



Josy Doucette can get into a dog's head

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Josy Doucette can get into a dog's head. So much so that she knows what it takes to get them to sit, lie down, heel and - most of all - respect their owners. Doucette, an obedience and protection consultant, started *Goju-Ryu Pro K9* earlier this year, after completing a two-and-a-half-year internship and receiving *Excellence* in dog training in the fall of 2011, with Don Evans at *Evans Training Centre* in Deep Creek. Don established the centre in 1995 and, in his professional career, has trained over three thousand dogs.

Goju-Ryu

Goju-Ryu is a martial art and translated means "hard and soft". "Everything in life requires a variance of hardness and softness," Doucette says. "Ryu" also translates into school. And, that is what the owners and the dogs receive upon contact with Josy Doucette - an education. The business is named in recognition of Evans, who is of Japanese ancestry and is Doucette's mentor.

Don Evans

Wanting to know how to train dogs better, in 2009 Josy contacted Evans, inquiring about dog training.

"When I first made contact with Evans and



Josy Doucette (right) and Don Evans stand with Doucette's dog Sumi and horses Jazz and Cash.

described my plans of going to dog training school to become a master certified trainer, he just laughed at me."

"Do you know how many dogs you train when you do that sort of stuff, to be a master certified trainer?", he asked - and answered: "Six".

Don explained that he did not feel completely comfortable training dogs until after his 100th because the training of a dog is not theoretical. The training and learning process must be hands-on.

Josy adds: "Fortunately, through my internship with Don Evans, I successfully worked and trained 130 dogs." This involved training dogs in the areas of obedience, personal protection, and tracking. Dogs at the training centre arrived from throughout North America. "We received dogs from such places as Texas, Vancouver, Saskatoon, Ontario, Quebec, and Germany. I was fortunate enough to have Don Evans accept me as an intern as he wished to pass on his knowledge and training methodology to someone with 'the insight necessary' to continue his legacy. I am thankful for his trust and confidence in me."

Moving to Canada

Raising dogs is in Doucette's blood. "My family has been involved with dogs for years," she says, adding, her grandmother ran a successful Golden Retriever breeding kennel in Walzenhausen, Switzerland for 30 years before passing her knowledge onto Doucette's parents. When Doucette was 11 years old, she moved to Canada from Switzerland with her parents and her younger twin brothers, in 1993. "Switzerland is quite a small country, and my parents had these dreams of owning large property and becoming self sustained, so they bought property out at Gavin Lake." Her parents also started to breed dogs, specifically Standard Poodles and Golden Retrievers. "I've been around dogs my whole life," Doucette says. "Dogs have been a major part of my life but I needed to find how to access their innate abilities more effectively."

Educating owners

"When I met Evans he showed me how simple dog training can really be." He said; "Humans complicate everything." When you look at the dog in front of you, what you see first and foremost is a carnivore, a predator, and a pack animal. No amount of wishful thinking is going to change this fact. In order to access the animal in front of you, you must put your own humanistic ways away. Josy says people have to address the fact that dogs are not children. "The most difficult aspect of being a dog trainer is not the training of the dog but the education of their owners. It's not their child. It's not their best friend. It's their dog. The sooner the owners can face that fact and open their minds to a dogs way of thinking, the faster they will achieve success with their dogs. It's only through respect and strong obedience that one will have a true and natural relationship. It takes specifics, dedication, and continuity. Being a dog trainer is no walk in the park — there is actually a lot more walking involved."

Being a dog trainer

"Being a dog trainer is extremely physical, because I walk and I walk and I walk. You have to be very physically fit in order to be a successful dog trainer. You are out there everyday, sunshine or rain, so it helps to be an outdoorsy, nature kind of person." Doucette owns three dogs of her own, including a large Akita cross, named Kita; a miniature poodle, named Julian; and a registered German Shepherd she purchased from Evans, named Sumi. She also owns three horses: a miniature mare, an Arabian cross and a registered Quarter horse. Josy admits that horses are her other passion. Brandy, the mini

mare, she trained to drive and pull a two-person cart. Her quarter horse, Cash, is an accomplished reining horse; and the Arabian cross, Jazz, is in training.

"I obtained Sumi because she has all of the genetic potential and working ability that I am looking for in a dog. Sumi has successfully completed Level 1 and Level 2 obedience training, level 5 in personal protection work, and completed her preliminary stage in tracking. She was given one of the highest compliments by Evans: "She is amongst the top five of all the dogs I've trained in tracking". Doucette says, She is looking forward to Sumi becoming the foundation for her working German Shepherd breeding program. Deposits are already being accepted for puppies out of Sumi at the end of the summer. These pups will be excellent representatives of the true, working German Shepherd dog.

The Training

Level 1 obedience training involves all aspects of leash work, proofed around distractions. Proofing your dog around distractions is the only true indicator of a well trained dog. The dog remains at the training facility for the duration of their training. Level 1 one training is completed in 14 days as is Level 2. Level 2 training is off-leash work with hand signals up to 100 meters. Level 2 work is completely psychological. Protection training goes in stages. It is expected that a dog will complete two stages every ten days. The highest level of personal protection training is stage 6. It is imperative to understand that the training isn't just restricted to the dogs; it also involves the owner.

When people approach Doucette to have their dogs trained, what she usually encounters is a miscommunication between dog and handler. The dog perceives the world in one way and the owner perceives the world in another. The dog responds to the world through natural instincts while the human perceives the world in a controlling manner. The owner attempts to train the dog using the experience and methodology used to train and teach children. This is where the conflict and the frustrations arise. The most difficult aspect that Doucette faces is in educating the owner on how the dog views the world. Doucette is capable of working with all dogs and behavioural temperaments. "I do not need to see the dog prior to receiving it for training" Doucette says. "The owner's description of the dog is subjective. I have to deal with the dog in its present state. What I do is identify the drives present in the dog and then I direct those drives into obedience. Every dog has degrees of these three main drives: pack, prey, and fight."



Doucette also specializes in personal protection training. This necessitates the dog, regardless of breed, to have the necessary genetic predisposition to do the work. The owner/handler must also have a higher level of dog understanding in order to control and deploy the dog. The personal protection dog is trained to respond to either a verbal command and or aggressive body language. Doucette notes that dogs trained in protection are not compound dogs that guard someone's yard, house, furniture, or jewelry. "These are companions that have bonded with you, the owner, and will protect you, utilizing all of the benefits received through their protection training." There is a mistaken concept regarding the training and the behaviour of a protection trained dogs. The dogs are never abused in the process of their training and neither is the finished product an unstable, aggressive, uncontrollable dog. Doucette relies on their innate drives to

perform their tasks. It is these drives that differentiate the abilities between for example, one German Shepherd from another. The clearest example is in the difference between a working dog and a show dog. A working dog (athlete) is characterized by its abilities in completing a task whereas the show dog (model) is characterized by simple physical appearances. Working dogs are required to have courage, strength, and mental stability.

Doucette does not use food as motivation for training. She uses a unique combination of body language and touch to activate your dog. We can agree that the dog is a pack animal and, as such, they respond to a leader. The handler must be viewed by the dog as this leader. In order to become the pack leader you must gain your dogs confidence and respect. 90% of behavioural problems can be corrected through good, strong obedience. A quick way to check into the status of your relationship with your dog is to observe the heel command. Are you being dragged, jumped on, pulled, ignored? Or the opposite of the above. Are you pulling your dog? What does this indicate to you regarding pack order?

Previous experience

Prior to her internship with Evans, Doucette completed the *Human Service Worker Program* at Thompson Rivers University in Williams Lake and is also a certified Life Skills coach. She was a youth worker at the *Skyline Alternate School* for eight years, and has worked as a teacher's assistant as well as with people with disabilities. Her experience in the Social Services field has shown her the importance of individual differences. These differences are applied not only to her human clients but also to her canine ones. "Throughout my learning process it was intriguing to me how my work with people as well as my skill set translated and intertwined into working with animals." Her dog training skills are in the following areas: all breeds training, level one obedience, level two obedience, personal protection (six levels), search and rescue tracking, working dog agility, canine behaviour modification, litter assessments, handler education and post training support, and breeding of "true" working German Shepherd dogs.

GOJU-RYU PRO K9

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