

BOOK REVIEW

By Carley Phillips

LIFE SKILLS FOR PUPPIES

By HELEN ZULCH & DANIEL MILLS

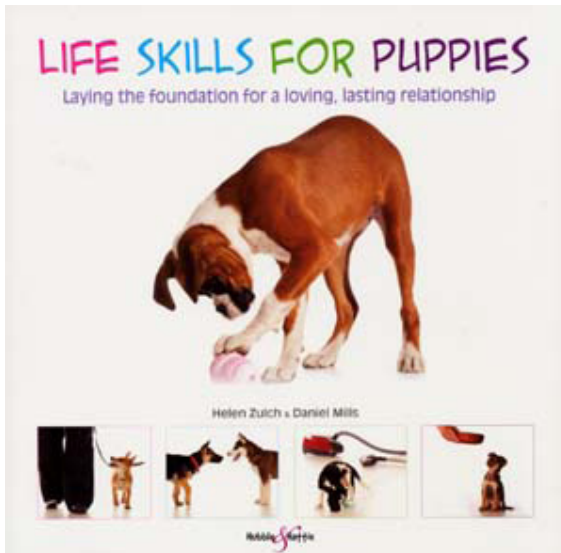
A very clever book which is the first 'puppy' book I have read that gives a fantastic amount of advice on all the basics and loads of practical tips, exercises and help. I am delighted to see so much covered in a puppies life, as it should be in a fun and happy manner. The first chapter 'I have confidence' is so valuable to a pup and its future, should he/she be aimed at competition, or for a well-grounded happy pet. A pup's confidence is so often overlooked but is the basis for the pup to learn happily and deal with everyday situations. The point is made that the pup needs to experience everyday situations, and also they must be experienced in a confidence building way. Some of these situations are listed as examples, such as cars, children, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, hair dryers etc etc. it shouldn't be taken for granted that a pup will take all these in their stride! There are clever 'tip' boxes with helpful hints about introducing these things, as well as 'remember' boxes for important points to cover. Then the excellent worksheets which you can fill in the book. You can list the experience, the reaction and what the follow up needs to be.

Chapter two goes more in depth about these situations, showing how to deal with any reaction so pup starts to like surprises. More tips and another really good worksheet for follow up. Chapters follow with excellent coverage and pictures of the life skills a puppy should achieve in his/her first year. 'I like to be touched'. 'I can't do everything I want when I want', 'I can be calm'. 'I know the rules', 'I have good manners and say please', 'I need help to make the right choices'.

Excellent instruction and hints given on subjects that many will just expect a dog to know or pick up somewhere along the way. Many don't realise that they need to be shown and/or taught. As with all Hubble & Hattie books, beautifully illustrated and excellent photo's throughout which really shows what you are aiming towards. This book also used the worksheets in each chapter... a very good idea where you can monitor your pup's progress and what still needs to be practised.

Towards the end of the book there is the 'I hope my person remembers that....' chapter. Love this, and some pointers we should all remember. Dogs are not machines. Dogs don't understand English. Dogs are not motivated by dominance. Dogs learn all the time, and my favourite....Dogs have feelings!

What I really like about this book is that it is written in a puppy's perspec-



tive. Clear explanations are given to describe the importance of each of the skills, backed up by excellent photos. The book demonstrates how to teach puppies to be naturally well behaved and how to make the right choices. Puppy education is really simplified in this unique book, giving 10 life skills enabling owners to really enjoy and interact with their new addition.

Helen Zulch is one of the authors. She is a veterinarian who qualified in South Africa and has special interest in animal behaviour and the prevention of behaviour problems through appropriate early life experiences.

Daniel Mills is an internationally recognised veterinary behaviour specialist. He initially worked in the animal charity sector where his interest was in problem prevention.

In summary, a new approach to puppy training through learning life skills. A refreshing and new outlook for both competitive and pet puppy owners, and well worth a read.

Published by Hubble and Hattie and available from DTW at the price of £12.99 plus p&p.

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