

The Dinner Party Complex

Category: Companion Parrot Behavior

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Ever been to a dinner party of more than 4 couples? The type where drinks and snacks are served in a comfortable living room or maybe in the backyard with introductions and conversations between new acquaintances followed by a sit down dinner with the seating arranged. Ever been to one of those and within 10 minutes realized you didn't identify with or like any one else in this festive group? But yet, you are stuck due to decorum and having to work with the dinner host on Monday?

Awkward. And yet as humans we carry on. Nodding our heads at stories we find annoying. Sipping wine and laughing at jokes we don't get. Passing mashed potatoes to people we'd rather dump the mashed potatoes on. We human dinner guests know how to lie and we know how to hide what we are really thinking and we are really good at playing nice when we'd rather take our ball and go home. That's what we do in human society.

Parrots do not do this. EVER.

Let's get that out of the way. Parrots do not suffer the Dinner Party Complex. Depending on the size of the parrot you might just get a chirp and a nip. Or, you may just get a chunk of that thumb taken you will learn to live without anyway.

You've rehomed or rescued a parrot into your life. EVERY SINGLE PARROT WILL ACT DIFFERENTLY. Do not bring expectations to your situation because you read about someone else's happy ending. This companion is coming into a lifestyle he knows nothing about. And this may have been the second, third or more time he's had to transition. Give the bird a break. Fold up all your expectations and put them in a box. Write the word "USELESS" on the box and dump it in a landfill. Because you just brought in a companion you think you know, but you will not truly know until he finally deems you good enough to reveal his true self. That sounds like the Dinner Party Complex, but it's the reverse. He won't tolerate you if you overstay your welcome. He will not tolerate inconsistent attempts at his approval.

The quickest most successful route to integration of a new companion under any circumstance is to leave your expectations behind, and sit quietly with, around, and for that companion. Parrots are not stupid. They will recognize your kindness of giving them a little room to regroup, rethink, and breath. Let them be a spectator, and you be the color commentary. Introduce them to things, foods, processes and routines. Offer invitation with no expectation. And accept their response. There's the key. Just accept their first response and move on. No is fair. Yes is fair. Climbing up on you and wanting cuddles is fair. Screaming is fair. Everything is fair because they have to know they are safe to choose. A flock allows the members to choose. If he isn't given the right to choose with a proper result of acceptance. That parrot will assume he isn't in a flock that accepts him.

Ever go to a Dinner Party where dinner, snacks and drinks are fully open to the picking and eating. There are no seating arrangements. You just mingled at your own pace, your own liking and nature aligns the like minded in conversation.

Those dinner parties work because everyone has a choice.

The key to the lock of success for a new companion parrot is choice. Followed by you accepting the choice and not overstaying your welcome. If you get a lunge or an attempted bite, back up, sit down and smile. You just had communication with your companion. Celebrate that because they are not humans, they are really uncomfortable with forced expectations. Which is why parrots do not have dinner parties.

Integrating a new parrot, no matter the reason or background, requires patience, kindness, understanding and admitting there is no end to the process. Because relationships grow. They change. And a good relationship always requires mindful awareness to choices and the changing of those choices.

There is no finish line, but there could be dessert.

Together we can give every parrot everywhere, a happy home!

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