

DO GOOD ALL ACTION PLAN

Jennifer Buergermeister
Leadership in Shelters, Fall 2023
Dr. Becky Morrow

Do Good All is a committee of like-minded folks who care about health, design, animal welfare, humanity, and the intricacies of human relationships. The project I am presenting is to form a PAC to influence legislation and alter how we view abandonment, homelessness, and loneliness of all animals, including humans. The goal is to end human loneliness with animal homelessness through legislation to incentivize fostering and adoption through tax breaks and other compensation methods.

By communicating with two colleagues and dear friends - Christine Pfeffer and Dak Kopec, PhD - about the issues of euthanizing healthy animals, the human mindset, the problem of human loneliness, and animal homelessness, we joined together to form a PAC. Our PAC is Do Good All (www.dogoodall.org). The leadership style we follow is Affiliative and Democratic. Though we have titles, we are all leaders, though I am directing a lot of the show and handling the details of setting everything up. I have experience in the legislative process, so my goal is to do what I've done before and create a sticky message so that animal welfare activists can join hands and unite in the cause. I like the do-with process and making connections with other leaders found in the Affiliative leadership style.

The original name chosen was PET PAC, and I ordered an EIN since this was a necessary step to register with the FEC. However, when I attempted to register the PAC on the FEC website on Friday, November 24, 2023, PETS PAC was already registered with the FEC. Dak had mentioned his concerns about the name earlier that week, indicating that we would limit ourselves to "pets" with the name Pet PAC by potentially, yet unintentionally, disregarding some of the issues surrounding exotic animals in the USA. Some exotic animals are captured and caged or, as we have seen in Florida, released into unaccustomed habitats, such as the python population explosion in the Florida Everglades.

After a brief call, we decided to stick with the foundation name we had initially chosen, Do Good All. We are registering the Do Good All PAC on Monday, November 27, 2023, and I will be making some final touches on sticky messaging until the end of the year. My goal is to also reach out to an Austin-based legislative influencer who once helped me

and our team push legislation in Texas to protect the sanctity of yoga in our state by December 15, 2023, and have things ready to move forward in January 2024 to prepare bills for the next Texas congressional session January 14, 2025. We will need one year to raise money and prepare our two written bills to submit through the Texas House and Senate.

During 2024, we also plan to communicate with leaders in other states to ally, putting Affiliative Leadership into action. When we pushed the legislation in Texas for yoga, we had members from every city and area of Texas supporting us. We held an annual Texas Yoga Conference and invited the Texas Workforce Commission to come and speak on behalf of the government and explain to the community what was happening behind the scenes. Why was the TYC threatening us with letters to become certified by the state as teachers? It has not been customary or needed to regulate yoga schools in the traditional sense. Teaching yoga differs from teaching social studies or math in a secondary school. What was happening behind the scenes was shocking. There was an attempt by an extensive yoga training program to eliminate its competition, a creepy crawly under a rock that none of us expected from one of our own! The unveiling of the organization's true intentions made us push forward with more zeal and passion to eventually get two bills signed into Texas Law.

The fun task of putting this movement together requires a bit of creativity, experience forming organizations, camaraderie, the ability to write and speak to others, and, most importantly, a treasurer. Christine Pfeffer has agreed to act as our Treasurer since she has experience in finance. The Treasurer's role must be separated and unique from that of other performing committee agents.

I have a list of SMART Goals on dogoodall.org and some information about our leadership style. DAK and I are notorious for pacesetting to get the job done when necessary. Dak and I have worked together on timelines and deadlines for publishing textbooks so we can work together, laugh, understand our frustrations, and give each other the space we need when things get overwhelming. We have survived over 20 years together, so I am confident we can make a few splashes in Texas and beyond through our research and tenacity.

A few exciting obstacles will be changing paradigms. I want people to consider how we started the foster care program for human orphanages in this country and relate that to animal welfare. Why not give life a chance to live? Noah would have done the same to appeal to the more religious folks of our nation. He built an arc to save two of every animal. People should remember their faith beyond some notion of human superiority. WWJD? I want to create messages that stick. My favorite example in Heath and Heath's (2008) book, *Made to Stick*, is how we reduced littering in Texas. The message appealed to the *proud boys*, the "Bubbas" of our conservative state. We can do better by helping people remember that all life is precious. Noah thought so, too. But that may not be enough. I expect to find at least five messages that appeal to different populations. The Bubbas may be the most challenging. I'm up for the challenge!

The next challenge will be raising at least \$80,000 to begin the legislative process. Having bills written by professionals isn't cheap. But I know animal lovers are unique and will like the idea of finding more fosters and adopters to reduce the number of animals roaming the streets killing little old ladies on their daily walk, which just happened in Houston in November, unnecessary euthanizing of puppies and kittens (no one likes this idea except sociopaths), and declining health environments in shelters, parks, and other public places as new bacteria and virus infections spread across communities, such as recent pneumonia-causing "mystery" infection taking down dogs who visit boarding facilities and public parks recently in the news.

My personality is the Advocate. I love doing good because it's the right thing to do. I enjoy working with others in teams to show leadership and support for a mission. Where do I need to improve and be careful? One is not to step on others' toes because I get too excited or ambitious. I hope I have grown older and wiser enough not to take myself or others too seriously and to bow down when I feel backed into a corner by wiggling my way out gracefully instead of pushing back. Taking deeper breaths, performing regular self-care, listening attentively, and giving others the space to explore their ideas is a skill that I want to embrace wholeheartedly. I am a learner, a connector. And I can execute, as my StrengthsFinder results have shared. Standing as a Democratic Affiliative Advocate will hopefully serve well, forming a PAC of animal welfare supporters in Texas and beyond if I can keep my sensitivities to a minimum.