

Teaching Behaviors 101 - Relationships Flourish When Needs Are Met by Diane Schultz

You have this dog. You want to know how to get the dog to be a good buddy, a good family pet. Realizing your dog is making home life frustrating requires you to understand one key component, **needs are not being met**. Neither your needs nor your dog's needs are being met. ***Relationships Flourish When Needs Are Met***.

Dogs need water, food, shelter. They can get that on their own in the wild. When we bring a dog into our home, we have a responsibility to that dog to provide those essentials and so much more! You, their person, is responsible for providing the dog exercise, companionship and training, by being their protective leader. In other words, you must meet your dog's needs for this relationship to flourish. When do your job, your dog has a much better chance of doing his job. You lead, he will follow.

All dogs are trainable, you simply must find what makes each dog tick. Some dogs learn some things quicker than others; every dog is different. We all have strengths and weaknesses; we can use the strengths to improve the weaknesses.

Our goal as teachers is to help you develop a relationship with your dog that makes your dog owning life good. **Understand: Behaviors are always changing; they are not static in dogs or humans. Behaviors are either getting better or they are getting worse. It is your job to help your dog be a well-mannered pet. You are your dogs' coach. Are you ready?**

Teaching Behaviors is a process. Think of it as watching a slow-motion movie picture. When you slow it down, you can see the details, the little pieces of every behavior you are hoping to teach. Initially this concept might sound a bit overwhelming but THINK about that for a minute. Being able to watch it in slow motion in your mind's eye WILL be the gift that allows you to TEACH IT! Be PATIENT with the process, with yourself and your dog! Each tiny step forward is creating a wonderful family pet.

You will hear a lot of words you may not be familiar with. We'll try to cover the most common ones but don't ever hesitate to ask us to explain something you are unsure of!

"Lure": is something the dog wants, like a piece of food or maybe the dog's favorite toy. The dog must want the lure for the lure to work! If the dog isn't hungry, food won't work!

"Luring": food is visible, and you are using it to move the dog into giving you the behavior you want

"Behaviors", "Skills", "Exercises": We dog trainers tend to use each of these words when teaching and they each mean basically the same thing. We could also add the word "trick" in this line up.

Teaching each behavior/skill/exercise:

1. **SEE It:** Have a vision of the behavior you want your dog to do, and **how** you want them to do it!
 - a. If you *can't* see it in your mind's eye, how can you lure it?
 - b. Everyone's ability to visualize is different. Try to break it down into tiny small pieces.
2. **LURE it,** create the behavior you want luring with food and with minimal hands on assistance.
 - a. PRAISE at the same time you are feeding during this step.

3. **NAME IT: WHEN** the dog is doing the ACTON (Behavior) NAME IT!
 - a. **Don't name it until the dog is doing the behavior!** Your words mean nothing at this point, and if you name it before you get the behavior you are inadvertently teaching the dog the "word," your command, means nothing!
 - b. Lure, Get the Behavior & and then Name it when the dog is nearly anticipating what you want then, with that behavior you progress to "create it."
4. **CREATE the behavior.** With this step the food is no longer readily visible, but it is readily accessible.
 - a. This might mean the food is in your hand but not stuck to the dog's mouth.
 - b. You use your hands and leash more to get the behavior and once the dog starts the action you NAME IT. See 1a. above.
5. **ONE COMMAND ONLY:** Once the dog associates the behavior with the "word," (your command) use only one command!
 - a. **You want your dog to learn to behave. This means you want your dog to learn to respond to your first command.** You do not do this by teaching them you will say the word repeatedly and they have a choice to not listen or not follow through.
 - b. When you make the step to "one command", think about your vision. You want the dog to respond quickly. If the dog doesn't, you must be prepared.
 - i. Immediate "hands on" communicates to the dog that you want a quick response.
 - ii. If that car is coming down the road and the ball is rolling across the same road, a "lie down" or "come" is essential in saving your dog's life. How much time do you want to give your dog to not respond?

If you hang around dog trainers long enough, **you will hear a lot of different training terms being used. In addition to what you learned in week one**, here is sampling of some additional terms and what they mean:

"Want to" - create want to in your dog. This means to motivate the dog by using something the dog wants.

"Motivator" - something the dog wants. **"Motivate"** - encourage, inspire your dog to do something

"Turn it on – Turn it off" - this is a technique to teach the dog opposite behavior. Examples are "Jump Up" – "Off"; "Speak" – "Quiet"

"Correct" - take what is and make it right

"Collar Correction" - using a quick check on the collar to get the dog to respond to you. In most cases, this is a quick wrist action. The degree of the "check" depends on the size and behavior of the dog.

"Create a Connection" - finding what will get your dog to connect with you.

"Shaping" is a method of training a dog to do something by waiting for him to offer a behavior and then quickly rewarding the desired behavior. The trainer does not prompt (lure or offer hands on assistance) any responses but waits patiently tiny increments (approximations) and reinforces each step. A positive marker may be used.