

Dr Bert wants to thank his colleague, Mary C. Mueller, for helping him with this micro-chapbook and with his blog: www.corgiconsulting.com



Wait...did I say kill? Back to the couch.

I was going in for the kill when we were yanked...

He just couldn't let it go, even after I was picked from the litter and spirited away. Once, I went back home to visit Mom. There was Chuckie, still hanging around, which didn't surprise me. Who would want him? Naturally Mom ran over to lick me. Chuckie's reaction was predictable. He went for my throat. So I grabbed him by the throat. I wrestled him to the ground.

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Cover: Dr. Bert waits for his next patient

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Dr. Bert's Thoughts on Sibling Rivalry

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Dr. Bert's Thoughts on SIBLING RIVALRY



MARY C. MUELLER

Dr. Bert, world renowned Corgi therapist

Even as a puppy, I had an elegance and elan Mom cherished.

He was furious when I tried to stop him from chewing up socks. He called me a brown-nosing, goody two shoes – as if I didn't have four paws, like any normal dog. Of course he was jealous. I was the responsible one – and the most handsome.

Chuckie – that mangy mutt. He was third or fourth in the line-up. I remember his snarl, his "you're a speck of dirt" smirk when I tried to bring order and civility to chaos. He hated rules. I hesitate to use the pee word – but you can imagine what he did to my instructions.

I myself recall early moments of blissful self-satisfaction when I broke up yet another infantile sibling squabble. How I loved to teach empathic role-play, or explain the simple art of counting to ten to calm down. How I quietly enjoyed prising above the fray. How I preferred to pretend Chuckie wasn't my brother....

SIBLING RIVALRY

Most therapists just sniff around the subject of sibling rivalry.

We've all read the classics - *The Alpha Puppy Sleeps Here, What about the Runt?* For years we've chewed on the horrors of the Oedipal Complex, but we still deny a secret wish to obliterate our siblings. I suspect it's because we were the caretakers of the litter.

A study recently released by the National Institute of Canine Mental Health confirms my suspicion. Seventy-five percent of canine therapists spent their puppyhood taking care of siblings. We tirelessly protected the runts from bullies, ensured everyone had enough to eat, negotiated with the alpha puppy on behalf of the group and puppy-sat when mom went out, which was often.

We liked our job.