Transcript of **Out of The Woofworks** Episode 12: “Namita DigheShetty (Pawsitive Cultr)”

RACHEL: Welcome to Out Of The Woofworks, here with me, Rachel Forday, a podcast where we’ll be talking about dogs, dog training, and more importantly human social issues, both in the dog industry and the world.

Today we have Namita DigheShetty with us. She is a dog trainer with her business, pawsitive culture based in Vancouver. We'll be talking about Namita’s journey into becoming a force free dog trainer and her experiences in this industry. I really enjoyed speaking to Namita, so let's get right into it.

[INTRO MUSIC]

RACHEL: Hi, Namita. Thank you so much for being here to chat with us. How are things going for you today?

NAMITA: Good. It's a nice sunny day, looks like. So I'm doing well.

RACHEL: Oh, that's brilliant. My dog's outside in the sun all day today, cuz it is also sunny here in England, which is quite rare. could you tell us a little bit about yourself and what you've been up to?

NAMITA: Yeah. So I am a multi certified dog trainer and behavior consultant. I was born and raised in Mumbai India, but I have been in Canada for the last 10 years. I'm based off of Vancouver. And so I've just started my business with dog training about a year ago, full time. And that's just what has been on my mind most of the time now just helping clients and their dogs and helping them understand how dogs learn.

RACHEL: Oh, that's really great. And I think we all have really interesting stories on how we get here. So have you always known you wanted to work with dogs or animals? Like how did you end up becoming a dog trainer?

NAMITA: So here's the thing I always wanted to work with dogs. Like I don't remember a time in my life where I wasn't interested in dogs, but like you said, you know, we come from such different backgrounds.

And back in India, when I was growing up, working with dogs, it was not a profession. There was no hope to earn a living out of it and I wanted to become a vet cuz that was the only thing I knew as a kid.

RACHEL: Oh, me too.

NAMITA: Yeah. Like I was like “that's what you do if you care about dogs”

RACHEL: Yes!

NAMITA: So my dad was like “there's not enough pet dogs in this city and you are just going to be sitting in a clinic with no patients and you cannot become a vet. It's not gonna do anything for you”. So I kind of like, gave up on it. It was like a whole journey of just doing something else. I did a bachelor's degree in mass media and I did web design and all sorts of things like that. I was in beauty pageants, but I always was interested in dogs.

So I used to take care of street dogs in our area. I would feed them, play with them. I would just use them as my outlet for being around dogs.

RACHEL: Aw.

NAMITA: And then I got my own dog when I was about 15, my family brought home a Labrador and I would just train him all these tricks. And that was my sort of foundation of understanding if I can work with, you know, teaching dogs, things and things like that.

But of course, I didn't know anything back then compared to today, but when I moved to Canada, I think that's when I finally, like at a point, 3 years into my web design job, I was like “this is not what I wanna do”... And that's when I was like “I wanna start working with

dogs”. And I started at a dog daycare because that was the best I could do at that point with no experience. Right.?

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: And as I learned in the daycare, I started to do more digging into like understanding behavior and things like that. And so from there on, there was no looking back. This was like about four years ago. And I was like “that's it, this is what I want to do”. And so, yeah, here I am.

RACHEL: That's so interesting.

And do you find that the culture of dogs in Canada and in India is quite different, you know, with how people respond to dogs or the way that people perceive dogs?

NAMITA: Absolutely. In India, I guess the idea that dogs are outside animals is still to a great extent, probably persistent because there's so many dogs on the street. Right?

So having dogs in your home is more like a personality thing. Like some people like dogs a lot, so that's why they have them. But there wasn't, at least when I was growing up there, wasn't that understanding of anything about them as a being, you know, it was kind of like property, but not in an extremely negative way. But it was at the end of the day, something you bring home and you just, you know, feed them and everything, and then you can just expect everything out of them.

RACHEL: Mmmm

NAMITA: There's definitely a difference in like how much money someone would spend on their pets and things like that. But I guess the overall difference between what life is like having a pet back in India versus here, there's not much difference. There's still that sort of unknown aspect of not knowing that they are beings themselves and they have their own feelings and needs. That's something I think overall humans are just struggling with.

RACHEL: Sure. Totally. And because you and I are force free trainers or like positive reinforcement based trainers. Did you always start out that way when you first started learning about behavior training or did you use other methods in the past?

NAMITA: So I always thought I was, uh, a positive reinforcement trainer. Always, right? Or like I am into positive reinforcement, but as I learned more, I realized that I was unintentionally using punishment or creating frustration in my dog and things like that. So the thing is, I was just like the common person is the idea that food is basically positive reinforcement or that as long as you are praising your dog and not really being abusive, it's still positive reinforcement .

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: So essentially I thought I was always a positive reinforcement trainer, but I definitely would say that there was a certain degree of aversiveness in the way I handled dogs or was training dogs in the past. And the more I learn about it, the less I use, like, I am almost extinguishing punishment as an aspect in training because it's just, we don't need it as long as we start to learn more ways to use encouragement and praise and reinforcement to help them learn.

RACHEL: Yeah, totally. And I have a similar story to you because I also started out, you know, thinking I was a positive reinforcement person and that's kind of the way that I always wanted to be and always thought that, but I also used a lot of things that was actually frustrating, my dog.

And I got to a point where my dog, Dave, like he doesn't wanna train with me. And I was so funny because I thought “it can't be me. He must be unwell”. And I took him to the vet. There was nothing wrong with him.

I just thought “but I'm using food” and he was like “yeah, you toss that salmon on the floor. I'm not gonna take it, cuz I don't like training it’s too frustrating. You're not clear. I don't know what you're asking”. And so I learned the hard way there.

NAMITA: You know, funny you say that because I also started to notice with my old family dog that he would not wanna be around me a lot. And, you know, he was more fond of my mom who was basically only feeding him.

She wouldn't even walk him because my dad used to walk him. And I was like, why. I do all the work for you. I take care of you. I train you.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: And so, as I learned more about behavior, I was like, oh, that's what it is. I never made it fun for my dog. And I was frustrating him. That's why he wanted to avoid me all the time.

RACHEL: Exactly. Because we, I- Speaking for myself here, but you know, I would do things like withhold the treat for quite a while, trying to wait for something. And he is like, what the hell are you getting for?

NAMITA: Yeah.

RACHEL: And just like train for too long because you're like, oh, he is doing quite well. Let's keep going.

Let's keep going. And that just annoyed him. So, similar to you, my dog was like, I'm gonna go with dad, cuz he just gives me like free stuff. And like it's cool. Even though he works all the time and they see each other mainly in the evening. So it was quite funny to hear that that's the case for you as well at the time.

And it's so good that we now all have these resources to keep learning and. Keep improving.

NAMITA: Yeah. And it's obviously not an overnight change. Like I still catch myself doing it a lot.

RACHEL: Sure.

NAMITA: And even with my current dog Jericho, there are moments where I can see he's like “no, this is not- I'm not enjoying this. So I'm just gonna leave”. And that… A great- like the more, you know, about body language, the easier it is to catch yourself and really, you know, change how you're approaching your training and it takes time, but it is possible. And my hope for the future is that more people get into that mindset. And that's what I wanna do with my clients as well.

RACHEL: Yeah, no, that's really important. And kind of demystifying the whole thing about positive reinforcement of force free training. Sometimes people just think that it is just about throwing food around just giving your dog food, but it's so much more than that. And we've both learned it the hard way. So I wanted to ask, is there an aspect in your work with dog training that you really love the most like, is it puppy stuff, trick training reactivity or…?

NAMITA: So, most of my caseload is reactive dogs. Uh, which is interesting, cuz it's not something that I seek to do, but it just is happening, which is great. I love it, cuz then I can help people better their relationship and underststand their dogs, but my favorite personal favorite thing is trick training.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: And I do it more, not so much as like this fancy thing, you can show off to your friends, but my take on trick training is everything is a trick, right?

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: As long as you are making your dog do something they wouldn't do normally it's a trick, you're tricking the dog.

RACHEL: Totally.

NAMITA: So I love to teach a small, even the smallest trick, like being on your left side, being on your right side, having front paws on something, hind paws on something or any sort of thing that could help me move my dog without having to force him to move or hav-

ing to coerce him in any way is great. And so I love tricks for that reason because firstly, it's very reinforcing for the human cuz it it's very easy, right?

It's really easy to get small successes quickly. And it motivates the human as well as the dog and the enthusiasm between the person who's training them the tricks as well as the dog. It's just so beautiful. So trick training is by far my most favorite thing to do, and I try to include it in all of my training.

Like whatever I'm trying to teach, I will teach a few tricks to people so that they can involve that in their lives. You know.

RACHEL: Yeah, absolutely. And I think tricks actually have a lot of value and sometimes people miss out on that because it's all about like serious obedience or behavior, but actually tricks can really help build that confidence in working with our dogs as well.

And the confidence of our dogs. I tried doing the, do more with your dog trick titles with Dave and he's quite an old boy now. So he was about 10 or 11 when I did his advanced one. And he did really well, and that was pretty good. And so just having a go at things like that, you know, doing something together is really fun, I think.

NAMITA: Absolutely. When the pandemic hit and we were on lockdown, that's when I went knee-deep into trick training and I got Jericho his do more with your dog titles. So he's a champion trick dog with about a hundred.

RACHEL: Oh wow.

NAMITA: Yeah. With about a hundred tricks. And I was like super proud of him. He did such a great job.

And, you know, I try to encourage my clients to go for trick titles. A novice title is like, I think 15 easy tricks and you know, your dog can have a title and you'll feel so proud of everything your and your dog have achieved. So if anyone's listening, I'm a certified trick dog trainer, and I can definitely help you get a trick title for your dog.

RACHEL: Awesome. I love that. And working with dogs is often so much more about working people, too. So what's like your favorite part about working with dogs and their people?

NAMITA: I think for me, that a-ha moment in their head, when they finally sort of relate to something that is human-like, but they have never, ever thought of it as affecting their dogs.

So even something as simple as like “I'm at home. And when I call my dog who come to me, they don't wanna come to me”. And I'm. Okay. Maybe they wanna rest in that moment and they just don't feel like it. And their response is like, but they know what come means. Why can't they come? And I'm like, well, why should they?

RACHEL: Right.

NAMITA: Yeah. And they have this moment of like, I don't know, like, I really don't know why I want this to happen so bad. And. So it's moments like that, or like anything that I can use as an sort of like an analogy to sort of compare to what happens in our day to day life. And I notice that they really have this moment of like, why haven't I thought about it like that?

And that's, that's my favorite part. Like, you know, really opening their mind to something that they didn't think about before and then changing how they will relate to their dogs for the rest of their lives based on that. Right? Yeah. That's my favorite part.

RACHEL: Often, it's not just about training, it's about the mindset stuff and the way that we think about our dogs, isn't it?

NAMITA: It absolutely is because with the mindset shift, there’s so much more that you can sort of let go so many more frustrations and you can build such an amazing relationship if you just shift your mindset. And this applies for even like our humans, like even in general, a mindset change can really change your life.

So just imagine how much better it would be with your dogs too. Like you just have to sort of try to understand each other's perspective and things will be a lot easier if we just let go of these archaic

principles that someone told us, we should believe it. and now we're just going with it.

RACHEL: Right. Totally.

And what are some of the common misconceptions you've heard people have about dogs?

NAMITA: God, where do I start? There's things like heel. I, I don't understand people's obsession with that. Like if I told my friend to walk right next to me for 20 minutes, and she's not allowed to move a step forward or step sideways, how frustrating would that be?

You would think that that would just make no sense to people. And then the other thing is, you know, the alpha theory. Oh my God. If only people took a little bit of time to read about these things and realize that it doesn't even exist in the true form that it was put out there. Like, you know, the alpha theory came out of studying captive wolves and even the person who put that theory out there is like “sorry, I was wrong” and has been spending the rest of his life, trying to tell people, please don't believe of that. And it's all trickled down to dog training, unfortunately, but yeah.

And you know, the idea that they should do what we want just because we wanted it. Like the idea that if they know something. They should be able to do it as soon as we tell them.

And I'm like, but you didn't buy a robot. Yeah. You brought home a living being, so I'm confused as to why you would think they would just do what you want. but I understand, I understand. It's definitely, you know, how we portray dogs and animals and movies and films and TV. And we think that that's how they're supposed to be: perfect.

RACHEL: Totally, and I think there's a lot of misconceptions because of like media and social media. With how dogs are being portrayed, how training dogs has been portrayed. And that can be quite

frustrating for us, but I think over time, people are learning a little bit more things, you know, they're always changing.

We already mentioned this a little bit, but we have to keep up to date with the better kind ways to work with our dogs. And it helps a little where we look to more up date, resources and studies.

NAMITA: Yeah, absolutely. Um, especially like with my journey being on social media now and trying to educate more people.

I'm so proud of the people that are following on our page because the responses that they have. The examples that they give. And I'm so proud to see that there's about 10,000 people that are like thinking of these things, then really wanting to learn better ways to communicate with their dogs. I am so proud of that.

And I'm so glad to see that there are people wanting to know more and that's all we want. We just want people to be open to more ideas and open to newer ways of communicating with your dog.

RACHEL: Yeah, totally. And as we've been talking about, we can't work with dogs without also working with people. And that's why I really want to chat with people here about their stories and what life is really like for them.

Particularly those of us who are for marginalized community in some sense. So if you feel comfortable sharing. As a south Asian person, have you experienced any racism or even uncomfortable potentially microaggressive situations in your life, whether that's with other people in the industry or even in your general life?

NAMITA: Yeah, so like, I haven't directly experienced, you know, blatant racism, but I definitely think there's moments of microaggression and it's people who don't really sort of. Understand how something can affect a Person of Color. First and foremost, I think people don't realize that we can never disconnect from that.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: We're always a Person of Color. And in every situation we are going to have those things at the back of our minds and with someone who is essentially white, that is something that they will never understand. Right?

RACHEL: Sure. Yeah.

NAMITA: You know, just to put things into perspective. One of the most sort of painful experiences was someone that I worked with for a long time, I started from the lowest position in this job and worked my way up to the manager's position for four years. And I thought we had a great, uh, working relationship because we were very cordial with each other, but as I started, you know, wanting to do dog training specifically, and not just, you know, the other dog related profession that I was working with them with, I took a special interest in making sure that I did my certification.

So I paid for my own trick training certification and my CPDT exam. I studied for it. And I certified myself despite the fact that I was being allowed to train without those certifications, because we had another trainer that was mentoring me. And so at some point I was probably not feeling satisfied with the sort of like what I was getting paid for the amount of work I was putting in.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: And this was also around the same time that I had lost my dad, uh, from COVID. Uh, this was last year. And I was sort of taking time off and I met somebody just, you know, outside of work somewhere else. And they saw me with my dog and they wanted to do something that was very easy to do in my home and things like that.

So I was like, you know what? You can come over and I can do a session with you. And, you know, I was very transparent that I had this client that I took over and I posted it on my social media and I had no contract at that time with the person I was working with to not take any clients outside of work or anything of that sort.

In fact, I had nothing on paper that said I was a trainer, which is odd because the other trainer did have a document that was contractual and things like that. So when I got called in a little bit later saying that there's a chance that I am using this company to sort of start my own and sort of compete against I was pretty shocked because I was like, well, it's one client first. And secondly, that was not my intention. It was just a simple thing. And I didn't think that it would mean that way. And that doesn't mean I would take every single person that I match to my own home. It would just be, you know, a case by case thing, or...

I didn't think that it was sort of like a betrayal, but I was sort of put in this position where I was made to feel like I was supported by this company. And just as soon as I was able to get my own client, I took one and ran with them and I was blown away cuz I was like, well, I don't even have a contract.

And I don't feel like the amount of pay is enough. Like I wanna progress in life. I want a, a home, a car and things like that. And maybe that was the wrong way to go about it. But I said that that's how I felt. And the response to it was things like we supported you with doing your certifications. And I was like, uh, I'm sorry.

Like I was confused because I paid for my certification. So I am just confused by what do you mean by support? Just the fact. I was taking time off to study for the exam, which like, doesn't everybody get the right to take time off every now and then, uh, I was blown away because that is literally like, making me feel like I owe you something because you've supported me in my growth and my journey, and I owe you to that extent that I should not want to grow myself. And you've not given me the, the feeling that all the work I'm putting into grow as an individual for your company is actually being compensated. But at the same time, if I choose to do that for myself, it's a betrayal to your company.

So it was such a contradictory statement and I found it amazing how the person in question was not seen their role in how they're sort of undermining me. They were upset at me for taking clients of my own, but the other trainer was allowed to take clients of her own. And so I was like, why is that the case?

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: And then to that, their response was because they were already a dog trainer from before working with us. And I was like, but the only reason I wasn't a dog trainer was because of, you know, the story you and I have talked about earlier this, in this podcast, the journey that took me to so many years to get to this point.

That should not be something that holds me back just because someone else was able to be a dog trainer for longer. That doesn't mean that their value is different. Right? And so to me, that is like, you know, really being so disconnected that you don't even understand that you are distinguishing between two individuals.

And I had a hard time not believing that it had anything to do with race, because it felt like it was one of those moments where it's like, “if it wasn't for me, you wouldn't get this far in your life, in this particular field. And I gave you this opportunity and now you're just because you're successful and independent, you are going to go with it?”.

And I was like, I don't owe you that because I've worked really hard to get to where I am. And it was really sad to leave that meeting with that feeling of me apologizing. Like I had to apologize for betraying, uh, the long loyal relationship we had instead of it being like, I understand where you came from. And I think that we've gotta do better to sort of make sure that we can compensate you the way you need to be. And if that's not the case, then I understand if you wanna leave. And it, eventually, I was even promised that, you know, we'll work things through and have a few meetings and figure out what to do, but that never happened.

And instead, uh, a decision was made on how much to increase the pay. And it was a very nominal amount in my opinion, because it also increased his profit. So it's not like, you know, I got more because I got more than the work I am putting comparatively. We both got more so that, that is in the same thing because you're now charging the client more money and still taking the same amount of sort of, you know, so that was disappointing.

And at that point I was like, you know what? I would rather work hard and be independent and do it on my own. And that's why I walked away from that. But, you know, that's one of those moments where I don't think the person in question really thought about race and how I felt marginalized. But it was definitely one of those moments where I was like, this would probably go differently if I was a white person.

RACHEL: Yeah. And I think that feeling of like, you should be so grateful that we even gave you this opportunity is something that a lot of us can relate to.

NAMITA: Absolutely . Because I don't think they're, I, I think it's amazing how they tap into that. We do feel like that to a certain extent, isn't it?

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: Because when we come into this kind of world, we think we don't know how things work here.

We have no experience here. And then they give you this opportunity. And even in my other job that wasn't dog related, the first person who hired me here was paying me $12 an hour for a bachelor's degree job. That's not, that's not even minimum wage, okay? And when I did ask, can I get a little more, he said “I don't know anything about your work”, even though I had a portfolio of web design or some like, you know, some examples of work and still, it was like, “I don't know what you can do”. And so for like the first year I was getting $12 an hour working with a bachelor's degree job with web design. And I was like, this is ridiculous. Like. How is this even happening?

RACHEL: Right. And yet we put up with it for a while, don't we? To just kind of, you know, get started.

NAMITA: Yeah. Because I needed a job. Yeah. I needed a job.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: So I took it, but, you know, I don't think that a Canadian who was born and raised here would do that. Like they would never stick around for like $12 an hour after doing a bachelor's degree.

RACHEL: Yeah, totally.

Because as People of Color, we are held sometimes to a higher standard than other people in a sense. And like, we, we're not allowed to slip up almost and-

NAMITA: Exactly.

RACHEL: And so we also carry those identities with us all the time. We can't detach from it, you know, we're not like, “oh, now we're a dog trainer and now we're Indian and now we're Chinese”.

We are Chinese and we are Indian dog trainers. And that's that, that is what it is. And we carry those with us. Yeah. So we can't separate that at all.

NAMITA: Absolutely not. And like working hard has always been a part of, I guess my culture. Like it's not something that I can even not do. So it's not just that. But I was also like, at some point I was also given sort of like this thing of comparing to someone else who was an existing dog trainer and was getting certain, um, you know, more respect and more sort of defined roles as a dog trainer.

And I. Well, I don't have any of those things outlined in my, uh, sort of, uh, working relationship with this company. And I was told that, well that's because they were always a dog trainer, so I was like, “okay, but what's that gotta do with it?”. Like I'm studying to be one. And this person is actually recommending that I should be given more clients.

This person is my mentor. So I'm confused. Like I am confused how, how we are two different, uh, like how are we different? That doesn't make sense to me just because of the number of years. I guess that's where the microaggression comes in because you don't understand why it took me so many years to be a dog trainer.

Like when you listen to my story.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: You realize that I always wanted to be one. I just did not have that pathway. Like I did not have exposure to these career options. If I did, I probably would be a dog trainer for years and years, because I always knew I wanted to be around animals. So that wasn't my... I had barriers and I had barriers that other people whp were white would probably not understand because I was just not born here. I wasn't raised here. I had to go through cultural barriers, financial barriers, so many things to get to this point. And it was really disappointing to see that it's- I just couldn't understand it in that moment. Like, it's hard for me to not relate that it has something to do with microaggression and not specifically to do just with me or my efforts as a worker, like that has nothing to do with it.

I just feel like it's, it's hard for people too, to understand it, but it is happening. And they've gotta be a lot more mindful about these kind of things, but it's really hard. I understand. It's hard.

RACHEL: Yeah. Yeah, it absolutely is. And I wanted to ask, like, what do you really want to see change in our industry?

How can it do better for People of Color?

NAMITA: I think that platforms, like, for example, even this podcast and just having the opportunity to say where you came from and how things have been for you. And what it took to get to this point is really important and seeing more diverse, um, people when we're, when we're seeking experts on, you know, television shows or anything like that is what I'm hoping for. I mean, we, it's kind of what we want in every aspect of life, not just in dog training, but we just need to seek out more diverse experts because that diversity is not just about color, but it's about ethnicity and culture and what they bring with it.

Because each culture has some sort of background that they can add value through. Um, it doesn't just mean that, you know, oh, they're marginalized. That's why they should be given an opportuni-

ty. That's not what it's about. It's important to understand other perspectives. And that's why that diversity is important.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: Um, so I'm just hoping that more BIPoC people get, you know, an opportunity to voice their opinions and get called on, to speak as experts in the industry and not just people and faces that we've known for for years and years who just happen to almost always be someone white.

RACHEL: Yeah, totally. I think there are so many of us that have so much to bring.

And at the same time, you know, when there is representation that kids, or, you know, young people watching will be like, “Hey, I can be a dog trainer. I didn't realize this was a career path for me, but I've seen someone now that looks like me, who is in this industry. And that's pretty cool. And I can do it as well”.

So I think when we have more diversity or representation in these conferences or organizations and things like that, I guess we reach more people and that's kind of what we want to in the end. Isn't I?. To reach more people, to be able to help their dogs.

NAMITA: Yeah. I don't want someone to have to go through like 15 years of doing something else.

RACHEL: Yeah.

NAMITA: And then coming to be a dog trainer, I would love them to know. Today is the time and you can definitely do it. You just need to watch the people that have already created that pathway for you. And we're here to support you and. If we could do it, so can you, right? That's what we want. Um, and also, I'm sorry, I did not mention this earlier, but-

RACHEL: Yeah, go ahead.

NAMITA: Scholarships for BIPoC people is really important because there are financial barriers that can hold you back from getting the kind of experience and knowledge that you should be able to access in order to be qualified, because it's not just about being a trainer. It's about being a good qualified trainer that has the right education because we're an unregulated industry and everybody learns different things.

So in order to have that access. There are financial constraints because, uh, five years ago I couldn't have spent the amount of money that I've had to spend in order to get my certifications in order to continue my education. Um, and if you think about my story, it took me so long to get to the point of you starting to dog train.

But then I have to catch up with the years of education that people who have been here have already had that exposure or things like that. So it's really important to understand that that's why these scholarships are important because there are some barriers that. Are there before we can get to that point.

And it'll be really nice to encourage more people of color to do these certifications and learn, you know, more about dog training and behavior so that they can be the experts someday and speak on these panels. Right?

RACHEL: Yeah, that ties in really well with what I wanted to ask next, which is if there are any South Asian or Indian dog trainers or, you know, people of the global majority who are dog lovers and, or, or maybe who are already trainers listening to this, do you have anything you would like to say to them?

Any words of encouragement or advice you would like to share with them?

NAMITA: Yeah, absolutely. I think that if you want to do something and you are looking to your own culture and you see that that's not how things are, and there's nothing sort of like guiding you in that way. Remember that you don't need it to be that way.

It's your life. And, um, all it takes is you and even just one person to motivate you. So you know what, I'm here, Rachel's here and I'm sure there'll be more people on this podcast that are like you, so. All it takes is the need to learn these amazing ways to communicate with your dogs and, you know, just invest in a lot of time to study these things, reach out to BIPoC trainers that have sort of a similar principle in dog training, as you do and learn from what they're doing and feel motivated.

Because there's no reason to give up on your dreams because one day you're gonna wake up and be like, oh, why didn't I do what I wanted to do?

RACHEL: Absolutely. That's such a good point. And you are absolutely right. I'm here. You know, lots of people are here to just connect with you and to just chat and, you know, know that someone is there for you.

And so finally what's the best way for people who want to reach out to you or who want to get to know you a little bit more in your work, how can they get in touch with you?

NAMITA: Yeah, so I'm very active on Instagram. So you can follow me at @pawsitivecultr. And it's spelled as a paw as in, dog paw. also on my website, pawsitivecultr.com.

So I hope you reach out to me and I'm ready to help if we need anything.

RACHEL: Sure, I'll be sure to put all of that in the show notes and people can go and have a look at that. And connect with you'll reach out to you sometime, and thank you so much for your time being here. And thank you so much for your emotional labor and sharing your experiences.

You've been really lovely to speak to, and I hope we chat again soon.

NAMITA: Thank you so much, Rachel. This was such a pleasure and thanks for having me on.

RACHEL: Oh, thank you. Take care now. Bye.

NAMITA: Take care. Bye.

[OUTRO MUSIC]

RACHEL: Thank you all so much for listening! As mentioned, you can find links and transcriptions in our show notes. If you can't the link in the description, you can find them on my website dogatheart.co.uk/podcasts. If you enjoyed the podcast and would like to support us and what we're doing, you can buy us a coffee at buymeacoffee.com/dogatheart . You can also get updates about future guests and episodes on our Instagram @dog_atheart, I'll see you in the next one!