

The Honeymoon is Over

As all Greyhound owners will know, when you first get a retired or ill-treated dog home, your first instinct is to spoil them rotten and give them everything that they have never had. I know this as I have done this myself! But with some dogs, especially the wilful ones this can lead to future problems. During the first couple of weeks when you bring them into a home environment everything seems rosy, there are many new things for them to explore, new foods to try and objects in the home that they have never seen before and need investigating, (except the sofa, they all seem to know what that is for)!. We pander to their every need, if they do not like the food we try them with everything on the supermarket shelf until we find the things that they like (usually the most expensive). Every time they cry for attention we try and console them by giving them lots of treats to take their mind off things, and we even allow them on the bed in case they are feeling lonely. We try everything possible so that they are made to feel part of the family and settle in. But after a few weeks, The Honeymoon is Over!, we could now have a dog that does what it wants when it wants too, and gets anything it wants when it wants it, then the fun begins...

They are no longer satisfied with the things that you gave them anymore, they now want the kids toys to play with, your best coat to lay on and will not eat anything unless you go down to the shop and buy them sirloin steak that they like so much! and if you are going to cause any waves and not let them do these things, then cry, bark or even growl at you until you let them. It does make a funny photograph when your dog is surrounded by ripped up cushions and there are feathers and stuffing hanging out of their mouth, because they have been allowed to take control of the house and they are now in charge!

If they are allowed to do as they like from the start things can only get worse. Ben used to be a fine example of this, he is now in a new home for the third time due to his behaviour in previous homes, and all of it was not his fault. It all came down to when he was first re-homed, and being totally spoiled rotten, no ground rules set and allowed to please himself, to which he took complete advantage of . He has been at his new home for over a year, with no problems at all, as he was given ground rules from the beginning. Basically they are only like children, allow them to run riot and they will, and they will throw a paddy if they cannot have what they want. Set the rules from day one, give them as much love and affection as you want but just do not spoil them too much or you will be paying the price later on - or the dog will!!

Another example of being spoiled is my own greyhound Bobby, as many of our owners will know, he is a lovely dog and we would not be without him, but he is a spoiled brat! and I know that we have made him this way. He stamps his feet when he does not get what he wants, he steals food off your plate, while you are still eating it! he takes everything that does not belong to him and nothing will stop him from barking if he wants to go for a walk, but he is nearly 11 years old now and set in in ways.

It's amazing how I can give out advice to other people, but do not take my own advice!!