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Dogs Sense Our Stress, Adding to Theirs

(Locust Valley, N.Y.) While life can be stressful to us all at times, COVID-19 has added an exceptional amount of stress for everyone. Our pets are a wonderful source of solace for us since they offer unconditional love whenever we need it. Yet, dogs in particular are especially aware of change and some don't react well to it.

Barking at people wearing masks because it was simply foreign to them and harder to observe facial expressions among strangers on the street and visitors to our homes is just one example. Even giving pets a lot more attention than usual because we were home so much more and pet them to soothe ourselves can become tough for some dogs over time. Having us there more can also break their rhythm and sleep patterns. When we started to leave the house more, especially to go back to work for long periods of time, they naturally sense the change.

Because dogs tend to feel what we feel, they are happy when we're happy and can become stressed when they sense our stress. For parents of dogs with noise and other kinds of anxiety triggers, these past several months have likely been especially trying for our pets and us since we love them as part of our families.

Dogs demonstrate their anxiety in a variety of ways. Some pet parents don't realize they are acting out due to tension or fear. Just as humans might exhibit nervousness by playing with their hair or strumming their fingers on a table, dogs might exhibit uncommon behavior such as destructive biting or chewing, for example.

Dogs are extremely perceptive to our moods, tones of voice and other signals we don't even know we're demonstrating. Studies have proven that they can help ease our anxieties, but might also become very anxious when they sense that people and other animals around them are tense.

If you sense that your dog might be tense, find a comfortable space in your home or yard and simply relax, breathing and enjoying your surroundings. You'll find both

you and your dog will begin to feel relaxed. Try listening to calming music. Dogs respond well to classical and other calm music. Going for a nice brisk walk is also a great stress reliever and every dog loves going for walks!

Whether during this stressful time in our and our pets' lives during the COVID-19 situation or at any other time, there are a number of natural ways we can relax our minds and bodies hand in paw with our pups.

Debbie Greco Cohen is the Business Manager of Music Mutz, LLC. The patented Music Mutz® Collar soothes dogs that suffer from noise phobias, separation anxiety, and other situations that cause stress. The Collar features high quality speakers and an MP3 player with songs custom arranged to relieve anxiety. Music Mutz Founder Kris Baggelaar has spent decades working with dogs through the Guide Dog Foundation. Music Mutz donates money and collars to various worthy pet charities to help as many loving animals as possible. Contact Music Mutz at musicmutz.com.