



The Giggly Mentality

By Katherine M. Sprague, Psy.D.

Giggly is my two year old half husky/half golden retriever canine. A repairman who came to our house once stated, "He's a squirrely thing isn't he?" Trying not to be offended by this man calling my little fur baby squirrely, I smiled and nodded; however, he was right. Giggly is more rambunctious than Marley, but what he lacks in serenity he makes up for in personality. I sometimes wish I had the "Giggly Mentality."

When our alarm goes off each morning, Giggly is rip, roaring and ready to go! He's excited to start the day even though five of the seven days each week he spends in his crate, which he shares with his little sister, Laney, who has attachment issues, hates being in her crate alone and refuses to be away from Giggly when we're gone. To be honest, although I love my job, I'm not nearly as excited as Giggly is to get out of bed and there's no falling back to sleep with him jumping all over us. I wish his enthusiasm for the day would rub off on me more.

I have thought about the difference in mentalities between dogs and humans. One of the many things that separate us is that dogs don't do things they don't like to do. Now most dogs, out of necessity, will go to the bathroom outside when it's cold and rainy even if they aren't crazy about it, but that's where they draw the line. If a dog doesn't like a toy, he won't play with it. If a dog doesn't like to go swimming, she won't jump in the water. Humans are different. We have to do many things we don't enjoy doing such as laundry, taking out the trash and paying bills, but we tend to take this a step further. Humans tend to do too many things we don't enjoy for too long and we don't spend nearly as much time doing things we're passionate about. If people engaged in more activities they were passionate about, I bet we'd all be more like Giggly when the alarm goes off.

Taking this to heart, this fall I started volunteering at the Franklin County Dog Shelter and although, it can be sad at times, I love dogs and am passionate about giving every dog the chance to live a long, happy and healthy life. Adding this volunteer work to my busy schedule has helped me to live more passionately because giving back to the creatures that bring me so much joy makes me feel good. I encourage those of you reading this article to think about the ways in which you could tweak each day so as to live a more passionate life and maybe eventually, more of us will wake up with the Giggly mentality.