



## DAACK PACK DOG TRAINING

INNOVATIVE. HUMANE. EVIDENCE-BASED.



### Is your dog experiencing Leash Reactivity?

Did you know that 'Leash Reactivity' is an umbrella term? It's often used to describe a number of situations. It can look the same (a dog barking and lunging at the end of a leash) but can have a variety of factors and other considerations that may change how we work with each individual case. Below are a few example starting protocols that you can work on that can be great first steps for working on this with your dog in a variety of these cases.

**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: Switch out walks for time at a Sniffspot or other types of enrichment.)
- 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
- All behavior serves a function, that makes it easier to replace an undesirable behavior with a desirable behavior, if both serve the same function, than just trying to stop the behavior we don't want.

### Example of some Protocols to start with:

**Connectivity:** The purpose of this protocol is to teach the dog that our body movements is the signal for them to mimic us. We want to get them to the point that as our legs start to move away from them, they're following us. If they understand our body movements as a visual cue to stay with us, it helps us to be more connected!

- Remember, there is no verbal cue or prompt and it's important to give your dog time to respond. Once you get 3-5 successes in a row, remember a success is if we start to move away and they're also moving with us pretty immediately, then we can advance to the next step in the specific environment. It's important to start from the beginning in new contexts to help work on their generalization skills!
  - a. Face dog, back up 3 steps, reward in front of you
  - b. Face dog, side step x3, reward in front of you
  - c. Face dog, walk away 3 steps, reward on the side you want the dog to walk on AS they approach so the treat meets the dog's nose in the 'heel' position
  - d. Restart but increase distance

**Look at That:** "Look at that" is to help prepare the dog or cue the dog to look at a target so they can see it coming or help them build a more neutral response to seeing a trigger.

- Practice counterconditioning to the trigger first
- Then move out of sight of the trigger
- When you move back insight of it say, "Look at That"
- Once your dogs eyes line up with the target mark and treat
- Move out of sight and practice 8-10 times
- Once the dog understands the trigger we want them to look at when we give the cue, then you can add some duration. When doing this you say, "Look at that" mark and reward when the dog sees the trigger and if the trigger does not leave immediately continue to mark and reward as with counterconditioning.
  - Note: Remember to meet the dog where they are at and not to over extend duration if the dog is not ready.

**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.**



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