

Daisy... Second Time Around for Her.



(Daisy Posing)

I live in a small 2 bedroom apartment in the city which makes it difficult to have a pet. I have always been a pet person. I grew up with dogs, I had rabbits, ducks, chooks, mice, guinea pigs, fish, frogs, and cats. The researchers are right when they say, 'Pets are great therapy and aid to relieve stress'. Living in the city, although I have the company of my boyfriend and I live close to work, the last 1 ½ years have been the longest I have ever lived without a pet in my home...and I was really starting to notice.



(Daisy pawing my gorilla slippers)

I had toyed with the idea of getting a cat as I thought of all pets, a cat would be the most appropriate for an apartment. But I worried that it would be too cruel to have a cat in such a confined space.

Not long before I got Daisy, we minded a family members kitten for 3 days. But by the last day, she was climbing the curtains desperate to get outside, and that just made me feel sad. I thought I couldn't have a cat here, I'd just have to wait until I moved again one day.

But after returning the kitten I realised I really, really needed a pet.

That's when I thought about creating a cat/environment fit.

An older cat, I realised would be perfect, generally most are happy to look out the windows, sleep, meow at you for food and request a pat. They don't require a lot of space to run around or many things to keep them occupied, they are not destructive just happy to be mellow, they are toilet trained and have grown out of bad kitten habits like climbing curtains. I'm not a fan of cats on kitchen benches and having an older cat means they aren't climbing up there either.

And the best thing about this environment/cat fit, is that I'm able to give a cat a second chance at having a home life for the remainder of its life.

Everyone always wants the kittens but when they get big and they aren't cute anymore, if they aren't a good fit for the environment they have been brought into...they are often given up.

I wanted to make sure if I got a cat it was going to work. I have never given away any of my pets, I grew up accepting them as part of my family and like children, no matter how bad they are, they are part of the family and you don't give up family just because they become too hard. It taught me to take responsibility for the choices I make in life.

So once I decided that an older cat was definitely the way to go, I got one.



(Sleeping comfortably)

I have had Daisy who is 15 years old, for the last month and a half now and she settled in by the second day in my home.

She has made a big difference to the place and I love being able to come home to her.

Each day she hears me coming she is already lingering near our front door. As I walk in I get the 'reowah' 'brrrea' 'neyh' 'meyh' 'eaye' sounds she makes, which encourages me to engage in a 2 way conversation with her for several minutes.

She sits with me on the couch but not on my lap, she decided next to me is good enough, she loves a pat but only when she is in the mood. Often follows me around the house but pretends its not for me.

By the second day with us she had figured out where the kitchen was and the sounds to make there to get what she wanted. She has had an array of items to eat here, cheese, chicken wings, bits of meats before they are cooked & ham being her favourite. When she first ate ham, she inhaled it, she looked up with her eyes all wide as if to say 'What was that?!!!'

The funniest thing she has just begun to do, is after she eats her dinner each night. My cat goes into 'psycho mode', which is highly amusing to watch. For the next 10 minutes with big wide eyes, she flies around the house from room to room, hiding behind couches & curtains and playing with any odd items around on the floor. In that time it is hard to think this cat is 15 years old.

She's not too sure about the technology we have in our home, the first time the printer was printing while she was in the same room (3 weeks after she came to live with us) she got up off the couch to investigate, crouching low to the ground and sniffing the air around it. When it spat the paper out she jumped right back, we had to laugh although I felt bad for her.

She used to take herself off to bed at 9pm every night, I would look around and she would be gone. I'd look under the bed and sure enough that's where she was.

In the time she has been here she has made no indication that she would like to be outside, I honestly think she is happy being an indoor only cat. The closest she goes to the windows is 1-2 feet away.

My partner has never really been a cat person but was happy for me to get one. Mind you saying and doing are often 2 very different things with him ;)

I often walk into the room and find him sitting in my seat next to the cat patting her 'oh she wanted a pat' or when I go to bed I hear him talking to her or sneaking snacks for her. He even went out and purchased chicken wings and individually wrapped them to store in the freezer for her. He was disappointed to find that she didn't seem to like them. I said they are just too much work for her at her age with older teeth, and once we boned the chicken she was more than happy to eat it.

At first she wasn't too sure of my partner, I think being used to females, although she liked him, she was wondering what was with him, being so big, having a deep booming voice and big footsteps stomping around the house. But she likes him, sometimes I think more than me ;)

For city living, I highly recommend an older indoor cat. I don't have to worry about neighbours disliking my cat or her getting lost or run over by a car.

She is well behaved and tidy, she uses her kitty litter always and I find her very low maintenance. She is happy to just meander around and have her own place.

I get so much out of having her here and I honestly think the cat/environment fit is perfect.



(Still Sleeping)

Although I may have saved her from seeing her days out as a shelter cat, she has more than saved me by being in my home.

And although many would argue 'but you wont have her around for very long', I say its not about the time it's about the quality of her time and, when she does eventually go, she will leave a space for another cat to have a home it wouldn't have otherwise had.

I can't understand why many more people don't consider an older cat as an option. You don't have to get a cat as old as mine, one of 3+ years could be just as good depending on your home space. If more people gave older cats a home, obviously we would have less homeless cats and then there might be less demand for kittens, which often then turn into unwanted cats.

I love my kitty, even if she does lover her food, and my partner more than me ;)

Joanne