

6/1/2018

What Keeps You Up at Night?

Ellen C. Wells



Ellen C. Wells

If someone were to ask me the question posed above, my knee-jerk answer is something that has plagued me for a few years now: my cat, Bandit. About three in the morning he starts nosing my hand and placing his head underneath, the cat's not-so-subtle clue that he wants to be petted. And if I don't pet him on demand, he moves to that fleshy/flabby part of the upper arm—his favorite place to bite. He eventually curls into the crook of my arm, but by then my other cat, Boo, decides she's awake and I should be, too, so she starts banging doors. "Close the bedroom door!" you say. I'm sorry, but you must not be a cat owner.

That's the literal answer to what keeps me up at night. But yes, I do understand what the question is really asking. What am I concerned about; what thought is weighing heavily on my mind; what's always right behind what I'm currently engaged in? Oh, there are so many things I could say! Like

the worldwide rise of totalitarianism, what am I missing out on because I can't fathom the concept of Bitcoin and why are they called the Toronto Maple Leafs and not Maple Leaves? (That last one? I want a good explanation!)

Sure, I could respond with the aforementioned concerns and other (slightly more serious) ones, but I know these questions and concerns will either be resolved in time or just don't matter in the scheme of things. "What keeps me up at night" is usually something to which I am emotionally connected. For example, what is currently (and seriously) weighing on my mind is my dog Osa. She's normally a spunky beagle mutt who loves long walks, finding food on the street and having her ears lovingly cleaned by Boo. But for the past month, Osa's walks have been short and hurried, as if there is something outdoors that frightens her—and her reaction is getting worse each day. Vet wellness visit: check. Doggie behavior specialist: check. Now we just implement what they suggest, have patience and keep loving on her as she goes through this. But still, the worry and concern is present.

What's keeping you up at night? Hopefully nothing. Truly. But if you are tossing and turning or find your mind preoccupied, it is likely concerning something you care about to your core. Maybe it's an issue impacting your family or good friends. Maybe it's your business or employment objectives. Maybe it's a spiritual matter.

What to do about it? Well, heck—I don't know! I'm just a person who writes about the latest garden retail-related news and trends, not Self-Help Sally. My point in bringing up this topic is to convey that we've all got something that we care deeply about, and at times our concern for it makes us unsure and, yes, keeps us up at night. We have all been there and we get it. And we get that it takes some time to sort through the solutions. Or that it takes time to

accept what we can't change.

This is what I'm going to do about my particular situation: I'm going to do as the dog trainer says, even though it may seem insensitive to my poor little girl. I'm going to put my emotions aside the best I can and use proven training methods to get her out of her agoraphobia (I suspect it is bird related!). I'm going to plug along and do the best I can to come to a solution.

And I'm going to sleep at night knowing I'm doing the best I possibly can. Until Bandit nudges me awake, of course.

GP