

Make Your Dog or Cat a Hero!

Tips For Restoring The Peace In Your Home:
Why Your Pet's Job Is Important



Making your pet a hero can give them the confidence to be the animal they're born to be.

Sometimes this is as easy as giving them the right job.

Animals have jobs?

Yes!

Frequently during a session with a client, I talk about the job their animal has. And when I talk about an animal having a job, I'm not referring to some money-making opportunity like movie roles or circus tricks! I'm referring to their role in the household or farm.

Why do I talk about this?

Having a purpose and being satisfied in a job is as important to dogs, cats and horses as it is to people! It's about being recognized and useful, about meeting the expectations of their person.

Just as a person might be confused about the exact role they're playing their job, an animal may not fully understand the boundaries and rules in their job and it can appear as bad behavior.

I've found that sometimes a behavior issue can be easily remedied by changing their role, maybe taking that strength that they've gone too far with and redirecting or transforming into something more appropriate for your house.

The other end of the spectrum is also true, an animal may be timid and shy or afraid if she doesn't know her role, but will truly shine as a superstar when assigned a job.

If you've never thought of your animal having a job before - this may be the reason if you have a behavior issue - they don't know what their job is and so they don't know what is expected of them.



Do All Animals Need Jobs?

Yes! Dogs, Cats, Rats, Mice, Horses, Birds, Ferrets, Goats, Bunnies and all. We all are more fulfilled while living a life of purpose.

How do I know what my animal should do?

This might seem like a big question if you've never thought about it before, so let's break it down a bit.

Listed below are the main archetypes and essences of animals. Take a look at the list and find the top one or two that your animal seems to fit into. It's important to remember that while each type has strong desirable traits, it's also possible that overaction of these same traits can lead to undesirable behavior. For example, your proud, strong dog is your protector and keeps the house secure at night. But the next day, while you're at the dog park he shows aggressive behavior to the people and animals that come close to you. That's taking the protector role too far, so you'd want to transform his job so he doesn't need to be aggressive at inappropriate times. Let him show off his strength and smarts in agility or rescue or entertainment, or he may also be great at protecting the small animals of the house but be clear that You don't need it. Looking at the second or third archetype or essence of your animal can give clues which way to redirect energy if necessary.

This is not a complete list by any means, but covers the main categories.

- Ruler (king/queen)
- Magician (healer, maker)
- Teacher (sage, wise one)
- Comedian (Joker, trickster)
- Lover (partner, friend)
- Rebel (misfit, outlaw)
- Explorer (seeker, wanderer)
- Citizen (regular guy, good neighbor)
- Caregiver (helper, parent)
- Hero (rescuer, savior)
- Mystic (saint, innocent)
- Creative (artist, expressive)



And of course there are knights and princes and divas and couch potatoes and more – they all have a role to play!





What kinds of jobs are there?

Now that you've browsed the list, do you see the essence of your animal in one of them? Most animals are a combination of two or three and the distinction between them can be subtle. For example, your dog may love being in service to others and is great in search and rescue (Hero), but maybe she would prefer to be in service in the Caregiver role of therapy or nurturer. A cat that breaks the rules by sneaking out the door all time may not really be a rebel, but a true wanderer at heart and just wants to explore.

While looking at the jobs listed below, think about how it compares with the essence of your animal, can you see a good match? Some of these are specific jobs, some are just general. You'll need to consider your personal living situation, resources, and capabilities when deciding on the best job for your animal.

If you are working with a behavior problem – can you tell if/where they may have carried their job too far? If so, it may be time to reassign them.

- Organizer/manager
- Greeter
- Sentry
- Critter/bug control
- Overseer
- Lover
- Companion
- Therapy/nurturer
- Herding
- Hunting
- Guard
- Protector
- Entertainment
- Show off
- Babysitter
- Advocate/defender
- Teacher
- Service
- Search and rescue
- Therapy
- Hunting
- Provider
- Leader
- Carting
- Couch potato
- Alarm
- Center
- Joy
- Tricks
- Agility
- Nosework
- Fetch
- Assistant
- Follower



Not all jobs are physical.

A new puppy or kitten in the house may simply be an apprentice to the older animal as it learns the ropes.

Your new timid cat may just need to be the observer at first, or always. She might be the lover, companion, or nurturer later.

A job doesn't have to be physical, it just needs to fulfil a purpose for that animal. In my house I have a lover, an auntie and an entertainer, there's no need for them to be anything else.

If your aging dog is a couch potato there is no shame in that, they've earned it. Recognize it and praise them for their success of couch domination!

What's the payoff?

Happy animal, happy house. Really. I've found both in my life and in my client's life that the right job for the right animal can help restore the harmony in the house.

It's at least worth a try, right?

Unless you're dealing with serious aggression (in which case hire a trainer) resetting jobs and expectations is worth a try.

How do they know what their new job is?

It's very important to convey to the animal what your expectations are. They won't change if you don't. You do this many ways:

- Tell them. Yes, in words, out loud. "You are the new Greeter".
- Tell them the expectations of this role.
- Expect the new role to materialize. They pick up on our expectations, so truly believe it will happen.
- Give it some time to gel. Overnight success may happen, but it may not. One, two or three weeks may be more appropriate.



Good Luck, and I would love to hear how you've changed jobs in your household [Email me!](#)