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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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PHOTO submissions are welcome, too!

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President's Letter

by Melanie Benware

You do not have to be in the industry long to quickly realize how divided the training world can be and just how “ugly” people can get with one another. When I stepped into the training world 20 years ago, the familiar saying “The only thing two trainers will agree on is what the third is doing wrong” was quite popular. You laugh about it at first until you realize just how true it can be. In my opinion, it is one thing for us to call out dog abuse, and it is another to criticize or pick apart another trainer’s methods simply because they are not 100% in alignment with your own.

The IACP was founded with open mindedness as a goal. At the end of the day, if the dog understands what we were trying to convey AND the dog is happy doing it, the training is successful. This organization has spent over 20 years fighting for the rights of our members and our clients to use tools and methods in a manner that creates happy and balanced dogs. It shakes me to my core when I see trainers squabbling about who’s method is the best, rather than promoting the multiple ways to safely, effectively, and humanely solve the same problem. The IACP, especially our Legislative Committee, is working overtime fighting legislation that could change the landscape of training, to the detriment of the dogs we love. This infighting is adding fuel to a fire that is already difficult to contain. We need to check our egos at the door and work together, promoting the wonderful advantages and possibilities our different training methods offer rather than spending time attacking others.

This is an industry full of passionate people and it can be hard to remember that we were founded on being inclusive. We have come this far because we accept that not all trainers are going to train the

same, that we do not all have to use the same tools. Our Code of Conduct allows for flexibility in each member’s training style and the tools they choose to use, as long as they are not working to get the tools they do not use banned. By us allowing this flexibility, we have the opportunity to be a stronger, more well-rounded organization made up of canine professionals from all walks of life. This provides our members exposure to different points of view and thoughts regarding how to handle different training situations.

I was listening to an episode of *The Canine Paradigm* the other day and their guest was not a dog trainer; she was a dog owner who had adopted a dog that proved to be more difficult than she anticipated. She discussed how overwhelming it was to try to navigate the training realm on the internet and how confusing it seemed at times. We, as professionals, are causing that problem! We are making it harder for well-meaning pet owners to find the help they need to live a better life with their dogs.

When did it become a “my way or the highway” world? Why are we giving more ammo to the folks that would like to strip us of our options in training? Why are we creating a “mess” for pet owners to sort through when trying to learn about training for their pets?

As an industry we can and should do better! If you are a “leader” in the industry that others look to for guidance, lead by example—not just in the training methods you use and promote, but in the way we treat and respect one another. The training world would be a better place if we interacted with our human counterparts with the same compassion and patience we show their dogs. The IACP



will continue to work on behalf of canine professionals and owners who are working hard to let dogs live their best lives.

Part of this work requires us to grow and adapt as the industry changes too. We need to market the organization and its members to show our strengths, diversity, knowledge and compassion. Part of this image change is the launch of our new website, allowing our members to have advanced profiles to highlight their skills. It will also come with a push for us to get our clients to join at the Supporting Member level, acknowledging that without the public's support, we are fighting a losing battle. Another area is using our social media platforms to share content from our members doing amazing things with a wide variety of tools. Everyday we ask dogs to adjust and make changes to live a happier life; as an organization, we must do the same if we are going to thrive.

I know this can be a difficult topic to discuss and it is easy to stay in a negative mindset about it. But there is hope, and a better way forward. We can

start by **encouraging and promoting the good work our colleagues are doing.** Social media makes it so easy to jump on the bandwagon and criticize others; instead, **learn to walk away from the negative while uplifting those showing good, compassionate, honest work.** We need to rejoice with those improving the industry rather than shouting at those with whom we disagree. As the IACP has entered its third decade, it is always nice to look back at our beginnings, see how far we have come, and then shift our gaze to the future. We cannot create this shift alone; we will be calling on our members to participate. Change is not easy, but we are canine professionals—our business is encouraging change for the better! Let us make our third decade the best yet!

Respectfully,

Melanie Benware

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Making the Complex Seem Simple

by Chad Mackin

Today, I started a video for a client that was supposed to be a pretty straightforward lesson. My goal was to teach the client the basic process for fading a food lure to a hand signal, and eventually to a verbal-only response.

Things did not go as planned.

I picked the swing-to-heel behavior as the starting point, because the dog was more or less auto-sitting so that wouldn't make a good demo, and down wasn't clean enough yet, so swing it was.

Things started well. I mimicked the same motion as the lure, with empty hands, and the dog followed as expected. Then, as I began to try to minimize the hand motion, things started to fall apart. The dog looked confused. Not the kind of confused because a slight variation is creating uncertainty, but more like, he didn't have any idea what I was asking for. He started trying different behaviors. He seemed to be trying to figure out what I wanted. This was not good.

The dog was confused and I had somehow created that confusion.

My standard response when a command blows up that way, is to start over. "Teach it again," as Dick Russell used to say. So I started to teach it again, and that's when I noticed, the issue was my leg. When I teach the swing, the motion includes moving my left leg back a bit to help the dog see the path more clearly. I begin to minimize the leg movement pretty early, and I don't think I've run into this problem before. That's why I didn't think to look for it. But it was there clear as day. If I moved my hands and left leg a little, he did it fine. If I moved my hand a lot but not my leg, he would haltingly follow. If I just moved my hand a little, he was lost.

So as I stood there, thinking about the prospect of starting over, a thought struck me.

The problem was that the leg is a big movement. The dog had "cheated" by focusing on the biggest, most obvious movement instead of the first part of the sequence. The big movement was more obvious than the first movement so he focused on that one. He didn't know it was a cheat. He was doing what came easiest for him. So, what if I used that to my advantage? I figured if the leg movement was the most important thing to him, I could make the change in leg movement mean something different.

I told him "Swing," and did the full movement leg and all. When he found the position I gave him one piece of kibble. Then I set the situation up again, and moved only the hand but in the full movement. He followed, but not as confidently. This time when he found the position, I gave him a small handful of kibble. He got a jackpot.

The message I wanted to send was, "It's better for you if I don't move the leg."

And it worked.

After a few reps, he started following the hand instead of the leg. By the end of the session, he was moving into position in response to only a slight movement of my hand.

It was a nice solution. I was happy with it.

While I would like to say that the rest of my day was full of easier dogs, that's not true. By the luck of the draw (or perhaps I was off today) every dog I worked provided me with its own unique challenges. And while they all did great, every dog I worked with had a challenge of one sort or another to address. There were no easy dogs today. And they weren't simple, either. Which brings me to my point.

I didn't describe my struggle with swing to wow you with my problem solving skills. The fact is, if I hadn't missed something very early on in the

process, there would have been no need for such skills. The lesson would have gone as expected and there's nothing all that interesting about that. Certainly it wouldn't be a story worth telling. The reason I sat down to write this is to address the oft quoted sentiment "Dog training is simple, but not easy." That's just not true. It's really not.

Some trainers are very intuitive, and to them, it seems simple. Others like myself never had a natural knack, but stuck with it, found good mentors, and eventually got to the point where on a good day, it seems simple. But despite what advertisers believe, perception is not reality. There is nothing simple about what we do.

Sometimes when I hear that phrase, I wonder if everyone else is using a different definition of "simple," but all the definitions I find refer to something that is uncomplicated and easily understood.

Weight loss is simple but not easy: Eat less, exercise more. Simple, but not easy.

Wanna quit smoking? Stop lighting cigarettes. Simple, but not easy.

There are lots of things that fit that description. But dog training is not one of them.

If you're a trainer, I'm betting you came up with your own solution to the problem I created as you read my description of it. I bet it was different from mine, and it probably would have worked. You are a professional, after all. And if it didn't, you probably would be able to discern from the way it didn't work where you went wrong and

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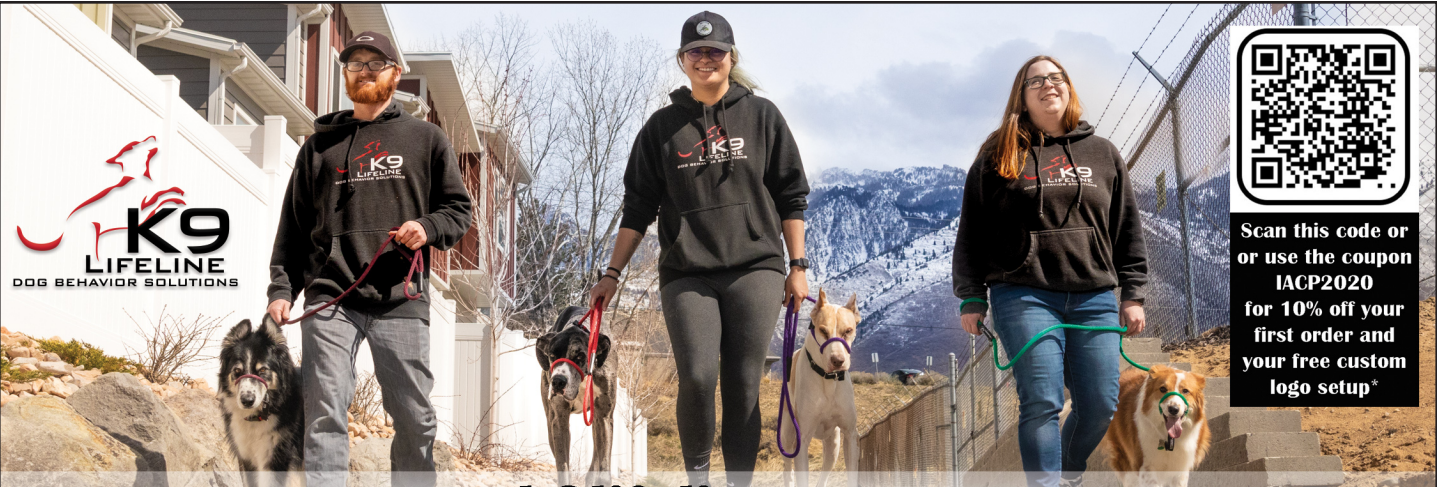
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adjust accordingly. And all of that would probably feel simple, because it seemed pretty obvious to you. I believe it seemed obvious to you because you've dedicated time and energy to being good at this strange passion. The truly masterful make it look easy. But go back and remember when it wasn't easy. Go back and remember the last time you tried to learn an entirely new way to train, or integrate a new idea into your own system seamlessly. Or that moment that happens when reading about dog training where someone says something about a skill you've been teaching for years that makes you see it in a completely different light. None of that suggests simplicity.

What we do, when it's done well, is beautiful, elegant and often makes us look like wizards to our clients. It can be inspiring and breathtaking. And it should look both simple and easy. That's the true sign of mastery. But just sit down and try to write on a single piece of paper, everything you know about teaching your favorite command. Write so that someone who has no experience with dogs or dog training could with no more input

from you or any other sources, and with a little practice, train 100 random dogs with all the types of behavior problems you're likely to encounter as a dog trainer in even twice the time it would take you. If it defies a simple explanation, it's not simple.

Simple platitudes in dog training are abundant, but they serve better as reminders and signposts for the initiated than as instructions for the work.

If you're good at this, it's because you worked hard to get there. You understand things that most people don't. You have internalized a complex process until it feels simple to you. But if, like me, you are still discovering new things after decades of daily work, the word "simple" doesn't really apply.

Chad Mackin is a trainer, teacher, seminar presenter, podcaster, mentor, and muse to many. Founder of Pack to Basics, he is always seeking ways to provide clarity to dogs and people. He is also past President of IACP and knows a choke hold. It is possible that he is 7 feet tall, though no one has ever asked. Look for him on Facebook.

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History of Therapy Dogs

by Valerie Ann Erwin

The author thanks Tom Savoca, Laura King and Tracey Atkins for contributing to this article.

A Therapy Dog Team is defined as a handler and a dog that have been specially trained and certified to provide interactions such as visiting patients in hospitals and nursing homes, working with incarcerated individuals, and/or assisting those in reading programs. These animals are considered pets and are not provided public access under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A therapy dog team should facilitate human-animal interactions to provide a benefit to the recipient of such animal-assisted interactions. This is the definition, but I wanted to know more about the history of where such interactions and certifications came into common usage in the canine-human relationship.

I had decided to do a paper on the various contexts in which therapy dogs are used in our current modern times some time ago. I was surprised to find that the recorded history of the use of therapy dogs goes much farther back in time than I had previously imagined. Some well-known and historically significant health practitioners and scientists on the very forefront of codifying modern medical care and psychological therapies were using animals, primarily dogs and horses, long before many pharmaceutical choices to accelerate mental and physical health and wellbeing had been invented.

The earliest known references to the therapeutic use of dogs in healing are in Ancient Greek texts. The demi-god Asclepius, whose symbol of staff and snakes is still the universal symbol of medical services today, shared with his daughters the gifts of healing, hygiene, rejuvenation, recovery and remedy. In the cult of Asclepius, his temples were places of worship, healing and hospice. Dogs, Asclepius' associated animal, roamed the temple/hospitals, licking the wounds of patients

and providing therapeutic comfort to guide them to health or peaceful end of life.

In the 1860s, Florence Nightingale wrote in her journal that she had observed that patients institutionalized for their health often did better when treatment was accompanied by dogs and small pets. She was the first to name this care 'Animal Assisted Therapy' and felt it was very beneficial in alleviating anxiety due to illness and or treatment. Florence Nightingale is responsible for modernizing and improving and professionalizing nursing medical care for patients of all social strata. Her early recognition and naming of the importance of AAT is very significant to how relevant therapy dogs were in early medical care, even before the use and training of dogs in Animal-Assisted Therapy had been standardized or accepted into mainstream careplans. A contemporary Nobel Laureate in Physiology and a psychologist did sufficient experiments into this phenomenon to write papers on what they called 'the Human-Animal Bond'.

In the 1930s, Sigmund Freud recorded in his notes that his pet dog Jofi was able to sense and convey to him the level of tension and anxiety his patients' were suffering. He believed that Jofi would choose to sit close to relaxed patients and deliberately chose to sit at a measurable relative distance from the patient, depending on the level of tension or anxiety the patient experienced. He also noted that Jofi was able to facilitate communication with non-verbal patients, particularly children. His work with AAT was lost until 20 years after his death.

In 1944, the American Red Cross set up an Animal-Assisted Therapy program for soldiers returning to New York from World War II. Other than this, AAT and the formal use of therapy dogs fell out of common use until Boris Levinson, a child psychologist, claimed that he was able to reach non-verbal children and communicate with

them when his dog Jingles sat with them. He made his presentation of his observations to the American Psychology Association, who summarily dismissed the importance of his work. It wasn't until a few years later, when Dr. Freud's journals were revealed and published, that Dr. Levinson was able to write and successfully publish *Pet Oriented Child PsychoTherapy* in 1969. This was the first comprehensive and professional book on using Animal-Assisted Therapy.

Up until the point at which Levinson's book was published, a number of practitioners and people were using AAT in uncertified and unstandardized ways, both in America and in Europe. In 1976, a nurse named Elaine Smith formed the organization Therapy Dogs International. This was the first organization in the world to test and certify therapy dog teams to do therapeutic visits at hospitals and nursing homes.

Since then, the Therapy Dog world has grown and expanded exponentially as increasing studies, observations and evidence prove the efficacy of

fostering the Human-Animal Bond in improving the wellbeing of humans of all ages in many environmental contexts. The effect of Animal Assisted Therapy, Therapeutic Visitation Dogs and



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Facility Therapy Dogs in facilitating healing and rehab of mental and physical trauma, depression, and anxiety while showing great advances in extending human longevity, increased speed of physical healing, improved cognitive function, improved reading ability, improved social skills and functionality is immeasurable.

The expanding contexts in which the Therapy Dog Teams work and volunteer, from the original hospitals and nursing homes, has evolved to schools, natural and man-made disaster relief scenes, first responder stations, prisons and jails, courtrooms, airports and many more.

In schools, Therapy Dogs can provide comfort and prevent emotional breakdowns, act as rewards, and assist in verbal and non-verbal interactions in special needs classes. In police departments, Therapy Dogs can help victims advocate for themselves at interviews and depositions of their experiences. They can provide comfort to victims of crimes and act in the capacity of a community service unit working alongside officers to promote communication and positive interactions with the public. Fire Departments are training and certifying Therapy Dog Teams as CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) which supports the fire department and assists with crisis management at emergency scenes. In libraries and reading programs, Therapy Dogs have become partners in learning for children struggling to read. Therapy Dogs have been efficacious at bringing comfort to victims and first responders at catastrophic disaster scenes, such as school shootings and natural disasters.

The potential for properly trained dogs with suitable temperaments, handled by appropriately trained handlers, to effect positive change in how humans cope with stress and illness, both physical and mental, seems only to be limited by human imagination. The dogs have been telling us how for millennia!

Valerie Ann Erwin has been teaching, training and mentoring for most of her professional life. Her degree in Medical Technology was granted with a minor in Evolutionary Biology. She also worked as an archaeologist for 10 years after earning a BS in Art History with minors in Anthropology and Medieval History. She has an AS in Engineering.

40 years experience training and competing successfully in Equestrian 3-Day Eventing begat dog training when she started training personal service dogs and therapy dogs in the 1990s. She currently instructs at the Canine/Human Relationship Institute and is certified in the NePoPo method of obedience as a Gold School Graduate with Bart and Michael Bellon. Valerie has been an avid hobby wildlife rehabber and conservationist since childhood. She is a Professional member of the IACP, and a 3 year member of the IACP Therapy Dog Committee. She owns New Paltz Dog Training and Canine Adventures in New Paltz, NY.

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Group, Private, or Day School?

by Babette Haggerty

In our last part of this series, we addressed the pros and cons of offering group classes, which is a great way to build your dog training practice while keeping your day job. This next part will address private lessons, which is another way to make your reputation as a trainer while also giving you the ability to keep working elsewhere if needed.

Like group classes, you can begin on a shoestring budget when starting as a private lessons trainer, but that is not the only benefit.

Private lessons allow you the flexibility to work when you want; whereas, in group classes, you are committed to the same day and time for however long the course lasts. I know for this dog trainer that I can't wait to graduate the dogs and the people by the time weeks four and five come around. The flexibility that you as a trainer have with offering privates is also another great advantage to the owner. Hence, one of many reasons why private lessons should cost more than group classes. Private lessons give the owner and the dog the individualized attention they will not receive in group classes. Many owners erroneously believe that their unsocialized dog needs to be trained in a group setting to learn to behave around distractions; however, the dog needs to know how to act in a controlled environment first. It provides a more efficient and thorough learning process for the dog and the owner.

Private lessons in the owner's home are an excellent advantage for many reasons. You can see the entire dynamic of the household and get a feel for the energy that the dog lives on, and from a financial standpoint, you can charge a premium price. You have to have the gas and miles on your vehicle and forget your travel time. You can either train four dogs in a day on the road or train six

dogs in your facility. However, suppose you are training six dogs in your facility. In that case, you are probably charging less money to the owner, but you are paying the overhead of rent, air conditioning, electricity, and more vs. while going into the home, your overhead is gas and miles. Your profit margin is going to be higher. As you check out what others are charging, you will find that in-home lessons always command a higher fee, and they should. Owners will always pay more for convenience.

Many trainers have expressed concern about their safety going into the owner's home. Since the early '60s, Captain Haggerty's School for Dogs went into the house, and never had a problem. Haggerty Dog Training has offered private lessons since 1989, and neither my employees nor I ever had an issue. However, there are several precautions that a trainer can take when going into the home.

1. Talk to the potential clients on the phone first if possible. In this age of technology, I see many people book appointments via the internet, and the trainer never has a conversation with the person before meeting them. Find out who referred them to you, ask them who their vet is, make small talk. Our instincts are better than we realize. The more you talk to people, the better your spidey senses will become.
2. Take a self-defense course.
3. If you live in a state that allows you to carry a weapon, go for it.
4. Bring your dog with you for the lesson, especially if you have a breed that scares people.
5. Keep your locator on your phone and tell people where you are going.
6. I know that once or twice, I wasn't too sure

about someone or something, so I would call a friend just before going in and say, "Hey, this is where I am. Can you call me in ten minutes and check on me?" Please give them a code word that you can use to make a 911 call or show up at your lesson.

7. You also don't have to go into the house. There is nothing wrong with telling the owner, "Hi! I am outside; I would like for you to bring Rover out to meet me." This is especially wise if you are dealing with an aggressive dog. It also demonstrates how the owners are handling the dog before teaching them anything.

Those mentioned above are suitable safety precautions when going into someone's home, and they are also good to keep in mind if you are going to have people come to you and you work alone.

Having people come to your home for lessons is different than having them come to your facility. The downside of them coming to your home is that they see where you live; I have once or twice had people show up at my house, thinking nothing of opening up the gates despite Rottweiler and German Shepherd signs on the gate and come peeking in my windows on a Sunday evening.

If you choose to have people come to your home, I recommend putting a building up that is separate from your home and planting some trees to separate your building and your home. If a training building is not possible, try to create a separate entrance to the area where you will work with the owner. It adds to the professionalism rather than having them come into your living room while the kids play video games.

Working from the house has a significant tax advantage, but don't forget that you can take your gas and miles off your expenses too when going



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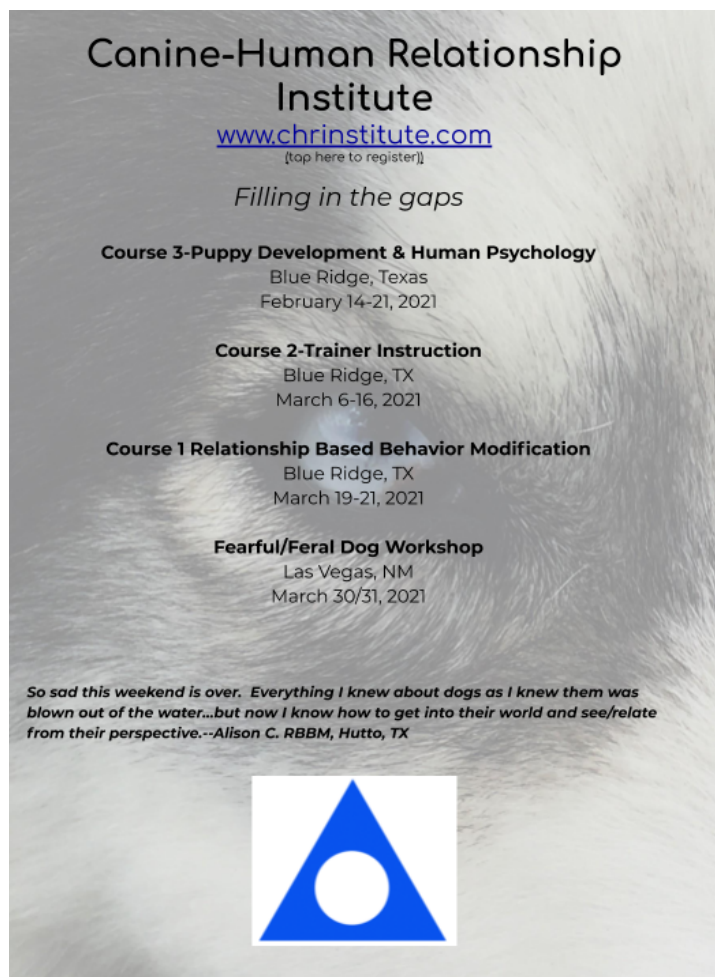
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So sad this weekend is over. Everything I knew about dogs as I knew them was blown out of the water...but now I know how to get into their world and see/relate from their perspective.--Alison C. RBBM, Hutto, TX



into the home. There are some rules on taking depreciation, gas, and miles off of your taxes, and it has to do with ownership of the vehicle. There are also laws in some states about signage on your car and needing commercial plates. Be sure to discuss this all with your accountant before making a decision.

The one drawback to private lessons, either in your facility or in the owner's home, is fewer distractions. However, you can always begin the lessons in that vacuum and then build up by meeting your owners outside of a supermarket or inside of a pet store. I will caution you, some big box stores that also offer training get a little upset if you show up in their store with a private lesson student. I encourage you to be a little subtle and definitely don't start handing out your business cards to other customers. If you have a lot of signage on your vehicle, you may even want to park further away from their door.

When it comes to being paid for private lessons, one risk is not getting paid. Today's availability of

technology gives us some significant advantages over what many trainers had to deal with many years ago - bounced checks, last-minute cancellation, misplaced checkbooks, etc.

Upon booking a private lesson package, collect a 50% deposit on the training and the balance due the first day of lessons. People can pay via any number of ways, ie. Paypal, Gingr software, etc. Using an app like Venmo may not offer an option for an owner to sign a contract when they send you the money. I encourage you only to use something that requires them to sign a contract when they send you the deposit. I only offer complete packages, and never do I charge by the lesson. The owners will be less motivated to practice and more likely to cancel your appointments and not complete a program that cheats the dog and the owner and, of course, you, which is another reason I book out a lesson at a time. I never book all six sessions at one time because changes will always occur.



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One objection I often received from owners regarding private lessons was that they wanted their dog "socialized." While I did educate them on socialization etc., I decided to offer, as a supplement to my private lesson course, attendance at my group classes at no extra charge. While I built that into my price, and you have to have the luxury of space in your classes or teach outside with unlimited space, it was a huge selling point to owners. Another alternative to group class attendance is "monthly refresher training": a group class that is just for private lesson students. Allow them to attend multiple times so that they can work their dog around controlled distractions with your help. This will prepare them for the real world even further.

When I started teaching private lessons in the home, my dad bought me the AKC Complete Dog Book. He told me that before going into any lesson, read about the breed of the dog before going in. It was one of those golden nuggets that you don't realize how valuable it is until you do it.

Private lessons can be the most profitable and least stressful of all other options such as group, day school and boarding school. The overhead is minimal, which gives you a much higher profit margin, the owner is doing the majority of the training, and not only will you have a higher customer satisfaction rate, you will have far superior results than to group classes.

Babette Haggerty has been working with dogs her entire life. Raised in a boarding and training kennel by dog training pioneer Captain Haggerty, she started making \$2.00 an hour feeding and walking the dogs. Her 16-year-old daughter is now following in her footsteps, but is paid better. In 1989, Babette began teaching private in-home lessons while living and going to college in Palm Beach County, Florida. It gave her extra beer money for the weekends. Before she knew it, she was training dogs more than going to class. She had more fun training dogs for the Rich and Famous of Palm Beach and ended up with the largest dog training school in Palm Beach County. In 2007, she ended up going back "home" and now trains dogs for the rich, and not so rich or famous, of Northern NJ. For questions on this article or anything about dogs, feel free to reach her at her school in Midland Park, New Jersey. info@haggertydog.com

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From Good to Great

by Camilla Gray-Nelson

Editor's note: this is Part 1 of an interview of member and sponsor Camilla Gray-Nelson that I excerpted from a piece entitled How to Take your Company from Good to Great by Jerome Knyszewski. It is used here with permission from the author(s). Part 2 will appear in the Winter 2022 issue of the CPJ.

Thank you so much for joining us in this interview series! Can you tell us a bit about your 'backstory' and how you got started?

Mine is a long life-story of many challenging subplots that eventually came together successfully at one glorious point in time. I was brought up in the country, on a ranch with all manner of animals: cows, horses, dogs, cats, and the occasional goat, sheep or stray turtle. I learned animal-speak before I ever learned English, and my closest friends, even through my school years, had four legs, not two.

After high school, I left the farm to go to college and grad school and after my "proper education" I spent the next ten years trying to build a career in the business world. I was full of ego and pride. I was woman ...and I roared. Failing to succeed there to my satisfaction, I then took the leap into entrepreneurship where, after many trials, more costly mistakes and eventual soul-searching, a new awareness set me on the trajectory for success. My animal expertise, personal passion and business education unexpectedly came together.

For the past 25 years, I have been on a "good to great" journey and have built a 5-star canine resort in the heart of California Wine Country, featuring "nature-based leadership training" as well as luxury boarding and daycare. What began as a 1-woman traveling office in an old red pickup, has grown exponentially to a 7-figure corporation with over 20 employees and a months-long waiting list of clients.

Did you ever consider giving up? Where did you get the drive to continue even though things were so hard?

Being raised as a farm girl, one thing you learn early on is that there is no such thing as "giving up"! No such thing as, "It's too hard." There is nothing that overrides responsibility.

The idea of creating my own company had always appealed to me. I love the exhilaration of success that is hard-won, and I felt I was smart enough and clever enough to go it on my own. Unfortunately, at least four of my brilliant business ideas failed miserably and each failure was costly, both in monetary and personal terms, as along the way I failed at not one, but two marriages and the personal toll was devastating. At my lowest point, I was alone, confused and so broke that I unplugged the phone so I wouldn't hear the creditors calling and I lived off one baked chicken for almost a week, because I didn't even have money for food.

It was at that low point I had what I call my "Come to Nature Moment." I was living on the farm and watching how all of the animals seemed to be happy, how the leaders ran their "organizations" and how the cleverest animals down the line accepted their situation yet still got what they needed, regardless of their lower place in the hierarchy. That was my lightbulb moment! Yes, I was woman — but no one needed to hear me roar. The animal leaders I watched led with quiet power. The animals without authority built respectful alliances with those who did, to their advantage. Both found conflict unnecessary in pursuit of their personal goals.

Working with dogs was second nature to me, so I got in my truck and started creating leaders, one dog-owning household at a time! Turns out, women wanted what I was selling. They had a

problem, and I had a tailormade solution. Demand grew, I started a school and rest is history.

What do you think makes your company stand out?

There are many things that make my company stand out from others in my market. We are the only training company that focuses on helping women control the family dog. Instead of typical sit-stay obedience, we teach leadership and relationship skills that solve behavior problems but which, it turns out, do not require masculine size or strength. This is not available anywhere else in the dog training market to my knowledge.

Another way we stand out is our brand clarity: We don't sell dog training; we sell Help and Hope. Every employee is hand-selected for their eagerness to help others and their interpersonal skills for supportive client contact.

Which tips would you recommend to your colleagues in your industry to help them to thrive and not "burn out"?

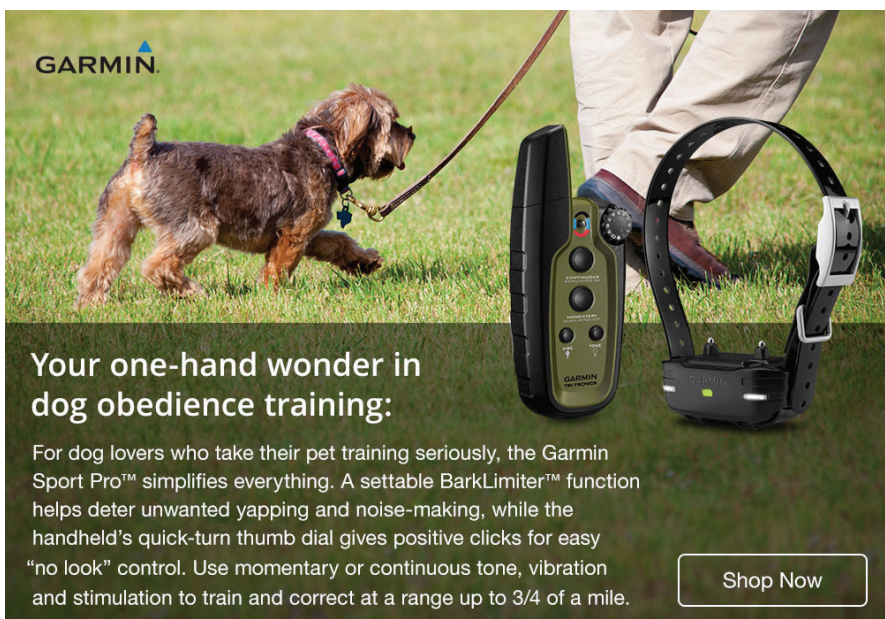
Try creating "Mini-Me's" and delegate to them.

In the small-business sector, burn-out is an occupational hazard. It comes with the territory, I think. Entrepreneurs start a company on their own, based on their particular skill or personal knowledge. But when the business grows, they hesitate to delegate or share the reins, believing that no one can do it as well as they can. We all know that trying to do it all yourself is a sure-fire recipe for burn-out.

I was definitely one of those burn-out candidates, as my unique life experience with animals and uncommon philosophical perspective WAS the business and not a skill or knowledge base that I could recruit. The answer for me, eventually, was

to hire people with a personality like mine: friendly, outgoing, responsible and loyal. Once I had the right raw materials in an employee — the right hard-wiring — I could teach them what I knew. You can't teach personality, but you can teach skills. With the right personality to start with, they not only learned the necessary skills, but became as passionate about my particular message or my special product as I was. You could say I created a "Mini-Me". At that point, it was less of a gamble to delegate to them.

Delegating those tasks within a growing business that you, as the owner, are NOT good at is equally important. For example, when my business got to



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a point where notepads and pens were no longer adequate to manage things and we needed tools like Excel spreadsheets, I found I was terrible at reading and understanding them! I hired someone else to do our bean-counting, while I focused on what I do best: brand building, client relations and new product development.

How would you define a “good” company, what does that look like? How would you define a “great” company, what does that look like?

A “good” company gets things done. They meet customer expectations. They do the best they can with what they have.

A “great” company doesn’t just get things done; they look for ways to do them better, or ways to do more. They are forward looking, spotting trends and thinking about how they can be at the forefront of what is coming in their industry.

A “great” company doesn’t just meet customer expectations; they strive to exceed them.

A “great” company pays as much attention to who they hire as they do their product. Employees are the company. They are responsible for the quality of the output behind the scenes as well as the direct client experience. The employee who answers the phone is just as important as the General Manager. In fact, if you are a service business, I believe a bad receptionist can do more harm to a company’s goodwill and reputation in a short period of time than an under-performing GM over a quarter.

Based on your experience and success, what are the five most important things one should know in order to lead a company from Good to Great?

1. Know what you sell
2. Develop a brand identity
3. Be committed to honesty
4. Hire the right people
5. Understand your employees and manage them with instinct-awareness

Here’s an example of what I mean by an honesty policy, and why it is so vital.

At any dog boarding facility, things happen like scrapes, colds, upset stomachs, etc. Let’s say we notice a dog has an upset stomach for a couple of days. Of course, we know it will clear up and the dog will be fine by the time he checks out a week from now. But we call the owners anyway, just to keep them in the loop and let them know what is happening and that we are on it for them. Or let’s say a cold develops in our facility and a handful of dogs are catching it. Even though it may mean cancellations, we proactively call all clients with upcoming reservations to let them know the potential risks of coming in and let them know we understand if they want to cancel their reservation with us. This type of transparent honesty can be scary for a company because lost business will affect immediate cash flow. The real result of this honest transparency, however, is increased trust, and trust is what sustains and builds a business in the long run.

Extensive research suggests that “purpose driven businesses” are more successful in many areas. Can you help articulate for our readers a few reasons why a business should consider becoming a purpose driven business, or consider having a social impact angle?

Here is where seeing human beings in terms of their Inner Animal can really help guide a company

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toward a “purpose.” Whether client or employee, all humans are driven by their deepest survival instinct to join together or “flock” and “group” with others that seem similar to themselves. In lower animals, these flocking and grouping instincts are most often associated with appearance, which can indicate family ties, but in the human animal it can be shared values that draw us together.

Establishing a company purpose toward a greater societal good with wide appeal can be that unifying factor that binds both employees and clients to a company with greater loyalty.

From my perspective, this explains why purpose-driven companies do so well. It's instinct!

A sustainable business can never stop evolving or keeping up with what is happening in their market. Their customer base is transforming every year, with established clients aging and younger consumers coming of age to take their place. With these new consumers come new ideas, new values, new needs, new demands, etc.

I've seen this in my own business. As our client base has become busier with less free time, we've incorporated video classes, Zoom instruction and the like, to accommodate these new demands or expectations.

One of the most critical responsibilities of management is to look ahead and spot trends. Some will be courageous enough to be innovators, but being the first can be risky, too. More than one great idea has failed because it was too far ahead of its time. The risk of waiting for someone else to try a new idea first, however, is that the early gambler that hits it right will then own the space and everyone else could end up an also-ran. Either way, however, evolving a product or service to keep up with the changing market is always better than resting on your laurels while the others win the race because you are too far back to catch up.

Stay tuned for Part 2 of this interview, coming up in a future issue.

Camilla Gray-Nelson has a leg-up on her competition as a compelling figure in the dog training world. Founder of

Dairydell Canine in Petaluma and best-selling author, she redefines power and leadership from Nature's perspective. Raised on a local ranch, Camilla has synthesized her keen knowledge of animal behavior and her particular awareness of women's leadership challenges into “dog training a woman's way,” where clearer boundaries replace confrontation, and influence through instinct becomes more effective than physical dominance or strength.

She offers customized shadow programs for Trainers, from branding to marketing to introduction to Nature-based training. Email: cgraynelson@gmail.com. (707) 781-6887. Find out more at dairydell.com.

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Critical Thinking

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

The older I get, the more gray I become.

I'm not talking about my hair. Everyone gets gray as they age. My father's hair was completely gray by 40. Mine would be salt-and-pepper if I let it grow, and I think gray hair looks great on most everyone.

But this isn't about hair.

I'm talking about my worldview. And when I mention a "gray worldview," I'm not talking about a dismal, dreary, "it's a gray day outside" perspective, or a "gloom and doom" perspective. I'm not despairing. I'm not unhappy.

You see, I'm not a pessimist. I'm an optimist with experience.

For me, adopting a gray worldview means being able to see the world in many shades of gray, and less in absolutes, less in pure "black and white." It means realizing that though I may not be the brightest, or smartest, or most educated, I am nevertheless striving every day to be a critical thinker who is constantly trying to see the world past my own perception.

This isn't easy. At all. It takes work and it can be uncomfortable work. No one likes to realize that a lot of what they think could be, well, wrong. Or misguided. We must consistently and urgently challenge ourselves to think in different ways because it is impossible to grow without doing so.

And we like routine. We like thinking the same stuff all the time. We like not being challenged mentally and emotionally, especially when it comes to our core beliefs. Many people enjoy stagnation because it is like putting on a favorite pair of jeans or the softest t-shirt you own: it's comfortable, and easy. Westerners, by and large, enjoy ease—especially ease of thought.

Think about it: when's the last time you started a conversation, on purpose, with someone who has opposing religious, political, or social issue beliefs than you do? When is the last time you chose a book to read (or watched a video) that challenged your beliefs?

It's time that we purposely push ourselves to walk in unfamiliar, and even uncomfortable, territory when our physical safety is not at risk. We need to not just *have* the uncomfortable conversations, but *start* them. And

I'm not talking about social media, which is often a terrible place to have deep conversations about any topic, much less a topic that will create discomfort.

No, these conversations are best held in person, either one-on-one, or in small groups. They are best held when our bellies are full, we are sober, and we are well rested. They are best held when we cannot escape easily, cannot defer our answers, cannot deflect.

We need to be prepared to not know the answers, but to figure them out as we go. We need to learn to sit with discomfort, look it in the face, and not shy away.

We need to be prepared to say to the others in the conversation, "That is not a perspective I have ever considered, and now I have some thinking to do. Thank you for bringing it to my attention."

We need to be prepared to feel dumb. To feel small. To feel the hot flush of embarrassment, even, because we have put ourselves "out there" and been corrected, ideally gently. (Embarrassment is always survivable.)

Our conversation companions may not play fairly, but we can. They may shout, but we can speak normally and thoughtfully, regardless. They may get angry and try to leave, but we can stay, take deep breaths, and continue on, as long as we are not putting ourselves in any physical danger. (Emotional discomfort feels scary like physical danger, but they are not the same). Do not have these conversations with someone who has abused you or threatens to become violent (talk to a therapist instead).

(Does this feel too frightening? See next page for how you can prepare.)

Many issues surround us daily that require critical thought and the adoption of a gray worldview. Black and white thought will not solve our problems. None of us can solve world hunger, the healthcare crisis, the inefficiency and waste of government, or the problems of racism and sexism by ourselves. You and your friends talking about them in your backyard on a sunny day will not solve them, so why does it matter how you discuss them? What is wrong about bitching and complaining about the problems we all have in common that are well beyond our capacity to solve?

It matters because it is far too easy to have unfiltered opinions, to vent, to cast aspersions on others, to marinate in the frustrations of the world. Our brains are wired towards negativity and we careen down that fast track with no desire to put on the brakes. And we need to do the work to put thoughtfulness out into the world, uncomfortable as it may be, difficult as it may be to see the good in situations that frustrate—even pain—us. Doing so stretches us, not to a breaking point, but to a growing point. There can be no growth without stress and we should care what energy we thrust into the universe from our heads. We should want to have all the information before deciding what we believe about important issues, and we should want to be able to change what we believe when, and if, more information comes to light to challenge our beliefs.

If the thought of engaging people you know and care about on difficult issues fills you with dread, I have outlined an exercise below that can serve as a handy “warm-up” to in-person discussions:

Prepare yourself beforehand by simply seeking out books or other sources extolling beliefs and attitudes with which you disagree, and exploring them while alone. Practice hearing, watching, or reading the info and just listening instead of objecting. Try putting yourself in the speaker’s shoes and try to understand why they believe the way they do. Even if you fail at understanding their point of view fully, you have stretched your abilities to withstand concepts with which you disagree.

Then put the book down/close the laptop and go for a walk outside (shoot for 20-30 minutes, uninterrupted). I suggest a familiar place, so you can think about what you just read or watched instead of having to think about directions, safety, or getting lost. **Leave your phone and headphones behind.** Let your thoughts flow through your head without trying to dam them up or divert them away. Just let them come. If you are feeling angry or frustrated by what you consumed, ask yourself why. If you are confused, then *allow yourself to be confused* as your feet move you through the space; the rhythm of walking on a path, especially in nature, is often a balm for soothing confusion.

I often talk to myself, out loud, as I take these “debriefing” walks. It helps me to hear myself asking questions, even if I cannot answer them right then. If I’m especially perturbed by the content I just explored, the first few moments as I process angrily probably look super weird to my neighbors. But I’m too old to care.

Are you a runner? You may be inclined to process by

going for a run instead of a walk. Try to squelch that impulse and just walk instead. Walking after such a mental (and often emotional) exercise is actually better than running, because running will raise your heart rate and your breathing and will, in itself, become a diversion. And this outing is NOT about diversion. *It is about processing while moving in a calibrated way.* Movement dissipates stress, and all you need right now is to reset slightly while not avoiding the discomfort of thought. You will find that your swirling thoughts will settle themselves as your feet push you forward. The rhythm of your movement will begin to have an impact on the rhythm of your thoughts, and you will feel the discomfort melting.

You will likely return from your walk without having adopted the view of the speaker or writer you imbibed 20 minutes earlier. No problem! Adopting their viewpoint was NOT the point. However, if, once you arrive back home, you are still “fired up” and even more entrenched in your prior beliefs, then you still have a few questions to answer. It’s fine to put them aside for a bit if you need to attend to other pursuits, but **allow** **make** yourself return to them later.

(It’s unlikely that one reading/video followed by one 20 minute walk would change your worldview completely. If it does, so be it—you probably already had your doubts and that’s fine. My point is that you should not consider this exercise a failure, regardless of what you end up believing as you remove your walking shoes.)

Ask yourself questions in the continuing days, too. Don’t push them away. They are an important part of coming back into your comfort zone slowly.

Now, when the opportunity for a potentially uncomfortable conversation in person arises, you will be less likely to avoid it, and you may very well feel confident enough to start it. This is a huge step in personal growth and you should be very proud of yourself.

Mailey, The Pooch Professor, has been Editor of The Canine Professional Journal since 2010. She joined IACP in 2003 and served on the Board of Directors from 2014 through 2020. She is a longtime member of the Education and Certification Committee and was in charge of creating the Dog Trainer Foundation Exam. An Atlanta, GA native, Mailey has worked professionally with dogs and their people for 38+ years, holds a Masters in Education, is a CDTA and PDTI , and was Behavior and Training Manager for the Atlanta Humane Society for 21 years. Read more at www.poochprofessor.com and www.carpek9.blogspot.com.

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