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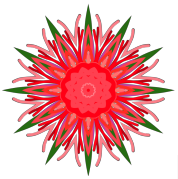

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DOG as a Second Language

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DEDICATION

For Daboo, who taught me of partnership, and for Lennier, who stretched my limits.

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CHAPTER 1: BEGINNING

Soon after the Creation, a chasm broke open across the earth. Man was left on one side of it, the animal world on the other. The animals seemed undisturbed by this separation from Man, except the Dog. He whined and ran up and down, seeking a way across. At last Man saw him and noticed the pleading look in his eyes.

"Come," he cried.

The Dog sprang, but the chasm was too wide for him. He reached the opposite side only with his front paws and hung there, struggling vainly to get up.

Then Man put out his hand and pulled the dog up to safety beside.

"You shall be my comrade for ever and ever," he said.

—Old Legend

You're getting a dog! Congratulations! Since you're responsible, you're reading up on dogs and making sure you have all the practical aspects of life with a dog taken care of. You make sure you've puppy-proofed the house, set up the dog's own area, and gather all the necessities of dog ownership: leash, collar, personal ID tag, food and water dishes, toys, chewing supplies, dog food, bed, and crate.

Few people, in all this activity and excitement, think of the inevitable language barrier that comes when adding a dog to the family.

In this we do our best friends a disservice, even with the best of intentions. It would be so much better if we would prepare ourselves with the ability to communicate

with these new family members. We would do them a favor to even acknowledge that there is a difference in the way we communicate, and that not all messages, therefore, will be read as intended.

For example, take our senses. Humans as a species are visually focused. Even our language leans toward visualization. “I see what you’re saying”, “I can look into that”, “Do you see?”, etc. So many phrases refer to the eyes, even when talking about something auditory or purely intellectual (like an idea) in nature. We also (overall) rely heavily on our sense of hearing, and less heavily on our sense of touch. Our least used senses, as a species, tend to be the senses of taste and smell.

Now let’s take our canine friends. Their world revolves around the sense of smell. If they had a language of words, they would likely have hundreds of smell words just as we have hundreds of words describing our visual world. Their hearing is also very good, but their vision is not as detailed as ours, and they tend not to rely as heavily on their eyes (sighthounds excepted). However, the dog’s sense of touch is heightened by the presence of their whiskers.

There is bound to be miscommunication between one species that depends so heavily on vision and barely registers smells and another species that depends heavily on smells and has simply adequate vision. Indeed, it is rare in nature for such extensive communication to exist at all—in this, the relationship and interdependence between humans and dogs is truly groundbreaking. By recognizing our species’ differences and keeping the distinctiveness of our communication styles in mind, we can help keep the lines of communication open both ways.

I talk about the “language” of dogs, a term I’m using loosely. Dogs definitely communicate with us as well as with members of their own species, but it is not a “language” in the strictest sense, for it lacks grammar and syntax. However, dogs communicate using specific body language signals which a human can quickly be taught to decipher. Most humans naturally pick up on the most extreme

emotions—a happy dog rolling in the grass with a ball in his mouth, for instance, will often bring a smile to people's faces, while a charging dog with teeth bared, barking and snarling, will often make even the most inquisitive person think twice about continuing to approach.

What most often damages a dog's relationship with its humans is anthropomorphism—the owner's treating and thinking of their dog as human, often without even realizing it. How many times have you seen a dog looking "guilty" and punished for doing something "he knows is wrong?" How many times have you heard: "Well I know my dog knows better than to pee in the house because whenever I come home and there's a puddle she always looks ashamed!" Does she really understand, or is her look another breakdown in human-canine communication?

> Since I mention anthropomorphism, I have to give a caveat here. Throughout this book, I will occasionally illustrate examples by saying things like "Your dog will think 'Blah, blah, words.'" I am not saying your dog is thinking in words, nor is he thinking that exact thing. It's merely an illustration to help you understand my point.
>
> Anthropomorphism can be helpful, and it can be hurtful. What differentiates this is accuracy, use, and the understanding of the pitfalls. Some times we just have to make our best guess, but behavior is communication. Making our best guess (and understanding we might be wrong!) is all part of the fun.

The signals that a dog is sending when he looks "guilty" are submissive signals—they do not mean the dog knows he's done wrong. The simpler explanation is that the dog is guessing he's about to be punished (because of their owner's unconscious body language signals and/or the situation around them) and is doing everything he can to try and reduce the punishment. Oftentimes, the dog does not connect their human's anger with the act of pooping or peeing, even in the house. Instead, they connect waste in the house + owner = bad things. So when Fluffy looks

ashamed (ears back, tail down, back hunched, avoiding eye contact) those are really signs of submission (ears back, tail down, back hunched, avoiding eye contact) as she tries to avoid or lessen punishment.

Of course, it's not so simple as that. Dogs are highly social, very intelligent animals, and they have rich emotional lives. But if there's a reasonable chance that your dog is simply confused or doesn't understand, *you cannot justify punishing him*. Try to be aware of your own preconceptions so that you can observe and respond to what is actually happening, rather than what you expect to be happening.

Ethology

Dogs do not operate in a vacuum. Dogs live in a world saturated with smells, sounds, and sights (as well as tastes and touch). Although our dogs are experts on us and are often seen doting on our every whim, their world does not revolve exclusively around us. While you may be your pooch's best friend, the pile of garbage over there still might smell a whole lot more interesting than the prospect of sitting nicely (and boringly) next to you.

Your dog also lives in a world where subtle body language cues can mean more than sound cues. Try giving your dog a big crinkly-eyed smile and use your gooshy voice to say, "What a naughty dog! You should be ashamed of yourself!" Did he come over wagging his tail happily?

Now put your hands on your hips, put your angry face on, shake your finger sternly at your pooch and yell "Good boy!" Did he look confused? Submissive? Why would he, since you called him a good boy?

The body language of a person communicates more than the voice alone, and so it is with dog-to-dog interactions. Canines speak to each other with a host of body language, accented by vocal communication. Humans, on the other hand, often try to communicate to their dogs with vocal interactions accented by body language. This combined with the fact that dogs do not understand English creates problems.

The fact is that dogs live in a dog world where greetings involve sniffing rear ends and friendship involves licking another dog's lips. Since our world involves very different greeting customs and expressions of friendship, signals can easily get confused. For example, many humans want to hug their dogs to show them the extent of their love. However, if you see one dog put their paws over another dog's shoulders, this usually signals either play or (rude) dominance. Is it any wonder then that many dogs get a nervous look on their faces when they get a hug? Combine that with the fact that when dogs get restrained for shots or blood draws or any number of unpleasant activities, the restraining hold looks an awful lot like a hug, and you may begin to understand your dog's point of view.

A hug

A restraining hold

How about jumping up? When dogs greet each other, it's not uncommon for there to be a lot of face licking and sniffing (along with rear sniffing if they are not very well acquainted or if they've been away from each other for a while) and playful bouncing around. When dogs try that with humans, it can be dangerous and we consider it to be impolite, but dogs don't naturally understand that. We need to teach them how to politely greet humans while keeping in mind that this is how they greet each other.

Even the appropriate use of teeth is different when considered from the point of view of a human versus that of a dog. Dogs learn a very valuable lesson called bite inhibition from each other. Basically, it teaches them how to properly use their mouths and how much pressure they

should apply at any one time. It helps to keep dogs safe while playing with each other, especially while engaging in the play style I call "teeth jockeying"—the wide-open mouth play often accompanied by a lot of menacing-sounding growling and some clinking of teeth against each other. The dogs often look like they're each trying to eat each other's heads at the same time. Dogs teach each other bite inhibition by letting each other know when they bite too hard on each other, usually with a yelp and a temporary ending of play. However, while it is fine for your dog to nip another dog in play (as long as it stays play and the dogs involved are being careful and courteous of each other) it is not okay for your dog to set teeth on human skin. It's easier for a dog to mistakenly break human skin than dog skin (maybe because of all that fur), and those dogs who think humans are fine to use as chew toys very often get into trouble of the kind that can take their life.

How can this information help you and your dog? By keeping these things in mind, you can help to minimize misunderstandings and create a much more harmonious, happy relationship between you and your dog. You'll be able to relax in the company of each other, knowing that your understanding of each other will increase day by day as you study your canine companion (he's already studying you!). Understanding what makes your dog tick and the possible motivations behind his actions can help you teach him acceptable alternatives, thereby winning yourself a human-savvy dog who has low stress and behaves beautifully in public! This in turn means that your dog will have many more opportunities to be with you, where he wants to be, instead of locked away at home (where he can't get into trouble).

Teach your dog, encourage him to be responsible and to control himself, and then reward him and enjoy him. As he becomes educated, trust him as much as he can handle, and increase your companionship. After all, isn't companionship the goal?

Communication, Respect | Relationship, Trust

By giving your dog clear communication and respect, you will build a strong relationship and trust between you, which will then increase your communication and respect, which then increases the relationship and trust, and this becomes a beautiful, positive cycle between you and your dog.

CHAPTER 2: LEARNING THEORY

His name is not Wild Dog any more, but the First Friend, because he will be our friend for always and always and always.
— Rudyard Kipling, The Cat That Walked By Himself

There are two main ways in which people teach dogs new behaviors: classical conditioning and operant conditioning. Both involve learning regarding the stimulus and the behavior, and both can be powerful in shaping a dog's behavior. You're probably using these theories already, even if you don't realize it.

There are some very important differences between the two conditionings. Classical conditioning pairs two events or stimuli (often, dealing with unconscious behaviors or emotional states). Operant conditioning pairs a conscious behavior with a subsequent event.

Classical Conditioning

Most people think of Pavlov and his slobbering dogs when they hear of classical conditioning. Ivan Pavlov was doing research on digestion, and he needed to collect saliva from his dogs. Unintentionally (at first), he conditioned them to salivate before the food even arrived. A bell (or other signal) would ring, and then dinner would come. In time, the dogs learned that the sound of the bell predicted food and began salivating in anticipation of eating. Soon enough all they needed to hear was the sound of a bell and they would begin to salivate—they didn't even need the food to follow!

How can we use this in teaching our own dogs behaviors? Well, this is the lesser used method of the two, but if you've ever seen a dog learn about a clicker (a click means food is coming), you've seen classical conditioning in action.

Classical conditioning is very helpful to change the way a dog feels about a situation or environment (but I'll talk about an even better way later on). For instance, when you take your dog to the vet simply to get him used to the process and give him lots of goodies and have a good time in the waiting room and then go home, you are classically conditioning your dog to feel good about the vet's office. Conversely, the dog who gets a pinch on the neck from a pinch collar or choke chain every time he sees a dog may begin to feel negatively about seeing dogs (this can cause an otherwise friendly dog to be "leash reactive" toward other dogs).

Operant Conditioning

Operant conditioning is the main method used to teach dogs new behaviors: a behavior is followed by a consequence. Because of the consequence, the behavior either becomes more likely or less likely to occur.

The following quadrant is often used to demonstrate the four possibilities when using operant conditioning.

Positive Reinforcement	Negative Reinforcement
Positive Punishment	Negative Punishment

"Positive" here indicates that something is being **added to** the environment while "negative" indicates something is being **taken away from** the environment for the dog.

"Reinforcement" indicates that the behavior is **more likely** to occur, while "punishment" means the behavior is **less likely** to occur. So what we end up with is:

Positive Reinforcement Something GOOD ADDED to the environment	**Negative Reinforcement** Something BAD TAKEN AWAY from the environment	Dog is MORE LIKELY to do the behavior the next time
Positive Punishment Something BAD ADDED to the environment	**Negative Punishment** Something GOOD TAKEN AWAY from the environment	Dog is LESS LIKELY to do the behavior the next time

What does this mean for you? As you are going about your normal everyday life, your dog is watching you. He is a master at watching you, and an expert on you and your habits. So if you consistently give him a treat when he is learning sit, he is more likely to sit when you say “sit” next time. If he gets all sorts of good stuff from the garbage while you aren’t watching, he’s more likely to get into the trash next time he’s left unattended. If the only time you call your dog is when he’s in trouble, he’s going to learn not to come when called. And if every time he jumps up to say hello, all his friends leave him, he’s likely to try harder not to jump up next time.

Remember, it takes time for your puppy to figure out what you are trying to teach him. Puppies and dogs do not operate in a vacuum—there are all sorts of noise and distractions and competing motivations while you are working with your dog. Take some time to take a look at your environment. What else is competing with you? Can you use a distraction to your advantage, or should you try to move away from it so your dog can concentrate on you better?

Motivation

Do you work for free? Many people still expect their dogs to work for us for free, simply because they are dogs and that’s “what dogs do”. While there are some dogs who

Hold on! You said there was a better way!

Conditioned Relaxation was designed by Kayce Cover, along with her Syn Alia Training System. It's a phenomenal way to change how a dog feels about a situation or environment. Read her books (listed in the Recommended Reading at the back of this book) to help you better communicate with your dog.

You can think of Conditioned Relaxation as a sort of natural combination of classical conditioning and operant conditioning. By teaching the dog to relax on command and allowing them to choose a comfort level with a situation, and then by challenging them to keep their cool in increasingly more difficult (for them) situations, we work in true partnership with our dogs. The training progresses amazingly fast because the dog has real buy-in to the results. They have a great way to tell you how they feel, and you and the dog work together to handle the situations that come up with more and more calm.

spoil their humans and appear to work for free, many others don't—and that's nothing to hold against them.

There are many things your dog can work for, and there's no reason you shouldn't give him the opportunity to earn those things. The first that often comes to mind is treats—and yes, your dog can work for treats. In fact, if you do want to give your dog a treat, I'd encourage you to have your dog work for that treat, rather than just getting it because he's so cute and you love him so much. If you use treats, remember they are candy. Feed small tastes, not a full meal of junk food! Using liquid or lickable treats can really help with this. But treats are not the end-all of training rewards: they are just the beginning.

Many people feed their dogs twice a day, and there is no reason your dog shouldn't work for his dinner. Lots of dogs enjoy it, in fact—dog bowls were invented for people, not for dogs. Ask for a sit or down and have the dog hold that position while you fill up the food bowl and set it down.

For more advanced dogs, you can turn around and fill up the water bowl as well, or maybe walk around for a little while before releasing your dog to eat his food. Or, ditch the bowl altogether and have him search out his kibble among furniture or grass or out of a treat dispensing toy—this will keep his mind active and healthy. You can also practice obedience commands while rewarding your dog with a little of his dinner each time. Keep in mind what you've been working on in your training sessions, and make sure you are asking for something your dog knows how to do and is capable (physically and mentally) of doing. If you want to make your dog's kibble more enticing, simply pour your dog's daily ration into a zip-top bag and throw in a few pieces of stinky treats, like liver treats. Seal it and let it set for a few hours, and all the kibble inside will begin to smell (and taste) like those treats.

You can ask your dog to work for the things he wants at other times too, including: when he wants to go outside (for completely housebroken dogs ONLY), when he wants to come back inside, before or in the middle of any sort of game with him, before, during and after walks, and more! If his favorite person is coming over and he has a solid down-stay, why not have him work to hold that down-stay while his favorite guest comes in and gets settled. Then release him to get some love! The possibilities are endless.

The most powerful reward available is also the least utilized. Your dog, like you, is a social creature. Therefore, your relationship with him can be plenty motivation, as long as you build a strong relationship. Think about your group of friends. How do you reward them for things you like? Chances are, you don't consciously reward them in any way except by your relationship. How did you come to be friends with those people? Respect, trust, and time spent together are probably on the top of the list, and the same is true for you and your dog. Build your relationship by paying careful attention to your dog. Trust him as much as he is able to be trusted and show respect for him by avoiding putting him in stressful or potentially painful situations without good

reason. Show him you are taking care with him. And invest your time and energy into the relationship. Likely, your dog will do the same and your relationship will grow. If by chance your dog does not respond with trust and respect while you are showing him trust and respect, your relationship is out of whack and needs fixing. Demand barking and pushy behavior are not acceptable. A brief separation will often help both of you to think clearly.

As you are going about your day with your dog, think about what he wants at any point in time. Notice what distracts him and draws his attention. Keep him guessing, and sometimes have him ignore the distraction but sometimes reward his work with you by letting him go to the distraction after he completes a behavior you asked of him (assuming the distraction is something safe). If you are asking your dog to do something that's difficult for him, be sure to raise your reward, as well. Really and genuinely thank him for his work for you—that way, he will be that much more motivated to work for you next time!

Distractions and Proofing

Keep in mind whenever you are practicing a command with your dog that there are three main ways you can make it harder for your dog: distance, duration, and distraction.

Duration is how long they are in the command (for instance, how long they must sit before being released) and is what I like to start off with.

Distance is how far away you are from your dog.

Distraction is, of course, what's going on around your dog.

When you and your dog are ready to make things harder, remember to only increase one of the D's at a time. So if your dog can handle a 15 second sit with nothing else going on around him and you right next to him, don't try to ask for a 15 second sit with you stepping away from him.

Decrease the duration drastically (maybe to 5 seconds or less) and work your distance up. Then drop both distance and duration as you add in distraction.

Whenever you are working on a new behavior with your dog, or if your dog is having trouble getting success with a behavior, think about the distractions around. When teaching a new behavior, you want to start off with no distractions, ideally. Since we all live in the real world, try to make your training area as low-distraction as possible. Crate any other dogs you may have or put them in a separate room. Turn off the TV or radio or computer. Make sure you yourself are focused and ready to concentrate on your dog. Make sure your dog is focused and not overly excited about something else.

If your dog is not focused on you before you add in distractions, you are only setting him up for failure. If he is overly excited, it will be much harder for him to maintain the self control he needs to succeed. Help him succeed. Try to break down complicated behaviors into smaller steps—especially if your dog seems stuck.

As your dog begins to understand what you're asking of him, you can slowly raise the bar by raising the distraction level. Begin to move around, thereby becoming a distraction yourself. Set out toys or treats. Have a helper walk calmly through the room, and then faster and faster until they can run through the room. Don't forget to support your dog through the training process—low, steady, near-constant verbal praise can keep a wiggly dog in position once they realize you are signaling to them that they are on the right track.

Think of it as a game. You want to help your dog win as often as possible *without cheating*. Yes, praising your dog throughout a difficult stay is allowed. No, you can't just "oh well" and treat your dog anyway when they fail the current challenge.

Different distractions have different values just as different rewards are more or less valuable (being offered a $20 bill is more rewarding than a $1 bill, and likewise, a

piece of steak is usually more rewarding to a dog than a stale old dog biscuit.) If the distraction is something the dog really wants, is close by, seems really fun or engaging, or is moving around a lot, then it's more difficult than something sitting still and quiet and being a little more boring.

If you are rewarding your dog with food, you have another tool at your disposal: the jackpot. Dogs can count at least rudimentarily. They know that two is more than one, and that three is even more yet. Use this to help reward your dog. When your dog does something really spectacular, reward him with one treat, then another, then another, then another, then another! I usually jackpot with five or so treats in a row, sometimes more if I was really blown away. The key is to give each treat one at a time, rather than presenting the dog with a handful of small treats. Many treats all at once basically equal one big treat (and 3 is more than 1, of course), so remember that if you want to use this concept in your training.

Remember, it takes time for your dog to figure out what you are trying to teach him. As we discussed, puppies and dogs do not operate in a vacuum—there's all sorts of noise and distractions and competing motivations while you are working with your dog. Take some time to take a look at your environment. What else is there competing with you? Can you use a distraction to your advantage, or should you try to move away from it so your dog can concentrate on you better? I love using distractions to my advantage whenever possible. Is Fido distracted by another dog being walked down the street while he is in a sit-stay? If it's safe, I may let him approach or interact briefly once he has completed the command.

Progress from lower value distractions to higher value distractions as quickly as you can, but not so quickly that your dog is failing all over the place. Games that are too hard are no fun.

The process of helping your dog learn to perform a behavior no matter what is going on around him is called proofing. The best way to proof a behavior is to ask for it in

all sorts of environments. If you are working on loose leash walking, have your dog walk politely with you to the car. Have them walk on a loose leash to the pet store (or through it, if they are at that level), to the park, and to training class. Once that's easy, have them walk politely past a playground or other high-energy environment, keeping safety in mind at all times.

> Don't just let your dog fail during the proofing stage. Help him correct his behavior and continue to win. Training at its best is a partnership, which is exactly what dogs have had in mind with humans since the beginning.

The more you ask of your dog (provided you have built up a good foundation for him), the more he will be able to give you. Well-trained and well-proofed dogs often have a much greater level of freedom and get to experience more with their owners than dogs who are not as well-proofed.

The time you put into your dog will reap you and him great rewards later on!

CHAPTER 3: VISUAL COMMUNICATION

A dog is not almost-human, and I know of no greater insult to the canine race than to describe it as such.

—John Holmes

Much of dogs' every day communication with pack mates is done through an elaborate system of body language. It is rare for the dog to be hanging out without paying attention. The dog who looks like they are not paying attention is likely a dog who is happy and content, free of stress, at least for the moment.

For the most part, dogs communicate with humans exactly as they do with other dogs. This is why it is so easy for miscommunication to occur. For instance, eye contact in dogs is rarely a good thing; even best friends will rarely give each other direct eye contact. However, eye contact is extremely important to humans and so we must train our dogs to accept and trust eye contact with us. Fortunately, many dogs will look to humans for help when stuck in a puzzle they can't solve[1].

Likewise, when we call a dog, most of us expect the dog to come running in a direct line right to us. In the dog

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[1] Monique A. R. Udell When dogs look back: inhibition of independent problem-solving behaviour in domestic dogs (Canis lupus familiaris) compared with wolves (Canis lupus)**11**Biology Letters http://doi.org/10.1098/rsbl.2015.0489

world, that would be a rude greeting, and may be responded to with a correction from the other dog. The polite thing in the dog world is to approach in a curve at an easy, loping pace—something that many humans interpret as their dog dawdling or thinking about running off (and indeed, this is the case sometimes!). We need to teach our dogs to approach us in a manner that we enjoy, rather than expecting them to just automatically know.

Other times, humans inadvertently miss much of what their dog is trying to tell them, whether it's "I'm excited" or "Let's play" or "I'm scared". Let's take a look at some common emotions and situations in which dogs may be communicating. By carefully reading the whole dog, you can begin to quickly sum up an accurate description of what your dog is feeling and/or saying. You MUST read the whole dog—if you concentrate on only one body part (ears or tail for instance) you may misinterpret what your dog is trying to tell you and you will certainly miss out on nuance.

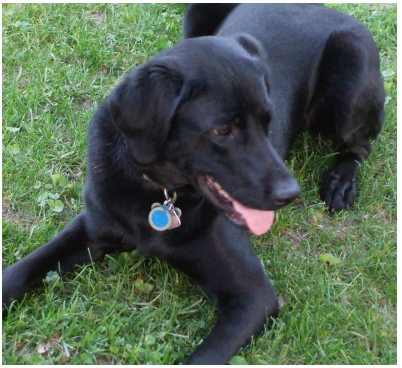
Friendliness

A friendly, content dog is often in "neutral" so to speak. With their head about even with their bodies or high but not tense, tail held in normal carriage (which differs by breed) and ears relaxed and "floppy" (even if prick), they exude relaxation and confidence. You won't find much tension at all in a dog communicating friendly intention—no body tension, no tension around the tail, ears, head, face, or neck. The commisure, which is the corners of the mouth, is held in normal carriage as well, neither pulled back nor pursed forward. Often the mouth is closed, but it may be slightly open or panting with a big old goofy dog smile. The eyes should be nice and soft, blinking, warm eyes—the kind of eyes that say, "take me home".

Lenny shows a beautiful relaxed face here, with bright, happy eyes, relaxed ears, and relaxed, open mouth. His head is confidently high, and his tail is held midlevel with its customary curve (individual to the dog), also indicating confidence. This is a picture of a happy, friendly, confident dog.

This is Sasha, a very friendly female Siberian Husky. You can see how she is so soft she almost looks like a stuffed animal. Her weight is evenly distributed on all four feet, neither leaning forward nor backward. Since Sasha is looking at something in particular, her head is held fairly high and her ears are pricked up, but there is no tension in her face or body, and her tail is loosely held in its medium position (Huskies naturally carry their tails high).

Boo the Lab is demonstrating a down while watching some puppies play (out of frame). Her ears are perked up but soft, and her eyes are soft, although you can see some whites as she looks to the side to watch the play. Her mouth is loose and open.There is a little tension under her eyes and in her limbs, as she is ready to play.



Charlie the mutt is showing overwhelmingly friendly body language, with his head held about even with his back, his eyes and body soft and free of tension, and his mouth slightly open. His tail is relaxed and curved over his back, which is normal carriage for Spitz type dogs like him. He avoids eye contact with the camera and walks in a polite slight curve, and his ears are relaxed but directed to the sides.

Playfulness

Few people don't recognize a play-bow, that herald of doggie play. With the hind end up in the air and the front end low to the ground, the elbows hovering slightly above the ground, this is the move that makes me want to join in the fun! The tail can be held either up or down and is typically loose, possibly waving in long sweeps. The tail should not be stiff. The face and body should be relaxed with soft squinty eyes. The mouth may be closed or partly open, but the tongue is contained in the mouth rather than

A word about tails:

Tails are one of the most misunderstood canine body parts. Almost every one of my clients has heard "a wagging tail means a happy dog." Unfortunately, and sometimes dangerously, this is far from true. A wagging tail merely means an excited dog—a dog who is in a state of arousal. Sometimes, it's an indication of friendliness, but it can also be an indication of anxiety, stress, territoriality, and aggression. By carefully looking at the tail and keeping in mind the whole body of the dog (and therefore, what the rest of the dog is telling us), we can accurately determine the dog's state of being.

Height is one important indicator when you are looking at tails. First, you need to determine the natural carriage of the dog's tail. Some dogs, like the Westie, have a tail that naturally sticks almost straight up, whereas other dogs, like the Italian Greyhound, have a tail that curves inward and down when at rest. Most dogs are somewhere in between. Regardless, when the dog's tail is carried higher than normal, that dog is probably feeling confident, but it could also be an indicator of territoriality or aggression (if the tail is carried stiff, high, and the tip of the tail is facing forward, this can warn of territorial aggression). If the dog's tail is carried lower than normal, that could indicate stress, anxiety, or fear. Keep in mind that the tail could be being used for balance, and that can affect its position.

The speed of the wag also matters. Generally, the faster the wag, the more excited (or aroused) the dog. The breadth of the wag is another important indicator. The more area the tail sweeps through, the more friendly the message. A short, quickly vibrating wag (also known as "flagging") is often a warning.

One of the most interesting things to look at, in my opinion, is the tail bias. A tail that is wagging more to the dog's left indicates avoidance or uncertainty. A tail that is wagging more toward the dog's right indicates happiness and confidence. To make this discovery, researchers videotaped dogs as they watched a stranger and a familiar person approaching. The familiar person was greeted with a right-wagging tail, while the stranger was greeted with a left-wagging tail (*A. Quaranta, M. Siniscalchi, G. Vallortigara, Asymmetric tail-wagging responses by dogs to different emotive stimuli, Curr. Biol., 17 (2007), pp. R199-R201*).

Watch your dog's tail and see what you can glean!

lolling. The ears are at half mast, and the dog is gazing along a straight line from his nose, often at an angle from the dog or person he is inviting to play. The play-bow typically lasts only a few seconds before it explodes into play or, if ignored, the dog sinks into a down or walks away.

A playful dog will look goofy and joyful, with a floppy, rag doll appearance throughout its body. Neither dog involved in proper play will appear concerned, even if the play involves neck nibbles, leg holds, teeth jockeying, or mock hunting. Play should be frequently interrupted by the participants themselves with a play pause and some calming signals or play bows, just to reinforce to everyone involved that this is just a game, not for keeps. A play pause may not last long—often only a half second or so, but the dogs may give calming signals (often a look away) during it. Any yelp or indication of pain or fear in either participant should result in an instantaneous play pause, and this pause should last longer—something like two or three seconds, with plenty of calming signals from each dog and perhaps a neck nuzzle from the offending dog to make up. Play is often resumed with either an invitation from the offender or a playful pounce from the victim. Either dog may politely request the continuation of play by using a play bow.

One of the most important themes in play is cooperation—without this, it's no fun. In order for play to be enjoyable, the skill sets should be matched. Just as people don't like playing when they know they'll be beaten, dog also often refuse to play when there's no chance of "winning". Because of this, you will also see something called "handicapping" when the two dogs who are playing are mismatched in physical ability, perhaps because of age or size. Often, to make things easier on a puppy, an adult dog will choose to play while laying on the ground, and will not use their full strength when wrestling—something called "self-regulation". Dogs who are buddies also often show something called "mirroring", which is when the dogs mimic each other's body language.

Boo and Lenny are playing here (Boo in the foreground, Lenny in the background). While they are facing each other, they are off-set a bit and just slightly angled. Both are giving great play-bows to signal to each other. Boo has her hackles up, which is a sign of arousal (excitement).

Boo and Lenny are playing again, and they are fully into very intense play (meaning play pauses are even more important than normal). You can see the whites of both of their eyes, but that is because they are looking at each other but pointing their noses slightly away (polite). Boo's nose is wrinkled as she bares her teeth, but overall both dogs look loose and silly.

Boo the Lab is giving a beautiful play bow here to encourage the tiny puppy in front of her to play with her. She is politely turning her face slightly away from the pup to avoid direct eye contact. Her whole body is soft and wiggly. The puppy is more tense, with his ears to the side and his tail held very high. His back legs are braced, but he is also being polite, by facing Boo at an angle rather than head on.

Anxiety and Stress

An anxious or stressed dog will often respond with calming signals. There are many calming signals a dog can use, some of which might be responses to internal states (not conscious communication) while others may be responses to external situations (conscious communication). Some examples of signals that may not be meant as communication are: blinking, tongue flicks and lip licking, yawning, body checks (males). Some examples of signals that are probably intended to be communication are: splitting (moving between two other parties) also known as a pass-through, sitting, laying down, moving away, looking away, moving in a curve, lifting up a paw, or half-closing the eyes. Some signals are displacement behaviors, that is, they are behaviors that are normal for dogs to do, but when done out of context (without a typical trigger), they are calming signals. Some examples include yawning, sniffing, and grooming.

Lenny's ears are held slightly back, the whites of his eyes are showing a bit, he's carefully looking away from what makes him nervous (the camera), he has some facial tension, and he is giving an exaggerated tongue flick.

Lenny is lip-licking here, as well as looking away from the camera. His ears are still held to the side and his face is still tense, indicative of his stress.

This is "Grumpy", a rescued puppy mill survivor about six years old, a few weeks into her foster stay with us. Her ears are held back but not flattened, and her tail is partially but not fully tucked. Her back is still quite rounded, however, and there is tension in her face and body. However, her eyes are squinty as she feels just comfortable enough to tell me she really wants no trouble, and you can hardly see any whites of her eyes. A few days after going back to the shelter, she was adopted by a wonderful family and is now thriving.

Zelda is showing a mix of expressions. Her back is rounded, with her tail tucked under her and curled around. Her mouth is closed and her front legs are braced. However, her head is high and her ears are not fully pinned back, although they are held back. She is very uncertain about being in the car, but hasn't decided what to do about it yet.

Riley the Malinois mix and Cheyenne the German Shepherd are learning to play politely together. Both are seen here in a play bow on opposite ends of an obstacle. Riley has a nice play bow, but Cheyenne's is more of a play crouch, with her ears to either side, her back rounded, and her tail held low, all indicating her uncertainty. Riley's straighter back, relaxed ears, and high tail indicate her confidence.

Fear

A fearful dog may or may not give many calming signals, depending on how deep in the clutch of fear he is. Trembling is often a sign of fear, as is tucking the tail up between the legs toward the belly and holding the ears pressed back against the head. The fearful dog will be tense and you can see that tension in the face and body. The dog will often carry their weight backward, more on the rear legs, ready to retreat if allowed. Often fearful dogs will try to escape or hide, but if they can't or don't think that approach will work, they may resort to aggression. Many times, aggression is rooted in fear, rather than other causes. One of the biggest signs of impending violence is what is known as whale eye, in which you can see the whites all around the eye. If the dog is looking straight ahead and you see any white, that indicates a heightened state of arousal, but if you can see the whites all around the eye, that is whale eye, and indicates that this dog feels like his very life is threatened. This is a dog that will very likely bite if continued to be pressed.

Aggression

A truly aggressive dog is a sight to behold and an experience few forget. Most of the time when people talk about aggression, they are referring to the negotiations (barking, growling, warning looks, the "freeze," bared teeth, etc.) that occur before the aggression actually happens. Eye contact between dogs is rarely a good thing, and sustained eye contact is nearly always a warning that things are going badly. Many times before launching an attack, the aggressor will go completely still, like a statue, for a few seconds. This “freeze" is often your last warning to intervene before a fight erupts.

“Sassy” was an extremely fearful-aggressive mother dog with Terrier heritage. You can see the hard stare she gives the camera. Her mouth and face and body are all tense, and her body weight is forward, indicating that when she moves, it will be toward me and the camera. Her ears are stiff and up, and you can just see the commisure of her mouth pursing forward. Her back is slightly rounded, and her tail is down, however, indications she’s not confident.

Socially healthy dogs give plenty of warning before resorting to aggression, as they understand that fights are risky business, to be avoided if at all possible. These warnings can include direct eye contact and freezes, but can include a host of earlier signals. Bared teeth, especially with the commisure (the ends of the mouth) pushed forward, is a sign of the dog beginning to think of aggression. The hackles (the hair by the shoulderblades) may be raised and the tail is often carried high. The dog will almost always be carrying their weight high and forward, more on the front legs, indicating their intent to move forward. The feet are planted, with tension all along the body and head, and the eyes are hard and cold with a direct stare. The ears are often held stiffly, either forward, to the sides, or back, depending on how confident the dog is feeling. Often, dogs will flare their whiskers forward just before launching an aggressive assault, although you may not want to be close enough to see this, in that case.

A word about hackles:

Hackles are also misunderstood. The hackles are basically the hair along the spine. Some say that forward hackles (by the shoulder) and back hackles (by the rear) indicate different things, although I haven't seen this to be true. Many think that hackles mean aggression, but this is not precisely true. Like the wag of the tail, hackles merely mean arousal. Aggressive dogs may have hackles up, but so too may playful, excited dogs. While you will want to watch any overly excited dog while playing to make sure they continue to mind their manners, the raising of hackles itself does not spell trouble. Instead, look at the rest of the dog to see how to interpret the hackles.

Polite versus Rude

Just as people have a concept of polite or rude behavior, so do dogs. Some dogs may seem oblivious, while other dogs are very sensitive to doggy etiquette. Rude behavior may be tolerated, corrected, or responded to with over-reaction. Puppies are able to get away with much more rude behavior than adult dogs, just as human children are often allowed to be more rude than adults. This gives them time to learn the ropes of communication with their species: what is acceptable and what is not. Most dogs will give puppies a “puppy license”, allowing them to just about get away with murder without recourse. Some dogs however, especially those who are most sensitive to social rules, may still require puppies to behave with politeness. When these dogs correct puppies gently and with forgiveness, the puppies learn a valuable lesson that will help them later in life. Puppies enjoy puppy license until about four or five months of age, when practically overnight the license is taken away and they are required to behave with adult manners. Intact males receive the hardest lessons, as this is also the time when their testosterone is spiking above adult levels and all the males around seem inclined to illustrate to the youngster the importance of showing deference and respect.

So what is considered rude, and what is considered polite? How does a correction look, versus damage-inducing aggression? Rude behavior in the dog world includes direct, straight-on approaches, especially with direct eye contact. Putting the paws on another dog's shoulders is also considered rude, as is invading another dog's space. The polite behaviors to the above situations are: approaching in a curve and avoiding direct eye contact, and respecting another dog's space. Even the stereotypical doggy butt-sniff has rules: the appropriate sniff should involve the nose being held a couple inches from the other dog. A sniff with the nose touching the other dog's rear is intrusive and rude.

Some dogs will put up with and ignore rude behavior, while others will confront the rude dog. Especially for puppies, corrections may be limited to standing tall over the other dog, perhaps with a loud roar and/or a muzzle grab (the teacher dog grabs the youngster's muzzle gently but firmly in his mouth and holds for a couple seconds before releasing).

Even harsh corrections, while sometimes sounding and appearing fierce, should do no damage, and the dogs should make up afterwards. Often, the dog being corrected will admit their error by lowing their body stature and sometimes voluntarily going belly-up. The "alpha roll" is non-existent in the dog world because dogs do not force each other into this submissive position. Instead, it is a position assumed voluntarily as an apology.

The making up later may often involve the former offender licking at the lips of the teacher dog, and often includes some gentle hanging out or play. This is essential to keeping the emotions of a pack healthy and cohesive. However, there should be a cooling off period between the correction and the making up. This cool down time is necessary because it allows for both dogs to calm down from the stress inherent to a correction and so both dogs are in a healthy state of mind again with their self control intact. Sometimes puppies who don’t understand this will

come scampering up to the teacher dog wanting to make up and are generally ignored for a few seconds until they have calmed down a little. Between two socially adept dogs, the dog who was corrected will often leave the other dog alone for some time—even minutes in some cases—before attempting to make up.

Rocky the Rat Terrier mix is showing some over-excitement. His tail is wagging, but it is held stiff and high, and his body weight is forward. His eyes are gleaming with stress, and there's tension all over his face and body. His mouth is wide open, and the upper lip is just slightly lifted, showing part of a canine, and his tongue is spatulate (wider at the bottom and curving upward), indicating the stress of his over-arousal.

CHAPTER 4: SMELL/TASTE

The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is his dog. . . .He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer; he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. . . .When all other friends desert, he remains.

—George G Vest

Smell is the most powerful sense dogs possess and the sense by which they most commonly learn about the world around them. Since we in comparison have no sense of smell, it is almost impossible to imagine what we are missing. Dogs use their sense of smell not only to gather information but also to communicate, most often through territorial markers.

Unlike wolves, who tend to mark mostly at the perimeter of their territory, dogs mark more often the further into their territory you get. The samples left behind contain much information, including the dog's age, gender, emotional state and whether or not the dog was in heat. Since the scent can last for days, the scent marks act as sign posts, and other dogs can sniff the scent mark to learn information about the individual claiming that area. Interestingly, in a pack of dogs, the more dominant dog often scent marks last and scent marks over the top of the

other dog's marks in the group, so their scent would be most available to any dog passing by.[2]

It is estimated that the dog's sense of smell is superior to a human's by somewhere in the vicinity of 10,000 to 100,000 times, and much of this is due to the structure of their nose and the brainpower devoted to processing the vast amount of information received [3]. Dogs have been shown to be able to smell cancer [4], fear, ovulation, exercise, disease[5], explosives, drugs, decomposition, and even electricity. They can identify one individual from another by scent alone, whether that individual is canine or human. This is why dogs have been so prevalently used in searches, whether it is search and rescue, drugs, fire, or police work. They even have been employed to detect things like bedbugs and termites.

How is it that dogs have such a wonderful nose? Simply put, their noses (and brains) are built for smelling! Your dog's nostrils lead into the nasal cavities. Each nasal cavity is separated from each other by a nasal septum, so his right nostril (or "nare") leads to the right nasal cavity, and his left nare leads to his left nasal cavity. Each cavity is filled by turbinate bones designed to make the air swirl, and are covered with mucous to warm and moisten the air[6]. You may have noticed that when your dog is "on the scent," he sniffs much more rapidly than he does normally. This rapid sniffing causes more turbulence in the air inside the nose, and the extra swirling causes more odor molecules to stick to the olfactory epithelium. The olfactory epithelium is the surface that traps odor and analyzes it—it is lined with millions of receptors that are packed much more tightly than in

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[2] Jon Bradshaw, Dog Sense

[3] Jon Bradshaw, Dog Sense

[4] http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/U/UNP-0066/UNP-0066.pdf

[5] Alexandra Horowitz, Inside of a Dog

[6] William G Syrotuck, Scent and the Scenting Dog

humans. Dogs have much greater diversity of olfactory receptors than humans do, meaning that they can tell the difference between a greater variety of specific scents than we can. Each receptor encodes what molecule stuck to it and how strong the odor was, then passes that information on to the olfactory nerves which go to the brain. The part of the brain that analyzes smell, the olfactory cortex, is about 40 times larger in dogs than it is in humans[7].

The inhalation is not the only extraordinary part. As one inhales, one must exhale. When doges are sniffing, they go about it a bit more elegantly than humans. Rather than exhale out the same hole they inhale through, the air actually exits the nose through small slits in the side, directed out and back away from the source of the scent so as to avoid disturbing the scent. This creates a small current that actually draws in more scent to be smelled[8].

Why do dog's sniff each other's rear ends? There are special sacs known as anal sacs located near the dog's rectum. These anal sacs contain huge amounts of scent, and the odor varies between individuals, meaning each individual has its own unique, signature scent. The scent slowly changes over time, which is why dogs who have been apart for an extended period of time spend much more time sniffing each other's rears than dogs who have not been apart from each other[9]. Interestingly, dogs do have protocol about sniffing: including proper length of time and distance. As mentioned, dogs who have a habit of making contact with their nose to another dog's rectum are setting themselves up for being told off by a dog who is more sensitive to doggie manners. Dogs who sniff too long often find their source of information wanders away from them, and if that is not sufficient enough of a hint, may be given a serious (and scary-sounding) warning.

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[7] Jon Bradshaw, Dog Sense

[8] Alexandra Horowitz, Inside of a Dog

[9] Jon Bradshaw, Dog Sense

Scent is the dog's primary way of identifying people, places, and other dogs. They learn about smell before they are even born, which is when they learn their mother's scent and the smell of the food she is eating[10]. However, the strength of an odor will dissipate over time, and will even be undetectable if the wind is blowing in the wrong direction. Those who have seen a tracking dog at work know the world of smells dogs are constantly immersed in is at least as vivid and interesting as the world of sight we live in. Everywhere we go we pick up smells and leave our smell behind. This is why dogs can track humans, by paying attention to and smelling the unique odor each person leaves behind. Trained dogs can work even on busy urban streets because they have been trained to ignore all smells except for the one they are looking for.

Pet dogs have no less of an olfactory super-power. Your pet dog is living in a world of smells as rich as the one the tracking dog lives in: he just may never have been rewarded by you for paying attention to this world (and may even have been punished by you for it!). Yet pet owners all over know the dangers of leaving their shoes out for their dog to find. Why is this? Shoes are extremely porous, and feet are extremely stinky. This combination means that our shoes smell a ton like us—enough to perhaps cause dogs to think of them as extensions of us. No wonder the lonely dog snuggles up to a shoe, which perhaps entices him to relieve some stress by chewing at the same time[11].

What about the dog who is given a bath by his owner or a groomer, and promptly follows it with a roll in the grass? It is likely that the smell of the shampoo, or the simple absence of organic smell, is offensive[12]. If the world is a world of smell to our dogs (as opposed to our world of

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[10] Jon Bradshaw, Dog Sense

[11] Alexandra Horowitz, Inside of a Dog

[12] Alexandra Horowitz, Inside of a Dog; Patricia McConnell, For the Love of a Dog

sight), then scrubbing away as many smells as we can perhaps is akin to doing away with as many sights as we can. Perhaps a bit of balance is in order between stinky and stink-less, just as there is between cluttered and overly pristine.

Jacobsen's organ

Here is an organ that is often difficult for humans to wrap their brains around: the vomeronasal organ, or the Jacobsen's organ. This is a pair of fluid-filled ducts located between the nostrils and the roof of the mouth, behind the front teeth. This organ has a muscular pump to move fluid in and out of the nose and down into itself, thereby bringing molecules from the outside world into the vomeronasal organ for analysis. This does cause a delay, however, from the time an odor molecule enters your dog's nose to the time it reaches the vomeronasal organ, so this is not an organ for "on-the-fly" analysis (such as running a trail), like the nose is. Instead, this organ is great for scents that do not change by the second, but instead remain fairly constant. This gives highly detailed information, since the scent is essentially analyzed twice—once by the nose, and secondly by the vomeronasal organ[13].

The Jacobsen's organ's primary function is to detect pheromones, and the information gleaned there goes straight to the more primitive parts of the brain which hold basic emotions and sexual desires, rather than to the olfactory cortex. This organ detects large molecules which are typically undetectable as far as odor goes[14].

Many trainers and behaviorists have begun to put this information to good use, incorporating the use of a pheromone called DAP in their work with stressed and anxious or fearful dogs. DAP stands for Dog Appeasing Pheromone and is derived from the pheromone given off by

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[13] Jon Bradshaw, Dog Sense

[14] Whole Dog Journal, November 2004 Issue, http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/7_11/features/Canine-Sense-of-Smell_15668-1.html

mother dogs while their pups are nursing. The intention is to utilize the pheromone to reduce stress and relax the dog. DAP is available in three forms: a collar (so the dog can wear it), a spray (so you can spray your dog's bedding), and a plug-in form (to be present throughout the air of the chosen room).

Now, the sense of taste is another matter; dogs have a poor sense of taste. Dogs have taste buds just like humans do, but humans have significantly more than dogs (about 9,000 as opposed to about 1,700). This means that humans have a much more developed sense of taste than our canine companions. Dogs can taste the four basic sensations we can: salty, sweet, sour, and bitter. However, while humans have a strong response to and desire for salt, dogs do not. Dogs do, however, have specific taste sensors that respond to the tastes of meats and fats. Since so much of their diet is meat, it makes sense that they would have a high response to and desire for things that taste like meat. However, like us, dogs tend to like sweet tastes and dislike bitter tastes. Like other carnivores (including cats), and unlike us, dogs have a specific region of the tongue (the tip) dedicated to tasting water. This may be due to the fact that dogs have a high-meat diet, and meat tends to be salty. To keep fluid balances in line, it makes sense to have taste buds that will encourage the dog to seek out water, and in fact when these are active, dogs tend to drink more water, and seem to enjoy it more[15].

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[15] Stanley Coren —http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/canine-corner/201104/how-good-is-your-dogs-sense-taste

CHAPTER 5: AUDITORY

No one appreciates the very special genius of your conversation as the dog does.
—Christopher Morley

Many humans consider barking to be a nuisance, but in reality it is the sound of a language. Different barks mean very different things, from "Play, play!" to "I'm afraid" to "Get off my lawn!". It takes practice to be able to determine one bark or growl from another, but the extremes are fairly easy to recognize. Most people, for instance, immediately sense danger when hearing an aggressive bark, while many people relax and smile hearing a playful bark.

Most people are surprised to learn about the existence of dog laughter. Dog laughter is a breathy "huh-huh" sound heard when dogs are playing or just before they begin playing. Studies have shown that playing the sounds of dog laughter relaxes many stressed dogs and puts them in a more playful mood. There are even dog laughter CDs available for purchase! Dog laughter is a sound only heard socially; unlike whines, barks, and howls, it does not occur when there is no one to hear it.

Dogs hear supremely well. They can detect sounds much higher in pitch than we can and are attuned to fainter sounds than we, as well. They can hear not just dog whistles, but also fluorescent lights, chirping of rodents and insects as they navigate, and insect bodily vibrations[16].

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[16] Alexandra Horowitz, Inside of a Dog

They can understand the vocal stresses and tones of human speech, which adds to the illusion that they understand human language. While not understanding language, research has shown that dogs do have a limited understanding of human speech. That is, while grammar is tough, they do understand tones and stresses and they can learn some words (as owners already know). They also have a hard time distinguishing between two similar sounding words.

Rico, a German border collie, was celebrated as the smartest dog on the planet for a few years. He has been tested and proved to be able to reliably fetch two hundred different toys by name or by seeing the picture of the toys. In addition, if presented with an unfamiliar word, he will fetch the unfamiliar toy. Since Rico's testing in 2004, many other dogs have also been tested and proven similar capabilities[17]. Since then, Chaser the border collie has breezed past Rico's records, recognizing more than 1,000 words for objects.

Dogs have a wide repertoire of sounds they can make, and each has a distinct meaning. A whine is differentiated from a growl, which is also different from a bark. Different kinds of whines and barks and growls mean different things. These meanings are often accentuated by body language, clarifying and underlining these vocal statements, but even recorded vocalizations, played back in the dog's absence to a new dog, will have the intended effect.

Researchers recorded a variety of growls and then allowed a single dog to enter a room, where a bone lay. While play growls were played back for the dog to hear, that dog had no trouble chewing on the bone. However, when possessive growls were played, the test dog backed away

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[17] Alexandra Horowitz, Inside of a Dog

from the bone, even without seeing the dog who was growling[18].

Some sounds are incidental, that is, they occur as part of activity, rather than as part of intentional communication. One example is the play slap, in which both front paws land on the ground at once (often accompanied by a play bow). Another is the teeth chatter, which is an expression of nervous arousal (excitement). Then there is the snuffling of a dog sniffing the ground or searching for a scent.

Howling, or baying, is a rallying cry, and celebrates or calls for the unity of the group. Wolves howl to pump themselves up before a hunt or to call the members of the pack together from afar. Some dog breeds, such as Huskies, have retained the howl. Other breeds like beagles, coonhounds and Bloodhounds have turned this into a bay, sort of a cross between a bark and a howl. The bay functions to let the other members of the pack, human or canine, know where they are and to typically communicate excitement or frustration (losing the track).

Barking is contagious, we know, but what is it all about? Various barks have been studied, and it has been shown that barks are functionally different from each other and can be told apart[19]. In fact, based on this research[20], PBS's Nova has a site on which you can test your ability to distinguish between different dog barks[21], and I encourage you to try it for yourself.

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[18] Faragó, T., Pongrácz, P., Range, F., Virányi, Z. & Miklósi, Á. 2010b. "The bone is mine": affective and referential aspects of dog growls. Animal Behaviour, 79, 917–925.

[19] http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2011/06/dog-bark-origins/

[20] Pongracz, P., Miklosi, A., Molnar, Cs., and Csanyi, V. (2005) Human Listeners Are Able to Classify Dog (Canis familiaris) Barks Recorded in Different Situations. Journal of Comparative Psychology, 119, 136-144.

[21] http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/nature/meaning-dog-barks.html

Attack barks are short and sharp, often deeper in sound and they come rapid-fire like a machine gun. They are aggressive in sound, and even young children can identify these barks.

Stranger-alerting barks tend to be lower in pitch and harsher in sound, with many repetitions. They sound more aggressive than some other types of barks, but less aggressive than the attack barks.

Isolation barks are more variable in sound, but are fairly easy for people to identify. They sound "fearful" and filled with "despair" and are much higher pitched in general. They are often one or two repetitions with spacings of time between.

Crying is unmistakable—a high pitched keening that sometimes almost turns into barking but not quite. This is the infant version of the isolation bark.

Excitement barks are a bit more ambiguous and harder to tell apart. They may have a few repetitions, with quite a bit of panting in between.

Frustration barks tend to be one or two barks with short spaces between, and then longer spaces after. They tend to be sharp, but medium pitched.

Play barks are often one or two barks separated by play-growls or panting or dog-laughter. They tend to be fairly high pitched, but seem to repeat "phrases." They are also directed at someone, either human or animal.

A Hungarian ethologist studied various dogs and people and concluded that people can differentiate between various barks, but could not tell what individual they came from. All groups studied (except for young children who do not own a dog) performed above chance when categorizing barks. Being blind or having significant dog experience did not increase the chances of categorizing correctly. Only the age of the participant mattered: the higher the age, the more accurate the

categorization[22]. In another study, five different dogs were recorded in two situations: when a stranger was at the fence and when they were isolated. They found that different dogs listening to these barks seemed to be able to tell the difference between the individuals and also between the two contexts[23].

In another study, the researchers recorded thousands of different barks from 14 different dogs in 6 different situations and fed them into an algorithm to see if a machine could tell the difference between the barks. The contexts were "Stranger", "Fight", "Walk", "Alone", "Ball" (which possibly may have been frustration), and "Play". The best recognition rates were for the "Stranger" and "Fight" barks, and the poorest rates were for the "Play" barks. Not only was the machine able to tell the difference between individuals but also between most contexts, although humans outperformed the machine when distinguishing between "Play" and "Alone" barks[24].

Like barking, growling can vary based on the situation, but typically there are two main types of growl: the aggressive growl and the play growl. The aggressive growl tends to be lower in pitch and more rumbly, although it can intensify into a louder, harsher snarl if the warning is not heeded. Play growls tend to be higher pitched with tiny mini-breaks while the dog pants.

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[22] http://molcsa.web.elte.hu/irattar/tezisek_en.pdf Ethological study of acoustic communication in family dogs, doctoral thesis by Csaba Molnar

[23] http://molcsa.web.elte.hu/irattar/Molnar2009.pdf. Dogs discriminate between barks: The effect of context and identity of the caller; Csaba Molnár, Péter Pongrácz∗, Tamás Faragó, Antal Dóka, Ádám Miklósi Department of Ethology, Eötvös Loránd University, H-1117 Budapest, Pázmány Péter sétány 1/C, Hungary

[24] http://molcsa.web.elte.hu/irattar/Molnar_etal_2008.pdf classification of dog barks: a machine learning approach; Csaba Molnár · Frédéric Kaplan · Pierre Roy · François Pachet · Péter Pongrácz · Antal Dóka · Ádám Miklósi

Compounding this differentiation is the fact that some breeds are known to "talk" (like Rottweilers), which sounds an awful lot like a growl, but has more variety to the pitch and is long and drawn out. Other breeds like Huskies "talk" as well, but for a Husky this is higher pitched and less similar to the growl. A Husky's "talking" has the same properties of being variable in pitch and long and drawn out, just like a Rottie's "grumbling" or "talking".

Yelps communicate pain or being startled, and are sharp, high-pitched sounds. Screams are heard only when the dog is in extreme distress like pain or fear, and are sharp high-pitched sounds like yelps, but are much longer in duration. They are unforgettable if you've ever heard one. Grunts are low pitched and soft, and communicate pleasure and bonding. They are most often heard in puppyhood, and many dogs outgrow grunting.

Whines communicate excitement or anxiety, as well as a sense of not wanting conflict. They are typically heard while the dog is offering appeasing friendly signals mixed with calming signals. They are higher pitched and nasal, and some dogs are quite skilled at controlling the range of pitch of their whines—"singing".

CHAPTER 6: TOUCH

Dogs have given us their absolute all. We are the center of their universe. We are the focus of their love and faith and trust. They serve us in return for scraps. It is without a doubt the best deal man has ever made.

—Roger Caras

Dogs do communicate some through touch, but less than humans do. For dogs, touch is limited to corrections, fights, play wrestling, or cuddles with a carefully chosen, close companion. In the context of communing with your dog, lucky is the owner (and dog!) whose dog feels a close enough bond with them to cuddle. Dogs' whiskers help them identify obstacles in their path and sense air currents and vibrations. The sense of touch is well-developed in newborn puppies and is how they find their mother (and their milk.)

Dogs can be quite choosy about touch, just as humans can be. All of us know a human who is extraordinarily touch-oriented. They are the huggers, the arm-pumpers (rather than the simple hand-shake), and the back-patters. We also all know people who are more touch-aversive. They find excuses or reasons not to shake hands and shy away from hugs and other contact except during those times when they feel comfortable enough to give brief contact.

Dogs have the same range of preference. The touchy-feely dogs, provided they are very well socialized and obedient, often make wonderful therapy dogs. The

more wary dogs may prefer quiet, adult homes where their boundaries will not be constantly trod upon. Many dogs switch roles based upon whether the object of affection is strange or familiar. Just like most humans, most dogs are more inclined to accept and seek touch with familiar humans and dogs, rather than unfamiliar. Also like most humans, the touch of a stranger can be very stressful and even aversive to many dogs.

When Lenny first came to us, every touch was an invasion. Each attempt to pet him sparked his hasty retreat, or if he was laying down, he'd roll onto his back and rabbit-kick at us with his powerful back legs. Over time, we helped him learn to trust touch and would rub on us and press his head into us or try to curl his 80 pounds into our laps. However, strangers rarely got to do much more than pet him in passing, and it was a notable moment when he chose to place his head in someone's lap for petting.

Meanwhile, Boo was a social butterfly. She most enjoyed cruising by people just inside the range of their arms to be pet as she passed by, and she might wander past multiple times. But, she did not cuddle with strangers. Even with the family she was very particular. I was the only one she was truly comfortable cuddling with and then only for a short time, perhaps 15 minutes.

Zelda is in between. She loves cuddling with her family and has since day one, but strangers are not allowed to pet her unless they bribe her with a particularly tasty treat, and then their touch is only tolerated until she finishes eating. Otherwise, she stands, calm and confident, just out of reach.

Take a few moments and commune with your dog. Try to find out what your dog likes and dislikes for touch. Most dogs dislike the stereotypical head pat, and prefer soft, gentle contact along the cheek or throat. Hands on the shoulders of an unknown dog is often seen as threatening, while hugs are restraining and both domineering and very possibly threatening. Of course no dog is going to enjoy touch that includes pain (paw pinches, ear twists, tail yanks), though some will respond by asking you to play

instead. Short, sharp contact tends to rev dogs up, while slow, deep contact tends to calm dogs down.

However, individual differences are displayed around most of the torso. Some dogs like the rough, harsher petting (like my Boo), while other dogs like to be touched more gently (like my Lenny). If you are treating your Boo like my Lenny, that may be why she's not completely enjoying contact. If your dog moves away from you during petting, perhaps you have a Lenny that you are treating like a Boo. Be on the lookout for ticklish spots, as well, and respect them. Some dogs enjoy full body contact, while others enjoy touch a little at a time. It is quite common to find two canine friends curled up together in mutual bliss. Your dog doesn't just like snuggling with you on the couch for the access to the comfy couch (although, sure, that's probably part of it) but for the tactile contact with you.

Similarly, consider your dog's reaction when you come home from a short (or long) separation from him. Most dogs run to their owner and sniff excitedly, perhaps jostling them and seeking tactile attention. Indeed, when you look at the behavior patterns of a pack of dogs, when one is separated from the others, the reunion is a time for boisterous tactile contact and extensive use of the sense of touch, including pushing, shoving, bumping, licking, and nuzzling. It's no wonder humans are constantly jumped on by our dogs when we reunite with them—after all, it is their natural way of welcoming you back.

Research has shown that just a short time of human contact (petting, playing, or grooming) in the first day of being impounded dramatically benefited the stray dog later on in terms of how he dealt with the stress of a kennel[25]. On the second day in the kennel, the researchers took the dogs out for a 45 minute session which included reviewing basic commands, grooming, petting, and playing with the dog.

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[25] Coppola, Grandin, Enns "Human interaction and cortisol: Can human contact reduce stress for shelter dogs?" Physiology and Behavior 87 (2006) 537-541

Those dogs which engaged in this social-contact session had a lower stress response later on than dogs who did not, even days afterward.

Touch has been known to be useful in rehabilitating nervous and anxious dogs. Many trainers now use massage and Tellington T-touch in their work with nervous and stressed dogs. Dogs often enjoy a good massage to help them relax, just like people do. Massage, for both humans and dogs, works on the principle of deep pressure. Tellington T-touch is a type of massage used to facilitate relaxation by drawing small circles with your fingers on the dog's body. However, since not just any circles will do, contact a T-touch trained educator near you to learn more.

Another tool that uses deep pressure is the body wrap and its commercial cousins: the Anxiety Wrap, Thundershirt, and Storm Defender. A body wrap is basically just an Ace bandage that is wrapped around the dog in a certain fashion and calms the dog. Anxiety Wraps, Thundershirts and Storm Defenders are basically snug coats that hit the same pressure points as the body wrap does, but are easier to put on. To learn more about body wraps, check out a T-touch practitioner or read *Getting in TTouch with your Dog* by Linda Tellington-Jones (body wrap explanation and pictures beginning on p.82).

Another way to increase canine confidence that has been gaining some popularity is known as "spatial therapy." Basically, the theory is that as dogs learn more specifically where their body parts are in space and learn how to effectively move those body parts, they feel more unified and whole, and that decreases their stress. Trainers doing spatial therapy with dogs will often wrap them in a body wrap and then teach them agility obstacles, eventually taking the dog through the entire agility course. Whatever the reason for success, many dogs emerge from these sessions calmer and more confident.

CHAPTER 7: SPATIAL COMMUNICATION

In order to really enjoy a dog, one doesn't merely try to train him to be semi-human. The point of it is to open oneself to the possibility of becoming partly a dog.

—Edward Hoagland "Dogs and the Tug of Life"

Dogs are amazingly sensitive to the use of space, and using space to communicate with your dog can be extremely rewarding. The slightest lean one way or another matters, and this tends to be magnified as the dog moves at greater speeds.

For instance, if your dog knows Sit and Down (and to Stay until released) you can easily teach him to Sit from the Down position using solely space. There is no luring required (although luring also works). In my experience, the use of space in this instance teaches the dog faster than the use of a lure—perhaps because dogs may get distracted by the lure. Additionally, there is no fading of the lure. All you need to do is stand about two or three feet from the dog while he is in the Down position. Just as you say "Sit" in an upbeat, excited tone of voice, take a quick step forward. Of course, be careful not to step on his toes or intrude too much into his bubble, but as you take a step into his personal space, he should back up the only way he can while staying in the same spot—by rising into a Sit. Mark that as what you want and love him up, releasing him if

necessary to make sure he doesn't get up from the Sit prematurely. Take a smaller step for dogs who are very sensitive to space, and a larger step for dogs who are less spatially sensitive. You never want to intrude so far into a dog's space that they get uncomfortable—only enough to prompt the move. As he learns, take smaller and smaller steps to wean him off the use of space as a prompt.

In agility, the use of space is very important. Looking the wrong way causes your dog to miss the obstacle you'd like him to go to, because he is using your body language and your use of space more than he is using auditory cues. Leaning toward him will cause him to veer a little away from you because just like people, dogs want to maintain a bubble of personal space. The size of this bubble varies from person to person and from dog to dog. Leaning away from your dog will cause him to veer your way because dogs are social creatures and bond tightly to their owners. They want to be near us!

You can use this in so many ways. Let's say your dog is mildly (but not severely) distracted—just enough that he isn't responding to a command he knows. Try stepping away from him quickly to draw his attention (because he will be aware of the increased spatial distance and want to follow), or step toward him to draw his attention with increased spatial pressure (he wants to maintain his bubble). As soon as you have his attention, give the command again in an upbeat tone, and be sure to praise generously if he follows it. This can help move training forward rather than having to back down to a lower distraction level where your treats matter, because many times (but not all, of course) spatial pressure is more powerful than food. This is one of the joys of working with social creatures.

How you move toward your dog also matters. When approaching from the side, angle toward the front of your dog (toward his shoulder or head) to encourage him to move backwards, or angle toward the back of your dog (his hips) to encourage him to move forward. Herding dogs

understand this, and watching them can help you learn to use this communication tool for yourself!

Be aware when using space that this is a form of pressure and can be mildly stressful. Think of someone entering your bubble of personal space. Use it as a communication tool and warmly reward your dog for communicating with you. Never abuse this spatial sense by continually intruding where not wanted, but build up your bond so that occasional intrusions are easily handled and allowed by your dog with the understanding that you are attempting to communicate on their level. Think of the difference between a stranger intruding into your personal space versus a loved one doing the same thing.

Patience is essential whenever you're communicating with a dog, but even more so with space. If you come at your dog too swiftly with too much intrusion into his space, you won't get the results you're looking for. Typically, your dog will give you extra space, but worst case your dog may snap to correct you for your rude space intrusion or as a fearful response to your social aggression. Imagine, for instance, that you are at a party and someone (especially someone much larger than you) comes running up to you, gets right in your face and screams at you. Depending on your personality, you will likely either respond with fight or with flight—but either way the experience will not be a comfortable one for you nor one you'd wish to repeat!

If you use space too conservatively, waiting for your dog every half a second, your dog won't understand what you're trying to tell him and will eventually simply leave the conversation. Imagine you're talking with someone who pauses for a half second after every syllable. How long is it before you politely bid them farewell and go find someone who makes more sense to talk to?

Dogs communicate with each other primarily through body language and their use of space. People communicate primarily with words, using body language as a back up. By thinking about how your use of space and body language would make you feel if you were on the

receiving end, you can oftentimes approximate how that might make a dog feel (especially if you keep in mind the differences we've already examined between dogs and human communication). When in doubt, always, always, ask the dog. Watch your dog's reactions and respond accordingly. Lots of calming signals? Turn it down. Nothing's happening? Consider trying just a little bit more pressure. Contact an expert for help if you get stuck or run into a bad reaction.

Using space conservatively at first, all the while watching your dog's reaction. Remember to give your dog space if you want them to come toward you and to go into their space if you want them to go away from you. Move confidently but not overly assertively. Be sure your dog is paying attention to you or you might surprise them! And remember that training will modify the use of space for communication—for instance, your dog will have to learn that when he is in a Sit, he is not to move even when you or someone else intrudes on his space and even when you move away from him. Learning this will not negatively affect your spatial communication with him—it will instead teach him that there are times when you can communicate using space and there are times when you can't. By being consistent about the verbal and body language cues you use ("Sit" for instance) he will readily pick up on those cues and be able to reliably predict when you are using space to communicate and when you aren't. This really isn't that difficult for them to understand, for dogs know that just because another dog is moving through space doesn't mean they are communicating to them, just as you understand that just because someone is walking toward you on a sidewalk doesn't mean they are communicating with you. If you're having trouble, contact someone proficient in the use of space to communicate with dogs to learn from them.

CHAPTER 8: COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR DOG

Animals can communicate quite well. And they do. And generally speaking, they are ignored.
—Alice Walker

So what does all this mean for you? Well, if you study your dog and use the previous chapters as your guide, you will be reading your dog in no time. While Fido won't be writing sonnets any time soon, the lovable pile of fur in your lap or at your feet still has plenty to say, such as if he is nervous or confused or over-excited. This, in turn, can affect your training—positively, if you pay attention and adjust your approach to best suit your dog. True communication is a two-way street, and it is possible. Some of the descriptions of body language that you've already read can be adapted for humans to perform. I never tire of the look dogs give me when they realize I'm doing my best to approximate their native language!

So, when you want your dog to come toward you and you're having trouble helping him succeed, try to avoid leaning over toward them with direct eye contact. Avoid reaching out toward them with outstretched fingers. Avoid baring your teeth at them (smiling). Instead, crouch down, avoid direct eye contact, present your side to them or lean away from them, and maybe even pretend to be super interested in something on the ground in front of you. Keep your body loose and wiggly when you want your dog's

attention. Be clear about your body language, and refine your natural body positions into hand signals for the various commands. Dogs read each other's body language easily, and they quickly learn ours when raised in a normal environment with lots of opportunity to learn. By presenting the same hand signal every time you say a command, your dog will quickly learn the meaning of that hand signal. In fact, it's likely they will learn your hand signal before they learn the verbal command!

We already mentioned in the very first chapter the enormous impact tone has on dogs. Keep that in mind when you're working with your dog. If your dog is having trouble because they are so excited, a firmer tone may help. If your dog's nervous instead, try a softer, more upbeat tone.

You're not going to be having conversations with your dog like you do when you go out for coffee or something, but I said two-way communication is possible, and I was not exaggerating. By using tone and paying attention to your dog's body language, you can respond to what he's telling you, which encourages him to keep using those cues. You can go a step further as with Kayce Cover (synalia.com) and teach your dog words for every day events and items in a very intentional way, and then build on that to ask his preferences (hold out two treats and ask him "Which one?") or to have him do some thing complicated ("Come, and Heel on the Left")[26]. The sky's the limit—how far you go depends on you and your dog.

My greatest rule is "When in doubt, ask the dog". To do this, you must have a good handle on body language and put your own motives and emotions on the back burner. This takes a lot of study and practice, but yields wonderful results for you and your dog. Take a half hour to an hour every day to simply watch your dog, especially when he is interacting with another dog. What signals is he giving? How is the other dog responding? Don't overload yourself with

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[26] For more, see TALK to me! A Communication Guide for People who Live and Work with Animals by Kayce Cover

too much too fast. Focus on two or three things to look for and learn about and then once you have a good handle on those, find another two or three things. For instance, you might start out looking for lip licks, yawns, and whale eye. Once you feel comfortable reading those signals, you might then look for tail position and body posture. Little by little you will have experience reading the whole dog.

However, just because you break the dog down into parts to learn to communicate doesn't mean he has to stay in parts! Once you have a handle on picking up pieces of his communication, put them together. This step is immensely important and too few people fail to do this. Without looking at the dog as a whole, you will miss the message and may conclude that your dog is a stressed out, depressed wreck when really he is a calm, content, polite dog.

Just because you see some stress signals doesn't mean your dog is stressed out. One tongue flick does not a panicked dog make. Look at the rest of the dog as well. Is there a tongue flick but the tail carriage is normal and the body and face have no tension with normal body carriage? Then your dog is almost certainly fine. He may be focusing hard on something, or he may be trying to be polite.

Training should be enjoyable for you and your dog. If you start seeing clusters of stress signals, it may be time to take a break. However, don't get too worried about stress signals. Some stress is actually good for you, and good for your dog. A dog who has never been frustrated tends not to do well when life inevitably frustrates them—these dogs tend to be "bullies" or "bratty" toward other dogs and toward people as soon as they don't get their way. A pushy puppy might look cute to you, but when he turns into a 100 lb Rottweiler who acts out when he doesn't get his way, that's no longer cute!

If you see a stress signal now and again but your dog is still focused on you—even better if they try to get you into the training groove, too—you are doing well! But if your dog starts to break away from training or shut down, or if you see

clusters of stress signals rapidly, your dog may have crossed the line from good stress to bad stress. In that case, take a break and try to approach the problem again from a different angle when you both are in a calmer state.

Speaking of calm, this is a very important skill to know for dogs. A crazy, wildly excited dog is not necessarily happy and may in fact be *unhappy*! Too many dogs are not taught the importance of calming down because their owners don't want to 'take away their happiness' or 'break their spirit'. These dogs are often wild, out of control, and causing major stress for their owners and themselves. They often miss out on a healthy social life because they don't know how to reign themselves in. These dogs make me sad for them. I mentioned Kayce Cover's revolutionary Conditioned Relaxation[27] previously, and it has changed my training.

Just imagine being out of your mind with excitement, as if you are pumped up on caffeine (or even more accurately, adrenaline) all day, every day, for months or years on end. Wouldn't relaxation, if it ever finally came, be like a breath of fresh air? It seems like heaven to the dogs I work with, once they finally relax. If you go back through this book and look at the pictures of the happy friendly dogs, you will see in all of them the element of relaxation. Teach your dog to be calm by presenting a calm face yourself. Obviously, he needs a good diet, plenty of exercise (both physical and mental) and plenty of social interaction before he can be expected to be calm. Once that is taken care of, reward him when he is calm. Stop interactions with him when he begins to escalate in excitement (except when playing, provided he is under control). Any time he begins to lose control, he is giving in to the wave of excitement, and it is past time for him to calm down. By encouraging calm behavior and expecting it, you will be providing your dog

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[27] For more, read SATS & the Family Dog: Daily Living Skills by Kayce Cover

with a wonderful skill and helping him live a more full and happier life.

The best way to teach your dog to relax is… to specifically teach the skill! This is done most easily when you are relaxed and comfortable and your dog is in a comfortable area with you. I like to have the dog on leash to begin. You'll want to name both an excited state of mind (Excited, Alert, Bonkers, etc) and a relaxed state of mind (Easy, Relax, Settle, etc). I know, I know—you don't want your dog bouncing off the walls! The trick is, many dogs don't realize when they are over excited. Having a word to share that valuable information with them is a wonderful tool. So, once you know your two words, you are ready to begin.

Ask your dog to get Easy (or whatever word you chose), and begin massaging him, paying attention to areas where he might be sensitive and especially areas where he is carrying tension. Think massage or T-touch: long or circular strokes, slow and with deep pressure. As you pet him, you'll be giving him information—when he's Excited, let him know, while when he's Easy, let him know that too.

You need to mentally stay with your dog. If he's relaxing for half a second, you are praising for that half second. Don't worry about when he's going to "mess up" (in fact, getting excited again allows him the chance to learn to calm himself down, which is an essential skill). You want to end up with a puddle of dog on your floor or couch or lap (wherever you happen to be working on this at).

Now you need to teach your dog how to calm himself down on cue. Some of your dogs have already learned this while learning to relax in the first place, but this is a skill that needs strengthening like a muscle. We're going to practice by playing an impulse control game, designed by Chad Mackin. Take a mildly interesting toy or treat, and place it on the ground (covered) or keep it in your hand, but make sure your dog knows it's there. He's going to try to get to it, and you're going to give him the correct answer: "Get Easy". All he needs to do it get a little more relaxed, and you'll praise, then cue him the opposite: "Get Alert!" and off you go to

play or toss the treat so he can chase it. Continue, asking him to get a little more relaxed over time, or to maintain relaxation for a little longer. This will add challenge to the game and set him up for success in real life situations when he needs control over his emotional state. Don't worry about playing too long—play until you get tired, then drop it and pick up another game later on in the day.

Check out videos of this on my site or YouTube channel. For more information, go to synalia.com to get the scoop from the creator of Conditioned Relaxation herself, Kayce Cover. The above is just the introduction—on Kayce's site you can find a wealth of information to explore in more detail, along with videos to watch illustrating the power of this way of communicating with animals.

CHAPTER 9: LEADING THE PACK — RULES AND GUIDELINES

There's facts about dogs, and then there's opinions about them. The dogs have the facts, and the humans have the opinions. If you want the facts about the dog, always get them straight from the dog. If you want opinions, get them from humans.

—J. Allen Boone, Kinship With All Life

If your dog begins to backslide and is no longer meeting your expectations, or if you are not progressing with your training as quickly as you had wanted, following these rules and guidelines may help you. They are designed to clearly reinstate you as leader in a non-confrontational way while clearing up the lines of communication between you and your canine companion.

- Never physically punish your dog (ie: hitting, kicking, alpha-rolling, etc).

- Pay attention to your dog's body language. If you start seeing a lot of calming signals, back off a bit and try a different way (one that is less stressful).

- All rules and commands must be consistent across all family members, in all situations, etc. For instance, it's confusing to a dog to be allowed on the couch on

Monday when Dad's home but not on Tuesday when Mom's home.

Practice obedience skills in everyday life, using real life rewards. This will yield more consistency and reap better rewards than only following through during a training session. You're training to improve everyday life for both of you, so practice where you'll use these skills. When you safely can, reward your dog with what he really wants (not just food)! This breaks down your everyday life naturally into hundreds of mini training sessions.

If you need a time to shoot for, practice 3 to 10 training sessions each about 5 to 10 minutes long every day. If you or your dog get bored, spice it up or increase difficulty! (Zelda's average training session is about 2 minutes long, as she hates drills. You can still get phenomenal obedience with short practice sessions!)

Once your dog has mastered the down-stay, try for one 30 minute down-stay per day. This could be during meals to help with unwanted begging. This demonstrates a baseline level of self control.

Do not "bribe" your dog. If he knows the command (does not need to be lured into the position in the given distraction level) and you have to show him the treat (or toy) to get him to perform the command, then he should not get the treat. You can show it to him and put it away if you'd like, but if you need to show him the treat, don't reward him with it.

Use one particular word for when your dog does something you like. It's best if this is a single word like "Good" or "Yes" but if you find yourself consistently saying "Good boy," don't worry too much about it. It's more important to be consistent than to have a short marker word.

.Use one particular word when your dog does something you do not want—usually this is “No.” For our purposes, “No” is not “No, No, bad dog,” but instead “You guessed/acted incorrectly” and “Stop doing what you are doing right now.”

Choose a release word to let your dog know when he’s off your time and has a break—kind of like a recess bell. This tells him that the exercise he was doing is over; **it is NOT a come command** even though oftentimes your dog will come running to you when the release command is given. Common release commands are: “Free dog,” “Free,” “Release,” “Break,” “OK,” “All done,” “Up,” “Go,” etc. Remember, you can use anything in the world—just be consistent. If you are the type of person that always uses certain words in every day life, you may want to avoid choosing one of those for your release word so you don’t accidentally release your dog.

CHAPTER 10: LEARNING METHODS AND PERSONALITY TYPES

The greatest pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself, too.

—Samuel Butler, Notebooks, 1912

There are five primary ways dogs learn: through luring, shaping, capturing, modeling, or mimicking, as well as two others that are related: targeting and pressure.

Luring is fairly straight-forward—the human lures the dog into the desired position with something portable that the dog desires—often a treat or food item, but this could also be a toy in some cases.

Targeting is similar, though in this case, the dog moves to touch a target, which puts them in the desired position. This makes it easier to wean them off treats, since your treat or toy is not visible during the luring/targeting phase, but only during rewards.

To teach targeting, simply rub one hand (your target hand) with a smelly treat. Then, holding the treat in your other hand, present your target hand a couple inches from your dog's nose and say "Target" or "Touch". Praise when

he touches your smelly hand with his nose, then feed from the other hand. (If your dog doesn't want the food, no worries—simply play a fun game with him instead!) Progress, adding in distance and motion little by little with the target. I find I vastly prefer targeting to luring, as it makes it very quick and easy to wean away from treats and the dog doesn't need to be hungry or food motivated. Additionally, their full attention is on you and the cue, rather than being distracted by the lure!

In shaping, you reward any behavior you think might lead toward the ultimately desired behavior, and then slowly expect more and more of the dog. For instance, if you were shaping the dog to spin in a circle, you might first reward the dog when she turns her head. After she gets that that is getting her the treat and offers the behavior reliably, you then ask for more, so that she has to turn her head and part of her body, for instance, before getting rewarded. Slowly, the behavior is shaped step-by-step until the desired behavior is reliably offered. Often with shaping, the cue for the behavior is not given until the finished product has been shaped, to avoid potentially confusing the dog (does "spin" mean turn my head, or turn in a circle?).

Capturing requires attention and timing on the part of the owner, but can lead to some wonderful behaviors learned in a very low stress (for the dog) way. When the dog naturally offers a behavior, the human names that behavior and then rewards the dog. For example, some people teach their dogs to "stretch" or "take a bow" by waiting until their dog naturally offers a stretch (often after waking up from a nap) and naming it and then making a fuss over their dog. With enough repetitions, the dog learns that "Stretch" means for them to put their front legs down on the ground but leave their hind end sticking up in the air. How many repetitions it takes for your dog to understand depends on your dog, how often you are able to capture the behavior reliably, and your timing.

Modeling used to be used fairly commonly but has fallen into disfavor among many dog trainers because it can

be stressful. The biggest drawback I see for it is that besides the potential stress for an animal not used to being physically prompted, it is also a very passive learning method. In modeling, the human positions the dog's body as desired and then rewards the dog as they name the behavior. Eventually, the dog learns that that word means they should get into that position. So for instance, if you gently positioned your dog into a Sit and said "Sit", eventually the dog would learn that the word "Sit" means they should keep all four feet on the ground while placing their rump on the ground as well. I do not favor this method, largely because the dog is learning no initiative and is not thinking as much as they tend to in other methods. However, this method sometimes has merit as a way to enforce a command that the dog already knows, *so long as* the dog doesn't find it too stressful and if the modeling is done gently but firmly and with patience and not anger.

Sometimes modeling is the best method to choose, particularly if the position requires strength and balance, for some dogs will use it as support while building up that strength and balance. For instance, when I was teaching Boo to beg, I had her Sit in front of me facing away from me, and then used modeling to bring her up so that her back was supported by my legs. With enough time, I would lessen the support gradually so that she would be doing more and more of the work to maintain the position, as she was able.

Mimicry has not been commonly used to teach dogs in the dog training circles, but nonetheless it can be a valuable tool. Mimicry is when the human uses another dog who already knows the trick to teach the new dog. This works especially with puppies, and you hear stories from owners all the time who are using mimicry and perhaps not even knowing it. Do not underestimate the power of this tool to teach your dog new skills! Recently, there is a trend

toward using social learning in dog training with Claudia Fugazza's "Do As I Do" method of dog training[28].

Pressure is another tool useful to teach some dogs. By teaching the dog to yield to pressure, you can use very gentle, consistent leash pressure to help the dog get into the desired position. This is similar to modeling, but it requires more thinking and decision making on the dog's part, and I find it very useful for some dogs. Be sure your pressure is very gentle—you only need to use one or two fingers worth of pressure, and you should be able to hold the pressure consistent for five minutes without getting tired. Too much pressure can cause your dog to panic or rebel. Too little doesn't get the message across. You want just enough that your dog feels it as an obnoxious, somewhat annoying stimulus, not as something frightening or painful. Once they learn to yield to pressure, you can use this to beat high distraction environments and create a very relaxing loose leash walk.

Personality

The personality type of your dog may influence how you teach and what style of learning your pooch prefers.

Fearful, insecure dogs require an owner willing to invest lots of time in learning to watch for their calming signals. They easily get overstimulated, and are attuned to minor changes in body language. Keep your own body language friendly or neutral when working with this type of dog, and use plenty of rewards to motivate him! Keep your training sessions short and upbeat, but practice multiple times a day. Be sure you are consistent, as these dogs love being able to predict your responses, even if that response is a correction to their behavior. If you don't correct when they expect it, they can become nervous and stressed because of the lack of reliability. Corrections, for these dogs,

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[28] Do As I Do: Using Social Learning To Train Dogs by Claudia Fugazza. https://www.doasido.it

rarely need to be anything more eventful than pressure or modeling, and often a mild "No" will suffice nicely.

Splitter dogs have high pack drive. They want their pack to stay together emotionally and they are very attuned to the emotions of their people. Most splitter dogs become stressed when their pack members are stressed or anxious, so keeping the environment calm and optimistic will help these dogs feel secure. Avoid arguments or other forms of social upset around this type of dog to keep her happy. However, provided her pack is emotionally stable and cohesive, the splitter dog is hard to phase. She is also eager to please (because upsetting you would go against her goals of emotional cohesion in the pack) and is often a breeze to train. Just because she likes to make you happy doesn't mean you can skimp on the rewards though—she needs to be paid for her efforts in more than just praise and petting.

The independent dog is more of a challenge to train. He often has high prey drive and gets lost surveying the smells and sights of his world. His owner is often of little consequence to him—more just along for the ride than the be all end all of his life. He may take a more serious correction than other dogs to get his attention, and he certainly will require more management of his environment and attention to proofing his behaviors. This dog needs lots of practice learning to control his impulses and attend to you, and often the biggest rewards for him are real life rewards.

These dogs are amazing once they realize that the words coming out of you mouth have direct impact on their opportunities in life, and once they've learned this, the rest of training becomes much easier. While he may not care about the hot dog you are offering him, once he realizes he can get what he wants (chasing the squirrel in his fenced in yard, for instance) by doing what you want, he is much more likely to be complaint. As with the other types of dogs, be fair and consistent with him—he's watching you, and if he

feels you are unpredictable, he may decide not to bother playing your games.

The middle manager type of dog tends to be a bit bratty. He's missing some confidence, but rather than acting on his fear, he acts on his insecurity by being pushy. Often, they get into trouble with other dogs as well as people, by ignoring social signs and customs. In the past, when trainers thought more strictly in terms of dominance, this would be called the "beta dog". This is often a highly stressed dog who needs to learn calm, relaxed behavior. Like the independent dog, he needs to learn impulse control and to attend to you, as well as frustration tolerance to lower his overall stress level. By being fair and consistent, he will learn that no matter how he tests you, your responses to his behavior will remain the same. This dog needs a lot of obedience training and would do well to be always learning, as this will give him an outlet for all that mental energy.

While he may seem like he would take a strong correction to get his attention, often these dogs are surprisingly soft, and require little effort to get their focus. Real life rewards and consequences are often the most severe correction this type of dog needs. If your middle manager dog wants to meet someone and knows they have to Sit first buy won't Sit when asked and therefore doesn't get to say "hi", this is huge for them. While these dogs can be handfuls, they can also be delightful clowns.

Try to determine your dog's personality type. Most dogs have some pack drive and some prey drive and some elements of all the four personality types. Each type has their strengths, and each type has their weaknesses.

Pay attention to your dog as you try out different methods of teaching him. By reading your dog's body language and making note of how quickly they catch on to the concept you are trying to teach, you can tell which method is their preferred for learning. Utilize this knowledge to translate English for your dog in a way they can more easily understand; after all, they don't know what we want

from them until we teach them, and if they don't know what we want, they certainly can't deliver! The least stressful method for your dog should be tried first, repeatedly, and you should teach with both patience and humor.

If you want further in-depth analysis of your dog's temperament and behavior, try out the excellent C-BARQ test (vetapps.vet.upenn.edu/cbarq/), which just involves answering some simple questions about your dog's behaviors.

CHAPTER 11: TEACHING SIMPLE OBEDIENCE COMMANDS

If a dog will not come to you after having looked you in the face, you should go home and examine your conscience.

—Woodrow Wilson

There are many ways to teach each obedience command, and each has their own pros and cons. You want to keep the stress as low as possible on your dog. However, keep in mind that it can be stressful on your dog (as well as you) to not be able to understand what you're trying to convey to him. As such, I have included multiple "plans" to help you teach your dog.

Every dog is an individual, and no two learn exactly the same way, so while Plan A may work great for your neighbor's dog, it may not work so well for yours. If you're having trouble, try the next plan of action and see if things make more sense for you and your dog. In any plan, remember to praise, reward, and release your dog! If things still aren't working, consult the help of a professional trainer who can walk you through it.

Your dog does not knows English. Therefore, your commands can be anything you want. The words used here are simply examples, but if you want to

If your dog gets up too soon (before you release him), mark that with a No and cue him to resume the command. Do this regardless of which plan you use for teaching.

say “Down” for sit and “Sit” for down, go for it—just don’t get confused yourself! Also, since your dog does not know English (or any other language you speak), pay attention to your tone and body language to help educate him so that he learns what these words mean. During the learning process, patience for both yourself and your dog will go a long way.

Watch your dog’s body language as you teach. Remember, we want to put as little stress possible on our dogs while still teaching them and looking at the whole picture: you and your lifestyle, your dog, and safety concerns.

Teaching Sit

Plan A1: Show your dog a treat. Raise the treat up and over his head, being careful not to let him steal the treat from your hand, but also not raising it so high that he jumps for it. As his head goes up, his rear should go down. When he sits, mark with praise and give him the treat. Feed several small treats in a row to get him used to an implied Stay (so you don’t have to say “Stay"). Then, give your release signal in an excited voice and make sure your dog moves. When he moves, give him a party! Once your dog is easily following the lure, begin using your command “Sit.”

Plan A2: First, teach targeting (see previous chapter). Then, instead of using a treat to lure the dog, make the same motion with your target hand, saying Sit and marking with praise when he sits. Keep praising while he stays seated, until you release.

Targeting is an invaluable tool to increase your training speed and avoid having to wean your dog off treats. You can use your cue word immediately with targeting, rather than having to wait as with luring. Once you teach targeting, you can use it with many commands. In fact, I taught Zelda her basic obedience cues using targeting, which was especially nice as she’s not very food motivated. The only reason targeting is Plan A2 instead of A1 is because clients often have trouble embracing it.

Plan B: For dogs who back up rather than

sit, place them with their rear a couple inches from a wall. When they back up to keep the lure in view, they will encounter the wall and will likely sit. Remember to release them, and as soon as they begin sitting with the lure easily (not needing the help of the wall) you can add your command "Sit." If they turn to the side and continue to back up, simply place them in a corner instead.

Plan B2: For dogs who still aren't sitting, hook your foot just behind their back knee. It's very important to keep your foot still—do NOT sweep your dog's legs out from under him! The pressure from your foot against their knee as they try to back up for the treat usually gets the dog to sit naturally, often on your foot at first. Again, remember to release as normal, and add your cue word as normal.

Plan C: Try hooking your fingers through the dog's collar, and as you raise the treat up above their head, apply gentle (GENTLE) pressure upward to the collar (this pressure should be so mild that your arm would not get tired even if you held the pressure consistent for several minutes at a time). Most dogs will sit within seconds to relieve the obnoxious sensation on their necks. The moment he sits, the pressure goes away. As time goes on, you will need to use the pressure less and less, and with less and less strength. *Do not jerk on the collar*. Simply hold the pressure consistent. You can also use Plan C without a food lure, if your dog finds that too distracting.

Plan D: Use shaping —mark (use your "Good" or "Yes" or whatever word you chose) and reward a hint of a sit, such as, the nose going up after you say "Sit". Then, after a little while, just the nose going up won't be enough. Your dog will start to think "why can't I get the treat? What else can I do?" As soon as the back end lowers just a little, mark and treat.

Most people don't need Plans D or E (for either Sit or Down), and I don't often recommend them, simply because they take a lot more time than the other plans. However, they are a completely valid way of teaching Sit, so I include them here.

Progressively ask for more and more, and then eventually you will get a sit. Once you have your dog sitting on command, don't accept any more of those partial sits that you accepted when you were shaping!

Plan E: Use capturing—every time your dog sits naturally, no matter what you (or he) is doing, say "Sit", then praise and reward, and then release him. Eventually he will connect the dots, and begin offering sits much more easily.

Teaching Down

Plan A: Hold a treat in your hand so that your dog can lick it and smell it, but can not steal it. Lower your hand from the dog's nose to the floor slowly enough for him to follow the lure easily—too fast and he'll lose focus. You want to keep him interested in trying to get to the food. The opening in your hand where he can lick the food should be facing the floor so that he gets the idea to try to come up to the food from under the floor. The closest he can get to this is to lay down. Once he has laid down completely, praise, reward several times consecutively just as with Sit, and release him. Again, make sure he moves when you release him. Once he's following the lure readily, begin cuing him with your command "Down".

Plan A2: Use the same motion as in Plan A, but using targeting instead (which you will need to have taught your dog beforehand) with an open target hand. Be sure to mark when your dog is correct!

Plan B: Use your food lure as described above, but sit on the floor with your knees up in the air, so your legs create kind of a tunnel. Tease the dog to follow the lure into the tunnel, where to get to the lure they will have to lie down and kind of crawl a little into the tunnel. This does not work for bigger dogs who do not have enough room to lie down under your knees (you can use a chair instead), but can work for any dog small enough to fit through the tunnel you're making.

Plan C: Use your food lure as described above, but with your free hand apply gentle (the key here is GENTLE)

pressure downward with your other hand. You are not throwing him to the ground, you are not giving him a crink in the neck, you are not causing pain or panic, but you are applying enough pressure so that he feels it, and likely wants to move away from it (and toward the food lure!) Keep the pressure steady and consistent, and be patient. As soon as he begins to down, the pressure magically goes away, and you reward, praise, and release as described above. You can also use Plan C without a food lure, if your dog finds that too distracting.

Plan D: Shape the down. Praise and reward for the head going down, and then select for the head going down farther and farther until eventually the legs have to follow. As with the sit, eventually you will shape a true Down—and then don't let your dog get away with offering anything else once you say "Down"! Patience is the key here, just as it is when using pressure. Slowly and consistently shape toward what you want.

Plan E: Capture the down. Whenever your dog lies down naturally, say "Down" and enthusiastically praise, reward, and release. Eventually he will begin to offer downs more and more readily.

Teaching Come

"Come" is a very fragile command and it is very easy to break it. However, it's arguably the most important from a safety standpoint. It's a great feeling to know that if you call your dog at any point in time, he will come, even if it means leaving something really fun behind. To accomplish this sort of fantastic recall, keep in mind these rules:

Rule 1: Most of the time (about 90%), release your dog to go back to whatever he was doing before, after he comes when called. So the sequence will be: Your dog is rooting around in the bushes sniffing something awesome (to him), you call him, he comes toward you, you praise every step he takes toward you, he reaches you, you throw him a party (get really excited and seriously party with him!)

and then after a little bit of party time, you become boring again and let him go back to sniffing the bush.

Why is this important? Letting him go back to what he was doing will make that potential distraction that much less distracting because your dog is presented with a choice: Either he can leave it to go to a great party and then very likely be able to come right back to it again, or he can stick with it and miss out on the party (food, petting, play, and all). Most dogs are going to choose the first option in a heartbeat once they understand.

Rule 2: Do not (especially in the early stages) punish your dog after he has come to your call. "Punish" here mean anything your dog doesn't like. That includes medicine, bath time, nail trims, being put in the crate while you go off to work, leaving the dog park, or anything your dog doesn't like or wishes wouldn't happen. Your dog is going to be much happier and ready to come when called if he's not worried about what happens when he gets to you.

Rule 3: As your dog starts coming to you, turn on that praise and encouragement. This can really help carry them through a distraction between you and him. For sensitive dogs, remember body language and crouch down with your side to them rather than bending at the waist. Also, remember that short, high sounds tend to add movement while low, drawn out sounds tend to take away movement. If you want a fast Come, try getting high-pitched and squeaky!

Rule 4: Just as with everything else, build up your distractions slowly. Use management (for instance, a long leash or rope) to prevent him running off. You want to practice success, not failure. If your dog is already practiced at not coming when called or at ignoring your calls, use a different word for your Come command. It could be that after so much practice at ignoring you, your dog's brain automatically tosses out your Come command as soon as he hears it, and so it no longer registers in his conscious mind.

Rule 5: If your dog ignores you after three calls or more, calmly go over and get your dog (do not engage in a game of keep away). Do not talk to him, do not look at him, just walk calmly to him in a curve, and then bring them back to the spot where you called them from. There, give them just a simple "Good dog" or "That's better" instead of the full-fledged party they would have gotten otherwise. What we want them to learn here is that they are going to be coming to you anyway—so do they want to come to a party, or not?

Now that we know the rules, let's look at how we can teach our dogs what we mean when we say "Come!". Try practicing with all three of the below Plans when you begin adding your distance and distractions.

Plan A: Put your dog on leash. We want to practice success, remember, not failure. Put your dog in a sit-stay or down-stay and back out to the end of your leash. Use your "Come" command as you backpedal away from your dog, reeling him in with the leash the whole while. This method employs a "Chase You" game while not giving your dog the option to fail at this come business. For best results, keep your reeling action nice and smooth while you backpedal.

Plan A2: Put your dog on leash in a sit-stay. Go to the end of your leash and put down a food treat or some sort of distraction, and return to your dog (enforce the sit-stay if needed). Release your dog to go to the distraction and interact for a second or two (or eat the food) and then call her and party when she comes to you (reel her in if she doesn't). Once she's good at that, place the distraction off to the side, and then once that's easy, place the distraction behind her, so she's between you and the distraction.

Make it harder: The farther your dog is from you, the harder it is! The closer the distraction is to her, the harder it is! Vary your distances to gradually increase difficulty.

Plan B: Put your dog in a sit-stay or a down-stay and walk a little ways away, off leash this time. You want to go out just enough that you still would bet he'd come, but not too close that it's just too easy. Call your dog with your come command, and praise praise praise as he comes! No need to backpedal this time—we're increasing difficulty. Give him a party and indulge him a little. Then, rinse and repeat, increasing the distance little by little as your dog gets better and better.

Make it harder: Disappear out of sight and call your dog. Keep calling and calling so he can use your voice to locate you. You may want to have someone spotting your dog to keep him on task should he stray, and you want to do this in a confined, safe area (such as in your house). You can add extra people to this hide-and-seek game, but only one should call your dog at a time.

Up the ante: Call your dog while there is a distraction in the area with him! Start off with something like a familiar (but not favorite) toy and work your way up to more distracting things, such as someone running through the area at the same time, or another, friendly, loose dog. Be sure to up your praise accordingly! Also be sure to keep safety in mind—practice on a leash or long rope, or in an enclosed area.

Plan C: This game involves two people. One person holds the leash while the other person goes a little ways away. The person holding the leash drops the leash as soon as the other person calls the dog and the dog starts off toward them. As soon as the dog reaches the first person who called, they throw a party. (If the dog goes to anyone else, they ignore him, stepping on the leash to contain him ONLY IF NECESSARY.) As soon as the party dies down, the second person calls the dog, and throws a party once he's reached them.

Make it harder: Add in more people and more distance between people and try randomly (but one at a time) calling your pooch to various members of the circle, enlarging the circle as he gets better and better at this game!

Up the ante: Use a distraction and remember to up your praise. Oftentimes a distraction ahead of the dog (behind the person calling) will be easier to resist (and easier to block) than the same distraction behind the dog, so plan accordingly.

Teaching Eye Contact

In the dog world, eye contact is often a bad thing, and so people need to teach dogs that in the human world, eye contact is a wonderful thing. Fortunately for us, dogs seem to come "pre-programmed", so to speak, to look to a human for guidance when they cannot figure out a problem. As you work your dog in his obedience, many times eye contact will naturally develop—be sure to praise whenever your dog looks at you! Some dogs or owners may want/need more eye contact, so this section is designed to help you get that additional attention. Eye contact becomes very important for reactive dogs, as you become a life line for your dog when they find themselves drowning in fear.

You may want to place eye contact on a command ("Look", "Watch", etc) if eye contact is very important for you and your dog, but in most cases it's fine to skip the command and just teach your dog that it is their job to check in with you, not the other way around, and that you will reward them for checking in with you. You can think of it as a Mother May I game—your dog sees a distraction (and they will likely see it before you do, so this is when having the eye contact spontaneous rather than on cue comes in handy) and looks at you first before giving in to the distraction. This gives you an opportunity to step in before your dog gets into trouble, as long as you are paying attention and catch that look!

Plan A: Begin by taking some treats (or even your dog's dinner if they are hungry) and settling yourself and your dog in a room with little to no distractions. If your dog is a very distractible dog or seems to have little interest in you, place him on leash just to limit his movements, and therefore interactions with the environment. Take your treat (which is both a distraction and the reward) in one hand, show it to your dog to interest him but don't let him have it, and raise the treat up and away from your face, preferably about arm's length away. This way you can easily tell when your dog is looking at you, and when he is looking at the treat. If you are going to put the eye contact on cue, this is when you say the command—otherwise, just stay quiet and wait. As soon as he looks in your eye, give him your marker (your "Good" or "Yes", etc) and give him the treat. Repeat!

> ***Make it harder:*** Progressively ask for longer and longer eye contact (if you have a reactive dog, you'll find it easier to deal with situations if your dog has a solid eye contact of at least 10 seconds) or by asking for more intense eye contact. You can also raise the distraction level too—if you've been holding the treat in the left hand, try it in the right, and vice verse. Try holding it behind your back. Once your dog is doing great at that level, you can try slowly moving the treat around, and then progressively get faster and faster. You can also at this point introduce mild, (and then stronger and stronger) environmental distractions until your dog is a pro and is reliably offering you eye contact in real world situations.

Plan B: If your dog is having trouble giving you eye contact, try marking and praising him for glances toward you, even if he doesn't actually make eye contact. Slowly and progressively ask for him to get closer and closer to making eye contact until he actually does! Those first couple of times he makes actual eye contact with you, jack-

pot him (give him a couple extra treats instead of just one)! Then proceed as in Plan A.

Plan C: Go about your normal day with treats on hand and keep an eye on your dog. If at any time he gives you eye contact, be quick about marking and rewarding that! Slowly, he will discover that eye contact is the magic thing that is causing treats to rain down on him, and he'll begin to offer more and more eye contact. Then you can proceed as in Plan A.

The Attention Game

Once your dog is used to looking to you for further information, you can begin this attention game, which is a great aid for Leave it and for Loose Leash Walking. With your dog on leash, place a distraction in front of you, about 20 or so feet away. Your distraction needs to be something the dog wants, but not something that is so valuable to your dog that he loses his mind not being able to get to it. Keep your leash nice and short, although you do want your dog to be able to move around a little bit. He can sit, he can down, he can stand—it doesn't matter. He can even pull on the leash, but you aren't going anywhere. Wait him out, and eventually he will look at you with the leash loose. At that point, you take *one step* and then stop. Wait him out again, and when he gives eye contact with a loose leash again, you take *one step* and stop again.

Remember, there are only two rules: He must look at you and he must keep the leash loose. You may only take one step at a time!

Now, keep an eye out, because the closer you get to your distraction, the stronger the distraction becomes. So the further you progress, the harder the game naturally gets for your dog. At the beginning levels, anything closer than 5 feet is likely to be too hard, but watch your dog, and when you see him start having trouble giving that eye contact, or getting stressed about not being able to go to the

distraction, you want to wait for the next eye contact and praise him as you lead him *back to the starting position*, rather than going forward again. Go ahead and take your time to party with your dog, and give him a break to settle down and relax, then try it again!

If you want, you can choose to praise your dog for sitting while looking at you, or for staying close to the Heel position, but the only way to take a step (even if your dog is keeping the leash super loose or looking incredibly cute) is when he looks you in the eye. Eventually, your dog will keep nearly constant eye contact at this level. As you keep making things harder in this game, your dog will be able to get closer and closer to distractions, until they are able to walk right past them.

Additionally, since this game relies on focus and self control skills, you'll find as your dog gets better and better at those things, you will need to use this game less and less. Eventually, you'll find you have no further need for it, and that's great!

Teaching Loose Leash Walking

While you are teaching loose leash walking, there are some pieces of equipment you can use to help you, especially in the beginning or when there's a large size or strength difference, so your dog can't drag your arm out of your socket. Remember that each dog is an individual and no two will accept the same piece of equipment the same way. Experiment and see what works for you and your dog.

Two often recommended pieces of equipment are head collars (like the Gentle Leader) and no-pull harnesses (these generally clip in the front, like the EasyWalk harness). Your dog will need to be acclimated to the head collar before you ever clip a leash to it (simply put the collar on and love up your dog, play a favorite game, or feed him yummy treats, and then take the collar back off. Repeat often until your dog enjoys seeing the collar and lets you put it on without a fuss.) The Easywalk harness is accepted by most dogs right away without the need for acclimation.

However, neither of these work for 100% of dogs—some dogs will pull regardless. The biggest issue with a head collar (besides the need to acclimate to it) is that you must maintain a short leash. If your dog hits the end of a six foot leash while wearing a head collar and going full speed, he can seriously injure himself!

I find that slip leads work beautifully for a lot of dogs, especially leads with a brake to keep them from slipping open too much. Since we are not allowing the dog to pull us around, the slip lead can really help fine-tune your communication with your dog.

If you have any concerns of your dog pulling out of his collar, a slip-lead or a martingale collar are the way to go. The last thing you need it to be worrying about your dog running off while trying to train him to walk politely.

Pinch (prong) collars and choke chains (check chains, slip collars) are also fine for my methods, because once again we aren't allowing the dog to pull us, and we are specifically teaching him what we expect of him. We are not talking corrections here, and I find the vast majority of my clients don't need a prong collar or check chain.

Many dogs do fine with a standard buckle collar and regular leash. You can even use a regular harness. The only thing you can't use for this method is a retractable leash or an electronic collar.

Now that you have equipment sorted out, allow NO MORE pressure on the leash! That means no more dog pulling human, and no more human pulling dog! We want the feeling of pressure to be unusual to the dog, so that he is sensitized to it. That means that he'll feel it more quickly, at less pull strength, and he will act quickly to turn the pressure off—because we'll teach him how to control that pressure. I do not put this on cue, because I want this to be a default behavior for the dog. If the leash is on, I expect you not to pull.

Do allow your dog to sniff and be a dog. This is very important to his mental well-being! While you can and should of course make sure he can't get into anything

harmful, whenever possible do let him sniff, so long as he isn't pulling you. This will make the walk more enjoyable and fulfilling for both of you.

If your dog is a fast dog (ie: pulling a lot ahead of you on the leash) you want to do a lot of turns INTO your dog (cutting your dog off from running ahead of you) to get him used to slowing down and watching you. If you have a slow dog (ie: dilly dallying behind you on a walk) you want to do a lot of turns AWAY from your dog to encourage him to speed up and watch you. If you have a dog that does a little of both, turn according to the situation and keep it mixed up.

Plan A: Give your dog the full leash, and begin walking at a fairly brisk pace. As soon as your dog pulls, stop walking immediately and match your dog's pressure (if your leash was a tug of war rope, neither side would win). Now, wait. The moment your dog releases their pressure, release yours and start moving forward. If you time it right, you'll create a sort of "taking wind out of their sails" feeling. Be sure not to give more pressure, jerking or pulling your dog backward. If you do, your dog will very likely go right back to pulling. If you find yourself having trouble matching your dog's pressure without overdoing it, try tucking your thumbs in your pockets or belt loops, to keep your hands fairly steady. Make sure you praise your dog when he's got it right!

Plan B: If your dog is having a hard time paying attention and keeping the leash loose, he may be having trouble keeping track of where you are in space. This is especially true for young puppies, distracted teenagers, and very social dogs (think the splitter type). Clip a long (20 feet or so) leash to your dog and hold the very end of the leash in a wide open safe area, such as a park or large yard. You want to keep your distractions low at first, remember, so if you are using a park, try practicing when there are not many people or dogs around.

Start walking forward at a brisk pace. Change directions frequently and at random, especially when your

dog is near the end of the leash. If your dog jets away from you, head in the opposite direction. As soon as your dog starts to check in with you or hang close to you, praise.

Once your dog starts to reliably hang out closer to you, slowly decrease the amount of leash you've given them, until finally you're at a normal six foot leash length.

Continue practicing with your dog. Turn less and less frequently and gradually increase distraction, rewarding him for doing well.

CHAPTER 12: TEACHING MORE ADVANCED OBEDIENCE COMMANDS

Our dogs will love and admire the meanest of us, and feed our colossal vanity with their uncritical homage.

—Agnes Repplier

Teaching Heel

Not everyone needs heel. Most people can get by just fine with the simple request of "don't pull me". For those who need a tighter expectation of their dog, we have Heel. I recommend not asking your dog to heel for an entire walk, but only when necessary. He should still be given plenty of time to sniff and be a dog. When you are releasing your dog from Heel to a looser Loose Leash Walking expectation, be sure to remember to give that release command!

Heel needs to become associated not only with a particular space (the dog's head lined up with the seam of your pant leg, following you as you move) but also with a loose leash. Therefore, you are not allowed to pull your dog into position, nor to hold the leash so tightly that the dog has no choice but to stay in the heel position—for best results the choice must be your dog's.

Stick to one side or the other (either the left or the right) when teaching your dog to heel. Be consistent (among all family members, in all situations) on which side of you the dog is on. Once your dog has mastered the heel (and not before) you may give your dog a separate cue and teach him to heel on the opposite side. This however, is an advanced maneuver and can be difficult for dogs to grasp what we are wanting them to do. So certainly don't try it until your dog knows exactly what you mean and can perform a solid heel.

If you are done with the heel command, remember to release your dog with your release word! Otherwise, he will be practicing not heeling while the heel command is still in effect!

Again, if your dog is a fast dog (ie: pulling a lot ahead of you on the leash) you want to do a lot of turns INTO your dog (cutting your dog off from running ahead of you) to get him used to slowing down and watching you. If you have a slow dog (ie: dilly dallying behind you on a walk) you want to do a lot of turns AWAY from your dog to encourage him to speed up and watch you. If you have a dog that does a little of both, turn according to the situation and keep it mixed up.

Work with your dog until they are solid in their Loose Leash Walking skills before raising the bar to Heel! Loose Leash Walking is a lot easier, and it doesn't make sense to take calculus before your student has master basic arithmetic!

Plan A: Find a wide open area, such as a park or large yard. You want to keep your distractions low at first, remember, so if you are using a park, try practicing when there are not many people or dogs around. Say your word and start walking forward at a brisk pace. Keep your criteria for Heel very loose at this point—perhaps a 3 foot radius for Heel at first. Let your dog make a mistake, and when he has left Heel, *accentuate* that mistake (head off in the opposite direction). When your dog sees that you've left him and hurries to catch up, praise him, and if he is older than a

young puppy, perhaps give him a small treat. Continue walking at your brisk pace, turning as needed, until the dog begins to stay in Heel. Now you can tighten up your requirements for Heel to be more precise, gradually asking more and more of your dog.

Continue practicing with your dog. Ask for better and better performances before you give him a treat, so as to wean him gradually. Also, once you have as precise a Heel as you want, start upping the distraction gradually and weaning him off the turns, rewarding him for doing well.

Plan B: Plan B is a modification of Plan A, and requires more precise timing and more coordination, but does not require as much room at first. This can be done in tandem with Plan A, preferably after you have ten steps or so at a time figured out with Plan A, or it can be done separately. Take your leash in your hand, and be sure it's loose. You want to keep the U-shape in the leash between you and your dog. Set off at a normal pace with your command to heel, and keep an eye on your dog. If he stays in the heel position, be sure to praise him (but don't be too excited or he will run ahead and get into trouble!) If you see him beginning to push forward like he's about ready to pull, you want to turn INTO your dog at that point. What we want him to learn is that the space in front of his nose is your space, and you can occupy that space at any time, without any warning. Use your leg if necessary to gently sweep him back into heel position while you take up the space he was about to occupy (but don't kick him or step on his toes!). If you can't turn fast enough, you want to do a quick about-face and go in the opposite direction. Keep your turns no smaller than right angle (90 degree) turns.

As you can imagine, this is best done in an empty parking lot, a yard, or a large room—somewhere where you can do lots of random turns without any notice and are free to turn as much or as little as you like. Once your dog is getting the hang of it, you can try him on a sidewalk where your turns tend to be of the 180 degree variety. Slow, quiet

roads are best, as not only are there less distraction, but you can turn and cross the street more readily.

If you get dizzy, use the time to stop and practice some sits or downs with your dog, or just love him up for heeling. This is a great time to practice attention exercises, as well, because a good heel is very closely related to good attention skills for your dog.

Plan C: Take some treats in the hand on the side your dog is going to be on. That is, if your dog is going to be heeling on the left, have treats ready in your left hand, and hold the leash in your right hand. If your dog is going to be heeling on the right, have treats in your right hand and the leash in your left. Make sure your leash is loose, and keep a nice U shape hanging in the leash between you and your dog. Lure your dog into the heel position with your treats, cue "Heel", and take ONE step. As your dog follows you, treat and praise. Repeat as necessary.

Once your dog has the hang of heeling for one single solitary step, practice heeling for two steps at a time. Tell him to heel, and take two steps, praising your dog for staying in the heel position. As your dog follows you and hits that second step, reward him. Once he's mastered this step, go on to three steps at a time, then four, then five, and so on. Eventually you'll get up to half a block of heeling time, and then a block, and so on.

Plan D: There are other approaches to teaching heel, but if these are incorrectly implemented, they can have serious side effects. If you would like to explore these alternative options, seek out the help of an experienced trainer to help you troubleshoot and possibly try other methods.

<u>Teaching Leave it</u>

Leave it is an incredibly helpful command and can potentially save your dog's life. This command cues the dog to leave a distraction alone and to check in with their owner. Leave it can be used on anything—trash, fire hydrants, homework, even people or other dogs! It can be used if

something poisonous to dogs drops on the floor (raisins, onions, etc) or you drop medication or anything else that could hurt your dog. The key is to start with a low value distraction and a high value reward. While the dog is learning, you want to slowly increase the value of the distraction while increasing the value of the reward simultaneously. You do not want to inadvertently ask your dog to leave a $20 bill for a $5 reward early in the learning stage!

It is important during the learning phase to be sure your dog does not get rewarded by the distraction (being able to eat the food, for instance), otherwise they will not learn the lesson as quickly. We want them to think the item is completely off-limits, and that nothing they do will get them that item. If they leave it alone, great things happen to them! Also remember that the closer you get to your distraction, the stronger the distraction becomes. As such, you want to catch the moment your dog decides he wants to go to the distraction, because with every step you're getting closer to the distraction and it's getting stronger (and harder) for your dog!

Begin teaching Leave it with your dog by putting your low value distraction on the ground. It needs to be small, because as soon as your dog goes for it, you'll cover it up with your foot (step on it). When your dog stops, lift up your foot so he can see it, but get ready to block your dog again! Once your dog doesn't try to get it anymore, reward him from your hand with the high value reward!

***Make it harder*:** Practice Leave it with your dog on a leash and a distraction (maybe old dog biscuits or your dog's kibble) about 15 feet away or so. In your hand you will have a high value treat (maybe soft dog treats or small pieces of dog-safe human food like cheese, lunch meat, etc). Begin walking your dog toward the distraction, watching your dog closely. As soon as you see him notice the treats (ears go up, eyes lock on, and he'll probably start pulling toward the distraction) say

"Leave it" and stop. If your dog looks at you, feed and praise while passing the item. If he doesn't look at you, do an about-face, heading back the way you came. As soon as he stops pulling toward the distraction, praise, praise, praise. As soon as he looks into your eyes, give him one of your treats. Then repeat!

You will know that your dog is ready for a bigger challenge (higher value distraction) when he starts leaving the distraction automatically, or not going near it at all. It's just fine to praise your dog for this leap of knowledge! Now we make it harder by adding to the distraction, making it a higher-value distraction (but not higher value than your reward), or walking closer to the distraction, maybe even loitering near it for a while.

Remember, most real life distractions are not something you can cover up to keep your dog from seeing, so let your dog see the Leave it item as much as possible. Your dog will not be in a Sit or Down most times when you need this in real life, so don't practice that way, either!

Prepare your dog for real life, too! Practice with dropping Leave it items (begin with short heights and progressively raise the height of the drop) or sweeping them off counters (slow speeds first, building to high speeds). Give your Leave it command at later and later times or further and further distances from them, so they have less of a heads up of what you want, always keeping in mind that you want them to win.

When you find yourself hard-pressed to challenge your dog in the home, you are ready to try this while you are out and about in the world with your dog. Be prepared and bring a reward for your dog. The more you practice (and the more you stay consistent), the faster your dog will get better at this!

Teaching Wait

Another useful command you may enjoy teaching your dog is Wait. This command becomes necessary if you have a dog who bolts out the door ahead of you, especially if they do so habitually and on a potentially dangerous basis. You want your dog to have a good sit-stay and down-stay before attempting to have him wait at doors, because the doorway is often an extremely challenging environment for dogs. So many cool things happen at doorways: walks start there, visitors come and go through there, pizza delivery guys appear there, and owners come and go through there too!

To begin teaching wait, put your dog on the leash and walk up to a closed door. If there is a door that is less exciting for your dog, that would be the best door to start this work with. Have your dog sit or down, whichever he is better at holding and tell them to wait. Then open the door slowly—most dogs will jump up as soon as the door begins to open, so be ready! As soon as your dog breaks their stay and bolts forward, just close the door (before your dog gets there) and remind your dog to sit or down (whichever he broke), and then to wait. Repeat as necessary until your dog stays put, and then walk over the threshold. If at any point your dog tries to come with you, close the door, reset your dog, and begin again. Some dogs catch on quickly, while others (especially if they've been bolting through doors for a long time) may need more practice, so take a deep breath and be patient—your dog will get this!

It's often easier for your dog to maintain a sit or a down than for them to maintain a stand (they tend to be more likely to move forward if they are in a Stand, unless you have proofed this). When your dog has mastered this, however, you may choose to allow them to stand *as long as they do not cross the threshold*. Otherwise, this exercise is an advance sit or down stay,

Use a Sit or Down stay at the door if you want. If you use Wait, make sure you clarify its meaning in your head. Typically "Wait" means the dog can change positions or even back up, just so long as they do not move **forward**. Whichever you choose, the method is the same.

which is also fine (in that case, do not bother saying “wait” as you may confuse your dog).

For your first success, what you want is for your dog to stay put while you cross the threshold of the door. As soon as you do so, release your dog with your release cue, and allow him to party, and do his thing. If it’s a door to the outside that you are working on, this might be a good time to go for a short walk, or play some ball, or whatever. You can always repeat the wait sequence when you are going inside. If you’re using an outside door, make sure your dog is on leash or contained in some way before doing wait (having him wait in front of a door that leads to a fenced in yard is a good way to go).

Make it harder: Take a few more steps through the threshold—try going to the end of your leash before releasing your dog to come after you. Once your dog is ready and has mastered the basic wait, try pushing the door all the way open, giving your dog ample room to bolt (be ready in case he does, and keep a firm grip on the leash). Try adding in distractions, slowly raising the level of difficulty as your dog becomes better and better at this skill. Once your dog has mastered all of the above (if the environment is safe) try dropping your leash and going farther, or out of sight. If at any time your dog forgets and crosses the threshold before he was allowed, simply stop him as soon as possible (so he doesn’t have a chance to get into trouble or to have too much fun as a reward for his mistake) and bring him back to where he broke his wait from.

<u>Teaching Place</u>

Once your dog is an expert at holding a sit and a down, you are ready to introduce a Place command. This is kind of a nicer, extended stay for your dog. You’ll need a blanket or mat, something that has a different feel to it than the flooring it will be laying on (that way your dog can feel through his paws right when he made a mistake and

stepped off his mat). Decide whether you would like to have your dog keep four feet at all times on his mat (a more strict form, but perfect if your place is very large) or two feet (great for smaller mats, or if you want a more relaxed place command), and then stick to it! The idea is that when you give the place command, your dog can do whatever he wants (nice and politely) as long as he keeps two or four feet (whichever you chose) on the mat at all times. He can sit, he can lay down, he can stand, he can even move around on the place, or play with a toy, or chew a bone, as long as he does not leave the place.

The place command is great for keeping excited dogs from getting in trouble through being too exuberant in their greetings. They can greet people if the people come over to their place, but they can't be getting into guests faces (unless said faces are right by the place). Your dog will have a place of his own that he will feel comfortable on and begin to really enjoy.

To teach the place command, put your dog on a leash, and put your place on the floor. Have your dog walk with you around for a little while, and then walk him right across his place without paying attention to it at all. Do this three times, getting him accustomed to the feel of it.

Next, walk your dog across the place as before, but this time you are going to get super excited about the place! "Look boy, this is your place! This is your place! Good place, good place boy!" After a little "place—party", get up and walk him off of the place again. You want him to get really excited about the place and then to leave it before he's done being all excited about it. You will do this routine three times.

Now we want to start practicing sending the dog to his place as well as teaching him the boundary you've set for him (the two-foot or four-foot rule). Bring your dog to the place as before, and this time as you approach, you will draw a line with your index finger from your dog's nose to the near corner of his place while you give his command "Place!" Once he has the required number of feet on the

mat, praise him, but do so gently. We don't want him so excited that he jumps right off.

Give him enough leash that he can get off the place, but say nothing and kind of hang back with him. Praise him if he stays on the mat, and if he leaves, tell him "No, Place" and bring him right back on the mat. After he's stayed for 30 seconds or so, give him his release command or come command to get him off of the place. After a little while, repeat the above step, slowly increasing the time he needs to stay on the place before you let him off. Alternatively, you can slowly increase the distance from which you send him to his mat by not quite finishing your line from his nose to the corner of the mat, and then bit by bit, giving him his place command from farther and farther away (don't rush it!).

While your dog is hanging out on the place, you'll see him begin to experiment to see what he can get away with. Praise anything your dog does (as long as they are being polite) as long as he keeps two or four feet (whichever you decided) on that mat. The moment he breaks that rule, say "No, Place" and put him right back on his place, and then praise once he is on.

Once your dog gets good at the place command, you can start adding in distractions into the area. Remember to go slow, and raise the difficulty in a step-wise manner. As always, practice makes perfect with the place!

CHAPTER 13: COMMON BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Properly trained, a man can be dog's best friend.

—Corey Ford

Crate Training

Crates take advantage of the den instinct of dogs—dogs in general like to have a place they can call their own, where they can relax and get away from it all. They like to keep their den area clean, so they have a natural instinct to not mess in their crate (den) if they can help it. The key to crates is to make sure the crate is small enough so that there's just enough room for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and lay back down. Any larger and they will try to eliminate in the front and lay down in back. Then, when you come home and they are so happy to see you, guess where they're dancing?! There are always exceptions to this rule, but this section aims to help you train your puppy or dog to accept (and then love) the crate.

The crate needs to be in a socially central, well travelled area of the house, not tucked away in the basement. If your puppy feels isolated, he will not like his crate.

You want to put your puppy in the crate whenever you can't watch him. Frequent short visits with you in the room with him will help him get used to it. It will also help if you leave the door open for him so he can go in and out as he likes while you are watching, and then when you can't watch him, you can lock him in. If your puppy doesn't want to explore his crate, put his water in there (but take it out when you close him in there) and/or feed him in his crate. You can also surprise him by throwing toys and treats in there for him to find so he can associate the crate with pleasant things. Soon enough you'll have a puppy who eagerly bounds in and out of the crate!

When you need to shut your puppy into the crate, your puppy may whine or bark. This is natural—they want to be with you, not away from you. However, it's to their benefit to be in a safe place where they can't get into anything potentially dangerous. It's extremely important for you to never let your puppy out of the crate while he's whining or barking or throwing a fit. Dogs can quickly learn that whining and barking get them out of the crate, and so they will bark and whine longer and louder. Teach him that being quiet in the crate is the key to getting out of the crate. Ignoring them for short crating sessions will, for most dogs, be enough to teach them to stop—if they are quiet they get praise and let out of the kennel, while they get nothing if they are loud. If you have a dog on your hands that is really being loud and obnoxious, wait for the millisecond of quiet while they are drawing in the breath to bark more, and use that millisecond to let them out.

There are some dogs who need more help—in these cases it's best if you ask an experienced trainer or behavior expert in your area for advice.

Housebreaking

There are a few guidelines to follow to make the housebreaking process as smooth and easy as possible. Different dogs begin to understand the process at different rates, as each dog is an individual. Dogs who are closely

monitored and allowed to make few (if any) uncaught (right away) mistakes tend to "get it" faster than dogs who are allowed to make many mistakes without the owner's knowledge. The general rule of thumb is that a dog is housebroken after they have gone for a month without a single accident.

Rule 1: Constant Supervision—On Leash or In the Crate

A puppy or adult dog that is going through the housebreaking process needs to be under supervision at all times. If the owner(s) cannot keep an eye on him, he needs to be in a crate (be sure to crate train him!) or puppy-proofed area with appropriate elimination areas (puppy pads). Otherwise, what often happens is that the puppy wanders away and pees in another room, unbeknownst to the owner. He then goes back into the room that the owner is in, and the owner (happy to see the puppy) praises him. Inadvertently, the puppy gets praised for peeing in another room. To help you keep an eye on the puppy, keep a leash on him at all times, either leashed to you (best option), or let the pup drag the leash behind him as he wanders along (keep him supervised!). Restricting rooms he has access to is a great idea too.

If you have a dog that has a habit of wandering off and you find yourself constantly running after him, simply leash him to you (tie the leash around your waist or hook it through your belt, etc). This is called umbilical cord training, and it really helps in situations where the owner finds it hard to keep an eye on their dog. Before you know it, you can stop leashing him to you—it's only a temporary measure.

Rule 2: Go Outside With Your Dog

If you think about it, a lot of owners take the easy way out. In the winter, they send their dog or puppy out into the cold to do their business while they stay inside where it's warm. When it's raining, they stay in the doorway or the cozy inside and wait for their dog to hurry up and go. While this makes sense and is understandable, it is not the best way to housebreak a dog.

Leash your puppy up and take him outside with you to a particular area of the yard where you want him to eliminate. Use the same area every time—this way, it begins to smell like the bathroom to your puppy, and helps him figure out what you want. When you get to your potty area in your yard, give your dog a cue to go to the bathroom (things like “Go potty”, “Hurry up”, and “Do your business” are common). This way he’ll be on cue to eliminate, and you can choose where to have him eliminate, even if you aren’t at home.

As soon as your puppy begins to do his business, praise him gently. You don’t want to get your puppy so excited that he stops in the middle, but you do want to let him know right away that this is what you came out here to do. This is one reason not to wait at the door for your puppy—in that case, he gets a treat not for going to the bathroom, but for coming back inside. Some pups learn this and only partially do their business so they can come inside—then they finish on the floor.

If your puppy delays going, just be patient. Keep him on the leash so that he has a circular area of about a 6 foot radius to go about it, and don’t engage in play with him and don’t let him get too interested in sniffing around. This is potty time—you want it to be boring. Play time can happen inside. Otherwise, if the puppy plays and plays and plays outside, they can forget that they needed to potty. Then when they come back inside and it’s boring because their owner has other things to do, they remember “Oh yeah! I had to potty. Hey, this spot looks good!” and you end up with a mess (this is another reason you want to go outside with your puppy—you can make sure he’s pottied, and you can keep outside boring for him until he’s housetrained).

If after ten to fifteen minutes your puppy still hasn’t gone and you are pretty sure he needs to go, bring him back inside but put him right into his crate for ten to fifteen minutes. After that, put the leash back on and take him right back outside to his potty area and cue to go potty. Repeat

as necessary until he's pottied. This can help you avoid some accidents.

Rule 3: Catch Them in the Act

Your puppy will have no idea what's happening if you try to punish him after you find a mess in the house that has been sitting there who knows how long. If you do find such a mess, just take a moment to resolve to supervise him better, and clean it up. At some point however, your puppy is likely to make a mistake—and it's your job to be watching so you can catch him in the act!

If you see your puppy acting suspicious, whisk him right outside as in Rule #2. If you miss this, and see your puppy squatting, act now! Give a loud "No!" to startle him, and run over to him as quickly as you can (this will stop most puppies mid-stream). Pick him up (assuming he's small enough), regardless of whether he's stopped or not—remember, this is a lesson that needs to be taught—and get him right outside. Bring him right to the potty area and give him his cue. You really want him to finish outside so you can praise him, so try to relax and not be so startling anymore. What we want the pup to learn is that going to the bathroom inside is a no-no, but going to the bathroom in itself is not a bad thing. It's just that this sort of thing needs to happen outside. The last thing you want is for your puppy to not want to potty in front of you—that's a recipe for accidents!

Whether or not he finishes outside (and if he does finish outside, praise him warmly) when you bring him back inside, put him in his crate while you clean up the mess. Then, let him out and remember to closely supervise him so you won't have another accident!

Rule 4: Clean Up Appropriately

You and your puppy will both make mistakes during the housebreaking process and it's important to clean up these messes appropriately. It is not enough to simply use 409 or Resolve or vinegar and water, etc, to clean up accidents. Do *not* use any cleaner with ammonia in it, or your puppy will have more accidents. The scent of ammonia will tell them "this is the spot to go!", and that's not what we

want. Clean up the mess as you normally do, and then follow up with an enzymatic cleaner. These cleaners have enzymes in them that stay in the flooring and eat away all the particles of urine or feces that your dog can smell but we cannot. Without these cleaners, your house begins to smell like a potty area to your dog (even though your relatively puny nose can't smell anything), and entice him to return to that area to pee or poop again. We want to erase these smells as thoroughly as possible so that the only area that smells like the dog's bathroom is outside. Some good enzymatic cleaners are Nature's Miracle (naturesmiracle.com) and Get Serious!, which are available at most pet stores.

Rule 5: Feed on a Schedule

Most puppies are fine being fed two to three times a day, but it's best to feed on a set schedule, whichever way you go. Rather than simply letting your puppy graze throughout the day (free-feeding), pick up the bowl after about 15 to 20 minutes. Your puppy will very quickly learn that they have a limited amount of time to eat, and will quickly adjust. As a bonus, you will be able to predict when your puppy needs to eliminate—approximately 30 to 60 minutes after they've eaten, depending on the puppy. If you are free-feeding, you have a much more difficult time determining when your puppy needs to go out. Also, you can use feeding time to help your puppy learn commands like sit and down—just ask for that command (once your puppy knows it) before setting down the food—the food then becomes the reward for your puppy.

Chewing

If you can't keep watch over your dog, he needs to be contained in a crate or puppy proof area to avoid the chance of him practicing bad behavior (chewing inappropriately). When you are watching him, act immediately. As soon as your dog's teeth touch something inappropriate for him to chew on, tell him no and take him away from the object. Immediately offer him an alternative

that he can chew on and praise him for any interest in it. Any time he shows interest in something he can chew on, give him plenty of praise.

It's very important that you avoid accidentally confusing your dog. For instance, you cannot expect a puppy or dog to know the difference between an old shoe he can chew on, and your new, expensive dress shoes. Only give him things to chew on that don't resemble (by touch, sight, or smell) things you don't want him to chew on. This means choosing your dog's toys carefully.

I love the Kong chew toys. They make wonderful puzzle toys as well as the original Kong, and the toys are fun whether stuffed with treats and peanut butter or not. For safety, always inspect them for any cracks before you give them to your dog to chew on, and be sure the Kong is sized appropriately (a Rottweiler should not be chewing on a Kong designed for a Rat Terrier, for instance). Kong also makes wonderful super-Kongs, so to speak, for the super-chewers we know and love (yes, that would be our Pitbulls and Labs, among others). The black Kongs and the Galileo bones hold up very well, especially if they are not too small for your dog. A properly sized Kong's largest ring will not fit in the back teeth of your dog- if it does, you need a larger Kong. The smaller the item the dog is chewing on, the more power they can exert from their jaws (and therefore, the more likely they are to be able to break the toy).

Other great chewing items are yak sticks (hard sticks of yak cheese), marrow bones (cow femurs often stuffed with either marrow or flavoring), and deer antlers. Your dog should have a variety of chew things: something squishy to chew, something hard, something soft, and something that gives food. A single toy can meet multiple of these needs: for instance, a Kong is squishy and can give food. A yak stick or marrow bone is hard and can give food. If you also have something soft like a loofa dog or a squeaky toy, you're set (though since you want to rotate toys, it's a good idea to have multiples!).

After teaching your dog what is and is not appropriate for him to set his teeth on, you can play a game with him. Set out 3 toys he can chew on and 2 things he shouldn't chew on, and sit on one side of the items with your dog on the other. Wait and see what he chooses. If he chooses something appropriate, praise, praise, praise! And if not, give him that "No!" and grab something appropriate to replace it with. Play as long as your dog is interested, and when he tires, grab the last toy he appropriately selected and take a break for a game with that toy. Congratulate your dog for being so clever!

Jumping

Jumping is one of those behaviors that is not only socially unacceptable to humans, but can also be dangerous. It has its roots in a socially proper (in dog world) greeting behavior between dogs—sniff the face, sniff the rear. Our job as dog owners is to teach our dogs a human acceptable greeting behavior instead, and to give them the impulse control to help them succeed rather than succumbing to instinct. If you're having jumping problems, try some of these helpful games. Mix and match from the below plans according to your needs and the situation.

Plan A: For this game, you will need a helper, and your dog on a leash. Put your dog in a sit or a down and have your helper approach normally. The moment your dog jumps up, your helper needs to turn tail and run away as if from a scary dog. For most dogs this will be punishment enough; all they want is to greet the person, not drive them away. Reset your dog and try again.

Plan B: This game works well when you are expecting guests. Put your dog on a leash. Hold the handle of the leash in your hand, and relax your arm so that the leash touches the ground about in the middle. Set your foot firmly on the leash at that point, so the leash is slightly relaxed while the dog is standing still, but goes tight when he jumps up. As your guests arrive one by one, invite them in and let them pet your dog while you help him keep his

feet on the ground. Once everyone is settled and your dog is calm, you can let him greet your visitors one by one if he wishes.

Plan C: Another way you can help your dog while out and about is by setting your foot on the leash (as described above) whenever someone wants to meet your dog. You can also ask your dog for a sit or a down to help increase his self-control and help him get to the next stage more quickly.

Plan D: If you are having company, you can also use distance to help your dog succeed, if your dog has developed some self-control through obedience and if he's mastered his obedience commands. Put him in a place command away from the door, or in a sit or a down -stay away from the door and have him hold that command while you invite your guests in and get them settled. Once they are settled and your dog is calm, your dog can say hi, just as above.

Plan E: How about if your dog is jumping on you? Most dogs respond well if their owner ignores them while they jump up. Don't look at your dog or talk to him—simply walk right through him as if he wasn't there (try not to step on any toes though!). This will put him slightly off balance, which he won't like. As soon as he has all four feet on the ground, praise your dog. As soon as you begin to pay attention to him, your dog will likely jump up again, so be prepared to go back to ignoring him at a split second's notice. After a little while, your dog will spend less and less time airborne, and you will be able to praise him more and more.

There is no need to knee your dog or step on his toes or spray him with anything! Simply be consistent with the above plans and the jumping will stop.

<u>Weaning off Treats</u>

We don't want to be tied to treats all the time, but remember what I said in the beginning of this book about the need to reward your dog in some way, to motivate them

to behave correctly. This is super important in the learning stages especially, because learning a new skill is hard, and even harder without proper motivation. But you don't have to be tied to treats—you don't have to use treats at all, in fact (which is fantastic if your dog isn't food motivated).

First off, figure out what *does* motivate your dog—and this can change depending on the situation. If you can use what your dog wants, or even better, if you can use what's distracting your dog as motivation for following commands, you will be in a very good place. Your dog will quickly realize you are telling them how to win. You're telling them how to get what they want. This is the beginnings of a beautiful partnership!

I use treats often during the beginning stages of training, but I also wean the dogs off treats very quickly. As soon as the dog is doing well, I raise the bar. So in the beginning, when the dog doesn't know a command, I'll use food to reward a Sit, for instance. Once the dog knows Sit, simply sitting is no longer treat worthy. Now to earn a treat, they need to sit while I walk a little ways away and back, or sit for a longer time, or sit while there's a distraction. And I'm constantly raising that bar, giving plenty of supporting praise. That praise is going to be the last thing you wean them off of, and you should never wean them all the way off praise. But as things get easier, they simply don't need so much support.

Varying your rewards and using real life rewards and consequences, will help immensely with freeing yourself from the tie to treats. Just remember that it's not a linear process. When things get hard again, you might find treats helpful again for a little bit.

So, if you're working with your dog to sit politely to be petted, use that already present reward and consequence! You don't need treats here, because the dog doesn't want them anyway (for a dog who wants to be petted, of course). If your dog sits, he gets what he really wants in the first place—to be petted. If he doesn't, he doesn't get what he wants.

Be creative! The sky's the limit. Maybe your dog loves chasing squirrels, but she still came to you when you called her. Why not reward her by running after squirrels with her (in a fenced in yard or on leash for safety)?

This is why I love the game tug. It's got rewards and consequences built in, as well, and is infused with partnership and cooperation. Tug only works if the other person (or dog) is also playing. So ask your dog to use their self control. If they sit or down or relax on command during the game, they get to play more, or maybe you ramp the game up! If not, the game is over. If they ever lose control and grab you instead of the tug, the game is over. If you need to end the game, don't just rip it out of your dog's mouth. Hold it very close to your body and simply be still (don't do this if your dog is possessive—contact a trainer in that case!) and calm until your dog gives up. Then put the tug up. The calmer you are, the sooner they'll realize you stopped playing.

Enforcing Commands (or What to Do When Your Dog "Forgets" Everything)

Remember, weaning off treats is not a linear process. Neither is motivation. And when your dog stops listening, generally one of a handful of things happened: it got too difficult, the dog didn't understand, the dog is not motivated, or he simply doesn't want to do it.

In the first two cases, this is not the dog's fault—this is a training error, instead. You cannot apply consequences fairly to a dog when it's a training error! Your dog has a sense of fairness, and depending on the dog, they will only tolerate so much injustice before deciding a partnership with you is not worth it. If one of the first two reasons is likely, stop, back up, and train towards that goal. Your puppy's not able to come when you call him while a person's petting him? That *makes sense*! Break it down for him into easy pieces, having him come to you repeatedly, while the person gets gradually closer and closer.

Check equipment, too. Maybe your dog can do it on leash, but just hasn't progressed to being able to do it off leash yet. Don't forget to account for over-excitation. If he's too excited to listen, simply taking some time to calm him down can help get you back on the right track.

Eventually, you're going to run into a motivation problem. Have you been working a long time? Have you been drilling your dog? It might be time for a break. Have you been increasing the difficulty without paying attention to increasing your reward? Are you giving your dog plenty of supporting praise?

A lack of motivation is directly connected to your dog not wanting to do something. However, check your motivation first! If you can help your dog win by simply increasing motivation (so long as you're not bribing your dog), great!

Sometimes, that's just not going to be enough, and we need to enforce our commands. When doing this, you need to choose the most mild consequence that works. Not every consequence will work in all situations, but you don't want to overcorrect your dog either, or you'll stress him out or damage your relationship with him.

Plan A: The simplest, easiest consequence is simply a "No", and remember, we've been using "No" to mark mistakes already. You should pair "No" with every other consequence you use.

Plan B: Sometimes a "No" by itself is just not going to be enough. Another mild consequence that often works really well is to use real-life consequences. We've already discussed a few of these—try to think of what your dog wants, and simply require them to use the manners they've built up to get those things. This is natural.

Plan B2: Another low stress consequence is the "show and stow". This only works if you have treats on you already. If you give your dog a command and they *can* do it but choose not to, you can take the treat out of your pocket, wave it in front of his face, and put it away again. He then does not get the treat for the next command. Obviously your

dog will be confused the first time, but they will very quickly catch on because dogs are masters of patterns. It generally takes dogs only two or three examples of show and stow to understand what's happening, and you'll see a change in their body language, especially for very food motivated dogs.

Plan B3: Sometimes you don't have treats on you. If you have your dog on leash (or can quickly and easily put him on leash) you can simply wait him out. I highly recommend waiting your dog out at least three times in their life time, especially during the adolescent phase (about 9 to 18 months or so, with some wiggle room there). It gives a very clear message, without a lot of stress, but it does take a time commitment in the early stages. You need to be able to hang out and wait for at least thirty minutes. If you have to give up and attend to other things before your dog follows through on the command, you only end up teaching him that he can out-stubborn you, and that is *not* what we want him to learn! When waiting your dog out, simply give him a No and put him on leash if he's not already. Look at his feet to note precisely where he's standing. When he moves, mark that again with a No, bring him back to the exact spot he was, and give the command again. So long as he doesn't move, nothing happens. Don't talk or plead, just wait. Most dogs will follow the given command within 20 minutes because you're making life very boring for them. The second or third time you wait your dog out, they may test you, so you may be there longer than before, but by the fourth time, that length of time drops and it drops rapidly.

Plan C: Going up slightly in amount of stress we're causing with our consequences, don't underestimate the effectiveness of simply removing freedom. If your dog doesn't respect the boundaries, he doesn't get the freedom to disrespect those boundaries. We aren't giving commands just for

Remember:
Freedom with Responsibility.
If your dog won't pull their weight, they simply won't get the freedom that a responsible dog will have. Show him that.

fun, after all. It's your responsibility to keep your dog safe in a human world. So if your dog won't come when called off leash, put him on leash and continue working. This also has the advantage of covering the possibility of your dog simply not understanding or knowing what you want, and is still fairly low stress (though you and your dog may be frustrated. This is natural). It's perfectly find for your dog to drag a leash in the house, so long as you're supervising, and there's nothing wrong with temporarily going back to umbilical cord training if your dog is going back to bad habits in the house. This is part of managing the environment while we teach the dog new skills. Just don't forget to continue working with your dog so that next time you test them with increase freedom, they're more likely to succeed!

Plan D: Nothing else is working! What do you do now? Use pressure. You'll remember this from the basic obedience skills, as Plan C for Sit and Down. If your dog knows what to do and can do it but simply doesn't want to, pressure is a fine consequence. Remember this is gentle pressure we're talking about, only two fingers worth, up for sit, and down for down. We are not hurting, scaring, or forcing the dog, and this is important. Do not force your dog. Do not hurt him. Do not scare him. We want a strong relationship with our dogs, and they tend to want one with us. Don't erode it by using pain, fear, or force to get what you want. So you've told Rover to Sit, and he's ignoring you. You've checked the difficulty, you know he knows it, you know he hurt you. Simply give him a "No, Sit" to mark his poor choice and remind him of what you asked, and give him gentle, consistent pressure upward on the collar, and wait. Keep the pressure steady—no jerking, no giving up. This is an accelerated "waiting the dog out" because we're just adding some obnoxious stimulus. As soon as your dog sits, the pressure goes away! If he gets back up, the pressure simply comes back along with another "No, Sit" until he fixes his error. This is extremely helpful for enforcing stays, and since we're teaching the dog to yield to pressure

with the loose leash walking skills anyway, it's not new. Your dog will very quickly learn how to turn that pressure off, though sometimes they may test you. Stay calm and keep the gentle pressure steady.

Remember, when you are increasing the strength of your consequence, you are adding some stress. You will need to up your praise to adjust for that, to avoid stressing your dog out. Even if your dog is testing you, remember to celebrate with them when they get it right!

The adolescent phase is known for testing. I love working with these dogs, because they're so much fun to build that partnership with. That testing, that pushing the limits, that's how they see what you're made of. Are you going to be gentle but fair? What kind of partnership will you build with them for the rest of their lives? The time you put in here will pay off amazingly well the rest of your relationship!

Be fair: Only enforce the command if you're reasonably sure your dog knows the command and can do it in this situation.

Be gentle: Choose the least stressful consequence that works. If it's not working, move up a bit in stress level, but remember to also up your praise for a while to compensate. Don't overcorrect your dog! Jumping straight to Plan D all the time is likely to stress him out.

Be consistent: Your dog is only going to get confused if sometimes you let him break his stay and other times you enforce it. You have to follow the rules just as much as he does.

Be tenacious: While you don't want to let your dog make mistakes dangerously or without any form of consequence, you do want him to learn. Mistakes are part of learning, so long as you address the mistakes and then give him more chances to then succeed. It's ok to tell him No, and then help him get it right. Never letting him make a mistake, or never letting him try again, is going to slow or stunt your dog's learning.

CHAPTER 14: FINDING PROFESSIONAL HELP

He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion.

—Unknown

A book is limited in that it can only give general information. Even the best author cannot use a book to dynamically respond to an owner's actions with his dog. As such, you may find it helpful to enlist the help of someone who can watch you work with your dog and tweak things as needed to help produce the best in both you and your dog. The most important thing I have noticed in my years as a trainer is that the owner agree with the methods used by the trainer (obviously, those methods being humane). If there exists a difference in philosophy between owner and trainer, the owner will likely not follow through with the trainer's recommendations and the training *will not work*. It will be a waste of money and a source of frustration for all involved, including the dog.

Therefore, call up the local trainers in your area. Have a conversation with them about their philosophy. Observe them working a dog (typically in a class situation). Do you agree with their philosophy and how they handle the dog? Do their words and actions match? Would you feel

comfortable if your dog was handled that way? Talk to your friends and see who they recommend. Talk to past clients of trainers whenever possible and see what they think. Continue until you find a trainer you agree with and feel comfortable with—then learn from them all you can. It is okay to question a trainer, and many good trainers welcome questions. It helps prevent misunderstandings down the road.

If you are having trouble finding a trainer and a Google search of "dog trainers [your city]" doesn't help, or if you want more recommendations from a professional source, look online at trainer organizations. Just remember that there are a variety of trainers out there and organizational membership is not the be-all-end-all. Take a look at some of these organizations:

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers (apdt.com)

The International Association of Canine Professionals (canineprofessionals.com)

The International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (iaabc.org).

If you are interested in someone who has been certified by an outside organization, you want to look at the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (ccpdt.org). Or, if you're looking for someone who's studied academically for years, try looking at the Animal Behavior Society (animalbehaviorsociety.org), although there are not very many members as the standards for joining are exceedingly high.

Regardless of who you choose, be sure you agree with their philosophy. Ask plenty of questions. Make sure you understand them. This is an investment that could bring you joy for years to come by teaching you how to communicate appropriately with your dog, to strengthen you relationship. If you don't understand their philosophy, methods, or even simply what they are asking you to do, that investment will be a failure.

Don't let fear of failure stop you though, because a trainer and an owner who are on the same page and working toward bettering the relationship between owner and dog are a powerful force for good in the life of the dog.

RECOMMENDED READING

Near this Spot are deposited the Remains of one who possessed Beauty without Vanity, Strength without Insolence, Courage without Ferocity, and all the virtues of Man without his Vices. This praise, which would be unmeaning Flattery if inscribed over human Ashes, is but a just tribute to the Memory of BOATSWAIN, a DOG, who was born in Newfoundland May 1803 and died at Newstead Nov. 18, 1808.

—Epitaph to a Dog, Lord Byron.

General Resources

The Other End of the Leash by Patricia McConnell

For the Love of a Dog by Patricia McConnell

The Emotional Lives of Dogs by Patricia McConnell

Inside of a Dog by Alexandra Horowitz

SATS & the Family Dog: Daily Living Skills by Kayce Cover

How to Be Your Dog's Best Friend (revised edition) by The Monks of New Skete

Dog Sense by John Bradshaw

How to Behave So Your Dog Behaves by Dr. Sophia Yin

Culture Clash by Jean Donaldson

The Dog Listener by Jan Fennell

101 Dog Tricks by Kyra Sundance

Introduction to Bridge & Target Training by Kayce Cover

Fired Up, Frantic, and Freaked Out by Laura VanArendonk Baugh

Getting in TTouch with Your Dog by Linda Tellington-Jones

Bones Would Rain from the Sky by Suzanne Clothier

The Rosetta Bone by Cheryl S. Smith

General Animal Resources

Animals Make Us Human by Temple Grandin

Animals in Translation by Temple Grandin

TALK to me! A Communication Guide for People who Live and Work with Animals by Kayce Cover

Body Language Skills

Canine Body Language by Brenda Aloff

On Talking Terms with Dogs by Turid Rugaas

“The Language of Dogs” by Sarah Kalnajs (DVD)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mel Heber is the owner of Paw In Hand, with over ten years of professional training experience. She began her training journey while working with the Dubuque Humane Society, and soon found patterns in the troubles new adopters would see, or behaviors owners would struggle with. She has designed, created, and led training classes helping thousands of dogs and their owners learn to communicate more effectively, and has worked individually with owners to help dogs plagued by fear, reactivity, and impulse control problems.

She's a member of the IACP and has been certified CPDT-KA (membership since lapsed). She's an ABC Mentor trainer and an AKC CGC evaluation as well as an evaluation for K9to5 National Therapy Dog Registry.

If you're struggling with your dog, there's a better way. Contact Mel or a trainer in your area today.