

I like dogs, but I am a “cat person.” It seems to me that cats have more in common with us humans than do the-always-willing-to-please canines. And, to be honest—though we co-exist here at Coe Creek with both dogs and cats—cats are easier to deal with.

This may seem counter intuitive. After all, it should be more pleasant and less stressful to accommodate those animals that want us to like them and that appear to relish our company. And yet, it is simpler and more relaxing to change our lives in whatever manner we must to get along with the cats.

Right at this very moment, a white cat with a dark gray tail and a couple of gray spots is on my lap, interfering with writing this very late—by a whole week—essay. Muzzy really would prefer to lie on the keyboard, but I had to get him to compromise, so only his front paws are on the laptop.

He is purring. This is not because he is pleased with me. No, it is quite obvious that he is satisfied with himself, that he has managed to complicate my life one more time.

So, how does that make it easier to deal with a cat than a dog? It is simple; there is no negotiation. I just do whatever he wants. In some small way, such as to modify his demand and lie on my lap, he comes out of the evening victorious, and he has one more day chalked up as 24 hours of being the boss.

Some of this is undoubtedly my own fault. I should never have purchased a certain kind of cat treat, something that quickly became Muzzy’s addiction, and that he has been obsessive about ever since. I live in fear of this cat treat becoming a casualty of the supply chain problem.

It works this way. Early in the morning, Muzzy jumps up on the bed—usually, around four a.m. He is normally rather nice at this time of day, purring, curling up on the bed, occasionally standing over me, looking me in the eye, but not really being disruptive.

But, when I get up in the morning, I know I have to be quick about my routine. First things first—I need to put on my socks without delay. They are always the first items of clothing to consider. If I am not quick, Muzzy bites the backs of my ankles, not so very hard, but annoying and irritating. So, on with the socks.

At this point, the cat starts to meow. And, as he talks, he leads me, step by step, to the filing cabinet, because the cat treat container stands on top of that piece of furniture. I shake out a few pieces of the treats and earn a little peace.

But, I am not the only being that Muzzy dominates. He also rules the dogs. Kate, in particular, is afraid of him. She hides her head and lies in the corner if he approaches her. Blue likes the cat until Muzzy begins to sniff his paws and face. Then, Blue moves away. They know that Muzzy bites.

And, he is jealous. If one of the dogs comes near me for attention, Muzzy leaves whatever he is doing and takes over my lap.

Just now, I had to stop working at the computer and give him some treats to get rid of him. He was lying here on my lap, stretching his paws to bat the keys, and he was licking my arm.

Why would anyone put up with such domination by a ten pound cat that makes life complicated in so many ways? Why not just keep dogs?
I guess it is because I am a cat person. We are strange.