

# The Whole Dog Journal™



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A monthly guide to natural dog care and training

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PHOTO BY BONITA ASH, ASHFORD STUDIO



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# Fact V. Opinion

*We offer both, in different forums.*

*This page, as well as WDJ's*

*online blog, are for opinions and personal stories.*

BY NANCY KERNS

**Y**ou may not be aware that WDJ is more than just a printed publication: it's also available to subscribers in a digital form. (To read it online, subscribers simply register for access. Then they can read current issues before they are available in print, and follow links given in articles to back issues and articles.) The WDJ website also contains a blog, where I (and sometimes, guest bloggers) post more personal stories and topics for discussion. It's a place where we can discuss more intimate, emotional, moral, spiritual, and even *judgemental* ideas and opinions relating to our relationships with dogs.

Please don't confuse my editorials on this page, or the blog posts on the WDJ site, with fact-based "articles" in the magazine. Our foremost mission with WDJ is to provide paid subscribers with solid, well-researched information that they can put into immediate practice to improve their dog's health and training. The subscription price you pay gives us the ability to deliver this information independently, without having to consider the feelings or bottom line of advertisers (who support most mainstream publications). We don't want to waste the limited amount of space we have in the print edition on personal stuff that may have no relevance for you. With the exception of this small space on this one page, the magazine is about fact-based service to you, our subscribers. (And sometimes, I offer facts here, too.)

On the other hand, lots of you enjoy reading, thinking, and talking about life with dogs. Some of you want to share personal stories, whether they are negative – like recitations of frustrating encounters with loose dogs, irresponsible owners, bad veterinarians, or incompetent trainers – or heart-warming and positive – like people who do an amazing job at rescue, vets who save

the lives of difficult-to-diagnose dogs, and trainers who rehabilitate formerly frightened, unhappy dogs into well-adjusted members of the family. The place for these things is our blog, as well as the WDJ Facebook page.

The Facebook page begs for an additional explanation. We frequently run links to past articles on the WDJ Facebook page ([facebook.com/wholedogjournal](http://facebook.com/wholedogjournal)), so that people who don't currently subscribe (or have never heard of WDJ) can see what sort of unique and valuable, independent information we deliver monthly to our readers.

We *also* frequently post links on the Facebook page to those personal blog posts, as well as articles or videos produced by other people that we admire. Neither should be confused with our own fact-checked, expert-written articles in the magazine.

Am I wasting too much space on this? I just wanted to let you know that if you don't like or don't want to be exposed to my opinions or stories, or stories and opinions from other thoughtful dog owners, skip this page and skip the blog; our mission of delivering solid, fact-based training and health-building advice will always appear in the rest of the magazine.

NK

**CORRECTION:** In the July issue, an error was introduced during editing of the article on Canine Bladder Infections, resulting in the erroneous description of prednisone as a *nonsteroidal* anti-inflammatory drug. Prednisone is *very much* a steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. We regret the error.



# Rest Easy

## Five things to do if your dog needs cage rest.

BY PAT MILLER, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA

**F**ew things are worse than hearing the vet say those dreaded words: “Cage Rest.” Most often the consequence of an injury or major surgery, it means your dog must be kept under tight restrictions – in a crate, out to relieve herself on leash only, and then back in her crate. Running, jumping, and playing are strictly prohibited; even excessive walking is frowned upon. To make matters worse, this period of restricted activity is sometimes prescribed for as long as four to six weeks. Most of our dogs barely get enough exercise as it is . . . How do you keep a young, active dog under wraps for a whole month or more? Boredom is your biggest enemy. Here are some suggestions to help you through the dark days:

**1 MENTAL EXERCISE.** What a fantastic opportunity to do a whole ton of training! When our young Corgi, Lucy, was laid up for six months (yes, you read that right), we had plenty of time to practice non-active behaviors such as Stay, Nose Touch, Paw Touch, Relax, Find It (low-activity version), Hold It, Rest Your Head, Polite Leash Walking, and many more.

You can also keep your dog’s body and brain well exercised with some of the more sedentary puzzle toys (see “A Puzzling Activity,” WDJ June 2008). Challenging mental exercises can be as tiring as physical exertion! Shaping (see “The Shape of Things to Come,” March 2006) and imitation training (see “Copy That,” October 2013) can be particularly good for that brain-drain effect. Careful behavior choices for these options (small, precise behaviors rather than big, active ones) can keep you and your dog playing by the restricted activity rules.

This is also an ideal time to work on the Karen Overall Protocol for Relaxation with your dog (see [dogdaysnw.com/doc/OverallRelaxationProtocol.pdf](http://dogdaysnw.com/doc/OverallRelaxationProtocol.pdf)). This protocol is laid out as a 15-day

program (although you can take longer if you wish or need to), with your dog learning to calmly sit or lie down in one place for increasing periods of time while you do other things.

**2 CUDDLE TIME.** Put on your favorite soothing “Through a Dog’s Ear” CD (see “Keep iCalm,” June 2014), turn the lights down low, and snuggle up with your shut-in. You might also light an aromatherapy lavender candle or employ a diffuser with a calming aromatherapy lavender essential oil. (It’s important to use only therapeutic-quality essential-oil products. To identify them, see “Smell This, you’ll Feel Better,” December 2004 and “Essential Information,” January 2005.) Your dog will likely appreciate the one-on-one time with you – unless she finds snuggling aversive, in which case, skip this step.

**3 MASSAGE.** Even if your dog’s not a fan of cuddling, she can benefit from some skilled calming massage or TTouch. Get yourself a good book on canine massage, or round up some TTouch resources, put on your calming music CD, light the lavender candle, and start massaging. Remember that calming massage should be comprised of slow, steady pressure, not fast rubbing and patting. Any talking should also be a low, calm voice, not the high-pitched tones we use to increase canine enthusiasm in training routines.

**4 TOYS AND BONES.** Stock up on Kong toys, other similar sturdy stuffables, and raw meaty bones, so you can keep your dog happily engaged when you cannot personally attend to her. Chewing is a great stress-reliever, and can help take some of the angst out of her confinement.

**5 ENVIRONMENTAL AIDS.** In addition to the “Through a Dog’s Ear” music, consider using Adaptil spray, which is said to mimic the calming pheromones a mother dog emits when she is nursing her puppies. Nutraceuticals such as Anxitane and Zylkene may also have a calming effect. Calming herbs for dogs such as chamomile (see “Calming Chamomile,” February 2004) can be useful. Commercial herbal calming products include Composure, PetCalm, Quiet Moments, and Dr. Harvey’s Relax. Your vet may also prescribe a short course of sedatives to get your dog through the first couple of weeks, when strict cage rest is likely the most crucial.

Making use of all five of the above suggestions, we survived six months of Lucy on restricted activity with only one bout of OCD tail-chasing. In fact, her healing exceeded the orthopedic veterinarian’s expectations and we were able to cancel her planned second surgery. Here’s wishing you the same success if you and your dog find yourselves in a “cage rest” scenario. 🐾

*Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, is WDJ’s Training Editor. Pat is also the author of many books on positive training. See page 24 for more information about her dog-training classes, books, and courses.*

**Prolonged cage rest may be just what your dog’s body needs, but it can be hard on his psyche. Help him cope with these mentally tiring and/or relaxing activities.**



# Neutering Without a Scalpel

*Zeuterin renders male dogs sterile, without the risks of surgery or general anesthesia.*

BY JESSICA HEKMAN, DVM, MS

**S**ounds odd to say, but I'm accustomed to standing over a fully anesthetized dog holding his testicles in one hand. Until recently, if I did, in fact, have his testicles in one hand, I'd usually have a scalpel in the other, preparing to neuter him. But on a day not long ago, I found myself armed with only a needle and syringe in my other hand, preparing to neuter a dog who was merely sedated.

We'd all love to see a procedure that can easily and permanently sterilize a male dog without side effects or complications. Historically, surgery has been the most commonly used option in the U.S. Contained in the syringe I held was

an exciting new product, Zeuterin, which permanently sterilizes male dogs (between the ages of three and 10 months) without surgery. Will "zeutering" prove to be a better option? I was attending a training session to learn more.

Zeuterin is comprised of zinc gluconate and arginine, and is injected with a needle into the center of each of a young dog's testicles. The compound diffuses in all directions in the testes, causing permanent and irreversible fibrosis in the testicle, rendering the dog incapable of producing any new sperm. Once the sperm currently in the testicles have been cleared (over the course of several weeks), the dog is sterile.

The needle used for the procedure is a very small one, and the procedure is remarkably painless. The dog does not have to be anesthetized. In theory, a calm dog being "zeutered" by an experienced veterinarian could even receive the injection without sedation. In practice, though, sedation is a very good idea: if the dog moves during the procedure there could be side effects, and dogs who have been subjected to the treatment should receive a small "Z" tattoo on the groin area to identify them as zeutered – and tattoos definitely require sedation.

After the injection, the dog's testicles may briefly swell. Usually, they then atrophy, so that eventually they will be smaller than before, or sometimes, not even easily visible.

For dogs whose testicles do remain visible, though, there can be some confusion about whether they're intact or not. This is the point of the "Z" tattoo, of course – and the company that manufactures the compound *also* sells "I'm Zeutered!" T-shirts for owners who want to prevent glares from the canine-testicle-averse passers-by at the dog park.

## WHY ZEUTER?

The zeutering procedure has some obvious benefits. General anesthesia always carries a small risk, so avoiding it is unquestionably a good thing. And if you can avoid removing a dog's organs, why wouldn't you?

But, as with every medical procedure, there can be side effects to Zeuterin.

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**This doesn't look like neutering, but it is rendering this male dog sterile, without surgery or general anesthesia. A quick injection of Zeuterin in each testicle, with the aid of only a sedative to help keep the dog still, is said to "zeuter" dogs with less medical risk than surgery.**

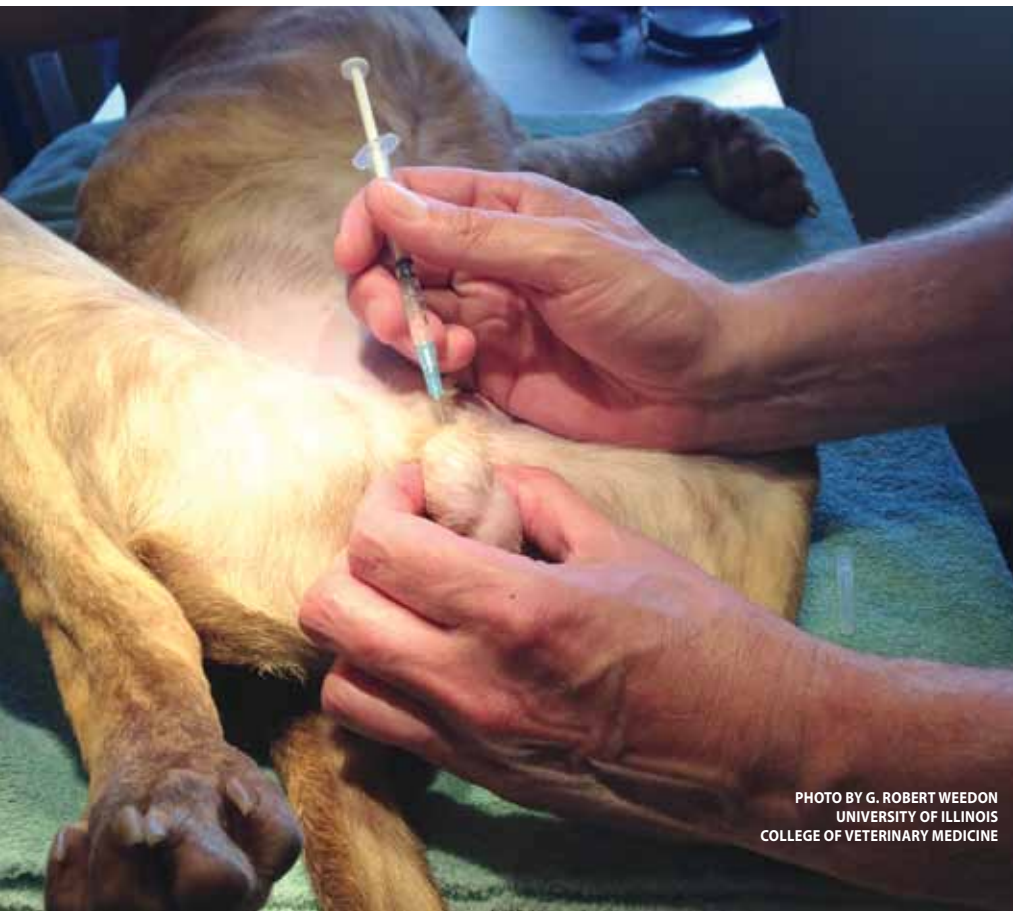


PHOTO BY G. ROBERT WEEDON  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Some dogs can be in pain afterward, for several days up to a week, and some dogs may vomit.

Occasionally, if the compound isn't injected just so – if some of it erroneously comes into contact with the scrotal skin (rather than being injected properly into the center of the testes), the skin of the testicles can become irritated and ulcerate. In bad cases, a dog may have to go under the knife after all, to have his entire scrotum removed in a more invasive procedure than a simple castration would have been.

Of course, surgery poses the risk of complications as well, such as infections of the surgical site, or swelling of the empty scrotum with fluid (known as a seroma).

There is another significant difference between surgical neutering and zeutering, though, and it has to do with testosterone. The procedure you choose for your next male puppy may well be determined by how you feel about that hormone!

## THE PROS AND CONS OF TESTOSTERONE

One of the most interesting things about this product is that it reduces testosterone levels in dogs who have had the procedure by only about 50 percent. Traditional surgical castration reduces the dog's testosterone level to almost zero. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

Testosterone is associated with some really obnoxious canine behaviors: mounting, marking, roaming, and some types of aggression. Veterinarians have traditionally recommended castration for dogs whose owners who want to reduce these behaviors.

The jury is still out on whether a 50 percent testosterone reduction will reduce those behaviors as well as castration does – but then, the jury still hasn't ruled on how effective surgical castration (and its attendant near-total testosterone reduction) is for helping to eliminate the "problem" behaviors in male dogs, either. That said, if you're thinking about sterilizing an animal specifically because of problem behaviors, I'd take the safest route and go with 100 percent testosterone reduction (surgery).

Be aware that there is a growing number of veterinarians and dog owners who believe that the health benefits of testosterone outweigh its potential for negative effects on the dog's behavior. It's

## HISTORY OF ZEUTERIN™

The drug now called Zeuterin™ was briefly on the market a decade ago. Then called Neutersol, the drug was sold to veterinarians with little training or support. Many dogs suffered adverse reactions (such as inflamed testicles, which then required a far more invasive surgery than a conventional castration). The resulting poor reputation of the drug led to the 2005 death of the company then making and marketing the product, about two years after the product's introduction.

Ark Sciences, of Irvington, New York, was founded in 2007 by Joe Tosini, an original investor in Neutersol. Tosini believes strongly in the product's promise, but says that it was rolled out incorrectly. Under Tosini, Ark Sciences bought the rights to Neutersol, and built a team of advisors to help him resubmit the product for FDA approval (which it achieved in August 2012) and to relaunch the product with a vastly improved strategy. Ark Sciences requires veterinarians who want to provide zeutering services to their clients to complete a five-hour course – encompassing a two-hour online course, and three hours of hands-on training (which includes injecting the drug into several dogs).

Ark Sciences has also limited its recommendations for the procedure to dogs between three and 10 months of age who have two fully descended testicles in the scrotum, healthy scrotal skin, and no testicular abnormalities, such as pre-existing fibrosis, tumors, or transmissible venereal tumors (TVT).

According to the company's online FAQs: "While adverse reactions requiring medical treatment occurred in only 1.1% of the dogs, there were minor reactions observed in 6.3% of dogs during the FDA study. Local reactions included testicular swelling (normal reaction to the injection), pain (dogs may resist sitting or may sit with both hind legs open), biting and licking at the scrotum, swelling of the prepuce and irritation, dermatitis, ulceration, infection, dryness or bruising of the scrotum. Systemic reactions included an increase in the white blood cell count, vomiting, anorexia (loss of appetite), lethargy (tiredness or abnormal attitude), and diarrhea.

"Most reactions were seen within the first seven days after the injection. Over 93% of dogs did not show any signs of post procedure pain. When pain was detected, it was most commonly seen in the first two days. No pain management medications were used in the study. Vomiting was most commonly seen on the day of the injection (within one minute and four hours after the injection). It is recommended to withhold food for 12 hours prior to injection to help prevent vomiting, which occurred in 4% of dogs. Your dog's testicles may remain slightly enlarged but non-painful for a few months after the injection. Proper injection technique and owner observation post-injection is critical to avoid any potential undesirable side effects."

a hot debate; some studies have found a correlation between neutering and the development later in life of certain kinds of cancer (specifically osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, and prostate cancer), as well as an increased risk of tearing the cranial cruciate ligament (CCL). Note that while a CCL tear is not life-threatening, it is certainly expensive to fix.

On the other hand, neutering has also been correlated with a longer life, despite the risk of cancer, and a reduced chance

of death by infection.

Warning: the studies regarding the pros and cons of neutering are very difficult to interpret! And many of the effects that are seen may be the result of different levels of healthcare provided by different owners. As just one example, it's possible that dogs who are not neutered are just as likely to develop cancer, but less likely to be *diagnosed with* cancer. This could happen if owners who can't afford to neuter their dogs are also unable to afford veterinary care as their dogs age.





**Castration often reduces (but doesn't eliminate) behaviors that many owners regard as problematic in male dogs, such as humping, urine-marking, roaming, and some types of aggression. If these are not an issue for your dog, you could consider zeutering him instead.**

There may be other reasons that neutering correlates with an increased risk of cancer and CCL tears; and, of course, improved management and access to veterinary care is almost certainly why neutering correlates with longer life expectancies. (By the way, I'm not implying that responsible breeders fail to provide their dogs with good veterinary care, only that responsible breeders are a minority among those who don't neuter their dogs.) Testosterone is a powerful hormone; it's possible that a lifetime of exposure to it has beneficial *and* detri-

mental effects on dogs. Amazingly, we still don't know enough about it. And because zeutering is so new, we know even less about its long-term health effects than we do about surgical neutering.

### **WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE FOR YOUR DOG?**

So in the end, should you neuter your dog, zeuter him, or leave him intact and manage him carefully? There are a lot of factors to consider, and the right decision will vary from situation to situation.

If behavioral changes are your biggest

concern, your best bet is always to choose an animal who is well suited to your lifestyle and to invest time into a good training program. However, neutering may help, as may zeutering.

More and more owners say that the health benefits offered by testosterone are their priority, and so they are leaving their male dogs intact. They should be aware that the intended benefits remain the topic of much discussion and study and few conclusions.

If your veterinarian offers zeutering, ask about her experience with the product and the procedure; personally, I would have a dog zeutered only by someone who is familiar with the procedure. When the product has been on the market for a decade or two, experience will tell us a lot – and who knows, there may be other options by then. 🐾

*Jessica Hekman, DVM, MS completed her shelter medicine internship at the University of Florida's Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program in 2013. She is now studying the genetics of dog behavior in Illinois, where she lives with her husband and three dogs. You can learn more about Dr. Hekman at her blog, [dogzombie.blogspot.com](http://dogzombie.blogspot.com), a blog about dog brains and behavior (and sometimes shelter medicine), or follow her on Twitter @dogzombieblog.*

## **OTHER NONSURGICAL CONTRACEPTION INNOVATIONS**

Zeuterin is a major new product, but there are other products under development that may eventually offer additional options for non-surgical contraception. The two main approaches are chemical contraception, such as Zeuterin or hormonal birth control, and immunocontraception, which actually uses the body's own immune system against part of the reproductive system.

For example, GonaCon is a vaccine that teaches the immune system to target GnRH, the "master hormone" of reproduction. This product has been tested in cats and deer, and usually lasts for several years. Unfortunately, early versions had unacceptable side effects in dogs. It doesn't provide 100 percent reliable contraception, so while it's useful for feral animals, it's not yet ready for use in companion animals.

Another immunocontraceptive that has been used with some success in wild horses is a vaccine for females that works against the zona pellucida, the coating around the egg. This vaccine has been tested in cats with poor results. It hasn't yet been used in dogs.

Some types of hormonal birth control, such as deslorelin, can be implanted into male or female dogs to provide long term but reversible contraception. Like GonaCon, deslorelin targets GnRH, at the top of the reproductive system. This product is marketed for ferrets and horses, and is not commonly used in dogs. Additionally, as with any hormonal birth control, it can have side effects.

Because surgical spays and neuters are so well accepted in the U.S., there is not a lot of pressure to find alternatives in dogs. Most research is targeted at populations that cannot easily be reached with surgery, such as feral cats and horses, and wild deer. There is some interest in finding non-surgical solutions for feral dogs in other countries, but very little funding for such research.

For more information, keep an eye on the Alliance for Contraception in Dogs & Cats at [acc-d.org](http://acc-d.org). This non-profit organization helpfully provides detailed analyses of various products that are available and will keep you up to date about any news in this very interesting and underserved field.

# What's SUP, Pup?

## Stand-up paddleboarding with your dog.

BY LISA LYLE WAGGONER, CPDT-KA, PMCT2

**I'm a water-loving girl. I have a water-loving dog. I love the outdoors. What could be better than exploring local lakes and lazy rivers with my dog on a stand-up paddleboard?**

A stand-up paddleboard (SUP) is similar to a surfboard, though one paddles a SUP while standing. As a former avid whitewater kayaker, when I first saw photos of people on SUPs, I thought, "Why in the world would anyone want to do *that*?" Where was the excitement? The adrenaline?

Fast forward a few months later, when a girlfriend twisted my arm to give stand-up paddleboarding a try on the Tennessee River, which runs through downtown Chattanooga. I quickly realized this sport was much more fun than it looked in those photos. What's more, all of us who tried it that day enjoyed the exercise and the view from the standing position on the board, and we didn't fall in the drink! I had a new puppy, Willow, and I immediately saw this as something that she and I could enjoy together. That did it! Knowing that I could have that kind of fun *with my dog* was my main motivation to get involved in this sport.

If you like the outdoors and your dog enjoys water, stand-up paddleboarding (SUPing) is a fantastic way to spend time together. The added bonus is that it's great exercise for both of you. Standing and balancing on the board while paddling seems to work every muscle in my body, and it seems to give my dog a good physical (and mental!) workout, too. If you tire of paddling, just plop yourself down on the board and take a break. Or

**Stand-up paddleboarding is a meditative yet fun sport that you will love if you and your dog love water, and you have access to calm rivers, lakes, or ponds.**

hop off and take a swim with your dog. It doesn't get much better.

Stand-up paddleboarding began in the 1960s when surfers used the technique in order to take photographs of other surfers. Around 2008, SUPing became popular with the creation of new, modern boards. Since then, the sport has spread rapidly around the world. Today, you can find people and their dogs paddleboarding in oceans, streams, rivers, and lakes. Boards are designed for specific types of water – even whitewater, but always keep your dog's safety uppermost in mind. (I wouldn't feel comfortable with my dog in whitewater, even with her life jacket on.)

Stand-up paddleboarding is a relatively easy sport with few equipment needs (see "Recommended Equipment," page 11). At a minimum, you need a board (with a nice-sized deck pad that extends to the bow so both you and your dog have good

footing), a paddle, a personal flotation device for you, and one for your dog. I recommend that you develop your own basic stand-up paddleboarding skills and gain some confidence on the water before teaching your dog to enjoy the sport with you.

### PREREQUISITES FOR YOUR DOG

Your dog should possess a few traits and skills before you consider her seriously as a paddleboarding partner:

■ **LOVE OF THE WATER.** Many dogs naturally take to water and swimming, so if your dog already loves the water, fantastic. If not, you may be able to develop her enthusiasm for water. Find a lake or pool with a shallow area and bring out the fun! Pair the new experience of two or four paws in shallow water with an enjoyable game of tug, or feed your dog high-value treats while her paws are in the water.

One caveat: Don't ever push or throw your dog in the water. Dogs are always making decisions about what's safe and what's not, so make sure your dog has a pleasant experience near and in the water. And some dogs might not ever take to swimming. Our 6-year-old male Australian Shepherd is one such dog; Cody is comfortable only in very shallow water. This sport would not be for him and that's okay. There are plenty of other activities we can enjoy together that don't involve water.

■ **ABILITY TO SWIM.** Swimming didn't come naturally to our other Aussie, Willow, either, but she developed this skill over time, and to watch her now, you

PHOTO BY BONITA ASH, ASHFORD STUDIO





would never know that she wasn't always comfortable in water. As a pup, she liked wading in the shallows, but wouldn't go more than belly-deep on her own. To help her gain confidence, I cradled her under her belly, let her dog-paddle for a few seconds, then quickly set her back down where her paws could touch bottom. I also used friends' water-loving dogs to encourage Willow into the water.

A canine flotation device can help a dog feel more comfortable. There are a variety of well-made dog lifejackets available. I use the Hurtta jacket because of its secure fit, multiple buckles for adjustment, and wide, stretchable belly band. As with many dog lifejackets, the back is made with a sturdy handle that allows the handler to easily guide the dog in the water or lift the dog out of the water. If your dog jumps or falls off the board, you can use the handle to get her easily back up on the board.

■ **BASIC FOUNDATION SKILLS.** Before paddleboarding with your dog, she should have mastered basic foundation

skills such as sit, down, targeting, wait, and recall. Recall is extremely important, since your dog will be off leash before, during, and immediately after your SUPing adventures. If you've already done some shaping with your dog, these skills will come in handy. (Shaping is a training technique that involves rewarding your dog for increasingly accurate approximations of a desired behavior; see the section on shaping in "Behave!" on page 14.)

## TEACHING LOVE FOR YOUR BOARD & PADDLE

Once you are confident that your dog possesses all the prerequisites for paddleboarding, use classical conditioning techniques to help your dog develop a positive association with your SUP and paddle and to think the board is the best toy in the universe. To your dog, the board and paddle are new, unusual pieces of equipment. Many dogs, including our older Aussie, Cody, shy away from a long paddle when it's held in a vertical position. Go slowly during the introduction

period and move at a pace that's comfortable for your dog.

Because Willow is such a confident dog and was only eight months old when I began teaching her, it took just a few short sessions for her to become comfortable with the equipment. However, if your dog adjusts slowly to new, unusual things or environments, spend as much time as necessary for your dog to show you through her exuberance that she loves the board. You know that "Whoopee!" look you get when you pick up your dog's leash? That's the look you should get when you pull out your board.

If you have room, place your SUP and paddle inside your home in an area where your dog already enjoys spending time with you. This is a great way to pair fun experiences with your new SUP. You can play games with your dog near the board, have fun training sessions near the board, let your dog enjoy a food-stuffed Kong toy beside or on the board, and even feed your dog meals from a bowl on the board.

Do the same exercises with the pad-



You can lure or shape your dog to step on and off the board.



Use a targeting exercise to teach her where to position herself.



Put the board only partly in water to accustom her to movement.



Stay close to shore at first, and keep the exercises very rewarding.



dle. When it's time to pick up the paddle and hold it vertically, enlist the help of a friend to hold and move the paddle while you're feeding your dog treats or playing games with her around the moving paddle. Our home is so small that bringing the board inside wasn't an option, so I did all these things outdoors.

Once your dog is comfortable with the board inside, it's time to do some outside training on dry land. Willow has such a positive classically conditioned response to the board that I can barely begin to pick it up before she's trying to hop on it.

I'm a clicker trainer; I build behaviors by using the sound of a clicker as a signal to let the dog know when she does a behavior I like, and then reinforce her with a yummy piece of food. I also do a lot of shaping, which helps a dog learn to interact with new objects. Because I've done so much shaping with Willow, when I first placed the board on the grass, she immediately began interacting with it. I merely clicked the clicker and gave her a treat for any interaction with the board (a sniff, a nose touch, a paw up, etc.) and before long she was readily hopping onto the middle of the board.

You can use food or a toy to lure your dog on and off the board (see Photo 1, facing page), but you'll want to remove or "fade" the use of any lures as quickly as possible, so your dog understands that it's getting on and off the board that is being rewarded, not just following the lure.

You can use any of these techniques to encourage your dog to hop on and off the board. Once your dog is happily moving on and off the board, add some cues for getting on and off. My hop-on cue is, "Surf's up!" and my get-off cue is "Off!"

## HANDY TARGETING

Stand-up paddleboarding demands that you and your dog learn to balance. You are most stable when you're standing near the middle of the board and your dog is positioned in front of you. "Targeting" is a great tool to use to get your dog to go to the best spot on the board for stability. To target, you teach your dog to touch a part of her body (usually, her nose, paw, or shoulders – whatever you choose) to your hand or an object (such as a "target stick," a short stick with a ball on one end).

I used both nose targeting and body targeting to teach Willow where to be on the board. She already knew how to

## VIDEO LINKS

- ✓ **VIDEO OF STAND-UP PADDLEBOARDING FOR BEGINNERS**  
[youtube.com/watch?v=5-7rDavdJGs](https://youtube.com/watch?v=5-7rDavdJGs)  
[rei.com/learn/expert-advice/paddleboarding.html](http://rei.com/learn/expert-advice/paddleboarding.html)  
[rei.com/learn/expert-advice/how-to-choose-a-stand-up-paddleboard.html](http://rei.com/learn/expert-advice/how-to-choose-a-stand-up-paddleboard.html)
- ✓ **USING SOCIAL FACILITATION TO HELP A DOG LEARN TO LOVE WATER**  
[youtube.com/watch?v=qeOzv1-T7Fs](https://youtube.com/watch?v=qeOzv1-T7Fs)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=amUuNFaBgSU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=amUuNFaBgSU)
- ✓ **SAFETY AND COMFORT WITH DOGGIE LIFE JACKET**  
[tinyurl.com/swimmingpractice](http://tinyurl.com/swimmingpractice)
- ✓ **HAND TARGETING ON MAIDEN VOYAGE**  
[youtube.com/watch?v=zfYDuhf6bwQ](https://youtube.com/watch?v=zfYDuhf6bwQ)

follow my hand into various positions in order to touch it with her nose. Using this technique, I taught her to walk through my legs from behind me and sit right in front of me. With her behind me, I stood with my legs wide apart, placed my target hand in front of and in between my knees, and cued her to target my hand, and then sit. Voila! She was right where she needed to be (see Photo 2). Once she was reliably moving through my legs and into a sit, I added the cue, "Peek!"

This exercise came in handy when SUP training on land to help me position her body where I wanted her to be on the board. It was also incredibly useful when we made our maiden voyage on flat water. Excited, she wanted to wander around the board, which made it challenging for me to balance. Having her target my hand was an easy way to position her so that we could successfully paddle around without falling.

Another targeting technique is to use a mat to teach your dog to put her body in a certain place. To start, you teach your dog to sit and wait with her entire body on a mat. Practice with the mat in a variety of locations in your home, outside on your porch, in your yard, on a dock, and on grass by a lake. When she understands her "go to the mat" cue, put the mat on your paddleboard – at first, on land! Because your dog has learned to sit and wait on the mat in a variety of places, the exercise should transfer well to your SUP. Begin with a mat large enough to fit your dog's entire body, then decrease the

size of the mat by cutting it into smaller and smaller pieces, until you fade it out entirely.

## ACHIEVING BALANCE

I've had Willow on all manner of wobbly, rolling surfaces since she first entered our home at nine weeks of age, so she already had good balance and was comfortable on a variety of moving surfaces before I started SUPing. When traveling and staying in hotels, I've had Willow hop up on a rolling luggage cart and fed her yummy treats as I slowly rolled the cart around.



PHOTO BY LISA WAGGONER

If you haven't already, help your dog become comfortable with balancing on a moving surface prior to beginning board work on the water. A couple of fun training tools are a wobble board and a FitPAWS Balance Disc. Be creative!

## HIT THE WATER!

Once you're certain your dog is comfortable and has a positive association (that "Whoopie!" look) with the board, the paddle, and moving surfaces, it's time for the water work.

Choose a nice, warm, sunny, calm day on a flat water surface. I'm fortunate to live near many beautiful lakes, but even a small pond can work. Begin with the board partially in the water and partially on land (see Photo 3). Cue your dog to



PHOTO BY  
BRAD WAGGONER

**To prevent falls and frightening your dog before you really get started, sit on the board with your dog and paddle about before you try kneeling; kneel and paddle before you try standing. And always smile!**

get on the board, praise her for doing so, and feed her bits of yummy food the entire time she's on it. When she steps off, stop the "food bar," thus classically conditioning her to better enjoy being on the board than off!

Make her time on the board only seconds at first, then slowly increase the length of time you ask her to stay on the board. You want your dog to have a positive experience, so go slowly. If at any time, she seems uncomfortable, move back to dry land beside the water and continue there until she has that "Whoopee!" look.

Once your dog is comfortable with being on the board partially in the water, place the board fully in shallow water (avoiding any rocks or hard surfaces; see Photo 4 on page 8). While steadying the board with your hand, cue your dog to get on the board. Be fun and upbeat, and praise and reward her as you slowly move the board around. If she hops off before you cue her to do so, no worries. Just begin again and eventually she'll get the hang of it. If your dog seems at all uncomfortable, go back to where she was last happy and successful and spend more

time on that step before proceeding.

Next, sit on the board with your dog and paddle around. Then kneel on the board and paddle around. Once your dog is comfortable riding the board with you kneeling and paddling on flat water, it's time to stand up!

Standing and balancing with your dog on the board is a new challenge for both of you. Either one of you could lose your balance and fall off, so practice doing some fake falls (or just jumping in) and make it a fun experience for both of you. That way, when the unexpected fall happens, you'll both be better prepared.

When you're ready to stand, come up onto all fours (both knees and both hands), positioning your knees on either side of the handle in the middle of the board. Your paddle should be perpendicular to the board and your palms should be on the paddle. Come up on one foot, then the other, by bringing your feet toward your hands. If you're feeling a bit wobbly, your dog may be, too, so continue to be upbeat and praise your dog for being the "best dog in the whole world!"

Be prepared to shift your position

on the board in response to your dog's movements. Ideally, both you and your dog will stay in one spot on the board. Make your maiden voyage very short, praising your dog the entire time, then return to your knees before getting off the board (providing more stability for both you and your dog).

It's natural for dogs to move about the board when they're first learning (yes, even if you've cued them to wait). It's a new, unusual experience for them, so until they learn to be still, you'll need to make minor or even major adjustments when they move unexpectedly. Remember to smile through it all!

Some dogs prefer to ride toward the bow (front) of the board. If this is the case with your dog, move backward a step or two to balance the board so that it tracks through the water with ease. Too much forward weight will cause the bow to dip under the surface. Too much weight on the stern (back of the board) will cause the stern to dip under water and the bow will be too far above the water.

## **SAFETY FIRST . . . ALWAYS!**

As I mentioned earlier, before you ever invite your dog to join you on a SUP, it's imperative that you are comfortable on your board and that you have practiced falling off and getting back on. The more experience you have with practice falls, the better you'll be when the unexpected happens. Always have your dog wear a lifejacket, no matter how well she swims, since you may find yourself having so much fun that you paddle far from shore.



**Practice falling into the water, so it doesn't scare your dog when it happens for real!**



PHOTOS BY BONITA ASH,  
ASHFORD STUDIO

**Practice getting back on the board, too.**





PHOTO BY  
BRAD WAGGONER

**If you've done everything right, your dog should LOVE your stand-up paddleboard! The author's Australian Shepherd, Willow, shows her enthusiasm by trying to jump on the board before it's even in the water.**

Make it a habit to check the weather forecast before you head out. Take the right clothing for the weather, and always remember to bring drinking water for you and your dog.

### READY TO GIVE IT A TRY?

If you think you might enjoy this sport, try renting a SUP first; most surf shops now rent paddleboards and there are many niche SUP shops popping up all over the country, especially in areas with lakes and rivers. Take advantage of a day's rental and find out how fun SUPing can be. If you really like it, then you can look for a paddleboard to buy (new or used; don't forget craigslist.org!), and start honing your skills on the water while doing dry-land training with your dog. Before you know it, you'll be SUPing into the sunset with your favorite furry friend on board. 🐾

Stay tuned for Lisa Lyle Waggoner's *Stand-Up Paddleboarding DVD from Tawzer Dog*, which will be available before the end of 2014.

A passionate advocate for humane, science-based dog training, Lisa Lyle Waggoner is a CPDT-KA, a Pat Miller Certified Trainer Level 2, a Pat Miller Level 1 Canine Behavior & Training Academy instructor, and a dog\*tec Dog Walking Academy Instructor. The founder of Cold Nose College in Murphy, North Carolina, Lisa provides behavior consulting and training solutions to clients in the tri-state area of North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. See page 24 for contact information.

## RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

The following prices are for new equipment. Buying used equipment can help reduce your investment.

### ✓ STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD \$600 - \$1,500

- Boards with extended deck pads are preferable so that your dog has a safe, non-slippery area.
- If the deck pad doesn't extend to the bow, a textured surface on the bow is preferred, though you can add deck padding to either a textured or slick bow.
- Length/weight of the board depends on combined weight of you and your dog.

### ✓ PADDLE \$80 - \$225

### ✓ PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE (PFD) FOR YOUR DOG \$25 - \$75

### ✓ PFD FOR YOU \$50 - \$200

- A paddleboard is considered a vessel by the U.S. Coast Guard, whose regulations require that adults have a Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, or III personal flotation device (PFD) on board when paddling beyond the limits of swimming or surfing areas.

### ✓ PROPER CLOTHING

- You'll need different clothing depending on the weather (wetsuit or drysuit for colder weather, T-shirt and shorts or bathing suit for warmer weather).

### ✓ WHISTLE AND LIGHT \$5 EACH

- These are safety measures should you need to summon help and/or are unexpectedly caught out after dark. There are many waterproof LED lights available for various sports (such as bicycling).

### ✓ SAFETY LEASH/TETHER \$14 - \$30

- A safety leash or tether is recommended in any type of moving water or in ocean surf. If you fall off your board, the ankle leash keeps your board near you. Coiled and uncoiled leashes are available. These are not necessary for lake paddling, though they're nice to have if you're on a slow-moving river or in the ocean.

### ✓ DRINKING WATER FOR YOU AND YOUR DOG \$30 AND UP

- If you paddleboard in salt water, brackish water, or potentially polluted water, bring clean drinking water for your dog, as well as a collapsible bowl. You can carry the water in a collapsible water bottle or wearable hydration pack (such as Camelbak, etc.).

### ✓ FIRST-AID KIT \$15 AND UP

- Should include sunscreen, emergency contact info, your dog's info (including vaccination records) and your vet's contact info.

### ✓ DRY BAG \$3 - \$25

- These are the perfect thing for holding snacks for you and your dog, as well as dry clothing. I've used water resistant "dry bags" from Walmart that cost only \$3 and worked fine, although they were never submerged (the real test of a quality dry bag). More expensive models designed for kayaking and other water sports can be submerged and still keep their contents dry.

# Behave!

*Here are several methods you can use to produce more of the behaviors you desire from your dog.*

BY PAT MILLER, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA

**L**isten to a mom tell her child to “Behave!” You know what she *really* means is “Stop doing that behavior!” Similarly, for a long time in the dog-training world a dog who “behaved” was seen as one who didn’t do much; he just sat or lay quietly around the house. Today, thanks to the shift toward positive-reinforcement-based training and a better understanding of the science of behavior and learning, dog trainers and owners are coming to understand the value of dogs who *offer* behaviors. “Behave” is actually an action word. One of my all-time favorite dog trainer T-shirts says, “Behave!” on the front. On the back it says, “Do Lots of Stuff.”

There are several different ways to get your dog to do lots of stuff. You can **lure**, **shape**, **capture**, **use imitation**, and, yes, you can even coerce and physically manipulate your dog into performing certain behaviors. Coercion was the mainstay of old-fashioned training, and carries with it a high likelihood of unwanted side effects, including fear, aggression, and learned helplessness (shutting down).

Today’s educated, competent, modern, positive-based trainers strenuously avoid the use of coercion and manipulation, relying instead on the first four techniques in order to get their dogs to happily and willingly offer behaviors during the training process.

Keep in mind that getting the dog to do something is just the *beginning* of that process. In order to “train” a behavior, you start by getting it to happen; once you are able to get your dog to perform a certain behavior (using any of the methods described in this article) you reward and thus *reinforce* it, so as to increase its frequency. The next step is to associate the behavior with a cue, which will replace whatever you originally did to get the behavior. This is an important step; many amateur trainers fail to ever “fade” (eliminate) whatever method they used to originally get the dog to perform the behavior, and the dog never manages to figure out the cue.

The goal is to get the dog to quickly realize and reliably understand that the *cue* – not the luring or shaping, etc. – indicates that he has an immediate opportunity to earn a reward for performing a specific behavior. (Act now! Limited time offer!)

**The methods used to teach a dog to “behave nicely” are the same as the ones you’d use to teach him to perform cute tricks.**





## FOLLOW THE LURE

“Luring” involves the use of a desirable object, often food, to entice your dog into doing the behavior you want. To lure a dog to sit, put a treat at the end of his nose and raise the treat up and back over his head (not too high, he’ll jump up instead of sitting!). To lure a sitting dog into a stand, put the treat in front of his nose and move it away from him, parallel to the ground. To lure him into your car, take his favorite toy, get in the car yourself, and show him the toy. Squeak it, bounce it, and/or toss it in the air to increase its value.

You can also lure-shape, which means luring and reinforcing pieces of the behavior until the dog can do the complete behavior. Since many dogs won’t lure all the way down to the ground on the first try, we often use lure-shaping to get a dog to lie down. While luring is frowned upon by some trainers, especially by shaping “purists,” it can be an effective way to get a behavior relatively quickly.

### ■ DISADVANTAGES OF LURING

- Dog and human can become dependent on the presence of the lure to get the behavior. The dog



**Trainer Sandi Thompson (Bravo!Pup, Berkeley, CA) uses a food lure in her hand to get this dog to sit from the down position.**

may learn to wait until the lure is offered to do the behavior. The human may believe her dogs won’t be able to do the behavior without the lure. You must “fade” the lure quickly in order to avoid lure-dependence. (See “Fading the Lure,” page 14.)

- Some humans are not skilled at fading the lure.
- Luring can be seen as a form

of coercion – when the dog doesn’t really want to do the behavior, but because he wants the treat so badly he feels compelled to do it. There may be fallout in the form of increased stress for the dog, or worse.

Example: The dog is fearful of strangers, but his owner has given a stranger a high-value treat and asked him to offer it to the dog. The dog doesn’t want to approach the stranger, but he really wants the treat, so he does. He accepts and eats the treat and then, realizing he is way too close to the scary stranger, bites.

We use luring a lot in the Basic Good Manners classes at Peaceable Paws (my training center in Fairplay, Maryland). Novice dog owners tend not to have the patience or the understanding, at least a first, for the complexities of techniques like shaping. I may also use luring with a novice dog who hasn’t been introduced to shaping, if I need to get a behavior quickly for some reason, and don’t have time to teach him the concept of shaping or imitation.

## TRAINING TERMS EXPLAINED: “CLICK AND TREAT”

“Click and treat” – This term is used by many trainers who use positive reinforcement as a major tool in their training toolbox – even if they don’t actually use a clicker!

To “click” is to use a consistent signal – often, but not always the “click” of a clicker – to let the dog know that the thing he *just* did just earned him a reward. In order to be effective, this signal needs to be sharp and discrete, as it’s being used to “mark” the desired behavior as cleanly as possible. Clickers make a distinctive and highly consistent sound, which is more effective than a sound that changes each time in pitch and tone, but most dogs are capable of understanding and lumping together similar-sounding or similar-looking signals.

Audible signals (such as a click or a spoken word, such as “Yes!”) are the easiest for many handlers to use, but visible signals are needed for deaf dogs (or senior dogs who are on their way to deafness). Many trainers of deaf dogs use the flash of a small flashlight or a thumbs-up gesture as their marker signal.

In almost every article we present about training, we use the word “click” to indicate the use of a marker signal, but you can

mentally replace it with whatever marker you prefer.

As to the “treat” – The click or other marker is followed, every time, as immediately as possible, with a reward. Most dogs like food, and are willing to work for bits of high-value, super-yummy food, like chicken, roast beef, hot dogs, cheese, etc. But some dogs are more highly motivated by toys, and still others by praise and petting. Make sure, however, that whatever you use as a “reward” is truly rewarding for your dog. If you pet him, and he moves away – that’s not a reward, that’s a punishment. His response tells you he does *not* like it and does *not* want more of it. Use whatever rewards rivet your dog’s attention on you.

Often, trainers start a session by “charging” the clicker, by clicking it no matter what the dog is doing, and giving him a treat after each click. You generally have the dog’s rapt attention after four or six clicks and treats! That’s all most dogs need to understand the concept: when he hears a click (or experiences another consistent marker signal), he’s going to get a treat. It’s also usually enough to elicit most dogs’ interest in doing things – offering behavior – in order to get more of those clicks and treats.

## SHAPING UP

“**Shaping**” is the process of breaking a behavior into small steps, reinforcing the dog many times at each step before moving to the next, until, through successively more accurate approximations, you build the entire behavior.

To shape a dog to pick up an object, for example, you might first click and treat him for glancing at it. When you see that he deliberately looks at it in order to make you click and treat, you could click/treat him for looking at it while moving his head very slightly toward it. It might take several steps (numerous repetitions and reinforcements at each step) until he is at the “sniff the object” step. The next step might be to touch the object with his nose, then open his mouth slightly, and so on, until he is picking up the object.

Shaping is a fantastic way to develop a dog who is quick and eager to offer behavior. This makes training new, sometimes amazingly complex behaviors, happen much more easily and quickly than does luring. In fact, there are some complex behaviors you’d be hard-pressed to figure out how to lure that might be relatively simple to shape.

There are actually three versions of shaping:

**1 PURE SHAPING.** You have a goal behavior in mind, you create a shaping plan, and work as described above until you have the full behavior.



Captain Jack Cricket’s owner/trainer Laura Dorfman shaped him to push this pint-sized shopping cart.

**2 LURE SHAPING.** As described in the Luring section above, you use a combination of luring and shaping to get the behavior you want.

**3 FREE SHAPING.** Also known as “101 Things to do With a Prop,” free shaping is an exercise intended to encourage your dog to offer lots of different behaviors – a very useful skill

down the road when you are working to shape complex or particularly creative behaviors; some of the most amusing tricks come out of this exercise. (See “101 Things to do With a Prop” on the next page.) It’s important when doing free shaping to studiously avoid having a behavior goal in the back of your mind, but rather to celebrate (and reinforce) a variety of behaviors.

## FADING THE LURE

One of the criticisms of lure-training is that dog and human become dependent on the lure to get the behavior; if the dog doesn’t see the treat in your hand, he doesn’t perform. It is a valid *and* unfortunate criticism – unfortunate because it is really pretty easy to fade the lure from your training.

The moment you can lure the behavior easily, it’s time to fade the lure. With your treat-hand behind your back, cue the behavior. If your dog does what you asked for, click and treat. If he doesn’t, bring the treat out and lure (or prompt) the behavior as you normally would. Click and treat. Gradually (and variably) increase the length of time you wait after giving the verbal cue before you use the lure or prompt. You *must* give your dog’s brain time to process the information and to send the cue message through the nervous system to his muscles. Watching this thought process is one of the great joys of positive training! Be patient. As long as it looks like he’s trying to figure it out, wait. If he gets distracted or loses interest, try again.

If he still doesn’t perform the behavior, fade the lure or prompt more gradually. Cue the behavior, *pause*, and if your dog doesn’t do the behavior, do a *partial* lure.

For example, if you are working on “down,” say “Down,” wait several seconds, and then bring out your lure and being to move it toward the floor. When your dog *begins* to go down, instead of moving the treat all the way to the floor, whisk it parallel to the ground (so you don’t inadvertently lure him upward) and quickly behind your back, and let him finish the down on his own. Gradually lure less and less, until he’s lying down on cue without any luring.

Note: I am not a fan of prompting with a “pretend” cookie in your hand. You may have faded the actual treat lure, but you have added in an extra step, and deceived your dog in the process. Now he may not believe you when you do have a treat in your hand, and you still have to fade the empty hand prompt.



## 101 THINGS TO DO WITH A PROP

This exercise started out as “101 Things to do With a Box.” Then trainers realized it doesn’t have to be a box, you can play “101 Things to Do” with any prop – a traffic cone, a stool, a metal pan, a child’s wagon, or . . . ? The goal is to encourage your dog to offer behaviors until he has a large repertoire. Then, in the future, when you are trying to shape a specific behavior, he will give you lots of behaviors to choose from.



Your dog can be on leash or off (if he’ll stay with you). Set a chair a few feet back from the box or object, sit in the chair, and wait. (I use a “Do it!” cue to

**Click/treat every new variant your dog tries: tapping the box with a paw or nose; stepping in with one, two, three, or four paws; sitting inside it; pushing it across the floor; and so on.**

let my dog know the game is on.) If your dog glances toward the box, leans toward it, steps toward it – *anything* – click and feed him a treat. Look for tiny pieces of behavior to click and treat – any behavior that relates to the prop – a look, a step, a sniff, a push . . .

You have no specific goal in mind, and you don’t have to build up to a behavior – in fact you shouldn’t; random behaviors are desirable. If your dog seems hung up on one particular behavior, stop clicking that one and wait for something else. I use a “Try something else!” cue to let my dogs know I’m not going to click that particular behavior any more.

The more confidently your dog offers behaviors, the more easily you can quit click/treating one thing and wait for another. At some point, if you wish, you can decide on a goal behavior for that prop based on the ones your dog has offered, and shape it into something specific. Don’t be in a hurry to do this unless your dog is already skilled at the 101 Things game!

### ■ DISADVANTAGES OF SHAPING

- Shaping requires patience, good observational skills, and good timing. It can be frustrating for a novice trainer to shape behaviors.
- Novice shapers tend to “lump” (look for and reinforce big pieces of behavior) rather than “split” (look for and reinforce very small pieces of behavior).
- It can be frustrating – and boring – for the dog as well as the human, if the handler isn’t skilled at shaping. If the handler is “lumping,” the dog doesn’t get reinforced enough to keep him playing the game. If the handler’s timing is bad, the dog can’t figure out what on earth he is getting clicked for, and the shaping moves forward very slowly, if at all.

I use shaping almost exclusively now with my own dogs because, once they understand the concept you can teach new behaviors very quickly. At my training center, we also use it in the advanced classes, where students have demonstrated their commitment to and interest in a greater understanding of behavior and learning.

### ■ CAPTURED!

“Capturing” is so easy it almost seems like cheating. You just need to have your reward marker handy (hence the value of teaching your dog a verbal marker *as well as* a clicker), and easy access to treats or some other high-value reinforcer. Anytime your dog just happens to do something you like, mark it and give him a treat. In time, your dog will start to offer the behavior in order to make you click.

Capuring is easiest to do with behaviors that are somewhat predictable. Does your dog always stretch when he comes out of his crate? Be ready to click the instant he does it. This can be a terrific way to train behaviors that your dog offers spontaneously and that are challenging to lure or shape.

### ■ DISADVANTAGES OF CAPTURING

- You can capture only behaviors that your dog offers.
- You have to be quick, with excellent timing to capture

**This cute trick, a variation of the behavior seen on page 12, could have been shaped OR “captured” when the dog wiped his face and was reinforced.**

spontaneous behaviors with enough frequency that your dog gets it and starts offering the behavior. (Note: Dogs who are clicker-savvy and who have done a lot of shaping are likely to catch on most quickly.)

I use capturing (with a verbal marker) as described above when one of my dogs offers a spontaneous behavior that I want to encourage – especially one that might be difficult to shape or lure. (It’s usually something cute.)



Author/trainer Pat Miller recently held a workshop on the “copy this” technique. Owner/Trainer Laura Dorfman models “sit on this step” for Captain Jack Cricket.



And voila! Jack figures it out! This level of copying behavior occurred after just two days of learning foundation imitation concepts.



Sandra Goodstein was looking for a “paws in the air” behavior from her Aussie, Ash.



And Ash almost gets it. At this stage Ash still needed a little prompting to offer the “paws up” behavior.

## CLEARLY AN IMITATION

A spanking-new concept for the dog-training world, “**imitation**” involves teaching your dog a cue that means “Copy what I just did.” While not yet a mainstream technique, it shows a lot of promise, especially for shortcutting the training of complex behaviors. Once your dog has learned the imitation concept, you simply have him sit and watch while you demonstrate the behavior, return to him and give him your “Copy” cue. Then he does the behavior. (For lots of detail on this method, see “Copy That!” in the October 2013 issue of WDJ.)

Imagine for a moment the painstaking process of teaching your dog to run weave poles for agility. Now imagine that all you need to do is have your dog watch you while you run the weave poles, return to him, tell him “Copy!” and sit back and watch him run the poles, letter-perfect. Okay, maybe it’s not quite that easy, but still . . . a lot of service-dog skills and a whole host of other behaviors could lend themselves quite well to imitation.

## ■ DISADVANTAGES TO IMITATION

- It requires an investment of time in the training process to teach your dog the imitation concept.
- You cannot use imitation for behaviors that your dog does with you or to you because you cannot demonstrate them. How would you demonstrate heeling? Or weaving between your own legs?
- You cannot use imitation for behaviors that are beyond human capability. Some humans can do a back flip, for example, but I would be unable to demonstrate that behavior for my dog.

While I have taught our dog Bonnie the imitation concept, I admit that I haven’t taken it further to teach her new behaviors. I am working with a group of four students in their sixth week of class, and their dogs are just reaching

the point where they may be ready to try learning new behaviors using imitation. Stay tuned for updates!

As you can see, there are many different ways to get your dog to “behave” by developing happy and willing participation in the training process and encouraging your dog to offer behaviors. There is no “right” way; you have many choices, depending on your dog, goals, and training skills. If you’re stumped by shaping, or eager to try imitation, find a qualified positive-training professional who can help you add those new techniques to your repertoire. Now – if you want your dog to “behave” – go teach him to do lots of stuff! 🐾

*Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, is WDJ’s Training Editor. She lives in Fairplay, Maryland, site of her Peaceable Paws training center, where she offers dog-training classes and courses for trainers. See page 24 for more information about her classes, books, and courses for trainers.*



# Labels 101

***Don't get overwhelmed at the pet supply store! Here are the top five things to look for on a commercial dog food label.***

BY NANCY KERNS

**R**ecently I visited a fancy new pet supply store\* – seriously, the fanciest store I've ever seen. It boasts a fenced and rubber-matted area for patrons' dogs to play while their owners shop; an area where owners can bathe their dogs (with warm water, cross ties in the raised tubs, shampoo and conditioner on tap, waterproof aprons, cool blow driers, and plenty of towels); an area where visiting veterinarians can provide vaccinations and basic health exams; a climate-controlled, glassed-in area for puppy and dog training classes; and, oh yeah, aisle after aisle after aisle of toys, beds, treats, shampoos, and lots and lots of dog (and cat) food.

I prowled the aisles for over an hour, shaking my head in wonder and appreciation for the amenities in the store, and the sheer volume of quality products therein. It felt heavenly to a dog-food and dog-equipment geek like me. But at one point, as I was examining all the brands and varieties of dog food in the dry food aisles, I found myself crossing paths several times with another

shopper. After the third time that I sidestepped out of her way saying, "Sorry, excuse me" without taking my eyes off the shelves, I finally made eye contact with her. I smiled and said, "I don't work here, but can I help you find something?" She laughingly replied, "If I knew what I was looking for, I'd tell you. There are too many foods here! I can't tell them apart and I don't know what to get!"

I agreed with her that the selection was overwhelming – but in my view, it was overwhelming in a *good* way. I *love* having a lot of products to choose from! But then again, I know what I'm looking for and feel confident when reading labels. When it's time to buy food for my dogs, I find it interesting and even enjoyable to move down the aisles checking ingredients lists and "best by" dates as I go: "No. No. Nope. Wow, no way. Hmm, maybe. Maybe. Yes! Here we go! Yes! Whoops! No again!"

The encounter was a good reminder that I may be in the minority in this; some dog owners feel oppressed (rather than excited) by the sheer number of choices at their local pet supply stores. "Read the label," we always advise in WDJ, but where should they start? What information is trustworthy and important on the label, and what text is hyperbolic marketing gobbledygook? How can a dog owner choose?

Hey, take a breath! Relax! Allow me to explain the top five things to look for on a dog food label.

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**\* This is not a photo of the fancy new pet supply store referenced in the first paragraph (which was Pet Food Express in Roseville, California), but a Pet Supplies Plus store in Indiana. The business pictured here had three store-length aisles and two entire walls lined with dog food. Daunting to some, exciting to others.**



## 1 START WITH THE INGREDIENTS PANEL, LOOKING FOR REAL FOOD INGREDIENTS.

That might sound silly, but only if you've not yet taken the opportunity to read the ingredients on at least one variety of each company's dog foods in your local pet supply store. If you've never done this, do it as soon as you can; you may end up slightly horrified, because the vast majority of dog

foods on the market are comprised of ingredients that bear only a passing resemblance to food.

Look for products with ingredients that you can readily identify as actual food ingredients.

If you couldn't explain to someone what a given ingredient is, it probably isn't a good thing. If you

don't know what may or may not be legal to include in something like "meat and bone meal" or "chicken by-product meal," perhaps you shouldn't feed it to your dog. If you can't immediately visualize what is meant by "corn gluten meal" or even "brewer's rice," you can bet that it's a waste product from some human food manufacturing process – meaning it's been processed in one place and then shipped to another, losing freshness and vulnerable to adulteration along the way.

In contrast, things that sound like whole, real food ingredients are desirable – things like chicken, duck fat, rice, oats, apples, or carrots.

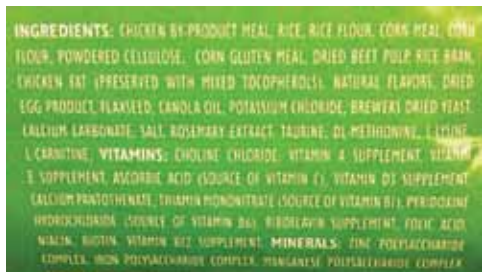
As you are looking for real food ingredients, focus on nouns and ignore the adjectives. It can be difficult to disregard the influence of descriptive words, but at least try to be aware that they are present specifically in order to manipulate you. Apples are great; they don't have to be "fresh, whole, Red Delicious" apples in order to provide beneficial flavonoids and soluble fiber. "Sun-cured" alfalfa is alfalfa; "whole ground brown rice" is brown rice.

Don't concern yourself too much about the ingredients that sound like chemicals that appear low on the ingredients list. Virtually all dog foods contain vitamin and mineral supplements; if you look them up, you'll find that most of those chemicals are some vitamin or mineral source.

Owners who get really into food will be picky about these, too – looking for only chelated minerals and food-sourced vitamins, and eschewing anything synthetic. If you are a label-reading novice, don't worry about any of this for now. There are bigger, far more important details to worry about – things that can have a much greater impact on your dog's well-being.



### Nice! Real food ingredients.



### No! Just ... no.

## 2 LOOK FOR MEAT – THAT IS, NAMED MEATS SUCH AS CHICKEN, TURKEY, DUCK, LAMB, BEEF, PORK, OR RABBIT.

I know it's confusing, but you don't actually want to see the word "meat." "Chicken" can contain only chicken, but "meat" could be just about anything.

The more *named* meat there is in dog food, the better, so you want to see these named meat sources as high on the ingredients list as possible – ideally, in the first couple of positions on the ingredients list. Remember, on all food labels, for humans *and* dogs, the ingredients are listed according to how much weight they have contributed to the food. There is more of whatever is listed first on the ingredients list than anything else on the label, so the first thing on a dog food ingredients list ought to be a (named) meat.

## 3 NOW LOOK FOR THE "GUARANTEED ANALYSIS" BOX AND CHECK THE PROTEIN AND FAT LEVELS.

Do you know how much protein and fat is present in the food you currently feed your dog? You don't?! Well, you should – because otherwise, how else would you know whether the new food you are thinking about buying contains twice as much protein and three times as much fat as the one you have been giving him? Go *now* and look at the label of the food you already have, and note those numbers somewhere.

The range of protein and fat levels in the variety of dog foods present in any given pet supply store will astound you in their breadth. If you've always been under the impression that "dog food is dog food," you will be stunned to learn that one food may have three or more times as much protein and fat than the food sitting next to it on the shelf. There really isn't a single "ideal" number for all dogs; you have to take your own dog's age, breed, size, weight, activity level, and health into account when choosing a food that has the "right" amount of protein and fat. And you have to know where your dog is now – how much protein and fat he is already being fed – to know what effect a new food with different amounts of protein and fat will likely have on him.

Pay no attention whatsoever to phrases including Light, Lite, Healthy Weight, Reduced Calorie, and so on. Look at the protein and fat numbers on the Guaranteed Analysis – that's all, because one company's "Reduced Calorie" food may contain twice as much fat as *another* company's regular Adult food. It's just another place where you have to dismiss the adjectives and look at the bottom line.

Speaking of calories, you can look for a number, but you may not find it (the calorie content of foods is not yet required on dog food labels in every state) – and you may not be able to easily compare one food's calorie content to another product's. One might list kilocalories per cup of food, and another might list kilocalories per kilogram of food. The protein and (especially) the amount of fat listed on the Guaranteed Analysis will be a more useful guide.

## 4 LOOK FOR THE PRODUCT'S "AAFCO" STATEMENT.

You will find the words "complete and balanced" on almost every dog food label – sometimes, in *many* places on the label. But this phrase, which means that the product contains all the nutrients your dog needs, only really counts in one spot: where it references the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). No, that's not



**Nutritional Adequacy Statement:** By Nature Adult Formula is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles for maintenance.

**This photo is many times larger than this sort of statement will actually appear on any product label. You may have to look really hard for a dog food's nutritional adequacy claim, but you need to know what sort of dogs it's adequate for, so bring your glasses and really look for it!**

a branch of the government you've never heard of; it's an *advisory group* that establishes standards that are adopted by (and regulated by) feed control officials in each state. Pet food may not be labeled as "complete and balanced" in any state unless it has one of two possible statements on it: one referencing AAFCO "animal feeding trials" that have confirmed the nutritional adequacy of the food; or the other, indicating that the food has been formulated to meet the AAFCO nutrient guidelines (or "nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles").

We've explained the differences between and compared the relative merits of these two statements in several past articles in WDJ, and discuss them briefly in all of our annual dry and wet food reviews. For now, though, as long as the product has one statement or the other, let's not worry about that. To make sure you are buying an appropriate food for *your* dog, the words you really need to notice in this statement have to do with the dogs mentioned within the statement. Does the statement say the food is complete and balanced for "all dogs," "puppies," or for "maintenance" (sometimes specified as "adult maintenance") only? If it says it's for "all dogs" (or "all life stages"), the product meets *all* the standards. The nutrient requirements are the lowest for products labeled as for "maintenance only."

Note that if a pet food label does not say it is "complete and balanced" anywhere, it should have a statement saying that it is for "intermittent or supplemental feeding" only. It should be obvious that a food labeled thusly should not be used as a dog's sole diet.

By the way, you may have to look really hard for this statement. It might be just a line or two of really small type, located somewhere inconspicuous. But it has to be there by law; check it out.

**5 FIND AND CHECK THE DATE CODE AND/OR "BEST BY" DATE.** Every product label will have a code stamped on it somewhere, identifying where and when the product was made. These batch codes are used to



**Helpful, but not as helpful as it should be. A date of manufacture is far more informative for owners who want to buy the freshest food.**

identify the origin of the product in case of a recall or any problem with the food. However, *that* information is coded; you won't be able to find out exactly which manufacturing plant in which state made the food. If you have a problem with the

food, and give the date code to the pet food company, they will know, and will use the information to look up batch records and perhaps test their own retained samples from the same batch.

While you are standing in the pet supply store, looking at labels, none of that information is important; I only mentioned all that because sometimes the batch code is incorporated into the date codes, and sometimes it's stamped on the bag separately. When you are about to buy your dog's food, the critical part of any coding you can find on the label has to do with the date of manufacture. You need to know how old that particular container of food is, because the older it is, the more likely it is to have lost nutritional value. This is less of an issue with canned foods, because they last far longer. But with dry dog foods, the age of the food has everything to do with its potential rancidity. For in-depth information about this, see "Fats' Chance," in WDJ's December 2012 issue. Suffice to say here that rancid (oxidized) fats are really bad for dogs.

Again, though, just to make things a little more challenging than they really should be, this information will be hard to find and inconsistent from brand to brand and label to label. Some companies stamp their bags with a date of manufacture; this requires you to be knowledgeable about how long the food should be expected to last. Other companies use a "best by" or expiration date; that's far more helpful, but understand that food that is close to these dates is actually months older than it ought to be; ideally, the product would be consumed by your dog within a couple of months of its manufacture. It's best of all when the company stamps the product with *both* dates – the manufacturing date *and* the "best by" date, so you stand the best chance of identifying the freshest product possible.

Consumers who are armed with this information are hard on store owners, because they rifle through the nice neat stacks of food and reject the sacks on the top of the piles, which the stock persons have placed there hoping to sell them first, before they expire.

A really good store manager will understand the importance of selling you the most wholesome product possible, however, and will want your dog to have the best possible digestive experience with the food, so you come back to her store and buy some more. What's more, good managers manage their product orders carefully, so they aren't stuck with literal tons of products that are close to their expiration dates. If a salesperson gives you a hard time about sorting through the stacks (looking for freshly made foods), or if there are no relatively freshly made foods available, look for another product to buy.

After 17 years of writing about dog food, I still learn new things about the industry and canine nutrition, but these five label-reading tips will do more to help you find an appropriate, healthy diet for your dog than everything else. So grab your reading glasses and start with the label of the food you currently feed! I promise you will learn something new and interesting. 🐾

*Nancy Kerns is the editor of WDJ.*

# Mad Dogs?

*An interview with the author of a fascinating new book about mental illness in animals, including dogs with “behavior problems.”*

BY BARBARA DOBBINS

**D**ogs can change our lives. Little did Laurel Braitman know how much one Bernese Mountain Dog would change hers. Not long after Laurel had adopted Oliver, the 4-year-old dog began to exhibit anxious behaviors, soon culminating in his exodus from the window of her fourth-story apartment. A young neighbor boy witnessed Oliver’s fifty-foot fall and screamed, “Mom! A dog fell out of the sky!”

The boy and his mother found Oliver lying in a heap inside the concrete stairwell of a basement apartment and rushed him to an animal hospital. The veterinarians said they had never seen a dog survive such a fall.

In the months that followed, Oliver inspired Braitman to change her career path and embark on a journey of exploration into the minds and well-being of animals. She wrote a book about what she learned in the process: *Animal Madness: How Anxious Dogs, Compulsive Parrots, and Elephants in Recovery Help Us Understand Ourselves*; it was published in June 2014.

Braitman is a Senior TED fellow and holds a PhD in the History of Science from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. We spoke recently about Oliver, dogs and other animals, and mental health.

Braitman writes:

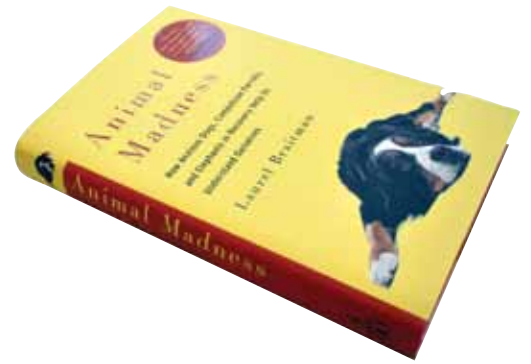
“The first real sign of real trouble I discovered by accident . . . I said goodbye to Oliver and locked the house only to realize as soon as I reached my car that I’d left my keys in our apartment. As I headed back up the block to our building, I heard a plaintive yowling – not feline or human and not from the National Zoo, a few blocks away. It was a

bark that sounded like the squeak of an animal that was too large to squeak and it was coming from our apartment.”

**WDJ:** What was your process for reaching a diagnosis for Oliver?

**LB:** I first started noticing strange behaviors after Oliver had been with us for about six months. I hadn’t asked the breeder or his former family about any issues. I didn’t even know separation anxiety existed! But I also didn’t need a name for it initially. It was clear that he was upset when he was being left alone. I think this is true when pathologizing animals and humans in general. What we *call* it is less important than recognizing that they are suffering and that we need to do something about it.

That was obvious – he was *losing it* when we would leave the house. I noticed all these behaviors – pacing, drooling, barking incessantly; there were so many signs of anxiety – and I began doing online research. I read a lot of things by veterinary behaviorists and people who were working with veterinary behaviorists. I delved into the online Bernese Mountain Dog forums. I posted some things about Oliver and asked for feedback. I was advised to “ignore the dog when you return home.” That was



**Animal Madness, published in June 2014.**

probably the first thing we tried – and that didn’t work at all.

We started sticking with a schedule, not really as a form of retraining but just because it seemed like the only thing we could do to keep him from destroying stuff and make him less anxious. We went on more walks. At the point when he jumped through the window, he had been with us for about a year.

Until he jumped, I hadn’t realized how extreme his behavior was. The veterinarian who treated Oliver’s injuries said that he should be on Prozac and that we should see a veterinary behaviorist. He gave us a prescription for Valium – with no refills – and said that this was to keep him from jumping out of the window again. Which was not a problem at that time because Oliver was so injured he couldn’t even approach the window for at least a month. He couldn’t *walk*. I was so distraught.

I took him to a veterinary behaviorist [Diplomates of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (DACVB) are veterinarians who have attained specialist status in veterinary behavior] and she gave him the diagnosis of canine separation anxiety and canine obsessive-compulsive disorder.

**WDJ:** Did the veterinary behaviorist ever refer to Oliver’s behavior as “mental illness”?

**LB:** No. This is where I really differ from the veterinarians. People are so scared of anthropomorphizing but I think that it’s kind of silly. Why wouldn’t we call what he went through – separation anxiety – the same thing whether the same symptoms were seen in a child or a gorilla or a wombat or a dog? I don’t think



canine separation anxiety is the same as separation anxiety in children, but I also don't think that one child's separation anxiety is the same as the next child's. I feel quite comfortable saying that Oliver had a type of mental illness. Do I think it's the same as other dogs or as people? No, of course not.

**WDJ:** Veterinary behaviorists, as well as most veterinarians and trainers, usually refer to "behavior problems" or "aberrant behavior" rather than "mental illness." Do you think the hesitancy in labeling certain behavior problems as mental illness is due to the stigma attached to the label itself?

**LB:** Stigma, yes. Mainly, though, it's a fear of anthropomorphism and projection, because when you say "mental illness" that infers a thought process that we can't confirm in another animal.

That said, we diagnose mental illness in humans with whom we can't communicate through behavioral observation. That's how many children are diagnosed.

It's funny. Say you're a dog owner and you go to a veterinary behaviorist with your dog. The behaviorist says [your dog's problem] is an issue of behavioral training. That is so much less daunting than having them tell you that your dog has a mental disorder – even though that's what they're actually "telling" you when they prescribe a psychopharmaceutical and recommend behavior therapy, which is often what happens for a person in the same situation.

I guess I'm not particularly interested in what mental illness is or isn't. It's anything that keeps you from whatever your version of normal is. Whether it's caused by a brain tumor, a pollutant in the environment, some endogenous thing, or triggered by who knows what – the result is the same: it's something that keeps someone from being himself, from things that he enjoys, or from living a healthy, happy life.

**WDJ:** If mental illness is deemed to be a medical condition, it might relieve some of the guilt some people feel about having a difficult dog. Not to mention feeling like a failure . . . .

**LB:** Exactly! "If only I was a better owner, trainer, etc . . ." That was my overwhelming feeling during this experience. I was tortured by my inability to help my dog.

If you have an anxious dog – or even a dog who is ill with cancer – you feel so bad! You are their sole caretaker in the world and I think that kind of sadness and pressure haunts us all.

**WDJ:** You write about how, two years after Oliver leaped from the window, he developed a case of gastric torsion during a severe panic attack while you were traveling, and how despite extraordinary efforts to help him, ultimately, you made the heartbreaking decision to let him go. You write:

"We called the veterinarian back and told her to put Oliver down. She assured us that he wouldn't feel any pain, that he was already unconscious. I made her promise that she would cradle his head and stroke him while he died, that she would call him 'Beast' and tell him that we loved him. And then I asked, lamely, 'Do you think we're bad people?'"

**LB:** I was traumatized by him. If I had been less traumatized, I would have gotten another dog a long time ago. I sometimes think about how many dogs I haven't helped because I was so saddled with guilt by this one. On the other hand, I have learned so much; I will never be that naïve about another creature again.

**WDJ:** I know you didn't write the copy on book jacket and I realize it was probably put there to capture interest, but there is

a statement about Oliver suggesting that he may have even attempted suicide. Do animals have to have a concept of what it means to live in order to have a concept of wanting to end that life? Or is it a by-product of other pain/stress that results in further harm?

**LB:** I *don't* think Oliver was consciously trying to kill himself; I think he was in a panic. But I do think that many people commit suicide that way, too. When you're in such overwhelming discomfort, you just do whatever you *can* do to end that discomfort. In humans, this can be a rash act, not fully thought out. But if we're going to call that scenario 'suicide' in people, we might also call that suicide in animals.

The issue here is that it's impossible to prove. There's an entire chapter on suicide in the book. I don't want to say that animals do it or not; what I want to say is that some animals probably do it like some people do it, in that they choose a state away from the state that they are in. Animals do that all the time. If they're hot, they move to someplace cool. If you're suffering emotionally, of course you move away from the discomfort – and that may have fatal consequences. Maybe you become so uncomfortable that you'd do anything to end that discomfort and that kills you; I think some people do just that.

Was Oliver thinking, "If I jump through this window I'm going to die"? No, anxious dogs do what anxious dogs



are capable of – and he was a big, powerful dog, so jumping out of a closed window was something he could do.

When it comes to other animals, such dolphins and whales, or African grey parrots, or macaws who use tools, who *do* have a sense of self, who probably have a clear concept of past, present, and future, who knows? We should give them the benefit of the doubt, absolutely.

**WDJ:** There's been a shift in the past 50 years in the understanding of the neurobiological conceptions of the brain; future research will be exciting and no doubt delve deeper into the mind/body connection and the neuromolecular vision of the brain. Where do you see this exploration going?

**LB:** It's so fascinating but it is also as mysterious as ever. Contrary to much public opinion, many neuroscientists I consulted argued that current studies *don't* prove that specific parts of the brain are associated with certain emotions.

You know the studies where individuals are put into an imaging apparatus to examine how different parts of the brain “light up” when the person has certain types of thoughts? Or even the dogs in the MRI who are shown their owners and their brain reactions recorded? What those studies show is analogous to the experience of walking down a dark street at night and seeing one house with all the lights on with lots of people inside and lots of noise – you could hypothesize that it looks like a party, but you can't say what kind of party it is. Is it a funeral? A cocktail party? Is the house up for sale? Did someone call the cops?

We can see activity in different parts of the brain. That may mean that such a region is where we process pleasure, and dogs' pleasure centers may be similar, but it's hard to know for sure. We're creating maps of the brain that are interesting, but they are not yet showing us specifically what's going on. The topic of neuroscience and comparative neurology between humans and other animals is very complicated and there is very little consensus. Eventually I threw up my hands and just decided to present some of the debate in the book.

You know, there is still a lot of discussion among neuroscientists about what an emotion actually is, even in humans! But I think that many of us

spend so much time with other creatures that we can use our own animal natures to puzzle it out. It seems very clear when we spend time with a dog that we can tell if the dog is happy or upset or anxious. Sure, that's projecting – and that's using human language to describe it.

**WDJ:** You devote a chapter to the use of pharmaceuticals in animals. One of the things we can't know is how a given medication will affect an individual dog. With animals, we have to rely on the science of how the medications work within the body and our potentially inadequate skills of observation. In light of this and your research, do you think we underuse or overuse behavior-modifying medications in our treatment of animals?

**LB:** I know a lot of very compassionate dog owners who have used pharmaceuticals as a bridge – say, to reduce a dog's anxiety long enough so they can work with a trainer.

As a society, we often overuse medication, but we live in a world where a lot of us are ill-suited to our daily lives, and pharmaceuticals are one of the things that are getting us through the day – humans *and* dogs! We are not built to sit in front of a screen for 12 hours a day. Both dogs and humans are so social, and we are living much more disconnected lives than we should be.

All of the things you often do to make a dog feel better (exercise, more time outside with humans and other animals, stimulating games and puzzles, a satisfying job, structure, and a healthy routine) are things that might actually work for people. I think the fact that we are missing so many of those things is problematic and one of the ways we are dealing with it is by taking drugs. On that level, I think we should be changing our lives, both humans and dogs.

The drugs can facilitate treatment. But in the long run, they may be overused. Without changing the stressors and the things that trigger certain behaviors in humans and animals, we're not going to get better.

Medications *can* be used as a stopgap. If you have a zoo gorilla who is clinically depressed and won't engage with his troop mates and has stopped eating and can't be sent back to Africa, then the ethical thing to do is to medicate that ape. It's just bad that the drugs are used as

an excuse when something else could be changed to make him happier.

**WDJ:** You cite many examples of mental illness or disturbance in animals in the book; it's fascinating.

**LB:** Animals are all individuals and have varying susceptibilities to mental problems. Learning that *changed* me. When I observe pigeons now, I wonder about the individuality of each one: Which one is the scaredy pigeon? Which one is the brave one? Certainly there is a deer in the Marin Headlands who is more of a risk-taker than the others, and probably one who has a tendency toward obsession. Take birds that stare at their reflections and throw themselves into windows – not all birds in the group are doing this.

**WDJ:** I'm reminded of the popular adage in the dog world that one person's behavioral nightmare is another's ideal pet. While you certainly couldn't characterize Oliver as an ideal pet, he gave you an immeasurable gift and, in turn, you are passing that gift forward to all animals by bringing to light these very important concepts.

**LB:** I think I've always loved the difficult animals best, because they stretch us and they force us to challenge ourselves in often uncomfortable ways that we never would have otherwise. If I didn't have a dog – one that was literally jumping out of my house – I wouldn't have been forced to confront the extremes of the canine mind. I would have been content with my rather boring preexisting view of dogs.

Before Oliver, I never doubted that other animals had emotions, but mental illness was something I never would have grappled with without him. It changed my view of other animals, and people too. I owe Oliver absolutely everything. 🐾

*Animal Madness* was published in June by Simon & Schuster and is available wherever books are sold.

Laurel Braitman is at work on a new book – and she's decided she's finally ready to adopt another dog. Find out more about Braitman and her research at [animalmadness.com](http://animalmadness.com).

Barbara Dobbins, a former dog trainer, writes about dogs and studies canine ethology. She lives in the San Francisco Bay area with her Border Collie, Duncan.



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 RESOURCES 

**BOOKS AND DVDS**

- ❖ Nancy Kay, DVM, DACVIM, is the author of *Speaking for Spot: Be the Advocate Your Dog Needs to Live a Happy, Healthy, Longer Life*, and *Your Dog's Best Health: A Dozen Reasonable Things to Expect From Your Vet*. More of her writing can be enjoyed at [speakingforspot.com/blog](http://speakingforspot.com/blog). Dr. Kay's books are available from [dogwise.com](http://dogwise.com) and [wholedogjournal.com](http://wholedogjournal.com)
- ❖ WDJ Training Editor Pat Miller is author of *Positive Perspectives; Positive Perspectives 2; Power of Positive Dog Training; Play With Your Dog; Do Over Dogs: Give Your Dog a Second Chance at a First Class Life*; and her newest book, *How to Foster Dogs: From Homeless to Homeward Bound*. Available from [dogwise.com](http://dogwise.com) and [wholedogjournal.com](http://wholedogjournal.com)
- ❖ *Fabulous Focus: Focus & Attention Skills for Both Ends of the Leash*, DVD by Lisa & Brad Waggoner of Cold Nose College, who show you how to get five-star attention from your dog, who will love every minute! Available from [tawzerdog.com](http://tawzerdog.com)

**TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION**

- ❖ **Pat Miller**, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, Peaceable Paws Dog and Puppy Training, Fairplay, MD. Group and private training, rally, behavior modification, workshops, intern and apprentice programs. Trainers can become "Pat Miller Certified Trainers" (PMCT) by successfully completing Pat's Level 1 (Basic Dog Training and Behavior) and both Level 2 Academies (Behavior Modification and Instructors Course). (301) 582-9420; [peaceablepaws.com](http://peaceablepaws.com)
- ❖ **Lisa Lyle Waggoner**, CPDT-KA, PMCT2, Cold Nose College, Murphy, NC. Force-free, humane training. Group classes, private in-home training, behavior consulting, nose games, agility for fun, tricks classes, and more. Also offering a variety of weekend workshops, Pat Miller's Level 1 Basic Dog Training and Behavior Academy, and dog\*tec's Professional Dog Walking Academy. Facebook: [LisaLyleWaggoner](https://www.facebook.com/LisaLyleWaggoner); Twitter [@ColdNoseCollege](https://twitter.com/ColdNoseCollege); (828) 644-9148; [coldnosecollege.com](http://coldnosecollege.com)

**WHAT'S AHEAD ...**

- ❖ **TRY DRIED**  
*Dehydrated and freeze-dried diets reviewed.*
- ❖ **WAIT! DON'T PULL THOSE TEETH JUST YET**  
*In some circumstances, and with very proactive care, loose teeth can be saved. Here's how.*
- ❖ **DOGS AND THE PLACEBO EFFECT**  
*How what you know can change the results of what you do with your dog.*
- ❖ **BUILDING A SERVICE DOG**  
*The best practices for raising a puppy who will go on to serve humans well.*

