



DAACK PACK DOG TRAINING

INNOVATIVE. HUMANE. EVIDENCE-BASED.



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Fear, Anxiety and Frustration in Dogs:

Fear, anxiety and frustration are commonly at the root of not only aggressive behaviors in our dogs but a lot of undesirable behaviors. Sometimes our dogs can have big emotional responses. While it's normal for dogs to experience stress as they go through life, it's important to address their feelings to prevent it from becoming a chronic, overwhelming or generalized feature of how the dog experiences the world. These stresses can start to affect their health, behavior and quality of life, along with our own and those around us. Below are some examples of some first steps and protocols that can be helpful when working with a dog that is experiencing fear, anxiety or frustration.

Initial First Steps:

If exposure was enough for the animal to be okay with the trigger, it would be okay.

- Utilize Positive Reinforcement strategies that allow the dog to maintain choice and control. (Example: Deescalating the situation, instead of yelling when a dog growls.)
- Stimulus Vacation - Preventing the rehearsal of undesirable behaviors by limiting exposure to triggers. (Example: Use window film to cover exterior windows to obscure your dog's view.)
- Listen to your dog's emotional state - if they're getting frustrated, tired, or seem uncomfortable reevaluate the situation and work towards decreasing the stress.
- Be generous with your affection while being consistent and realistic
- You get what you reinforce - Not Necessarily What You Want
- It's easier to replace a undesirable behavior, with a desirable behavior, than to expect no behavior.

Example of some Protocols to start with:

Consent Petting:

For a dog that experiences difficulties with fear, anxiety and frustration a protocol like consent petting is an easy way to help your dog feel more safe in a home and around you and your family. It's a great trust building exercise.

- If an animal seems hesitant or has been previously but will let us pet them, we can teach them that they have a choice in whether or not they are petted. We can pet their chest or under their chin for 3 seconds and then disengage. If they actively engage (for example, pushing their head into my hand) then I'll repeat the exercise. It's important that if the animal doesn't move or disengages that we do not engage. This is all about teaching them the process and to build trust long-term.
- In the beginning I will do this 1-3 times before fully engaging them
- Strangers can get 3-5 successes before proceeding

SMART 50:

With this program, you will take the opportunity to reinforce desirable behaviors that are offered naturally.

- Every morning, please put 50 kibbles (or treats if he won't work for kibble) in a bowl on the counter.
- Over the course of the day, please toss a kibble toward them when you notice them being calm or making a decision that we would like to see of them, especially when noises and other distractions can be heard, or when they are doing something that you like or approve of.
- You can start with just 20 kibble and work up to more every few days

If you have an questions and would like to learn more about our Training services or local resources, please visit our website and reach out to us.

