

## Off Leash - Pet Gratitude

- How do pets show gratitude?
  - Dogs: spending time with you, smiling at you, wagging their tails, turning their backs to you.
  - Cats: spending time with you, laying on your lap, purring, slow-blinking.
- Anthropomorphizing our pets
  - While we project a lot of human emotions and feelings onto our pets, they don't feel them all. Pets do seem to experience joy, sadness, remorse, excitement, fear, anxiety, love, and frustration.
- Good pet parent; what can you do at home?
  - Dogs:
    - Snuffle mats
    - Towel burrito
    - Sand pits
    - Licky mats
    - Puzzle toys
    - Dog-safe diluted essential oils
  - Cats (they love novelty!)
    - Boxes
    - Scratching surfaces, different kinds of textures
    - Catnip
    - Puzzle toys
- Animals in shelters
  - Given extra enrichment and activity to fight boredom.
  - Long-stays receive specific and unique enrichment schedules
  - Clicker training
  - When a shelter animal is brought into a new home they should be allowed a decompression period (roughly 3 weeks) to acclimate to the new environment. At this time you will notice their full personalities which allows you to create specific enrichment you think they would like/benefit from.
- Why enrichment?
  - Enrichment allows animals to expend extra energy while stimulating their senses.
  - Dogs doing a scent-driven activity for 5 minutes is equivalent to them doing a 30-40 minute physical activity.
  - Cats have a natural schedule they follow multiple times a day (hunt -> eat -> groom -> sleep). Owners should help to encourage this cycle by giving their cats enrichment (hunting/playing) prior to eating.
- Cat boredom
  - Overly lazy
  - Destructive (scratching unwanted furniture, chewing plants, etc.)
  - Not using the litter box
- Pet fostering
  - Allows animals to get used to a home setting

- All costs covered by RHHS
  - “Test if ready to own a pet”
- ARC - helping both ends of the leash
  - Pet Pantry
  - Crisis Boarding
  - S/N Assistance
  - Low-cost Vaccine Clinics
  - Homeward Hounds