



"Open Mind," photo by Taylor Cobb

Chasing a Tail

Tristin Holley

For just a moment, think about how similar you are to your dog. In the center of my living room, I've watched my Black Labrador do random things to occupy its time. For some reason I'm interested in what my dog does in its free time, and a certain question has crossed my mind: *Are humans like the dogs we own?*

I watched one day while Kimber just sat there and slept, but after 30 minutes, he started to chase his tail. Round and round, for no reason, my dog made the decision to run in circles to chase his tail. Did he know he was never going to touch his own tail? Did he even care if he could or couldn't?

It is a fact that tail chasing in older dogs is a behavioral problem, and like humans, dogs can develop compulsive disorders. Sometimes these disorders can cause dogs to bite or lick themselves; other times it can cause them to chase their tails.

This compulsive behavior mirrors how many people act today. Nearly every single person has small, harmless addictions that don't matter, but many people also have addictions that are harmful like drugs, alcohol, porn, gambling, and fighting – while they feel good in the short term, these addictions are harmful and meaningless in the long

term and can cause a harmful effect to society as a whole.

By the time you die, it won't matter how much you drank or how many people you fought, because in the end the only purpose that serves is to bring you to your death bed quicker; to further destroy your body and ruin it beyond repair.

But like a silly, foolish dog humans chase our addictions because we are so compulsive that we can't control ourselves.

However, our addictions are not the only things we chase. Throughout our lives, we as people want to become perfect individuals that have perfect looks, money, fame, and perfect relationships that never go wrong; and even though countless times our mentors tell us it is impossible to get everything we want and nothing can be perfect, we still pursue these things viciously without ever reaching them.

We as a society keep ignoring the fact that idealizing hollow concepts will never bring happiness, and becoming victims to our compulsive behaviors and addictions will only bring us harm; and in the end, we are exactly like the dogs who chase their tails – for no reason.

Vulpes Lexcee Shelton

They call you dangerous and sly. Are the two related within the minds of your accusers? Do they not know that you, too, are born helpless to the world? Blind, deaf, and grey, you start as vulnerable as any human, yet you will become as dangerous as them. You will grow to become a scavenger, and hunter, a guardian. You will kill and eat them, because the world is not kind.

You who are connected to your vicious cousin, the wolf. You have the same teeth and muzzle, but can't snarl. How do you defend

your young? How do you bear to have young in this unforgiving world? Humans call you dangerous and sly. I call you adaptable. I call you vital.

Humans cannot see that everything disgusting or dangerous is a cog in the great cycle; a part in the machine called life. They hunt, they drive their children away from you, now brick red and soft-stepping. They wield guns just as you wield teeth and claws. In a way, we are the same. We fight, we love, human and fox, and yet we hunt each other, in the end.

They are afraid. They should be.