

## Dog Talk with Uncle Matty: Till dog do you part

by *Matthew\_Margolis*

For the longest time and for reasons that escape me, this column used to be titled "Dogs, Cats and Other People." Not a week went by where I wasn't lambasted by some flummoxed cat person with a bone to pick over my gross neglect of felines. Who could blame 'em? Bad title.

And now, with the column at last more aptly named "Dog Talk With Uncle Matty," I finally have cause to advise a cat person:

"Here's my problem, and I hope you can help me out. My wife recently said to me, 'We need to get a dog.' But if you feed that through the translation matrix, the actual thing she said to me was, 'We should get a dog so I can dump 100 percent of the work and care of a dog on you.'

"The main issue is that I hate dogs. I'm a cat person. I love cats and have three. They don't smell bad, they cuddle in my lap, and they sleep 16 hours a day. Before I was married, a then-girlfriend of mine and I got a dog. I ended up hating the thing because, as a puppy, he soiled the house at every step. As an adult dog he destroyed everything in sight. I know, you say 'dogs need training.' And they do. But I'm not the person to give the dog training, as you can see. My wife, who wants to get a dog, also wants to dump all of the work on me, someone who hates dogs. Do you see what's going to happen next?

"How can I convince my wife that I don't have the time for a dog?"

My advice: Show her this letter. Print it out or cut it out of the newspaper, and leave it on her pillow. Tell her to give as much weight to your words as to mine, and Uncle Matty says under no circumstances should either you or your wife get a dog. That is unless your marriage vows were "for better or worse, till dog do we part."

My intent is not to be unfeeling toward his wife's desires, but rather to spare a pup from the cold environment of an absentee "mother" and a cat-loving "father." If animal adoptions were as carefully considered as human adoptions, these two would never make it past the initial home visit. And that's not because they couldn't, as individuals, become good "parents," but because they aren't, as a couple, on the same team.

I'll give credit where credit is due, though. At least Hubby has the good sense and decency to recognize his limitations.

Dogs need and deserve love and lots of it. But love isn't enough. They require time, patience and training on top of all that love. It's the time and patience put into training that will prevent a recurrence of Hubby's previous unpleasant living conditions – not the love.

While his wife may feel a love that knows no bounds for all canines, great and small, it sounds as though her time constraints are much greater and her attention span much smaller. For a true happily ever after, she ought to instead consider joining the other team. They can be ornery, but for the most part cat people aren't all that bad.

Woof!

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