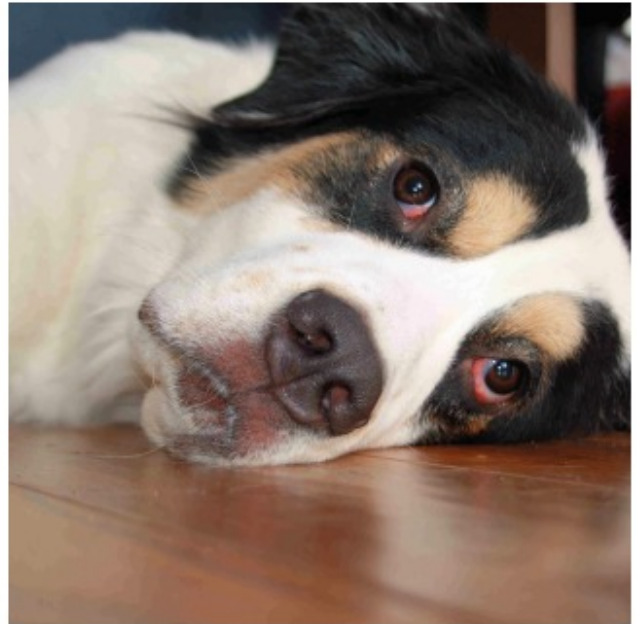


Hopeful (again) Hearts – Rescue Dog Adoption Tips

Friday, December 13, 2013. The day I dreaded from the moment we brought her home. Hubs & I had taken our beloved Bernese Mountain Dog, aka the #suckhole, to the vet where we unexpectedly spent our final hours with her. At only 6 1/2 years old, cancer had taken hold of her body, attacking her organs. She was bleeding out and would not make it through the weekend.

My heart ached. She was our only (fur)babe. Where we went, she went. I vowed never to get another pooch. I needed to heal. I also needed to have a semi-clean house again.

Fast forward exactly 8 weeks. 3:45 am. I'm dragging myself upstairs; feet weighted like heavy blocks of concrete. As I crawl into bed and tell hubs I can't do it anymore, pounce!



Meet Lois

A few weeks after loosing the #suckhole, hubs mentioned the Humane Society at breakfast. **Clearly** that was my green light to find our new furbabe. *OK, so he may not have said those exact words but it was implied. Sort of.* With so many pooches out there in need of a good home and a bit of love, I perused the adoption sites. Somehow I managed not to adopt every puppy, senior, and dog in-between but don't be surprised if we (that would be the Royal we) are running a sanctuary in the

near future. Go and look at a rescue site. If your heart strings aren't tugged then you don't have a pulse.

Lois is a little-not-so-little endless ball of angelic she-devil energy. She was waiting for her forever home through [Hopeful Hearts](#): a non-profit dog rescue in Ottawa who was created specifically to fill the void in the local rescue world for senior and special needs dogs. She was described as a "remarkably smart dog with a lovely gentle disposition". Translation: she'll outsmart you in every way imaginable before smothering you with love.



We were Lois' 3rd home in as many months. It's been an adjustment for all. While there have been some unexpected surprises along the way (like flailings down the street as she herds anything that moves including the leaf blowing past and itchy-scratchy food allergies) Lois has been the best thing for our little famjam. There is life in our house again. She keeps us on our toes and fills our hearts with unconditional love. She is home.

Our hearts are hopeful again. The real question is, "who rescued whom"?



Rescue Dog Adoption Tips

Ensure you're ready for a dog. And not just you. Your entire family. Can you fit a dog into your schedule? Do you have someone who can take them when you're going to be late or are away? Can you financially afford to provide them with the vet care and food they need? They're an added responsibility that

need your time, attention and love every single day.

Find the right dog. Before stepping foot into a shelter or looking at rescue sites, ask yourself a few questions: are you dominant or more passive? Do you lead an active or laid-back lifestyle? Are you a clean-freak or can you handle shedding and drool? Do you have the right space for a dog? Do your research for the breed would be a good fit.

Leave your emotions at the door. Once you start looking it is hard to stay focused. The term puppy eyes takes on a whole new meaning as the looks describe what their heart is saying, "pick me". It's hard not to feel sorry for them, however, if you let your guard down you may end up with the wrong pooch for your lifestyle.

Be prepared for the unexpected. Due to the nature of rescuing, organizations who are generally run by volunteers don't always have the whole history of the available dogs. They do their best to assess the pooches that come into their care but like life, there are always twists and turns. Patience goes a long ways.

Allow for an adjustment period. Once you find your new furbabe and bring them home, give them time. Imagine how it would feel to be whisked away by strangers and taken to a foreign place. They may be standoffish at first but I promise you, it won't be long before you're being licked like an ice cream cone.

Ready to adopt your new furry friend? [Here are some great tips from the Ontario SPCA to help you and your pooch adjust.](#)

Have questions? While I'm not an expert I'm happy to chat about our experience adopting a rescue. Leave your questions below in the comments section.

xo