

## TRUST - A DEADLY DISEASE

by Sharon Mathers - PERMISSION GRANTED TO CROSS POST

There is a deadly disease stalking your dog, a hideous, stealthy thing just waiting it's chance to steal your beloved friend. It's now a new disease, or one for which there are inoculations. The disease is called trust.

You knew before you ever took your puppy home that it could not be trusted. The breeder who provided you with this precious animal warned you, drummed it into your head. Puppies steal off counters, destroy anything expensive, chase cats, take forever to house train, and must never be allowed off lead!

When the big day finally arrived, heeding the sage advice of the breeder you escorted your puppy to his new home, properly collared and tagged, the lead held tight in your hand.

At home the house was "puppy-proofed." Everything of value was stored in the spare bedroom, garbage stowed on top of the refrigerator, cats separated, and a gate placed across the door to the living room to keep at least part of the house puddle-free. All windows and doors had been properly secured, and signs placed in all strategic points reminding all to "CLOSE THE DOOR."

Soon it becomes second nature to make sure the door closed, less than a 9th of a second after it was opened and that it is really latched. "DON'T LET THE DOG OUT," is your second most verbalized expression. (The first is "NO") You worry and fuss constantly terrified that your darling will get out and a disaster will surely follow. Your friends comment about who you love most, your family or the dog. You know that to relax your vigil for a moment might lose him to you forever.

And so the weeks and months pass, with your puppy becoming more civilized every day, and the seeds of trust are planted. It seems that each new day brings less destruction, less breakage. Almost before you know it your gangly, slurpy puppy has turned into an elegant dignified friend.

Now that he is a more reliable, sedate companion, you take him more places. No longer does he chew the steering wheel when left in the car. And darned if that cake wasn't still on the counter in the morning. And, oh yes, wasn't that the cat he was sleeping with so cozily on your pillow last night?

At this point you are beginning to become infected, the disease is spreading its roots deep into your mind.

And then one of your friends suggests obedience. You shake your head and remind her that your dog might run away if allowed off lead, but you are reassured when she promises the events are held in a fenced area. And, wonder of wonders, he did not run away, but came every time you called him.

All winter long you go to weekly obedience classes. And, after a time, you even let him run loose from the car into the house when you get home. Why not, he always runs straight to the door, dancing a frenzy of joy, and waits

to be let in. And, remember he comes every time he is called. You know he is the exception that proves the rule. (and sometimes late at night, you even let him slip out the front door to go potty and then right back in).

At this point the disease has taken hold, waiting for the right time and place to rear its ugly head.

Years pass -- it is hard to remember why you ever worried so much he was a puppy. He would never think of running out the door left open while you bring in the packages from the car. It would be beneath his dignity to jump out of the window of the car while you run into the convenience store. And when you take him for those wonderful long walks at dawn, it only takes one whistle to send him racing back to you in a burst of speed when the walk comes too close to the highway. (He still gets in the garbage, but nobody is perfect!).

This is the time the disease has waited for so patiently. Sometimes it only has to wait a year or two, but often it takes much longer.

He spies the neighbors dog across the street, and suddenly forgets everything he ever know about not slipping outdoors, jumping out windows or coming when called due to traffic. Perhaps it was only a paper fluttering in the breeze, or even just the sheer joy of running.

Stopped in an instant. Stilled forever - your heart is broken at the sight of his still, beautiful body.

The disease is trust. The final outcome - hit by a car.

This sums up what my feelings are. Danielle

A PRAYER FOR PUPPIES

MAY YOUR LIFE BE ONE OF PURPOSE, OF DIGNITY AND PLAN.

MAY YOUR LOVE BE WELL INVESTED IN A WISE, UNERRING HUMAN.

**One of CP's adopters violated the trust placed in him as a Cairn forever home. He adopted a puppy freed from a breeding facility as a young pup. He raised that pup for three years and then one day he took that young dog out to the mailbox without a leash. That youngster bolted into the road and was killed by a car. It just takes ONCE and there is no second chance.**