

Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

Transcript

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SG As we move closer to the gift giving time of the year, I thought I would do a podcast on what would be the number one most ideal gift to give a dog owner or somebody who is about to become a new dog or puppy owner. Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. And before we jump into what would be that ideal gift, I think we can all agree on what would be the absolute worst gift, right?

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And that would be gifting somebody the surprise gift of a new dog or a new puppy. As romantic as television or movies might make that appear to be that is the absolute worst gift you can give to anybody. Please don't do that. I can do a whole podcast on why that's a really bad idea, but that's not what this one's about.

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It's about what is that ideal gift? And it's clear to any of you who followed me on social media I have a little bit of a problem/obsession with dog beds. And I love dog toys and I love dog leashes. None of those are my number one gift that I think you should be giving somebody who owns a dog or is about to own a dog or a puppy.

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Now a true gift is something that lights up both the giver and the receiver. You know, I dialed this one in, I have got you the best gift ever. And when they receive it, they go "Oh my gosh, I never would have thought of getting this for myself but thank you. Thank you." or "Oh my gosh, this is exactly what I wanted, but I wasn't in the position to get it for myself. Thank you. Thank you." That is what we're aiming for. That's the kind of reaction.

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We feel good about giving it, they feel amazing about receiving it. But that doesn't always happen. Here's what often happens is you rack your brain for a great gift, and you just get something because you feel obliged.

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And the people who receive that gift, you know they might fake "Oh yeah. Great." But really how many potato peelers or crockpots does one person need? And they're going to hang on to that because there's an emotional obligation because it was a gift from you right? You don't want that kind of gift.

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That's not the kind of gift to give somebody you really care about. So, what is the number one gift to get a dog owner or somebody who's about to become a new dog or puppy owner? Let's have a drum roll, please. The number one gift is the gift of education. Gift that person the opportunity to learn all about how to train dogs. A gift certificate to an amazing dog training program. Now you might be scratching your head going, "Susan, how can somebody make use of a dog training program when they don't have their dog yet?"



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That is a very, very good question. And it's a logical question. But you're thinking of dog training in a traditional way. Traditional dog training classes teach you things the dog must do. The dog must sit, they must come, they must down, they must walk on leash, they must stay. There's five things. You go to a traditional dog training class and you're going to learn those five things.

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Sit, down, stay, come when you're called, walk on leash. I look at that as the old proverb of giving a dog a fish, we are giving you these skills. But there are skills in isolation, which would be great if you had one of those remote-control dogs. "You will do this now. You will do that now. you will do this now."

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But that's not what dogs are. Dogs live within our lives. They're part of the fabric of how we go about our lives. And so, what we need as dog owners isn't to learn how to teach a dog how to, they must fit in with our life. The true gift of education for a potential new dog owner or somebody who'd like to deepen their bond with their dog is one that is a functional education.

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That's integrative. That teaches the dog things like how to respond when you want something, how to respond when you're afraid of something, how to respond when you want to show me that you really love to do this, how to show me that you're confused, how to relax so that I can go about doing my human things. This is not dog time.

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How do I teach my dog that? You know, it's an integrative approach. We teach the dog, you have a choice, you have a choice to try and steal food or to think about how you can earn food. That's an integrative dog training program, a program that takes a cognitive approach to teaching true understanding which helps deepen the bond of trust between the dog and the owner.

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The dog learns "First you have a choice. Do you want to try to steal this food, or do you want to earn the food?" Then those choices become more complex, and the dog shows you how much trust they have because they have a choice. "Would you like to run out that open door or would you like to sit and show me you know you have to earn permission to go out open doors." "Would you like to chase the kid on the skateboard? Would you like to chase the wildlife?" Those are all progressive layers that are opened up and the dog shows you they make these amazing choices because the program has integrated all of what the dog wants with what you want. You're not telling the dog "You must do this." We're allowing the dog to show you how amazing they can be by putting in layers of choice which builds amazing decisions. And it doesn't matter if you want the most amazing family pet, or you want the most amazing dog that can catch flying disks, or you want an amazing dock diving dog or agility dog or a dog that you can take off leash hiking in the mountains.

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That's what a really functionally integrative program dog training program looks like. It's like we're teaching the dog to fish. We're not just giving them isolated skills 'you must do this'. We're teaching them how they become part of the family. And in order to have that kind of relationship it requires that the human really learn things ahead of time.



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What's the absolute best time to learn about how a dog communicates with us? How a dog reads our emotion and how we read our dogs emotion? How our dogs respond when they're afraid? And what's the best thing for us to do when we see our dogs are afraid? What is the best time to learn all these things? It's probably three to four months before you get that dog or puppy. And what's the second-best time to learn all those things? It's right now. And that's why this is a gift that lights you guys both up because it's a gift that doesn't just change one life. It doesn't just change that person who's living with this dog so that the dog doesn't destroy their home and their dog doesn't accidentally fly out a door and get hit by a car or the dog doesn't get into the garbage when they're out and eat the wrong thing and have this massive vet bill.

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It's a gift that changes the dog's life for sure. It's a gift that changes that person's life because they learn that while they're teaching the dog, they're actually learning from the dog. They become a far more empathetic person. And that changes them for the next dog they will own. And every dog they'll ever own for the rest of their life.

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And as they rehearse these skills about understanding that dogs are doing the best they can, with the education we've given them in the environment we're asking them to perform, lo and behold they realize that they are applying this mantra to the people in their lives as well. So, a gift of functional integrative compassionate dog training doesn't change one life. It doesn't change two lives. It has the potential to change hundreds of lives. It has the potential to change the world.

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And that's why I think the gift of giving somebody you love an amazing opportunity to join in a dog training program is a gift that they will always remember you for. So, if you're in your home right now or you're near somebody who just happens to be listening to this podcast, guess what? This is a person who would love a gift of one of our programs. Because every podcast that I sat down and plan, I plan for it to be a masterclass for the listener.

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I plan for it to deliver such incredible value to every dog owner that stumbles upon our podcasts. But these are 15-to-20-minute glimpses into the kind of dog training that I'm talking about. The kind of bond and trust deepening dog training that I'm talking about. Our podcast shows you to believe in what's possible for dogs. That dogs can show us how amazing they can be. By listening to or watching my podcast here on YouTube I hope you're starting to expand your belief that dogs really are crazy brilliant. But what our dog training programs do is it allows us to coach you for a year. So, you don't just believe what's possible for dogs. You see what's possible for your dog.

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Because you see the onion peel of understanding start to unravel for the dog. You see the dog says, "Oh, you get it now? You get me? You understand how I learn? You understand how I think?" Well then, those five behaviors from a traditional dog training program: sit, down, walk on leash, come when called, stay, those are a drop in the bucket. Those can be multiplied a hundred-fold by what you would be able to teach dog. And what you're able to teach dog is how you two fit together as a team. How you live in this life and have an amazing time together.



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It's not just teaching a dog stuff. That's not dog training. If it was then heck yeah, don't consider buying a dog training program before you ever get a dog. Because what's the point? All you need to learn is how to put a cookie above a nose or the best way to get the cookie in the mouth. When you want to go deeper, when you want to really reveal all that's possible with the dog that you own, then you want this kind of dog training program.

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Now if you're listening to this podcast then chances are you are interested in the kind of dog training that we do. And if you are, I'm going to leave a link in the show notes and if you're watching this on YouTube, I'll leave a link in the description that will take you to [shapedbydog/gift](https://shapedbydog.com/gift) where you can learn about all of our dog training programs that we offer and how something as simple as Home School the Dog rolls into something more complex like Recallers and it rolls into the opportunity for that person to then learn about dog agility.

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Click on the link and see what the gift of bringing a dog closer together with their owner would look like. Now I know this isn't the way dog training has been thought of for the last, I don't know hundred years or so. But I look at that as kind of like cognitive constipation. There's a lot of crappy ideas that people just keep hanging on to about dogs, about what dogs are capable of, and I swear to you when you connect with the dog at the level they are capable of, they will absolutely blow your mind. And I hope you give your dog the chance to show you that.

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So, whether you're thinking of joining a program yourself to see that happen or you're thinking of maybe a veteran, a junior handler, a shut-in, somebody who would never consider doing this for themselves, gifting the joy of having this kind of relationship with their dog I know that neither you, nor the receiver of this gift will ever be disappointed.

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And I know you'll be changing not just one life but many, many lives from here on out. And it's a ripple. We're dropping a stone into the pond of life. And dog's lives are changing. The more people listening to this podcast, the more opportunities dogs are going to have to take a deep breath and just connect with the person that they love.

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I'll see you next time here on Shaped by Dog.

Resource:

<https://shapedbydog.com/gift> - learn about our dog training programs and how to gift someone special in your life.



The Best Gift For Dog Owners (And Puppy Owners)

About Susan

A world-leading educator of dog trainers, Susan is also one of the most successful agility competitors of the last three decades. She has won multiple Gold Medals at National or World Championship events with every dog she has ever owned over the past 30 years. Susan was one of the very first dog trainers to share knowledge online when she opened her "Clicker Dogs" website many years ago. Susan has helped hundreds of thousands of people enjoy a great relationship with their dogs through her workshops and keynote speaking around the world, award winning books, DVDs, magazine articles, blog posts, podcasts, free dog training and dog agility video series, and online dog training programs.



A natural teacher and an entertaining speaker, Susan is world renowned for her dog training knowledge and practical application of that knowledge. Her understanding of how to apply science-based learning principles to both competitive and family pet dog training has been pivotal in changing how dogs are trained.

Susan is now helping many thousands of dog owners in 82 countries have the best relationship possible with their dogs. The real joy for her comes from bringing confidence to dogs and their owner through playful interactions and relationship building games that are grounded firmly in the science of how animals learn.



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