

## Unconditional, Dog-like Love

*Dear Stef,*

*My little dog Jake has congestive heart failure. Doctors say he could be around for another year. When he coughs, I feel so sorry for him, which is negative energy. How can I change that? — Jake's Mom*

**Oh Jake's Mom,** your question touches me deeply. You see, my dog Barnie just so happens to have the exact same health challenge. I sometimes resist taking my own advice, but this synchronicity reminds me that the practice of allowing *what is* has healing merit here, for all of us.

There's no point in denying the heartbreak of Jake's condition. Feeling sad when witnessing suffering, especially in beings we love, is as natural as the love itself. It's especially difficult when what you see reminds you of the diagnosis and outcome you have been told to expect. So please stop labeling your reaction as "negative energy" — it only adds the sting of self-criticism to the pain you already feel.

Canine companions are unique in the human experience. For me it is no accident that the backwards spelling of DOG is GOD. Nowhere else do we find such clear vessels of unconditional love. We dog lovers have the unique opportunity to receive this love and elevate our consciousness in kind.

When Jake coughs, do what he does when you're hurting — go to him and offer comfort. Get down on the floor and lavish him with attention and affection. Tell him in mental pictures how well he's fulfilled his doggie duties and how thankful you are for his loyalty, devotion and protection.

Pets sometimes linger in old age on our behalf, sensing our attachment and emotional need. Dogs are especially wired to serve at all costs. Jake may need reassurance you will be OK when he crosses the rainbow bridge. Communicating this, even silently in your mind, gives him permission to go when ready, which is a very noble, God/Dog-like thing to do.

Love him without reservation now. When he is gone, you will be comforted by so many sweet memories, including these times of tender connection in his later years.

Barnie and I send much love and tenderness to you and Jake. ☸



**STEF SWINK, RScP,** has been a sought-after practitioner and licensed Heal Your Life® teacher for 17 years. Early on, she was the personal assistant to author Louise Hay, responding to thousands of "Dear Louise" letters and now has a thriving coaching practice in Evergreen, Colorado. Visit her online at [StefSwink.com](http://StefSwink.com).