

IACP

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

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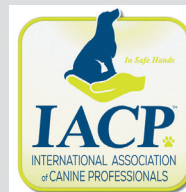
International Association of Canine Professionals

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The International Association of Canine Professionals is dedicated to the education, development, and support of dog training professionals world-wide. The IACP provides a community where experienced dog trainers mentor, guide and cultivate members to their full potential. Our commitment to the highest quality training increases our members' skills and abilities, develops professional recognition, and improves communication on training best practices. We support our members' rights to properly use and promote effective, humane training tools and methods to create success for each dog and owner, while expanding the understanding and cooperation among canine professionals and dog owners across the full spectrum of the canine industry.

In achieving these aims through education and training, the IACP works actively to reduce cruelty and abuse to canine partners.

**For Those Dedicated to
the Well Being of Dogs**



How to Join IACP:

PROFESSIONAL MEMBER — At least five years experience as a canine professional. Can vote on IACP issues and use IACP name and logo on business materials.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER — Less than five years experience as a canine professional but practicing as a professional. Can use the IACP name and logo on business materials. May not vote.

AFFILIATE MEMBER — intended for those who support the goals, positions, and mission of the IACP, but are not canine industry professionals. This membership applies to everyone who loves dogs and wishes to support the IACP's mission to insure the betterment of dogs worldwide. See website for membership restrictions.

Annual Fees:

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Benefits:

All IACP members receive an electronic copy of The Canine Professional Journal, have access to our email list, seminars, educational materials, business support materials, events and activity calendars, regional group participation, and our Certification Programs. Discounts for sponsor services are available to members.

Applications and renewals can now be paid through MasterCard, Visa, and AMEX.

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IN THIS ISSUE...

President's Letter.....	Tyler Muto	4
Facts and Information About Service Dogs, Pt 2.....	IACP Service Dog Committee	8
Words Have Power	John Wade	11
The Right Tool for the Job	Ruth Crisler	15
Shaping Success.....	Sarah Dixon	17
Facing My Fears.....	Heather Beck	21
Critical Thinking	Mailey McLaughlin	22

The IACP is proud to announce that Members

Kerrie Wimberly and Sharmila Sarma

have successfully completed their Certified Dog Trainer examination and are now able to add the designation IACP-CDT to their names.

In addition, the IACP is proud to announce that Members

Rosemary Dybel and Kimberly Poisson

have earned the DTFE certification and are now able to use these designations in their titles.

We know how much work goes into this and we are proud of your achievement.

Well done!

The Board of the IACP



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President's Letter

by Tyler Muto

Another IACP conference has come and gone, and it appears that we are continuing our running theme of "It was the best one ever." The St. Louis venue provided a great environment and backdrop for learning, networking, relaxing, making new friends and great memories.

So much went into the success of the conference, and I want to apologize in advance if I miss anyone by name here. First and foremost our conference committee led by Cyndi Graham and including Melanie Benware, Martin Deeley, and Pat Trichter. This crew outdoes themselves year after year by orchestrating this entire event from the planning stages through the awards banquet on the last evening. I know I speak for many when I say that I couldn't be more grateful for all the work that they do.

Of course, in addition to the formal committee there are many folks who volunteer behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly. Thank you, Liz Vasconi, Peter Van Barneveld, Barbara De Groodt, Suzanne Hantke, Anne Greene, Monica Davis and Carman Crawford.

Our awesome office manager, Dana Burns, travels to the conference every year and helps out at the registration desk to make sure everything goes smoothly, and I know that she truly enjoys being able to put faces to the names that she interacts with so regularly over the phone and through email.

Of course the conference wouldn't be the event it is without our speakers. Every presenter brought a unique perspective and offered opportunity for growth within our membership.



Many of our members who are asked to present also offer their services free of charge, which is a tremendous act of generosity that not only helps us to ensure a broad range of speakers and topics, but also helps to ensure that our treasurer Jack Clark doesn't have a heart attack.

Of course we couldn't afford to put together an event like this without our sponsors and exhibitors who show up year after year support our organization and our values. Many of these folks have been with us from the beginning, and this year we welcomed many new sponsors who helped make the event a success. Please return the love and visit the sponsor section of our website. Doing business with those who support us helps to secure the continued success of the IACP.

I was also very pleased to announce during the awards ceremony that both Mailey McLaughlin and Brian Bergford will be continuing on the Board of Directors for another two years. Both have been tremendous assets and I am pleased to be able to keep our momentum going.

Finally, I know that many have already shared that they have booked their hotel rooms for the 2018 Conference in Florida. We have already started planning the speakers and agenda, and I can tell you that you will not want to miss this. I predict that 2018 will be another year of record breaking growth for the IACP, which means space at the hotel might fill up, so don't wait!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Muto".

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Annual Educational Conference, St. Louis, MO

September 13-16, 2017



"It takes effort to see the best in people. It's easy to criticize."

~B. Bergford



"People say, 'Oh, that breed doesn't show pain.' Yes they do. We just don't know how to read pain."

~Dr. Boling



"Reinforcers increase behaviors. Rewards drive behaviors, and they need not be present to be valuable."

~Chad Mackin,



"There are 3 things people create war over: politics, religion, and nutrition."

~R. Habib,



"Dog trainers really love to hear ourselves talk, but it's a skill to be concise. Avoid ambiguity."

~Robin McFarlane,



"Learning how to adjust your criteria—when to make things easier, when to make them more challenging—is a very valuable skill."

~T. Muto,



"Thanks for inviting me to your chandelier convention."
~Drew Lynch



"Whether you are in training, daycare, boarding, or grooming, you are really in the relationship business."

~Karen Laws,



"You gotta learn how to find your peace if you wanna stay in this business a long time."
~Cyndy Douan,



"Become better at knowing your dog's regular movement so you will notice when things are wrong."
~Dr. Boling,

The 2017 IACP Educational Conference is now over, and those who attended are richer for the skills they acquired and the knowledge they absorbed. But, as always, it's the friendships between colleagues that leave the most lasting marks. Spending 4 days in the company of like-minded, passionate people will do that.

**Please join us in St. Petersburg, FL
September 16-19, 2018 (Sunday to Wednesday)
and see for yourself.**

**And to all who attended this year, thank you.
You make the conference—all of you.**



Facts and Information About Service Dogs, Pt 2

by IACP Service Dog Committee

Service Dog (SD) vs Emotional Support Animal (ESA) vs Therapy Dog (TD)

The IACP acknowledges that, at this time, the United States is the only country that we are aware of who is recognizing ESAs. Therefore, the rules and regulations contained in this document are those of the United States.

Service animals are defined as dogs (and sometimes miniature horses) individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. The work or task a service dog does must be directly related to the person's disability and must be trained and not inherent. Service dogs may accompany persons with disabilities into places the general public normally goes, even if they have a "No Pets" policy. These areas include state and local government buildings, businesses open to the public, public transportation, and non-profit organizations open to the public. The law allowing access for a person with a disability with a Service Dog is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Under Title II and III of the ADA, service animals are limited to dogs and miniature horses. Entities must make reasonable modifications in policies to allow individuals with disabilities to use miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the handler. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals.

Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA. It does not matter if a person has a letter from a doctor stating the person has a disability and needs to have the animal for emotional support. A doctor's letter does not give an ESA, or therapy dogs, public access rights.

An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) is not a personal pet. Access for the ESA to be permitted into housing with a person with a disability is defined under the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) code: It is a companion animal that a medical professional has determined provides a therapeutic benefit for an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability. The animal may or may not be specifically trained to perform tasks for a person who has a disability. Capuchin monkeys that aid persons with quadriplegia are examples of animals that meet the ESA definition and perform tasks, but are not permitted public access. Unlike a service animal, an emotional support animal is not granted access with its handler to places of public accommodation.

The role of an ESA may include improving one or more identified symptoms or effects of the persons' disability. Emotional support animals are not species limited. In order to be prescribed an ESA, the person seeking such an animal must have a verifiable disability and the animal's presence mitigates the symptoms of that disability. A person without a doctor-verified disability who wants an animal to be defined as an ESA for companionship does not qualify to have such animal defined as an ESA. An animal does not need specific training to become an emotional support animal and is not required to perform any tasks.

In the U.S., federal protection against housing discrimination is afforded to mentally disabled persons under two federal statutes: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act (FHAA) of 1988. These statutes, and the corresponding case law, create the general rule that a landlord cannot discriminate against disabled persons in housing, and if a "reasonable accommodation" will enable

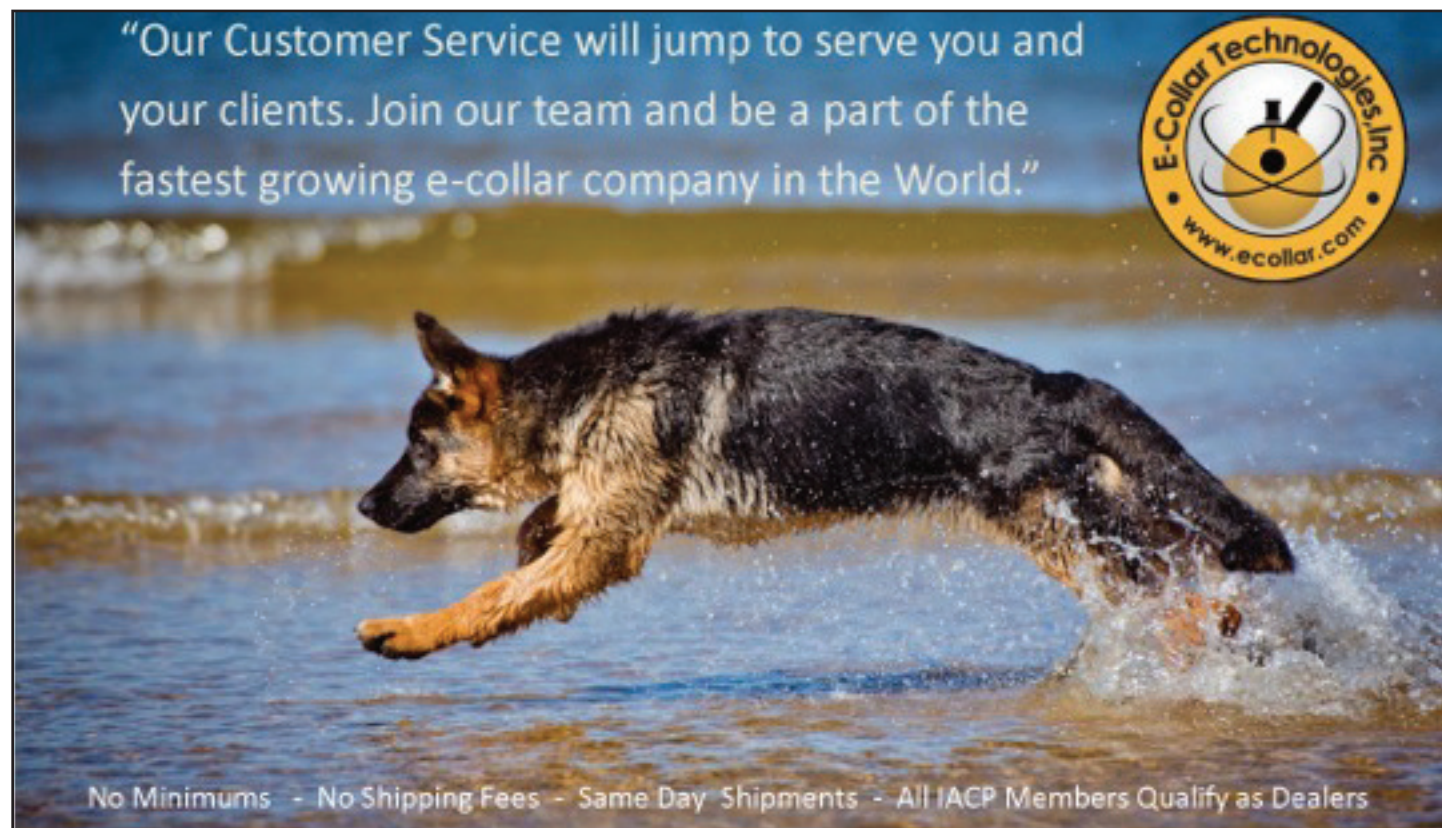
a disabled person to equally enjoy and use the rental unit, the landlord must provide the accommodation. Persons with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a waiver of a "no pets policy," for any assistance animal, including an emotional support animal, under both the FHAA and Section 504. While the FHA does apply to most housing types including those for sale or rent (apartments, condominiums and single-family homes) there are some major exclusions such as buildings with 4 or fewer units where the landlord lives in one of the units. It also excludes private owners that do not own more than 3 single family homes, do not utilize real estate agents or brokers and do not engage in anti-discriminatory advertising practices.

Neither the FHA, nor section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, requires an ESA to be individually trained or certified. There are no specific breed restrictions relative to canine ESA's but if the housing provider determines that there is a "direct threat" that relies on objective evidence about a specific animal's conduct then there are grounds for the housing provider to not allow that pet. Additionally, if a

housing provider's insurance carrier would cancel, substantially increase the costs of the insurance policy or adversely change the policy terms because of the presence of a certain breed of dog or a certain animal, it would be found that this imposes an undue financial and administrative burden on the housing provider. This type of claim must be substantiated by the insurance carrier directly and different but comparable insurance coverage must be considered by the landlord.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) Air Carriers Access Act (ACAA) establishes a procedure for modifying pet policies on aircraft to permit a person with a disability to travel with a prescribed emotional support animal, so long as they have appropriate documentation and the animal is not a danger to others or does not interfere with others (through unwanted attention, excessive noise, blocking aisles, inappropriate toileting, etc.). The DOT also allows access for ESA's on certain types of transit such as trains and buses.

Regarding airline policies affecting persons flying with their personal animal/pets, most airlines



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charge fees and require the animal to be in a soft sided carrier that can fit under the seat. If a crated animal cannot be placed under the seat, the animal will then have to fly with the checked luggage. Air Carriers have different policies regarding transporting "Live Animals" in the luggage compartment and owners should check with the airline that they are flying regarding traveling with their pet. On the other hand, with an ESA, they are not required to be crated, nor are people charged for flying with their ESA.

Most airlines have written policies defined based on the ACAA that passengers flying with an emotional support animal must follow. While an airline is allowed to require a passenger traveling with an emotional support animal to provide written documentation that the animal is an emotional support animal, no such documentation is required for a service animal.

Regardless of whether the animal is an ESA or the dog is a service dog, standards of appropriate behavior apply to these animals. Any airline can deny access to a service dog or an ESA if the animal is behaving inappropriately such as roaming the cabin, showing signs of aggression to passengers or other animals, etc. If the aircraft

is already airborne when the service animal behaves inappropriately, then the owner of the animal will be subject to decisions made by the air carrier in accordance with the ACAA SD regulations. It is important to remember that the goal of any airline is to ensure safe passage of its patrons. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the owner that their service animal is well behaved and has appropriate, reliable manners throughout all phases of air travel.

Lastly, a therapy animal is defined as a pet which in partnership with its handler has passed a series of behavior and/or aptitude tests to qualify to do interactions with its handler in settings approved by the administration/owners of those settings. These settings may be hospitals, nursing homes, universities and other educational facilities, prisons, etc. These animals are also not limited to the canine species and they and their handlers do not have public access under any federal or state laws.

The IACP Service Dog Committee is dedicated to the proper education of the general public, professional trainers and business owners regarding the utilization and/or training of Service Dogs.

iACP

Additional Resources regarding Service Dog information presented:

ADA: <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=28:1.0.1.1.36>

HUD: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=servanimals_ntcfheo2013-01.pdf

DOT: https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/20030509_1.pdf

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Words Have Power

by John Wade

*"Words are seeds that do more than blow around.
They land in our hearts and not the ground.
Be careful what you plant and careful what you say.
You might have to eat what you planted one day." ~Unknown*

Maybe it's just me, but the first few times I heard someone refer to a dog as a "fur baby," or themselves as a "pet parent," two things happened. The first was that I found myself scrutinizing the person for other signs of mental illness, and the second was questioning myself as to why each time it happened I found myself throwing up a little bit in the back of my mouth.

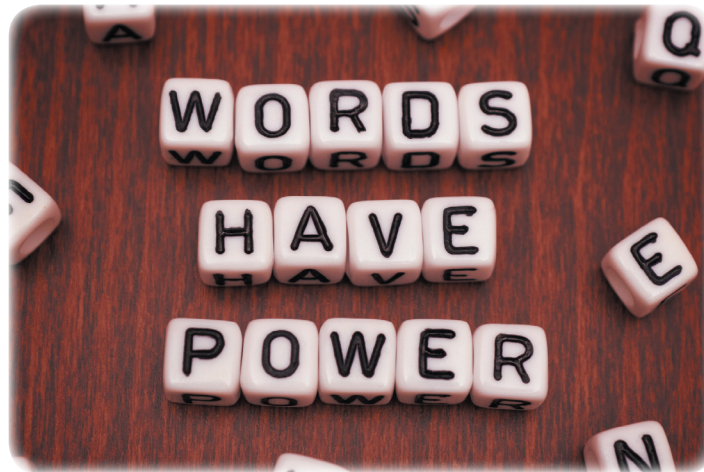
I know that it isn't the most politically correct thing to say, but I freely admit that yes, in many (but not all) cases, the people behind these utterances were often to my observation somewhat "off." Not in a "call the authorities" manner, but in a "say a silent prayer that my cell phone rings so I can say I have to go as there's an emergency" sort of way. It's similar to when you meet someone for the first time, and they open with, "I'm a vegan" or "Have you been saved?" or "Do you want to see my scab?" I've come to suspect that people readily using words like "fur baby" and 'pet parent' are the sort that believes that "101 Dalmatians," "Lady and the Tramp," and other similar anthropomorphic Disney movies were documentaries.

I get it. "Fur-parents" love their dogs, but this blurring of the line between what it is to love a dog vs. an actual human being is certainly not good for dogs, and I highly suspect not so good for the enthusiastically self-described "pet parents" with "fur babies" either. I also get that these people have very likely repeatedly had

the stuffing kicked out of them in the much-more challenging-to-navigate personal relationships encountered in life. I get that loving a dog has very few of the pitfalls that relationships with humans often have. In spite of the facial tic that develops when I'm in their presence, I'm happy they've found love, even if it is only in a contorted sense; as being alone in this occasionally cold world is no fun and so I give them, albeit still reluctantly, a pass.

However, there are other categories of people using such language where I'm a little less forgiving. There are those young adults, couples often, that declare that their dog is family, and they proclaim to all that will lend an ear that they love that dog just the same as they would any child. Their wake up call is when they have a child, at which point they learn that up until that point they knew very little of love. It's not that they stop loving their dog, it's that for the most part, through the birth of their child, have revealed to them a greater capacity for love. I say for "the most part" though because down the road, even when

there are serious problems relating to a dog safely coexisting with a child, there is still incredible social pressure for them to give the dog elevated status. Depending on your age, you may remember that when we were children and a dog behaved



aggressively towards a child, the child's parents had the dog "removed from the gene pool." Now parents are just as likely to be blamed, even vilified, for not somehow containing ordinary childlike behaviours and impulses found in, of all things, children. People in yesteryear did not put dogs down because they didn't love those dogs. They put them down because they loved their children more.

The other category (and the one that concerns me the most) are people in industries related to dogs--trainers, veterinarians, technicians, and product marketers--who have recently begun using this sort of language as an emotional outreach to influence the consumers for whose dollars they hunger. It's dreadful enough to have deluded oneself into confusing a dog with a human, but to do so for mercenary reasons is something I find despicable. One, looking to have me use their material on my website wrote me a while back, ". . . As you know, feeding our fur-children is just as important as any other family member." She went on to say, "As a parent of a pup with digestive issues myself. . . ." Needless to say, I wrote back. If you're interested in my response, email me (john@johnwade.com), and I'll send you a link.

You may now be getting a sense that I don't blindly subscribe to the belief that "sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me." In fact, I believe the aforementioned anthropomorphic language is going to backfire across North America resulting in harming dogs, their owners, and our industry in particular. I would go as far to say that there is considerable evidence that we've moved from "backfire" to stall, and are currently in reverse with regard to the beneficial treatment of dogs.

Words influence society and society influences policies. For me, the most recent evidence of this was the recent ban in Toronto, Ontario Canada, a city of 2,700,000 people, of prong and slip collars because "they are inhumane and unnecessary training tools." (It was overturned, yet is now up for reinstatement as I write this). These are the same tools used fairly, not only by companion dog owners throughout the city, but by animal control

officers, police officers, groomers, service dog handlers, and dog show handlers. In Florida, there was recently an attempt to legislate the manner in which a dog might be trained. The "new science of dog training" was to be the only acceptable choice, of course—a "science," I might add, that I have been unable to find any actual scientific evidence that supports its use in the context of actually living with and training a companion dog.

Never mind, let's set aside for a moment the whole, "it's not the tool, it's the fool at the end of the tool" banning argument. Let's also set aside logic and critical thinking in general. Let's just focus on legislative changes from the perspective of non-dog-centric people exposed to the new language and subsequently related attitudes now permeating our industry. I'm referring to average citizens well known for making decisions on the basis of how they feel. Ask the same question phrased slightly differently. "Do you think the use of prong collars or slip collars are ever justifiable in the training of a dog?" The alternative version of the question, "Do you think the use of prong collars or slip collars are ever justifiable in the training of a fur baby?" Do you think the outcome would be influenced by language use? Take this thought experiment a step further. How do you think the results would be shaped if the survey was conducted, 100 years ago, 50 years ago, 25 years ago? Personally, I suspect that 100, 50, and 25 years ago a lot more people would be edging for the nearest exit if they heard someone referring to a dog as fur-baby or a person as a pet-parent. Did these people not also have a love for their dogs? Of course they did. The line between dog and human just hadn't been blurred, and as a result, it seems unlikely to me that they would have proposed, let alone attempted to pass, any of the nonsense we are now seeing rear its head.

Of course, when there is proposed legislation impacting tools and methods, the language in the legal documents has (so far) not referred to 'fur babies' and 'pet parents.' However, it is being presented to a society exposed to that type of language and the overall "Disneyfying" of dogs. Aforementioned is important lest we forget that

words impact thoughts and thoughts inevitably impact societies and societies develop their laws.

Language is not the only factor, but I believe it to be a significant factor. Copious research has been done on how critically wording impacts the outcome in things like polls, surveys, marketing, etc. It has repeatedly been found that answers end up having more to do with the wording of the question than a person's actual ideologies. In other words, in the context of dog training, think of this not as a ban on various dog training tools regardless of their legitimate pros and cons, but as 'fur baby' training tools. I think the outcome is influenced.

There are other words as well that get my spider-sense tingling. "Guardian" and "adoption" are two more. Even the word humane, when it's used to describe dog training equipment, can set my teeth on edge. The use of the word humane in this context is to me on par with anthropomorphic language mentioned so far and in my view, also part of the slippery slope that has lead to

dog training equipment and methods erroneously considered humane or inhumane. To call one bark collar humane or more humane than another is purely a marketing strategy and frankly dishonest. When the collar is activated, whether it is sound, noxious (to the dog) odour, vibration, static shock, etc. if it does indeed work it is not because it talked the dog through its feelings. Something happens sufficiently uncomfortable to either redirect the dog's attention or self-correct the dog's behaviour. Otherwise, why not replace the humane/humanely words with the phrase 'Your Dog Will Love It!'?

I believe that we are where we are, in part because our silence as individuals and lack of proactivity in our associations has allowed the 'fur baby' and 'pet parent' crowd and their related kin to become the dominant voice. As a result, the public and politicians listening to those voices regarding issues like what is humane and inhumane regarding methods and tools will be accordingly influenced. They've told the unchallenged lie that their philosophy is science so much that they not



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only believe it, they have shifted public opinion sufficiently that we now have the debacles of Toronto and Florida.

We dog trainers may not have a voice that might be heard in one of the many areas where "alternative facts" and misleading advertising has become accepted. However, I do believe in the arenas related to our industry we do have a voice (as the politicians and city administrators learned recently in Florida and Toronto) and we should start using those voices when others use words that misrepresent reality. John Keating said, "No matter what anybody tells you, words and ideas can change the world." He should have added, "but pay attention because it isn't necessarily always going to be for the better."

I'm willing to ignore those sadly socially estranged individuals bent on replacing real people with surrogate relationships through their dog, but dog trainers who wanted to be taken seriously much less so. I think it's time for dog training professionals to pay more careful attention to the

language they use. Even more importantly, to speak up when this type of language is used by their peers and go so far as to contact advertisers when they do so. Also, and most importantly of all, rather than rise in outrage when something like Toronto or Florida occurs, rise and act. Join an association committed to defending the truth. If you already belong, then recruit. Don't just post-volunteer to do something. It should not matter that Toronto or Florida is not your community. Ask what you can do and whether that role is glamorous or not, do it.

John Wade is a full time dog trainer closing in on 30 years of experience. His website www.askthedogguy.com has become a popular destination for companion dog owners around the world. He has written several books and is a popular speaker known for both his knowledge of companion dogs and his humour. He also designed a simple dog training collar (wadecollar.com) that is sold around the world.



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An advertisement for DogWatch Hidden Fences. It features a close-up of a black dog's face with its tongue out. The text "DogWatch®" is in large white letters, with "HIDDEN FENCES" below it. A small white dog silhouette is to the right. Below the dog's head is a circular logo that says "Unleashing dogs for 25 YEARS 1990-2015". At the bottom left is a gold seal that says "CONSUMERS BEST BUY DIGEST". Text at the bottom says "The only premium pet containment system rated a Consumers Digest Best Buy." and "Keeping dogs happy and safe since 1990". The website "www.dogwatch.com" is at the bottom right.

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The Right Tool for the Job

by Ruth Crisler

Anyone who has ever confronted a wine bottle without a corkscrew understands the importance of having the right tool for the job. Granted, there's always a workaround, assuming you don't mind a little broken cork or broken glass in your Pinot Noir. You might even persuade yourself that pouring wine with dinner isn't a legitimate goal, that tap water should suffice, that merely contemplating wine in fact represents some brand of moral failure. Or you could just admit you need a corkscrew and get on with it.

Dog trainers have a critical interest in making practical and responsible tool choices. And there have probably never been so many options. In a perfect world, every online trainer forum would support rational discussion of the pros and cons of different tools in relation to a broad range of dogs and training challenges. Our professional organizations and individual social circles would uniformly encourage open and respectful dialog between trainers of different backgrounds and disciplines, as well as ongoing education in a full suite of tools and techniques. Questions, whether stemming from doubts or simple curiosity, would be asked and answered frankly and freely.

This is happening now in some corners of our industry, but too much real-world dialog over tools still descends rapidly into talking points and knee-jerk responses. The culture of combativeness over which tools are most effective or humane, not to mention the looming threat of bans and regulation, tends to force trainers into choosing sides and to stifle productive conversation. The pressure to either advocate for or protest against hot-button tools creates a climate inhospitable to critical thought or civilized discourse, in which decisions regarding tools become increasingly reflexive.

Speaking of buttons, no tool elicits more fervor or controversy than the electronic training collar.

At times, opinions seem hopelessly polarized, as if the entire universe of professional dog trainers were divided into two symmetric camps, one unwilling to take up an electronic collar under any circumstances, the other unwilling to ever put theirs down.

This is not the reality, of course. Most trainers including myself fall somewhere in the middle. But we're nonetheless at risk of winding up entrenched in our positions, no longer questioning our process or examining our instincts.

I was introduced to remote collars early in my career, but only achieved genuine comfort with them a decade later, after attending an eye-opening four-day workshop. Although never my mainstay, their utility is undeniable and relatively unique. Another decade on, as a more deliberately positive-reinforcement focused trainer and certified behavior consultant, I continue to use them openly but selectively.

This has drawn me into numerous debates with anti-shock trainers, typically battling the assertion that remote collars are inhumane by definition and therefore never a valid option. But it's also drawn me into debates with other E-collar users, sometimes discouraging over-reliance or advocating for a different approach.

One takeaway from these debates is that the decision to select or reject a given tool is often driven more by personal comfort or beliefs, than by the nature of the exercise or an objective assessment of the tool's suitability. Some would pass on wine altogether rather than wield a corkscrew, while others are constantly seeking out creative new corkscrew applications. The fact we're all staring at the same bottle of wine doesn't mean we're finding common ground.

By and large, individual tool preferences strike me as relatively harmless, assuming a certain

level of commitment to welfare and craft. Many viable paths typically exist from A to B, so there ought to be plenty of room for individual variation. Some routes may be longer or less scenic or involve unnecessary detours, but few will actually take you off a cliff. Methodologies that are too strict or disconnected from practical reality may create unnecessary road blocks, yet there are times when having a compass definitely comes in handy. Reasonably-constructed ethical guidelines like LIMA (Least Intrusive Minimally Aversive) provide trainers a decision-making framework that will steer them clear of the most treacherous paths without tediously dictating every step of the journey or telling you what you're allowed to put in your pack. Go ahead and take your corkscrew, in other words, just don't poke me with it every five seconds to get my attention.

When asked by fellow LIMA trainers for an example of when I would personally reach for an Ecollar, I point to cases where off-leash reliability in unfenced public spaces would incontrovertibly enhance a dog's quality of life. My own dogs are all Ecollar-trained for such occasions, and I am ready to do the same for any client I trust to be responsible with remote equipment and whose dog has the temperament and training foundation to take the work in stride. I also firmly believe that if one acknowledges that negative reinforcement (escape/avoidance training) is sometimes called for, electronic collars are a superior tool for such work in important respects. In addition to their capacity for timely remote application, more and more modern collars allow one to condition desired responses at levels that are so minimally aversive as to be essentially neutral. If one's

goal in applying R- or P+ is to tightly control or minimize the aversive stimulus, a good quality remote training collar in skilled hands should be widely recognized as a sound option.

If challenged by fellow Ecollar trainers to defend LIMA principles, which admittedly would disallow some common Ecollar protocols, I would argue that the more we can do internally as a community to deter plainly heavy-handed or frivolous uses of this important class of tool, the better off we will be in the long run in terms of bringing a majority of trainers around to their humane potential. Anyone who knows me will tell you I love a good bottle of wine and don't want to see corkscrews taken off the shelves. That said, a good bartender doesn't reach for one when making a martini.

Ruth Crisler, CBCC-KA, is a certified behavior consultant, IACP Pro member, and IAABC Principles & Practice mentor and Ethics Committee Chair. She began training dogs professionally in 1998 following a career with horses. In 2000 she founded See Spot Run, a Chicago training and daycare/boarding facility focused on canine socialization and behavior work. She lives on site with her husband, two children, and three dogs (pit bull Atlas, GSD Feisal, and westie Lodger). In her free time, she practices tae kwon do and cooks risotto.



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Shaping Success

by Sarah Dixon, CDBC

Free shape—or not?

Free **shaping** is a type of animal training where you teach the behaviours in gradual steps using a **marker**, like a **clicker**, and rewards. Shaping can be a great way to teach some difficult behaviours, expand your animal's capabilities, exercise your animal's brain, and build your chops as a trainer. There has been a recent trend pushing toward free shaping as much as possible. While it is a powerful training tool, it can also be frustrating for the learner if the shaping is done poorly. Free shaping is sometimes not the most effective training option.

Timing

If you want to be successful building behaviours with shaping, you will need to have good timing. There are lots of games you can play to practice timing with a clicker. Try bouncing a ball and clicking every time it hits the ground. Or, while watching TV, take a few minutes and click every time the camera angle changes. If you don't have good timing, you're not going to be able to click your target's behaviour, and you might end up shaping some pretty bizarre actions.

Plan ahead

Before beginning shaping sessions you should have a plan of what the probable steps of the behaviour should look like. Start with something the dog can and likely will do easily, and build up in logical steps to the finished

behaviour. For example, if I wanted to train my dog to bow, my steps might look something like:

1. Dip the head in a standing position
2. Head halfway to the floor
3. Nose close to touching the floor
4. Elbows bent
5. Elbows touching floor, rear in the air—a bow!

Establishing *criteria* and *reinforcement* rate

A common misconception about free shaping is that there is a lack of information provided to the learner. The truth is that if you are free shaping well, you will provide plenty of feedback to the animal. Your goal should be about 15 clicks a minute—that is feedback an average of every 4 seconds. With that rate of feedback and reinforcement, your

dog should be having lots of success, understanding what you are looking for, and working eagerly for you. If you notice your dog getting frustrated, then you are probably asking too much and need to adjust your criteria.

When you are getting the 15 clicks a minute consistently after a few training sessions, then it is time to wait the dog out before offering the next step of your shaping plan. Keep your training sessions short, only a minute or two in length, and track how many treats you go through so you know what your **rate of reinforcement** is. Count out a certain number of treats before the session, and count



what was left afterward to know how many clicks per minute you logged.

Cues to communicate

Another objection to free shaping is that it causes dogstobefranticandtoofferbehaviourscontinually. While this definitely can happen, I don't feel it is the fault of free shaping itself. I believe that dogs get this way because their trainers do not add cues early enough. It's commonly accepted in the **clicker training** world that you do not add a cue until the behaviour is perfect. However, this gives the animal plenty of rehearsals of the behaviour without a cue attached. The more times the dog does the behaviour without being cued, and gets reinforced for it, the more likely it will be that the dog will offer that behaviour when it hasn't been asked (cued) to do so.

So, when do you add a cue? As early as possible! When you can predict with relative certainty that the dog will do some form of the behaviour, start attaching a cue. Once you add a cue, do not reinforce un-cued responses afterwards. You can always change your cue once you get the behaviour exactly where you want it so your final cue is not attached to the imperfections associated with training.

Provided that your dog has a good understanding of the concept of cues and you are diligent about getting behaviours on **stimulus control**, this practice will help avoid frantic offering of behaviour. Your dog will know the difference between when it is time to experiment (shaping) and when to perform a specific behaviour when asked. Another trick I really like to do that seems to help dogs have a "shaping off-switch" is to use "game on" and "game off" signals to indicate when we are going to start shaping and when we are done. I will use "are you ready?" to mean we are going to start training and "all done" to tell the dog our session is over.

Reward placement

One of the single most important efforts that can speed up your shaping sessions (and training in general) is utilizing the placement of rewards. For

example, you can deliver your reinforcement in a physical location that will jump-start your dog to offer the next repetition. Reward placement comes down to planning, but also to thinking on your feet. Where do you want the dog to be positioned to set up for the next rep? If you want the dog to stay in position, deliver the food directly to the dog. If, for example, you are trying to train a dog to go around an object, click for just moving beside it and toss the food so that the dog has to move even further around it. Instead of having the dog return to you to get the food, jump-start the behaviour of moving around the object by using your food reward placement to get the dog there. If you want to set the dog up to repeat an action, go to a platform, for example, toss the food away after you click so that the dog moves off and has the opportunity to return to the platform.

Many people think that they have to be extremely sterile during clicker training, and during shaping



in general. Not true! Put some heart into it! If you are engaging, your dog is going to enjoy the process so much more. Training should be a game that both of you enjoy. While you should remain quiet before you click, there is no reason why you cannot praise the heck out of your dog after a click, for a big breakthrough, or at the end of a session. Relax, have fun!

Shaping—just one tool

While shaping can be a really cool way to teach some behaviours, it is not always the most efficient or effective way to train a skill. This is



why shaping is not something I use to train all the time; I use shaping if I cannot get the behaviour easily in another manner, or if I want to challenge myself and my dog. To avoid frustration and make training go smoother, I suggest that you pick a method that will get the behaviour started as quickly as possible. Often, this choice will not be shaping. Utilizing prompts such as targets, setting up the environment, or even just capturing may be much faster means of training. You can even mix a combination of targeting, shaping, etc— whatever works best to explain to the animal what you are looking for.

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One wonderful benefit of shaping is that there are no prompts to fade, since the training process is based completely on the dog offering behaviours. If you are going to use a prompt, it is important that you do not use it more than is necessary. For example, if the animal will do the behaviour naturally, you don't need to set up the environment. If you can set up the training area to get the behaviour easily, try not to use targets. If you can get the job done with targets, avoid using a lure. The less you prompt, the less you have to fade. Remember, if you are using a prompt, you want to fade it as quickly as possible to avoid the animal's reliance on it. Get the prompt out of the picture as quickly as you can.

Some dogs will prefer shaping more than others. If one of you, you or your dog, does not really like shaping, that's just fine. There are plenty of other training tools to teach your dog to perform many wonderful tricks and behaviours. My 5-year-old Belgian shepherd, Dexter, loves to shape and is really fun to work with. I will do shaping with him often, just because he is so enjoyable to train this way. In contrast, my young Australian shepherd, Brew, finds shaping a frustrating process. For Brew, I limit the amount of shaping I do and try to use other methods to prompt behaviours with him. I do work on shaping with him occasionally, as it is good practice for him to think and use his brain in that way. Sometimes shaping really is the best way to accomplish my goals.

A useful technique

Shaping is often misunderstood and can be difficult to do well. But if you have well-developed timing and planning skills, with some practice it can be a helpful addition to your toolkit—especially as there are some behaviors you can shape that are very difficult to

train in another manner. Overall, shaping is an excellent way to enhance your skills as a trainer and exercise your dog mentally.

Happy training!

Sarah Dixon, CDBC, KPA-CTP, works as a Dog Trainer and Behavior Specialist for Instinct Dog Behavior & Training LLC in New York City. Sarah has trained animals her entire life and has experience working with dogs, cats, horses, parrots and various small animals. She is dedicated to continuing education and has completed multiple courses in dog training and animal behavior. Sarah is particularly interested in helping puppies, newly adopted dogs, and dogs that have behavioral issues.

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Facing My Fears

by Heather Beck

In over 20 years of working with dogs and a lifetime of working with animals, I have felt, seen, and been a part of the highest highs, and the lowest lows. I have witnessed things that still give me nightmares—things that most people just could not even comprehend. Seeing and feeling horrible things that you just can't "unsee" or "unfeel" creates a really weird head space. Now, imagine that continually putting yourself in those types of situations is your livelihood? You can't just walk away when things get uncomfortable. That is where I am right now. The fear is taking over and not allowing me to do my job and sometimes normal life stuff. I don't even want to go anywhere there are dogs, like friends' houses, or parks. It has become debilitating to my once outgoing lifestyle.

I always say that due to my experiences, I have a healthy respect and slight fear of animals. I have been thrown over the head of a horse going full speed, down hill, into a pile of rocks; trampled by an entire herd of horses, causing multiple broken bones in my face; mauled with intent to kill by a large white Doberman; found myself an unexpected rodeo clown standing next to my freaked out Texas Longhorn; charged at by an angry black Angus; and gotten my thumb bit off and broken by a dog as I was trying to put her collar back on. I choked out a pitbull at an adoption event with a small dog in his mouth, and have been in the middle of more dog fights than I would like to admit. The list goes on and on. Each one of these experiences knocked me down a notch, opened my eyes, and created fear.

I often talk about the Doberman story and what a huge impact it had on me and my life. It was a huge wake up call out of my "Intermediate Syndrome," thinking no dog was a match for me. Well, he humbled me fast and very painfully. Dogs are very good at that. I had never felt something so powerful and angry; with each bite (and I took many to both arms), I felt his energy. He wanted me dead. How could an animal that I had devoted my life to do this to me? Well, he did. Taught me a huge lesson, one that for months I wasn't sure I was going to be able to recover from both physically and emotionally. He broke me from my innocence, and I would never see dogs the same again.

In many ways this was a good lesson, but in other ways it crushed me. It has been over 10 years since that wake-up call. Though I was able to move back into my career, it wasn't without issues. The first several dogs I worked with after that, I was shaking like a leaf. I never really dealt with those emotions and just this last week, watching a dog attack 2 people, has stirred a lot of them back to the

surface, enough that now I know I need to do something, including writing it down. All these years I have picked up pebbles along the way, and now the cumulative weight of them has just gotten too heavy to continue to carry.

I don't know the solutions, but I do know I'm not the only one that might be feeling this way. I feel weak wanting to ask for help, or crying when I feel so overwhelmed. I won't ever look at a picture of a dog and a baby the same way again. It's truly a burden of information to know what can happen. I hope that newer trainers (truly, all trainers) see that this life does take a huge toll on you mentally and physically. I am thankful to have other trainers that have been mentors and become like family. They have reached out to me once they recognized my overwhelming distress lately. Having a support network when you need it is invaluable. Having a laugh, cry, hug, or scream with someone who truly gets it can make all the difference. I'm so grateful to have that in my life, and you should make sure you do too, cause you will need them when the shit hits the fan.

I own camels, horses and riding cattle. One of my camels is a biter, and I am having to recreate our relationship by building many positive interactions with him. I have found that working with other experts to teach me how to properly handle and build confidence seems to be another good path to follow. Reach out to expert trainers to guide you.

I'm also setting boundaries at work. This is nothing new, but what is new is me trying to not feel guilty for not running my business 24/7. I have an amazing, trustworthy staff that allows me the freedom to not have to work all the time. I'm letting go of the guilt.

I'm making an appointment next week to get professional help. I think I'm ready to just talk to someone about these crazy emotions and fears that are becoming so overwhelming for me. Will it help? Yes. Will I be cured? No. My life experiences will always be there, and I'm grateful for that. I want to just learn how to cope in a better way.

Thanks for reading.

Founder of K9 Lifeline, Heather has been working with dogs since 1995. Her experience ranges from Animal Control Officer to fostering dogs for adoption to running her own large breed and pit bull rescue. Heather spends time working with Saga Humane Society in Belize as an Animal Control Officer, helping to trap packs of feral dogs and cats and coordinating visiting Vet teams. Heather also enjoys teaching shadow programs and workshops in Utah and around the world, and in her spare time she enjoys working with her other animals, a riding Texas Longhorn, camels and horses.

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Critical Thinking

by Mailey McLaughlin, M.Ed., CDTA/PDTI, Editor

Ed. Note: This piece originally ran in this space in January, 2013. We thought it was worth sharing again.

The Stuff Life is Made Of

“Life offers us two precious gifts: one is time, one is freedom of choice—the freedom to buy with your time what you value.”

~Richard Evans

How well do you manage your time?

If you are like most people, you see time as linear, or what the Greeks refer to as *chronos*. Days are scheduled, appointments made, tasks assigned. Whether it's your work day or your personal life (and for many of us canine professionals, those blend together quite a bit), you have all, or most, of it scheduled—often weeks, months, or years ahead. (I make my obedience class schedule a full 14 months in advance. It's the only way I can fit in the number of classes I want to teach with the time allotted.)

We are all slaves to linear time, in part. But if you set a goal to work smarter instead of harder, you can rise above *chronos*, believe it or not. You can either manage your time, or it can manage you.

The first thing to do is plan your day, putting the most important tasks at the top. Most people's to-do lists are a jumbled mish-mash of “important” and “not-so-important” tasks. This creates chaos and often leaves you at the end of the day with important things left undone. Make your list the night before; it really can help you get a jump start on the day.

You must prioritize accordingly. I am a huge “Simpsons” fan, and every time I think of time management, I think of the episode from Season 2 titled “One Fish, Two Fish, Blowfish, Blue Fish,” where Homer eats some possibly poisoned sushi and realizes he has only 24 (er, 22) hours to live. He makes a bucket list of oddly thoughtful (for him) things he wants to do, and it's a funny list anyway, but the very last item on it is “be intimate with Marge.” The day gets away from him, and in his hurry to get everything on the list done, he realizes that he didn't prioritize very well.

Time-consuming and technically unimportant tasks can eat away at your day. You may choose to prioritize tasks based on income generation, or satisfaction level, or a wish to avoid procrastination. I conduct a vast majority of my dog training business via email (as opposed to the phone), because I realized some time ago that answering dog training calls as they come in ends up being a huge time suck. The alternative to answering them is to let them go to voicemail and return messages later. This can be a bit more effective, but as I never really know how long each call is going to take, it's very hard to plan even for this. If you plan a chunk of time, you may get a voicemail and be forced to leave a message; if you plan to leave a message, you will inevitably get a live, frustrated person on the other end. Business etiquette says you should endeavor to return all voicemails within 24 hours at the very latest. I was finding this very difficult to do, so I switched to a 95% email-based system, and it definitely freed up my time.

To be frank, emails can also be time sucks, but since they can be read and replied to any time of day or night, and many can include some pre-written material (your fees, your general schedule, what you offer, and how to set up an appointment, among other things), you can knock most out pretty easily. Whenever I have a situation where I know that a phone call will be easier for the client because of the questions I need to ask, I schedule a call in an email so that I know we will both be available.

The next thing to do is to leave out non-essential tasks for that day. Do you really need to hit the feed store today? Or can you lump that in with the errands you'll be running on Sunday, since you'll be on that side of town anyway?

Can you delegate anything to anyone? This is the essence of working smarter. You know your strengths and your weaknesses—farm your weak spots out to others who excel at them. Is it easy to abandon control of some of your tasks? Heck, no! But if someone can do it better, faster, and more professionally than you have the time for, pay them to do just that. You can still control most of it, and this will free up a good chunk of time.



Let's talk for a minute about multi-tasking. Do you think you are good at it? Studies have proven over and over that multitasking is a myth. It can take 20-40 percent more time to finish a list of jobs when you multitask, compared with completing the same list of tasks in sequence. When you split your brain by trying to multitask, you perform at a lower level efficiency on all of the tasks you are attempting, so resist the urge—especially when you are speaking to clients or prospective clients.

“It's not so much the techniques and tricks of time management, but the principles of personal leadership, that truly empower people to identify and keep ‘first things first’ in their lives. More than ‘doing things right’, it's “doing the right things.” ~R. Merrill

When you get a handle on chronos, you will find that you have more time for what the Greeks call “kairos”: quality time; something to be experienced. Seeing as that study after study shows that people on their deathbeds universally regret that they didn't spend as much time doing things that they truly loved to do, I'd say the search for kairos is hugely important—and often overlooked in the day-to-day rat race.

You undoubtedly love what you do—and this absolutely matters—but you also need to schedule breaks to pause,

reflect, recharge, and renew, so that you can be the best at what you do. !

Mailey, The Pooch Professor, is Editor of The Canine Professional Journal and currently co-Vice President of the IACP. She has worked professionally with dogs and their people for over 30 years, holds a Masters in Education, is a CDTA and PDTI through IACP, and is Behavior and Training Manager for the Atlanta Humane Society. Read more at www.carpek9.blogspot.com.

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