

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.

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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.

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:

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

An additional \$30 fee applies for initial processing costs of Professional and Associate members only.

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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Cover photo: "Flirt" by Nikki Sheckells

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The IACP is proud to announce that Members
Agnesa Redere and Carol Ann Salveson
have earned the DTFE certification and are now able to use this designation in their titles.

In addition, the IACP is proud to announce that Members
Cathy Dolan, Taylor Herr and Lauren Tobin
*have successfully completed their Certified Dog Trainer examination
and are now able to add the designation IACP-CDT to their names.*



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

Well done!

The Board of the IACP

Want to be published? Here's your chance!

The Canine Professional Journal 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.

PHOTO submissions are welcome, too!

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President's Letter

by Tyler Muto

Last month, the IACP Board of Directors held our bi-annual face-to-face board meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The Board of Directors (BOD) meets monthly via teleconference; however, twice a year we get together in person for 2 full days of meetings in order to plan a more in-depth strategy for the organization's future.

This year's first such meeting was incredibly productive, and I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you all some of the highlights from our discussions:

First, every meeting provides an opportunity for each director to give a report of their work as well as their future objectives. For those who may be unfamiliar, the current BOD includes Myself, Martin Deeley, Mailey McLaughlin, Melanie Benware, Jack Clark, Cyndi Graham, Amanda Nepomuceno, Nelson Hodges, Brian Bergford, and Jason Vasconi. I am incredibly proud of the hard work and contributions that each of these individuals provide.

After Martin opened up the meeting with his Executive Director report and summation of the six months, Jack Clark, our treasurer provided a detailed breakdown of our finances. The IACP is currently in a strong financial standing thanks to the decisions and directive of the BOD. Leading off the meeting with positive news helped set the tone for the BOD to look ambitiously into the future.

Cyndi followed with an update on the planning and organization of the 2018 Conference. Cyndi has been an absolute powerhouse of event planning and somehow she manages to outdo herself every year. I can tell you with confidence that this year's conference is going to hit a

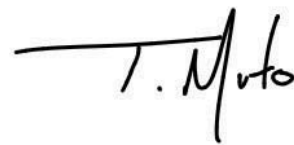
new level with a combination of an unbelievable venue and top-notch presenters.

Brian Bergford and Melanie Benware have been teaming up to continue to expand the educational portal on our website. Planning for the future, Brian is looking to provide curated, topic-based links that professionals can distribute to their clients as a resource to supplement their training. This increased public exposure will benefit all IACP Professional members, as dog owners look for IACP Membership as a sign of credibility when choosing a professional.

Perhaps most noteworthy from the weekend was a broad group discussion about expanding our international influence. This includes pursuing options to provide more direct benefits to our international members, as well as plans to grow our membership in other countries to give us the leverage to have a stronger influence over policy and legislation in those areas.

Additionally, as I mentioned in my last letter, we discussed the need for the IACP to shift our focus and take our seat among the ranks of organizations fighting for increased animal welfare in our industry. I believe very strongly that not only is this shift necessary for us to gain the level of influence needed to support our mission, but it is simply the right thing to do. Above and beyond protecting our own business, we must work to protect the animals whose well-being depends on us.

Respectfully,



Tyler Muto, President.

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Losing A Mentor Dog

by Krista Milito

With each passing day, the reality that she's gone settles in a little more. Ursa was such a huge part of my life, part of my business, part of my family, part of my pack. She was everything, and to think I only had her for 4 short years makes it seem like a dream. I adopted Ursa from a high kill intake city facility. She was hunkered down in the back of her kennel, just the kind of dog many adopters wouldn't even consider. She was a large dog, a dark brindle mastiff mix with a poorly docked tail. She was on my list of dogs to see, but once I met her I was pretty certain she was the one leaving with me. She showed no interest in cats and had the most uneventful meeting with my resident dogs. She left the building with me that day.

Ursa was stoic, strong, maternal and sweet. She quickly showed me who she was by the way she handled hectic city life. At that time, I was working out in the city with packs of dogs. I relied on her to be calmest one, and that she was. She was steadfast when faced with dogs that reacted aggressively toward her on the street. Once the facility opened, her role changed. She became my assistant evaluator, group role model, and often the first dog troubled dogs met. I could count on her to express how she felt about every dog: she would shy away, turn her back, look at me or move forward. Each motion had a distinct meaning, and she was never wrong about a dog.

Ursa's presence on a busy day at the center was even-keeled, and the dogs were drawn to her. She had a way with puppies that could bring a tear to your eye. And, if she gave a correction, it was always fair and with incredible restraint as not to hurt anyone. I think almost every aggressive, reactive, pushy or fearful dog met Ursa first. She always handled their behavior in stride, and was a great source of comfort for fearful dogs—they would stick close to her, because her balanced demeanor made them feel more secure. In fact,

one of my own dogs, Atom, was a feral dog and he is her biggest accomplishment.

In short, Ursa had my complete trust. She is the kind of dog that you can't imagine ever finding again.

In January 2017, she began showing signs of poor health. She lost some weight, her spirits seemed down, her stomach became more sensitive, and she seemed tired. I chalked it up to aging, but that didn't seem right—something else was going on. Testing showed slightly increased thyroid levels, but not enough to cause the issues that were now worrying me. It was baffling because her symptoms seemed to present themselves as merely signs of aging.

Eventually, she became increasingly hungry and thirsty. I fed her more, but her stomach couldn't handle it, and she was already excessively urinating. Then the skin infections started. Worried, I convinced myself it was due to vaccines while I searched for answers. Nothing clicked—until I stumbled upon an article about Cushing's disease. I made an appointment the next day and asked for her to be tested. I was right, and the prognosis—6 months to 2 years—devastated me. Cushing's disease is treatable, though, so we began her regimen.

I made a variety of changes in hopes of prolonging her life, especially after some great advice from many respected friends from the IACP. She responded well for a while, but despite my efforts she was deteriorating before my eyes. It was incredibly painful to watch my once strong, beautiful dog slowly fade away. Each passing day, I asked myself if I was holding on when I should really let her go. As it often happens, we had some really good days, and I vowed to make every day count for her—we took some special trips together to the beach and other places. My whole life now

revolved around Ursa's care, and I couldn't rest because she was restless, urinating constantly.

In November of 2017, a cyst on her face ruptured. She was well enough for surgery, but the biopsy came back as hemangiosarcoma—another blow. Her health deteriorated more, though it was Cushing's that ultimately took its toll—and I struggled mightily to know when the time would be right. Every day I questioned myself, but then she would have a really great day, and confuse my fragile nerves even more.

Dogs are so stoic—their struggles have to hurt, but they soldier on through their suffering as we watch helplessly through our tears. Through the support of the people around me, and my vet, I made the appointment to end her suffering—an appointment that I knew would alter my life.

My role as a canine professional has been helping people through this process: guiding owners to recognize when their dog is ill and also when to let go. It was up to me to be the strong one when

a beloved dog passes. And yet, I struggled with all the same questions. While I know these are the lessons dogs teach us, and these lessons help us help others, it doesn't make it easier. These experiences have given me the ability to be more compassionate and more patient. The lessons of a lost dog continue after they are gone.

On a cold winter day, I fed her three hamburgers, and held her tightly in my arms with her head against my head, as she snuggled in her pink fluffy blanket on her bed. Through tears, I thanked her for all she gave to me and the dogs she mentored and the lives she helped me change. I told her how much I loved her while I set her free from her pain. On January 30th, she died in my arms—a beautiful peaceful passing.

Losing your lead mentor dog is a hard pill to swallow. You never realize how much you depend on them until it's over. I remember bringing Ursa to seminars and feeling an immense sense of pride in her behavior, and when I was able to transfer



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that into my work at the Canine Enrichment Center I felt comfort that's hard to convey. Almost every night I have consultation appointments, and every night I feel lost without her. I have to fight the inner dialogue when I begin to second-guess myself. I have other dogs I can use, although none of them are nearly as stable as Ursa was.

I've realized in her absence that she was the missing piece of the puzzle for me. I had a training career well before I adopted Ursa, but once she came into the picture, my life became easier without recognizing it. I knew her so well; I could base a lot of my assessments on how she behaved. So now, here I am, having to rely on myself for these assessments. I suppose it's time to rebuild my confidence in what I know in my core. Dogs have always been my passion. I never second-guessed myself before and while that may have been due to being prematurely confident in my abilities, I certainly am analyzing my every move and decision. Trusting your gut instincts is so much harder than I remember.

In the end, I know how lucky I was to find a dog like Ursa. I am forever thankful that I was able to make an assessment on her on my own. I will eventually move on when I am ready, but for now I try to find ways to honor her because she gave so much and asked so little in return. I will continue to help dogs and people in her honor and one day, when the time is right, I will find another dog to carry on her legacy.

Krista Milito began her career working with shelter dogs in 1998. Through her shelter work, she made a name for herself as a resource for dogs with challenging behaviors such as fear and aggression. In 2005, she started The Philly Pack, in Center City Philadelphia. The Philly Pack specializes in working with challenging dogs, but Krista's true passion in the dog world is working with fearful dogs. In 2015, The Philly Pack opened their Canine Enrichment Center. The center is a training/day care facility and a host for seminars to help other trainers continue their education.

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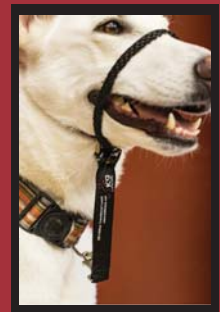
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Shadow Program Information

Working with dogs and their owners can be a very rewarding career. Heather Beck is focused on teaching how to work with dogs with behavioral issues. You will watch Heather throughout her daily activities, including consultations with clients and their dogs, working with dogs at K9 Lifeline for Board and Train, and working with their own pack of dogs. You will also spend a lot of hands on time with dogs learning how to work with problem dogs in a safe, but effective manner.

Facts and Information About Service Dogs, Pt 4

by IACP Service Dog Committee

SDIT SKILLS PRIOR TO PUBLIC ACCESS TRAINING

In this article, we want to discuss basic skills a service dog in training should have before going into public access training. Public Access is defined in this article as going into areas open to the general public but not to pet dogs. The IACP SD Committee has developed and included a checklist (found on the following page) to help trainers decide if their dogs are ready for public access training. The Committee thanks IACP SD Committee member Cindy Stanford for the baseline checklist.

It is important to know federal and state regulations regarding access for persons with disabilities with service dogs and state laws regarding access for individuals with service dogs in training (SDIT). The United States federal regulations and Canada's regulations for access will be discussed at the 2018 IACP conference by SD committee members Morgance Ellis and Bill Grimmer. Additionally, Kristi Smith will be introducing the IACP Public Access Test (PAT), which measures the ability of a handler and SD or SDIT team to complete skills in various public access areas.

Preparation for the public access outings should be done in dog-friendly locations, starting in your home, then yard and neighborhood, then places such as parks, pet stores, some hardware stores, and dog-appropriate gatherings.

Be careful not to overwhelm your dog. Acclimate him gradually, try and keep him below his excitement threshold. Shopping at dog-friendly stores should be training trips at first; don't shop and train. Be sure time out is appropriate for dog's age and response to public outings.

Keep commands low-key, and don't carry on a constant conversation with your dog--remember that a service dog should be unobtrusive. The best compliment a service dog handler can get is when someone says "I didn't even know a dog was here!"

If your dog doesn't enjoy his outings, he will come to dread going out in public. Always make a training trip fun and engaging for the dog!

We hope to see you at the 2018 IACP Conference in St. Petersburg!

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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

For more information: <http://www.canineprofessionals.com/service-dogs>

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.

Skills Checklist for SDIT Before Doing Public Access	YES	NO
I. Handler and Dog are Capable of Passing the AKC CGC test		
Item 1: Greeting a Friendly Stranger		
Item 2: Sit (Stand) Politely for Petting		
Item 3: Appearance and Grooming		
Item 4: Out for a walk (Loose Leash Walk)		
Item 5: Walking Through a Crowd		
Item 6: Sit and Down on Command/Stay in Place		
Item 7: Coming When Called (30 ft)		
Item 8: Reaction to Another Dog		
Item 9: Reaction to Distractions		
Item 10: Separation for Handler is Not Necessary	N/A	N/A
II. Other Skills		
1. Housebroken		
2. Has been introduced to the general public in appropriate, dog-friendly situations		
3. Able to ride comfortably and safely in vehicle		
4. Possesses a temperament able to deal with people and other animals in public settings		
5. Has been evaluated by veterinarian for proper body structure to walk on different surfaces and perform trained tasks as needed for current or potential handler with disability		
6. The dog has been trained not to seek attention from other people or animals		
III. Dog is Clean and Healthy		
1. Well-groomed		
2. Nails are proper length		
3. Vaccinations & Titers are completed as per veterinarian		
IV. Equipment is Appropriate and Clean		
1. Age appropriate for the dog		
2. Has been properly introduced before public access		
3. Is Clean		
4. Is sized appropriately		

PETT: Working with Trainers and Consumers to Promote Safe, Effective E-Collar Use

1. What is PETT?

PETT is the Partnership for Electronic Training Technology, a group formed by five of the most respected names in the pet training industry. Those members are Dogtra, DogWatch, D.T. Systems, Garmin, and Radio Systems. Our mission is to educate consumers and advocate for the safe use of modern electronic training collars, as well as to ensure that our products offered by our members are manufactured to the highest standards.

2. How does PETT help canine professionals?

First and foremost, we make sure that professional trainers have equipment that is safe, reliable and effective. We also monitor the legislative and regulatory landscape, offering support to combat anti-static collar initiatives.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we're just beginning to open a dialogue with the IACP and its members. Professional dog trainers are the people who use our equipment every day – and they can certainly be great advocates for our products and humane e-collar training methods. PETT wants to help organize our industry so that we can more effectively communicate the benefits of using static to assist in training a dog.

3. How does PETT help pet owners?

PETT is committed to consumer education. Our goal is to provide reliable information that will help people select electronic training systems that are safe, effective and meet their specific training needs. Once training products are acquired, PETT members are committed to educating consumers on how to use the tools efficiently and humanely. Our website, www.pettpartnership.com, offers educational materials about electronic training collars and containment systems, and tips on how to use them safely and effectively.

We also encourage pet owners to talk to professional trainers. Perhaps there's a way to work with the IACP to refer pet owners to the IACP website to search for an approved trainer in their area.

4. Are you involved in legislative efforts in any way? There seem to be more and more groups popping up that want to use the courts to ban electronics. Can you help fight them?

We can and do help combat these anti e-collar initiatives, but there's more we can do. PETT can offer education on what electronic training collars do and how they operate, but we believe the most effective advocates for e-collar training are the professional trainers who use them.

We are interested in identifying IACP trainers around the country that are comfortable in helping us speak to lawmakers and the media to make sure the debate over electronic training collars is balanced and informed.

In turn, PETT can help with message development, issues monitoring, and organizational and logistical support.

5. Are there any scientific studies being proposed or implemented that use modern e-collars? I feel like the science will "prove" that electronics are safe and reliable and humane, but until there are peer-reviewed studies, some people will always oppose.

We agree that an unbiased, peer-reviewed study would conclude that e-collars are safe and effective. We have investigated commissioning such a study, and we've learned that it is a very expensive and time-consuming endeavor. And at the end of the day, while such a study would be very valuable to many pet owners and trainers, we are not convinced it would silence the small but very vocal anti-static crusaders.

It's important to note that the antis will often cite studies that suggest that modern e-collar technology is somehow harmful to dogs. But when pressed to show those studies, they either can't, or the studies they do present are flawed and not peer reviewed.

Until we can present a peer reviewed study, we think the best way to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of electronic training is to show people the happy, well-mannered dogs who have been trained using these devices.

That said, a number of scientific studies have examined the use of electronic pet training systems. In June 2012, a review of the historic studies conducted by the Companion Animal Welfare Council (CAWC) concluded that there was insufficient scientific evidence to indicate any damaging effects of electronic collars on the welfare of dogs. Most recently, the Department of Environment,

Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in the United Kingdom commissioned two studies designed to assess the effect of pet training aids, specifically remote static pulse systems on the welfare of domestic dogs. The resulting report was released in June, 2013.

Defra concluded that the research shows no evidence that electronic training collars cause long-term harm to the welfare of dogs when used appropriately.

6. Where can we go to get more information about your organization and how we might support it?

Our website is www.pettpartnership.com, and you can email us at info@pettpartnership.com. We would love to hear from IACP members and hear their thoughts on how our organizations can work together.

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The DOG-scale Scoring System

by Guy Kantak

Over the past 2 years, I have been developing what I call the “DOG-scale.” I developed the concept after years in EMS, where various “scales” are used to help responders focus on specific assessment criteria. In the same way, I have been using this scale for helping me track clients and their dogs, and to help me focus on each of their strengths and weaknesses.

The scale has 3 assessment components, each graded from 1-5. These grades are mostly subjective, and could vary from trainer to trainer. I find them fairly helpful in sorting out where I need to spend more time and effort, to push favorable outcomes. A “1” is the worst score for any individual component, and “5” the best. Grading could change as you work with a dog or owner. But in my experience, good initial assessments will generally remain stable.

D is for the “DOG”:

- 1 = dog I would not own, dangerous, aggressive.
- 2 = significant behavioral issue(s), challenging or very difficult.
- 3 = typical dog that can learn and improve with average work.
- 4 = pleasant, likes working with humans, learns easily.
- 5 = dog I would like to own, not sure why owners called.

O is for “OWNER(S)”.

- 1 = evasive, problematic, dishonest.
- 2 = poor match for dog, poorly compliant.
- 3 = requires average time, help, instruction.
- 4 = pleasant, follows instruction well, works assignments.
- 5 = highly skilled, teaching me some things.

G is for “GOALS”.

- 1 = goals are not realistic for their dog (or any dog).
- 2 = goals will require intense and extended work.
- 3 = typical goals and required work.
- 4 = flexible or simple goals.
- 5 = why am I here – your dog is great!

If you read through these lists, you should be realizing a “9” would be your typical dog and client. Those with scoring over 11 are the clients and dogs that are exceptionally fun and/or easy. Anything under 5 is something that is going to be extremely difficult and require some serious work – usually with questionable results. And while an overall ranking may fall around a 7-8, if I grade ANY of the assessment components a 1, I typically will decline working with the dog or owner(s).

Let me provide some examples.

EXAMPLE A.) Call from an owner with a 1-year-old male, large breed dog, that has shown increasing aggression toward the owner’s 12-year-old son. This began 3 months prior with growling, and most recently involved the dog “going after the child.” Owner reports having to drag the dog away from his son with dog barking and lunging. When released, the dog tries to go after the child again. The owner thinks maybe the dog could use some training.

DOGscI: 1+1+2=4 (based solely on a telephone interview)

The dog gets a 1 for the intensity of its aggression toward a child in the family (doesn’t matter to me at this level how they got there). The owners get a 1 for not recognizing the severity of this issue. Goals are “maybe” a 2 because of the work that

would be required with dog and owners. The “1’s” here are huge red flags, and I would recommend the dog be taken out of the home immediately.

EXAMPLE B.) Family has a 9-month-old, hyperactive Goldendoodle. Dog is rough with kids in the home (jumping, mouthing, etc.), jumps on counters, is a destructive chewer, and “doesn’t listen.” Owners want the dog to be calmer and better behaved. Working with the dog at a visit finds him responsive to balanced training, and owners that are attentive and follow instruction well.

DOGscI: 3+3+3=9

The DOG gets a 3 as a typical adolescent needing some basic work. OWNERS get a 3 for following instructions well. GOALS are a 3, being reasonable, typical, and ones that should be accomplished with average work.

EXAMPLE C) Meeting with owners who have a 15 month old GSD X. The owners have had well-behaved dogs their entire life, and now want help getting this dog off-leash. They elect to use an e-collar toward those goals. The dog responds well and learns quickly, and the owners seem to pick up on proper use of device easily.



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DOGsc1: 4+4+4=12

What can I say? The dog is easy (4), the owners are experienced, and they're committed to the dog's training (which they do well - 4). They have very attainable goals (4). I wish all clients were like this.

If you look at these very generic examples, I hope you might be thinking of some ways to use this grading scale productively. Some ways I have found this helpful include the following:

I generally decline working calls where one or more of the grading factors suggest a "1," based on my initial phone interview. These are generally seriously aggressive dogs, owners seeming "off," or owners having wildly unreasonable goals (wanting a training session and service dog certification).

Noting a client's DOGscale on my calendar allows a very easy way to remember past clients who may call or want a follow up visit at a later date. A 5-second search and I can see very quickly rough

information on how they did, as well as remember their strengths and weaknesses.

I also use this as a prognostic tool, suggesting which clients and dogs may require more work, as well as what areas were weak and may require more support and follow-up. More often than not, this tool is fairly accurate. Thoughtful consideration of these scores can also help you better manage a client's expectations (e.g., "your dog's not really wired to be a therapy dog"), and overall satisfaction with your services.

I know not everyone is concerned with grades or numbers, and neither am I. But I have found this simple system a very easy tool for quick reference and tracking of clients and their dogs.

Guy Kantak is a Certified Professional Trainer, National K9 grad, IACP Pro member and owner-operator of "The K9 Guy." He provides one-on-one visits in home for obedience, behavior modification, off-leash training, confidence building, puppy consultations, and owner education throughout the Central Ohio area. Find out more at www.theK9guy.com

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The IACP Education Portal

by Brian Bergford

Serving Your Clients and Maximizing Your Efficiency

Have you ever been in a training appointment, or on the phone with a prospective client, and they ask you a question about a basic topic like potty training, or how to use/size an E-Z Walk Harness, or how to start crate training? I get this kind of stuff all the time. Sometimes I have the time to walk the person through it, but other times, I'd rather just refer them to a video or article that answers their question.

If it's a call from a prospective client, I like spending a little time walking them through things to build a relationship. I have no interest, however, in spending each day answering every dog training question that's ever crossed their mind. So how do I bridge the gap? I tell them how to find the additional information on the **IACP Education Portal** on the canineprofessionals.com site, or I email them a link to the exact resource(s) they need. The result? They're happy because I provided them with relevant content, and I'm happy because I saved myself a boatload of time and energy.

When working one-on-one with training clients, I want to make the best use of our time together. If they ask off-topic questions during a session, I often direct them to the **IACP Public Education Portal**. Then, later on, they can read an article on – or watch a video about – their area of interest and get great information while still allowing us to stay on topic during the training session itself. It's the best of both worlds.

Inside the Members Only Portal at the top of the contents page, we've posted a document you can save and/or print off called the **Public Education Portal Reference Guide**. It's a shortcut to the topics within the public side of the portal, so you can quickly identify resources of interest and direct your clients to the right place. So the next time

a client stops you just as you're walking out the door to your next appointment with an "Oh yeah, one more thing: What do I do if my dog is scared of the car?" you know exactly how to get them the information they need. Boom. Two birds, one stone: Your client gets their question answered, and you stay on schedule and get to your next appointment on time. Mic drop. You are the best trainer in the world. Okay, so that last statement might be a slight exaggeration, but if you're also taking advantage of the Members Only side of the Portal and educating yourself, you're growing and becoming an even better trainer, whether you're brand new to the profession or you've been in the game for 30+ years.

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The Definition of Success

by Tracy Dyer Atkins

Who are you? Or rather, who would you like to be? Do you desire to be “successful” as a dog trainer? Do you find yourself daydreaming about having it all (e.g., an indoor facility, numerous clients, qualified employees and cash flowing in quickly)?

This is what you might imagine:

You pull up to your 8,000-square-foot indoor facility with its eye-catching, welcoming façade. Inside the climate-controlled entry, you observe a friendly, knowledgeable staff assisting clients and their dogs to select the appropriate equipment, toys and foods from the artful display of merchandise hanging from shiplap displays designed by Joanna Gaines. You move past the bright retail area past the safety double doors into the training portion of the building. On the left are two bright colored puppy training rooms; to the right there are two regulation-size obedience rings, which can be converted in the daytime into daycare areas. You look through the obedience training / daycare area to an expansive, lush green pet turf outside play area, which is complete with bone-shaped in-ground pool. The kennels are located past the agility ring and two-acre large field socialization pasture.

While not everyone’s cup of tea, the above scenario is a dream for many dog trainers. I was one of them.

I started training other people’s dogs in 1988. While working at a shelter where I was able to attain special permission to take dogs home to train in the hopes of increasing adoption rates in the early 1990’s, I was approved to be the first Puppy Walker (raiser) in my area for a guide dog training school. I was honored and humbled to train and apprentice under a NADOI-endorsed instructor, who also happened to be a registered veterinary technician and a reputable breeder.

I learned about guide dogs around the world, and service dogs in the USA. I was a moderator on AOL’s (yes, AOL--don’t laugh) Service Dog Forum. It was great! I shared a lot and took notes on others’ experiences with great attention to detail.

Eventually, through apprenticing and full-time volunteering with the guide dog training school, I became confident enough to create my own business. I lived on a little acreage, in a rural area. I charged \$15 per hour for private lessons at my home, and I thought I was RICH when I had five lessons per week! This was back in the day when my town had just removed party lines, when just five years prior, the operator would dial calls for me.

I was eager to learn more, but it turns out, seminars were expensive. Fifteen dollars per hour wasn’t going to cut it if I wanted to continue to learn from other professionals. I took a job as a receptionist at a church (I don’t know what I was thinking because that doesn’t pay much either). But I needed funding if I was going to grow and become diverse in my chosen field of dog training. I kept the receptionist job for years. It allowed me to attend as many seminars I wanted. I also bought every book I could find, and watched tons of videos on training, development, and behavior (yes—VHS tapes—don’t judge me). I took only training jobs I knew I could resolve, and business came to me by word of mouth, local veterinary referral and my website.

I learned from colleagues about AKC obedience, sheep herding, agility, service dogs, retrieving, tracking, flyball, lure coursing, freestyle and Schutzhund.

In 1997 I took my first aggression case. It was successful, so I carefully, selectively took more aggression cases. I got fairly good at it, and

then I got better. I finally got so good at training and resolving just about everything, I left my receptionist job. At that time, my clients consisted of low-to-average income households. A favorite client of mine had a missing front tooth, and I had to walk over an open floor in her mobile home to get to her kitchen, but she loved her dog and she worked every day until her border collie was one of the most happy, responsive, well-mannered dogs I've ever had the pleasure of training.

In 1999, I had built my business enough to be able to start dreaming big. I created a business plan which would allow me to have a nearly 5000-square-foot indoor facility in town. (Keep in mind, this was really just after box stores started to have dog training and there weren't nearly as many stores as there are now.) I thought I would finally be "somebody" amongst my colleagues. I believed the building would make me even more important, respected, and successful amongst those whose professional opinions I valued most – the "old, crotchety dog training ladies." (I say that with affection because those ladies--and some men--were amongst the people I wanted to learn from, but they were set in their ways, and weren't interested in what I knew.)

Quickly after opening my indoor training and daycare facility, I found myself with ALL nine veterinary clinics in the 55,000 person town referring to my business almost exclusively. The building allowed me to offer 10-14 classes per week (12-14 dogs/puppies per class); 20-30 daycare dogs per day (I kept the numbers small because I wanted quality control with a smaller staff); 10 in-home private training sessions per week; and about 10 dogs per day boarding at my home. I had seven amazing employees, most of whom I trained myself. I called myself many things, including an "animal behavior specialist."

I was (and I still am) a very eclectic trainer. I used clickers, head collars, choke chains, prong collars, bark collars, shaker cans, food, toys, etc. But, at that time I was averse to using remote trainers because the country trainers around me who used them didn't use them in a way I felt was humane or reasonable. Weirdly, I felt like

an outsider in both IACP and in another large professional organization. I wasn't "all positive," but I wasn't a "Neanderthal" either. I spent nearly a decade learning different methods, tools and techniques from some of the best in their areas of expertise. I even learned the amazing E-Touch Technique from Martin Deeley and became an ardent believer in the use of remote trainers to work with many dogs, in particular rehabilitating

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extremely fearful dogs I had been previously unable to help with all my other techniques.

Despite all of my knowledge and expertise, I really didn't feel valued as someone who fit into either group. But my business clients and veterinarians were thriving and pleased as punch with the services I provided. That was great and my dreams for having more, "bigger and better" facilities grew!

My existing facility was large, bright, well organized, cheery and clean. I had about 50% veterinary referral; 40% client to client referral (In one neighborhood I had almost one client on every street) and 10% web search referral. In the early 2000's, my business thrust itself past the six figure income mark.

I had reached it! Finally, I was "somebody," at least in my world—and I "only" had to work 80+ hours a week. By necessity, I gave up having a personal connection to my clients and became an administrator. As I buckled down to meet

the growing need, I was exhausted, cranky and completely freaked out that I could lose it if I lightened the reins at all. The fun and excitement was gone, and I failed to have a good plan for what to do when the business got so big and I didn't have time (or energy) to correct or redirect it.

Back in that day, the only way to be "somebody" in the dog training world was to write a book, and then, have another trainer (likely one who had previously written a book) to endorse your book. This allowed the author to become "known," which allowed them to be presenters of seminars. (Some trainers offered apprenticeships, but not as many contemporary trainers who have cleverly created "shadowing.") I didn't write a book. I had no interest in writing a book either. Therefore, I was still a "nobody" amongst my colleagues.

Late in 2001, I suffered a miscarriage. Numb, I had to stop everything and grieve. It was the first time in a long time that I had to think. The next



The advertisement features a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a brown leather jacket and a dark scarf, walking a medium-sized dog on a leash through a field of tall, golden grass. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees. In the upper right corner, the DairyDell Canine logo is displayed, featuring a stylized dog head above the text "dairydell CANINE". Below the logo, the text "SPECIALIZING IN" is written in a small, sans-serif font. The main title "DOG TRAINING FOR WOMEN" is prominently displayed in a large, serif font, with "DOG" and "TRAINING" in black and "FOR WOMEN" in red. To the left of the title, a gold seal with a scalloped edge contains the text "PROUD IACP GOLD SPONSOR". Below the title, the text "FOR MORE INFORMATION:" is written in a small, sans-serif font. Underneath this, the contact information is provided: "TELEPHONE: (707) 762-6111" and "ONLINE AT: DAIRYDELL.COM". At the bottom of the advertisement, the address "DAIRYDELL Doggie Dude Ranch & Training Center PO 751378, Petaluma, CA 94975" is listed.

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year, I became pregnant with my son, and I knew my priorities had to change in order for me to have what I wanted in life. My husband and I discussed the financial aspects of my impending cutback, and we were able to compromise on my resuming training on my home property.

I gave up my very successful facility. With no fanfare, I just closed it. I changed my personal lifestyle to accommodate my income decrease. I simplified. I taught private lessons, small group classes and limited board-and-train services. Veterinarians still referred to me, but I had to allow other, newer training businesses in the area take some of the load. My workload decreased.

Here is what I discovered: I didn't need to have ANY accolades from my peers to be me. In fact, having all the "stuff" (the building; the loads of classes; the employees; the exclusive veterinary referrals) that many new and emerging trainers may think will give them success may just not be necessary. I quickly started making more money in my pocket, because I had virtually no overhead.

I realized I didn't care that I wasn't "somebody" amongst my peers--I decided I really didn't need to "be" anything to anyone. I began to go to annual conferences and seminars and just be me. I enjoy being kind and helpful if needed. I like to fly under the radar. I love to watch my other friends see old friends and see the warmth which ensues. It's delightful! I also love to watch other trainers with their dogs, and I enjoy other people's joy.

I know that, though I know a lot, I'll never know it all. I also understand that it is possible for me to learn something tremendous from someone who may have only been training a year. I remain a learning sponge because while I know a lot, I have humility. I want to listen more than I talk. I want to know what you know, even if I don't agree with you.

I used to think having a place or a title would make me important, but as I am older and wiser I realize it's my learning and experience diversity that makes me important – if to no one else – to me. If your dream is to be the biggest and best and have

the material parts that go along with it—go for it! My story is not about changing your dreams.

But just know that success has many definitions, and there is only a certain amount of time in each day. Make sure you know what is truly valuable to you.

Tracy Dyer Atkins is the owner of Complete Canine Training in The Woodlands, TX. You will find her smiling face at most IACP conferences, but she can also be found by emailing tracy@yespup.com.

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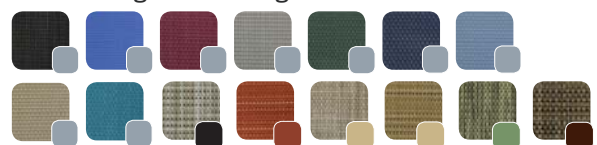
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Critical Thinking

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

“Failing is not the worst thing in the world; quitting is.”

~Edwin Louis Cole

We are conditioned, nearly from birth, to never give up. Quitters are chastised, vilified, and shamed in our culture, and it's not difficult to see why. While we hear plenty of stories about winners, we don't read many stories about the great quitters of history. Everyone knows that quitting is antithetical to accomplishing our goals.

Or is it? Is it ever a good idea to quit endeavors (beyond quitting smoking, sugar, or other things that aren't good for you)? Do successful people ever quit? The research says, surprisingly, yes.

In Tracy Dyer Atkins' article on page 19 of this issue, she writes about realizing that success didn't have to mean what she originally thought, and that by scaling back, she actually made a better life for herself—the life she truly wanted.

STRATEGIC QUITTING

In his new book *Barking Up the Wrong Tree*, author and blogger Eric Barker writes about a concept known as strategic quitting. “Once you've found something you're passionate about, quitting secondary things can be an advantage, because it frees up time to do that number-one thing. Whenever you wish you had more time, more money, etc., strategic quitting is the answer...and if you are very busy, it's the *only* answer.”

Think about it. There are only 168 hours in every week. Everyone gets the same amount of hours. How we spend all 168 may not be entirely up to us, as we have bills to pay and mouths to feed, but we do have more say in the matter than we think. And often, we choose poorly. We choose activities that are passive, instead of motivational. Why? Well, when you are always feeling rushed

and tired, you want downtime to be easy—and passive leisure is certainly easy.

Strategic quitting is simply figuring out which activities are superfluous to meeting our goals, and ditching them. Quitting translates to freeing up time. And humans are really bad at estimating how much time they will have “in the future” to get things done.

Despite what the culture tells you, no one can really do everything. This is not failure—it's reality. Being able to realize, after a certain amount of time spent on something, that it's not going to work for you isn't giving up. It's actually smart, according to research. One of the foremost scientists on persistence, Angela Duckworth, says, “Moving on from dead-end pursuits is essential to the discovery of more promising paths.”

Ever hear the phrase that “no one ever says on their deathbed that they wish they'd spent more time at work”? Every hour you choose to work is one fewer hour spent with family or friends. Every hour spent scrolling social media is one fewer hour spent exercising, enjoying nature, or reading an actual book. Every hour we spend doing things that do not enrich us, or move the needle in the direction we say we want to go, is an hour we will never get back to be with our spouses, romantic partners, children, pets, or best friends.

“You value that to which you attend.”

WHAT ABOUT HOBBIES?

Now, there is something to be said for taking a breather, and relaxing. Taking time away from our main “needle-moving” activities is actually an important part of realizing our goals. Like dogs who are crated for an hour or two post-training, we need time to gestate, to rest, to explore other parts of ourselves, to connect with others just for connection's sake, and to have some fun.

Many successful people had, or have, at least one consuming hobby, and it often has nothing to do with their profession. Benjamin Franklin and Charles Darwin both had multiple hobbies. Actress Susan Sarandon loves ping-pong so much that she started clubs to promote it, billionaire Richard Branson enjoys kitesurfing, former Twitter CEO Dick Costolo makes honey, soccer star David Beckham likes to fence, Mark Twain loved fashion and was granted a patent for suspenders in 1871, and former game show host Bob Barker trained in karate under none other than Chuck Norris.

Having hobbies and activities that are not part of our normal job duties or career goals allows us to be more well-rounded, and can even help us reach our goals faster. Ever had an insight about your work while you were riding bikes with your kid, taking a walk with your spouse or alone, hiking a trail, playing tennis, doing a crossword, or jogging? When we step away from

our needle-moving core activities, we can have insights that simply might not come to us unless we are taking a break. Breaks are good, and even occasional breaks involving passive leisure like binge-watching TV can help us disengage, turn off our brains, and end up seeing things differently.

Spoiler alert: there will not be more time in the future. There will be the same amount of time you have now: 24 hours in a day; 168 hours in a week. It's not too late to quit what isn't working and focus on what will get you where you truly want to go.

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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