



BEHAVIOUR
ADJUSTMENT
BLUEPRINT

A HOLISTIC APPROACH



So, when I say that my approach is Holistic, what do I mean?

 holistic

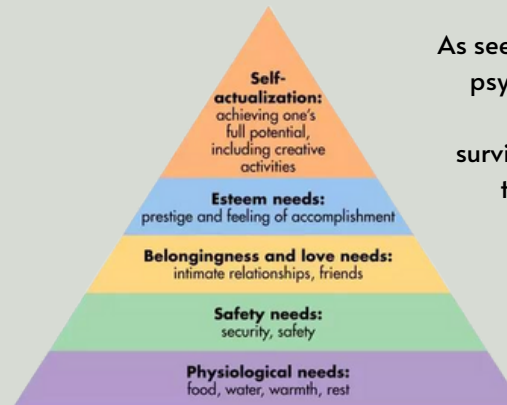
/həʊˈlɪstɪk, hɒˈlɪstɪk/

adjective

PHILOSOPHY

characterized by the belief that the parts of something are intimately interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole.

What I mean, is that everything is important. Every part of a dogs life is important. The small parts that you may not think matter, DO matter. By tackling all of these parts we can ensure the dog is completely fulfilled from the inside out and know that we have covered all bases.



MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

As seen on the left, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology incorporating a five-tier model of human needs (though we can also apply this to our dogs). Our most basic need is for physical survival, and this will be the first thing that motivates our behavior. Once that level is fulfilled the next level up is what motivates us, and so on.

For our dogs, I see things very similarly.

Dogs match the bottom 2 levels just the same as humans. At a baseline level, our dogs need their physiological and safety needs met. But as we move up the levels on the triangle, things should be viewed a little differently.

FOR OUR DOGS...

- ORANGE TIER: Being completely fulfilled by all tiers below and having a purpose in life
- BLUE TIER: Confidence and resilience in the real world
- YELLOW TIER: Positive, meaningful and predictable relationships with owners
- GREEN TIER: Security, Structure, Safety & Advocation
- PURPLE TIER: Nutritional Food, Water, Warmth, Exercise & Movement, Mental Stimulation & Rest

By ensuring each tier is fulfilled/achieved as much as is possible, we ensure that we are giving our dogs the best lives we possibly can.

HOW DOGS LEARN



This is the most sciencey I'm gonna get, I promise!

This stuff is just worth trying to understand so we can fully understand how our dogs brains work.

- Dogs. Dogs are beautiful, yet basic creatures.
- Everything that a dog does, it does to improve their own situation (as do we!)
- Dogs do certain things, because they want to either **increase nice feelings, or decrease negative feelings.**

THIS is the most basic way to look at dog training... if you want to create a new behaviour and make that behaviour stick, you have to make it awesome for the dog. If you want to eliminate bad behaviours, the dog must find them unpleasant.

- Dogs learn via conditioning. They learn via operant, and classical conditioning.
- Operant conditioning is learning through consequence. They learn that there are consequences, both good and bad, for various behaviours. Eg. You ask a dog to sit, they complete the sit, they get food. They jump on you instead, they get nothing.
- Classical conditioning simply gives something that previously had no meaning at all, some form of meaning. Eg. Clicker training. You click, then you produce food, then you repeat.
- When talking about operant conditioning, we use something called the Four Quadrants of Operant Conditioning.



- Within these quadrants, the word "Positive" does not necessarily denote a "good" thing, it just means we are literally ADDING something.

- Similarly, "Negative" does not necessarily mean "bad" things, it just means we are TAKING SOMETHING AWAY.

- It should be noted that within these quadrants, the word Reinforcement, simply means that it will increase the likelihood of a behaviour happening in the future.

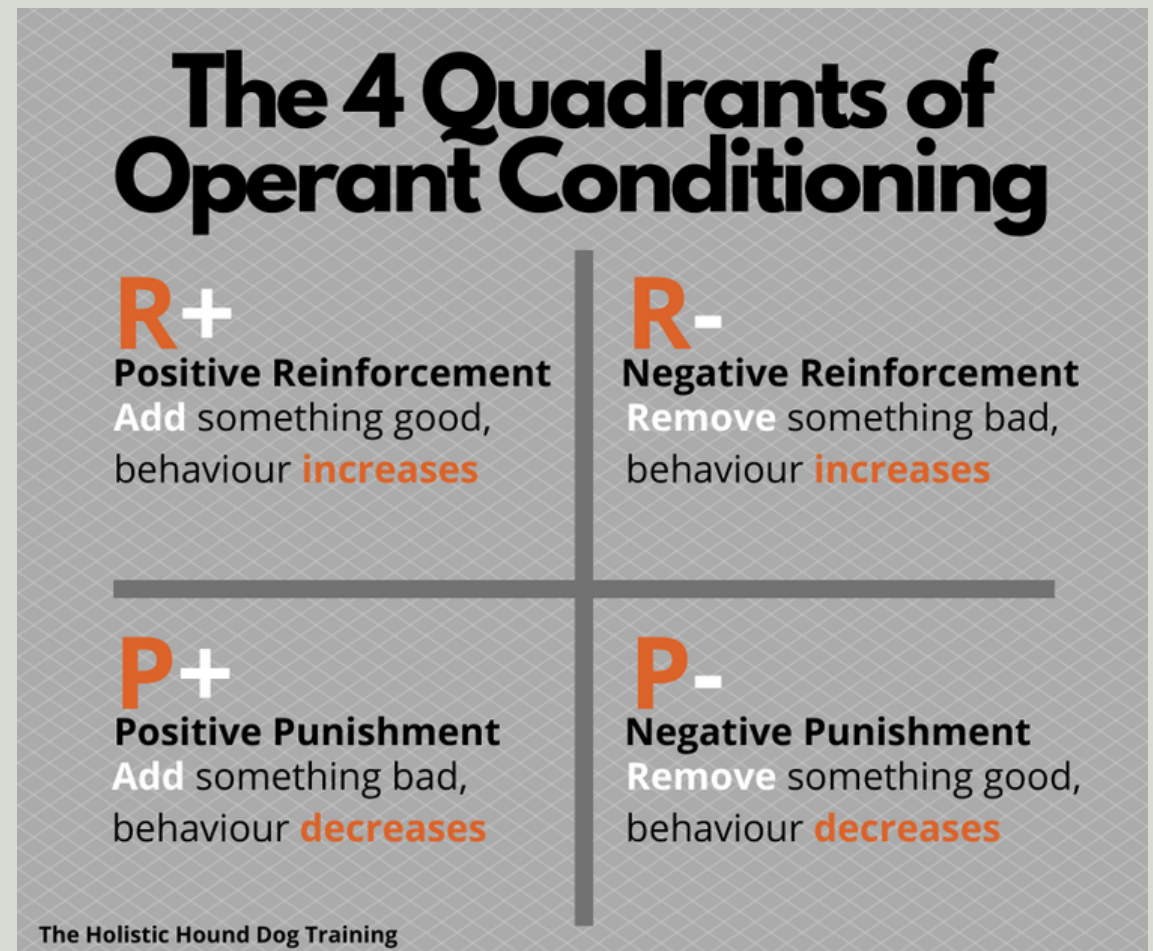
- Punishment, simply means that it will decrease the likelihood of a behaviour happening in the future.

Positive Reinforcement: To ADD something that will INCREASE the likelihood of a behaviour happening in the future.

Negative Reinforcement: To REMOVE something that will INCREASE the likelihood of a behaviour happening in the future.

Positive Punishment: To ADD something that will DECREASE the likelihood of a behaviour happening in the future.

Negative Punishment: To REMOVE something that will DECREASE the likelihood of a behaviour happening in the future.



A FEW PROTOCOLS I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER...



WHEN TEACHING SOMETHING NEW...

1. **MOTIVATE** your dog (ensure they have the drive to work - creating food drive helps here)
2. **TEACH** your dog the behaviour
3. **PROOF** the behaviour with distractions present

WHEN TRYING TO ELIMINATE UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOURS...

It's a process, and you must be consistent.
Always remember this system.

1. Don't do that
2. Do this instead
3. That's awesome! Great job.

Broken Down:

1. Don't do that (we **interrupt the behaviour**, or make it uncomfortable in some way to reduce the chances it will happen in the future).
2. Do this instead (**we guide the dog** into the DESIRED behaviour).
3. That's awesome! Great job. (we **pay/reward the dog** with their daily food portion for completing the new, desired behaviour).



NILIF & CREATING FOOD DRIVE



Existential Feeding & The NILIF Policy

- When we need to reward a dog for good behaviour, most people's go-to is food rewards. But what if your dog doesn't find food rewarding?
- In order to create positive and negative motivation, your dog must find the reward or the aversive RELEVANT.
- By definition, if the reward is not going to increase a behaviour, it's not a reward just like if a punishment is not going to decrease a behaviour, it's not a punishment.
- If your dog doesn't find food motivating, we build the dogs food drive. If your dog does find food rewarding – awesome! Use that to your advantage by feeding through training only.
- Or maybe, your dog finds food rewarding at home but as soon as distractions are present, that food is no longer motivating for the dog.
- This is because dogs will constantly weigh up motivators in every single changing situation. Any new environment or distraction may bring with it a competing motivator which challenges your food reward, so your food must be relevant and only available when the dog completes training.
- Learning is accelerated in a primal state where the dog is attentive, hungry and focused. We want passion, and persistence. They must learn to love to eat, and they must learn to love to work for their food.
- Essentially the way that we get this is to remove the dogs free portion of food each day. If you are feeding from a bowl left out 24/7 or even from a bowl once/twice a day, remove the bowl and put the food in a training pouch and you feed only via training.
- This does not mean you starve your dog to make them hungry. You still offer food once (I would recommend twice) a day. If the dog feels like that's too hard, then they go without until the next time you offer, simple as that.
- YOU MUST BE STRICT. If you give in and give them food for free because you feel bad for them or you think they'll die by not eating for a day (as long as the dog is healthy, they will not) then you will ruin your food drive.
- Nothing In Life Is Free. NILIF. The food bar opens only at certain times, and when they close, the dog must wait for the next opening period. Initially, open the bar twice a day for 5-10 mins and make it easy for the dog, use a sterile environment and get them to do some easy basic obedience, over time you can increase the standard and start working with distractions.
- Dogs do not starve themselves. Remember that. Your dog will get hungry.
- Not only does this improve his food drive and make obedience easier to train, and means more to him when he is rewarded for good stuff at home, but it makes you as a handler very relevant!
- All of a sudden, you directly, through commands, supply him with something he requires to live. This will improve engagement with you as well as simply building drive. It will build your relevance when distractions are present.

MOTIVATION



What is your dog motivated by?

I mean both positively and negatively. The rewards and consequences that are valuable and relevant to your dog is decided by YOUR DOG, not you. Rewards come in the form of praise, verbal and physical, play and food. Dogs can sometimes respond better to verbal praise than they do to play.

A lot of the time I teach clients to build food drive to be able to use food in conjunction with verbal praise, because the food source is something we can easily control.

When it comes to consequences – put simply – **if it doesn't work, it's not punishment.** Punishment by definition refers to something that decreases the likelihood of the behaviour happening again in the future. If it's having little to no effect – it may be time to switch things up and start using another method or tool that IS relevant to your dog.

Dogs also find different things rewarding – it could be toys, or it could be food, or we could build either one of these drives. Food is much easier to control and works across the board, unlike toy drive which a lot of the time is a genetic trait.



MARKERS



Developing a reward/marker system

Good, Yes & Nope

Markers are a word that marks a behaviour in time so that we have time to follow up with a reward or correction. This means, the marker **MUST** come first, followed up by either food (Good & Yes) or a correction (Nope).

Good = You're doing well but keep doing what you're doing, food is taken **TO** the dog. **Use this when you are teaching a down and place command – take the food back and reward with a neutral (not excited!) "Good"

Yes = Well done, you've finished the command and now you can break, the dog comes to **YOU** to get food **Use this with Recalls, as soon as the dog turns to you to recall, mark "Yes!" and guide the dog in to you to finish the recall and for him to get the food.

Nope = we don't want that, food is withheld/correction follows.

Further broken down below:

GOOD

What is it? Duration Marker

What does it mean? You're doing well, but keep doing what you're doing.

How should you say it? In a boring and neutral manner, don't be too high pitched and excitable.

Where should you move? Towards the dog.

What happens after the food is given? The dog should still be in position.

How does the dog receive the food? The dog is fed in position (you take food **TO** the dog).

YES

What is it? Terminal Marker

What does it mean? Awesome job, you're finished, break position and come get your reward.

How should you say it? In a super excitable manner!

Where should you move? Backwards and hold food out.

What happens after the food is given? The dog is free to do whatever he wants, or you can set up another rep.

How does the dog receive the food? The dog runs **TO** you to get food.

NOPE

What is it? Non-reward marker

What does it mean? The dog has done something undesirable or got something wrong

How should you say it? If the dog has got something wrong; little to no emotion. If the dog has blown off a command, generally more assertive.

What happens after? A consequence and redirection

CLICKER TRAINING



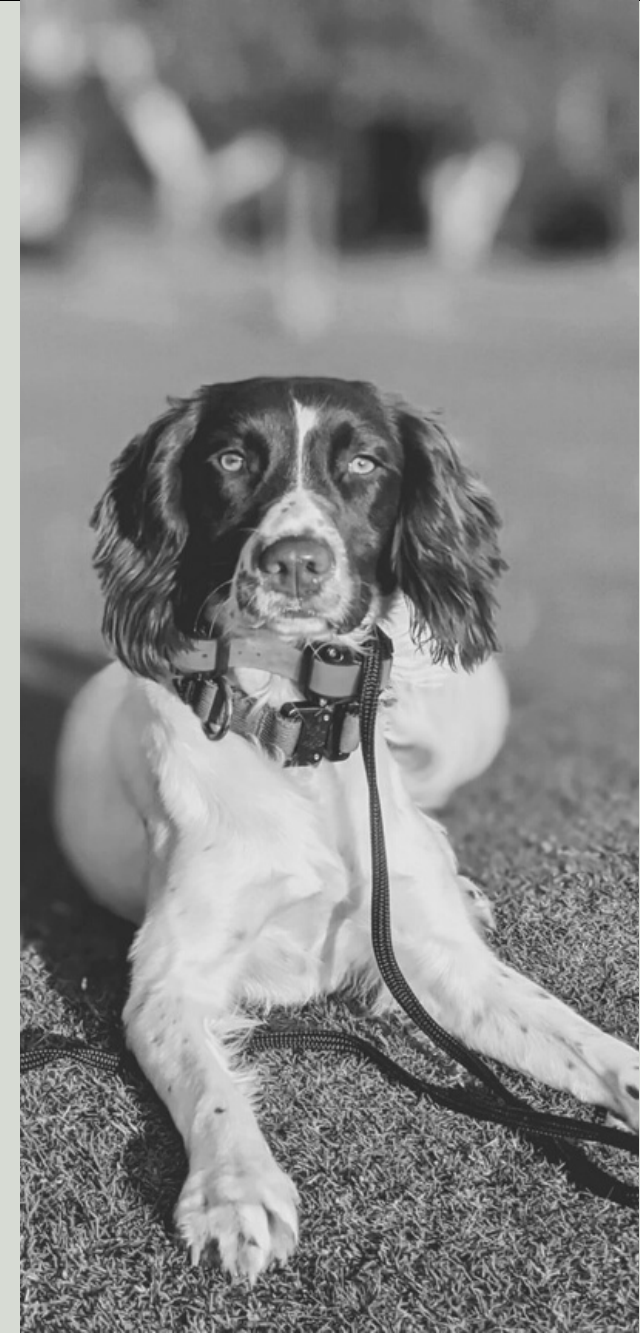
A clicker can be used as a terminal marker and is another form of secondary reinforcer (the same as “YES” marker). It’s great in the way that it always sounds the same, whereas with us, there can be fluctuations in our voice that changes the way the dog reacts to our marker. Clickers are fantastic for teaching new tricks and counter conditioning, but aren’t so great when it comes to duration commands (i.e. you wouldn’t use one for a place command because it would release your dog from the place).

Conditioning a clicker is very easy.

1. Click the clicker
2. Feed the dog
3. Repeat

Don’t ask anything of the dog, all you’re doing is linking the clicker to food so that the dog understands that every time he hears the clicker, there is a food reward with you waiting for him. Your dog will start to pick this up quickly and then you can start to use it.

I don't use clickers a LOT in training, but I love to use them when teaching a dog a new trick.



LURING



Luring is a great way to shape behaviours. Luring is holding a treat to your dogs nose and showing the dog where to move to in order to get his reward. Eg. You can use a food lure straight up (sometimes up and backwards) to get the dog in a sit, you can use a lure downwards (sometimes downwards and back) to get the dog into a down, and you can use a lure to shape tricks and start teaching to target a bed.

Try holding the food on a flat palm (like you're feeding a horse) and then put your thumb in front of it. This will prevent teeth from grabbing your skin as you give the food reward. The lure should stay very close or in contact with your dogs nose the whole time until the dog is in the desired position. Your dog is following the lure – move too fast and you'll lose them.



LEASH PRESSURE



The leash should mean communication – not restriction. NO dog comes out of the womb understanding what leash language is or knowing not to pull on a leash, we need to teach that.

Our aim is to get the dog as soft on the leash as possible and give the dog a good understanding of how to turn leash pressure on and off.

You are trying to teach the dog that “when you feel pressure in a particular direction, you must move in that direction in order to turn it off” and the criteria for this exercise is that we are looking for a dog who understands that.

- Walk up and down with your dog in a straight line, or in many different directions, turning often with your dog on the OUTSIDE of you (you’re not going to be able to add any pressure if your dog is on the inside!).

- Randomly change direction and as you do, apply slight pressure (NOT a pop, just gentle pressure on) to either the left or right (never down the back of the spine) if the dog doesn’t turn with you, the dog’s head and then body should follow, and at that point pressure actively comes off completely.

- If the dog turns with you, there should be zero pressure. The dog needs to understand that if he yields to you from the get go and is paying attention, there will be no pressure.

- This teaches the dog that they are in control of how to turn that uncomfortable pressure off.

- Rinse and repeat until the dog is gentle and soft on the collar, eventually add small distractions with baby steps.

- Keep pressure on in a tantrum scenario, and don’t allow the dog to block guidance with their body (attempt to turn the other way in oppositional force to the pressure). Keep pressure on until the dog turns the pressure off himself.



LEASH PRESSURE



- This is always a good one to practice, and also to practice in new areas to proof the behaviour with new surroundings.

- Dogs do not generalise! They don't understand that what is learnt in one place, applies to another. We need to show them that by proofing leash pressure and consistent leash communication in as many places as possible - you will need to start again in new places.

BABY STEPS: Don't take this too quick. It's going to take a while, and it needs to be done. You cannot skip from level 1 (teaching leash pressure in your driveway) to level 10 (walking around your full normal walk route). I would much rather you skipped the "full walk" for a week or 2 and got the dog really soft and fully understanding of leash pressure in a slow and gradual manner. Don't worry, the dog will still be doing the same amount of walking AND will be using their brain too, it will wear them out!

Take the time to complete steps 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 before you expect a perfect walk out of a dog. This normally means extending your working area little by little.

Once your dog is acing the driveway, you move to the front verge and walk back and forth. Once your dog is acing that, you move 1-2 neighbours up each side of your house and walk up and back. Once your dog is acing that you walk back and forth up to 4 houses either side of your house, and so on.

****TIP! Sometimes a long line can be better for some dogs here. Give it a go and try a longer leash rather than a short one, and give your dog more space on the lead, no need to have it tight and short.**

Play the leash pressure game!

As you're practising leash pressure, set it up like a game.

If you make a quick turn and the dog turns with you, they win a point, and so you pay them with food. If you make a quick turn and the dog isn't paying attention, and needs a leash pressure reminder, they don't get any food and you win a point.

You want your dog winning the majority of the time to be able to move onto the next level.



LEADERSHIP



When we know what's expected of us, what the rules are, that the consequences are real, that there are positive motivators for GOOD choices, things are predictable, we are protected, we are safe, and that we will be guided back on track if we are to get lost, we feel comfort. And so do dogs.

The fuel for the success of your dog-human team starts with the mental commitment to the outcome you desire. Stick to it, be consistent with it. Ask yourself; are you worth following? Are you consistent and dependable? Do you follow up what you say? Do you react or respond? Are you overly stressed or anxious? Do you have temper issues? Are you insecure? Do you own your space? Are you as firm as you are loving, or do you sway to either end of the spectrum? Are you too loving? Do you let the dog get away with murder? Or, are you too firm and are lacking an important bond and positive motivation techniques? Dogs require a calm and consistent leader – the more emotional you are, the more confusing in your commands you are, the less your dog is likely to follow your lead. **DOGS DO WHAT WORKS** – never forget that.

They're not doing things to piss you off. They're simply doing things that result in reinforcement for them – if they aren't met with a consequence, it will continue. Similarly, they need motivation to make better choices. Whatever "gives" will receive continued effort and focus, whatever doesn't, won't. In other words, quit being inconsistent with your commands, rewards and consequences.



DAILY STRUCTURE



Give your dog a routine. I cannot stress this enough.

Consider crate training your dog, by far, the clients that do and implement structure into the dogs daily life get better results overall. Basically, when we see behavioural problems, we have a dog that is making poor choices, so for a short period of time we want to take away their free ability to make those bad choices, and oversee the choices they make. Daily structure to me, involves some crate time, a walk and/or training, fulfilment via play, place command in the home, consistency from the leader and working for food.

It might look something like this:

- Dog sleeps in crate overnight
- In the morning you let the dog out for a toilet break and a run in the yard for a few hours
- Short place command session for a part of the dogs daily food portion
- Dog goes back to crate for some quiet time
- Dog goes for a structured walk and has a play at the park
- Dog goes back out to the yard for an hour or 2
- Dog does training inside in the form of place command (or other)
- Dog has short free roaming session around the house (supervised)
- Dog chills with family in the living room
- Dog has a toilet break and back to crate overnight

You can also crate the dog when you go out, once crate trained and as long as you're not going out for too long.

If you don't have a crate, you can use the backyard in place of the crate potentially



FULFILMENT



In order for a dog to be happy, healthy and balanced, we need a good foundation. The exercises in the rest of this document discuss training foundations, but we must also remember that mentally and physically stimulating a dog with reference to its breed is a must. For example, working dogs will need much more than the average dog. Just because a dog is small/not bred for a specific purpose, also does not mean that that dog can lack in fulfilment.

By fulfilment, I essentially mean we mentally and physically stimulate the dog each day. This isn't a massive job – a calm, structured walk paired with maybe some play, and/or training for his daily food portion is more than enough.

Chuck in some enrichment exercises for any remaining food and you're laughing. This ensures that any issues that are stemming from something like a lack of proper, structured exercise, are eradicated before we start treating it through behaviour modification.



PLAY (TUG)



I love using the game of tug or another type of play for dogs to fulfilment. Playing with your dog is a great way to create relationship and impulse control around a structured play session. This is particularly good for drivey dogs. ***(Keep in mind, Fetch is also great, and any other game your dog enjoys, but I will talk about Tug here).***

Firstly, I don't leave toys lying around, I structure the session which means when I get the toy out, we will play, but then I take it back at the end of the session and put it away. This will mean the dogs value on this toy is larger (he can't just play with it whenever he wants) and he will actually want to engage in play with you. For a pup, having a long line on the dog's harness or attached to the toy helps to teach him to bring it back to us for play. Also, keep sessions short and gentle – a pup is still growing and you don't want to overwork them. Playing with your dog seems straightforward but there are mechanics at play that can make or break your game.

- Tug on your dogs Level: When playing tug, your dogs neck and back should form a straight line, not an "L" shape, refrain from pulling the toy upwards too much/often – instead, drop the toy down to about knee level. If we do pull the toy up, ensure your dogs back is still in a straight line and they are not bending at the neck. You can also sit down on the ground for a small dog or a dog who is a bit apprehensive to eliminate the spatial pressure of you standing over them.

- Watch the Entry: If your dog is launching at the toy, you need to watch their entry. Best bet is to hold the toy out to the side so that the toy moves in a fluid motion when they grab it, as opposed to holding it at your centre mass and the dog jerking back as they hit it. You want to absorb their entry on the toy.

- Let Go! Let them win!: If your dog comes in for the toy with intensity or is really putting a lot of effort into the tug, let them win! Your dog will not want to play with you if you constantly win... that's just boring. This is where the long line comes in to ensure they don't run off and play with the toy on their own, you can reel them back in. Give LOTS of praise when the dog engages with you, and minimal when they don't.

- Be careful with your hand positioning: You control the handles, not the tug itself. Ensure you are presenting the toy to the dog and not the handles (pups especially will go after the handles a lot of the time). Opt for a shorter tug as it will be a lot easier to present the exact area the dog should grab.

- Keep the toy parallel to the ground: This eliminates the need for your dog to turn his head on an angle to grab the toy.



CALMNESS IN THE LIFESTYLE



Just because I said above that we need to fulfil the dog does not mean that's the ONLY thing we teach the dog. Far too many people focus on trying to wear their dog out and then wonder why they have a dog that can't relax – that's because they don't know how. You need to teach calmness on command.

You need to balance your exercise, training, play and enrichment with down-time. Movement is easy for dogs, it's one of their most used coping mechanisms to release excess stress or nervous energy, but this doesn't fix the problem, it simply masks it. A dog who thinks they need to be constantly stimulated is not a balanced dog – that's a dog on edge, an uncomfortable dog. And probably, all you are doing by attempting to wear them out is increasing their stamina. Instead, teach the dog to chill on a bed/place for example, during the day while you are cooking/cleaning.

Crate train a dog to chill when you are out (within a certain time frame).

The place command and crate training, as well as impulse control in general, are fantastic for this.



SOCIALISATION



What is PROPER socialisation?

- Exposing your dog to other dogs and teaching them that they should still maintain focus on you regardless.
- Exposing your dog to a few balanced, social and trusted doggos who will further their skills in canine communication in off-leash work.

What is bad socialisation?

- Allowing your dog to interact with any and all dogs he encounters, regardless of the balance of the other dog, or even whether you KNOW the other dog.
- Allowing your dog to be bullied by other dogs just to have him experience being social with another dog.
- Generally speaking, free-for-all environments with dogs/puppies you don't know is gonna be a bad idea. And yes, I'm talking dog parks, dog beaches, and certain puppy classes where they tell you to release all your pups together and not to step in. We are our dogs protectors, we must guide them and advocate for them. My clients wonder why they have a dog who is overexcited or even frustrated, and reactive EVERY time he catches a glimpse of another dog - a lot of the time this can be put down to poor socialisation.

"But I introduced him to so many dogs when he was younger!" Yes, that's probably the issue!

Some even force their dogs into socialising with ill-mannered dogs just because they THINK they should socialise - half the time, the dog doesn't even hold value on other dogs, and would rather not.

So, are you going to step in for your dog in this situation? Are you going to protect them? Or are you going to allow them to rehearse their own protection the only way they know how and for problems to develop from that?

Remember, play should be reciprocal, and if one dog is harassing another, that's not cool and should be interrupted.

Of course, dogs MUST experience the world and other dogs/animals at a young age, that is integral. But there are huge benefits in teaching a dog that he cannot meet every dog he sees on the street.

- Stop allowing your dog to roam free with dogs you don't know who have no manners and no boundaries.

- Teach them that focusing on you is the best thing ever.

✓ Let them have a couple of trusted, well-mannered dog friends for closer interactions. No reaction is a good reaction. Reward ALL focus and engagement on you – anytime the dog actively offers up to check in with you, “YES!” him and give some food. This is a very desirable behaviour and we want to reward it!

SLIP LEASH



The slip leash is a thin, rope leash that should sit high and snug on the dog's neck. It is slightly more uncomfortable for a dog to pull into than a flat collar or a harness.

SLIP LEASH PROS: Much better than a flat collar since it sits snug and high on the neck, and is thinner. Can be used to reduce drive in high-arousal dogs.

SLIP LEASH CONS: More aversive than a flat collar/harness, but not very aversive over-all, many dogs can pull through the slip leash and ignore corrections on one, which results in us having to use more force or create more distance. Can cause choking if the dog continually pulls on it. Needs to be on the dog at home in order to use it to correct home issues.



PRONG COLLAR



While it looks scary, it's actually the most gentle collar you can use on your dog!

- Because of the raised contact points, dogs cannot choke on the prong collar (like you see on check chains and flat collars) because it applies even pressure all around the collar, on a smaller surface area, therefore it can't crush the throat and cause damage over time.
- The prong collar means you have to apply less pressure to be able to get the same result, therefore it is least invasive. You will also find you don't have to apply pressure as often.
- The prong collar is NOT meant to be used in a rough manner, that's not what it's designed for. It's designed to be very sensitive communication from handler to dog, so no yanking or cranking on these collars
- If you keep on top of the dogs and correct or add pressure during the smoke before the fire, you shouldn't have any outbursts, however if you miss the signs or something catches you off guard and the dog reacts, see if he self corrects (a lot of dogs do once they get to the end of the lead), if he does, just guide him back to a heel and reward. If he doesn't and he seems not to be feeling the prong collar, grab his flat collar while still holding onto your lead and just leave the situation.
- The mechanics of a prong collar are: leash pressure (guidance; showing them where they should be) and corrections (a way of saying No, or snapping a dog out of a state of mind).
- Use leash pressure backwards to guide into position and use a pop to the side as a correction (not backwards, it will cause the prong to slip down the neck more frequently).
- Pressure needs to be completely off when the dog is doing the right thing or else you're sending mixed messages and the dog will get frustrated (and so will you!).
- I would be using a carabiner clip with the 2.25mm size to connect the dead ring of the prong to the ring on the flat collar for extra safety.

PRONG COLLAR PROS: More uncomfortable than a flat, slip, transitional leash or harness due to its smaller contact points sitting high and snug on the neck, therefore the dog will pull on it less. This also means we can reduce the amount of pressure we use on the dog and be more gentle. You are not able to choke a dog with a prong collar as there is no large surface area to crush the throat.

PRONG COLLAR CONS: Some dogs (particularly bully breeds) are able to pull through them, still. Sometimes they will amp a dog rather than interrupt and stop them. Needs to be on the dog with a leash to be able to correct home issues.



BASIC OBEDIENCE



OBEDIENCE COMMANDS (Sit, Down, Place Target)

1. Give verbal FIRST
2. Lure dog into position with food and/or leash pressure immediately AFTER verbal
3. As soon as dog gets into position, mark with a “yes!” or clicker and allow the dog to come get his food reward (or “good” if you are creating duration).
4. Repeat, but keep sessions short and positive!
5. Eventually, start to fade the lure. Lure less and less each time once the dog is acing it. Creating Duration in these commands: Initially, we will be wanting to reward every time the dog gets the position, but later on – you want the dog to be able to hold it. The way we do this, is by holding out on the treat for longer and longer each time. When we first begin a new position, we reward immediately. Then, once the dog is acing that, we hold out for 1-2 seconds before rewarding, then 3-4, then up to 10. Then, we ask even more, we command the dog with a lure, and when he gets into position we stand up and/or move away. Wait a little, THEN reward. After this is accomplished, you can start to increase this distance over time (BABY STEPS!)

***Remember: If your dog is failing, go back a step.**



DOOR THRESHOLDS



Prior to leaving the house for a walk, having her pay attention to where you are, being courteous and sitting before leaving the property to set the tone for the walk, same thing before re-entering the property to finish on a calm note.

Walk up to the door with her already leashed, stop, and if she goes ahead of you apply leash pressure and guide her into a heel. Reward for the right thing. Open the door, correct, guide back and shut the door if she tries to lunge forward, otherwise give him a release word like "ok" or "let's go" and move out (this should still be polite – she shouldn't yank you out the door. If she tries just shut the door on her and repeat.

Same thing on re-entry.

*****Consider a dogs energy level at a scale of 1-10, we want to leave on a 1-3 so we have somewhere to go and to come back to, if you start at a 10, it's very hard to bring it back from that.***

*****All these things help with impulse control, engagement with handler and general manners.***



THE STRUCTURED WALK (LOOSE LEASH, FOCUSED WALK)



THE STRUCTURED WALK: (i.e. The dog walking in a polite heel position more or less by your side, not pulling you around the block, not lunging at other dogs or animals and sitting at roads. It is a very calm and structured walk, hence the name!).

- After setting the tone with threshold work & leash pressure, reward heeling at your side with a completely loose lead (don't keep tension on that lead when he is doing the right thing!) and verbal praise.
- DON'T BE CRAZY ABOUT THE DOGS POSITION - dogs have longer gaits than us so we can let them walk slightly out ahead as long as they are paying attention and not pulling.
- Ask yourself – would you rather be so precise about the dogs exact position by your knee that you nag your dog on the lead/e-collar for the entire walk? Or can you just let that go and (as long as your dog understands leash pressure, is attentive and not pulling) allow him to walk on a loose lead, 1 head-length in front of you, and enjoy your walk.
- Of course, if your dog is breaking far too much ahead, go back to basics with your leash pressure and then do some work in the form of showing him where he should be (pressure on when he pulls in front, and pressure released when he is back next to you).
- Reward any looking up at you/eye contact with verbal praise! It's a good thing – and his engagement with you guys is awesome!
- Keep leash pressure ON in a tantrum scenario, don't let it off until he calms, or follows you. This doesn't mean get aggressive and add more pressure or dominate, it just means be consistent and patient and keep the pressure on until he stops, and then continue with leash manners. This shows him tantrums don't work and he doesn't get what he wants out of them – he's basically saying "If I can't do it my way I don't want to do it at all" which isn't gonna fly in the real world!
- In the case that a dog comes along, set him up for success, don't assume he can walk within a couple of metres from a dog at this stage without reacting. Take him away from the dog at a distance where he is still in a position to have a conversation, then correct any small moments of fixation before they turn into lunging, and reward the desired behaviour of keeping that heel position or looking at you (see other content for specific details on this).
- Keep in mind it's easier to keep their attention off another dog while their brain is moving forward in a walk, than when they're stopped and just sitting

CRATE TRAINING



A Crate is a brilliant tool for dog training. Please do not see it as “dog jail.” Learn about it and maybe even try it first. The crate is meant to be a positive place for your dog to be and hang out, and is meant to act as their den or safe place. We take time in training it to be positive.

1. When you first get your crate, set it up in a main living space so that when your dog is in it, they can still spend time with you (they aren't being locked away in another room or outside).
2. Let your dog get used to the crate just sitting there for a little while.
Start to throw some of the dogs daily food portion into the crate to start to create a positive association to getting into the crate.
3. Start a training session, lure the dog into the crate and as soon as all 4 feet are inside, mark “Yes!” and allow the dog to come out and get food, then rinse and repeat to further create a positive association to getting into the crate. If you have a dog who is especially nervy, you may need to start by rewarding simply coming close to the crate, then start to reward 1 paw, then 2 paws, then 3 and so on. With VERY nervy dogs you may need to use a bit of leash pressure too, but I can help you in person with this if needed. It may help to open the second door of the crate (if it has one) to be able to lure the dog through the crate a little easier.
4. Teach the dog to get into the crate and then down. Reward for this behaviour as soon as the dog is in the down and allow them to leave the crate to get the food reward. Then, ask for more and teach some duration in a down in the crate. Keep rewards frequent!
5. Start to shut the doors and mark “yes” and reward every time the door shuts. Simply close the door for 1 second at a time, no need to rush it. Later increase the amount of time the door is shut, over time. If your dog is especially nervy, you will need to start just by touching the door and marking/rewarding. Then shutting it ¼ of the way. Then ½ of the way, etc.
Build this up until the dog is comfortable spending more and more time in the crate.

DON'T use the crate as punishment:

What I mean by this is, don't yell at the dog, drag them to the crate, push them in and slam the door. This will ruin the positive association.

Don't rush the crate without training. I.e. don't shove the dog in there and leave them for 4 hours without doing any prior work. These are pretty much the only things you can do wrong with a crate.

If your dog is making poor choices and you need to crate them up, don't see this as “time out” or punishment.

Take a deep breath, say “in your crate” lightly and reward the dog when he gets there. No biggie.

MUZZLE CONDITIONING



Step 1: Get a muzzle that is fitted well to your dog. It should be slightly longer than the dogs snout, and it should sit flush across the snout (not tilted up leaving a gap between the top of the dogs nose and the muzzle because the strap over the head is so tight). Once the muzzle is sat there, ensure that the dog can pant, eat (chew) and drink while the muzzle is on.

Step 2: Start small and like with anything, TAKE THIS SLOW AND IN BABY STEPS! Start with luring the dogs nose into the muzzle by poking a piece through or smearing peanut butter on the inside and letting the dog lick at it.

Mark "yes!" and allow the dog to take the food.

Step 3: Over time, slowly ask for more and more. Your next step would be to stop rewarding for 1 second of snout holding in the muzzle, and ask for 2 seconds to get the reward. It can help to hold food on the other side of the muzzle just out of reach for this. Then ask for 3 seconds, then 4, then 5, etc.

Step 4: Start to condition the straps. Put the straps around the dogs head for 1 second and mark "yes!" and reward. Build this up the same as the muzzle work itself.

Step 5: Once the dog can hold the muzzle on, feed frequently through it and keep their brain busy with a walk or a sniff at the park. Build this up in short periods and frequently take the muzzle off at early stages.

See videos in the Holistic Hounds Online Content/Guides.



SEPARATION ANXIETY/DESTRUCTION



Destruction often comes from 1 of 3 things:

- Lack of fulfilment
- Lack of structure
- Too much time with the owner (Separation anxiety)

There is no sure-fire way to just “fix” destruction. It’s a symptom of a bigger underlying issue.

Normally the way I’ll deal with this is to put the dog on regular structure, crate train and where possible, crate when you are out.

I’ll put the dog on general structure at home and teach the dog a place command (how to be calm when they would rather not be).

I’ll ask the owner to separate the dog from them at times during the day, in a calm manner, such as through a place command or crate training.

I’ll ensure the dog is fulfilled during day to day life with structure, training, play and also take into account the breed of the dog (eg. A working line dog will need more fulfilment than a mastiff).

Separation anxiety is normally treated by teaching the dog how to be calm while away from us. As mentioned above, this can be started sometimes when you are home by separating the dog from you and not allowing the dog to be a velcro dog 24/7. Teach them to place on their bed while you move to other rooms of the house, and teach them to calmly chill in their crate while you have a shower etc.

This teaches the dog in small steps that it’s OK to be away from you and nothing bad will happen.

