



*Module*



*Let's Get Acquainted*

**What Is a Protocol?**

**It's All About Being In the Right Zone**

**Zones & Body Language Worksheet**

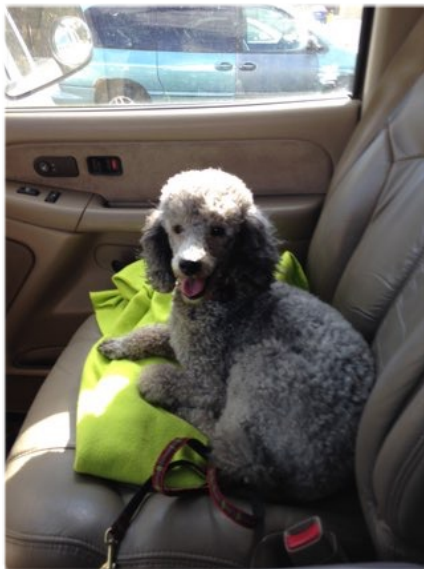
**Collar Touches**

**Training Perspectives: Why Doesn't He Understand?**



## What is a Protocol and How Does It Work?

Basically it is a series of lesson plans of essential skill sets that are broken down into baby steps (approximations)



A protocol is just a fancy-schmancy word for a plan.

This course is full of protocols so you can teach a variety of behaviours that will help you and

your dog live a happy life together. The protocols in this course will provide you with

tools so that you have behaviours on board as a foundation.

The Engaged Dog Foundation Skills were developed by me with all the dog sports that I dabbled in, in mind. Through the years I discovered that if my own dogs had this Skill Set, then I could build anything I liked on it. The advanced skills happened really quickly, because I was teaching them to a dog who already

- \* Understood that learning is fun!
- \* Knew how to concentrate
- \* Knew how to resist the environment and other distractions
- \* Knew how to be over-the-top drivey when I needed that, and...
- \* Knew how to be calm, cool and collected and save her energy when I needed that



This Foundation Skill Set is where I begin with all dogs who come to me, regardless of their issues. The original problems of many dogs - to my great interest (and sometimes downright astonishment!) - disappear without ever being directly addressed once the dogs have completed the Foundation Skill Set. Wow!

The protocols in this course will give your dog the tools to **learn how to learn**. They will teach your dog to look to you for direction. This is a package deal: your dog will be counting on you for precise information. Since you are the one who is in the driver's seat, you are the one responsible for a navigation plan.

This doesn't mean the dog is "just along for the ride" though. You will find that your dog has constant input and provides feedback for you as well.

**Your dog's job is to pay attention.  
Your job is to provide good teaching steps.**

Good training feels like good conversation - it is a sharing experience.

## Approximations

It is best to break each behaviour into tiny little steps, called approximations, so the learning is possible for your dog - and for you! You will be practicing skills that are new to you, too! Be patient with yourself and your dog. Work together and figure it out.

These plans or protocols have been tested on literally thousands of dogs, and you can bet that one of those dogs had a similar personality to your own dog.

As we work together, be consistent with how you operate to teach yourself, as well as your dog.

- \* First, read carefully about each protocol in the various written materials.
- \* Then watch the relevant videos provided.
- \* Then get your dog out and work on the very first approximation.

If you get stuck, go back over the material. The best part is that you will be able to access me for questions during our Community Coaching Calls!

The meeting of the minds that will occur between you and your dog as you work through these protocols and learn how to communicate with one another will increase your understanding of not just dog behaviour, but human behaviour, too. The changes in your relationship will be wonderful. You will become a team, even though when you are training your dog, you are leading the dance!

This training mind-set is important for you; because if you understand how dogs learn, you will meet fewer frustrations in your training. Knowledge is power!

The Foundation Skills protocols are applicable to just plain old having a very well-mannered and polite dog - a dog who communicates well with you and is safe. The bonus really comes to the fore when you start



teaching performance or working dog behaviours.

It is not at all difficult to teach things to an attentive dog who is eager to learn!

Therefore, even if you don't have any of the other problems listed in this book, these protocols will still be applicable to you and your dog. I have been teaching puppy classes and doing behaviour consults with problem dogs for more than 20 years at this point. The Foundation Skill Set is not just about training your dog - it is also about training YOU.

These protocols will help you understand your dog and her point of view.

Inevitably, the problem dogs that I see in my practice are sadly lacking in most, or all, of these basic Skill Sets. You will love the results as you work through these protocols! You will be astounded at the way simple exercises can make the bond between you and your dog stronger.

I always tell my students, "If the protocol is very complicated, your dog won't get it." So all protocols need to be simple in their execution. Protocols need to be effective!

Protocols are the baby steps we begin with to create great things!







# It's All About Being In The Right Zone

## Comfort Zone

This is the place where the dog is relaxed and confident. However, learning does not take place in the Comfort Zone.

Ideally, we get as many behaviors into this zone as possible. How? By starting the behaviour with good associations and the correct emotional state, so you do not have stuff to undo.

The second item is Repetition! When the brain is happy! All the Behaviours are happy! The brain is comfortable when the neural pathways are already formed.



## Stretch Zone

Between Comfort and Panic, there is a place where the comfort is slightly less, but there is a great chance of learning. This is where the best learning takes place. The ideal is to challenge the dog slightly,

work him just barely outside his Comfort Zone, but never get close to the Panic Zone.

The Stretch Zone is where learning takes place. It's a bit uncomfortable, a bit stressful: all learning is a bit that. But stretching into the Stretch Zone is how we **Grow!**

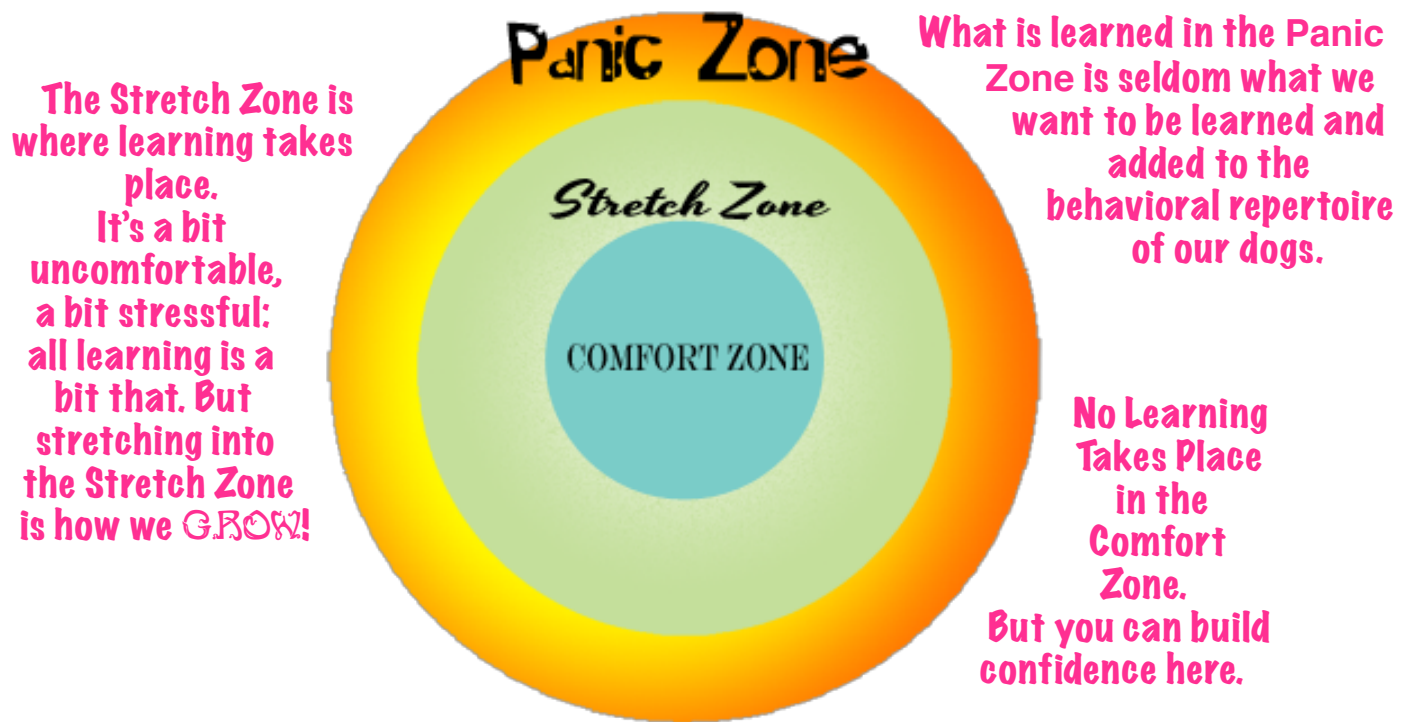


## Panic Zone

Because of extreme tension arousal and/or fear, excessive stress prevents the “type” of learning that we want for modifying behaviour to go our way. In this zone, dogs are most likely to use flight (fleeing the situation, or avoidance) or fight (defensive behaviour such as growling, snapping and biting) type behaviours. This zone is associated with high adrenaline levels and instinctive, reactive behaviour. What is learned in the Panic Zone is seldom what we want to be learned and added to the behavioral repertoire of our dogs.

**Think of the Zones as both mental and physical. You will see the mental and emotional state of dogs reflected in body language.**

**This is all about discovering and using Thresholds to aid you in your training.**





# It's All About Being In The Right Zone

## Identifying Body Language Worksheet

The dog or dogs we are reading will be indicated by ★

If there is only one dog in the picture, you can figure that out, right?

Copy the worksheet on page 11 - one for each photo. Then go to work!

### Photo #1





**Photo #2**





Photo #3





**Photo #4**





**Photo #5**





**Photo #6**

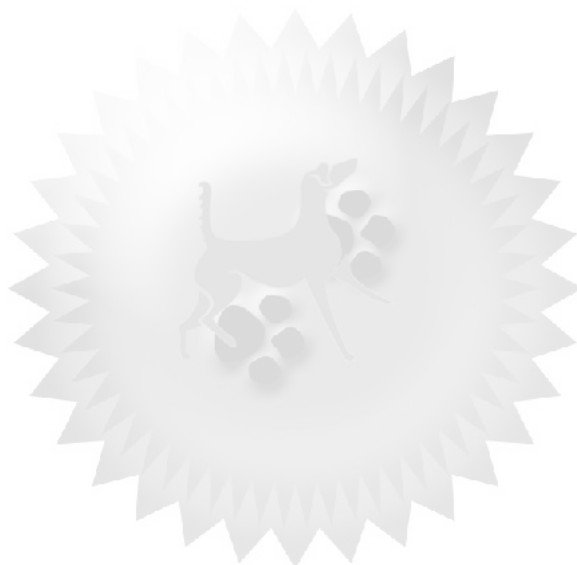


**Photo #7**



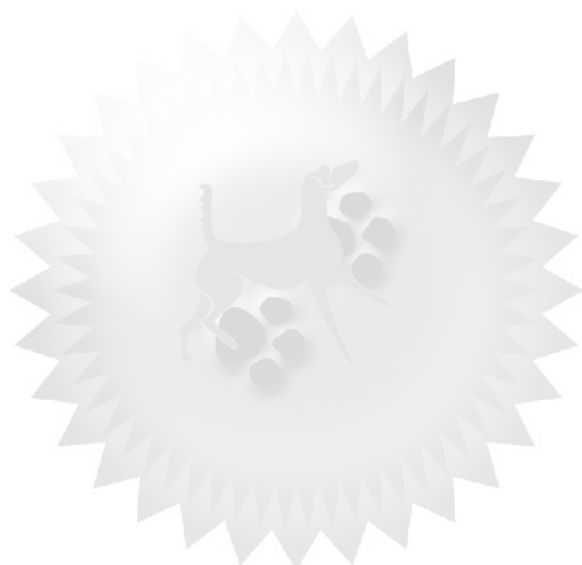


**Photo #8**





**Photo #9**





**Photo #10**



## Worksheet for Body Language Observations

The Answers for this are in the Coaching Call Recordings: 2014-03-23.mov

### It's All About Being In The Right Zone - Identifying The Dog's Current Zone

#### Photo #

What effect could this environment have on the dog's behaviour?

What effect is this environment having on the dog(s) in the picture?

Should you touch this dog's collar or body at this moment?

If you do, what is your prediction of what will happen?

#### Observations for Photo #

Basic outline or silhouette	
Eyes	
Ears	
Tail	
Anything else significant?	

#### Conclusion

This dog is currently in a    Comfort Zone            Stretch Zone            Panic Zone

#### Other Comments






This is my friend Julie at a Buck Brannaman Clinic. She is learning to rope! Her horse is being glorious! Instead of instinctive flight behaviour, she has trained and conditioned him to be a Truster and a Thinker. Wow!

## Training Perspectives

Training is the process of turning instinctive reactions into learned responses.

The whole reason to train our dogs is to teach them behaviours we consider appropriate and desirable.

In the teaching process, the reason we give a cue is to provide a consequence. Rather than being a drill sergeant, a command-giver or a Pez dispenser, **set up your training sequences thoughtfully, have good protocols and be a Good Consequence Provider**, and your dog will learn quickly.

The learning process is called **operant**, or trial-and-error, learning when the learning takes place because of antecedents or setting events (cues) in combination with what happens during/immediately following the behaviour: the consequences.

This makes the timing of the consequence (ideally this will most often be a positive reinforcer, such as a treat or social approval) very important. For optimal learning the



This is not a greeting, it is a mobbing. This puppy, through training will learn to be civilized.

**consequence must be applied during the behaviour or within 1/2 second after the behaviour.**

**Take Advantage of Offered Behaviour**

One of your most time-saving tools in training is to reinforce or notice appropriate behaviour as it is offered. This is the most effective way to show the dog how you want him to behave. (This stuff works great for kids and spouses too!) When the dog thinks it was his Very Own Good Idea, he learns more quickly.

When your dog is quietly lying down and chewing his own toy, this is an excellent time to **notice**, and casually say, “Great dog, I am proud of you.” I don’t advise disturbing him OUT of his good behaviour! So no big praise or high voices - and no treats if that will disturb the behaviour you liked and cause the dog to follow after you begging for more treats! Just a little, quiet Notice and social approval is most effective here.

**Intention Behaviour**

During training, you must carefully observe the animal and watch for intention behaviour - that is behaviour that indicates the animal is “thinking” or “behaving” in the direction you are hoping for! Intention behaviours can be very subtle, such as an eye flick away from an item that you are teaching the dog to avoid - say a treat tossed on the floor. If you notice and reinforce this eye flick instead of waiting for an entire head turn, the process of teaching the Impulse Control (leave it) behaviour will become quick - **like light speed**.

A word of caution about this. Don’t reinforce the same intention behaviour 5 times in a row, therefore placing it on a Fixed Schedule. If you do this, the dog will start constantly offering the tiny intention behaviour instead of moving on in the process. Catch it once or twice, then immediately go for twofers (2

repetitions of the same or similar behaviour). As soon as you begin a Variable Schedule, the dog will immediately intensify the behaviour and you can then reinforce that. Now you are moving along nicely.

**Dog Working The System...**

If, instead of intensified behaviour, you get pouting, shutting down and quitting, you have a very confused dog - or a dog who is “working the system” in his own favor. He has, in the past, learned that if he refuses to work, you get out more toys, treats and begin cheerleading to engage him. Beware of this error, because I see it way too frequently. It is a mis-use and lack of understanding of how to apply Learning Theory on the part of the trainer.

**Use Your Time Wisely**

To get the maximum out of the time you invest in training:

- \* Plan how to train the behaviour.
- \* Use excellent protocols.
- \* Use tiny approximations (baby steps) to get the idea across.
- \* Provide appropriate consequences.
- \* Make sure you provide the consequence during or immediately following the behaviour. 3 seconds later is much too late for the dog to make the proper association.
- \* Have a Cue System that Rocks.

**Dog Problem or Our Problem?**

If your only training plan is to wait until the dog is being naughty and then yell at him, you are already dead in the water, as far as training is concerned. And, truth be told, we ALL find ourselves in that position sometimes when life gets a little overwhelming. But as a general practice:



**Be pro-active - stop fixing things “after the event.”** Anticipate the event and have training in place. That is what my training system is all about. That, and reading the dog so you can use his feedback to be a better communicator.

Many dog “behaviour problems” are merely a dog expressing itself through natural doggy types of behaviours in a setting or context or location that we, as people, consider inappropriate.

- \* All dogs pee - we prefer they do this outside, rather than on our living room rug.
- \* All dogs chew - we prefer that they chew their chew-toys rather than our furniture or shoes.



If you need to use an aversive (like a verbal “NO” or another appropriate aversive), try to catch the dog while he is THINKING about it! For example, if your dog is air scenting and looking at the trash, guess what he is thinking about! Tell him “Leave It” right then. Screaming and spanking after the fact does not help! It may teach your dog that being in the same room with you and the garbage is a bad deal, but it does not teach your dog that getting into the trash is bad. He's already rewarded himself for that little bit of mischief.

So prevention, awareness on your part and good communication from you to your dog are the keys to success.

## Am I On The Right Track?

When solving “Why the heck did that happen?” or “How the heck did that happen?” ask yourself the following questions:

- \* What was the dog's observable behaviour?
- \* What were the consequences for him?

**The environment may have provided a consequence, and you may have provided a consequence. Which was most noticed by or valued by the dog?**

Were the consequences you provided appropriate? You can tell if they were understood by the dog by asking yourself this question: Did the dog's behaviour change? That is, the next time you asked for the

behaviour, did you get the desired answer from the dog?

## Now.... Getting A Behaviour On Cue!

- \* Have a goal. If you don't know what behaviour you want, how could you possibly expect the dog to know?
- \* Food is a good reward because it is so easy to control.

You can also let the reward be a “real life” reward. (Look up *Premack* for more technical information.) For example, the dog wants to play; you ask for a Sit and get it - then the dog gets to go play. Let her play for a few seconds; then interrupt her and get a Sit - then let her go play again.

**Reinforcement Schedules!**

- \* In the Learning Stage: 1 behaviour = 1 reinforcement. This is one kind of Fixed Schedule.
- \* Once the behaviour is established, harden the response to the cue. For instance: when first teaching the Sit, I might reinforce all sits - even those just “offered.” I don’t do this for very long, just 3 or 4 times, unless an offered Sit is just a super fine idea - offered, for instance, instead of dashing out the door. Then I would jackpot his Very Good Own Idea. But if he is just wandering in front of me and sitting as a way to beg for a treat, I am not so forthcoming. The next step in this stage is to reinforce/reward only those sits that were preceded by my cue to do so. So this step involves letting the dog know that the cue is important.
- \* Once the cue/behaviour pattern is established, you must begin to reward the responses at random intervals. In short, you become a “slot machine”: unpredictable payoffs during desired behaviour. This is the Variable Schedule coming into play.

When you introduce a Variable Schedule, if you have been using techniques properly, the dog will begin to work visibly harder in order to get that payoff. I find it more difficult to wean owners off the treats than I do the dogs!

In addition to that good stuff, you will also see a bunch of stuff you are not so thrilled with. This is a normal part of the Trial and Error learning process - in which the dog, to validate his learning, may offer up a variety of “guesses.” This is not a bad thing. You just

keep targeting for reinforcement those behaviours that are in line with the Target (desired) Behaviour.

If you are prepared for that, as a trainer, you don’t get all discouraged and start changing your entire strategy, which is what I often see - and which is extremely confusing for the dog. This is why you have proven protocols to work with. I have gotten myself through some extremely difficult situations by just hanging in there, believing in my protocols and having faith in learning theory. This gives my training a confident flavor that dogs see as authority, and also as a reliability.

For the analytical reader, think of starting a new behaviour off at 100% reinforcement for the first day or two. Then days 3 and 4 are at 75% a reinforcement ratio. Then move to treating 50% of the behaviours. Then 25% of occurrences of that same behaviour get the treat.

At this point, you can give a treat for only behaviours that are really spectacular, or if the dog does the behaviour the first time in a new location. This is DRE - Differential Reinforcement of Excellent behaviour.

**Generalization**

**You must take your behaviours on the road.** (I am always singing the Willy Nelson song “On the Road Again” at this point.) Practice in as many different locations/situations as you can find. You are teaching your dog to obey even though there are distractions.

A behaviour that is not Over-Trained (“proofed” in old-time dog training lingo) is not trained at all. A dog that sits and recalls when nothing is going on is no big deal. So

what? But a dog that you can call off bunnies (or even bunny poop!) and that voluntarily offers a Sit at the door instead of dashing out the door - now that's impressive! And useful. And safe.

Practice a Sit Stay in the grocery store parking lot. (On leash!) Go to every park in town to practice your Sit. Practice Sit behaviours unexpectedly in the house throughout the day.

At first your dog will require lots of support. You may have to go back to kindergarten (go back to an easier teaching step), at first, in this new area. You go right back to using your very first teaching baby steps (approximations) to elicit the behaviour and build on that foundation in the new location/situation.

Only now, after enough repetitions that the dog has shown understanding of them and lots of patience with one another, do you correct. The dog must understand the exercise intimately before he can understand: Why the correction occurred and How to avoid the correction.

### **The Idea Is That You Minimize Correction**

You will find you correct less and less as your training relationship grows and prospers. Remember! A correction does not have to be a physical punishment – it can be something so small as not allowing the dog to partake of a rewarding activity.

Or it can be as minor a correction as very neutrally taking your dog by the collar and replacing him in a Sit or Down position. Loud yelling, yanking on the collar and hitting your dog are never appropriate corrections.

Just as a frame of reference: I have trained some very complicated behaviour chains with never having to administer any correction at all. If your dog is attentive (Protocol: Eye Contact = Concentration) and has decent Impulse Control (Protocols for Impulse Control: Think First Then Do) it is amazing how little correction is needed.

## **The Relevance Of Observation**

When you are training, remember the relevance of observation and the importance of the following equation:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Chemical State} = \text{Behaviour} \\ \text{or} \\ \text{Internal State} = \text{External, Observable State} \end{array}$$

**Observation of the behaviour, or the dog's external state, is how you gather information about the dog's chemical or internal, state.**

This gives you an idea of not merely what the dog is doing, but allows you to extrapolate what the dog may be thinking. As a result, you can make better decisions about your dog's training and how you might intervene at any given moment in order to make any situation safe, comfortable or less chaotic.

Looking at your dog's body language also gives you good information about how to proceed with a given protocol, so you can "individualize" the training process. For example, if a dog is indicating a fearful state, you might wish to proceed slowly and concentrate on increasing the dog's self-confidence levels in this context.

You want to proceed slowly, because a dog who is in a fearful state is very prone to

defensive behaviour (growling, snapping and biting or trying to get away by retreating from the area).

If, on the other hand, the dog indicates self-confident body language and is not afraid, you can move along more quickly. Paying attention to the dog's body language will tell you if you have made a learning step too big.

If your dog is able to relax and show you a desired behaviour within a few repetitions of an approximation, then you are doing well. If you have done six repetitions of an approximation (learning step) and the dog is getting increasingly agitated as you proceed or is trying to leave the area, you need to make the task easier, by breaking it down into smaller steps, so it is achievable by the dog. You must also observe your dog when you are in new locations.

Changing locations means that the dog may be very distracted by the environment, and become very active - sometimes he will resemble a whirling dervish more than the dog you know at home! Really work on your Restraint and Eye Contact and Impulse Control exercises to help gain control of these situations quickly. The over-active dog is telling you that she is a bit overwhelmed at this moment and needs the familiarity of known behaviours that *activate a thinking, concentrating state to help to calm her down*. Your observations of your dog's behaviour will tell you if you are overwhelming her too frequently.

If all your training sessions end up in frustration, you need to break each behaviour down in tinier steps. That is why I give you the Protocols in a step-by-step fashion. People

who haven't done extensive dog training know they should do this, but really don't know what a "step" consists of from the dog's point of view. The video content I've included will be a great help, because you will be able to see the reactions and responses of the dogs while I am training them. ("Reactions" - the dog is not thinking, he is just reacting. "Responses" - the dog is thinking and participating.) The basic rule is: you can move ahead as quickly as the animal will allow you to do so, emphasizing a huge variety of new locations and experiences.

## When Should I Train?

During the day, around the house, you may have several opportunities to do 10- to 60-second training sessions:

- \* Your dog needs to go outside, so before you open the door you will request an Eye Contact behaviour. (Maybe not first thing in the morning with a young puppy...)
- \* You decide to have a cup of tea and, while the water is warming up in the teapot, you have plenty of time to call the dog and do a Sit or Down Stay for one minute. Or you could do several "Down" trials where you are specifically working on a quick response to the verbal cue. ("Down" – "Yes!" Move 2 steps. "Down" – Yes!" And so on.)
- \* If you use the time you walk your dog to train as well, you can advance very quickly. So you could walk 10 steps and ask for a Sit. Then walk another 10 steps and "Down." Then allow the dog to sniff by telling him, "Go Play." Then call him back to you and ask for a Sit after 20 seconds. I love this, because then your walk is interactive, not just allowing the dog to drag you down the street. The more you integrate this into your daily routine,

the more amazed you will be at the progress!

- \* Perhaps every day or every other day, you can put on your calendar to have a 15-minute formal, dedicated-to-training-the-dog, session.
- \* Group classes are a structured way to get you focused on training the dog and can be invaluable for socialization opportunities and “testing” your training in different locations and situations. Do be careful of the instruction and the atmosphere in the class. A free-for-all atmosphere tends to be extremely disturbing for most dogs, as is the class in which dogs are receiving a lot of punishment.

These are just a couple of examples. You will need to decide how to best organize your time. Just remember that the more you integrate these exercises into your dog’s daily living experience, the quicker you will see a change in the dog’s overall conduct.

And I personally have trained dogs for competition work without doing extensive trips off the farm, because I just didn’t have the time. Your dog needs to be exposed to novel situations, but a trusting, respectful relationship can go a very long way in preventing distraction from ruining your work. I guess what I am trying to express here, is that you can cut down on generalization time by taking advantage of the training relationship you develop and how you live with the dog in daily life. I see plenty of dogs who have been socialized to death exhibit extremely distracted attitudes when working.

## Revisiting Generalization

The dog will learn best when he is relaxed and in a familiar environment. It is harder to teach your child Algebra if you choose to take him to a basketball game to do so, right? Same with your dog.

First lessons are easiest to do if you are both in a familiar and safe area, where neither of you is worried. Once the dog can Sit on your cue in the kitchen, though, it is time to take that behaviour on the road! Then move the behaviour into the dining room, then the living room, then the front porch and the back yard, and use Sit on your walks. In this way, your dog will learn how to make small changes of location, preparing her for bigger changes of location.

Each time you take a behaviour to a new location or practice with different circumstances, you are generalizing that behaviour. **Generalizing behaviours will be where you spend the great bulk of your training time.** It takes very little time to train a dog to Sit; it is training the dog to Sit when told no matter what is going on around him that is time-consuming.

If your dog is able to do a 3-minute Down Stay at home, don’t expect total and flawless execution of it the first time you are in a new location or situation. Relax your criteria just a bit, and began by asking first for a 10-second Down; then 30 seconds; then 2 minutes; then go for the 3 minutes.

Once your dog has been able to do the 3-minute Down in at least 10 different locations and under different circumstances (when guests come to the door, for instance), you



can ask for and predictably get that 3-minute Down immediately.

You may be working on several protocols simultaneously. It is not necessary to do one, finish it to completion, then begin the next.

For example: Today in your 15-minute formal training session, you are planning to work on:

- \* Eye Contact
- \* Impulse Control
- \* Sit & Down Stays



My friend, Emily Renz, Sasha & Hannah

**Good luck and have lots of fun with your dog. Training is a team effort, and lots of joy is the name of the game.**



## Collar Touches

### Finding The Front Brain & Staying There

Goal	Your dog will allow you to touch her collar and will allow restraint with the collar without aggression or undue anxiety. The dog trusts the owner.
What it Teaches	You are relieving anxiety about touching and restraining your dog with the collar, reaching quickly over your dog's head and other things that often make dogs uneasy. This systematic desensitization will make for a more relaxed, comfortable and confident dog.
Practical Application	Many dogs are made anxious by, or flat-out become defensive, when people attempt to restrain them with the collar. For dogs to be safe living with humans, it is necessary that they accept touch and restraint from humans.

### The Least Your Dog Needs To Know!

No Pre-requisites

#### Make Your Dog Safe

To address safety issues and also to be able to do simple husbandry and veterinary care, dogs must allow us to handle them. Therefore, approach these exercises with the idea that you are teaching your dog to trust you, even if the circumstances seem a little scary to the dog at first.

For many dogs, people reaching toward them from a frontal position and grabbing their collar is entirely unnerving.

#### Baby Step 1 - Do This To Discover Your

**This is about your dog understanding manners and comfort. It is about YOU understanding how to discover thresholds that your dog has and work accordingly.**

### Dog's Comfort Zone:

- \* Standing in front of your dog, reach quietly for the collar, but don't touch it.
- \* Favorable responses, such as wagging the tail gently, remaining calm, not moving, staying relaxed get the Mark & Treat routine. (See Establishing a Memory Marker & Name Recognition.)

\*If your dog does not accept a reach towards his collar readily, ask for a Sit or another behaviour your dog knows well. Giving your dog a chance to do something he knows well in this instance gives you an opportunity to allay any nervousness and to calm the dog, rather than to make him more uneasy.



- \* Then, attempt the Collar Touch again; but this time, move your hand more slowly and don't place your hand as close to the collar before you Mark & Treat.

The idea is to have an opportunity to Mark & Treat before your dog might feel nervous or pull away or mouth at your hand because he thinks you are "playing rough."

## Baby Step 2 - Touch The Collar

Now that you have discovered the threshold, the dividing line between your dog's Comfort Zone and his Stretch Zone (see **It's All About Being In The Right Zone**), gradually raise criteria, one baby step at a time, until you

can actually touch the collar during one of the repetitions. Remember, you may be able to touch your dog's collar the first repetition, or it might take you 10 repetitions.

**What matters is working systematically, with a deliberate plan, until you are successful and your dog is comfortable and relaxed.**

## What Should I Be Looking For?

- \* Good: The dog remains in position and doesn't move away. A small ducking away (head movement away from your hand) is acceptable.
- \* Better yet: The dog is patient and neutral, but alert and waiting for the

collar grab so she can have her cookie.

\*Super-stupendous: The dog is eagerly looking forward to and actively seeking your hand approaching the collar. She may lean toward you or move into you, seeking the the treats she hopes you have and the attention and the touching she likes.

When you do Collar Touch work, this is exactly the moment you are preparing your dog for - to be safe, confident and relaxed in social settings.





## Journal Your Training (Gather Data)

I would like you to fill out two Worksheets.

1. I would like you to do this Exercise using Positive Reinforcement, described above, and...
2. Negative Reinforcement, described on page 5.

As we go through these basic and simple Foundation Skills exercises, I want you to not just see if you can get your dog to do it. That really isn't even the point on one level...I want this course to do much, much more for you than teach you how to follow a recipe. That is just dog training on the most basic level. And, honestly? Most people really don't ever aspire to reach beyond that. At that level you can win titles, you can even instruct. Most people won't even know the difference when you make the transition up into this next level - **but you sure will.**

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### This course is about you understanding...

...Learning Theory, how it works and why some techniques work better.

- \* It is about putting so many tools in your tool box that you cannot find a situation that flummoxes you for more than a few minutes.
- \* It is about opening your mind and really getting to understand the species better.

Both R+ and R- have a place in training. Figure out when a certain technique might work best. Also, you are working on your mechanical skills too. I now blend R+ and R- seamlessly, often using both at the same time! You wanna talk about Bang For The Buck! You really do get an enhanced result if you do this with foresight and skill.

Many of you are doing this in a sort of instinctive way, without knowing you are doing it. Be able to identify why and when to do what. Then, with experience added into the mix, you will be able to solve any problem any time. Or at least identify what philosophy you want to adopt and be able to identify charlatans at a single glance!



### Collar Touches Worksheet #1 Using an Event Marker & Treats

Can You Do This?	Dates & # of Reps	Comments
I have watched the video and read my handouts on Collar Touches.		
Discover and identify your dog's threshold or Comfort Zone for having his collar touched		
Baby Step #2 Able to touch the dog's collar.		
Now for Challenges to increase safety: Quickly reach for the dog's collar.		When you are successful with touching the collar from both sides, the front and leaning over your dog, continue with the following Challenges, remembering to move at the pace with which your dog is comfortable.
From a step away, step toward your dog and reach for the collar.		
From right in front of the dog, reach for the collar and give it a very slight tug.		
From a few steps away, step toward the dog and grab the collar, giving it a slight tug.		
From beside the dog, take hold of the dog's collar; hold the collar and pull the dog a couple of steps sideways. From in front of the dog, pull her toward you a step.		



**Now let's examine an entirely different way to do this. This technique can be used with any dog that is SAFE and you know will not bite you.**

Sometimes using the Mark & Treat method seems to keep backfiring. As long as you have the treat visible, the dog is fine; but as soon as you try to thin the schedule, the dog gets pushy again.

Or, the treat just seems to keep distracting the dog from the real topic; and every time you reach for him, he's looking for the treat and grabbing at your hand.

This technique will involve R- and will require more handler skill. Remember here, the crucial understanding for you is that ...

**Release of Pressure is the Click - a "Click" already installed by Mother Nature. So it works like a "click" by Marking the Behaviour, BUT is it really a Secondary Reinforcer if we don't have to make the association? Righto! It is actually a sort of Primary Reinforcer-Marker system all in one.**

### **So what constitutes "Pressure?"**

Well, the hand on the collar is a type of pressure, and the reach toward the dog is also a type of pressure.

You are going to use basically the same approximations as for the R+ technique.

### **Approximation (Baby Step) #1**

- \* Have the dog on leash.
- \* Reach toward the dog from a step away, with a rhythmic motion and keep repeating the exact same motion at the exact same distance until the dog does not acknowledge or notice the motion.

Basically he ignores it.

Use your knowledge of thresholds here; don't start right on top of the dog, or you will fail. By Threshold, I mean watch carefully for signs your dog is not totally comfortable or accepting, such as moving away or startling, or trying to dodge your hand.

- \* **Stop** all motion, **become motionless** at
- \* the first intention behaviour you see that indicates that the dog is just not interested.
- \* Repeat that same motion again, releasing the pressure by stopping the motion as soon as you see a good change in the dog's behaviour.

The release comes at the same moment you might Mark the behaviour if you were using a treat.

Do not use a clicker here at all. It will be counter to what you have taught the dog the clicker means.

Now just work each Approximation, breaking them down even smaller as you work, if the dog's thresholds are exceeded at any time.

### **Why the heck would I do it like this?**

I love the elegance and simplicity of R-. Once you get the hang of it and can both identify





what constitutes pressure for the dog at this moment AND you have good timing with the release, it is a method that speaks to the dog profoundly - **it is HIS language.**



These dogs apparently do not have much personal space requirements with one another. Clearly they know one another well.

Would this change if they did not know a dog? Would they look this comfortable? Of course not.

Restraint Tolerance and Bod Handling are all about personal space requirements with humans. It can even give us ways to work with dogs who have huge personal space requirements (space bubbles) with other dogs.

**You are the one with the learning curve here, not him!**

These other reasons for using R-are also valid:

- \* Amazingly effective with some dogs when treats are just not working for whatever reason.
- \* Some dogs find this more salient and less distracting than using treats.
- \* It gives me a way to learn to work with my dog if I don't have or don't want to always use treats for everything we do.
- \* It introduces to the dog that you don't get a treat for everything; sometimes



## Collar Touches Worksheet #2

### Using Pressure On-Pressure Off

Can You Do This?	Dates & # of Reps	Comments
I have watched the video and read my handouts on Collar Touches.		
Discover and identify your dog's threshold or Comfort Zone for having his collar touched.		
Baby Step #2 Able to touch the dog's collar.		
Now for Challenges to increase safety: Quickly reach for the dog's collar.		When you are successful with touching the collar from both sides, the front and leaning over your dog, continue with the following Challenges, remembering to move at the pace with which your dog is comfortable.
From a step away, step toward your dog and reach for the collar.		
From right in front of the dog, reach for the collar and give it a very slight tug.		
From a few steps away, step toward the dog and grab the collar, giving it a slight tug.		
From beside the dog, take hold of the dog's collar; hold the collar and pull her a couple of steps sideways. From in front of the dog, pull her toward you a step.		





# Body Language Worksheet

Use this to help you catalogue Body Language

Describe the environment.

Do you think the environment could have an effect on the dog's behaviour?

Is it having an effect on this dog?

Who is present. (There are some people you cannot see, so you don't know how many, but you can mention how many dogs you see and that you hear people. )

Use this as a guideline as you are teaching yourself to *Read Your Dog*.

	Dog 1	Dog 2
<b>Basic outline or silhouette</b>		
<b>eyes</b>		
<b>ears</b>		
<b>tail</b>		
<b>anything else significant?</b>		