

Lessons Learned from Royal Bahamian Dogs

The handsome, brown-coated Royal Bahamian dog strutted down the road. His eyes scanned to his left then to his right. What was he looking for? He was looking to see if any of the humans left on the side of the road any sumptuous meals. The humans normally would graciously pile their leftover delicacies on top of fifty-five-gallon bins each evening making it such a welcome delight for the friendly canines.

Royal Bahamian dogs are generous among themselves. They would gladly share their findings with their colleagues and friends. Sometimes they would store away their cherished findings for festival eating days when they would sit and eat with friends and relatives. On this particular night, this Bahamian dog, let's call him George, noticed that a human left a large bag on top of the bin in front of their colorful residence. George, standing about thirty feet away, scanned the outside of the bag with his dark, determined eyes. He thought to himself, "It looks like a delicious meal is in that bag. I can see through that plastic bag the humans use, that there is an assortment of tasty meats I am sure is paw-licking good. They make it so easy for us to have such wonderful meals. We canines are indebted to all Bahamian humans who so thoughtfully leave sumptuous meals for us. They are not aware that they are actually supporting the growth and development of intelligent Bahamian dogs for generations to come."

There was one problem. Although George was a respected and honorable leading canine in the community, he was too short to reach the bag of food. He decided to call his taller friends to come and help him get the bag for him. He was certain that the humans left sufficient to share. It was already after midnight. The neighborhood was silent. But George could not resist the opportunity. "Hey guys," he barked loudly, "look at what was given to us tonight. Come let us have a feast." You would not believe it. From around the corner and across the street, eight other dogs came scurrying happily to the scene. One said, "This is what I like about you George, you are always thinking of us." George barked to the tallest, black-coated, cross-bred friend, "Harry, would you kindly get that bag on top of the bin for us." He responded, "Whatever you want, George."

Harry stood on his rugged, strong hind legs and stretch his neck to reach the bag. It was really high on the bin. The humans had over stuffed the bin with all sorts of bags and goodies. Strong Harry tugged and tugged on the large bag, but it would not budge. He called for help. Two other friends, Susan and Sam came to assist. Together they pulled and pulled on the bag until not only the bag fell off, but the entire bin tumbled over. This was a welcomed opportunity. George and his friends discovered that the generous humans not only left one bag but many bags. As good Bahamian dogs normally do, they each grabbed a bag and used their sharp teeth to open them. The eight dogs had enough food for themselves. They spread the delicious meal in front of the bin and some in the road. It made it easier to inspect what was there.

You should have seen them so happily eating away. George raised his voice. "Guys, I am sure you all agree that we are grateful to the humans who made it so easy for us to spread this meal in the road tonight." They all barked in agreement. Susan could not resist the opportunity to share what she overheard the night before. She said: "Listen guys, my human masters were watching the television news last night. I overheard the news reader through the window saying that the Government of The Bahamas may implement new laws to prevent dogs from having this wonderful opportunity. This will not be good for us. We cannot let this happen." They all barked in agreement.

Susan continued, "If the Government prevents Bahamian humans from being kind to us by leaving food outside in the bins, we will die of starvation. "This is true," shouted Rebecca. "I live in a far-too-clean neighborhood just a mile away. Already many of the dogs are disappearing. We cannot have canine night parties anymore. They would not let us have our midnight street picnics and some of us are talking about having a rebellion. We plan to have a loud bark-out one late night for about three hours. We know that will upset all the humans. You guys in this neighborhood are so richly blessed. I am thinking about moving here."

William, the biggest in the group, stood to his feet. His deep voice pounded their ears. “I overheard my human masters saying that they will have to send me to cleanliness school. They want me to learn how to avoid eating out of trash bags. They want me to stop doing what I naturally do as a noble canine. That is spreading tables of sumptuous food all over the floor and the front yard. Fellow canines, we cannot let this happen. We must not let these humans destroy our culture. Cleanliness is not for us. Nastiness and dirtiness are what we live for. We must keep our streets nasty.”

Then Sally, a respect leader, shouted from the back of the pack. “Do you know what happens after we would have finished our nasty meal parties? About an hour after we leave the road spread with crumbs from our meals, our respectable rodent friends, the humans call them rats, come out by the dozens to eat what we have left. They are a growing healthy rat community we must support. We must not let the ecosystem between rat and dog disappear. We must keep our neighborhood alive and nasty. What do you say fellow canines?” They all loudly barked in agreement. Then George stood up on all four and asked two solemn questions. “How many of you will support me in keeping our neighborhoods nasty with open bins of trash and food bags spread all over the road? How many of you will protest against the Bahamian Government if they try to make our community clean? They all shouted, “We will.”

Barrington H. Brennen, MA, NCP, BCCP, a marriage and family therapist and board certified clinical psychotherapist, USA. Send your questions or comments to barringtonbrennen@gmail.com or write to P.O. Box CB-13019, Nassau, The Bahamas, or visit www.soencouragement.org or call 242-327-1980