

The Great Conspiracy



By Elizabeth Chandler

Why is it that when you take your dog for a walk, they always choose the only yard with a person out in the yard as the place to do their business? Why is it that right after you clean out the litter pan, the cat immediately jumps in? Why is it that when you are picking up poopies in the back yard at night, all of the spider webs are built precisely at eyelash level? Why is it that when you are photographing your pet, they only assume the best poses after you have put the camera away or when you have run out of film?

I have long postulated that cats and dogs (and spiders) have a quiet conspiracy to drive us nuts and I believe the answers to these questions point to the higher intelligence (by “higher,” I mean higher than us, which really doesn’t say much) that cats and dogs (and spiders) possess. That is how they manage to thwart us at every turn; it’s not just sheer luck. They plot and plan when we aren’t home as to how they will next toy with us. Here are some more examples.

Why is it when you are walking your dog at a good clip, they do the “pull-back”? That’s when they pick up a scent and go back to it, totally throwing off your walking rhythm and, sometimes, pulling their heads out of their collars. I hate the pull-back; I’m a forward moving kind of girl and pull-backs just slow me down and annoy me, which, I believe, they were designed to do! Then there’s the wrap-around, which anyone who walks a dog on leash has certainly experienced. Regardless of what you do, the dog will ALWAYS go in the direction that best wraps your legs in the leash. It’s hopeless to resist or attempt to outsmart them.

Why is it that when I’m in the shower or otherwise indisposed, the dogs and cats decide to wreak havoc out in the living room? Why is it that cats like to stick their butts in your face? Why is it that first thing in the morning, cats like to jump directly upon your bladder to say hello? Why do my cats take a “victory” lap around the house after using the litter pan, thus arousing the prey instincts of my dogs, creating momentary chaos? And why is it that these same primordial predatory wolf king instincts of the dogs completely disappear when it’s time to go outside in a rainstorm?

Why is it that dogs will stick their nose in another dog’s poop, but run like mad when they make their own poop, as if it’s a disgusting thing that they want nothing to do with? Why is it when I’m trying to clean up after my dogs, I often find their poopies better with my feet than with my eyes? Why is it that, in my house anyway, while I am picking up one dog’s business, another dog will go to the OTHER side of the yard to do its business rather than take care of it nearby? Why is it that while I’m trying to pick up their business, this seems to always be the time they decide to act up and distract me (barking loudly, chasing a squirrel, fighting over a stick, etc.) so my Beagle can then go eat the other dog’s business while I’m dealing with the distraction? I KNOW it’s a conspiracy; it can’t just be a coincidence!

I don’t know the answers to any of these questions, because I am clearly not as smart as my pets. But I do know that they are a lot smarter than we give them credit for and they do plot and plan to toy with us as if we were mere lizards or frogs, slowly torturing us, removing every shred of decency until we completely unravel. Or maybe they are here to teach us tolerance, patience, and letting go of having to control everything (all areas I still apparently need schooling on, since I’m still getting lessons from my pets!). Who knows? All I know is they have me very well trained.

If your pet has you well trained, and you'd like to share your stories, please feel free to email me at dogwogmom@comcast.net. I may be able to use the material in future articles. Also, send digital photos (if you can get your pets to put aside their "no good photos" plan long enough to let you have a decent photo opportunity) to the same email address. We will try to run readers' pet photos from time to time.

Just remember: We aren't really in control; our pets are running the show. But, that's OK with me.