

## Creating Confidence in your Parrot Care

Category: Companion Parrot Lifestyle

Author: Kathy LaFollett | Companion Parrot Advocate™

Don't confuse confidence with being certain. Uncertainty is the literal lack of knowledge of what may happen in the future. Confidence is based on a collection of known facts and decisions based on knowns. In other words you can feel confident about feeding vegetables, but uncertain about how your parrot will enjoy them or their body and health will react to them.

And that is where I hope to start with this idea of confidence. It is completely natural to feel uncertain in day to day decisions, you are more likely to increase that uncertain feeling by reading conflicting parrot information. Online, in groups and in larger community conversations you can literally find the answer you want, rather than the answer you need. Feeding uncertainty with conflicting information is fertilizing frustration. So how do you add more sincere confidence and remove more uncertainty? By simplifying the truths of the matters. And there isn't anything about parrots that can't be simplified. They are challenging companions because they are so very intelligent and flock driven. Highly social in instinct and drives they can't be put on Auto Pilot and left to "be a parrot in a cage". That's the difficult part. The rest is just simple facts and requirements you need to provide.

Some companions are more demanding socially and are more sensitive to foods than others. The large cockatoos and Eclectus are examples of those two demands. And yet, if you concentrate on even those elevated realities, there is still simplicity to be created. Talk to an engineer of any sort and they'll tell you that the best designs start with the simplest systems. Making something complicated for no other reason than because you can, just creates more moving parts that can fail, which adds to a dizzying list of parts that may hide the real problem. You may think your engine is failing because your check engine light is on. But, it's on only because you didn't get the gas cap back on tight enough when you filled up that morning.

Clear, pointed and reasoned systems for any project gets the jobs done and creates calm and confident results. Because a system answers all the requirements. And the happiest companion parrots in the world live with the calmest companion parents. If we aren't worrying about things, we are free to enjoy, laugh, and interact for the sheer relationship of it. I'm not worrying about my companions, we are enjoying ourselves. Systems create certainty that deliver confidence. So let's get some systems in place.

Systems are built around design requirements. In the companion parrot lifestyle, it is the humans lifestyle that dictates the systems to be built. I can't write an article about your specific systems because I don't know your lifestyle design requirements. But I can show you ours as an example. It starts with yearly vet checkups, and grooming done with my Avian Vet. I need my healthcare professional to see our companions 3-5 times a year (depending on the grooming needs) and have baseline, historical blood panel work so I know every bird is healthy through visual and blood chemistry. If you can only afford, or have time for, once a year make that the blood panel work and checkup. I can not over state the value and comfort of having that knowledge. If I tend to "treat" my birds with their favorite nuts more than some would agree with, I don't care. Because I have blood chemistry supporting food practices. I don't have to worry. I have the facts.

What about foods? That's complicated! No, no it's not. We can make it complicated wanting to provide the latest cutting edge nutritional source. I remember when dark leaf greens were the thing. Now it's Kale. I remember when coconut water was the thing, now it's camel's milk. Oh yes, that's coming up into the consumer stream. Wait on it. But is all this expense and fuss really necessary in our system of nutrition delivery? No, it's not. What is necessary is delivery of healthy seasonal nutritionally dense foods. And let's be honest. Produce and grocery costs are sky rocketing. Everything is far more expensive than it needs to be, but alas due to weather and population growth, it's only going to get worse. We need systems to protect our ability to afford our companion's food bill as well as ours! Stay local. Stay seasonal. Stay simple. Apples are an amazing fruit. They deliver dense nutrients. I don't need mango. I don't need pomegranate. I'm not saying exotic chop recipes aren't good. I'm saying they aren't necessary and you do not have to be stressed that you do not provide them or can't afford them. My system for nutrition: Seasonal, simple, local. Apples, pears, plums, oranges, grapes, green lettuces, brussel sprouts, sweet potatoes, broccoli, carrots, green beans, snap peas, brown rice, vegetable pastas. That's about it. I keep foods whole for foraging and employment. I keep nuts raw. I use a food processing system to make our humus and nut butters. We share our meals with our parrots as well. I offer Brown's Mix types. Simple. And when you read that paragraph, it's abundant, too. Something to keep in mind is in their natural habitats parrot's food choices are limited. There are no grocery stores or vendors importing strange new foods. It's the human in the room bringing in the complexity.

I put mix, and sized or whole veg/fruit in morning bowls. And they have access all day to that bowl. They all also have a secondary dry mix (same mix) bowl available for climbing around, foraging and stealing from each other's cage. Because parrots like traveling for foods. Mid day I check bowls, remove mashed up stuff, clean what needs cleaning or leave it if it's fine. When you leave a whole brussel sprout in a bowl, you can walk away. It won't deteriorate as a whole food in one 8 hour period. It's when you chop, mash, freeze and thaw that you introduce the idea that foods can spoil in less than an hour. I can clean, maintain, fill, check, refill and replace 16 bowls a day in less than 45 minutes. No worries. I don't run around reading about changing or improving things because I know I don't need to fix what isn't broken.

Systems are where confidence is born. Confidence feeds a calm lifestyle. A calm lifestyle creates a huge potential for relationship building and communication. Our confidence and calm transfer to our companion parrots. Look to your own lifestyle design requirements, to find your systems. Build your confidence. Remember no one knows you, your flock and your parrot personalities better than you. I have confidence, in YOU!

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

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