to start understanding the world through our senses!

As if I am a curious dog girl. I dug deeper and understood the 'why.' I discovered how great it is to walk slow. To take my time to explore things, smells and messages other animals or humans left for me.

On our "Frida exploring alone walkies," Silke walked SLOW! She followed me, observing me, and she paid attention to what I paid attention to. Sometimes we walked over sticks and walked on different surfaces. We observed rats, ducks, hedgehogs, rabbits and cats.

Sometimes Diego and Silke sat down outside in the yard behind our building and did nothing. I mean nothing. Observing and enjoying the sun. After a short time of having no idea what to do with this new situation, I decided to do the same. I felt safe within the environment. I felt safe to show my emotions. I got freedom of choice as often as possible. I felt understood, respected, and loved for myself.

Then, Diego died. After a rough time of grief, of observing and being me, it helped me a lot to overcome my deep grief. I got new housemates. Two cats who have no idea of slow and so now I am the teacher of embracing the slow: down-time – done! Sniffing games – done! Showing respect for my privacy – we are still working on it. Lucy and Diegito feel safe in their environment. They get a lot of choices. They get their needs and emotions met. And if they act weird, we are curious enough to dig deeper to understand them and to get more and more connected.

'On the Ground'

'My Journey to SLOW' by Cecilia Andersson

"I became very good at getting my dogs to do what I wanted, but with very little or no thought about how they felt and what they had to say."

All my life I have loved animals. When I moved away from home, I took the family's older dog with me and since then I have always lived with dogs. I thought I was pretty good at understanding dogs. But it was not often that I thought about what they actually had to say. When training my dogs, I continued until I found a way to get them to do what I wanted. If the dog did not do what I told them to do, I just found a solution with better rewards or approach. But to perform the task, it had to be done. They really had no choice. I saw no problem with this as the dogs looked happy and interested. They received treats, play and happy praise!

My first dog Dalton did ANYTHING for a meatball. He would easily go through fire without hesitation. A dog that was uncomfortable with unknown individuals and people with dogs. But with obedience command, I could walk with him off leash through crowds and pass dogs. Then we were like in a bubble where only the expectation of reward existed. However, he never became more comfortable in situations around unknown individuals during his 12-year life.

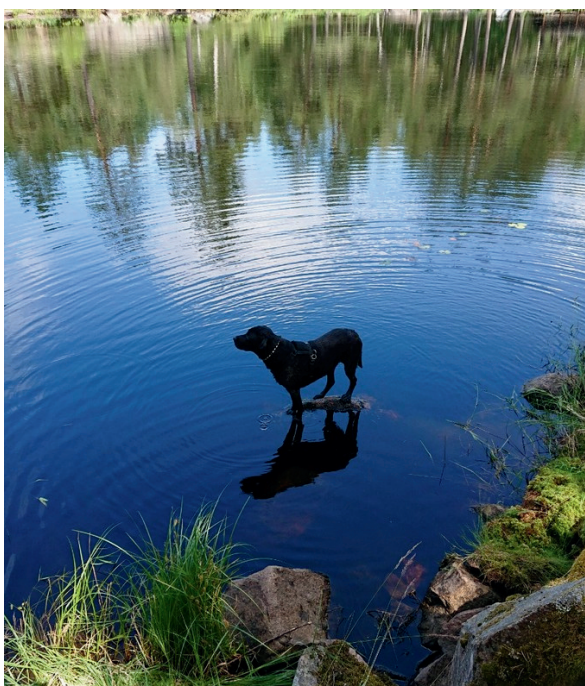


photo credit **Cecilia Andersson**

He also never got the chance to really work with his emotions and try to deal with these situations because we always went around them or stayed in our bubble and I continued to expose him to things that were too difficult. He was a very "active" dog, bred for work and training. I took this very seriously and we trained many times per week. I tried most dog sports with him and we also went to shows and other competitions.

It became a lifestyle with socializing for me in different training groups and annual camps. I loved the feeling of succeeding with my dogs. It was a kick to get good results and praise from others. Sometimes when I trained outdoors, people would stop and watch. I was often told "what obedient and well-behaved dogs you have". It was a huge satisfaction for me. It felt good that I trained and activated my dogs. I was convinced that this brought joy and satisfaction to their lives.

When I moved to a new city, a new country, France, I suddenly found myself in a situation where I did not know anyone and where it turned out that people did not devote as much time to training and dog sports. I trained a bit on my own, but it was not as fun when I didn't have friends to train with or competitions to show off my skills. I was very frustrated and honestly worried about how this would affect my dog Jackie who I was living with at the time. I felt bad because she was not trained and activated as before. What do people do with their dogs if they're not training? What's the point of having a dog then?

We mostly went for walks in forests and large parks. During our walks we often came in contact with other dogs. It was a very big difference because in Sweden you do not let your dog out to others like that. But here most dogs were off leash and free to approach others if they wanted to. Free to communicate and talk to each other. At first, I was very nervous when Jackie met other dogs. But I quickly saw that she could handle it well and eventually I started to observe the dogs. Their movements, body language and facial expressions.

Later I came in contact with people who had a different way of relating to dogs than I was used to. They did not use treats. They did not excite their dogs by playing fetch or tug of war. They were just hanging out with their dogs. I did calm walks where the dogs were free to sniff, explore and socialize with other dogs. In my world, positive methods, with food and excitement, was the best way to train dogs. The only other option I knew of was aversive methods with threats and physical punishment. Therefore, I was quite suspicious and even a little provoked at first. But it was something that always made me come back. There was a lot of logic and I wanted to know more. I could see patterns and pieces fell into place.

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'On the Ground'

'My Journey to SLOW' by Cecilia Andersson con't

I started giving my own dog more freedom, observing and listening to her. As I learned more and changed the way I relate to dogs, I also got to know my own dog all over again. She was an independent and confident individual who was not as easy to train and manipulate. Before we would often end up in conflict with each other because of this. Now our relationship developed into something completely different. She had more freedom with less demands but became more compliant and willing to cooperate with me. I always tried to be honest, meet her natural needs and ask for things instead of commanding. When she expressed her opinion, I listened. We could discuss for a while before we did as I had intended or as she wanted. Sometimes it was a compromise.

I quickly realized that our daily walks in the woods where she was always off leash and usually met several other dogs, gave an incredible satisfaction for both me and her. We were calmer and more harmonious together. She was happy and very comfortable to live with. We often went for walks with friends and their dogs. Sometimes we went on arranged social walks and so-called communication classes with other dogs. There we both had the opportunity to develop our ability to understand and communicate. The last years of her life we lived an absolutely wonderful life together without unnecessary expectations, stress and demands. We coexisted in a more balanced relationship with a very pleasant everyday life.

Later on, I came in contact with the **Slow Dog Movement**. It was wonderful to find a place where I could connect and share with others who were promoting a slower and healthier lifestyle with their dogs. I just love to watch all the posts of doing being dogs in the group. I have benefitted from this personally with my own dogs and in my work with others. I'm very grateful for this community.

Cecilia Andersson
DabbaDog

"The meaning of life is just to be alive. It is so plain and so obvious and so simple. And yet, everybody rushes around in a great panic as if it were necessary to achieve something beyond themselves."

— Alan Watts



photo credit **Lisa Edwards**

'Sensory Treasure Hunt trail ... a work in progress' by Lisa Edwards

My aim, to offer a private area where newly rescued, nervous, reactive dogs, can explore in peace, at their own pace, with their guardian who can also relax, undisturbed by other dogs and people.

Why? We have a perfectly 'normal' dog who does not find all situations, environments, other dogs, people etc. comfortable to be around. We understand the pressure on the individual dog and their guardians and would like to offer an alternative safe space.

The point? To empty their stress bucket. The more we do with our dogs, especially newly adopted and reactive dogs in places they find uncomfortable, the quicker we fill them with stress hormones which build up and then overflow causing a reaction. The more reactions, the more their stress bucket fills and takes even longer to empty. This is not bad behaviour; it is a cry for help.

I currently run a safe and secure, small enrichment area at the end of my own garden and it is a pleasure to observe dogs begin to relax and feel safe, and start to explore without any cues or interruptions from me or their guardian. Just allowing them to be themselves and make their own choices. Visitors comment on how precious it is for them to just sit back and relax and not have to worry. Yet I would really like to expand on this and offer a calm, slow walking experience, where you can just be with your dog in an area where they feel safe, observe their body language, reassure them if required with your own body language, practice your loose leash walking skills, and ultimately deepen the bond between you and your dog.

The tricky bit is finding somewhere! I was lucky enough to make contact with a local resident who was willing to hire out a field on her land on a casual basis. Ideal, exactly what I wanted; however, the position was not great with a busy main road on one side, not visible but noisy, and a train line on the other side...

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'On the Ground'

'Slow Dog Grooming - How Did I Arrive at Slow Dog Grooming?' (part one) by Nick Barstow



photo credit Nick Barstow - 'Bluey and I having a cuddle'

Standard Groomers Training Regime

I am a professional dog groomer based on the East Coast of Yorkshire in the UK. I studied for my City and Guilds and Certified Advanced Professional Groomer qualifications some six years ago now at a well-known and respected grooming school. As well as theory work, the majority of the training involved grooming all types of dog breeds from Malamutes to Chihuahuas with each student normally grooming a couple of dogs a day.

The usual procedure would entail the dog being booked in and then placed into a waiting cage until the student was ready. The student would then take the dog directly into the bathing and drying room where up to four or five students would also be working with their assigned dogs. Showers would be running and dryings working. The air would be warm, humid and smelling of wet dog and sometimes the room would be full of fine downy hair from a double-coated breed being blown around by the driers. As soon as the dog was dry it was taken into the grooming room and placed on one of the seven available grooming tables. A neck noose and belly strap would normally be put on the dog and a standing drier switched on to finalise the drying process. At any one time there could be up to seven students, their dogs plus two or three instructors. People would be talking, driers switched on, popular music blaring from the radio and clippers would be buzzing. Besides a few toilet breaks each dog could be on the table for up to four hours.

Surprisingly dogs seemed generally well-behaved and stood there accepting their lot. So-called 'troublesome' ones, would be bound ever tighter by the belly strap with possibly another neck noose used to hold its head away from the groomer's hands.

Further into the training something started nagging away at me, telling me that this, although the accepted way of doing things, wasn't the right approach. I started reading up on dog behaviour and realised that even the supposedly well-behaved stoic-type dogs could be in a state of learned helplessness or shut down. Given the constraints of the training environment such as other dogs, people and so on, I was limited in what I could do. However, I was able to do away with the belly strap as much as possible, use a looser neck noose and give the dog more freedom on the table to lay, sit or stand.

Please don't get me wrong. The trainers and students at the school love dogs and took great care to provide a safe physical environment and minimise potential risks as far as possible. Other students also gave their dogs more leeway while grooming but neck nooses and belly straps were the normal 'go to' grooming method. However one thing, to my mind at least, wasn't given enough consideration and that was the mental welfare of the dogs.

Life in a Salon

After finishing (and passing!) my qualifications, I rented a table at a local salon with two other groomers. This was where I started to practice what I later on came to think of as Consent Grooming. There was, however, one overarching imperative that always got in the way. Money.

It is an unfortunate fact that many dog groomers are forced to groom as many dogs as possible each day. The current state of the industry, low-priced competition by untrained/unregulated groomers plus owners' expectations and financial pressures mean that dogs are rushed through the salon with little or no thought for what the dog is experiencing. Stress, fear, anxiety and a host of other issues are overlooked, ignored or not picked up on in the need to finish expeditiously and prepare for another dog.

Several dogs that came into the salon would 'turn nasty' and go for the equipment or the groomer's hand. The usual response would be to add more restraints or to give up on the groom completely as the next dog would be due to arrive for their appointment and couldn't be put off. This was very much a repeat of the training scenario.

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'On the Ground'

'Slow Dog Grooming - How Did I Arrive at Slow Dog Grooming?' (part one) by Nick Barstow con't

I did what I could by way of trying to alleviate the dogs' stress and it wasn't too long before I acquired a reputation for being able to handle 'difficult' dogs. One – a large Malamute called Bluey – was a rescue from Eastern Europe. He would go for anyone who tried to handle him and would not tolerate the dryer or brushes. He was passed on to me. I was lucky in that I had the Salon to myself on a Saturday so was able to spend time with Bluey trying various ways to get him to the point where I could at least brush him without losing an arm! Bear in mind that I was very much making this up as I went along just seeing what approach would work and which didn't. My co-workers were amazed when I sent them a selfie of Bluey and I sitting together on the floor. Every Cloud has a silver lining.

Then Covid hit and renting in the Salon became untenable so the decision was made to go my own way which turned out to be one of the more positive things that came out of that period. I set up in a hut in the garden of my home (named The Mutt Hut thanks to my wife's suggestion) and away I went. I now had the opportunity to put more of my ideas into practice but it was still me going by observation and instinct.

A couple of years later I then came across a brilliant book called 'Taking the Grrr out of the Grooming Salon' by Sue Williamson. Sue is a qualified groomer and behaviourist whose approach to the grooming process struck many chords with me. The book showed many of the thoughts and ideas I had already come up with – as well as lots of new ones – but in a more formalised way as well as the reasons why they worked. I have incorporated many of her strategies into my work and attended a very interesting day-long seminar she ran late last year. It was uplifting to know that I wasn't the only groomer that thought the way I did.

Fast forward to a few months ago. My wife pointed out a Facebook post about this thing called the **Slow Dog Movement**. Intrigued, I decided to investigate further and to my delight discovered many of its principles and guidelines to be in harmony with mine. The way I had been working for the last few years which I had termed consent grooming could also be called Slow Dog Grooming! I signed up the very next day.

Next time I will expand on what I believe Slow Dog Grooming to be and how it can help dogs to cope (and dare I say maybe even enjoy?) the grooming process.

Nick Barstow - The Mutt Hut, East Ayton, North Yorkshire

'Sensory Treasure Hunt trail ... a work in progress' by Lisa Edwards con't

It was an opportunity I couldn't turn down so I planned a trial day. I deliberately invited dogs who I thought would not be intimidated by the noise so I could see how they responded to the environment, plus a range of personalities whose judgement I respect.

My forever patient husband was roped in to help me set up, and we placed 9 different areas around the field, not too close to the perimeter so the dogs had a choice to sniff around the outer edges where other wildlife would have passed by, as well as also exploring our 'sensory stations'. These included an old wooden crate filled with leaves and twigs from the woods and parks, old logs and flower pots with freshly unearthed soil from mole hills; a treat search amongst poles laid out on the ground to carefully step over to enhance proprioception; a scent tub filled with horse brushes, donkey and horse hair, feathers etc. followed by two large crayfish pots with netted bags tied onto them containing items collected from the beach. We also had another tub filled with human scent with old shoes, hats and gloves, followed by two painted tyres with a smear of liver paste for the dogs to discover.

Towards the end of the trail there was another scent tub filled with familiar animal odours; dog harnesses, brushes, plus cat blankets and hair. The penultimate discovery was a treat to chew on, hidden in a box and placed within a large circular kid's ball pit with an entrance on one side (no balls!). Finally, we had an old, large trunk containing second hand dog toys for the dog to check out, and if they selected a toy they liked, then they could take it home.

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photo credit **Lisa Edwards**

'On the Ground'

'Sensory Treasure Hunt trail ... a work in progress' by *Lisa Edwards* con't

Our little dog Moose explored first. I was walking with him, on a long line, and he set off to explore. However, my husband sat down to watch and this was a concern to Moose who kept stopping to look back at him to check he was still there. This was a new environment and although interesting, safety was his priority. So, my husband joined us and Moose was then happy to continue exploring. He really enjoyed wandering around the field and discovering things along the way. He is a real foody, but when he found the treat hidden in a box, he decided to leave it and carry on exploring before returning to consume it. This says a lot about Moose! It wasn't because he didn't feel relaxed and safe enough to lay down and chew, he was just curious to see what else there was to sniff and that it was safe enough for him to leave it knowing no one else was going to take it!

My first guest was a very special dog and her mum who I have great respect for and value their opinions. The dog's opinion was this is not for me. She did get as far as the treat search amongst the poles, but she made her feelings very clear and kept facing back towards the entrance, or in her mind, the exit! She knows her own mind and I appreciate that. She loves my enrichment garden but she was not interested in exploring the field. It had rained the night before so maybe it was because the ground was too wet, or the traffic noise was too distracting, or she was just not interested on that particular day. Whatever her reason, her decision was respected.

The next guest was invited as she is a little mischievous at times so we were interested to see how she would respond in the environment. She was excited to see me as she associates me with visits to my garden, and she did explore the area, yet towards the end she was becoming over stimulated, which obviously was not the point so it was time for her to go. Mum told me she had been to a training class before she came, so she may well have been over aroused before she arrived, and then her association with me was not what she was expecting and it was all a little bit too much.

My final guests were a lovely, confident, pair of German Shepherds along with their guardians, a canine behaviourist and his wife. They were not fazed by the environment and were eager to explore although they certainly looked for direction from mum and dad at times which was interesting. Did they enjoy themselves? Yes, as it was a different experience, but not the experience I had hoped to set out.

I could have invited dogs that I know well that I used to walk as part of my job, and I know they would have done exactly what I was hoping for. Slow, sniffy, careful and considered exploration of the entire area, much like Moose did. However, I wanted to learn how other dogs would interact before deciding if this was something that would be beneficial to potential clients, giving them the opportunity to slowly explore, in a safe space, taking their time to process new information, and enhance their bond.

Later that evening we took our two dogs out and after parking our car we spent at least 10 minutes just standing still whilst they sniffed before moving slowly on, and that is exactly what I want to achieve with my plan of offering a sensory treasure hunt trail. Calm, natural, and simply lovely. Allowing dogs to be dogs.

I am still determined to find a place, in private, where newly rescued dogs and reactive dogs can walk with their guardians in peace and discover little sniffy treasures along the way. I'm not sure when I will achieve it, but I will persevere, and in the meantime, I really appreciate what my little enrichment area in my own garden offers to dogs even more.

Lisa Edwards

Common Scents



Get to know:

Kath Hardington

Slow Dog Movement co-director

I'm Kath Hardington and I'm a Director at the Slow Dog Movement® and the Founder of Help for Hounds. I've been a passionate dog lover all my life and work with owners and their dogs to help them live in harmony. When I have worked with dogs in the past, I use a kind, scientifically based, force free and up-to-date approach to dog behaviour and training. I'm a Full Member of the Pet Dog Trainers of Europe. I completed the International Dog Trainer Education (IDTE) with world renowned Norwegian dog expert Turid Rugaas in 2016. I have also trained with Amber Baston and Ann Lill Kvam.

Right now I am working behind the scenes at the Slow Dog Movement®, as the Financial Officer. You won't see many posts from me but I do plenty for the movement, including organising our presence at the NE Dog Festival in 2021. I am not currently working as a dog behaviour consultant but my life is FULL of dogs as I have three rescues; a Rottweiler, a blind street dog from Italy and a rescue Ridgeback. My family and I all wear the SLOW wear merch and 'spread the word on the ground.'

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'On the Ground'

'How My Dog Taught Me the Practice of Forest Bathing' (part one) by Nadine Mazzola

In this article I share how I learned to forest bathe from my dog Juliet. She was truly masterful at both guiding me, and mentoring me, in the practice of forest bathing. Thank you, Juliet!

And thank you Laura Dobb for the inspiration to write more! Forest bathing and the principles of the Slow Dog Movement have a tremendous amount in common and are wonderful complements to each other, both supporting dogs and humans to be more themselves and connected with each other and their environments.

"Follow me! Do you see what I see--smell --hear? Isn't it fabulous!"

My dog Juliet would say this to me with her joyful look and in the way she moved her entire body. Her unabashed delight and her ability to always be so present, drew me in and **tugged at something deep inside me.**

Often distracted and inside my own head as we walked, it was noticing Juliet's joy in what she was noticing that freed me from my own thoughts and rumination and invited me into the present moment with her.

There were many things to notice. Sounds in the distance caught my curiosity. Birds speaking to one another, calling back and forth. Water running in small streams through rocks and under fallen logs creating small waterfalls and pools. Breezes in the treetops that always sounded different depending on the type of tree and the shape of its leaves or needles.

The scents of pine needles and dirt that smelled somehow delicious and familiar. Sun warming dried leaves and grasses creating a toasty, inviting scent that stirred memories from my childhood. Fresh coolness from the smell of water as we drew close to wet areas in the forest.

The many things to see and touch each with their individual textures and patterns. And the mud, to feel that wonderful mud! The way in which Juliet and I each noticed and used our senses were both similar and yet unique. She mostly used her whiskers, tongue and nose to touch things and I used fingertips, hands and the side of my cheek occasionally.

Suddenly all my thoughts and ruminations, and the anxiety built by them, were somewhere else!

photo credit **Jerry Mazzola** – Nadine Mazzola and her dog Juliet



We, Juliet and I, were alone and yet in the company of so many other living beings. Juliet and I belonged to each other and with all the living beings around us.

The name forest-bathing is inspired by the Japanese practice of Shinrin-Yoku (森林浴) and means taking in, or bathing in, the atmosphere of the forest. Forest-bathing is a practice, with a research-based framework, taught by the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy (ANFT). It is a relational practice about wellbeing, health and healing and these benefits apply to both our dogs and people.

There are amazing health benefits that have been studied by the Japanese and researchers all over the world (Read more about the science on the **ANFT** website or in the book *The Nature Fix*) and **many of these same benefits apply to our dogs as well.** (You can read more about the benefits to our dogs in my book ***Forest Bathing with Your Dog***)

For me, a sense of belonging with the natural world came flooding back into my body-mind-spirit, spontaneously and vividly, like remembering a moment from my childhood when I first experienced forest bathing. Now, whether I'm passing a tree on the street, a bird on a balcony, the plants in a nearby park or my own yard and garden, through the regular practice of forest bathing, and guiding, I feel an intrinsic sense of community even with the rocks, waters and wind. On a daily basis sweet Juliet was inviting me into all of this connection and community as she was immersed in the joy of noticing and interacting with everything around her.

(To be cont'd in Edition No.5)

'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', 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 and ANPECEC.org in Spain.

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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'On the Ground'

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Si aún con nuestra compañía e influencia, un perro sigue mostrando la misma curiosidad, las mismas ganas de explorar, de relacionarse, de aprender, de probar, de mantener su independencia y su personalidad, entonces, es entonces cuando sabremos que lo estamos haciendo bien y que compartimos nuestra vida con un compañero feliz.

If, even with our company and influence, a dog continues to show the same curiosity, the same desire to explore, to interact, to learn, to try, to maintain its independence and its personality, then, that is when we will know that we are doing it well and that we share our life with a happy companion.

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Asociación Nacional de
Profesionales y Educadores
Caninos desde la Empatía y
la Cooperación.

— ANPECEC

National Association of
Canine Professionals and
Educators from Empathy and
Cooperation.

Sold to
sneupenbijwillem@gmail.com



Photo credit: Cecilia Andersson