

IACP

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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.

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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.

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AFFILIATE MEMBER — An active interest in a career as a canine professional but lacking the experience to be an Associate or Professional member, i.e., apprentices, students of canine professions, trainees, volunteers, part-time, and devotees of canine related occupations. Cannot use the IACP name or logo for business purposes and may not vote.

Annual Fees:

Professional \$125.00; Associate \$100.00; Affiliate \$65.00

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Benefits:

All IACP members receive our SafeHands 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.

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Cover photo: "Dexter, Brew, and Calla" by Sarah Fulcher

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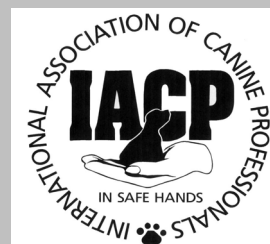
The IACP is proud to announce that Members
Bill Creasy , Leslie Horton, and Kelly Hoffman-Conn
 have successfully completed their Certified Dog Trainer examination and are
 now able to add the designation IACP-CDT to their names.

In addition, Members
Martin Deeley, Cyndy Douan, Gail Kulur, and Jason Vasconi
 have earned the CDTA and PDTI certifications 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!
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President's Letter

by James Hamm

2106 is upon us, and the IACP wishes each of you success, fulfillment and happiness for the upcoming year. This year will not be a year of overwhelming changes in our organization, but a series of evolutions quarter by quarter. We wish former Director Jeff Gellman the best and thank him for his fantastic contributions to the IACP for the last two years. I am personally honored to welcome Brian Bergford, with all his energy and enthusiasm, to our team of very experienced directors. He adds a very different set of skills, communication style, and perspective to an already diverse thinking group of canine professionals.

This year we will introduce a series of changes and improvements for all of you. Vice President Mailey McLaughlin and her team will introduce the long-awaited Foundation Examination as the first big step this year, followed by Melanie Benware's website visual and functional facelift. Brian Bergford is developing an education portal for members to add to, share, and use at your convenience. The IACP will strengthen its position and participation through Karen Laws to stop restrictive legislation in Canada and the United States from under-informed or radicalized individuals. Nelson Hodges and his Regional Group project are growing in numbers and locations, and we will foster and grow them from within throughout the year. The best example of this is the North Texas Dog Pro group, which

has grown by over 300% in a year under the watchful eye of current and former IACP directors Nelson Hodges and Tod McVicker. They are a model group to watch and learn as they build a team of teams.

Sponsorship grew significantly in 2015 under Martin Deeley and myself, and 2016 will continue the trend of bringing industry and canine professionals together. Vice President Tyler Muto transitions from Web interface to Communication and Public Awareness and Jack Clark continues his skillful management of the resources. Cyndi Graham will put on another spectacular conference with her team with a few changes from the recent past, a new location, and exciting speakers and teachers. Member of the Year Bill Creasy and his Service Dog Committee continue to bring standards and credibility to their segment of the industry and are building a Therapy Dog Committee as well. Certification at all three levels has seen significant growth and we are tremendously proud of former Director Tawni McBee's team of evaluators and our new CDT, CDTA, and PDTI members. I am personally proud and

humbled to have been elected for a second term as the President of this outstanding organization to serve each of you and work with an exceptional group of Directors this year.

You will see changes in IACP Social Media content, platforms and activity. We are now on



Instagram and will begin using it and other outlets in new ways in 2016 and we hope the changes increase your satisfaction, entertain you, and align you with some of the best pages on the internet for relevancy, quality content and group interactions.

The Board of Directors and I want to provide more resources, more variety and more personal and professional growth opportunities for each of you in 2016 than we have ever been able to do. We want each of you to be successful and prosper not just in your business, but in your personal life as well. We welcome your input, ideas, critiques and suggestions to give you the best IACP possible. Our industry continues to evolve at an incredible pace with many traditional methods still preserved and many new methods and skills rising to the top. We will work hard to keep you with us for many years to come. I look forward to meeting all of you soon.

Respectfully,

James Hamm
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Are You Ready for Board and Train?

by Ruth Crisler, CBCC-KA

Editor's note: this article was originally published in the APDT's "Chronicle of the Dog." It has been updated by the author for this publication.

The woman with the thirteen-month-old Cane Corso wished to enroll him immediately, barely a week before Christmas. He didn't look bad on paper, but taking a hundred-pound adolescent guarding breed for three weeks over two major holidays sight unseen was not exactly guaranteed to go smoothly. We invited them in for assessment, to gauge how quickly the dog was likely to acclimate to our staff and facility. With over fifty boarders expected over the coming week, it wasn't worth risking undue stress on staff, equipment, or other client dogs.

When I stepped into the office, the dog fixed its eyes on me and growled. A pair of senior kennel attendants were greeted similarly. After several minutes of conversation with the dog's owner, things hadn't much improved. The dog had never been boarded before, never had a lick of training, and was generally unaccustomed to coping with the world beyond his house and yard. I braced myself for the possibility that I would need to turn this dog down, at least until after the new year.

For trainers who have cut their teeth instructing classes or conducting in-home lessons, board and train may represent a final frontier, to be approached with some amount of trepidation. Between the level of responsibility implied by the format, and its reputation as ethically questionable terrain, it's no surprise many trainers harbor reservations. And in case you don't, others certainly do on your behalf, like the blogger behind "Beware! Of Dog Trainers Who Want to Board and Train Your Dog!"

Then there are those that dive in headlong, only to find themselves in the deep end barely treading water. Every year, one hears stories of client dogs getting badly injured or doing injury to others while

in training, not to mention all the programs that are simply unsuccessful due to goals not being met.

My own introduction to training dogs professionally centered around board and train, initially assisting experienced trainers and later working independently. In hindsight, I can't claim pride in all those programs--roughly fifty over a year. But I got a close up look at how board and train works, or in some cases doesn't, and developed my skills as a handler along the way. Since opening a full-service facility in 2003, we've played a lot with the format and had the opportunity to compare results with those achieved through group classes and private instruction. We currently offer a range of board and train programs, aimed at resolving obedience and behavior problems from housebreaking to aggression. Here is my personal take on the reality, including key advantages and pitfalls.

Reality v. Perception

How punishing is boot camp?

The primary concern over board and train among prospective clients reflects its persistent reputation as psychologically brutal and physically punishing. Kennel-based programs seem the most prone to skepticism, eliciting visions of military-style boot camp.

It certainly can be a high-stress experience under the wrong conditions, but it almost never needs to be. We consistently find dogs enjoy our programs, which include alternating group play and training sessions with down time in between (less social dogs are exercised individually). If we haven't won them over within the first few hours, we will have over the next few days. Even behaviorally challenged dogs usually learn in short order that life at our kennel--for all its newness--isn't *nearly* as confusing or frustrating as life at home. Stress tends to fall away rather than build in such cases,

as the rhythm and routine of daily training and exercise sink in.

Who sends their dog away for training?

Trainers frequently question the calibre of client interested in board and train. It is implied they must be lazy or uncaring, looking for quick and dirty fixes to all the problems they let fester.

While I've consulted with a handful of reprobate owners who did fit that unsavory profile, the majority have been the opposite. Many already invested significant time, effort, and money into training that did not meet their goals. Others unexpectedly found themselves out of their depth with a dog they recently adopted. Some are simply looking to make the most productive use of time their pets would need boarding anyhow, whether during a honeymoon, family vacation, or remodeling project.

In nearly all cases, there is above-average commitment to the dog, acute awareness of

training's impact on both behavior and quality of life, and readiness to make a non-trivial investment toward a successful outcome.

Wouldn't it be better if the owner were doing the work?

Responsible owners naturally question the wisdom of taking themselves out of the equation, especially in the case of longer programs. Trainers do as well, for legitimate reasons. We all wonder if it might make better sense for them to learn along with their dogs, working together as a team from start to finish.

Ultimately, I'm not convinced that's always feasible without additional support or intervention, and promoting the notion that it should be puts those clients at risk of giving up out of frustration.

Meanwhile, how many parents home school their kids? How many riders break their own horses to saddle? No matter how competent or dedicated

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one may be, there may yet be projects it makes sense to delegate.

The Case for Board and Train

All things being equal, we rarely recommend board and train ahead of less expensive or intrusive alternatives. But certain factors do argue for it. Here are some examples, along with actual scenarios from our case files.

Untenable situation

This could involve a dog whose basic needs have become impossible to meet, or whose behavior prevents owners from performing basic functions like going to work. Risk of serious injury, especially to a child, also counts as untenable, at least where no foolproof management strategy exists. Such cases demand immediate intervention, whether in the form of board and train or owner relinquishment.

Toxic environment

When the dynamic between dog and owner has deteriorated due to fear or frustration to the point of being fragile or toxic, or the home environment is not conducive to productive work, removing the dog to a neutral location may be key to breaking behavior cycles and facilitating a fresh start. Dogs often have an easier time accepting new rules or protocols outside familiar contexts, and owners may be more inclined to appreciate their dogs' efforts and successes following a period of separation.

Urgent deadline

It can be tempting to disparage owners who only

come to grips with the fact their dog is ill-mannered in the face of a looming deadline, like the birth of a child or a move to the city. But they deserve credit for attempting to address the problem before it's entirely too late, and to the extent it can be addressed with professional support, board and train may represent the most reasonable course of action.

Special needs

An owner who is compromised due to age, injury, or circumstance will naturally require extra assistance in raising and training his pet. Likewise, certain dogs require special handling in order to succeed. Board and train may not be able to resolve every conceivable mismatch between dog and owner, but for many it represents the best chance at a good long-term outcome.

Real Cases

Below are some examples of real cases in which we either recommended or consented to board and train programs.

Example 1: 1-yr-old Siberian Husky with separation anxiety manifesting in defecation and destructive behavior. His owners were essentially housebound, unable to leave together except



during the hours their dog spent at daycare. They had tried obedience training, crate games, interactive toys, webcams, pheromones, in-home training, and behavior medication. The last straw was having to attend their best friend's wedding in shifts.

Example 2: 1-yr-old Dogue de Bordeaux with guarding tendencies, unmanageable on leash and living with first-time dog owners in a downtown condo. Owners feared for the safety of visitors, passers-by, and neighbor dogs. Remedial training and socialization was required before the dog could be handled responsibly at home or in public.

Example 3: 1-yr-old Coonhound raised by experienced dog owners, who had become locked in a bitter and emotional conflict over how to address their dog's mounting aggression issues. They used the time their dog was in training to reconnect with each other and focus on presenting a united front going forward.

Example 4: 2-yr-old Golden Retriever possessive aggressive over toys. He had bitten his devoted owner over a tennis ball, significantly shaking her confidence.

Example 5: 1.5-yr-old littermate Potcakes (Caribbean island dogs) with a history of fear aggression and little positive exposure to children. Owners were expecting their first baby in three months.

Example 6: 1-yr-old Labrador Retriever in need of better leash manners. Owner was busy recovering from the ankle break she'd suffered while walking her.

Practical and Ethical Considerations

Before booking your first board-and-train client, consider the following carefully.

Assessment

The importance of a reliable assessment strategy cannot be overstated. It is critical one knows how to distinguish between solvable and unsolvable problems, as well as how to gauge a dog's suitability to your boarding environment.

Our assessment begins with an online consultation form, followed by a phone call confirming basic information. We then arrange an in-person interview of between thirty and ninety minutes, either at our facility or in the home. That choice is usually left up to the client, but some cases do call for one or the other. If there are doubts as to how a given dog will respond to the kennel environment or staff, the meeting takes place here. If there is particular concern over the household dynamic, we visit the home.

With both the Siberian Husky and the Dogue de Bordeaux, I insisted on a ninety-minute home visit prior to committing myself (and wound up staying over two hours in both instances). In the first case, this was to better assess the level of separation anxiety, which turned out to be less than one might think based on the history. In the second, it was to confirm the dog posed no discernible threat to either household child. Had my observation of that dynamic turned up red flags, I would have instantly declined the job and pushed for rehoming.

If a dog's fear of new environments or people presents an obstacle, we might ask the client to attend one or more private lessons at our facility prior to confirming enrollment. We have also required pre-program sessions in cases where client commitment was in doubt.

With the Cane Corso, we took our time. We had the owner place him inside a run and remove herself to the office, out of sight. We gave the dog some time to get over his separation, went about our business in the kennel, then returned to see how he felt about being handled. Not surprisingly, he was having none of it. But on a more positive note, he did not react badly to the dog in the next run, and while he persisted to growl and snap at the gate when any of us would approach, it became clear he was more confused than genuinely nasty, and very much a puppy in critical respects. In the end, we got him out to the yard and back in the run smoothly. I was satisfied my staff would not experience any drama with him.

That said, sometimes saying no is the best option, even in the face of pressure or at the eleventh

hour. One of the sanest decisions I ever made was to refund a client's deposit on the day she arrived to drop off her Portuguese Water Dog. Over the weeks that had elapsed since the initial consultation, she had failed to supply required veterinary and behavior evaluation forms, and ignored instructions to address her puppy's poor weight. After she became argumentative, I cut her a check and showed her the door. That puppy would have been a breeze to train, but her owner's open disregard for our policies and recommendations was ultimately a deal breaker.

Results

In addition to a reliable assessment strategy, one should have a clear vision of the goals you intend to achieve and a solid game plan for how to get there. The ability to set realistic goals and predict likely outcomes is critical to both shaping and meeting client expectations.

If the objective is to prepare the dog for the arrival of a new baby, what specific steps will you take toward that end? What skills will the dog learn, to what degree of reliability, and how will they apply to predictable challenges?

No trainer can guarantee permanent results based on a few weeks of work, much less a mere ten days, but he or she should be able to predict with fair accuracy what may be achieved with a given dog within a given timeframe. In other words, board and train can and should be goal-oriented, while always avoiding pat guarantees.

Suppose we book a recently adopted dog with leash reactivity for our short program (ten days). We can reasonably *predict* notable improvement in the dog's leash manners, heightened attention and responsiveness under distraction, and an increased threshold for reaction to triggers, based on the scope of our standard assessment and

A black and white photograph of a dog, possibly a Weimaraner, interacting with a Kong Wobbler toy. The dog is leaning over the toy, which is a large, dark, hourglass-shaped object with a hole in the center. Several small, dark, round treats are scattered on the floor around the toy. The dog's head is lowered, and its front paws are near the toy. The background is plain white.

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the results of a hundred prior programs. We may also acclimate the dog to new training aids, and typically conduct a controlled assessment of his or her baseline attitude toward other dogs and capacity for safe off-leash interaction.

In other words, we guarantee to provide significant insight and a foundation on which to build, along with instruction in both general principles and specific techniques. We do *not* guarantee to “fix the problem.” Nor does failure to meet goals according to the projected timeline justify ratcheting up the pressure on the dog to make up for the failure in judgement.

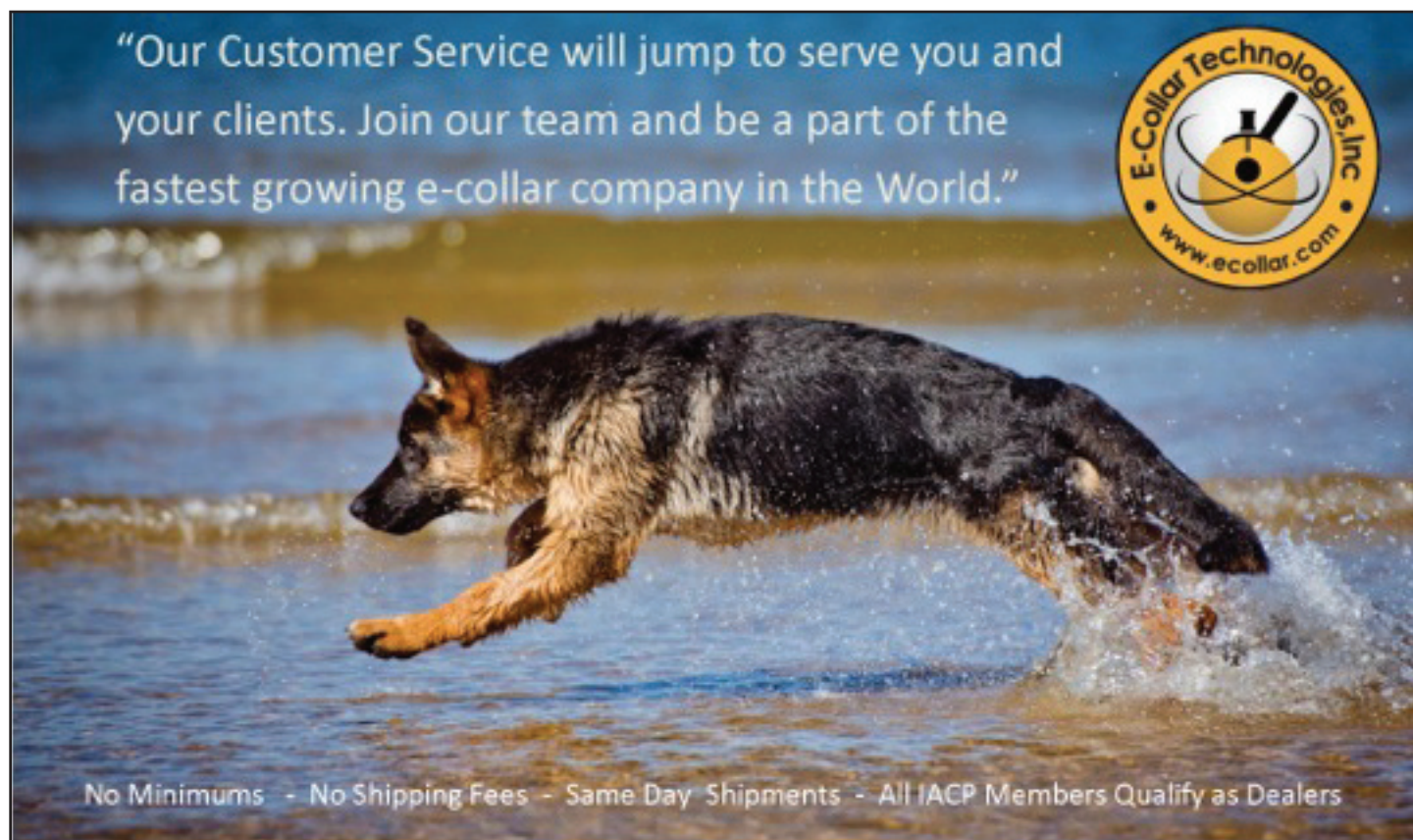
A lot rides on the exit and follow up sessions, and on understanding what success looks like from the beginning. It's *not* about proving the dog can be great with you, the pro trainer. It's about setting the stage for long term success at *home*, with their non-pro owner. If highly tailored one-on-one instruction is not your game, you may not want to choose this adventure. Either way, there is enormous value in creating and maintaining additional resources, whether in the form of written handouts, a video library, or custom DVD.

Long term results will depend primarily on owner follow through. That said, the trainer has more control over what the *dog* comes away with in board and train than in other formats. This means greater opportunity exists to build robust behaviors and skills, but also that the trainer may legitimately be held to a higher account.

The Board Part

Being a professional trainer does not automatically qualify you to board client pets, particularly ones with behavior problems. Just as serious trainers can resent amateurs claiming pro status without adequate knowledge or experience, licensed kennel operators have been known to voice legitimate concern over trainers taking the *board* in board and train a bit too lightly.

First, there are legal considerations. Familiarize yourself with local laws. Are you properly licensed and zoned? Do you carry adequate insurance? Training out of one's home does not relieve one of these or other responsibilities. If you're taking people's money for services, you're no longer an amateur, and operating illegally puts you at



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significant risk. Unlike the training industry, the boarding industry is widely regulated. Make sure you know which rules apply to you.

Second, there are safety considerations. These include managing flight risk and exposure to household pets or family members, preventing self-injury while confined or isolated, and insuring adequate food and water intake. Some dogs require non-standard enclosures, extra levels of supervision, or extra layers of security. What protocols do you have in place in case of emergency?

For the record, the most disastrous outcomes I've experienced first hand had nothing to do with training. One represented a failure at the assessment stage, in so far as critical information regarding a potentially life-threatening medical condition was withheld by the client upon enrollment. That dog, a toy poodle, died on the way to the emergency vet, minutes after suffering a grand mal seizure while sitting in his crate. The other involved underestimating the difficulty in maintaining a Labradoodle's long coat over a three week program. That dog required shaving before returning home, to the utter mortification of his owners, one of whom wept loudly during much of our exit session. This will be referred to at See Spot Run for all eternity as the thousand dollar haircut, as I knocked that amount off his bill in a fit of remorse.

Pros

- **Efficiency:** You will impart skills faster and adjust more fluidly to feedback than would the client, resulting in faster progress.
- **Consistency:** You have control over the dog's whole experience for the duration of the program, preventing backsliding between lessons.
- **Lower Risk:** Mistakes may be far less likely, key when the margin for error is small.

Cons

- **Unreasonable Expectations:** Managing and meeting client expectations is more critical than with other formats.

- **No Excuses:** With greater control over the training process comes greater responsibility for the outcome. You may be held more blame, fairly or unfairly, for future problems or regression.
- **The Board Part:** Boarding and training are separate skill sets in many respects, and involve different legal requirements in many states and municipalities.

Last Words

Board and train is not for every dog, client, or trainer. However, It is a sound option for many, and the only viable answer for a few. Be legal. Be safe. Be honest. Be effective. And be ready to wake up at 4 AM as needed, to let the dog out.

Ruth Crisler CBCC-KA began her career with animals in 1991, first with horses and then with dogs. In 2000 she founded See Spot Run, serving the needs of Chicago canines with a focus on socialization, obedience instruction, and behavior. She is an IACP pro member and IAABC supporting member and volunteer. She lives above her training facility with her husband, two children, and dogs Atlas and Feisal. Visit www.seespotrunkennel.com for more information.

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Fast Feedback: Learning from Dogs

by Mary Mazzeri

Generally, a mother dog is patient and pretty tolerant of her puppies--to a point. She teaches each pup all the warning language of low growls, bared teeth, air snaps and lunges, and if the little squirt still doesn't get it, he 'gets it', quickly and effectively.

Mother dogs are pretty theatrical, measure their punishment pretty carefully, and drop the issue once they've ended the discussion. This biting and/or pinning is very precisely calibrated and rarely does any real damage, but it leaves a lasting impression on a pup, develops some natural understanding of what's expected in the social order, and creates some inhibition of its impulses. This layer of respect accompanies 'love' in the chain of authority. The mother's discipline is entirely benevolent and her timing is perfect. The rapidity with which the mother corrects a pup 'in the act' leaves no doubt in the pup's mind of why the correction happened. It is a cease-and-desist order.

My most memorable experience observing a mother dog correct a puppy was many years ago when a Wolfhound brood bitch of mine disciplined a pretty bratty male pup of 7 weeks. I didn't see what he did this particular time. I was watching the pups in the back yard from the kitchen window while I washed a load of dishes. It was my first litter and I'd never seen a bitch discipline a puppy before. My bitch sounded like she was killing the pup and the pup and I both thought she was going to do so. I went running out the back door yelling at her, which she totally ignored. She was grabbing and releasing his neck (several times). The pup was ki-yi-ing and then suddenly went stone still on its side. I thought surely she'd killed him, as I watched her walk casually away to lay under a tree. When I got to the puppy it opened its eye without moving and looked wide-eyed back and forth as if to say, "Is she gone?" Then

he started wagging his tail, hopped up and shook himself off. I went over him and found no damage. He squirmed away and ran right over to mom, groveling the last 3 or 4 steps before throwing himself at her feet and rolling over onto his back. She gave him a long look and then started licking his face affectionately as if to say, "That's better, dear, now let's do try to behave ourselves, alright?" All was well between them and there was no residual anger or fear. After that, all she ever had to do was give him "THE LOOK" and he would stop doing..whatever-- instantly.

Mother dogs are masters at fast feedback. Although very patient, they react immediately and decisively in such situations and the puppy understands because the timing is perfect. The cause-and-effect relationship of the pup's behavior and the immediate consequence leaves no doubt in its mind that its action caused an unpleasant outcome. It did not have a pleasant consequence. The puppy's behavior was unrewarding, and was unlikely to be repeated.

In helping dogs to understand behaviors that we want them to learn, we need to apply this principle of fast feedback in training them. Let's take for example the dog that is just beginning to learn to sit-stay. The dog is positioned and given the stay command/signal. If the handler moves too far or too fast or for too long, the dog will be confused. Too many things can go awry and if the handler is not close enough to help the dog interpret "stay" as "don't move a leg." By the time the handler can get back to the dog, it might have laid down, moved in to the handler, or attempted to leave. By the time a handler returns or retrieves the dog, too many things have gone wrong and the dog is confused.

In contrast, the handler can easily communicate stay by putting light upward tension in the leash, giving the command/signal and going only one

step away from the dog, using the leash and physical positioning (blocking the dog's way with his/her body.) If the dog attempted to lower its head and shift its weight over the shoulders to lift the rear, the handler would be well-positioned to immediately increase restraint through the collar and leash and release it as the dog settled back into the sit. This fast feedback more clearly shows the dog that the command stay means don't move. Quiet praise at this point with a "Gooooood sit" would also help the dog realize more clearly and quickly what is wanted.

Mild distractions can be added while the handler is still close enough to prevent mistakes and show the dog differing circumstances under which it must stay. With well-timed feedback, learning is built on small successes with fewer corrections while extending distractions, distance and time. No need for growls, nips, or theatrics, but fast feedback helps speed up the learning process immeasurably.

Mary Mazzeri is a 40+ yr dog training veteran. She is a teachers' teacher, having mentored dozens of dog trainers over the years. She owns/operates CareDogTraining.com in Carpentersville, Illinois. She is a founding member of the IACP, past board member; serves on the Educational Committee as an evaluator, was awarded the IACP Member of the Year 2010; IACP Ambassador 2012; and was inducted into the IACP HOF in 2011.

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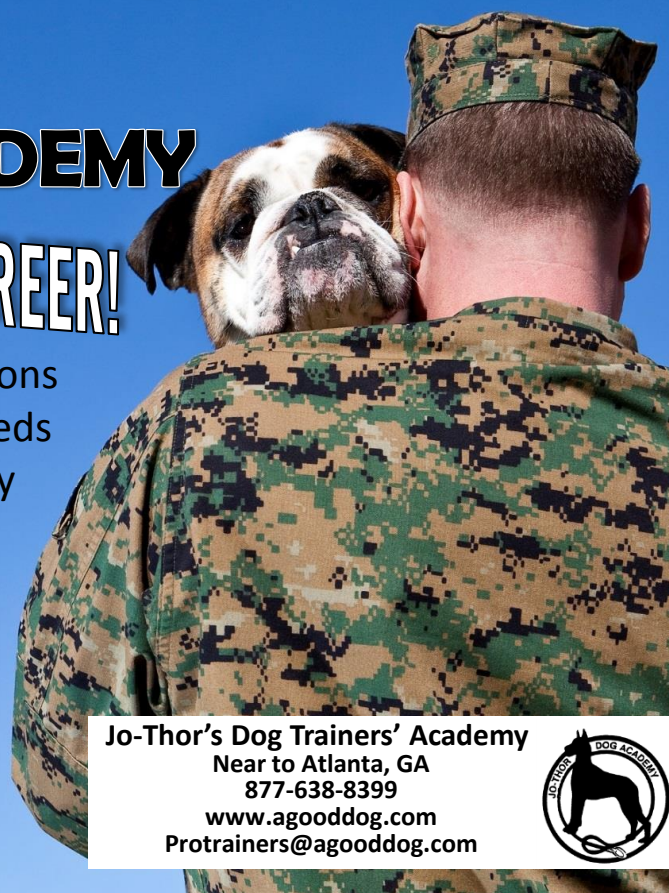
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The Art of Tug, Part Two

by Jay Jack

I presume you read Part One of this article in the last issue of the *Safehands Journal* (Fall, 2015)? Now, you are really fired up to go play. But, how? I have a simple protocol to get going. This is just a guide of how I teach people how to play the basic game.

Non verbal:

Because people have such a hard time making their words “match” their body language, I have them begin playing the game without words at all. This really cuts to the heart of relating to your dog in a more primal way. And, it is really super simple. If you want them to take it, you move it quickly away from them! If you don’t want them to take it, you move slowly, but naturally. If you want the game to stop for a second, you just stop! The toy, and you, become “not fun.” The most popular way of doing that is to hold the toy still by pressing your hands into your thigh, so it stops the movement. With the toy “dead,” the game is less fun, and they will disengage. This works much of the time.

But with some dogs, you will need a more skillful way of making the toy go “limp,” instead of “still.” Like the song says, “Hold on loosely. But, don’t let go!” And, yeah, you’ll need to step on the long line to keep them from tugging you across town. But DON’T put any “life” into the toy. Check out on them entirely. The whole game stops! Ivan has developed a different technique where he actually lets the toy go entirely to show them he’s stopped playing. That takes some explaining to understand, and I didn’t believe it when he told me about it. Fortunately, he’s got a DVD that shows you exactly how in detail.

“Styles” Of Play:

To have all those deep effects, you must play a well-rounded game. You have to include more angles than just ripping on the tug. Remember, the things missing in our dogs’ lives aren’t just fighting and killing. Some dogs find different games more

rewarding than others. Here are the elements I try to focus on:

Stalking: This is normally done during obedience (they are “loading” for the pounce!), and most folks call it “capping.” (As in, you shook the soda bottle. The pressure is building, but the “cap” is on.) Although obedience is the typical way people include this element, it can also be done by YOU stalking them as they trot around with their prize. Or, a still-open claw hand that SUDDENLY grabs. But it involves stalking body language and loading.

Chasing: This can be done by throwing the toy (yes, like fetch), or just playing “keep away” with it. Making them “miss” spins this dial. You can also chase your dog while he plays keep away from you. If it’s part of the game, I don’t think the dog enjoying keep away is bad. Keep a long line on them, until they have a solid “bring it back” command though.

Fighting: This is what we think of as typical tug: the dog gripping and pulling, the handler swinging them around.

Celebrating: This is the one that really gets trainers in a tizzy. I practice celebrating in two ways. 1.) Running the dog out: On a long line if necessary, I will let the dog run in circles around me holding their toy and prancing! 2.) I bring them into my arms, and slowly stroke them and keep them calm. This lets them calmly bask in the glory of their “win,” but also leads me into the framework of the toggle. Since I am playing non verbally, I will always run them out after bringing them into my arms. That is so they won’t be in my arms not knowing WHEN the fight will start again. Once I add language, I can cue the switch so they will know and won’t be obsessed with predicting it.

Not every dog will enjoy every aspect. And, that’s OK. Your job is to LEARN YOUR DOG, and figure out the game they enjoy! One dog’s game

will look like fetch with the occasional stalk, or bringing them into your arms. One may look like the “typical” swing-them-around-in-the-air, smack-them-on-the-bum, growly tug! Find and develop the game THAT dog likes!

Now, as you probably noticed, I use long lines. I will put every dog on a long line when I play until I am certain they will re engage on their own, or on cue. I don’t want them to leave the game, or lay down to celebrate. One of my only rules for play is that it be an interactive event! So, long line is standard equipment until you know.

Name And Explain:

Once the game has been established with that dog, I will add my language. All I’m going to do is just “Name and Explain” what we are already doing. You can use any words you’d like, but these are the ones I use.

Ready?: Means we are about to play. I say this before bringing out the toy. This will become our “focus” word.

OK: Release command. Means the toy is up for grabs! Not a “bite” command. If you release them while they are loading for a bite, it will certainly look like it! But, it literally means “free.”

Out: Let go of the toy. Game isn’t “over”, but on pause, like ringing a bell for a break in boxing.

Enough: Game is over. This is the last bell in a boxing match. There will be no more rounds. Put the toy away! They can be at relaxed liberty, because they know the game is through.

Ah Ah: This is my “no reward mark.” It means, “What you’re doing right now isn’t correct” and gets you further away from playing.

No: This, I reserve for OFF LIMIT activities, such as biting skin, or clothes. Reserve it for the really bad stuff. It should always include a brief “shunning”--maybe 3 seconds, maybe 3 minutes. It depends on the dog. But don’t use it lightly. If you focus on developing relationship in training, it will be a powerful motivator.




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When Naming and Explaining, say it, THEN- do it! “Out”, THEN stop. “OK,” THEN move! In no time flat they will begin responding to the words, and you can fade off the “help” from the body language. Now, I DO fade off the dependence on body language, as I want my dogs to respond to verbal cues. They should be able to let go of a moving toy on a verbal command only. But I do keep the non-verbal game alive. In sport, they fade off of body language and never go back. But for pet dogs, I keep them fluent. My concern is livability, not sport. But, it’s up to you to figure out your own goals, and train towards them.

Issues:

So, now that we’ve talked about ways to play, and how to appeal to different dogs, we have to talk about issues. Most often, the two biggest issues are: not enough drive, and too much drive. If you understand the different aspects, you’ll be able to entice more dogs to play, and keep them interested. Too much drive is usually expressed through not “outing.” Now, we already talked about how to get an “out” by using non-reinforcement (toy/game

goes “dead”). But, the other way to help get the out is to LOWER their drive using the “aspects” of the game. Many dogs will get TOO aroused by certain aspects. For example, fighting too hard can make dogs too amped up and committed. That’s not to say that you shouldn’t swing them around and let them get into it, but you can run them out or bring them into your arms after a bout of fighting to bring them back down to earth before asking for them to let go. Don’t get me wrong--I want a dog to let go no matter what--but, we gotta work out the game to get to that point.

Trust, or lack thereof, is also a HUGE killer of the game. In some dogs, the lack of trust will kill their drive to play. And in some dogs, lack of trust will make them lock down and not want to let go. In BOTH cases, learn to be very clear in your communication. Modulating the level of effort you’re asking for can be the make-or-break element. For the nervous dogs, you can also change positions. I will hold the toy to the side of me to take pressure off. Or kneel down so I’m not



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towering over them. Or, I can change toys, which brings us to toy selection.

Toy selection:

Armed with this new view of the game, you can select toys based on their “element,” and how your area of influence is affected by them. A tennis ball is ALL chase and celebrate. It’s hard to get a grip on to get the “fight” going. A Spring Pole is all fight--and a “losing” one at that. So your dog has to REALLY enjoy that element alone, or they won’t enjoy it. Flirt Poles, or toys on ropes, can increase how far the toy is from you, which can be great for increasing the “Chase” element and can take pressure off by moving you further away from it.

But in some dogs, the further you are from the toy, the less they want to listen to you! So, know what your area of influence is, and how that can affect your dog for better or worse. Toys with handles can help you keep a good grip, which is important if you have a lot of fight in your game. Stiffer toys are easier to hold still (that’s less important if you’re doing the “limp” out we discussed above).

Any trainer, from basic obedience to hunting and agility, will tell you that consistency is the key to a well-trained dog. Training your dog does not stop when the dog is “finished” with professional training. Consistency is essential for a dog to retain the commands he has learned. Platform dog training helps keep that consistency in training. The KLIMB™ is the first professionally-made dog training platform available for professional dog handlers and everyday dog owners, making it far easier to continue training and keep the dog's focus.
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So, know the game. Know your dog. And pick the right toy for the two of you. I have several different toys and a long line in my bag. So, I’m ready to play no matter what!

Well, that’s it. There’s no way to get this stuff across in print 100%. But I hope it inspired you guys to investigate the game you can play. And, all the things you can do with it. If you really want to learn more about it, you can go to the man that inspired me, Ivan Balabanov. His original DVD “Obedience Without Conflict: The Game,” is a great start. And, if you can ever make it to one of his workshops, you really have to go.

If you want to do any training with me, you can always find me at NLDogs.com!

Jay Jack is the author of the blog Three Bad Bullys, an accomplished MMA fighter, and a martial arts nerd. His love of bully breeds began as a child, and he continues to find ways to increase the relationship between dogs and owners through private lessons and instructor training on tug and other activities. He lives in Portland, ME.

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If at First You Don't Succeed, Stop Trying

by Brian Bergford

*Following is an excerpt from my book **Transformational Dog Training**. I wrote the book with the intention of elaborating on how personal growth, psychology, communication habits, and our ability to create genuine connection with our dogs are keys to creating lasting changes in them. I wanted to develop a resource for dog owners to help them understand how their personal life and stability affects their dogs' behavior. I also knew dog trainers could benefit from a timely resource they could hand to clients to help guide them.*

*The fact is, we do far more owner training than dog training! And daily we ache as we watch some of our well-intentioned, albeit misinformed, clients create and enable problem behaviors in their companions. The beauty is that we are in a position to help them identify areas of their lives that are causing issues for not only their dogs, but themselves and their families as well. If we are skilled about coaching people, we can have a positive impact on everyone involved. Sometimes, however, we don't have enough time during a training session – or a subject is too sensitive – to address it with a client directly. In cases like this, I love being able to provide them with outside resources. If I tell them they need to see a therapist and hand them a book called **Don't be Your Own Worst Enemy**, I may offend them and perhaps get punched. If the book I hand them is about dog training, I'm in.*

The chapters of my book are divided into two sections. The first is specific to outlining dog training principles. The second half of each chapter – where this excerpt comes from – addresses personal development strategies that complement and enhance our dog training efforts.

The world would be a better place if people stopped trying. I can't think of many other things that give people, especially children, such misguided ideas about how to approach life. Have you ever seen someone straining, trying to do something, who was consistently effective? No one comes to mind for me. I see several challenges with the notion of trying that warrant analysis. Let's explore some of those issues and then discover a few more empowering ways to position ourselves.

The first issue is that when someone says, "I'm going to try to do it," it implies a high probability of failure. The very way their words frame the challenge is a form of self-handicapping. Self-handicapping is when a person essentially makes excuses before she's even engaged a challenge, so if things don't go well, at least she has a predetermined out. If your friend tells you that she's giving a presentation at work but is not sure how well it will go because she hasn't been sleeping great,

she's practicing self-handicapping. Since she hasn't been sleeping great, if anything doesn't go quite as planned during the presentation it's okay, because she's already voiced concerns about a roadblock that will prevent the presentation from going smoothly. If it ends up going fantastic, she has even more to brag about: Despite not getting much rest, she still hit it out of the park. What a clever maneuver the ego has devised to hedge its bets. There's a built-in cushion in case failure occurs, but a pedestal is waiting to exalt the ego if success is the outcome.

So now we've arrived at the next issue: success and failure, both of which describe an escapism mentality, since they are after-the-fact judgments about an outcome. People want success and they strive for it, and there is nothing wrong with experiencing success. The problem is that when a person's energy is so focused on success, her mind-set undervalues the journey and wants to escape the

effort and get to the end result, which robs her of the opportunity to learn from the process. If she does succeed, she'll celebrate; if she fails, it's a blow to her ego and she'll punish herself. Punishment could be as subtle as dealing with a general sense of discouragement or as severe as active self-chastisement.

Whenever you "try" to do something, it automatically introduces tension into your system. The issue isn't settled (if it were, you would do instead of try), and the natural byproduct is a lack of total commitment and general angst about the task you are trying to perform. This is a disempowered stance from which to launch your efforts. Your mind and muscles become rigid and tense as they brace against the challenge. But great performances are all characterized by the ease and flow that accompany a focused effort, which is relaxed and simultaneously strenuous.

Performing a demanding task can and should carry a graceful ease. We have all experienced this at times when the boundary between self and an activity melt away and we become a part of the effort. We still feel strain and sometimes pain, but we experience oneness with the effort also. We're not trying to escape the situation; we're living right in the middle of it. Success and failure aren't even on our radar, because we are interested in using our attention impeccably by focusing on the quality of execution. When the task is over, we see the results as an outcome. This information provides us with valuable feedback and helps us better direct our future efforts.

When you are truly present, you can meet the needs of the present. Thinking about the outcome siphons precious energy and attention. Focusing on the now makes all of your energy to meet the challenge available to you. When you're trying, you're bracing against the activity, hoping that things go well—a defensive and powerless position. Focusing on an out-

come during an effort is like chasing a mirage. Not only is it exhausting and futile, but also out of your control and unable to be grasped—but the *moment* can be. When you commit to doing something, you're giving the best of yourself to the challenge; all of your gifts and talents and attention and energy are available to you. That's how things get done. Doing creates a meaningful effort and facilitates learning and the gaining of wisdom.

Trying creates frustration and is the long road to learning a skill, because it focuses the mind on the goal, blinding us to all the subtleties in our performance we need to focus on to learn so we can rise to meet the challenge. But what if you don't know whether or not you can do something? How can a person just decide to "do" something, thinking that will magically make it happen? These are the wrong questions. "Trying" focuses the mind on outcomes: success and failure; "doing" focuses the mind on total commitment to fully immerse oneself in the process, purposefully directing energy and attention into action. "Trying" puts a person in the position of a victim, subject to an outcome that is out of her control; "doing" puts a person in a state of power, whereby she is responsible for her effort. So, if at first you don't succeed, stop trying and start doing.

Reprinted with permission: Transformational Dog Training, by Brian Bergford, 2015, Altitude Dog Training, Longmont, CO.

Brian Bergford is a Dog Behavior Specialist, CDT, and the owner of Altitude Dog Training and Uptown Dog in Longmont, Colorado. He earned his degree in Psychology from the University of Colorado, taking particular interest in neuroscience, psychopathology, clinical psychology, and the principles of peak human performance. Integrating his passion for helping people with his understanding of canine behavior, Brian customizes training strategies to help his clients successfully communicate with their dogs and better understand themselves in the process. For more information, visit www.altitudedogtraining.com or email brian@altitudedogtraining.com.

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Social Media in Business: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

by Heather Beck

I have been working with dogs since 1995. In that time, so much has changed in how we communicate and how we interact with other humans. I literally have thousands of “friends” who I have never met face to face, but yet know so many details of my life and my business. I have used social media in a very advantageous way, and I have increased my brand, increased sales, networked with people all over the world, and sold out workshops all over (even on a cruise ship)! This is all thanks to my presence on social media. Wouldn't you like to do the same?

First, let's start with the GOOD. I have been learning to navigate the world of social media since the first day I gave into nagging emails asking me to sign up. At first, I felt like it was a secret world that everyone knew about but me; I was a little late to the party, but not by much. I never had a Myspace page, but started with Facebook. I also play around on other avenues of social media including Instagram and SnapChat. There are now plenty of options out there, so don't be afraid to get your feet wet if you haven't taken the plunge yet. I stated above some of the reasons I love social media and what it has done for me, but it truly is what you make of it. I have created the GOOD because I have put in the time and effort to be interactive in those mediums. Just like a plant with no water won't grow and thrive, your social media presence will wither on the vine if you don't engage with your followers. It's not just about a popularity contest, it's about making connections that can help you in your life and business. Social media is free access to the entire world, or at least to those in your market or community, and you just have to know how to work it.

Over the years I have experimented with several ways to connect with my target market on social media, in particular on FB. I have both a personal page and a business page, and at first I tried

to keep them completely separate, but soon I found that clients were becoming real life friends and also FB “friends.” They were referring their friends and family to me, but not to my business page--to me. Why? Because they trusted me and wanted that personal connection for their family and friends. I quickly learned that it was going to be to my advantage to become “friends” on FB with everyone I could because people want to do business with their “friends.” My business page is great and very active, but the response on my personal page is a thousand times greater than from my business page. People like doing business with other people, not companies. I have always been a strong believer that one of the aspects to my success is my connection between my business life and my personal life, so this approach works very well for me.

The GOOD is obvious, so don't wait! Start now to increase your business, your sales, and your customer service! Social media is here to stay and the longer you wait, the more you have to lose. If you are the type that just thinks social media is a passing fad and that you don't need it, time to open your eyes! Facebook is almost 11 years old, and realistically I get more messages by FB in a day than I get emails any more. Don't miss out on opportunities right in front of you. Jump on in; the water is just fine.

Now for the BAD. This medium has given us the opportunity to limit our face-to-face interactions. Even phone calls are fading into the past. So be sure to maintain your sanity and don't forget to nurture your real life, too. Don't get so bogged down in social media that your real life suffers or becomes nonexistent. Spend time with your family and friends, without your smartphones, too.

Finally, the Ugly: nothing you post to social media is ever private! No matter what your settings, or how private you think you are, once it's online, it

lives there forever. Yes that is very powerful, so use your powers for GOOD. Since we seem to have little choice about really wanting to participate in social media, just be aware of your presence. As a business owner, I have looked up people's profiles that have applied to work with me (most employers do this nowadays). What was I looking for? Mostly, I looked at the tone of someone's page. Are they negative? Argumentative? Who are they affiliated with? Does every pic show them taking selfies? You are what you post, so be careful about what you put out there. I have had to warn my staff about passive-aggressive posts, especially when it comes across talking about my business. As much as I thought I didn't want to be involved in those aspects of people's lives, in this day it's a must and will reflect on you and your business. So just keep in mind that your private page may affect you and your business, and also your future. If you feel like you need to vent, buy a journal.

It's up to you to decide if the GOOD, the BAD and the UGLY are worth it for you to be involved in social media. Ideally, if you focus on the GOOD, the payback will be great, so be the best virtual you that you can be. Be careful, and have fun!

Heather Beck has been trained, mentored and sought out by some of the "Best in the Business."

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. When not in Utah, she is often working alongside the "Dog Whisperer," Cesar Millan, as part of his Team of Trainers at the Dog Psychology Center in California teaching Training Cesar's Way workshops to groups of students from around the world.

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The image is a promotional graphic for PetSafe. On the left, a blue background features the PetSafe logo (a circular seal with 'SAFE PETS' and 'HAPPY OWNERS' around the text 'PetSafe') and the tagline 'protect. teach. love.' Below this, it says 'PetSafe brand is proud to be an IACP Sponsor!' and 'PetSafe.net' at the bottom. On the right, a close-up photo of a fluffy Bernese Mountain Dog puppy looking towards the camera is shown.

Want to be published? Here's your chance!

The SafeHands editor is looking for submissions relating to all aspects of professional canine care. Articles should be of interest to a diverse membership of canine pros and should range from 800 to 1,500 words. Articles are subject to editing. See page 2 for details.

PHOTO submissions welcome, too!

Critical Thinking

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

You are working with your current student, an adolescent knuckle-noggin hound mix who doesn't seem to possess the normal number of brain cells. It's been a long week, though it's only Day 5 of a 14-day B & T. This dog seems to be like Dory from the movie "Finding Nemo": zero short-term memory skills. He forgets everything and has to be re-taught at the beginning of each lesson. You are suitably frustrated, but you know you need to start making headway soon.

So, what do you focus on? With smarter, more biddable dogs, you are able to get more done in less time. But this lovable oaf has you stumped.

You feel as if you need to hurry, to do more in less time, so that you can catch up to where you need to be. But the opposite may actually be true.

In their book *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, authors Chip and Dan Heath suggest breaking tasks down, especially tasks that involve helping people change their minds, into doable chunks. They call it "shrinking the change." Author Charles DuHigg also touts the importance of small wins in his book *The Power of Habit*. "Small wins fuel transformative changes by leveraging tiny advantages into patterns that convince people that bigger achievements are possible."

What does this mean for you, in this moment, as you struggle with your hapless hound?

- Incorporate small wins into your training. Slow down, and do less. Stop sooner. End with success. Are you training this dog in 30-minute sessions? Why not train for 10 minutes? What about 5? Yeah, it might be annoying to train for 5 minutes and bench the dog for 20, but according to science, it works when it comes to behavior. Why not try it?

Take the tiny advantages the dog is giving you and build patterns with them. Shrink the change, as it were. Cut bigger steps into

smaller pieces to make it easier for you and the dog to get where you want to go.

- Marry your long-term goal with short-term critical moves. Building trust now by giving the dog easy wins will help you in the long run. Capturing the bits that work will give you something to build on. Think of it as building the foundation of the house, one board at a time.
- Tweak the environment. When a situation changes, behavior changes. So change the situation. If you don't seem to be making any progress, changing the environment can make all the difference. Switch from indoors to out, from a large room to a small one, from your regular training ground to someplace novel.

You can apply this to other areas of life, too. Any task that seems formidable can be made easier if broken into chunks. Changing the environment can change your perspective.

What if you are not trying to change dogs' behavior, but peoples' behavior? Of course the same rules apply. And here's one more that can help you to know:

People find it more motivating to be partly finished with a longer journey than at the starting gate of a shorter one. If your human students are having problems getting from point A to point B, showing them how far they've come already can help them feel better about the ultimate goal.

Here's to a new year and a new start. Enjoy the journey!

Mailey, The Pooch Professor, is Editor of SafeHands 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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