VITAL ANIMAL
THE NATURAL PATH

"I read some of Dr. Falconer's blog posts and really connected with what he had to say." ~ Stephanie Summerlott, Registered Veterinary Technician

CASE STUDY

NATURAL REARING ROADMAP
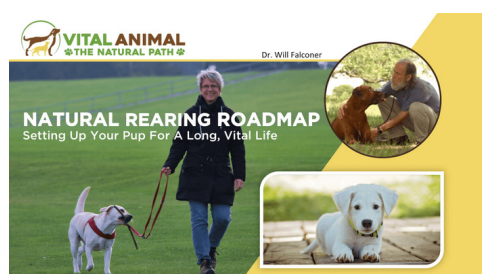### Setting Up Your Pup For A Long, Vital Life
Dr. Will Falconer

RAISE WILDLY HEALTHY VITAL ANIMALS

Will Falconer, DVM

How Dr. Falconer's Natural Rearing Roadmap Course empowered a Registered Veterinary Technician to go against everything she knew.

CHALLENGE

When a dedicated and passionate Vet Tech started to question the efficacy of conventional veterinary medicine, she was faced with opposition and disregard from her colleagues, friends, and family.

Stephanie Summerlott is a Registered Veterinary Technician who lives in Missouri with her husband and Yorkie mix, Oliver. She is a naturally curious person, a life-long learner, and lover of animals. When Stephanie graduated from high school, she began a twenty-year career in the veterinary field. She was trained in a conventional (allopathic) approach to veterinary care. This included giving routine vaccines, flea and tick medication, heartworm pills, and feeding a kibble diet.

One day, a two-year-old puppy came into the clinic with a severe leg injury. The puppy was limping badly and had a massive growth on its knee. After the exam, it was determined he had cancer. "There was utter devastation on the owner's face when I told them their puppy would die within 6-8 months," said Stephanie. "It was an absolutely horrid feeling."

There were a multitude of situations like this that prompted her to start questioning the traditional approach to veterinary care. "I thought I was prescribing the best protocols for our patients, but they were coming in sicker and sicker. We saw dogs with cancer, Cushing's disease, auto-immune diseases, and more," said Stephanie. "I began to won-

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>
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der if there was a connection between food, medication, vaccines, and their deteriorating health. How could all of this sickness be considered normal?"

"I always believed that there was more to healthcare than just taking a pill," said Stephanie. "When I made changes to my lifestyle—eating more natural foods, using non-toxic skincare products, regular exercise, homeopathy, and herbs, I started to notice improvements in my own health." Stephanie realized, "This is a no-brainer. It will obviously work for the dogs, too."

SOLUTION

Stephanie started researching natural veterinary care and found Dr. Will Falconer's website, vitalanimal.com. "I read some of Dr. Falconer's blog posts and really connected with what he had to say." When Dr. Falconer opened his Natural Rearing Roadmap course, Stephanie wanted to dive deeper and learn more. His course covered genetic influences, how to find ideal breeders, immunization without vaccination, kibble alternatives, the pros and cons of neutering, homeopathy, and more. "The fact that this course was all-encompassing was very appealing to me," commented Stephanie.

RESULTS

During the course, Stephanie had several "aha" moments. "One of the turning points in my understanding was when I learned that parasites thrive in an unhealthy host and cannot survive in a healthy host. This concept was fascinating to me," she said. "It

was the opposite of everything I had ever learned. Strengthening and supporting the body's immune system instead of increasing medications and vaccines made perfect sense to me. I had never thought about it from that perspective before."

Bright, Energetic, Happy, and Healthy Pets

It was at this point that Stephanie took her Yorkie off his heartworm medication, which, as a Veterinary Technician, was a big deal. "During my training, it was drilled into me that you give your dog heartworm medication or else they'll get heartworms and die," Stephanie said. "There's a lot of fear-based tactics to get you to follow convention." Since switching to a holistic approach, she noted that "Oliver is one of the brightest, most energetic, happiest, and healthiest dogs I've ever known."

The Courage to Question the "Norm"

As a Vet Tech working in a mainstream environment, Stephanie's new perspective didn't sit well with her colleagues, friends, or family. She said, "I couldn't, in good conscience, continue to over vaccinate and recommend commercial dry kibble for pets when I knew there was a better way." She found that there was a lack of openness and interest when she tried to explain what she had learned. Because of these differences, she ended up leaving her veterinary career behind. She noted, "The more I got away from conventional

care, the less I fit there. I ended up leaving as it just wasn't worth the grief. If I could find a clinic where they use homeopathy and natural care, I would go back to work because I absolutely loved my job."

Learning How to Be Your Pet's Champion

One of the goals of the Natural Rearing Roadmap is to provide the tools and knowledge needed to question authority and to "own" the prevention decisions for your pet. According to Stephanie, "Dr. Falconer's Natural Rearing Roadmap course gave me the confidence to know that I was making the best decisions for my pet. Knowledge is power, and the more informed you are, the better pet parent you'll be." Stephanie has reached a point in her life where she feels, "I'm going to be who I'm going to be, and I don't care what others think. Taking responsibility for your pet's life and healthcare is very empowering."

Stephanie cautioned that, "You'll face challenges along the way when you stand up and become your pet's champion. When you're speaking with a conventional vet, especially for the layperson, they can often make you feel ignorant or irresponsible for choosing not to medicate or vaccinate your pets. After taking this course, you will have the confidence, tools, and knowledge to stand up for yourself and your pet. You'll be able to say, 'No, I don't agree with that, I don't appreciate being intimidated, and that's why I'll take my business elsewhere.'"