

HAVING A BEHAVIORALLY CHALLENGED CAT IS POSSIBLY THE BEST MYSTERY NATURE COULD INVENT

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Who doesn't love a good mystery? A nice challenge to see who did it, where, how and the best part: **WHY?** Any cat owner **MUST** love a good mystery! Cats are mysterious and curious, intelligent and wonderful, all balled up into one furry beautiful creation. God surely put them here to give us a challenge in life (with a side of humor), or at least almost certainly when it comes to litter box evasion--the joy of finding urine puddles and poo piles where they don't belong.

Aside from the basics of *spaying and neutering* Fluffy to help prevent the marking behavior, many other reasons can contribute to this bothersome (and smelly!) behavior. A simple explanation is that they don't like something. That 'something' can be a little harder to figure out! It can be as easy as they don't like the litter texture or the perfume added to the litter to make it more appealing to us humans! (Can you imagine how pungent that perfume is on an animal that relies so heavily on the use of their nose for survival? It surely can drive any cat to avoid the litter box entirely or cause them to hurry to do their business, which in turn, performing sloppy while in their box!)

Maybe you have too many cats and not enough litter boxes? Maybe when Fluffy wants to use his box, it is occupied, and he really has to go! So instead of waiting around, he goes about his business in a corner somewhere. It can become a place of choice because it was uninterrupted and peaceful there. Fluffy never had to wait in line for that trip to the facilities! The rule of thumb is however many cats there are, have that many litter boxes, *PLUS ONE* to accommodate them all. To some, this can be a lot of litter boxes, but if it's saving your flooring it must be well worth it!!

What about the cat that is using blankets, or laundry, counter tops or perhaps a certain person's items as a bathroom facility? These can all be caused by anxiety or a medical concern. **These are definitely behaviors to seek advice from a veterinarian.** On average, these types of behaviors can be attributed to forms of anxiety...and this is where a good detective who loves that good mystery comes in very handy at solving this 'crime!'

A cat that urinates on a husband's shoes might have some anxiety relating to that individual. Is he too loud? Does he play too rough? Is Fluffy jealous of time spent on someone else, when it could be spent on him? A simple fix would be to encourage the husband to begin feeding and watering Fluffy, as well as handing him random treats and petting him here and there.

Fluffy is urinating each time you leave the house! This can possibly be attributed to the simple opinion that he just doesn't like when you leave him. Having another kitty friend could be good for him while you are away, or possibly giving him his own room while you are gone. Soothing music or the use of synthetic pheromones, such as Feliway™, can be helpful.

There are many more examples I could list here, as well as many more suggestions to help you keep Fluffy! Remember just because Fluffy is using the box inefficiently, doesn't mean he can't be helped! It is his way of telling you **something**!! When meowing his thoughts doesn't work, he is left with the choice of doing something that **WILL** get your attention. So take notes and pay attention to what Fluffy is telling you! Take those notes to your veterinarian and seek advice from a professional!

Most inappropriate elimination problems can be solved and I am willing to help you try! Even though I have helped many people, I am not a professional by any means, and can not replace the advice/recommendations given by a veterinarian or behaviorist. But if I can help you keep your cat by offering suggestions, by all means give me a call! I want you to keep Fluffy in your home just as badly as you do!