



### ***Can I Afford Training***

Most dog owners are proactive about ensuring their dog will not become ill, but lack the same commitment to preventing problems related to training. Owners invest in their dog's health and their own peace of mind by taking their dog to the veterinarian for vaccines, spaying and neutering and annual checkups. Most owners understand the amount it would cost to treat their dog for an illness such as Parvo could be 10 times the cost to prevent against the disease in the first place and are willing to pay that money. In addition, most owners know the amount of emotional turmoil they would experience should their dog get sick would be great and to avoid having this upsetting event in their lives they prevent against it through preventive veterinary care. What most owners are not aware of is the cost and emotional turmoil of an untrained dog is just as great as that of an ill dog and they fail to invest in quality training or enough quality training.

Despite the fact that behavior problems are the number one cause of dogs losing their home (re-homed, taken to a shelter or euthanized) owners are not investing the time and money in training their dog that is necessary to protect the other

doggie investments they have made (veterinary care, the owners emotions, personal property etc.) Much of the problem is not because of a lack of interest or desire on the owner's part. For the most part, the reasons for not seeking out quality training or enough of it is because owners do not really understand the training process, how much time and support is necessary to reach the owners goals and do not know how to fit this into their already busy lives.

### ***A Comparison Study On The Results Of Investing In Professionally Taught Classes.***

Two sisters, Beth and Claire each bought Lab puppies from the same litter. Each puppy was healthy and received routine veterinary care. As puppies, both dogs were friendly with other dogs and people had a moderate amount of energy and desire to chew.

Beth stated from the beginning she wanted to bring her dog to class so she could socialize her dog, avoid behavior problems and get her dog to follow commands to the point in which it could go everywhere with her. Beth was proactive and began attending classes with her dog Spencer when he was 8 weeks old. Beth went to class on a regular basis for the first year of Spencer's life. Beth not only learned how to train her dog, she had support and clarification along the way and learned how to use the training she was learning at home and in public so she did not have labor intensive training she had to do each day. Over the course of a year Beth spent about \$900 on

training.

Claire had trained a dog before and knew training would take some work. Claire thought she remembered much of what she had learned and did not want to spend money on training classes, so Claire supplemented her memory with some good dog training books. By the time “Lily” was a year old, Claire was at her wits end. She no longer enjoyed having a dog. At this point Claire had spent close to \$2000.00 to repair or replace items Lily had destroyed, to clean the carpets and on a ticket due to Lily escaping and not coming when called. Claire could not have people over or take Lily out in public because she jumped and play nipped at people and was starting display some inappropriate behavior around other dogs.

Claire was not negligent with “Lily”. She got books and she worked with “Lily”, but for the first year of “Lily’s” life she did not have the support of a professional trainer, she did not know how to apply the training to her life and the result was she no longer wanted to keep her dog. The emotional and financial investment she had made in her wonderful puppy physical well-being was at risk of being wasted.

The good news is Beth convinced Claire to seek help from the trainer she used for Spencer. By the time Lily was two years old, she was trained just as well as her brother. Lily no longer destroyed things, jumped or nipped at people could walk while keeping the leash loose, would come when called and was no longer showing inappropriate behaviors around other

dogs.

In the end Lily and Spencer had great manners and were well trained but Claire had experienced twice the expense, a tremendous amount of frustration and almost did not keep her dog because she did not understand the value of having a support system over time, how to train her dog and how to apply the training to her busy life. It is not so much a question of whether you can afford training classes, it is more a question of can you afford to not take training classes.