



DAACK PACK DOG TRAINING

INNOVATIVE. HUMANE. EVIDENCE-BASED.



Stranger Danger

Meeting new people can be tough for anyone. For some dogs, the approach, interaction and even sight of new and unknown people can be uncomfortable. Some dogs may bark or lunge at the sight of a person or become avoidant and hide when new and/or known people approach, they can even become frenetic. Below are a few examples of protocols that can be helpful when starting to work with a dog that experiences this.

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.)
- Create a safe space in your house for when strangers or people may have to be over.
- Two layers of safety between your dog and the person coming to your home.
- Stimulus Vacation - Preventing the rehearsal of undesirable behaviors by limiting exposure to triggers. (Example: Have visitors text or call before they come in to avoid knocking.)
- 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
- 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:

Stranger Protocol:

Make sure you and the client have a variety of unique, high value rewards for training,

- Most commonly done with food, think about if other reinforcers could be helpful, like water/hose, toys, tug, etc.
 - Utilize a clicker for a marker - helps move us to DRA, if trained appropriately. Be cautious of clicker training if the dog has sound aversion.
 - Structure the session ideally outside the home to begin with. In the front (preferred) or backyard.
- We can do this procedure with your dog when people come over, start from a far distance and when they look at the person click/treat. Once they relax and are showing body language like they are calming down (see body language attachments) then move a step closer or have them move a step closer and repeat the process. After 1-5 minutes, based on how he is doing. You could start outside and then move inside.
- We can also use this with the dogs or anything they have a fear response. The dog acknowledges the monster, immediately click/treat. they should be far enough away that they can acknowledge the dog but not so close that they are reacting to it. If we don't have these opportunities yet or you're not comfortable with it yet, no worries! This is something that we will build with him around other people in our 1 on 1 sessions, it's totally okay to wait and just work on management in those environments.

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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