

The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training

Learn how to
create an amazing
canine companion
without using
ineffective or
harsh techniques
all too common in
today's dog
training world.



Cat Spydell

The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training

Keys to Owning a Well-Mannered Canine



Shout out to my original much-loved
(but not terribly well-mannered)
human wolf pack who inspired the

Wolf Pack Guide Book Series:

Jenn, Morris, Alan, and Ben.

Also to "The Werewolf"~

Love you all!

Awwwwooooooooooooooooooooo!

Praise for *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*

~It is with great pleasure that I submit...our positive review of *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*: (It was) an enriching, positive bonding experience for our entire family of four (2 parents and two daughters ages 11 years & 13 years old) with our newly rescued German shepherd named 'MAX.' When we used Cat Spydell's *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* techniques, (they were) simple (and) all our family quickly understood and implemented the techniques with astoundingly effective results. (The results were) especially notable given our dog was a newly rescued 3 ½ year old German shepherd. Our dog 'MAX' still positively responds when we use 'wolf pack' training techniques in new (or) previously encountered situations. We enthusiastically recommend using *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* for a simply positive and effective training experience!

—Laura C. and family

~That (training advice) you shared with me from *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* is amazing!! I use it everywhere now! (Buddy is) already a more grateful dog! You are a genius!!!!

—Susan D.

A Note from Author Cat Spydell

I am excited to offer *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* eBook to anyone who needs dog training guidance, FREE! *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* offers effective and easy tips for dog training. Learn to create an amazing canine companion, a dog that will be welcome anywhere, without using ineffective techniques common in today's dog training world.

That's right: Teach your dog how to become the perfect canine companion, for free! *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* is easy to understand. Better yet, the program avoids typical entrapments and training aids used by most dog trainers.

The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training recommends:

- * NO Treats
- * NO Harsh commands
- *NO Poking collars
- *NO Clickers
- *NO Puppy 'training'
- *NO Physical negative reinforcement

You and your dog will become a relaxed and happy duo using the simple suggestions outlined in the book. Once you learn to master the techniques, you will wonder why you ever paid for an expensive puppy training class or an in-home trainer!

Why am I offering my book, based on decades of experience in animal and dog rescue, for free? Because happy dogs make happy owners. A few 'bad' dogs give all dogs a bad name. My

goal is to create harmony between society and canines so that dogs are more welcome to go wherever their humans go.

It's that simple!

PS: Follow 'wolf pack' tips and tricks, and watch for the upcoming print version of *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/TheWolfPackGuideToDogTraining>

~*Cat Spydell*

Animal Communicator and Author

A WOLF PACK GUIDE BOOK

The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training

c. 2017 Cat Spydell

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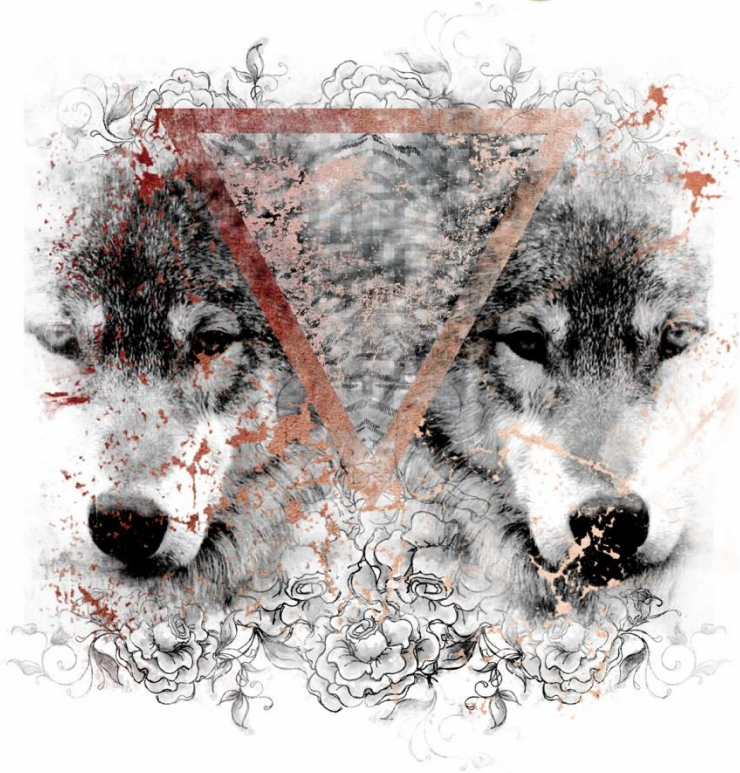
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The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training



Cat Spydell



INTRODUCTION



So you found this book called *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* and took a peek. Thank you for checking it out! *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* is not a book about sports teams, and has nothing to do with training actual wolves, but it is a simple-to-understand dog training book about being the leader in the dog/human relationship so your dog knows the boundaries expected of him or her, and respects you as the commander-in-chief, so to speak.

Dogs are amazing beings. As an animal rescuer who has dealt with more types of animals than I could quickly name, I have found dogs to be the most loyal, easiest to work with, most protective, and also sometimes the funniest, silliest, stealthiest, and sweetest animals on the planet. Dogs rock!

But dogs sometimes behave in a way that cause the owner grief. Here is the reason for that, and it may be something you probably haven't thought much about. You probably know that left to their own instincts, dogs group themselves in packs, like their ancestor, the wolf. If you own a dog, you are already in a relationship that is akin to the relationships found in a wolf pack. Wolves have a hierarchy of position, or rank, within the pack: **alpha** members are the leaders, **beta** members support the leaders closely, and **omega** members follow the lead of the more alpha members in the pack for their survival. Your dog should always be the omega, or lowest ranking member, of your human/canine pack, and you should be alpha, above your dog. Being alpha does not mean that you can randomly boss your dog around. What it means is, you lead in a way that shows the best interest for the survival of the pack. Just as you lead to care for your family or lead to manage your own life. You do it for the dog as well, without over-spoiling, indulging, or allowing behaviors that displease you to occur from your canine pack members.

The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training creates a transcendent animal-human relationship of understanding without language. This communication becomes so established using simple techniques that soon words are no longer needed. The dog and his human become 'one' and understand each other in ways that transcend not only words, but any 'tools'. Therefore, you will not be required to purchase a clicker, buy expensive dog treats, purchase shocking bark collars, or rely on any of the tools many trainers rely on in their quest to master the dog/human relationship.

Because in *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*, mastering is not the goal. Perfect co-existence is the goal, much as it would be in a wolf pack. Wolves are solitary at times, but as a pack, they have benefits that are similar to the dog/human pack. The hierarchy for wolves is of course the alpha wolf, or alpha couple. In your home, you and your spouse, if you have one, should be the alpha couple. Your next-in-line responsible roommate or older child can also be the second alpha (Note: The alpha couple can be same-sex, this status is about being a team, not a couple). Beta wolves are next in line. They are second-in-command to the alpha couple. Do you want your dog to be second-in-command over your toddler? Of course not. Omega wolves are the wolves that are the least successful in the pack. The omega wolf has a role, and it is to instigate play to relieve tension in the pack. Now doesn't that sound like the perfect thing for your dog to be, the omega dog who grabs a ball and asks the other pack members if they want to go outside and play?

Pack benefits include safety in numbers, protection, devotion, and remember, wolves follow a complex group hierarchy. Guess what? So do you, in your pack, with your dog and the people you live with. The dog in the home never gets to be alpha, because dogs just don't need that kind of responsibility.

HOW TO USE *THE WOLF PACK GUIDE TO DOG TRAINING*

If you are in ‘emergency mode’ and want to ‘cut to the chase,’ skip (for now) the discussion parts and go right to the lessons. If you need immediate answers, jump down to the LESSONS portion of this book and start reading.

Look for this paw print symbol and just read those sections and apply it to your dog’s training right now.



The lessons will work! Immediately! You can come back and read the rest of the book once your dog is already well-behaved to understand how and why it happened.

If you are interested in knowing why these techniques work, and if your dog is not causing you too much stress in general, then read through the entire book and take notes. I recommended you keep a record of progress...and pitfalls...in a dog training journal for the first three months, and learn the entire process and theory behind *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*.

Whatever method you decide, remember to stay calm around your dog. Adhere to the old adage ‘Never let them see you sweat.’ Dogs know when you are stressed out. A dog that wants to be alpha to you even knows how to make you stress out. *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* tips and techniques will ensure that you and your dog find a common bond and create a peaceful co-existence and wonderful relationship for years to come!

YOUR PACK

Being Alpha Dog (Regardless of Ownership)

Question: WHO IS IN MY DOG'S PACK?

Answer: EVERYONE WHO LIVES IN YOUR HOME.

Period.

Whether the resident is 6 months old or 95 years old, the family dog must learn the proper way to interact with every pack member, and every human in the home must show the dog what the expectations are. (Note: Parents of small children will show the dog how to treat young children until they are old enough to take control of the family dog).

Recently I discussed some bad dog behavior a client was having with the dog living in her home. I asked her why she doesn't show the dog the behavior she expects when the dog sits on my client's off-limits antique sofa (that the dog knows she isn't allowed on, according to my client). My client said, 'because the dog belongs to my live-in boyfriend. I tell him to tell her 'no', but he doesn't listen.' Suddenly, the boyfriend is the badly behaved one, not the dog, because he 'owns' the dog! My poor client ends up yelling at the dog every day instead of taking charge of the situation.

In her case, I recommended that she keep a slip-knotted rope on hand. When the dog disobeys and sits on her sofa, she is to go over to the dog, calmly slip the rope over the dog's neck, tell her 'no' one time, and remove her from the couch. The dog will learn that my client is the boss and soon respond to the 'no' or other negative command, because whoever holds

the rope on a dog, is alpha by default! It is important to realize: Each individual resident must forge their own relationship with each dog that lives in the home, regardless of who owns the dog. That is how a pack operates. Paperwork regarding ownership is irrelevant, at least to the dog!

The dog that lives in your home is your problem if it is a badly behaved dog. It is badly behaved only because it is in a pack where no one claims leadership, or the leader does not enforce good behavior with the dog in its relations to other pack members, the other residents in the home. (More on this variable later). It is up to each individual to claim alpha status to keep the dog omega, or on the bottom rung of the social hierarchy, regardless of how many different personalities live in the home (pack!).

If you are experiencing any of the following miscreant behaviors from your dog, your dog is alpha over you, or a beta pack member vying for alpha position. If your dog is going after humans or other pets in the home, nipping or biting, growling, showing teeth, showing dominance over family members, being 'bossy,' etc., you have a dog who thinks he or she is in control over the humans.

If you have experienced any of those behaviors from your dog, it is time to remind your dog that being omega in the pack is a happy place to be. The omega pack member just sort of follows along, doesn't have to make decisions, and doesn't have to rally to gain recognition of rank from other members.

The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training will address the concerns of having an alpha-vying dog, and also show you how to train a dog basic commands in a quiet, confident way.

Since you are reading *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*, you probably have a beta dog that may believe it is alpha.

Using simple techniques, it is time to change your dog's thinking using the simple techniques outlined in the book to quiet your dog's mind and allow your dog to enjoy life without the stress of having to feel like he or she is 'in charge'.



QUICK SOLUTIONS



The quickest and easiest way to maintain alpha status over any dog is to place a slip-knotted rope around a dog's neck and calmly but physically remove the dog from whatever situation the dog is in that is not a desired behavior. Another way to maintain control and stop an undesired behavior is to 'tap' your dog gently with your fingertips to remind him or her that the behavior is not allowed, keeping in mind that dogs mouth each other to reprimand one another and show they dislike a situation, without actually biting one another. That is the function of 'dog tapping.' Dog tapping is not something you want to do instead of dealing with a situation, but it works well for unusual circumstances to remind your dog of the rules in a new situation and break focus.

For example, my dog Drinian sustained an injury in the desert on an overnight trip. While the injury was healing, Drinian got into a neurotic 'licking' cycle and tore off every bandage we put on it, delaying his recovery. I tried numerous ways to get the bandages to stay put, but my sneaky big guy always managed to remove them. Finally, I just kept him closer to me throughout my day and nudged him gently with my fingertips when he began licking his paw or tried to remove the bandages. It brought him out of the behavior so that he learned to sit quietly without messing with his cut, and finally it healed. No words were exchanged, I used no crazy 'shame' collars, there was no yelling, just a fingertip nudge is all it took, and he seemed to understand I wanted him to heal the wound and leave it alone.

You may find that a tap works wonders. Perhaps in the vet's office if your dog gets too excited about other canine (or feline!) visitors, a light tap on the shoulder will break your dog's over-focused concentration on other animals. Or if your dog is licking too much, or tearing up toys or other objects,

these are all good times to tap your dog to break the behavior cycle.

Remember, an omega dog is a relaxed dog. Strive for that by being the best alpha leader you can be without going overboard and being hysterical. Show through gentle action how you want your dog to behave!

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR DOG

People pay exorbitant prices to put their dog in a 'puppy class' or obedience class. Participating dog owners are offered 'clickers' (plastic or metal sound devices available at pet stores), or told to bring treats so that they can train their dog how to manage the 'basic skills'...sit, stay, heel, come, and how to socialize with other dogs.

All that is a nice way to spend your Saturday morning, but training a dog in a controlled environment on a leash with strangers is not what dog training is all about. Of all those commands your dog may or may not learn listed above, only the 'come' command is important, or whatever word you choose to get your dog away from a bad situation quickly. The others are robot training commands and not at all essential to your dog's good behavior and acceptability in society. Regarding that all-important 'come!' command, I will have a whole section on how to retrieve and control your dog when he or she is off leash.

I don't like to use the word 'training' when I discuss working with dogs. *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* is more about dog *learning*. Your dog is learning his position in your pack! That is the only skill your dog needs to master. The rest of the bad behaviors will dwindle naturally if your dog is confident and relaxed in his position in your home.

Ask yourself: Why is it important your dog knows how to 'Sit' on command? Most dogs, while they can 'sit' when told to, don't stay in the sit position for long. Every time your dog disobeys and moves out of a position you asked of him, he moves up one notch in the wolf pack rank.

Some older dogs or large dogs or arthritic dogs feel pain when they sit.

A better alternative is to just ensure your dog is calm and quiet when you are stopped and chatting with others. Standing, sitting, whatever, if your dog is beside you and behaving, why exert your power...which is not real power anyway...over your dog by making him sit?

The sit command is best used when you are establishing dominance over your dog. For example, when you are about to offer food, or put a leash on, or need your dog to hold still for a veterinary examination. These are perfect times to give the 'sit' command.

While it is true it is convenient to have your dog sit while you are leashing him, it is just as good to have your dog stand still. Nonetheless, there are times when your dog should sit and stay on command...for his own safety. So I will teach you how to train a dog to 'hold still and quit squirmin'.

Regarding 'heeling'...your dog should walk on lead beside you, not pulling you forward, but with slack in the leash. This action does not need a voice command but can be accomplished by just utilizing the leash and insisting on it by stopping and correcting behavior you dislike. A dog should not ever be allowed to lunge up to a plant to pee without your permission.

When I walk dogs, I don't speak much but adjust the leash so the dog is beside me at my knee. I hold my arm steadily down and do not allow a large amount of play in the rope; soon all dogs, even those that have learned from their owners that it is okay to lunge and pull and act crazy during walk time, learn to just 'be' with me on walks. They do not pull, they do not lunge. We stop. The dog hesitates. I will say, 'okay, go pee' or something (not a command! Just conversation!) and the dog will relieve himself.

Walking a dog is just that: walking! Stopping to allow your dog to mark territory is a secondary thing. When you walk the

dog, the dog is beside you, always. When you stop to allow the dog to sniff and explore, stop first so the dog realizes you are granting permission. Then allow full lead range. It is okay to let the dog pull a bit then as he sniffs and marks territory. Then you gather up the leash and continue in the strict walking pattern. That becomes a natural way to walk, and the dog is more comfortable as well.

Other expectations one should have of their dog is: good manners, to be quiet when told, to not jump up on people, to listen, to easily load up into vehicles and/or get into crates, to allow people to pet the dog, to allow other dogs or people near the food dish, and to be a compliant and pleasant member of society. This book will cover all of these things, and by the end of it, you should be well on your way to creating the dog of the dreams from the dog you love, but may be currently annoyed at!

DOG OWNERSHIP

Remember...

DOGS ARE A BIG COMMITMENT.

Owning a dog is as big of a commitment as getting married, having kids, buying a new vehicle, starting a new career. Dogs are a constant source of pleasure for most dog owners, but the relationship is far from casual. It is like having a family member who doesn't speak your language or look at all like the others. Dogs are beings who need constant attention, companionship, and reminders of their place, and if you offer all that, they will be there, by your side, until their dying day. That is dog loyalty! It is a special relationship to enter in to. Do not take the dog/human bond lightly!

The blind quest for dog ownership is the reason over one million dogs are euthanized in shelters each year. Personally, I never seek out a dog except for letting people know I have interest to adopt one. I would never purchase a dog because too many homeless dogs die in shelters each year. Instead I allow 'Spirit' (insert your favorite deity word) to bring a dog to me if it is the right thing at the right time.

People think dog ownership is no big deal. Worse, they think if it doesn't work out, they can just re-home the dog. That is akin to re-homing your child. Sometimes it works out, but statistically, your lack of responsibility to keep the dog you originally promised to give a home to results in yet another dog ending up in the shelter.

It is a gamble in the shelter. 1.2 million shelter dogs per year do not find another home, and end up euthanized. This is a tragedy that must stop. Dogs are innocent beings. So I believe one way to alleviate the problem is by having a well-trained

dog. Being at one with your dog is the key to happy dog ownership, and that I can help with!

THE BASICS

Here is a quick breakdown of the premise of 'wolfy' dog training, based on how a wolf pack interacts, and how a mother wolf teaches her own offspring. It is quite simple, speaks to the 'wolf mind' within your domesticated pooch, and demands respect from all dogs, regardless of training or personality. *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* book is designed so that those who learn using the Quick Tips could just read The Basics and immediately begin working with their dog to improve behavior. More detailed instructions and even some examples and potential scenarios are included later in *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* for those who like to learn all they can to understand the material well before starting a new training program.

~NO TREATS DURING TRAINING

Training with treats is lazy training. To offer a treat then ask your dog to sit is a pointless act. Why does your dog need to sit for a treat? What are you trying to prove? That you are the boss and your dog is well behaved? In a natural wolf pack setting, other wolves aren't asking their lesser wolves to 'sit and stay' for rewards, and neither should you. You want a harmonious relationship with your animal. How does getting your dog to sit and stay translate to being one with your dog? It doesn't. It is fake 'power over' your animal and a useless trick, and I feel it is akin to getting Johnny Boy to play chopsticks on the piano when Grandma visits.

What is natural? If you and your dog are part of a pack but you are alpha, (a position you must earn), your dog will follow your cues. For example, if you are walking down your street and a neighbor stops to chat, do you tell your dog 'sit, stay' and

then wrestle your canine into that position during the whole conversation?

Here is the natural scenario: You bump into a neighbor. The neighbor begins to chat. You ignore your dog to talk to the neighbor, and within a minute, your dog will be sitting or resting by your feet. That is because you two are a team, and your dog knows that you will be a while and responds by settling into a relaxed state. Simple. No treats needed. No commands needed. Just a quiet understanding of 'this is what we are doing now.' You can of course give your dog treats, because we all know dogs love treats, like people do! Offer your dog treats 'just cuz' but make sure it is not at dinner time, not at a human table, not even in the kitchen. It can be a special moment between you and your dog when you randomly give him a treat he loves, and doing so that way won't leave to neurotic behavior like food stealing, possessiveness over food, or food aggression. Don't ever use food or treats for training purposes and keep meals between dogs separate, don't feed in the kitchen, and don't 'hand feed' your dog. All food and treats go in the food bowl when you, the alpha, says so, not when the dog says so just because she looks cute when she begs with those big brown eyes of hers.

It may sound contradictory, but I do mention a couple of rare instances when the sit command and a possible treat are in order. But not all the time, just rarely, for emphasis on complicated situations, like when you need a dog to sit for the vet, etc.

~NO HARSH COMMANDS

The Wolf Pack Guild to Dog Training uses sounds instead of words to quietly and calmly correct a dog of unwanted behavior. It is unbelievable the impact a simple 'hiss' makes on a dog, or any animal. Think about it. A hissing sound denotes danger. A snake, an angry feline, even opossums hiss when threatened. So hissing when a dog is jumping up on your leg

creates an instant reaction from your dog of assessment. I often make a quiet hiss around dogs that act as if they are about to jump up on me or offer unwanted attention. In fact, I never allow a dog to touch me unless I *invite* it to touch me. If a dog is nearing my personal bubble with a wet nose, I hold my energy steady and give a hiss under my breath. Most humans don't notice. Dogs hear 4 times greater than humans, so the dog hears it. The dog stops to assess, and more often than not, thinks twice about jumping up on me or licking me. The dog has already decided I must be an alpha dog.

You want a dog to await your next command and not do anything without your alpha guidance. You are merely redirecting the dog's energy by hissing. Other sounds *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* embraces are 'ah ah ah' (sort of like Uh Oh, to indicate a change in behavior is necessary). There are a myriad sounds you can make to your canine companion that will elicit a certain response. You can make up your own sounds; the trick is not to overdo it, and keep it consistent. The word 'no' loses its power quickly with dogs.

~NO PINCH COLLARS

Pinch collars are considered a 'last ditch' effort on the part for owners of wily types of dogs. As someone who ran a Siberian Husky rescue for 17 years, I admit I have used a pinch collar, the kind with poking rods that go into the dog's neck when they pull. Now that I have learned the key elements of *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*, I don't recommend pinch collars, or shocking bark collars, to any dog owner. Bark collars border on the inhumane in my opinion. Training your dog using fear technique is unfair to your dog, who trusts you to show you how to be a decent being in this world.

Instead, use a rope with a slip knot when you are first training a pup or rescue dog. The bigger the dog, the heavier

the rope. No collar, just a slip knot rope as the only lead on your dog when you are beginning training. Never pull, but allow the dog to explore until she reaches the ends of the lead. Yes, your excitable dog will lunge and pull too hard and maybe even sound like she is choking, but the rope won't really hurt your dog because the dog is the one creating the adverse reaction and will soon figure out, hey, if I don't pull, I won't choke! Slip ropes are an excellent training tool. Buy the cool collar and leash anyway, because once you have a well-behaved dog that walks well on a leash, you will want to show off that awesome accessory when you retire the rope, which in most cases you should have to use for only a couple of weeks before your dog walks casually by your side with slack in the rope or leash between you.

One final word: If you can hear your dog coming down the hallway because you have a dog license and dog name tag on the collar and can hear a jingling noise, consider taking the collar off when you are not walking your dog. Would you want to wear a choker 24/7? What if it jingled when you walked? What if you could hear it 4 times louder than a human? What if that jingling sound was right by your ears? Think about it. If your dog acts crazy, it could be because such mindless acts like leaving a jingling collar on his neck all the time is driving him crazy!

~NO CLICKERS

Let me ask you something...if you can make a 'clicking' noise with your mouth, why are you paying money for a dog training clicker?

Reserve clicking sounds for changing the momentary behavior. If my dog is resting comfortably by my feet and the neighbor and I part ways, I may make a sound that is a bit like a double clicking noise...just once...to let my dog know we are leaving. It is like saying 'hey, you, let's go' but without having to say anything.

I do talk to my dog, don't assume I am like some robot, just hissing and clicking and not using words! I reserve words for my dog for praise or complicated commands. Dogs don't understand your language right off the bat. Eventually, they learn words (especially 'dinner!' and 'wanna go for a walk?'). I do use some verbal commands for my dogs. Examples: 'Go to bed!' 'Load up!' (to get in a car), etc. I use phrases and words for scenarios in which the desired behavior I want from my dog is not immediate. For example, if my dog is asleep on the back patio, and I want him to get in the car, all I have to do is stick my head out the back door, look at him, and say, 'Load up!' While I gather my belongings inside and go out the front door to the car, my dog will get up, go through the side yard, wait by the front yard gate until I open it, then go wait by the car door until I open it, then climb in, without a leash or collar needed.

Two words- 'Load up'- communicated to him all that information as to what I wanted his desired response to be. I taught it to him by simply saying the words 'load up' every time he got into the car when we first got him as a 4 month old pup. On his own, he figured out to get to the car, he must wait by the gate so I can open it for him. He figured out on his own

where he needed to be to make this term 'load up' a reality, and filled in all the blanks himself. Dogs are smart like that.

A hiss or click sound cannot always convey to my dog what action is desired from him, so sounds are best reserved for simpler acts to represent words like 'quit it' or 'let's go.'

Repeating a dog's name over and over interspersed with the word "oh" is not a command or a reprimand, by the way. If he is rolling in deer poo and you are saying, "Oh, Petey!" repeatedly, he will like the attention and assume the more poo he rolls in, the more words like that you will say. Beware! A clicker won't stop him, either. It will be more like the drum beat to his cha-cha. But you saying his name once, leaning forward, and hissing will get the message across that if alpha ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.

That being said, a 'click' noise made with a plastic clicker to show praise is kinda lame too. When my dog is awesome, I tell him! My favorite phrase for reward is 'What a good boy!' to Drinian, who is, in fact, an awesome boy. I tell him 'you are the best dog ever' and he knows what I mean. Drinian did not arrive at my doorstep an awesomely behaved boy, however, and had some rural country habits that did not fit in with my suburban lifestyle, like running for a mile chasing a coyote after slipping out of our fenced yard, so we changed his behavior by showing him what we expect of him. Praise is a big part of showing a dog when his behavior is correct. Verbal praise and a light pat on the head or back is enough to let your dog know you are pleased with his behavior. You don't need a clicker to train a dog!

~NO PUPPY TRAINING

What is puppy training? As mentioned before, puppy training is a class that offers dog owners an opportunity to get together with their young dogs to try and teach them the basic commands *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* recommends against! Puppy Training can be stupidly expensive and is generally ineffective. Why? Because to meet a dozen strangers and their 3-month old puppies in a parking lot is the most unnatural behavior imaginable and does not reflect any real-life scenarios. It also brings out the insecurities in the owners, and puppies pick up on that. In-home puppy training is equally a waste of money and time. Why? It is equally unnatural for a stranger to come into the home and bark commands (sorry! couldn't help that pun) at someone else's dog. So let's get real. How do you train a puppy? Working one-on-one with a dog owner does work, so that a trainer can show a dog owner the techniques, but it is ultimately up to the owner to make a dog behave.

The best method to train a puppy is simple. The very first thing that you must do is turn off the Mama Love Rays. What the heck is that? That is that LOVE you feel for your puppy. You look at your adorable puppy and your heart swells and you feel giddy inside. EVERYTHING your puppy does is so cute! Look at how she just stole my sweater and ran under the dining table with it! Look at how she just stole my sandwich, omg how cute! Look at how she went into the bathroom and had the cutest little dookie just like she is imitating the humans!

Oh please. YES your puppy is the cutest thing on the planet, and don't even mention 'puppy breath' to me because I may swoon. I get it. Puppies are the BEST. But we cannot allow any of those horrific behaviors to happen at all, because if they happen once, and we are charmed, your psychic little puppy FEELS how charmed you are, then you are creating...a puppy

monster! So be careful. Even the tiniest puppy should not be allowed to bite anyone, even gently or cutely, steal things, poop in the house, or growl at anything other than toys, and only then while playing alone. Nip (sorry, a pun happened again) all bad puppy behaviors in the bud AS they occur at the earliest age. Then you won't really have to train your World's Cutest Puppy, she will be learning as you spend each day together and you will have an awesomely behaved, calm, adaptive dog because as a behavioral crisis comes up, you will be there to handle it and redirect it. THAT is how to train a puppy.

A final reminder: give your puppy as many fun and different life experiences as possible once she is old enough to meet other dogs and people! A dog that has seen the world is generally unphased by anything life has to offer.

~NO NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT

Giving your dog a time out is stupid. Yelling at your dog is idiotic. Hitting your dog is abusive. Repeating yourself over and over (No! No! No! No!) makes you look ridiculous. So don't do those things.

You come home from a long day at work and when you get in the house, Lucky the retriever rewards you with a tipped over kitchen trash can and coffee grounds dragged across the living room carpet. Sure, you are angry. Yes, you want to throttle Lucky. But Lucky is lucky, because you read *The Wolf Pack Guild to Dog Training* so you know, yelling, hitting, grounding, or any other kind of reprimanding for a behavior that occurred hours before is futile and just makes you look like an A-hole (I mean, come on...who left the DOG alone with the TRASH to begin with?)

Dogs need boundaries. It is your responsibility to keep your dog safe. Instead of yelling, hitting, time outs, etc., give your dog a safe place to call home within your home. It can be a kiddie-fenced in area of your living room or the laundry room,

whatever works for your space. Wolves live in dens. Give your dog a den with kibble, water, and a comfortable blanket, or even a crate that she can curl up in while you are away. This should become a happy home to your dog when the humans in your wolf pack are away. This is how a young beta or omega wolf would act; staying near a safety area or den, waiting for the pack to return, not venturing far, but still being on duty. If you don't allow your dog the opportunity to misbehave, you won't have to be upset with your dog. Never hit a dog; that action makes zero sense to the wolf mind. If you must reprimand, redirect the energy instead and create a distracting behavior, like when Lucky is too excited about the feral cat walking by. Distract Lucky with a quick hiss and if the behavior continues, turn Lucky away from even seeing the cat. While hitting is off limits, you can gently and quickly 'poke' your dog in the shoulder near the neck with three fingers if your dog's behavior is escalating and gentle reminders are being ignored. That gentle finger poke simulates the wolf nip...a training technique used by mama wolf to change the current behavior of her 'young 'uns.' Be like the parent wolf always, and reprimand bad behavior in the moment it happens, but no matter what, never strike your pets or scream at them. It just confuses them and makes them less likely to listen to you later, because if a dog can get his human to react that way...you guessed it! The dog just moved up in the wolf pack rank!

DOGS ARE NOT PEOPLE

I am about to blow your mind. How, you may ask? Because I am going to say 4 little words that will hopefully help you change your thinking about the human/canine connection.

Are you ready?

Wait for it...

Here it is!

Dogs are not human.

Wait, what?

That's right. DOGS ARE NOT HUMAN. Yet we act sometimes as if we somehow believe that they are just little furry unusual little humans. We call them man's best friend. We hang out and watch TV with them. We play with them in the park. We take them on trips in our cars and even on planes. They eat with us, sometimes even eating OUR food. We take them on walks. We talk to them about our problems and even hug them and cry on their hairy shoulders. Dogs fit well into our lives AS IF they were human. But they are not. And the sooner we realize it, the easier the transition is for us to maintain an ongoing relationship with our canine brethren.

Why did I just say that dogs are not human, you may be wondering? Of course it is obvious that dogs are not human. They are also not our kids, not our parents, not our siblings. They are animals that have learned to adapt in a human world. And guess what? We humans need to adapt somewhat to their canine world and meet them halfway to establish an authentic, simple, and rewarding ongoing relationship with our trusted doggy co-travelers.

As mentioned before, it is unnecessary for you to teach your dog to 'sit' and 'stay' when you are just standing around and not expecting anything from your dog. These are natural behaviors, and if you and your dog have a relationship built on trust and mutual respect, your dog will AUTOMATICALLY sit and stay for you if you just relax and use *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training* suggestions when you are out in public and chatting with a neighbor on the street.

As with children, humans tend to over-analyze situations, and dogs are psychic and pick up on nuances like worry or concern, and then those negative thoughts are transferred to your canine companion. Dogs sense when 'something's up.' They feel your stress, anxiety, nervousness, and even pain. Let's say you are walking your dog and your neighbor approaches. What happens next? Do you stop and wait for the neighbor to approach in a casual way, or do you go the opposite direction? Why? Stop and think about the answer to this question. Then write your response.

When you are walking Rover, and the neighbor comes toward you, and you tense up, guess what Rover is doing, too? Tensing up. Getting ready for SOMETHING to happen. Being made to be wary. Yes, your dog is wary/nippy/barky/aggressive/hyper because of YOU. Because your dog, on some level, believes that you are the alpha (because you know how to open the food can: That is the only requirement to become alpha in a dog's eyes).

By Following the simple technique outlined in *The Wolf Pack Guide to Dog Training*, you will learn how to have a flawless and stress-free relationship with your dog.

~GETTING STARTED

As you assess to establish where you fit in to your personal wolf pack in your home, I highly recommend that you grab some paper and a pen to take notes so you can show progress and also track what areas you may need to brush up on. Better yet, this process would benefit from your having a journal that you can write notes in so you can look back for a long time to come. I believe that you will find the change in your dog interesting, and also it will give you a reference place to remind yourself of what works best and what didn't go so well for you as you learn to become the perfect canine owner. Of course, some people just want to read quickly and get what they can out of a book, and that is fine, too. The beginning of the book, *The Basics*, is designed for 'read and go' types.



STEP ONE: EVALUATION



Grab your Doggy Journal (the blank notebook recommended in the previous chapter). Sit down and relax a moment. Breathe in and out, think about then release your day, and just 'be' for a moment. Close your eyes even. Now, answer this question. Where is your dog? Is your dog in the room with you? Why or why not? When you released energy, did your dog come closer to you? If your dog is in your home right now, and not with you, ask yourself, is the dog usually not next to me in the home? If so, then you may have some work to do to become a true pack.

Where is your dog right now?

Our dog is a working dog and mostly stays outside guarding our rescue animals in our yard from coyotes, but we travel a lot too and so our dog is often right with us in our schoolbus RV 24/7 on trips, every moment. He is huge. He is hairy. He has to have his head out the window to 'smell' where we are. There are issues. Yet, we have all learned to traverse the traveling dog and human scenario through a series of cues that the dog created, and some I created as well, and some his 'human dad' created. We all know our place. We have a comfortable rhythm and certain expectations that we all follow, and it works to the point that our animals (including a large exotic bird and feral kitten) all travel together in the same vehicle and there are rarely any problems; we have all learned to just be as one. You know...like a pack of wolves.

Answer these questions in your journal:

***Do you travel with your dog or leave him or her at a kennel? Why or why not?

***Do you consider your dog to be a family member?

***Do you let your dog boss you around? For example, if your dog whines for dinner, do you jump up and feed him or her?

***Does your dog eat in the kitchen or have his or her own space?

***Do you lock your dog away when you have company or allow your dog to be part of the scene?

***What is your most frustrating issue regarding your dog? How do you handle it as of right now?

***What do you wish was different in your dog/human relationship? Is there a way to achieve that goal?

There are no right or wrong answers. The above exercise is merely so you can see your progress in a few weeks, and assess what is working for you and what is not. Please get a journal or note pad and write your answers down, so you can begin the assessment of how to create the perfect canine companion. You will be amazed when you look back at the progress you both have made!



STEP TWO: COMMITMENT TO CHANGE



Sometimes it is easier to put up with an unsatisfactory condition rather than change it. Remember the goal with your dog is to have an easy, relaxed relationship based on mutual understanding and trust.

To keep the peace in your dog pack, there are certain things that you should stop doing with your dog if you are doing them now.

- * Don't feed your dog in the kitchen or where your family eats
- * Never feed your dog by hand. Put treats on the ground in front of your calm dog, or in the food bowl
- * Never let your dog bully you by barking until you do a thing, whether it is letting the dog out or giving the dog food. Respond, but wait until the barking stops and the dog is in a relaxed state
- * Never leave your dog hours on end unattended. If you have to be gone longer than 7 or 8 hours, have someone come in and feed/walk/entertain your dog, or send your dog to 'Doggie Daycare.'
- * Avoid allowing bad behavior by predicting it and redirecting the energy
- * Keep your emotions in check when dealing with your dog, even when he or she is doing something that angers you
- * Never yell at your dog or scream commands over and over. You will lose all alpha power if you do so, and your dog will not take you seriously when you ask him to obey

*ALWAYS use one common word to reward your dog when your dog is behaving. The reward word becomes the equivalent of a Scooby snack to your dog after you use it a few times, especially if accompanied by a pat on the head, or a loving stroke on the chest. I use the word “good”...”Good boy!” “Good heal!” “Good sit!” for my dog and the dogs I walk and petsit for.

LESSON ONE: WALK THE DOG

As mentioned previously, the quickest easiest way to maintain control over your dog is to use a slip-knotted rope **instead of** a collar and leash or choke chain. When you have control over your dog by using a leash that prevents your dog from jumping up on people, pulling on you, the dog walker, and anyone else trying to walk him or her, half the battle is won.

If you are not a confident dog walker, wait until your dog is in a relaxed state before attempting to walk the dog. When the dog is relaxed, and not barking or yelping or jumping up and down excitedly, walk over to your dog and slip the knotted rope over the dog's neck. Pull gently so the knot is near but not touching your dog's neck, and ask your dog, "Want to go for a walk?" Your dog may become excited about the word "walk" if it a word already in your dog's vocabulary. Because you have control, don't allow your dog to drag you toward the door or start 'bossing you around'. Maintain calm quiet control.

Do not open the front door and allow the dog to pull you outside and down the steps, risking injury to yourself. Walk with the leashed dog to the door. Then ask the dog to sit. Make your dog EARN a walk every time you go outside. That will make your dog understand, walks don't happen unless YOU say so, regardless of how much he has already been barking, threatening you, jumping around, and making a spectacle of himself. Also, shorter, frequent walks are better than mile or two marathon walks. It makes a walk outside less of an event, and more about establishing territory and having some quiet down time with your dog. Envision walks as a break for you and your dog to get some air and exercise, and then it is not

such a chore if you find it to be one. Even leashing your dog for a trip to the mailbox will suffice to get your dog used to going calmly out the front door.

As you walk your dog around the block, note YOUR triggers. I say “yours” because while you may know that Fido will charge the neighborhood feral cat and bark crazily and the old guy watering his lawn, you will be tensing up as you approach those scenarios. So try and relax and stay calm and envision a different scenario. Did you know you have the power to make your dog walk calmly by a cat, and your neighbor? That not everything has to be a dramatic scene? It’s true. Simply try these following plans:

*Walk a different way. If you know your pooch has a trigger up the street, go down the street instead.

*Keep your dog’s focus away from the trigger. For example, if you are walking by a neighbor’s house and the dog begins focusing intently on the gardener in the front yard, stand in front of your dog, block his view, and pull on him to go a different direction. Cross the street and let him smell the grass in the yard there, but don’t let him gain too much focus on something you know will cause him to react in a negative way.

*Though I rarely recommend treats for training, if your dog is really out of control, but has a weakness for say, hot dogs, go ahead and carry one in your pocket for emergency situations. If Fido wants to pull you and try and chase a cat, pull Fido’s eyes away from the feline and stand between him and the animal, and get his attention with the hot dog until the cat disappears. Do not feed your dog the treat until he is seated or at least calm and waiting for your reward for not chasing the cat. Do this less and less frequently to switch the situation of ‘wanting cat’

to 'wanting hot dog .' The old 'bait and switch' routine works very well on dogs.

Remember, you are alpha wolf teaching the wolf pup how to behave for his safety and the safety of the pack! When you get home, ask your dog to sit or stand quietly once more as you unleash him, and then offer a big bowl of water. Pat your dog and remember to make walks a great experience from the first moment you suggest a walk to the time you get back.

FINAL WORD ON DOG WALKING

I rarely recommend rehoming a dog, because I feel it is like rehoming your child. However, if you truly cannot physically control an animal, because you are either one of these things: Too weak or too scared, then consider finding a safe non-kill rescue or word of mouth to find your dog the best new home possible. Dogs are hard to control sometimes. Sometimes people have health issues or other reasons that they cannot be in control of their own dog. While I mean this as a very last resort, common courtesy and the greater good dictate that if you are not capable of keeping your community or local animal population safe because of your inability to control your canine, do everyone a favor and start over. It's the most kind and fair thing to do.

The only time I recommend euthanasia is for biting dogs. And biting dogs come from fearful owners who can't stand up to their canines and can't control them on walks. If your dog has bitten you out of aggression or someone else, please. There are amazing, perfect dogs destroyed in our shelters every single day. Don't risk tragedy over a bad dog. While I believe all dogs can be rehabilitated, I will tell you from experience rehabilitating a biting dog is not for the weak or inexperienced dog owner, and is left to professionals, although most agree

that once a dog has bitten someone, it will again. It is not inhumane to save a community from tragedy and find a rescue dog that needs you that you will have a better rapport with. Be brave and carefully assess your best course of action for all .

LESSON TWO: SIT AND STAY AND HEEL

I balk at the ‘sit’ and ‘stay’ commands. If you are a dog handler working in a show ring, that is an excellent command for the dog you are working with to know. But your dog does not have to learn these two commands at a military level, like a soldier lined up for duty. It is highly unnatural. Think about it. You have seen photos of wolf packs. When packs rest together, every member is in a different position. Some stand, some lie down, some sit. So when you want your dog to go into a relaxed state, does it make sense to ‘bark’ a command, like sit and stay? That is an unnatural command that your dog needs to technically be released out of that position—by you! It makes more sense for you to just relax your energy when you stop and want your dog to sit. Take a second and release your ‘walking energy’. Even breathe more deeply. Relax. Your dog will follow your cue and do the same. Chances are, without your saying a word, your dog will sit or even lie down in less than a minute.

Understandably, there ARE times when the sit command may be important. The best way to teach it is organically. When you are relaxed and your dog sits on his own, just say “Good Sit!” Enunciate clearly and make sure you keep a slight pause between each word so your dog is not hearing “Goodsit” as one word.

Pick a day when you are home and put your dog on a leash in the house...just a normal collar and leash or harness, whatever you use most days. Then just attach your dog to your belt and go about your day. Two things your dog will learn as you exhaust him with this exercise...to heal, and to sit. And even stay. Why? Because you will be loading the dishwasher, sitting on the couch watching TV, doing laundry, the most boring things to do in the dog’s already most boring house. No outside smells, no outside interference, just like Pooch’s normal days, except normally he gets to sleep while you do all the work. So try it and see what happens. Whenever Fido starts to

sit, say Sit! Then when his butt is on the ground, say, Good sit! Once you see he is settled, say Stay! Good stay! Same with heel. Every time there is slack in the leash, just say, Heel! Good heel! Eventually your dog will get it: Sit equals sitting beside you. Stay means butt on the ground. Heel equals walking beside you. Most dogs will get it in about 4 hours tops. Some take a few days of chore burners. But dogs are smart and will figure it out super quickly. If your dog is tugging, tug back lightly, and when the leash slacks, say, Good heel! When Fido is tired and laying on the floor exhausted and panting and probably impressed by what a hard worker you are, say, Good stay! When Fido gets up, stop him by gently placing your hand on his head. Say, Stay. Then, make him wait to stand up all the way. Then say, good Stay! and release him to a standing position. You will develop a lovely ebb and flow using this exercise. Enjoy your day together, and trust your dog to understand what you want. You two will work it out!

LESSON THREE: COME!

Teaching a dog to come to you is one of the trickiest lessons of all. Why? Because when you need to implement the 'come' command, you already have zero control over your dog. One way to start working on it is by having the dog on a run line. That is a long lead or rope (clothesline works well) strung between two trees and your dog's leash hooked onto the line. The dog has quite a bit of play on a runline and can even, well...run! You can let your dog wander to the far end of it, then practice 'come here, Lola! Come on!' If Lola flat out ignores you, DON'T repeat yourself. Walk over, get Lola, and lead her back to the spot where you were. Then give her a pat, and do it again. Eventually it will sink in that 'come here' involves walking over to the human. You can also substitute the words for a noise, whatever works best for you. I use an arm command when I train the idea of 'come here' because sometimes if an untrained dog gets off lead and decides to take off running, you want the back up reinforcement of SHOWING your dog what you want, even from a distance.

If your dog has made a game out of not coming to you, then you need to STOP using whatever command you are using and find a new one. I used 'Aqui!' (the Spanish word for 'Here!') with my Siberians because some of them were from bad homes and 'come' meant 'Come get beat on' or meant the dog was in trouble. It doesn't matter what WORD you use, as long as you don't set yourself up for failure by letting the word 'grow cold' to a dog so that it is no longer useful because the dog willfully ignores it. Practice makes perfect for the 'Come' command. Practice on a leash, or in a dog park with two people, and in the safety of your own home. Once a dog gets the command, you should be able to call your dog and get him to respond regardless of the situation at hand.



LESSON FOUR: SOCIALIZATION



Many would argue that socialization should be 'Lesson One,' but it is important that you, the dog owner, have control over your dog before trying to socialize him or her. When Fido meets Rover, you should be able to hear Disney music and feel the flowers blooming all around you, it can be such a sweet moment. If it isn't like that when you take your dog out in public, that's all your fault, Alpha Wolf. You are tensing, experiencing discomfort, and sending those signals to Fido. Dogs are psychic and they pick up on feelings and reactions. Especially yours, because Fido is watching you and the alpha position carefully. So let's talk about how to make YOU comfortable on a walk first.

When you leash up Fido, take a deep breath first. Breathe calmly and envision the walk going well, don't worry about anything even if Mr. Jones' evil chihuahua has caused you grief in the past. This action is critical in the process of keeping your own Fido calm. There are real fears out there, sure. But confidence is YOUR job, Pack Leader. So if you are iffy or nervous, so is Fido, and Fido is also thinking that he has to be your back up. Don't make it like that for you both. Relax. Make it fun.

Your dog should be able to go into any situation and meet any other humans or semi-friendly dog with zero incident. Period.

Read up on **Lesson One: Walk the Dog** if you need reminders on how the walk should go. Dogs should be included in your daily routine as much as possible. Bring your dog everywhere. Get your dog used to people, other dogs, dog-friendly pet stores, car rides, people coming and going from your home...everywhere. Your dog is your companion. Reminder that in France, dogs are considered 'living beings' rather than personal property. As of 2014, you can legally leave your

French dog an inheritance. Oui, oui! Mais, I mean, but, in France, dogs are also allowed to venture in restaurants with their owners and sip a latte while contemplating the neighboring table's brie platter. While that may make some Americans' skin crawl to even consider it, the fact is that, you should never put up with any behavior from your dog that is not restaurant-worthy!

Dogs are family members. Make the idea of bringing your dog everywhere the goal, whether it happens or not. Dogs must behave in public just as humans must behave in public. It is that simple. No excuses!

A good place to practice is your local dog park or in front of the neighborhood pet shop. There you are most likely to meet dog-friendly people.

So...what do you do when Fido lunges and snarls at the dog coming at you at the dog park? Simply turn Fido to face the flowers while the dog passes by. Don't let him look. What he can't see can't hurt him. Distract him. It's that simple. Do it every time. He will forget his lathering canine obsession soon enough.

Remember, dogs are like kids. If you don't let your dog misbehave, he won't remember to misbehave, but will replace his habits with behaving well, regardless of the situation!

LESSON FIVE: ANXIETY ISSUES

Anxiety Issues include: growling, showing teeth, nervous barking, trash digging, chewing furniture or other items, destructive digging, any aggressive behaviors, or nervous scratching or itching or licking for no reason, or separation anxiety. These behaviors represent your dog's uprising in the wolf mind. An omega dog does not have anxiety as much as a beta or trying-to-be-alpha dog will have, so recognize that your dog is experiencing way too much pressure trying to stay level in the pack with you, the actual alpha pack member.

Here are some ways to combat the above issues.

GROWLING, SHOWING TEETH, LUNGING OR GOING AFTER OTHER PACK MEMBERS (HUMAN OR ANIMAL)

If you have a dog that bares its teeth at you when you reach your hand near his face or head, you have a serious problem. This is a habit that has been shown ad nauseam on funny video show clips, but there is nothing funny about a dog threatening a human. In fact, while I am extraordinarily disappointed that we have become a society that euthanizes dogs at the rate that we do because there are not enough caring owners to support the rampant unwanted population, I am, in this rare situation, not opposed to putting a violent biting dog to sleep, for his own peace of mind. (Forget about the owner for a moment. I am ALL about the dog's well being in most cases).

Why? Because a growling, biting, snapping dog is a miserable dog that has zero idea of his role in the pack, is unwelcome and has a load of negative thoughts coming toward him by humans all the time, and is a menace and danger to defenseless children and probably other animals. There is no reason to put up with that kind of behavior from 'man's best friend' when

plenty of decent, loving, deserving dogs with amazing personalities that would never hurt a fly are put to death daily. I know this is a harsh reality, but dog bites are serious. They are preventable if the owner cares enough to rehabilitate the dog, but I truly believe that a biting dog is a liability not worth having, even if the intentions of the owner are good and sadly, yes, even if the dog is well loved.

That being said, I mean HABITUALLY biting or growling dogs. Not dogs that growl when they play, or that have bitten their owners once or twice by mistake while learning how to behave in the pack. You should be able to reach into your dog's food dish and retrieve food without reaction from your dog. If your dog has a negative reaction to your doing so, you are not alpha of the pack. The lesson here is to make sure your dog knows who is boss.

A couple of techniques that help with food aggression are to keep the 'food 'dog separate from any other animals or humans at feeding time. Or, if other dogs are eating nearby, have the most alpha member of the pack feed the food issue dog one kibble at a time by dropping one piece of dry dog food at a time into the dog's bowl, thus holding his attention while he is eating.

NERVOUS OR BORED BARKING OR NOISE MAKING

Some dogs become very uptight and whine, bark fast and loud, or make other annoying noises. I have noticed this behavior especially if a dog has different rules in multiple households. I work with a lab, Jimbo, that is an example of a dog that has two sets of rules at two separate homes. His daily life is spent living in a family home where he is pretty equal to all his human pack mates. Jimbo has a lot of leeway and bosses the human family members around: demanding dinner by barking, not staying quietly outside when asked to, (but demanding to be let back in by barking). Not sitting quietly during meals but begging and putting his face in people's plates. Jimbo is a friendly, sweet

dog but just has some bad habits. One reason he is allowed to act this way is that he is a rescue and he had some insecurities when he was first adopted. So the family overcompensated to make Jimbo feel confident. But now he is too confident at home and rules the roost!

Jimbo's family all are working professionals, so he also goes to a doggy day care most days. It is at a neighbor's private home where he is dropped off to play with the neighbor's dog for the day. At that home, because the owners have other small pets, Jimbo was immediately busted for chasing a cat. The home owner didn't need to put Jimbo in his place; their own dog did so, by protecting the cat from Jimbo. Then the owners reiterated by letting Jimbo know, chasing cats is bad. So Jimbo is now low on the hierarchical totem pole there, below the cat, even! So Jimbo spends his afternoons in a happy carefree zone where all he has to do is mimic the behavior of the resident dog all day long. He doesn't have to think about his role. At doggy daycare, Jimbo never barks to be let in, doesn't beg, doesn't do anything but shadow the alpha dog and sit quietly by awaiting instructions from that dog. Everything is perfect in Jimbo's world until he gets picked up and returns to his duty at home as king of the castle. Having worked with Jimbo before, I was fascinated to witness how he is just perfect at daycare...until his owners come to pick him up! Then his worlds collide and his wolf brain can't cope. Jimbo barks, jumps on the door, and makes a big scene when his owner steps foot on the premises. It is amazing to watch this previously well-behaved dog turn into an emotional freak show so quickly just because his humans showed up. Jimbo believes his pack has arrived, not his alphas, so he is trying to regain his hierarchal status. So stay in charge. Your dog won't dare demand anything from you except if something is seriously wrong...like if it's 8 p.m. and dinner was supposed to be at 6 p.m.!

ITCHING, LICKING, SCRATCHING FOR NO REAL REASON

Itching, licking and scratching can be either a physical allergic reaction, usually to vaccines or dog food or local plant irritants, or it can be a psychological problem that the bored or neurotic dog exhibits. If you are noticing this kind of behavior from your dog increasing, check your dog out thoroughly. If your dog smells different or unpleasant, it could be a skin infection or even an ear infection, or allergy. Follow up with your vet to confirm.

But let's say Rover goes to the vet, and it is discovered the itching and licking is not from allergies, fleas, or infection. Then what?

Neurotic itching or licking is annoying and can result in a dog becoming scratched up with bleeding wounds or infected skin, so keep a close eye on your dog. Observe when the behavior happens. Is it while walking the dog? When you are at home working and ignoring the dog? Is it constant? While sometimes these conditions are a result of a nervous weak system in dog breeds that are overbred, it can also be a psychological disorder. A gentle physical nudge is a good way to snap the dog out of the behavior, because often, a dog in the midst of making her own foot into a snack is too busy to hear you say 'knock it off!' Once the momentary chomping cycle is broken by a nudge, then redirect the behavior immediately. Take your dog into the next room or better yet, on a walk. I have a friend whose rescue dog would sit down as soon as we started chatting while she was walking her on a leash in the neighborhood and start chewing on herself. It was hard to watch, but upon a bit of investigation, I learned that the dog had a very traumatic past experience and as an animal communicator, I got a sense that the dog did not have any coping skills as to what to do if the owner's attention was off of her. The best thing you can do is offer a favorite toy or rawhide to the dog when you stop and

chat to redirect the behavior. Sometimes all you can do is redirect; if it is truly a neurosis, it is hard to stop it entirely because it is a canine comfort behavior, like how cats 'knead' on blankets. If your dog is friendly and enjoy car rides, bring her with you as often as you can. It is simple enough to rearrange things like coffee and lunch dates to an outside venue so your pooch can tag along. Distract the behavior while you are with the dog, and just never allow it to occur in your presence.

CHEWING, DIGGING, AND DESTRUCTION AND SEPARATION ANXIETY

If you come home and your back door has been chewed through or your couch looks like it exploded feathers, you have a problem. You have a bored dog, or a dog that has serious separation anxiety. If your dog has separation anxiety, congratulations: You probably have an omega dog already who has no friggin' idea what to do with him or herself when the alpha is away. Suggestions for a howling crying sad alone dog are to give the dog something to 'babysit,' because that is what omega pack members do. It could be a beloved stuffed animal that your dog ONLY gets when left home alone. I recommend highly using toys and play objects and even treats on occasion in a specialized way: When you go to the vet, the dog gets peanut butter on a spoon beforehand. When left alone, the favorite octopus chewy toy. When teaching your dog the word 'come!'--again, use a specialized toy that holds power in your dog's eyes. Keep a lot of varying things on hand for your dog if he or she suffers separation anxiety.

Digging and chewing because of boredom just means that you have a higher energy dog who isn't getting enough exercise. Tired dogs are happy dogs. If you aren't a walker or realistically don't have enough time, find out who the track stars are at the local high school and see if you can pay them to run around with your dog. Dogs can even use treadmills. High energy dogs can really benefit from a game of Frisbee tossing

at a local dog park. I know it is hard to commit to that on a daily basis, so part-time doggy day care at a center where other playful dogs hang out all day is one suggestion for bored dogs. While it is understandable that getting a workout daily is difficult for humans, let alone their dogs, physical exercise is the solution to unwanted destruction, aside from the obvious solution of keeping your dog in a safe enclosed area that is reminiscent of a den that has no dangerous items for your dog to chew up! Remember, the best way to train out a negative behavior is to never let it happen to begin with!

'BAD DOGS': SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE

I have written the following scenario that outlines a common canine personality without focusing on individual bad habits. See if you recognize this behavior in a dog you know. Perhaps seeing the 'big picture' in this example will help create more understanding of the canine psyche.

Let's talk about Fifi. You know Fifi. Your WIFE'S dog. Fifi has every hot pink accessory sold by every pet retailer. The amount of bling in Fifi's daily wardrobe rivals the crown jewels of England. Fifi has several bone china plates to eat off of, that get rotated depending on use, and Fifi goes to the groomer weekly...more than you or your kid do, or ever will. Fifi even has tiny little shoes to fit upon her dainty little (insert small dog breed here) paws so she doesn't get dirty when she does her doody.

You are cringing right now because you know what I am talking about.

The kicker? Fifi snarls at you when you come into the bedroom and lunges for your hand when you reach for your wife. She barks at the neighbor kids and is the most over-protective badass Chihuahua on the planet.

Why?

News flash: Fifi is not in your pack. She is in your wife's pack. You and your kids are omega members of the Fifi Club. Fifi, the tiny cute bling-wearing dog with the vicious grin, is alpha over you and your offspring.

You may be thinking, looking at tiny Fifi: That is just sick and wrong! How did this happen?

It happened because you are a man. And you initially were probably secretly put off by the fact that you somehow ended up owning a tiny girly dog that no self-respecting dude would own. And your wife was so charmed by this little 'harmless' dog that she began to dress her up like a baby doll, putting her in clothes as if she were a long lost Barbie from her childhood. And Fifi kind of liked the attention, the soft cooing noises your wife made to her, and became enamored with the attention that she received when she was out with your wife in public. And when people maybe began reaching up to pet her, she may have growled, and everyone...what?

Laughed.

But nothing in this scenario is funny.

If your wife is laughing when Fifi barks or growls at you, or worse, is saying, 'it's okay, Fifi' every time the dog lunges at a family member or the pool guy, that is where the problem started. Because now Fifi thinks it is okay to do this. And it is not okay.

Fifi is not a little monster because she wants to be. She feels a huge responsibility because she feels as if she is the alpha of this pathetic pack that is your family. Worse...she may even be led to believe she is the alpha male, since your wife is obviously below her in rank, and you are a lowly omega. Fifi is tired and cranky. It is hard to be queen.

This is a family situation that is seen all across America and abroad, and this naughty Chihuahua has been witnessed on every 'bad doggy' television show and on every funny video show, and little Fifi is the crux of the issue as to why dogs end up in shelters. Fifi is a leaderless tyrant!

If this scenario rings true, it is time to take control of the situation! And the Chihuahua.

Fixing an already bad situation is not as easy and preventing one, but with time and patience, this too shall pass.

It is time to take the tiara off the ballerina dog. This must be a slow process in order for Miss Fifi to not really realize that it is happening at first. Unite your pack! Gather your household members together and agree to work on Fifi's issues. One by one, the pack must stealthily strip the queen of her rank.

How to steal alpha status from the Chihuahua?

The Starting Point: Everyone in your pack must change their point of view about Fifi. Fifi is no longer called your wife's dog. She is the family's problem. And by stripping Fifi first of her own conquest...your wife... is a good starting point. The way to do this? Little by little, have your wife designate someone else to care for Fifi. Have a kid give her water. Have them run their fingers in the water before it lands in the bowl. Yeah, yeah, that may at first seem like we are giving the dog kid-flavored water and may seem like a bad idea, but what you are really doing is putting the kid's essence in the drink. In other words, when Fifi is thirsty, she will think of Little Tommy as she is refreshed by drinking water that he poured for her. This eventually makes Fifi immune to Tommy as an omega because now they have an established connection. Your wife should allow others to feed Fifi, and when Fifi goes to your wife for comfort, and begs for leftovers (and she will, because little dogs who run the show don't like change)...have your wife give her quick comfort with a pat on the head, but then then pass Fifi on to another family member, as it is safe to do so!

To keep Fifi an omega pack member, all must agree not to break the rules. If Fifi is running like crazy when someone knocks at the door and growling and lunging at your guest's feet, keep a leash on the doorknob. Calmly hook Fifi up and keep her at your side. Ignore the barking (because that is her job), but never ignore growling or lunging behaviors. If Fifi tries to growl and lunge at your guest, hiss at her and hold her

back, but do not let her approach the guest before you do. Just keep a tight leash and keep Fifi behind you, and ignore her attempts to interfere as you greet your guest. (You can explain to your guests up front that you that Fifi is Under Reconstruction!)

Reminder to never feed Fifi by hand or give her any food that you are currently eating. If Fifi is accustomed to eating sneaky treats handed to her under the dinner table, it is unfair to ask her to go 'cold turkey' on the turkey burgers. So if offering her a treat or special toy or any reward, make her wait, and even make her sit for 3 seconds before dropping the food in front of her. If Fifi barks to be let out and is used to people running to assist her highness by opening the door, fine. But even in that situation, make her sit and wait a couple of seconds before you let her out. Stopping the bullheaded and bossy behavior and regaining control of every situation is key in rehabilitating a princess into a common peasant, which is the status you want your Chihuahua to have in your home.

Remember: Animals pick The One Human to Rule Them All. If you are the Chosen One, you have a responsibility to let your dog know she is not the one in control, you are. And so are the other humans. Therefore, it is up to you to take control over every single situation you and your dog experience together. Don't be a wuss. Take control of your 5 pound dog!

FINAL THOUGHTS

Some things in life are optional. Dog ownership is one of them. Some people are dog people, some are cat people. I love cats and dogs, but also, I rescue exotics and roll with an adult male peacock as part of my pack. Every situation is different. If you are a dissatisfied pet owner, please, please, consider rehoming your pet or find a way to make it work so the two of you can have a happy life together. Analyze the situation. Write about it. Are you 100% happy with your pet? What percentage? Can you cope with that? Pets have a long life span. Make it work! Happiness is important, and having an animal in your life that makes you miserable and causes disharmony in your life with others is ridiculous. There are those who say, "it's me or the dog"... and those people truly love their pets more than they love humans, and I have seen rescuers who sleep in cars with their dogs to keep peace in the home. So yes, some of us are nutty for animals. But the general populace, people who are not rescuers...we rescuers are here for a reason. We get it. Make sure you are a happy pet owner, and your pet will respond in kind and be happy too! Work, taxes, and death are certainties. Animal ownership is a choice. Choose wisely, always.

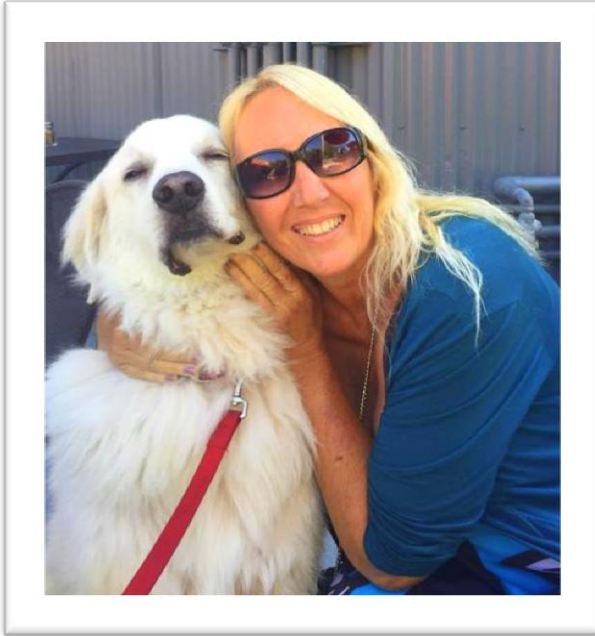
Good luck! I am available to answer questions directly at:

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Thanks for reading!

~Cat

MEET THE AUTHOR



Cat Spydell with Drinian the Big White Dog
#drinianthebigwhitedog

Cat Spydell is an animal communicator, author of two published novels, and a community activist who lives on the Palos Verdes Peninsula outside of Los Angeles, CA. Her books, *The Fairies of Feyllan* and *The Time Traveler's Apprentice at Hollywood High* are available on Amazon. Cat has years of experience as an animal rescuer and dog trainer. She is often shadowed by a giant white polar bear of a dog named Drinian, a Colorado Mountain dog. Cat is the owner of the private animal rescue Pixie Dust Ranch, and she is Rad the Peacock's handler. Cat takes Rad (in the ranch school bus RV called

‘Moonshine the Bus’) to his public appearances at libraries, schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, and to other specialty events where an adult male peacock’s presence is needed. Cat has fine-tuned the art of animal behavior rehabilitation to a format that she shares via lectures and workshops called ‘Transcendent Animal Relationships.’

To find out more, search these hashtags:

#radthepeacock #pixiedustranch #moonshinethebus
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Below: Drinian the Big White Dog with Rad the Peacock



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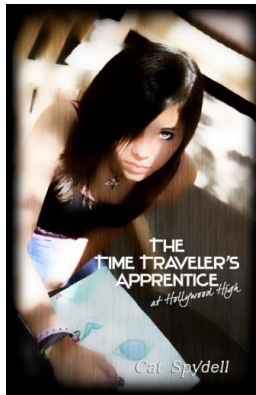
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