Alternative Therapy

Not your Grandparent's Veterinarian.

By Jill A. Richardson, DVM

Zen moments for your dog when practicing alternative healing.

J. Mikel Sacher had been working in the beauty industry in New York City for many years, but her dog Zachary, a West Highland White Terrier, was no beauty. "His hair was dry, his skin was flaky and despite frequent bathing, he smelled horrible." J. Mikel was determined to get help for her baby and turned to her veterinarian for some advice. "She recommended natural products for Zachary's coat," said J. Mikel. "My veterinarian explained that certain types of herbs and oils, like Calendula and Morning Seed Extract, can help condition and moisturize fur."

J. Mikel took her vet's advice and not only started using natural products on Zachary, but also used her know-how from working in the human beauty industry to create a line of products specifically for dogs that she appropriately named FUR. "Zachary, now 16 years old, is still my official 'Spokesdog' for natural products; the herbs and oils have done wonders for his fur," said J. Mikel, "I receive many compliments on Zachary's coat, and people are really shocked when they find out he's 16 years old." *www.furdogsnyc.com*.

J. Mikel and Zachary are not alone in their preference for holistic therapies. Alternative therapies like acupuncture, chiropractics, aromatherapy and homeopathy are becoming very common. Veterinarians who use holistic medicine in their clinics often combine them with traditional medicine techniques.

Veterinary holistic medicine is a type of medicine that uses alternative therapy for the treatment of animals. It is sometimes referred to as alternative, integrative or complementary veterinary medicine, and includes the practices of aromatherapy, energy therapy, magnetic field therapy, veterinary acupuncture, veterinary homeopathy, veterinary chiropractic therapy and veterinary nutraceutical therapy.

Dr. Susan Wynn of the Nutrition and Integrative Medicine Service in Sandy Springs, Georgia, is an expert on holistic medication. She agrees that holistic medicine is poorly understood by some pet owners and even veterinarians. "Some people believe that natural medicine can cure cancer. While there is no cure for cancer, holistic care can definitely help give support." Dr. Wynn published the first veterinary textbook CONTINUED ON PAGE 89

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