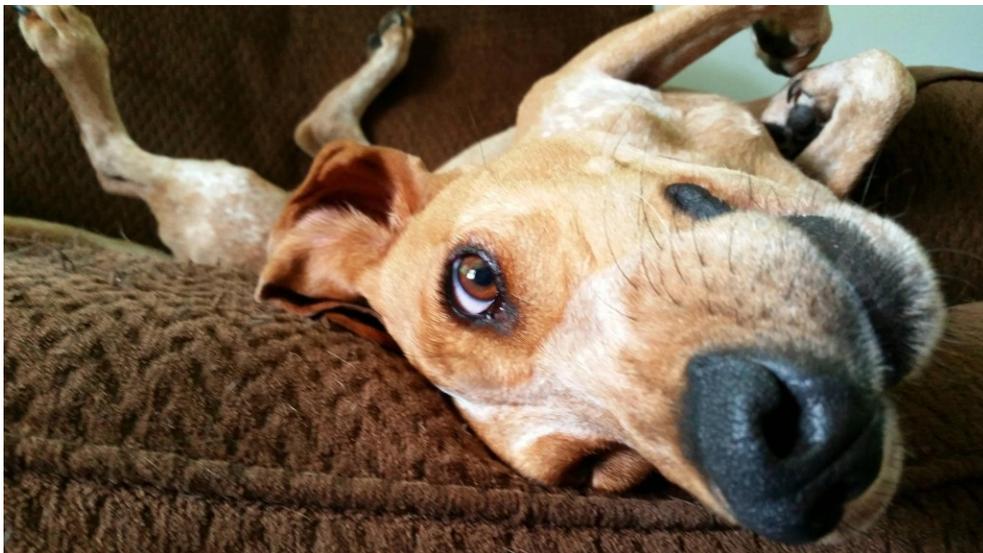


A dog's resolution: play every day

"What's the point of making a resolution if I'm not going to keep it anyway?" I asked my dog. It was the first day of the new year.

He rolled over and gave me his, "uh oh" look. *If we're going to have this conversation, please rub my belly.*



Dog owners face hilarious struggles.

"Well, there are some things I've been trying to do for many years. What's the point of trying if I never keep my resolutions?" I asked.

"That's your choice," he said. I could read it in his eyes.

"Huh? Are you saying it's my fault?" I asked.

"I didn't say that. You did," he moaned.

"Why is it that some of the things I've wanted for so long just don't happen?" I asked.

"It means that you really don't want them . . . yet," he

moaned with great empathy, begging me to play.

“What are you talking about?” I asked.

I knew what he was thinking. *When you want it bad enough, you will make it happen.*

“Make it happen? But I have too many distractions keeping me away from what I really want.” I told him.

He shifted his head sideways and moaned in his deep alto moan. It’s the same look he gives me when he wants something. *Do you? Really? What’s stopping you?*



“Well, you know, it’s all the stuff that’s been going on. I have to take care of all the people I love, and you. I’ve been going here and there. And I’ve been trying to do what’s right.”

He tweaked his head further. *Right for whom?*

“Well, I don’t know. Everyone.”

He gave me the look. *Are these people happy with you?*

“Well, I suppose their happiness doesn’t have much to do with me.”

“You’re getting somewhere. Continue,” he spoke to me through his hopeful eyes.

“I know what you’re getting at. They’re going to be happy or miserable regardless of what I do.”

Anything else? he yawned. He’s heard this story many times.



Researchers find that dogs’ yawns are cued by their owners.

“They’re busy with their own lives. I know I need to do what I know is best for me and that’s the best thing I can do for everyone.”

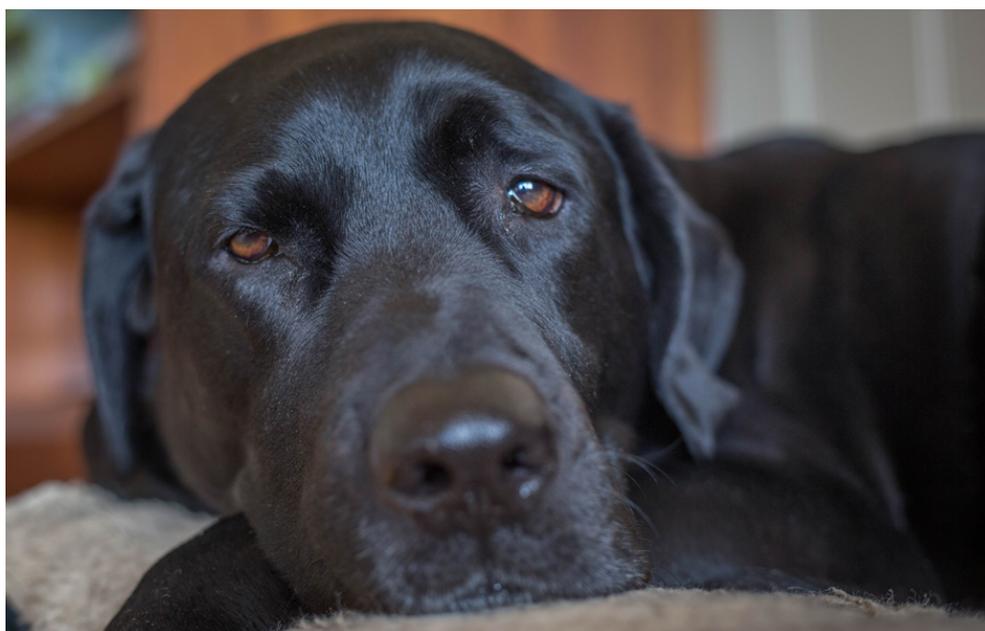
I cuddled up close to him and gave him a hug. His tail picked up wagging speed. He spoke to me in body language, *“That’s*

right. Let's do it. Let's play. See you already know what you need to do. What have you been wanting for so long that you aren't doing?

"Nothing, it's just me. I'm the one who hasn't been keeping my resolutions. I have no one to blame but myself. I really want to make this resolution. I know I need to make this resolution and then do what it takes to make it happen."

Yes, and what else? he wondered.

"I need to develop the right habits so that I do what I need to do every day until my resolution becomes my reality. If I don't make a resolution, my dreams are unresolved anyway. Deciding not to make a resolution means I'm giving up myself." I looked him in the eyes.



Your dog might save your life.

He stared back looking bored. I felt like he said to me: *You speak the truth.*

"I do? I guess I do. What now?"

He started circling around me, like he always does when he wants me to get into action, wants me to play. *Make your*

resolution on the first.

“The first of what?” I asked.

He ran to the door and looked back at me wagging his backside. *The first of everything. The first of every year and the first of every month. First thing every morning. Right now! Do you resolve? Or do you not?*

“I get it. I got it. I’m resolving to do what I *want* to do . . . what I *need* to do.” I opened the door. He dashed around the back yard searching for his stick. He found it and ran to me. I threw the stick and he brought it back to me. I threw it again and he brought it back to me again, this time with a little more slobber. I knew I could throw it for an hour or two and he would stay in the game.



He wants to bring me the stick. He never lets me down. I throw the stick again, but this time I resolve to run with him. He beats me to the stick, but turns back to give it to me.

I dash off in another direction, and he chases me with the stick still in his mouth. He follows me wherever I go. I freeze and turn around to look at him. He drops the stick near my feet. He leans back with full attention on me, ready to

take off the moment I grab the stick.

As I stare into his eyes, I know exactly what he's thinking. *I resolve right now to bring this stick to you. Are you willing to stay in the game?*

I drop my head back to look up at the sky. The sun is out of reach, yet I enjoy its warmth. My resolution is like the blinding sun. It's out of reach, but just the thought of it brightens my day. It warms my heart.

I need to chase my resolution every day. I must master my game. I need to get fired up about playing every day. I got a burst of energy and threw the stick one more time. As he was running back to me with the stick, I felt a sudden sense of power. I got the crazy idea that I could throw any wish out to the universe and it would come back to me. I felt great!

We went back inside. I noticed a book that a successful friend loaned me a few days ago. He said it was a game-changer for him. I sat down and looked at the cover. **RESOLVED: 13 Resolutions for LIFE**. I started flipping through the pages and randomly got caught up in chapter 5, the Plan and Do chapter. I was hooked as soon as I saw these three questions:

1. What do you want?
2. What does it cost?
3. Pay it.

Get it done when life gets tough: Advice from Julie A Fast

Guide Dogs of America



Finding The Way Together

