



## Fido Files: Meet Porter – My Co-Pilot

As Christmas grows close and my time and energy are running low, I am finding it hard to find a topic for Fido Files for January! So, with just one day left until deadline, I decided to share with you a personal story about my little buddy – Porter.

I met Porter (a wee Boxer baby at the time) over five years ago in a small town in Northern Alberta. I went to meet another puppy that had been chosen for me by the breeder, but kept getting nagged and nipped by this other pesky puppy named Porter. Porter was a handsome lad and because of his good looks was destined to stay at his kennel and have a very fulfilling career as a breeding stud. However, a divine series of events (he was absent the day God was handing out the testicles) brought Porter into my home.

Porter was only six months old when his series of health problems began. He had colitis, ear infections, weight loss, itching, a heart murmur, and the list goes on. We took him to several vets and got very little feedback as to what was going on with him. Finally, a specialist told us that Porter had dust and mould allergies and that he was destined to get worse with age and would need medication to prevent him from scratching.

I wasn't satisfied with this answer. Porter was such a young dog and I didn't like the idea of him being medicated for life with drugs that could lead to other health problems. Of course, his quality of life came first, but there had to be a better way.

In my spare time, I spent the next few years researching and experimenting with Porter's diet, supplementation, and less conventional forms of health care like chiropractic and acupuncture. It's been over five years, and I have seen results! Porter is not cured, but he is healthier now than he was at six months of age!

Porter and I have had a rough road, but let me tell you how he has changed my life. When I met Porter, I had just graduated college with a degree in Computer Information Systems. It didn't take me long to discover this was not my life's calling. Because of my dogs, I got led into assistant dog training, learning about species appropriate diets and alternative treatment and medicine for pets, pet photography, and more.

I now co-own my own health food store for pets where I am able to use my experiences with Porter to help pets regain health on a daily basis and it is the most rewarding job on earth for me! I get to see every day how these so called "negative" experiences are benefiting other animals and it all happened for a reason!

My point? The next time life hands you a bad hand, take the time to see what the experience might be trying to teach you. What journey might it be trying to take you on? Each and every one of us has something VERY important to accomplish on this planet earth and I thank Porter (and my two other Boxer babies – Brindel and Dante) for sacrificing his health to show me mine! Good dog!



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Now that it is 2008 and it's a fresh new year, it's time to consider our goals and take some steps toward them. Have you been thinking of moving, changing careers, getting married? Don't be afraid because if you are doing what your heart wants, you can't fail!

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