

Dear Dobie Gillis Watchers-

Nine weeks ago I came to live with my new person, Ann, in Cupertino. I was so nervous that I had to run and hide whether I was in the house or in the large back yard. In the house I could hide under the piano, and in the yard I found her son's old car and crawled under it. She had quite a time getting me out from under it, but she finally found a way to barricade it.

During the first week I wouldn't go near the steps to go upstairs, so she slept on the couch to keep me company while I slept on my bed at the foot of the couch. We started to become acquainted in baby steps. I was allowed to explore the yard on my own after being on my lead the first few times. When it was time to go in the house, I ran the perimeter of the yard 10 times, with Ann standing and turning to watch me from the center of the yard. When I got tired, I went to my safe place, where she would come to get me. It took several days to start eating regularly, so I lost some weight (it's almost all back on now).

She comes out with me every morning for an hour, sitting on the deck watching me and reading the paper while I lie on my pile of pine needles or run around the yard. She also comes out in the afternoons or evenings for an hour or two, talking to me while I make my rounds.

After a week I let her lie down next to my bed upstairs – I went up alright, but had to be dragged down every morning for about 5 weeks! Now I go up and down on my own with no problems. I got used to Ann pretty well, but I still get nervous around anyone else, especially men.

During the first 5 weeks we both wondered if we had made the right decision about belonging to each other. I had lots of accidents for her to clean up both upstairs and down. I'm doing much better now and I apologize when an accident occurs.

One of my favorite times is when I'm in bed in the evening and Ann sits down next to me. We play together and I put my head in her lap to let her pet me. Three days ago I even went across the room to where she was sitting and let her pet me. I think I'll stay here.

Thanks for all your good thoughts.

Best wishes-

Dobie Gillis (Dobe)

A note from Ann:

Having Dobe is quite an adventure in patience. The important thing I have learned is to celebrate the smallest progress and make sure each small gain is lasting before trying the next one. Dobe now comes into the house when called, if I'm standing in the right place when I call him. He does let me pet him when we are inside, but not yet when we are out, unless he is on the lead. We do long distance play outside and play "chase". He has 2 beds, one up and one down. They are his "safe places". He is still afraid of strangers and my sons, but is getting more tolerant of them. At first he ran scared with his ears back and looking worried. Now he runs with a smile on his face and ears up as far as they can go. He also wags his tail a lot.

Ann