



## **Dog Medicine**

By Kalpana (Rose) M. Kumar, M.D.

*When the Man waked up he said, "What is Wild Dog doing here?" And the Woman said, 'His name is not Wild Dog any more, but the First Friend, because he will be our friend for always and always and always.'" -- Rudyard Kipling*

*"A dog can't change the world but they can change your world. And if each of us can pass along even a fraction of the unmitigated, world changing love we receive from our dogs, maybe we can see about that whole changing the world thing." -- Will from Will and Mr. Eko*

I still feel the profound loss of my beloved dog and soul companion Jazmine who died in May, 2015. No, she has not appeared to me in a dream yet, (I'm still waiting) but I feel her love every now and then during moments of loneliness, heartache or struggle. Her gentle presence says, "I love you Mom," and I can exhale and not feel so alone in those moments. I still reach down by my leg for Jazmine while I am reading or studying or watching a show, and feel the impression of her beautiful imprint she left by my side. I feel into the imprint to see if I can feel her -- her warmth, love, support and yes, her goofiness. What a personality she was, and proud of it.

How does one process the loss of a companion, of any loss in life? Why do we say, "Get over it," "It's been long enough, move on." Why would we want to "move on" from having loved so profoundly, so deeply? What does that even mean? What does that do for one's heart? We need to trust in the process of love and of grief. We can only do this by being present for each other, in any stage that another may be.

Boosie, our Chihuahua, is now present for me. He entered our lives 2 years ago, when Jazmine was growing visibly old at 13. His relationship with her was profoundly special. He offered her his love, his companionship and his heart in ways that only a dog could. He also offered her his love of play. She played hard with him during the last few years of her life. I feel that because of him, she lived longer and with more joy in her heart. Jazmine's four legged companion gave her a connection with her own kind. It is what she needed after giving so much of herself to me.

Boosie is now with me -- my companion, who grieved with me, the loss of my Jazmine, and his favorite and only four legged companion. He too has a feeling of loss, a loss that only a dog can feel with the loss of one of their kind. Now we are forming our own sacred bond, one where I never take a day with him for granted. Each day that I am with this little dog -- who has a HUGE capacity for love -- is sacred. He is helping me heal, one day at a time. He is helping me remember the great times with Jazmine. He is reminding me, each day, that I am still loved. He is now my companion.

Our country has a palpable and profound loneliness within it. In some profound way, my Jazmine, and now Boosie have taught and continue to teach me what it feels like to feel connected and loved. For a sensitive, this is a profound gift. We can and should do this for one another... again (as we did not too long ago). Like Boosie and Jazmine, we need to be there for our own kind as well. Maybe then in some heart filled way, our lives can again be shaped by love.

People say they don't need relationships, they are self-sufficient and they are self-sustaining. I feel this is a fallacy. We DO need to feel witnessed, loved and supported. Relationships do that for each one of us; to push that aside, like many do, creates needless loss and pain. To be felt and witnessed is the greatest gift of all.

Thank you Jazmine and Boosie for your profound and sage teachings on love.

**©August, 2015 Kalpana (Rose) M. Kumar M.D., CEO and Medical Director, The Ommani Center for Integrative Medicine, Pewaukee, WI. Dr. Kumar is currently accepting new patients, call 262.695.5311 to schedule an appointment. [www.ommanicenter.com](http://www.ommanicenter.com)**