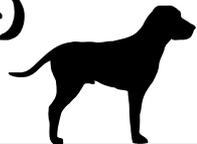




REACTIVE DOGS



A FEW FACTS ABOUT YOUR DOG

Your pet has a very unique way of viewing the world. They are playful, easily distracted, balls of energy that may have some habits we'd like to work on or prevent. Knowing a few key things will help you train your puppy and get the quickest results.



You have 3 seconds to praise or interrupt a behavior before your dog no longer understands what you're so excited or upset about.



Dogs need consistency! Everybody in the house needs to agree on the rules for the household pets and everybody needs to follow them. If a dog is allowed on the couch one time, they think they are allowed on the couch all the time.



Dogs need 120 - 200 repetitions of something before they truly comprehend a command.



Dogs communicate mostly through body language and very little verbally. This is why we train with hand signals first, because they are easier for your dog to understand. Once your dog understands what we want, we will add the verbal command.



Dogs are not capable of feeling guilt.



When a trainer speaks of socializing your dog, it's not just to other animals and people, but also to locations. Puppies need to be exposed to all sorts of different places (After they have had their 4th set of shots) so that they can be well rounded individuals.



The three forms of attention are: **Visual** (eye contact), **Physical** (touching) and **Vocal** (spoken)

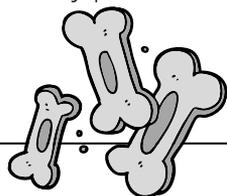
BODY LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT



With reactive dogs, it is important for us as humans to understand how they communicate. Often when our dogs are reactive, it is because they feel that they have been ignored. Our dogs speak with their bodies. In this folder, you will find that there are quite a few handouts, which specifically point out the different styles of dog communication. These are incredibly important for your dog's wellbeing, please be sure to study these handouts.

Each dog will have specific behaviors, which you need to be aware of. These signals are the warning signs, which lead up to their growling, lunging or biting. In this folder, you will find a reactivity chart, which specifically points out the most common of these signals.

TREATS



Using treats with our dogs can be difficult when they are reactive because they are beyond the point of being interested in them. During our training sessions together, we will often use high value treats. High value treats are not the typical training treats we use in our regular classes. Since your dog is emotional level is elevated when they are reactive, we have to use something that is worth them paying attention to.

High value treats we recommend are:
Freeze-dried salmon, Freeze-dried minnows,
Cheese, Turkey Hot Dogs, Shredded boiled
chicken.



OWNER STRESS & EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

As an owner of a reactive dog, we deal with overwhelming stress, which can cause a strain in the relationship between owners and their pet. We begin to dread taking our dog out in public, to the vet clinic, or groomer. These emotions are natural and difficult for us to process.

Our dogs respond to our emotions, even when we try to hide them. They can smell the pheromones through the sweat glands in our armpits, something that makes it impossible for us to hide. Training with a reactive dog is not just for the dog, but for the owner as well, to help us learn how to be comfortable and relax in these difficult situations.

As we relax, our dogs have one less thing to overwhelm them. Make sure you prepare yourself emotionally and mentally before each practice session with your pet. We, as dog trainers, find using meditation breathing techniques are incredibly helpful in preparing ourselves. We highly encourage you to seek out YouTube videos or podcasts, which may be able to guide you through the process.

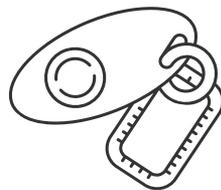
BABY STEPS



Difficult behaviors are not solved overnight. This training requires a series of small baby steps to help our dogs. Success is a ladder, and we must begin at the bottom before we can reach the top. The process of helping our dogs require patience and time, as we can only go as fast as our dog is comfortable with.

GETTING YOUR DOG TO RESPOND TO THE CLICKER

Clicker training is an excellent way for you to bond with your dog. It provides a sound that marks correct behaviors and can eventually help you remove the need for treats every time your dog obeys a command. Here's a good way to get your dog used to the clicker:



-  Click the clicker and immediately give a treat to your dog, no matter what it is doing. Keep doing this until your dog instantly pays attention to you when you click.
-  Wait for your dog to start looking away from you then click. If your dog instantly looks back at you, reward it with a treat!
-  Wait for your dog to wander off before clicking again. If your dog comes back to you quickly, then your dog is ready to train with a clicker!

After your dog is used to the clicker, here's how you use it in training:

-  When the dog performs a behavior that you want them to do, use the clicker immediately as your dog does the action and give them a treat within 3 seconds of the behavior (example: Dog sits = Click + Treat)

"LOOK" GAME

Teaching the game of "Look" to your dog will help you guide them into becoming a much more confident and comfortable. It is a simple game and helps engage our dogs in a playful way instead of requiring obedience during a stressful time. Dogs enjoy play, despite of their age, and play will encourage their engagement with you.



Point at a spot



When your dog looks at the spot, click and reward your dog

Begin the process with a simple spot on the ground, in the safety of the house. Once your dog begins looking at your pointing finger each time, change to pointing to something different in the house. Make it a game, make sure you have fun with it.

When this behavior is really good indoors, start practicing the game outside in your back yard. The back yard is the outdoor location where your dog is most comfortable, but provides low level distractions.



HELPFUL TRAINING TIPS



If you find yourself getting frustrated with a lack of progress, give your dog an easy command that they do almost automatically and end the session on a good note. Your frustration can feed into your dog and make training less fun than we want. It's better to walk away for a little while and come back to it when everybody is feeling better.

-  When giving your dog a command, do not ask it to do something. Make sure your voice is gentle yet firm, showing that you expect it to be done
-  Make sure you are displaying proper posture when working with your dog! Slouching = submissive! Keep your shoulders back and your spine straight with your head up.
-  Make sure the collar is appropriately sized, allowing two fingers of space, no more and no less.
-  Just because your dog is cute doesn't mean they deserve treats! Make your dog work for EVERYTHING you give them!
-  A bottle full of water set to "Stream" is effective in interrupting poor behavior. Once you have interrupted this behavior, immediately give your dog a command to prevent them from returning to the undesired behavior.
-  Play with your dog's feet, ears, mouth and tail. By using treats when you touch these parts of the body, your dog will find it less stressful. Conditioning them to be used to these touches will make it easier for you to trim nails and for your vet to do an oral exam and get your dog's temperature.