



Raise with Praise

The Nine Ingredients

By Paul Owens, [*The Original Dog Whisperer*](#)

There are many influences in life that affect both our dog's and our own behavior. We need a rock-solid foundation that supports us and makes everything we do easier to do, including forming healthier new habits.

The Nine Ingredients are:

1. Food (a high quality diet)
2. Play
3. Socialization
4. Quiet Time (relaxation)
5. Exercise
6. Employment (mental stimulation)
7. Rest (proper sleep)
8. Education (training and discipline)
9. Health Care (including dental health)

If these crucial ingredients are provided in a balanced manner, they are stepping stones to a healthy body and a healthy life and support all of our thoughts and actions in a positive way. But if a sufficient quantity or quality of each ingredient is not provided, a roadblock occurs and physical, mental, and emotional health is compromised. As a result, all behavior, as well as our motivation and willpower to do anything, suffers.

It isn't necessary to be perfect. Frankly, it's unlikely that it's even possible to be perfect. We all have busy lives and a myriad of commitments. And, after all, we can still thrive even if we don't get the same amount of food or sleep or fun time each day. The same is true for our dogs. The trick is integrating all of these life requirements as part of our lives on a fairly consistent basis—in other words, making all of these good habits. Balance is the goal and consistency the key.

The Nine Ingredients for Optimum Health and Growth



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| Ingredient | Qualities | Short Term Benefits | Long Term Benefits | Signs of a Roadblock (too little or too much) |
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| 1. Food (high quality diet) | Feeling good physically and mentally | Lots of energy Mental Clarity | Long, healthy life | Hunger, lethargy, overweight or too thin |
| 2. Play | Feeling good physically and mentally | Relieves stress Improves mental and physical health Raises stress management threshold | Teaches safety through appropriate behavior Improves physical and mental health Forms a trusting bond between dog and human | Chewing and other behavioral problems Poor health Aggression |
| 3. Socialization | Opportunity to learn proper dog etiquette Greater safety with people and other animals Builds confidence | Teaches safety through appropriate behavior Improves physical and mental health | Teaches safety through appropriate behavior Improves physical and mental health | Chewing and other behavioral problems Poor health Aggression |
| 4. Quiet Time | Relaxation | Calm, relaxed behavior | Good health Calm dog | Anxious Mouthy, chewy and other behavior problems |
| 5. Exercise | Relieves stress Promotes mental and physical health | Relieves stress Improves mental and physical health Raises stress management threshold | Improves physical and mental health | Chewing and other behavioral problems Poor health Aggression |
| 6. Employment (mental stimulation) | Feeling good physically and mentally. Redirects energy from destructive behavior to appropriate behavior | Relieves stress Improves mental and physical health Raises stress management threshold | Improves physical and mental health Appropriate behaviors become habits | Chewing, digging, stealing and other behavioral problems Poor health Aggression |
| 7. Rest (proper sleep) | Relaxation | Relieves stress Improves mental and physical health | Improves physical and mental health | Chewing, digging, stealing and other behavioral problems Poor health Aggression |

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| 8. Education (training and discipline) | Feeling good physically and mentally | Safety Teaches appropriate behaviors | Improves physical and mental health Appropriate behaviors become habits | Chewing, digging, stealing and other behavioral problems Poor health Aggression |
| 9. Health Care (including dental health, good hygiene, and grooming care) | Feeling good physically and mentally | Maintains mental and physical health | Maintains mental and physical health | Sickness, short life, lethargy, aggression |