



# AGING WITH GRACE AND DIGNITY

Aging is a natural part of every dog's life, one not to be feared, but celebrated. Emotional, physical and spiritual changes guide your dog from birth to death, and there are ways that you can make the process smooth and easy.



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**D**ogs view aging as a natural part of every life cycle on earth. They embrace the aging process, understanding that wisdom and beauty come from deep within the soul. Dogs savor the spiritual experience, accepting death as an opportunity to recycle their physical form and choose another one.

From birth to death, your dog's physical body passes through many phases. As he evolves and matures, many emotional, mental and spiritual transformations will also take place. Therefore, aging means many shifts and changes as his body, mind and spirit move through different stages. As your dog's partner, learning to recognize, accept and honor these changes will make the aging process easier for both of you.

## SHAPE SHIFTING THE AGING PROCESS

You might ask, "what can I do to help the aging process go as smoothly as possible for me and my dog?" The first step in managing your dog's shifts is mindfulness. Noticing any immediate changes in his

behavior, emotions, physical health and approach to life will help you remain confident and strong so that you can address any issues before they escalate or become chronic problems over time.

## PHYSICAL CHANGES

Your dog's digestion is his ecosystem, affecting every bodily function, including the endocrine, circulatory, skeletal and nervous systems. Your dog's appetite may decrease as he ages; his food preferences may shift or perhaps he'll no longer tolerate foods he ate as a puppy. Observing his digestion will allow you to adjust his food accordingly, supporting his overall health.

As he ages, your dog will also slow down. This is an inevitable part of growing older. Daily exercise routines and his level of activity may shift. Noticing and treating early physical imbalances can prevent more serious conditions from developing. Using homeopathic and herbal medicines, regular bodywork and acupuncture will manage aches and pains, helping him remain comfortable and supporting his body.

## EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL CHANGES

Like us, some puppies are born with outgoing, exuberant personalities. Others come into the world more reserved and cautious, taking their time to feel their way. Many different emotional combinations exist, making each dog a unique individual.

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Emotions and mentality are two different aspects of your dog's personality. His mental state is how he thinks, how he views life and how he behaves in the world. For example, your dog may be obsessed with his "job." If he's an agility dog, he may be a very focused, determined and driven guy who likes to nail his time and keep it clean. A more "chill" personality represents an adaptable mental type. This dog can alter his perspective, remaining flexible and open to new experiences.

Like you, your dog's mental and emotional attitudes will expand and grow as he ages. Understanding these needs at each stage of his life gives him permission to be himself. This is validating to him, because being his authentic self is important as he ages, allowing him to clearly communicate how he thinks and feels.

## SPIRITUAL CHANGES

Although you might not perceive your dog as a spiritual being, he is. Dogs are intuitively connected to divine energy, universal consciousness and the spirit realm. Your dog sees, hears and understands every thought and feeling you have, even those thoughts that originate down deep inside your soul.

Your dog has the ability to connect to the other side, reaching people and animals who have crossed before them, and to spirit guides who assist him daily. He receives spiritual messages and meanings, readily embracing the invisible realm.

For example, when your old dog dies, your puppy gravitates to the bed where your old dog spent his last few days. You wonder if your puppy misses the old guy because he's spending time there. It's likely they are convening, exchanging messages and communicating back and forth. Rather than stress over the situation, you allow the process to unfold, giving your pup space to grieve and process the farewell.

Recognizing your puppy's ability to reach the other side prompts you to do the same. Feeling more open, your old dog appears in dreams, revealing his presence so clearly that you know that he's completely fine. Or you see a dog who looks identical to him, another spiritual sign that he is

OK. These are magical experiences that transform your reality, helping you find peace in the death process.

## THE ENERGETIC CONTRACT'S ROLE

Sometimes you realize you are paired up like a mirror with your dog; he reflects your emotional makeup back to you as clearly as a pristine pond. Or you sense you and your dog are mismatched and cannot get in sync with one another. You might wonder why you feel so connected to your dog; alternatively, you question your relationship and how it will unfold.

Either way, there's a reason this is happening. The match you feel with your dog is actually an energetic contract. He selects you to help with your life lessons, thereby creating a conscious awareness of what you are trying to learn in this lifetime.

Sometimes the lessons are challenging, which can feel confusing. Take a closer look, recognize that you may be resisting the lesson. This will shift the energy, smoothing out the relationship kinks. Once the contract is acknowledged, the deeper ebb and flow of your shared life cycle is able to unfold.

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## ENERGETIC PROGRAMS

All dogs are born with certain energetic programs. Some come from past lives and

some are imprinted from their parents or life experiences. For example, perhaps your puppy was the runt of the litter, unable to get enough food and nourishment while competing with his littermates. Or, he may have been abused physically or emotionally, creating special needs that require extra love and attention to help and support him throughout his life. Either way, he may be carrying tremendous fear in his energy field.

Once you get him into your care, you switch up that energy to one of unconditional love and devotion, ensuring that all of his needs are met in a deep and timely fashion. Gradually, he is able to find that his survival is not at stake and he becomes more stable and secure in the world. While his DNA, personality traits and spiritual essence are integral parts of who he is, your devotion and love will help manifest an enormous transformation, healing the early energetic imbalances in his life.

## THE ULTIMATE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Dogs age with grace and dignity. They don't measure their self-worth by their successes or how they appear. Unlike us, they don't fear pain and suffering, nor do they try to control their health circumstances. They recognize aging as a life process, taking each stage as it comes.

Aging is a spiritual journey, deepened by the experiences you co-create as his life's purpose unfolds. Supporting his physical, emotional and mental needs with holistic healthcare will provide a balanced approach to aging. Combined with abundant doses of love and laughter, his senior years will bring you both infinite joy and bliss, making each day a blessing. 🐾

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