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Dogged persistence will reap rewards

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What do dogs value? Why do they get so excited by their daily walk? And why may dogs of different breeds have different needs?

In the fascinating new book *A Modern Dog's Life*, animal behaviourist, veterinarian, dog lover and University of Sydney Associate Professor Dr Paul McGreevy answers these questions and more, offering an exciting new approach to owning and training a dog.

McGreevy takes readers on a walk in the paws of man's best friend to help them understand the challenges and confusions dogs face by living in the modern world.

He offers an exciting new approach to making the most of life with dogs. Using humour, easy-to-follow instructions and memorable characters such as "Uncle Wolf" and "Feral Cheryl", McGreevy is able to make dog psychology and scientific research easily digestible.

The book offers more than just explanations as to what dogs are thinking and feeling - it also contains user-friendly tips on training your dog. "The dog in the 21st-century has to cope with many events, stimuli, and environmental complexities that its ancestors never had to deal with," points out McGreevy.

"As a result, the modern dog is the consummate opportunist; but one reliant on humans." What's more, McGreevy, from the University of Sydney's Faculty of Veterinary Science, offers a radical new approach to training a dog.

Rather than approaching our role in the dog-human relationship as that of master, "alpha dog" or leader, we should instead picture ourselves as life-coaches, providing dogs with opportunities to get the best out of life, yet at the same time ensuring they do what we want them to do.

"I believe our role as life-coaches is a more honest, exciting and unique role than any attempt to be a pseudo-dog could ever be. But I also want to emphasise that training a dog takes time and dedication; and owning a dog is not always a pleasure, but when the rewards come through, it's a win-win situation for the dog and the owner," he says.

McGreevy, who has worked with animals for more than twenty years and is the proud owner of three dogs himself, stresses the importance of understanding your pet in order to train them with greater success, and build a strong owner and pet bond.

McGreevy says that "what I have found over my years of research with dogs is that if we recognise what they want and give them a better deal, we usually get better results and become more fulfilled as dog owners.

"My aim with this book is to help people get to know what motivates their dogs, as well as what's important to them. Most owners want to ensure that their dog gets the best possible life and that they get joy and satisfaction as an owner" says McGreevy.

A Modern Dog's Life will appeal to dog owners, vets, trainers and breeders, and is a must for those who want to become a better dog-watcher, team-player, care-giver, companion or life-coach.

***A Modern Dog's Life* by Dr Paul McGreevy RRP: \$34.95, is published by UNSW Press**

About the Author

Dr Paul McGreevy graduated from Bristol University Veterinary School in 1987 and worked as a general veterinary practitioner in Australia and England before returning to Bristol to take a PhD in animal behaviour.

Since 1996, Paul has been teaching, researching and consulting at the University of Sydney's Faculty of Veterinary Science. He is recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons as a specialist in Veterinary Behavioural Medicine, with a research focuses on the behaviour and welfare of dogs and horses.

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