

VOLUME 10  
NUMBER 1

# The Whole



# Dog Journal™

A monthly guide to natural dog care and training

January 2007

\$5.95

## FEATURES

### 3 Gear of the Year

*Innovative, unique, useful, and/or delicious products for you and your dog to enjoy together.*

### 6 We're Positive

*How we know that training with lots of positive reinforcement – and without force or physical punishment – is best.*

### 10 Reducing His Concerns

*Acupressure techniques for grounding and calming a worried dog.*

### 12 In the Dog's Kitchen

*What we have learned so far from touring pet food production facilities.*

### 15 Perspective: Use It or Lose It

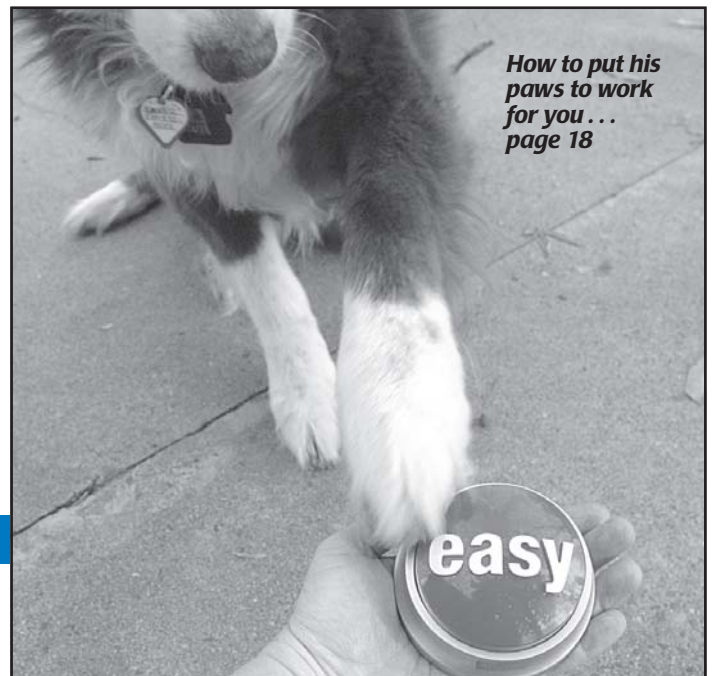
*Sometimes we forget how far our dogs have already progressed. Here's how to keep your training program on track.*

### 18 New Tricks for a Stick

*Use target training to teach your dog to walk without pulling, open and close doors, go to his bed, and much more.*



Products  
we can *all*  
enjoy . . . page 3



How to put his  
paws to work  
for you . . .  
page 18

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Editor's Note
- 22 Letters
- 24 Product and Expert Resources

# New Year, Old Tricks

*Resolve to have more fun with your dog.*

BY NANCY KERNS

**W**ho were your favorite teachers in school? Picture those individuals for a minute, and I'll bet I can describe them: Interesting, exciting people who made learning fun.

People who were kind to you, and made you feel respected and appreciated. The teachers you remember most fondly were probably "tough" – in that they had high expectations for you, and required you to learn and perform a *lot*. They encouraged participation, didn't make a big deal over your mistakes, but cheered on your successes. You probably did well in their classes and felt "smart" in that setting. Am I right?

In fact, people who meet that description are using the same sort of teaching techniques that WDJ promotes for "training" dogs. We advocate for these applications of positive reinforcement because they work so well, do not present a danger or threat to dogs or their handlers, and are *so* enjoyable for owner/teachers and their dog/students alike.

This issue of contains an unusual – and, I hope, inspiring – concentration of articles about positive training and behavior. Consider making these articles your new year, newly positive training guide!

I put WDJ's training advice to work every time I need to take photos to illustrate our articles. For the article on target training, I went over to my friend Donna's ranch. Donna has five of her own dogs, and frequently finds several of the neighbors' dogs hanging around, so I knew we'd have lots of fun training any number of canine models to target. I arrived at the ranch armed with my camera, loads of treats, several clickers, and a target stick.

When I pulled out the target stick, which I had fashioned from a wooden back scratcher with a small ball on the end, Donna started laughing. "Remember Howard?" she asked me.

Years ago, Donna had a laid-back, 100-pound, yellow dog named Howard. When visitors would ask Donna about the stately Lab-mix, she would say mischievously, "That's Howard; he's a stick dog." Of course, to most people, that would imply the dog is a compulsive stick chaser, one that is likely to drive you nuts by repeatedly dropping a stick at your feet in an effort to get you to throw it. Looking at the laid-back old fellow, most guests would look a little dubious. "Here, I'll show you," Donna would helpfully insist. "Howard, go get your stick!"

Howard would gravely get to his feet, go into the kitchen, and dutifully return with a long, thin stick that had something on one end. He'd bring the stick back to Donna, and then, as the bewildered guest looked on, turn his slowly wagging tail toward her . . . and settle in for a satisfying session of back-scratching! Not quite the type of "stick dog" that people expected!

I hope you have fun finding new tricks for a stick with your dog.

NK



**MISSION STATEMENT:** WDJ's mission is to provide dog guardians with in-depth information on effective holistic healthcare methods and successful nonviolent training. The methods we discuss will endeavor to do no harm to dogs; we do not advocate perpetrating even minor transgressions in the name of "greater good." We intend our articles to enable readers to immediately apply training and healthcare techniques to their own dogs with visible and enjoyable success. All topics should contribute to improving the dog's health and vitality, and deepening the canine/human bond. Above all, we wish to contribute information that will enable consumers to make kind, healthy, and informed decisions about caring for their own dogs.

## The Whole Dog Journal™

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF – Nancy Kerns  
 TRAINING EDITOR – Pat Miller  
 PUBLISHER – Timothy H. Cole  
 CIRCULATION DIRECTOR – Lisa Evans

### EDITORIAL OFFICE

E-MAIL: WholeDogJ@aol.com  
 MAIL: PO Box 1349  
 Oroville, CA 95965  
 PACKAGES: 1655 Robinson Street  
 Oroville, CA 95965

### SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

PHONE: (800) 829-9165  
 INTERNET: whole-dog-journal.com/cs  
 U.S. MAIL: PO Box 420235  
 Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235  
 CANADA: Box 7820 STN Main  
 London, Ontario N5Y 5W1

### BACK ISSUES, WEBSITE INQUIRIES

PHONE: (800) 424-7887  
 E-MAIL: customer\_service@belvoir.com  
 INTERNET: whole-dog-journal.com  
 U.S. MAIL: PO Box 5656  
 Norwalk, CT 06856-5656

### REPRINTS

For price quote, contact Mona Kornfeld at  
 (203) 857-3143  
 Minimum order 1,000

### SINGLE COPY SALES

Lisa Evans, (203) 857-3100

**WHOLE DOG JOURNAL  
 DOES NOT ACCEPT  
 COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING**



**THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL** (ISSN #1097-5322) is published monthly by Belvoir Media Group, LLC, 800 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854-1631. Robert Englander, Chairman and CEO; Timothy H. Cole, Executive Vice President, Editorial Director; Phillip L. Penny, Chief Operating Officer; Greg King, Executive Vice President, Marketing Director; Marvin Cweibel, Senior Vice President, Marketing Operations; Ron Goldberg, Chief Financial Officer; Tom Canfield, Vice President, Circulation; Michael N. Pollet, Senior Vice President, General Counsel. Periodicals postage paid at Norwalk, CT and at additional mailing offices. Copyright ©2007, Belvoir Media Group, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited. Printed in U.S.A. Revenue Canada GST Account #128044658. Canada Publishing Agreement Number #40016479.

THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL makes every effort to provide information on dog health, care, and treatment that is authoritative, reliable, and practical. It is not intended, however, to replace diagnosis or treatment from a veterinarian or other qualified dog professional. THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL does not assume any legal responsibility. Readers should always consult qualified healthcare providers for specific diagnosis and treatment.

**Subscriptions:** \$39 annually (12 issues). Bulk rate subscriptions for organizations and educational institutions available upon request.

**Postmaster:** Please send address changes to THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL, PO Box 420234, Palm Coast, FL 32142

THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL, PO Box 39, Norwich, ON, N0J 1P0

# Gear of the Year

*Innovative, unique, useful, and/or delicious products for you and your dog to enjoy together.*

There are literally *millions* of products being marketed to dog owners around the world for direct use on, in, or around their dogs and puppies: foods, treats, supplements, toys, training tools, garments, medical supplies, grooming tools and unguents, beds, fences, and crates. Then there are the limitless number of dog-related items meant to glorify, commemorate, and stoke the human's love and understanding of dogs: canine-related decorations and knick-

knacks, art, clothing, stationary, books, videos, DVDs, and computer programs.

We're always looking for new and particularly useful products to recommend to our readers (and to use for our own dogs!). We limit our attention to products that provide an actual service, that help owners keep their dogs healthy, happy, safe, and well-trained. You can find "cute" on your own!

We can't pretend to have seen – much less inspected – them all. The task would

be endless. But we've seen enough products to quickly recognize particularly unique items, ones that stand out in terms of quality and usefulness, or that have solved an everyday problem in an extraordinary way.

Here are some additional challenges: letting go of past favorites (especially those that have no real peers), and sitting on our hands while waiting for products in development to reach market. We're going to address both types, briefly.



We know, we know: There are thousands of dog treats on the market. But we keep buying Lick'n Crunch cookies, for ourselves and for gifts, because these are:

- Made out of 100 percent human edible ingredients in a plant that makes cookies for people
- Completely safe and legal for people to eat
- Perfectly safe for dogs to eat, since they contain carob (never chocolate)
- *Way* tastier than Oreos . . . and dogs love them, too!
- Available with either peanut butter or vanilla filling

LICK'N CRUNCH COOKIES, MADE BY THREE DOG BAKERY. \$6. AVAILABLE IN THREE DOG BAKERY STORES, MANY SUPERMARKETS, SELECT PET SUPPLY STORES, AND FROM THREEDOG.COM. THREE DOG BAKERY, KANSAS CITY, MO, (800) 4-TREATS

HAPPY MUZZLE, MADE BY DOG IN THE CITY. \$20. AVAILABLE IN SELECT PET SUPPLY STORES AND FROM DOGINTEHCITY.NET. DOG IN THE CITY, SAN FRANCISCO, CA, (415) 861-4724

There are many occasions and circumstances in which it's helpful for a dog to wear a muzzle. In many cities, for example, only muzzled dogs are allowed on public buses and trains. Muzzles are also helpful for dogs who have difficulty staying in control in the face of particularly stressful settings – such as a vet's office or on the sidelines of an agility event. Sadly, many people assume that a muzzled dog is a mean dog – or that you, the owner, are mean! – and the sinister look of many muzzles only reinforces those stereotypes.

In contrast, the bright, cheerful print fabrics of Happy Muzzles convey an overtly friendly message: This is a nice dog who just has to wear this right now!

Happy Muzzles are constructed out of strong but light and washable, Cordura fabric, with a little padding in the nose for your dog's comfort. They come in three prints – daisies, cherries, and a blue geometric design – and seven sizes, including two sizes appropriate for wide-faced dogs.



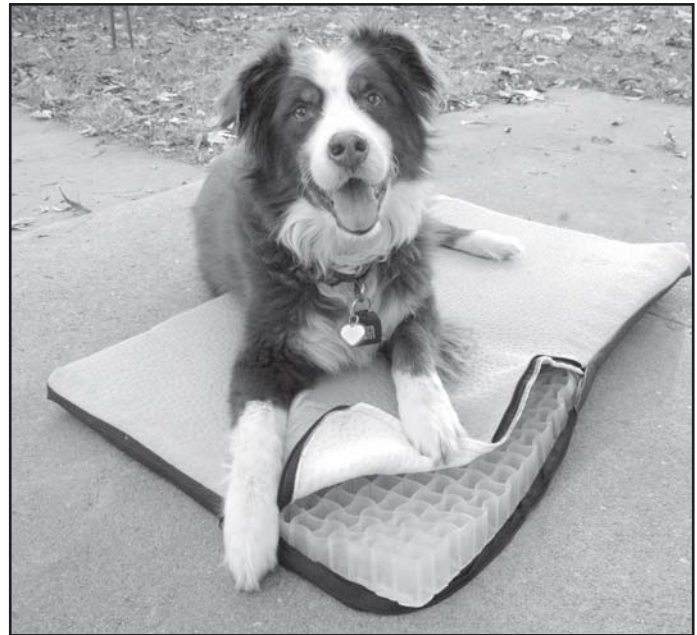
FLEXGEL LUXURY PET BEDS, MADE BY CROSSGEL, LLC. \$100 - \$200, DEPENDING ON SIZE AND COVER. AVAILABLE ONLY FROM CROSSGEL LLC, WOODS CROSS, UT. (888) GEL-BEDS EXT. 104, FLEXGELLUXURYPETBEDS.COM

We're always on the lookout for a better dog bed. Usually this implies a foam-filled bed; in our experience, only very thick, dense, top-quality foam can provide adequate cushioning for older, arthritic dogs . . . or to provide a comfortable enough pet bed to keep the young dogs and the cat off our sofa! But foam has its flaws. As it ages, it gets smellier and smellier. Thick foam is difficult to wash, rinse, and dry. Sometimes washing it makes it even more odoriferous. And when it gets even older, it starts to disintegrate!

CrossGel LLC has made luxury consumer and medical beds for humans for a number of years – but *not* with foam. Its unique mattresses are made of a soft, heavy polymer gel that is molded into a sort of honeycomb structure (with square-shaped cells rather than hexagons). The columnar structure of the cells helps to distribute weight over a wider area, increasing the comfort of the bed (and in humans who are confined to bed, reducing or eliminating pressure sores). The material feels flimsy when a section of it is manipulated in the hand, but it *does* provide cushion and comfort. The material is machine washable, and air-dries quickly.

CrossGel only recently branched out into pet beds. It tried to anticipate the special needs of dogs and the requirements of dog owners, and developed a antimicrobial, antibacterial, zip-on, fabric cover; this is the cover that we have tested. The base of the cover is a heavy, rubberized, no-slip material that holds up well to the bed's heavy use; the top has not proved as sturdy.

The fabric used in the top of the cover, made of a special material that is supposed to resist odor buildup, has frayed and worn at a rate that indicates it won't last nearly as long as the



gel interior. Though we haven't had the opportunity to test it, we'd probably be happier with the regular synthetic fleece cover that CrossGel offers for \$50 less.

Like virtually all top-quality beds appropriate for use with old or arthritic dogs, the FlexGel bed is very expensive. Even so, its comfort seems worth the price. Eleven-year-old Cooper, seen above, has a choice of three beds in the WDJ office. Since the arrival of the FlexGel bed, he chooses the FlexGel exclusively, even shunning his cozy (and well-padded) crate in cold weather. We think any older dog would instantly appreciate the FlexGel difference.

Patricia McConnell is the real deal: An educated, experienced dog trainer with a lovely and evocative writing style, who offers dog owners insight as to their beloved companions' behavior *and* good training and handling advice based on sound

behavioral science.

We've been ardent fans for years, especially of her 2002 book, *The Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs*. That title helped people appreciate how the human's and the dog's experience of the world are different, why this frequently leads to misunderstandings and gaps in interspecies communication, and how we can more effectively understand, live with, and manage our dogs.

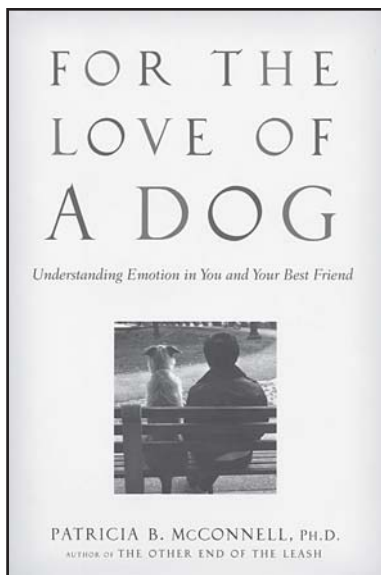
This book delves deeper into the shared

*FOR THE LOVE OF A DOG: UNDERSTANDING EMOTION IN YOU AND YOUR BEST FRIEND*, BY PATRICIA B. MCCONNELL, PH.D. \$25 HARDCOVER. PUBLISHED 2006 BY BALLANTINE BOOKS. AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL BOOKSELLER, OR FROM [DOGWISE.COM](http://DOGWISE.COM)

emotional life of dogs and humans. In the hands of the wrong author, that would likely be fuzzy or irrelevant or both. In fact, in recent years there have been numerous best-sellers written by amateur dog owners that cover lots of the same territory.

What elevates Dr. McConnell's work above others is her gift for noticing and clarifying the subtlest interactions between dogs and their people, and illuminating the biological, chemical, and evolutionary drives that influence those interactions.

When we better understand what is going on inside a dog when he wears a certain expression or assumes a particular posture, and we learn precisely how an emotion like anger predicts our physical responses, we can move past reacting to our dogs' behavior in nonproductive ways. McConnell helps us advance to the level where we can compassionately and correctly interpret our dogs' behavior, and respond with appropriate, kind, clear behavior of our own. That's a literal prescription for a better dog/human relationship.



TREATSTIK, MADE BY TREATSTIK PET TOYS, LLC, NORWICH, VT. \$10 - \$13, DEPENDING ON SIZE. AVAILABLE FROM SELECT PET SUPPLY STORES AND FROM TREATSTIK.COM, (802) 649-8448

Food-dispensing toys are a boon to bored dogs and their busy owners. If it was up to us, few dogs would take their daily kibble from bowls. Instead, you'd enrich your dog's day by delivering that kibble in a way that requires physical and mental effort over an extended period of time.

We've long advocated the use of Kongs and other rubberized toys for this purpose. However, we frequently hear owners complain that their dogs chew up (and sometimes swallow pieces) of their tough, but not indestructible, food-dispensing toys.

The TreatStik is an elegantly simple alternative. It's made of hard, tough nylon, so it doesn't invite chewing, but it can



withstand the efforts of dogs who attempt to extract the food by brute force. These

efforts are so unrewarding, especially in comparison to the strategy that results in the most generous payout – nosing the toy again and again – that even dogs with a history of chewing rubber toys change their strategy to the more rewarding nudge, nudge, nudge.

TreatStik comes in just two sizes (small and large) and four colors. A cap on the large end unscrews for easy loading and cleaning, and the toy is dishwasher safe.

## Still a Favorite . . .

Dogs who *don't* chew up their Kong toys, and who need even *more* distraction in their days – perhaps to help them deal with separation anxiety – can benefit hugely from KongTime.

We wrote about KongTime at length in “Help for the Home-Along Dog” in the September 2005 issue. KongTime is a machine that dispenses up to four food-filled toys, at random intervals, over a period of either four or eight hours (you select which). The dog's anticipation of the toy-drops and the time it takes him to extract the food from the toys help him get through otherwise tedious (and perhaps anxiety-producing) days. Often this is enough to keep dogs with separation anxiety from barking all day, compulsively chewing on themselves, or trashing your house!

We like to recommend the device to people who are planning to get a new dog or puppy, in an effort to help them *prevent the onset* of boredom- or anxiety-related destructive behavior.

KongTime runs on batteries, and is easy to load and clean. It comes with four medium or large Kongs, and detailed instructions for its use.

KongTime best helps dogs with separation anxiety when used as one part of a life-enrichment program; further changes in the dog's management may also be required. Note: KongTime is not recommended for multiple-dog households.



KONGTIME, MADE BY DOGOPOLIS. \$110 - \$140. AVAILABLE IN SELECT PET SUPPLY STORES, INCLUDING PETCO. SEE KONGTIME.COM OR CALL (800) 995-8996 FOR A LIST OF ONLINE RETAILERS.

## We Can Hardly Wait . . .

We're not wimps. We've given shots, squeezed anal sacs, taken out stitches, and worse. But we still dread clipping dogs' nails – especially thick, black nails. We shudder at the thought of clipping too much off and hitting the “quick” – the blood-filled, sensitive core of the nail. The dog jumps and yelps, *you* jump and yelp, blood goes everywhere . . . And if you *don't* cut off enough, you have to do it again all the sooner.

QuickFinder is supposed to end all the drama.

It's a pair of guillotine-style nail clippers that utilizes biomedical technology to detect the presence of blood vessels. Position the clippers too far back on the nail and a red light indicates, “Do not trim.” When you're close, a yellow light indicates caution. And when your position is *just right*, a green light says, “Go for it!”

MiracleCorp expects to have the clippers on the market this month . . . but we've heard that before from the manufacturers of products we were eagerly awaiting. The hazards of international product manufacturing can mean we may have to wait a while to receive and test this promising product. If it works like the prototype we saw in action, we'll let you know – and we'll buy several! 🐾



QUICKFINDER, MADE BY MIRACLECORP, DAYTON, OH. (800) 635-2044, MIRACLECORP.COM

# We're Positive

*How we know that training with lots of positive reinforcement – and without force or physical punishment – is best.*

BY PAT MILLER

**W**e've come so far since those dark days just over a decade ago when virtually all dog training was accomplished through the use of force and compulsion. I know those days well; I was quite skilled at giving collar corrections with choke chains and attained several high-scoring obedience titles with my dogs using those methods. And as a shelter worker responsible for the euthanasia of unwanted dogs for whom we couldn't find homes, I was convinced that a little pain in the name of training was acceptable and necessary to create well-behaved dogs who would have lifelong loving homes.

In fact, when I enrolled my Australian Kelpie pup in the now-renowned Dr. Ian Dunbar's first-ever puppy-training classes at our shelter in Marin County, California, I was so sure that using physical corrections in training was the only way to go,

that I dropped out of the class after just two sessions; I was convinced he was ruining my dog with training treats!

It was several more years before I crossed over to the positive side of dog training, thanks in large part to my wonderful dog Josie, who gently showed me the error of my ways one day by hiding under the back deck when I brought out her training equipment. Her quiet eloquence made me realize, finally, the damage I was doing to our relationship with tools and techniques that relied on the application of pain and intimidation to force her to comply. I threw away the choke chains and began my journey toward a more positive perspective on training.

## What's the difference?

Today, in many areas of the country a dog is at least as likely to be enrolled in a class with a trainer who uses positive methods

## What you can do . . .

- Renew your own commitment to positive training with your dog, if necessary, as well as positive relationships with others who share your life.
- Advocate for positive training with those who may not be as aware of the benefits of positive reinforcement.
- Buy extra copies of your favorite positive training books; donate them to your local libraries, to provide positive training resources to your community.



**Dogs who are trained without aversive or painful consequences for the "wrong" behavior, and who are appropriately reinforced for the "right" behavior, tend to become intensely and joyfully engaged in the learning process.**

as one who still employs old-fashioned choke chain or prong-collar coercion. As more dog owners and dog trainers see the light, clickers, treat bags, and positive reinforcement replace metal collars, shocks, and dominance theory. Many trainers who still fall back on compulsion tools will at least start with dog-friendlier methods, resorting to force and intimidation only when positive training seems not to work for them. Dogs and humans alike are delighted to discover a kinder, gentler method that still gets results.

Trainers, behaviorists, and dog owners are realizing that this is more than just a philosophical difference, or a conflict between an ethic that says we should be nice to animals versus a more utilitarian approach to training. While both methods can produce well-trained dogs, the end result is also significantly different. With positive training, the goal is to develop a dog

who thinks and works cooperatively with his human as part of a team, rather than a dog who simply obeys commands.

Positive trainers report that dogs trained effectively with coercion are almost universally reluctant to offer behaviors and are less good at problem-solving. Fearing the “corrections” that result when they make mistakes, they seem to learn that the safest course is to do nothing unless and until they’re told to do something.

In sharp contrast, dogs who have been effectively trained with positive methods tend to be masters at offering behaviors. Give them a new training challenge and they almost immediately set about trying to solve the puzzle. In fact, one of the criticisms often voiced by trainers who don’t understand – or accept – the positive training paradigm is that our dogs are too busy – always “throwing” behaviors instead of lying quietly at our feet like “good” dogs. This conflict in perspectives is illustrated graphically by a T-shirt belonging to one of my trainer friends, Katy Malcolm, CPDT, of Canine Character, LLC, in Arlington, Virginia.

“Behave!” proclaims the front of the shirt in bold letters. To the average disciplinarian, “Behave!” means “Sit still and don’t move!” But the back of Katy’s shirt says, “Do lots of stuff!” – epitomizing the thinking of positive trainers, who see the word “Behave!” as an action verb and *encourage* their dogs to offer lots of behaviors.

Another criticism of positive training is that the dogs are spoiled and out of control because, while the dogs are highly reinforced for doing good stuff, no one ever tells them what *not* to do. “Dogs,” the critics say, “must know there are consequences for inappropriate behaviors.”

We don’t disagree with this statement. Positive does *not* mean permissive. We just have different ideas about the necessary nature of the negative consequence. When one is needed, positive trainers are most likely to use “negative punishment” (taking away a good thing), rather than “positive punishment” (the application of a bad thing). As an adjunct to that, we counsel the generous use of management to prevent the dog from practicing (and getting rewarded for) undesirable behaviors.

## The Potential Pitfalls of Punishment

■ Training with physical “corrections” can cause physical pain and/or damage to your dog. Dogs have been killed by the heavy-handed use of choke collars and alpha rolls (see “Biscuits, Not Rolls,” July 2006).



■ It is difficult to gauge the appropriate intensity of a punishment. How hard a jerk on the collar is enough to have the desired effect of suppressing behavior without mentally or physically damaging the dog? Sometimes you don’t know until it’s too late.

■ Physical “corrections” can damage the dog’s confidence, his trust in the trainer, and the relationship between dog and human. This one is huge. Enough said.

■ The dog can develop a “punishment callous.” Many dog owners are (with good reason) reluctant to punish hard enough to be effective, so they give ineffective corrections or mildly effective ones. The dog learns to tolerate those, and the owner must then punish harder in order to be effective.

■ The behavior may return when punishment stops. If the behavior is hardwired and/or highly reinforcing, the dog may choose to continue the behavior when the punishment is no longer forthcoming.

■ It is difficult to have perfect timing. Just like a reward, a punisher must happen within a second or two of the behavior in order for the dog to make the association between the behavior and the consequences.

■ It is difficult to be perfectly consistent. If you punish intermittently, the dog learns he can succeed *sometimes*, so it’s worth trying again.

■ Punishment can suppress desired behaviors; inhibit offered behaviors. The dog learns it’s safest to do nothing.

■ Punishment shuts down behavior, but doesn’t teach the dog an appropriate behavior to use in its place. The behavior vacuum that’s left is likely to be refilled with the same inappropriate behavior.

■ The suppressive effect of the punisher is limited to the presence of the discriminative stimuli. The dog learns not to do the behavior when you’re there, because the punishment only happens when you’re here to deliver it. The dog who hops on the sofa the instant you’re out the door isn’t being sneaky. He’s simply learned it’s safe to be on the sofa when you’re away, not safe when you’re home.

■ It is rewarding to the punisher. You see an instant response, even appeasement behavior that looks like guilt, so you have the satisfaction of knowing you made an impression (at least you think you did). Since behaviors that are rewarded persist or increase, punishment is self-perpetuating in the punisher.

■ Violence begets violence. If you punish in anger and your violence is reinforced, you are likely to get violent more, and more easily. In addition, since dogs often become aggressive in self-defense against your anger, you are likely to escalate your violence in response, to which he’s likely to escalate his, in a dangerous upward spiral.

## How Training Theories and Methods Differ

As “positive training” gains popularity, some trainers who still routinely use coercive methods may advertise themselves as positive trainers. Be warned! Some trainers use positive methods as long as they work easily, but fall back on coercion when they hit a stumbling block, rather than searching harder for a different positive technique to get the desired behavior. It’s a good idea to watch a trainer at work to determine if her train-

ing philosophies and methods are a good match for you and your dog.

The following is an illustration of how the same behavior can be taught in two distinctly different ways. The first describes one modern, positive training method; the second describes how the same behavior is taught with an old-fashioned force-based training method.

**Sit! + POSITIVE METHOD:** Show your dog a yummy treat, and move it slowly over his head. Most dogs will sit (sooner or later) so they can continue to watch the treat; just wait. When your dog does sit, “mark” the desired behavior with the click! of a clicker (or say a word such as “Yes!” in a cheerful voice) and feed him the treat. Repeat this about 6 to 10 times, with a click! and a treat each time he sits.

When you know he’ll sit easily for the treat lure, say the word “Sit” each time just before you lure. After 6 to 10 more repetitions, move the treat toward your chest (instead of over his head) and say “Sit.” Continue to click! and treat each sit. After another half-dozen repetitions, say “Sit!” without moving your hand to your chest. If he sits, click! and treat. If he doesn’t, move your hand to your chest, and click!/treat when he sits.

Continue until he’ll sit without any hand movements. Then start putting your click!/treat on an *intermittent* schedule of

reinforcement; occasionally skip a click!/treat (though you should continue to praise him!), and gradually increase the number of skipped clicks, until you click!/treat only occasionally to keep the behavior strong and your dog enthusiastic about working with you.

**BENEFITS OF POSITIVE METHODS:** Your dog begins to offer “sit” as a default behavior whenever he’s not sure what to do. He also learns that he can make good stuff happen by offering behaviors that you like – the ones that earn rewards. Dog loves training!

**POSSIBLE FALLOUT OF POSITIVE METHODS:** If your dog isn’t accustomed to lots of yummy treats, they can give him a little digestive upset. Introduce new treats gradually until his system gets used to variety. (Lots of treats can add pounds to your pooch; be sure to reduce the amount in his food bowl accordingly.) Also, owner and dog can become dependent on the presence of a lure to perform behavior (if the treat lure is not “faded” promptly).



Author Pat Miller and her beloved Terrier-mix, Josie.

**Sit! - FORCE-BASED METHOD (NOT RECOMMENDED):** Say “sit” to your dog while pulling gently up on his leash (or “popping” up on the leash with a firm tug) and pressing his butt toward the ground.

**BENEFITS OF FORCE-BASED METHODS:** Dog learns to sit when you cue him to in order to avoid the discomfort to his neck. You can force him to sit when he doesn’t respond.

**POSSIBLE FALLOUT OF FORCE-BASED METHODS:** Dog fails to associate verbal cue with desired behavior; instead, becomes dependent on the pull-and-push as cue to sit. Dog feels threatened with physical cues and in self-defense, either “shuts down,” “checks out,” or (worst case) growls or bites in an effort to protect himself from handler’s physical contact. Dog may not enjoy training, may become fearful or resistant, or start to avoid owner. Dog can suffer long-term damage to his spine from being jerked repeatedly by the collar.



The result? Since all living things repeat behaviors that are rewarding, and those behaviors that aren't rewarded extinguish (go away), the combination of negative punishment and management creates a well-trained dog at least as easily as harsh or painful corrections – and without the very real potential for relationship damage that is created by the use of physical punishment (see “The Potential Pitfalls of Punishment,” page 7).

One of the most significant reasons for *not* using physical punishment or force with dogs is the potential for eliciting or exacerbating aggressive behaviors from them.

This was illustrated by an English Bulldog in a recent episode of the National Geographic Channel's show, “The Dog Whisperer.” Cesar Millan, the star of the show, spent several hours intimidating the Bulldog on a hot Texas day, in an effort to get the dog to “submit,” until the dog finally inflicted a significant bite to Millan's hand in a futile attempt at self-defense. Millan brushed the incident aside as insignificant, apparently blissfully unaware that he had provided the dog with the opportunity to successfully practice the undesirable behavior (aggression).

Even if the dog's reaction falls short of a flesh-shredding defense, the relationship between dog and owner can be significantly damaged as the dog learns to fear or resent the angry, unpredictable responses of his human. Given our odd primate body language and behaviors, we are undoubtedly confusing enough to our canine companions, without adding what to them must seem like completely unprovoked, incomprehensible explosions of violence.

## Crossing over

Increasingly, trainers are entering the profession who learned their craft without an early foundation of coercion training. This is a *good* thing! However, there are enough old-fashioned trainers around that positive trainers still find themselves working with a fair number of “crossover dogs” – those who are convinced that they must not dare offer a behavior for fear of punishment.

It can be frustrating to owners and trainers alike to work through the dog's conditioned shutdown response to the training environment. Shaping exercises, especially “free-shaping” that reinforces virtually *any* behavior to start with, are ideal for encouraging a crossover dog to think outside the box. This serves the same purpose for crossover owners and trainers



**Many dogs who were compulsion-trained never lose their anxiety about “doing the wrong thing” when they're unsure of what the “right” thing is.**

as well! (See “The Shape of Things to Come,” March 2006.)

It takes time to rebuild the trust of a dog who has learned to stay safe by waiting for explicit instructions before proceeding. It's well worth the effort. The most rewarding and exciting part of training for me is watching the dawning awareness on a dog's face that *he* controls the consequences of his behavior, and that he can elicit good stuff from his trainer by offering certain behaviors. We never, ever, experienced that in the “old days.” I used to take “sit” for granted, because if the dog didn't sit when I asked, I *made* him do it.

Today, I never get over the thrill of that moment when the dog understands, for the first time, that he can make the clicker “Click!” (and receive a treat) simply by choosing to sit. It keeps training eternally fresh and exciting.

## Not quite convinced?

So why, given all the available scientific and anecdotal evidence about the success of positive training, do some dog trainers and owners cling stubbornly to the old ways? Because it works for them much of the time? Resistance to change? Fear of the unknown?

It pains me that so many in the U.S. are still so far away from the positive end of the dog-training continuum. The celebrity status of Cesar Millan is evidence that dog owners and trainers are more than willing to buy into the coercion-and-intimidation approach to training, and that the use of force is an ingrained part of our culture.

Old-fashioned methods *can* work. Decades of well-behaved dogs and the owners who loved them can attest to that. So why should they bother to cross over to the positive side? The short answer is that positive training works, it's fun, and it avoids methods that have the potential to cause stress

and physical injury to our dogs through the application of force, pain, and intimidation. It takes the blame away from the dog and puts the responsibility for success where it belongs – on human shoulders.

In the old days, if a dog didn't respond well to coercion we claimed there was something wrong with the dog, and continued to increase the level of force until he finally submitted. If he didn't submit he was often labeled defective and discarded for a more compliant model. With the positive paradigm, it's our role as the supposedly more intelligent species to understand our dogs and find a way that works for them rather than forcing them into a one-size-fits-all mold.

The longer answer is that it encourages an entire cultural mindset to move away from aggression and force as a way to achieve goals. The majority of dog owners and trainers who have fun (and success) using positive methods with their dogs come to realize that it works with *all* creatures, including the human species. They feel better about training and find themselves less likely to get angry with their dogs, understanding that behavior is simply behavior, not some maliciously deliberate attempt on the dog's part to challenge their authority.

People who use positive methods to affect relationships get nicer. It feels nice to be nice. Children learn to respect and understand other living beings instead of learning to be violent with them.

When training programs founder, positive trainers are more apt to seek new solutions rather than falling back on force and pain, or worse, blaming – and possibly discarding – the dog for not adapting to our rigid concept of training. Indeed, in the last two decades, during which time positive training has gained a huge following, we've made even more advances in our training creativity and our understanding of behavior, canine and otherwise, and have even more positive options, tools, and techniques.

So, why positive? It's simply the best way to train. 🐾

*Pat Miller, CPDT, is WDJ's Training Editor. Miller lives in Hagerstown, Maryland, site of her Peaceable Paws training center. She is also the author of The Power of Positive Dog Training and Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog. For book purchasing or contact information, see “Resources,” page 24.*

# Reducing His Concerns

*Acupressure techniques for grounding and calming a worried dog.*

BY AMY SNOW AND NANCY ZIDONIS

**D**oes a worried dog sing a worried song? A dog's worried "song" is often expressed in quirky, repetitive behaviors and anxiety disorders known as Canine Compulsive Disorder (CCD).

A dog with CCD does more than exhibit anxiety in the face of an immediate threat; he often compulsively repeats a behavior that has nothing to do with escaping a danger or trigger. This is an excessive response; this level of worry is beyond immediate survival and, ironically, often results in the dog causing himself harm.

Dogs with CCD commonly exhibit behaviors such as licking their forelegs incessantly, chasing their tails or spinning in circles, monotonous barking, air-snapping, nail or foot chewing, sucking on the flank, ingesting nonfood objects, overdrinking water, and other repetitive behaviors. These behaviors may appear to have no immediate causation, though they may serve to relieve the dogs' anxieties.

## Genesis of CCD

The first order of business for a dog exhib-



**Like many herding dogs, Rupert, the now-deceased Border Collie owned by WDJ Editor Nancy Kerns, was a famous worrier. He also compulsively groomed his forearms when particularly anxious, to the point of bare patches and sores.**

iting signs of CCD is to have a complete examination by a holistic veterinarian. If the vet determines that there is no medical condition underlying the repetitive behavior, review the dog's environment and lifestyle. Consider the breed. Some breeds are genetically predisposed to particular manifestations of CCD. For example, herd-

ing breeds often find odd things to chase or nip at (including shadows, rays of light, flies, or dust motes), while retrieving breeds may compulsively mouth or suck toys or blankets.

Dogs who are kenneled or kept indoors many hours a day can become frustrated from lack of exercise and stimulation, and have a higher possibility of developing CCD. Confinement is probably one of the greatest contributors to CCD. Dogs are not loners; being left alone for long periods of time can cause the type of stress that leads to anxiety disorders. Animals exposed to consistent conflict or stress within a household often exhibit repetitive behaviors.

Knowing the genesis of the behavior helps to determine how to approach resolving CCD. Sometimes it is as simple as realizing that the dog is inadvertently being rewarded for an unwanted repetitive behavior, such as hyper-jumping, when all



**TWO-FINGER TECHNIQUE:** Place your middle finger on top of your index finger. This technique is good for holding points that are difficult to reach, or where you want to bring up the energy level by scratching the acupoint.



**THUMB TECHNIQUE:** Using the soft tip of your thumb at a 45- to 90-degree angle to the dog's body, apply about a pound of pressure, gently but with healing intention. Count slowly to 30 while holding the point; watch for signs of an energy release.

the dog really needs is attention. Providing the dog with direction and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior can go a long way in resolving a number of problem behaviors. Punishment rarely extinguishes behaviors associated with CCD; in fact, punishing the animal usually causes further stress.

### Combined approach

There are many alternatives to pharmaceutical approaches to help a dog overcome CCD. Acupressure is known to reduce the dog's stress level while simultaneously establishing new energetic patterns that can support behavior change. Consulting a professional trainer to help design a behavior modification program can be helpful. There are also homeopathic, herbal, essential oil, and flower essence remedies available to support a dog who is contending with long-term stressors resulting in compulsive behaviors.

The most effective approach to working with CCD is usually a combined approach. Acupressure offers the benefit of enhancing the effectiveness of behavior modification, herbal, and other remedies. Acupressure is based on the principals of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). From the TCM perspective, the extremely deep level of worry that underlies CCD indicates a disturbance of the animal's spirit and sense that his basic needs are not being met.

When a dog is highly frustrated or conflicted for an extended period, his anxiety builds and his concern for his very survival increases. To relieve this anxiety, he may repetitively lick his foreleg until it is raw or chew his own paw two very common expressions of anxiety. If an animal hurts himself, we know that his spirit has been seriously injured and his sense of security on earth is deeply threatened.

### Acupressure point selection

There are specific acupressure points – pools of energy – on the dog's body that can be stimulated to relieve a dog's anxiety and support his self-confidence and sense of security.

The following acupressure points (also called "acupoints") can be used to calm the spirit by relieving anxiety, stress, and worry while also addressing behavior problems and hyperactivity: Conception Vessel 14 (CV14), Governing Vessel 20 (GV 20), and Heart 7 (HT 7).

In addition, Stomach 45 (ST 45) and

Spleen 1 (SP 1) can be used to promote the dog's "grounding" and sense of belonging while also calming his spirit, clearing his mind, and resolving depression.

### Point work techniques

Each of the acupoints mentioned and identified in the chart below are bilateral; they are located on and should be addressed on both sides of the dog's body.

Place the soft, fleshy portion of the tip of your thumb on the point and press down gently yet with intention. Count slowly to 30 while applying pressure or until the dog shows that he has experienced an energy release, by yawning, licking, stretching, rolling over, passing gas, or moving away. Then move to the next acupoint.

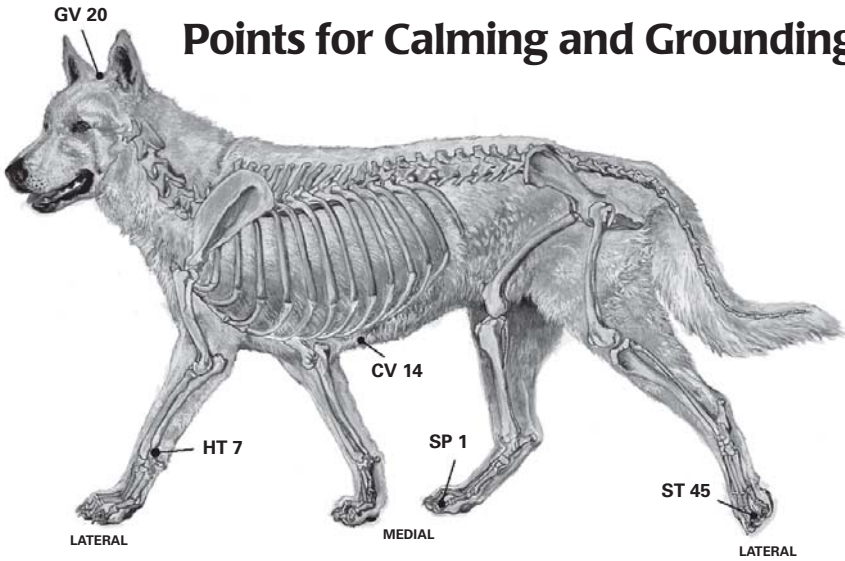
Another point work technique, which

can be used especially if you want to increase the dog's energy (if he seems depressed or lethargic), is to use your index and middle finger to scratch the acupoint. Again, count to 30 slowly or move to the next point when the dog indicates he has released the energy from the point.

While you hold each acupoint, think about how much you love the dog and want to meet his needs so that he will feel secure and he can let go of all his earthly worries.

Repeating this acupressure session every three or four days for four to six weeks will help the dog feel more comfortable and relaxed, especially if the other environmental, lifestyle, and social issues have been resolved. 🐾

## Points for Calming and Grounding



POINT	LOCATION
HT 7	Found on the outside of the foreleg, just above the transverse crease of the carpal joint. Feel for the notch just above the wrist (carpus).
SP 1	Located on the first digit, at the base of the nail bed on the medial side.
ST 45	Found at the base of the nail of the second digit, outside aspect.
GV 20	Located in a depression on the dorsal midline of the skull, in line with the front edge of the ears.
CV 14	Found on the ventral midline, at the level of the xiphoid process.



Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis are the authors of *The Well-Connected Dog: A Guide to Canine Acupressure*, *Acu-Cat: A Guide to Feline Acupressure*, and *Equine Acupressure: A Working Manual*. They founded Tallgrass Animal Acupressure Institute, which offers a practitioner certificate program and training programs worldwide, plus books, meridian charts, and videos. Contact them or purchase these products at (888) 841-7211 or [animalacupressure.com](http://animalacupressure.com).

# In the Dog's Kitchen

*What we have learned so far from touring pet food production facilities.*

BY NANCY KERNS

Not long ago, I was talking with Jay Weinstein, professional chef and editor of *Kitchen & Cook*, another one of Belvoir Publications' magazines, at a meeting with our publisher in Florida. Weinstein asked me where I had flown in from. I told him I had attended a pet products show in Chicago, and was touring some dog food factories on the trip, as well. "Ugh!" Jay protested, his fine dining sensibilities temporarily offended. "Why do they have to be called *dog food factories*? Why can't they be called *dog food kitchens*, at least? Or pet nutrition facilities?"

Jay has a point – but it was my fault that he was aggrieved by my offhand expression. I'm sure none of the pet food company executives who were proud enough of their facilities to invite me to tour them actually call their workplaces "dog food factories." While the very phrase "dog food" historically has been a sort of insult, the industry itself has become increasingly respectable.

Once primarily the repository for waste products from the human food manufacturing industry, pet food production is a fast-growing industry. And, significantly, the tippy-top end of the market, represented by foods that are made with all (or mostly) human-grade ingredients, is the fastest-growing segment of the market. A headline in the November 2006 *Petfood Industry* magazine announced, "The primary market driver in the US continues to be conversion to higher-priced petfoods."

We've always focused WDJ's attention on the top end of the pet food market – the products made with the best-quality ingredients that money could buy. That's because we strongly believe that products made with the freshest, best-quality, least-processed, most wholesome ingredients are the healthiest foods for dogs, and the ones that are most likely to support glowing health in the dogs who consume them.

While our focus pleased the makers of products that we admired – manufacturers whose philosophies are in alignment with

## What you can do . . .

- Always keep the bag that your dog's food came in; you'll need the production codes from the packaging in order to discuss any problems with the manufacturer.
- If anything about your dog's food doesn't look or smell right, contact its customer service.
- Ask the representative about the food's manufacturer. A reputable company should be able to put you through to (or have your call returned by) someone who can answer any question you have about the food, to your satisfaction.



The Whole Dog Journal



A chef preparing dog treats at a Three Dog Bakery store in Kansas City, Missouri. These lavish, hand-crafted products are sold from gleaming glass display cases in retail stores.



Another gleaming, high-end operation, but with a much higher production volume. This manufacturing plant, featuring new, top-of-the-line technology, makes extruded (dry) pet foods.

ours – some pet food industry insiders have complained to us that “food is more than its ingredients.”

What did they mean by that?

## Manufacturing matters

What concerns these particular critics are pet food companies that purchase high-quality ingredients, but use lower-cost, inferior production facilities to manufacture their products.

Conceivably, two different manufacturers could use the exact same ingredients and formula and end up with widely divergent products in terms of cost and quality. Comparison of the foods based solely on the ingredients (such as we do in our annual food reviews) would understandably aggravate the executives who spent a lot more money and time to produce their company’s foods in the cleanest, best-managed, most-inspected facilities available.

A *partial* list of the potential hazards of poor manufacturing practices include:

■ Inattention to quality control standards results in acceptance and use of inferior or unsafe ingredients (i.e., mycotoxin-infected grains, rancid fats or oils, etc.).

■ Product quality is inconsistent (i.e., dry foods are not always dried to a standard level of moisture, nutrient levels vary widely in the finished product).

■ Product has a higher probability of being contaminated with chemical hazards (pesticides, cleaning agents); pests (insects, rodents, birds, or their feces); foreign objects (such as ingredient packaging, bits of metal or plastic); and biological hazards (bacteria, toxin-producing mold).

■ Inadequate testing results in excessive variation of nutrient levels or undetected contamination.

■ Product does not contain what its label says it contains (wrong ingredients are used, substitutes are made, measurements are incorrect, ingredients are omitted, or product is mislabelled).

■ Problems exist with packaging (faults with seals or seams, packages damaged in storage or transit).

■ Poor inventory control means food spends too much of its shelf life in a warehouse before being shipped to retail outlets;

## Contract Manufacturers

For many years, it has been standard operating procedure for pet food companies to decline to disclose where their products are made. Many executives believed that the less consumers knew about the pet food industry, the better. Of particular concern was the perception that consumers would have a negative response to the news that some companies do not manufacture their own products, but use “contract manufacturers” (also known as “co-packers”) – independently operated plants that make foods for multiple companies.

There are pros and cons to either manufacturing scenario. While we see a strong potential benefit for a company to make its own products (and provide its own stringent oversight), we’ve also seen instances where the cost of operating the plant necessitated cuts in the cost (and therefore quality) of the food ingredients. We’ve seen terrific foods emerge from co-packing plants that were formulated by companies who could never afford their own manufacturing plants – and heard nightmarish stories about co-packer mistakes and packer/company miscommunications. For all of these reasons, we don’t have a bias toward one type of manufacturer or the other.

### Company makes its own products:

- P** • Company enjoys greater control over entire manufacturing process
  - R** • Can make swift changes in process if needed
  - O** • If investigation of problems is needed, access is immediate and unimpeded
- C** • Company must be responsible for many more aspects of production; liability is vastly increased
  - O** • Overhead cost of owning and operating manufacturing facility is exorbitant, much more so if the company size/production demand is such that manufacturing does not take place on a full-time basis

### Company uses a contract manufacturer:

- P** • Once company is confident in its selection of a “co-packer,” it can delegate most manufacturing worries to that co-packer
  - R** • Capital improvements to the plant infrastructure may be more common at co-packing facilities, since costs can be subsidized by multiple clients
  - O** • Co-packer may offer other efficiencies, such as better pricing of ingredients (due to bulk buying, for several clients)
- C** • Company has less (or no) control of production schedule and process
  - O** • It can be difficult for company to gain co-packer’s access and cooperation if investigation of problems with the product is needed

may arrive at consumers’ homes at the end of its “best used by” stage.

Unfortunately, while it’s abundantly clear that good manufacturing practices matter, it’s practically impossible for a consumer to determine which pet foods were made *well* when it’s still terribly difficult just to find out *where* pet foods are made! And even if you do learn the origin of your dog’s favorite food, there are very few ways to determine a manufacturer’s reliability and competence.

## What I’ve seen

I’ve now toured nine pet food and pet treat production facilities in seven states. (Note: Since it was expressly *not* my intention to

review or inspect any manufacturing facility to which I was invited, I’m not going to name or locate each facility I toured, or be specific in my descriptions of each site. My interest in each plant was educational, not investigative.)

I’ve witnessed the manufacture of extruded and baked dry dog (and cat) foods, baked “cookie” and “biscuit” type treats, dried treats and chews made from a variety of animal tissues, and canned food. I’ve yet to visit a facility that makes raw frozen diets or dehydrated diets, though I have received invitations and plan to see these foods made as soon as possible.

Interestingly, each facility I’ve toured seemed to be managed with an emphasis on different criteria.

The pride of one dry food plant seemed to be its on-site laboratory – complete with a well-educated, full-time dedicated lab staff – and its workers, who were retained long-term with larger than average salaries and generous benefits. The manager of that plant explained that his company leadership strongly felt that the longer each employee was retained, the more valuable they became.



**The manufacturing process is helpfully transparent in this tiny plant. Steam rises from the extruder and the freshly extruded food whizzing by on the conveyor belt, on its way to a dryer.**

At another facility, one that manufactured oven-baked foods and treats, certification and high scores in a variety of quality-control programs seemed to be the management’s primary focus.

At one canned food plant, top-quality ingredients were foremost on the manager’s mind; other aspects of the operation seemed to be hardly considered. I had a similar experience at the smallest extruded food plant I’ve seen so far. The ingredients were top-shelf; the manufacturing process itself seemed comically informal.

At another cannery tour, special emphasis was put on the mixing and cooking processes; it appeared that extraordinary resources had been invested in advanced technology to achieve the most consistent results in those areas. The newest dry food plant I toured was similarly equipped with new and advanced computer-based technology for controlling ingredient inventory, mixing, cooking, cooling, coating, and packaging. It was far more impressive than some of the human food manufacturing operations I’ve toured.

## Size matters

I haven’t been in any plants operated by the industry giants – Nestle Purina, Mars (which, in 2006, purchased Doane Pet Care, the largest maker of private label pet foods), Iams (Proctor & Gamble), Hill’s

Pet Nutrition (Colgate Palmolive), and Del Monte. At one point I made a huge effort to gain access to one of these behemoths – and got nowhere.

I have interviewed a number of pet food industry executives who spent decades at one or another of the giant companies, who confirmed my guesses of what’s inside the huge plants: Lots of gleaming machinery and floors, and the most inexpensive ingredients available.

This gets to what seems to me to be the most significant trade-off: The bigger a manufacturing plant is (the greater its production capacity), the more likely it is to be impeccably clean and modern. Its products are more likely to be consistent . . . and the less likely it is to use fresh, whole ingredients in its products.

In contrast, in the plants I saw with the smallest operational capacity, lavish attention was paid to the ingredients of the food . . . but the sanitation was not impressive, and equipment for lab testing of the product was not in evidence. Small facilities, especially those with limited production runs (making food just a few days a week, or in extremely small batches), may lack the full-time, well-trained staff needed to produce foods with a consistent level of quality. While I’m unaware of any specific problems arising from the shortcomings I perceived, it’s generally true that smaller production facilities tend to struggle more with product consistency than the “big guys.”

That said, it’s only fair to mention that the most devastating incidents in pet food history, where many dogs died as a result of a problem with food manufacturing, involved moderately large- or very large-volume plants.

## Overall impressions

All in all, I have been impressed with the facilities I’ve seen. As my editorial compatriot noted, “dog food factory” conjures up images of a disgustingly smelly, unclean facility. Only one of the nine plants I’ve toured could possibly meet that description (and probably not for long, as the plant is slated for relocation to a new facility). The plants I’ve toured *do* smell like dog food – but fresh, aromatic dog food, not

rancid or putrid.

Keeping in mind that the plants I toured invited me to their facilities, and each manufactures high-end foods, using high-quality ingredients, it shouldn’t be a surprise that *all* of the raw materials I saw (meat, fruit, vegetables, grains, dairy products, and herbs) were uniformly fresh-looking and absolutely of human-edible, supermarket quality. (One plant owner complained that she has to order twice as many avocados as needed for her product formulations, since her employees eat as many avocados as they use in the pet food!)

Most of the “fresh” meats I saw were frozen in big blocks, and are fed into the processing machinery still frozen for freshness. The only exception to this was one large facility where the fresh chicken was deeply chilled in huge, hot-tub-sized tubs. Careful temperature control was maintained in all cases.



**Dog food ingredients about to go into a crushing and mixing process: cranberries, carrots, apples, garlic, potatoes, alfalfa sprouts, cottage cheese.**

It’s not quite fair to directly compare the two gourmet treat manufacturing facilities I toured with the much higher-volume food and biscuit plants. Suffice to say that *Kitchen & Cook* would be perfectly comfortable with the mixing, baking, and presentation of the cookies, pretzels, and even cakes produced for dogs in the gourmet treat bakeries.

My next goal is to tour facilities that make human-edible products that can also be fed to dogs. These foods, made in factories (or “kitchens”!) that produce human foods, are increasingly popular. I’m curious to see how (and if) these facilities differ from the pet food plants I’ve seen.

I’ll describe the step-by-step production process for dry and moist foods in our upcoming annual food reviews. The dry food review will appear next month. 🐾

*Nancy Kerns is Editor of WDJ.*

# Perspective: Use It or Lose It

*Sometimes we forget how far our dogs have already progressed.*

BY CARYL-ROSE POFCHER

Lately, it seems like there's an epidemic of people around me who can't see their own and their dog's progress. In a similar vein, I've been surprised by the number of clients who seem to take their dog's improvement for granted, yet continually expect more and more.

Apparently, my new job is to remind dog owners to keep perspective, the long view, when training their companions. It takes time to train difficult dogs and manage serious canine behavior problems. But if you apply yourself with self-discipline and good will, you will see overall progress – if you remember to look for it and take the time to appreciate it! There will be setbacks and dips, because learning and change are like that. But when viewed with a bit of perspective, the progress becomes obvious.



**Once toddlers are potty-trained, their parents tend to forget how much time and effort it took to accomplish that landmark. Similarly, we forget to appreciate how much puppies and dogs learn in their first few weeks in our homes.**

## What you can do . . .

- Get a notebook or make a computer file devoted to tracking your dog's training. Write down your primary goals, and a brief description of your dog's current behavior in those areas. Date it!
- Enter key experiences at least weekly. Daily is better. Add some brags; admit to some worries. Identify what's working and what's not.
- Review the journal periodically. Pat yourself on the back for your dog's successes; forgive yourself for momentary lapses. Keep it all in perspective!



## Mission creep

One of my clients has a dog with a serious prey drive. If the dog spotted a squirrel in the park, she would go berserk, to the extent that her owner could barely drag her away from the park.

We used a combination of positive reinforcement, managing the environment, counter-conditioning, and desensitization, and the dog improved, to the point that I hadn't heard from the owner for some time. Until he called to complain that the techniques were evidently no longer working, because "My dog still chases deer on the trails."

Talk about mission creep! The dog's progress has been so steady that her owner had nearly forgotten that his original goal had been to walk his dog on leash through a city park without incident. And now his goal was many achievements past that.

With persistent probing, I learned that the dog *does* now come off a running squirrel using positive techniques. Hello?!

Hurray for you and your dog! Now let's figure out how we can deal with the deer situation – previously unimaginable! – by applying and adjusting the tools that worked with the squirrels.

## Human hangups

Another client told me recently that he was very concerned that his dog was doing it "just for the treats" – that she wasn't doing x, y, or z for him, the owner. Sigh.

This man was describing how they could now walk past the fenced yard on their street that contains a lunging, barking, snarling, frothing dog. He said his dog would now turn to him with what he described as a "happy face" instead of pulling and lunging back at that dog. He had originally come to me as a client because his dog was becoming more reactive, earlier in the walk as they approached that yard. They lived on a dead end street and *had* to pass that house in order to walk anywhere. They had made *amazing*, wonderful

progress using treats, among other tools and techniques.

First, I helped my client look back to the early days of our work, when the *only* way he could get his dog past her fenced nemesis was to stay on the far sidewalk and proffer a fistful of high-value treats for his dog to nuzzle and slurp. “Remember how grabby the dog was for those treats, how aroused she was?” I asked him.

I reminded him of how they had progressed to click and treating his dog for glancing at the other dog, sometimes tossing the treats on the ground so she was looking down in order to pick up her “pay-check.” How he had learned the importance of deciding where to deliver the treat itself: the ground, his hand, in heel position, slightly ahead of his knee, slightly behind his knee, even slightly across his body so his dog was turning away from the lunging dog to get the treat. How he learned to look for opportunities to reinforce her good behavior with treats.

I walked him through more of the steps we had taken together. “Remember how we had celebrated the first time your dog turned to you on her own accord when the other dog lunged?” I asked him. He had learned to taper the treats, moving from an “open bar” (a fistful of treats no matter what his dog’s behavior), to a rapid-fire click!/treat delivery, to the occasional tiny pause in click!/treats.

Then, gradually, at the rate his dog was successful, he began giving her treats intermittently, substituting jolly talk, pats, and praise as they walked on. And then . . . then we’d started walking in the street, a foot closer to the fence. And closer and closer, increasing the rate of reinforcement each time we reduced the distance. And then we had tapered down the treats, increased the other types of reinforcement, and when his dog seemed ready, closed the distance another foot or so and went through the same routine all over again.

### Gotta believe it to sell it

“Okay, okay, I get it!” he laughed. “We’ve come a long way. But . . .” We talked some more. As we discussed the situation, I began to understand that although he was happy with the results of the training, he still did not like how he *felt* when feeding his dog treats. He wanted his dog to behave calmly “for his sake.” He didn’t like the feeling that he had to “pay” his dog for good behavior.

I asked him if he liked his job; he said

yes. I asked him if he liked his boss; he replied in the affirmative. I asked him if he would go to work and do his job day after day if he never, ever got paid. His eyes got wide. For a moment I thought I’d reached him – but maybe I’d only surprised him, because after thinking for a moment, he said, “But my boss doesn’t feed me, let me sleep in his bed, brush me, pat me, and take me for walks. Isn’t that paycheck enough?”

This dog owner’s honesty and ability to identify the source of his reluctance to use certain training methods is admirable. Many dog owners may unconsciously (or consciously!) expect or wish for a certain amount of gratefulness from their dogs, as “repayment” or in consideration of all the time, money, and trouble they can cause. But those are all very human concepts – not anything a dog could *ever* understand.

I tried to get my client to see that, in order to change his dog’s natural behavior, he would have to use incentives that are meaningful to the dog. “It’s true, your dog takes it for granted that she lives with you and gets fed and brushed and so forth; there is no way for her to understand the home with you is hers to lose! How could she?”

I explained that if he wanted his dog to do something that is *really, really* difficult for her, the rewards for her hard work would have to be *very* immediate, palpable, and compelling – as compelling as it might be if a friend offered him \$500 in cash for helping him move an enormous filing cabinet a short distance. If the task seemed

impossibly hard – if the cabinet was obviously immovable or the distance was too far – he’d probably decline to even try. And if there were problems with the compensation – if the payment was only \$1, or would be given to him in a year’s time, or he’d be paid in something he didn’t care much about, like \$500 worth of coupons to a beauty salon – again, he’d probably take a pass.

Fortunately, food is a *very* compelling motivational tool for dogs. And they don’t need to know it doesn’t cost us that much!

Gradually, by nibbling away at the concerns and imagery, he and I continued to make progress in his comfort and in his dog’s behavior – and improvements in the relationship he and his dog have.

### The real world

A friend, a very knowledgeable pet owner with a shy/reactive dog, e-mailed me about a setback she and her dog experienced recently. She wrote, “I keep getting caught up in the fact that I can’t control the environment.” Well, none of us can, though we can do what we can to prepare.

My friend’s dog is about eight years old. It is only in the past year he has been able to stay calm enough to accept food treats when he is outside, even with no dogs or other animals in sight. She’s done tremendous work with him, and her patience and dedication are impressive. She had recently begun walking the dog on leash in a state park. When she saw other people with dogs



**When the real world intrudes, and training or behavior setbacks occur, try to remain calm. Remove yourself from the situation as gracefully as possible. Remember, it helps nobody, especially not your dog, if you become angry or upset.**



approaching, she would move off the trail with her dog – thus increasing the distance between her dog and a potential trigger – and click and treat (using peanut butter in a squeeze tube). The tactic worked well.

At least until recently, on a walk in the state park, an off-leash dog ran up as she and her dog waited off the trail, dashing right into her dog's face in an attempt to take his treat! It only took a moment for the off-leash dog to close the space between them, and not surprisingly, a fight broke out. Skin was broken. It was a nasty setback for her work with her dog. For a time, she despaired of the idea of ever taking her dog out on the trails again. She lost sight of their huge progress, and fixated on all that might be lost.

Fortunately, because she is so knowledgeable and has many dog support networks in place, it only took her a short time to come out of the spiral of despair and into planning and repair mode. After all, her dog's improvement had been huge. For a dog to improve from nutso reactivity to being able to take food when outside and with another dog passing nearby!

She's setting up dates to walk her dog with other dogs *on leash*, in a carefully controlled setting. She's talking with a local positive trainer who runs group classes to see if they can work around the edges of some of her classes so she can do counter-conditioning and desensitization work in an orchestrated environment. So, yes, this was a nasty setback but this owner got back on track with renewed vigor pretty quickly!

## When old issues resurface

I'm not immune to the nearsighted syndrome myself. Today I walked my old girl, my Hera-the-WonderDog! in town. This is her perfect time of year. Cool, dry weather. Good for an aging English Bulldog.

It had been a few days since Hera's last walk in town, and I took us to a street she hadn't walked in many months. She was excited. She pulled on leash. I was delighted she had that much interest, energy, and vigor. I said "Okay!" and we trotted along at the pace she dictated. Then my breath got short, and I was ready to walk at *my* pace. So I cued "With me!" She never even flicked an ear in my direction. Instantly I felt a wave of, "But I went at your pace, you should go at mine now!"

What nonsense! I got my clicker out of my pocket and when she was walking beside me, I clicked. She looked at me, and I gave her a treat. I delivered the treat with



**Take the time, every day, to appreciate your dog's good behavior and any improvements she's made. This simple exercise can have profound effects on your body language and tone of voice – which can improve your dog's responses to you!**

her in the "heel" position. We walked along with clicks and treats at irregular but frequent intervals. When she saw a chipmunk, I clicked the sighting and she turned away from the chipmunk for her treat, which gave me the chance to cue an "about face." Periodically I cued "Go play!" – her cue for walking at her pace, zigzagging at will, and sniffing as she wishes. Then it was back to my pace and my rules.

Was she just doing it for the treats? And not for *me*, as my client had worried with his dog? On the one hand, the treats were the paycheck she cared about. On the other hand, we progressed through the spontaneous, remedial training session quickly, positively, and pleasantly, and we both had smiles on our faces and a lilt in our steps. It was a treat-intensive walk, although by the end, I was back to my usual routine with Hera of using praise and play as reinforcers.

How long has it been since she pulled on leash and ignored me when I asked her to do something on our walk? A long time. In fact, I had started to mourn her declining energy, her signs of aging. Suddenly, I was confronted with her ignoring me and, briefly, I, too, lost perspective. I felt disappointed. How silly of me!

## Keep track

Perspective can be so elusive. We gain it, we lose it, and we shift our view and our values with the frequency and ease of a school of startled fish!

But we know how to compare what is now to what was last week, last month, last year, or simply last time. We know how to identify trends in behavior and change. It is our job as pet owners as well as the job of dog trainers to do those things, consciously and consistently. Record keeping helps tremendously, even if it's just a few notes jotted daily in a diary or journal. But failing that, simply look back honestly and compare not just one event, but the series of events.

We owe it to ourselves and to our dogs to see and appreciate any and all improvements and to keep working. To see where our progress is stunted, and try to make changes. To keep our perspective, and keep ourselves honest. Those of us who are trainers owe it to our clients to point out these things and to help them start seeing them on their own.

It's so easy to lose heart when there is one setback in your dog's behavior. It's easy to become tired and discouraged. But it is *so* important to stop and compare and identify progress and trends. We can do it. We have these big, complex brains. I challenge you to go forth and appreciate what you and your dog *have* done, while making plans to continue onward and make more and more progress! 🐾

*Caryl-Rose Pofcher is owner of My Dog, LLC, in Amherst, Massachusetts. See "Resources," page 24, for contact information.*

# New Tricks for a Stick

*Use target training to teach your dog to walk without pulling, open and close doors, go to his bed, and much more.*

BY PAT MILLER

**D**oes your dog know how to target? If not, the two of you may be missing out on one of the most versatile behaviors to come along since the rise in popularity of the positive dog training philosophy.

Targeting simply means teaching your dog to touch a designated body part to a designated spot – the end of a commercially produced target stick, your hand, an object, a location, or anything at all. While much targeting is done with the dog’s nose as the designated body part, you can actually teach your dog to touch with a front or hind foot, his hip, shoulder, ear, or any other moveable piece of his anatomy.

We teach nose targeting in my Basic Adult and Puppy classes. Whenever I introduce the exercise to a new group I get puzzled stares from most of the humans in the class. I can just see them thinking, “Why on earth would I want to teach my dog to do that?!” – proof that the concept of tar-

geting still has miles to go before gaining familiarity and acceptance in the mainstream pet dog community.

The list of reasons why you want to teach your dog to touch is as long as your arm, and then some. From the serious to the sublime, targeting is useful and fun for canines and humans alike.

You can use targeting to teach good manners behaviors such as “Go to your place” and to help your dog learn polite leash walking. “Touch the target” can be used as an emergency recall, or your dog’s cue to ask to go outside.

It also has widespread application for a number of service dog behaviors, can be used to teach agility dogs to hit the contact zones, and give search dogs a tool to communicate that they’ve located sign of the missing person (or pet). Finally, targeting can come into play with an endless variety of entertaining tricks and games. There’s something for everyone.

## What you can do . . .

- Teach your dog basic targeting with nose and paw and apply them to his basic good manners behaviors.
- Consider targeting as an alternative tool for solving training challenges that have proven difficult with other techniques, such as pulling on leash.
- Demonstrate the joys of targeting to your dog-owning friends; get together for targeting parties!



## Getting ready

It’s almost imperative that you use a reward marker – the click! of a clicker or some other quick, sharp sound or word – for fast and effective target training. The “touch” behavior happens so quickly that it’s difficult for the dog to understand what he’s being reinforced for absent a conditioned sound that marks the instant of rewardable behavior. If you have not already done so, start by “charging” your clicker – teaching your dog that “click!” (or whatever sound you choose to use) – means he just earned a reward.

**Note:** If you want to use a verbal marker instead of a clicker, I suggest *not* using the word “Good.” We frequently tell our dogs they’re good dogs just because we love them. Your reward marker needs to have a very specific meaning: “That behavior just earned a treat!” You don’t want to have to feed your dog a treat every time you tell him he’s a good dog! I suggest using the word “Yes!” or even the word “Click!” as verbal markers.



**Cooper is 11 years old and he picked up nose-targeting in about a minute and a half. We’re going to build his skill at targeting to keep his attention on us as we pass fences that contain barking dogs, which usually makes him anxious and reactive.**

Charging the clicker is one of the easiest things you'll ever teach your dog. It's classic Pavlov (classical conditioning) – simply giving the dog a strong positive association between the click or other marker and yummy food. So, assuming you use a clicker, just “click!” it a half-dozen to a dozen times, following each click with a tasty treat, and you will soon be good to go. To test if the clicker is “charged,” wait for your dog to look away and click the clicker once. His head should swivel back to you in anticipation of the treat. If it doesn't, supply yourself with treats that are more irresistible, and click and treat a few more times.

A small percentage of dogs are afraid of the sound of the clicker. When you first introduce it, click it inside a pocket to muffle the sound a bit. If at any time you notice an adverse reaction to the clicker from your dog, charge and use a verbal marker instead.

### Basic nose targeting

The easiest body part to start with is the nose or a front paw, since dogs use those two body parts almost exclusively to explore their world. My preference is nose targeting – the one we teach in our beginner classes – because it's easy to elicit the behavior, and doesn't reinforce dogs who might already be a little *too* free with the use of their paws. Foot is my second choice for an easy and useful targeting behavior.

You can capture targeting to your hand, which means getting the complete “touch” behavior, clicking and treating when he does – or you can shape it – which means

clicking and treating for “successive approximations” of moving his nose closer and closer to your hand. (See “The Shape of Things to Come,” WDJ March 2006, for more information about shaping.)

Dogs tend to naturally sniff an offered hand, so to “capture” a touch, offer your open palm to your dog at nose level with your fingers pointing toward the ground. If your dog thinks this is an invitation to “Shake,” offer your closed fist instead.

When he sniffs your offered hand, mark the desired behavior with the click! of a clicker (or verbal marker, such as “Yes!”) and give the dog a treat. Repeat until you see him deliberately bump his nose into your hand because he's figured out he can make you click and treat by touching you. Then add your verbal cue (for example, “Touch!”) just *before* his nose touches. In short order you'll be able to prompt him to target to your hand.

Of course, it's not always quite that easy. Your dog may sniff the hand a few times and then stop, either because your hand is no longer interesting to him, or because he's just focusing on the source of the treats. If he needs a jump start, rub something tasty on your hand and offer it for a sniff or a lick. You're on your way!

Once you've established the targeting behavior to your hand, you can transfer it to another object. Hold the target object in your hand, cue the behavior, and give him a click and treat when he touches the target. Fade the presence of your hand by moving it away from the target object until he'll touch it by itself.

Practice targeting to enough different

objects, and your dog will happily touch any object you indicate, the first time you ask. You can even name several objects and teach him to touch different ones on cue, a behavior called target discrimination.

Any time you want to add a new cue for a behavior, use the new cue, followed by the old one. When you name an object, you're really just giving that specific object a new cue.

For example, if you set a gallon water jug on the floor and say “Touch!” your dog touches it. Now say “Jug, touch!” After enough repetitions (“enough” will vary, depending on the dog and how touch-savvy he is), you can drop the “Touch” cue and just say “Jug!” to get your dog to touch the water bottle.

### Applied targeting

Ready to start making use of your dog's new behavior? Try these:

■ **Polite leash walking.** This is one of the most useful applications of targeting. When your dog starts to lag or move too far ahead of you, position your target hand or the end of the target stick where you'd like the dog to be (traditionally at your left side) and ask him to “Touch!” Click and treat when he's in position.

To keep him there, give your “Touch” cue more frequently, and reinforce randomly – very frequently at first, then less so as he gets better at polite walking. If you have a small dog and don't want to bend over for him to touch your hand, teach him to touch a target stick and offer that as you walk, instead.



This Cane Corso pup tries to take the ball on the end of the target stick into her mouth. After being clicked and rewarded for just touching the ball, not mouthing it, she catches on.



At six months of age, the pup is big and strong and getting bigger and stronger all the time. But with the target stick, teaching her to heel off-leash is a snap!

■ **Close a door/drawer.** Teach your dog to target to a plastic disk (like a cottage cheese container lid) in your hand. Then stick the lid to a cupboard door or drawer with rubber glue or double-sided tape at your dog's nose level, and ask him to touch it there.

You may need to have your hand near the lid at first, and fade the presence of your hand – or not, if your dog is really adept at targeting. When he'll consistently touch the lid on cue, shape for harder touches by only clicking the ones that move the door, at least a little. Eventually he'll close the door all the way.

If you don't want a plastic lid on your cupboard forever, fade its presence by cutting it into increasingly smaller circles, until there's no lid left and your dog has transferred the "touch" to the door itself.

■ **Turn on/off a lamp.** Gotta love those touch on/touch off lamps; they're perfect for target training! Show your dog the lamp and ask him to "Touch!" If your dog still needs some assistance, put your hand behind the lamp to help him touch it and gradually fade the presence of your hand.

Be careful with this one! I had a friend whose husband accused her of not leaving the light on when she went to bed before he did – until they realized their Sheltie was turning off the light after her mistress fell asleep.

■ **Go to your place.** Get out another cottage cheese lid (since you cut up the last

one) and stick it where you want your dog's "place" to be. Ask him to target to the lid from increasing distances, until you can send him to his spot from across the room, and eventually even from another room.

When he's targeting to his spot easily, start asking him to lie down when he gets there. Then change his cue for the behavior to "Place!" – or whatever cue you prefer – by using the new cue first, followed by the old cue, or "Place – Touch!" Eventually you can drop the "touch" and he'll go to his spot and lie down when you say "Place!"

You can teach him that one particular place is his spot, or you can generalize the behavior and teach him that anywhere you stick a cottage cheese lid is his spot.

■ **Play ball.** Teach your dog to push a large ball with his nose – one he can't pick up in his mouth. The hard plastic Jolly Ball is perfect for this, and comes in a variety of sizes from small to very large. When he's learned this one you can sit on the floor across from him and the two of you can roll the ball back and forth – a great game to play when your dog needs exercise and it's too cold or stormy to go outside. This behavior can also turn your dog into a great babysitter – as long as you remember that dogs and small children must always be under direct adult supervision.

■ **Be brave.** This is another application of classical conditioning – helping your dog develop an association between two dif-

ferent things. Most dogs love targeting once they've learned it. What's not to love? You're like a treat vending machine – your dog pushes the button (your hand), he gets a treat. He pushes the button, he gets a treat. As a result, he has a very positive association – a "Yay!!" feeling – when you ask him to touch.

Now, say you're walking down the street with your dog on leash and you have to a garbage collection truck. As you approach, the worker drops a metal garbage can, sending it clattering across the sidewalk 25 feet in front of you. Your dog happens to be a little fearful of loud noises and is now afraid to walk past the can, even though the garbage truck is long gone.

You offer your hand and ask your dog to touch. His brain goes "Yay! Targeting!" and he takes a step forward to touch your hand. You target him past the garbage can, and since he can't be happy about targeting and afraid of the can at the same time, and because his association with targeting is *so* positive, not only do you get him past the can, but the positive association has rubbed off and now he thinks garbage cans are pretty cool, too.

## Paw targeting

Some behaviors work better as paw targets than nose targets, especially things that require a little more "oomph" behind the touch – turning appliances on and off, for example. Others work equally well either way, and if you teach you dog both, you can choose which one to ask for.



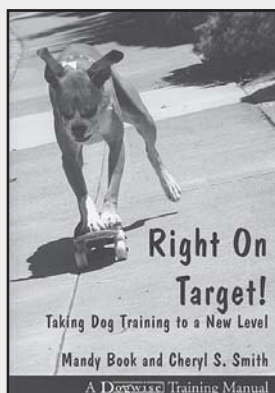
Dogs with longer noses may be better candidates for nose-targeting! This Pug presses what she can of her nose – her lips, actually – to a target on a door, while keeping her eyes on the treat she's about to get.



As the criterion for a click! and treat was increased to "move the door by pushing it," the Pug got stuck. A tiny push on the door from a helper was needed before she understood that she had to push harder and maintain contact as the door moved to earn the click and reward.

## Right On Target

If you've been bitten by the targeting bug, chances are good that you, like this article, have only scratched the surface. Authors Mandy Book and Cheryl S. Smith take an in-depth look at targeting – including targeting with little-used body parts such as hind paws, hips, and ears! – in this excellent book on the subject. Filled with positive training techniques, detailed descriptions, and more ways to target than you can dream of, this is the perfect addition to your library if you're looking for more fun and creative ways to target with your dog.



For dogs who are naturally “pawsey,” paw targeting is a breeze. Put something on the floor, and when your dog paws at it, click and treat. When he's pawing at it reliably, add a verbal cue. Be sure to use a different cue from the one you use for his nose! I use “Foot!” to ask my dogs to target with a paw, “Touch!” for the nose.

If your dog's not a paw-natural, you can “shape” a foot touch. Start by clicking any movement of one paw while your dog stands or sits in front of you. Pick just one paw or you could end up shaping a tap dance!

At first you might just get tiny paw movements, but when your dog figures out what you're clicking for, his paw movements will become more deliberate and more expansive.

When he's doing significant paw movement, add your “Foot” cue, then place an object on the floor. At first click if his paw lands anywhere near the object, then eventually only if it actually touches the object. Finally, add a new cue for the specific object you're asking him to touch with his paw. Some paw-touch applications include:

■ **Playing soccer.** You already taught him to push a ball with his nose. Now use a different cue for paw-soccer, and you've got another good energy-eating game.

■ **Playing a keyboard.** This is a great crowd-pleaser for my Scottie, Dubhy; he sits up on a chair and plays an electronic keyboard with his paws. He actually started

with a nose-touch on a plastic kiddie piano and graduated to the keyboard.

■ **Five more minutes.** Pushing the snooze button on the alarm – an obvious application, but don't let him make you late for work!

■ **Go to your place.** Instead of a lid on the wall, teach him to target with his paws to a rug or mat on the floor.



**Tricks such as high-five, pattycake, and shake hands can all be taught easily with paw targeting.**

■ **Turning off the TV remote.** For an additional challenge, teach him to do this *only* after you fall asleep watching TV!

Some of my favorite targeting applications are the ones that are taught just for fun. At shaping camp we teach our dogs to turn

on a smiley-face push light just because it's cute. A client of mine did me one better, however. Matt Conaty, owner of the high-energy, bright Jack Russell Terrier, Bally, discovered a great target object at a chain office supply store – a little push-button gadget. Now when Bally pushes the button, a recorded voice says “That was easy!” Indeed it was. And fun, too! 🐾

*Pat Miller, CPDT, is WDJ's Training Editor. Miller lives in Hagerstown, Maryland, site of her Peaceable Paws training center. She is also the author of The Power of Positive Dog Training and Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog. For book purchasing or contact information, see “Resources,” page 24.*

## THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL READER SERVICE:

### TO VIEW OUR WEB SITE:

Visit us at  
whole-dog-journal.com

### FOR BACK ISSUES, ARTICLES:

Visit us at  
whole-dog-journal.com/backissues

### TO CHANGE YOUR MAILING OR E-MAIL ADDRESS, RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION, CHECK PAYMENT STATUS, OR ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR ACCOUNT:

Visit us at  
whole-dog-journal.com/cs

Call (800) 829-9165

To change your address by mail, attach your present mailing label to this form (or a copy of this form), enter your new address below, and mail it to:

THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL  
P.O. BOX 420235  
PALM COAST, FL 32142

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

To order or renew a subscription, enter your name and address above and check the subscription term you prefer:

- 2 years (24 issues) – \$54  
 1 year (12 issues) – \$29

In Canada, 1 year \$39 CDN, 2 years \$72 CDN. All other countries, 1 year \$47 US, 2 years \$94 US.

- Check enclosed     AmEx  
 MasterCard         Visa

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### YOUR RENEWAL IS JUST A CLICK AWAY!

whole-dog-journal.com/cs

# Shouts and Whispers

*We received a veritable salad of comments regarding Cesar Millan.*

**Y**ou presented (“Don’t Whisper,” December 2006) some of the same observations I have made in viewing “The Dog Whisperer,” but I believe that you failed to give him credit for two key points.

The first is his consistent emphasis on the importance of exercise. In almost every instance on his show, owners don’t exercise their dogs and the dogs have behavioral problems. Second, he teaches people that dogs don’t think like humans; acting as if they do can cause problems. As for the lack of depth and oversimplification of dog behaviors, blame it on the lack of time or space for depth that is evident in most television and magazines.

There is much to be learned from your methods *and* those of Cesar Millan. My dog has needed several approaches and what I’ve learned from WDJ and Cesar have been very beneficial.

Kay, via e-mail  
Mankato, MN

I’ve been trying to articulate why Cesar Millan’s methods bother me so much, and you expressed it perfectly. I don’t want submissive obedience from my dog, I want a companion! While I’m pretty bad at the timing for clicker training, my Silky Terrier is smart enough to learn quickly, and he’s equally good at showing me how he feels about whatever we’re doing. I enjoy the two-way communication we share.

Suzi, via e-mail

The only thing I agree with you on is that some of Cesar Millan’s work should not be tried unless you know exactly what you are doing, especially with aggressive dogs. You should not try what he does without really knowing what you are doing and he states that on his program. He also says that what you do has to be a lifetime effort on your part if you want success.

I do not agree that Cesar wants a subservient dog. He wants to be in control. A lot of dogs are put down because people

can’t control them. I have seen too many people that can’t coexist with their dogs because the dog is in control. I have never seen Cesar gain control by harsh methods.

I don’t think that any one person has all of the answers.

Sharon Gibson  
via e-mail

I love the Dog Whisperer for two main reasons. First, he has convinced me that it is very easy to inadvertently nurture neurotic behavior in your dogs. Second, his methods have saved dogs who would have been euthanized because no other dog trainer was able to modify their aggressive behavior. The program encourages people who are ready to put their “bad” dogs down to give it one more try with him.

I am also a big fan of your publication and Dr. Ian Dunbar and the like. Just today I was practicing the eye contact exercise you described a few issues ago to try to get my Weimaraner to stop pulling after squirrels on her daily walk.

Barbara  
Via e-mail

Nancy Kerns expressed the same thoughts I’ve had about Cesar Millan. I first became aware of him a couple years ago when he appeared on “Oprah.” I was excited to see what he would offer her to correct/help her dog, Sophie, who had on-leash dog-dog aggression, because our pooch suffers from the same. I ran out and purchased all his books and DVDs, but soon came to realize that I disagreed with so much of his training theories and techniques. I became very disappointed with how everyone jumped on the bandwagon due to his celebrity.

I agree with him *only* in that dogs need more consistent daily exercise and a calm and assertive (within reason) leader, but his form of discipline and rough handling is very disheartening! I will never be a fan of his.

Rebecca Richardson  
Vancouver, WA

**J**ust a note to thank you for the nice article on vaccinations and risks (“Shots Fired,” November 2006). When I was in veterinary school, we were taught that vaccinations did no harm. We now know that is not the case. I never give a vaccine without questioning, “Is this a valid and necessary step to protect this pet from disease?” I am currently comfortable with expecting three-years plus of immunity. At my clinic, we have been following that protocol for more than nine years. We, too, have seen a decrease in immune-related diseases.

Thank you for this fine resource for my clients – and often enlightening for myself.  
Mona L. Gitter, DVM  
Noblesville Square Animal Clinic  
Noblesville, IN

Your article on vaccines could not have come at a better time. I recently found a puppy in the middle of the road, with a collar but no tags or microchip. We put up signs and called the Humane Society but nobody has claimed him, so I guess he was meant to stay with us.

I had no idea whether he had any vaccinations, so I had a vet give him one shot. Of course it was a five-way vaccination – the sort that I specifically did not want. Since then, I have been trying to locate single vaccines for Parvo, Distemper, and Adenovirus 1, with little success. Do you have any suggestions in this respect?

Ute Miethe  
via e-mail

*We strongly recommend finding another veterinarian to work with in the future, one who is willing to do (or has already done) the homework needed to locate individual vaccines. While owners can legally purchase and administer some vaccines, in our opinion, the accompanying veterinary examination and opportunity to discuss other health issues with a like-minded vet is too valuable to pass up.*

**Letters continued on back cover**

# articles from back issues: training, health & product reviews

- 12/06 Positively Australia: How Training Differs Down Under • Diet and the Older Dog • Agility for Reactive Dogs • Pica and Coprophagia • Practice Management: You and Your Vet
- 11/06 Fix the Fetch • Shots Fired: Reducing Vaccination • How to Lead Your Pack • Hera's Housemate • Pro Antioxidants
- 10/06 Car Safety for Dogs • Anal Glands • How to Teach Your Dog to Read • Dog Gone Dung • Puppies
- 9/06 Stopping Urinary Incontinence • Dog-Park Etiquette • Healing Hot Spots and Lick Granulomas • Acupressure for Health Maintenance • Pain and Pain Management
- 8/06 Probiotics • Men vs. Women Dog Trainers • Accelerated Wound Healing • Post-Operative Acupressure • Fat Dogs
- 7/06 Medications for Chronic Anxiety • Don't Do "Alpha Rolls" • Juliette de Bairacli Levy • Herbal Detoxification Helpers • The Adrenal Gland
- 6/06 Stress Signals • Interview with Dr. Susan Wynn • Arnica • Teach Your Dog to Look at You • Willard Water • The Canine Pancreas
- 5/06 Safe Pain Relief • What to Do If Your Dog Is a Bully • Giardia • Teaching Self-Control • The Canine Immune System
- 4/06 Commercial Raw, Frozen Diets • Signs of Active and Passive Submission • Treatment for Heartworm • Helping Shy Dogs • How to Provide Canine Hospice Care
- 3/06 Preventing Canine Cancer • A Dependable Stay • Heartworm Prevention • "Shape" Training • Central Nervous System
- 2/06 Best Dry Foods • Target Training • Nonconventional Care for Canine Cancer • Electronic Training Collars
- 1/06 Best Wet Foods • (Body) Language Barrier • Home Care for Canine Cancer Patients • Adoption Advice • Old Dogs
- 12/05 Fending Off the Flu • Teach Your Dog a Perfect Recall • Conventional Cancer Care • Scary-Looking (But Safe) Play Behavior • Best Books on Positive Training • To Crop and Dock?
- 11/05 Preventing Great Escapes • Canine Cancer Crisis • Learn Canine Body Language • Case History: Defeating Distemper • Skin
- 10/05 Teach Your Puppy Well: Bite Inhibition • Oral Enzyme Therapy Update • The "Gift" of Growling • Crazy About Coconut Oil • The Power of Intuition • Joints
- 9/05 Pre-Puppy Preparation • Foods That Are Toxic to Dogs • How to Save Yourself in a Dog Attack • KongTime: Help for a Home-Along Dog • Skeletal System • Letters About Kidney Diets
- 8/05 Your Pet's Pet Peeves • Making Salves From Carrier Oils • How to Choose Supplements • Train Your Dog to Walk on a Loose Leash • The Muscular System
- 7/05 Reforming a Reactive Dog • How to Choose a Food for Your Dog • How, When, and Where to Feed Your Dog • The Dog Bowl: Keep it Clean • Miraculous Moms
- 6/05 Hot Shots: Deciding Which Vaccines Are a Must • Oh, Baby! Preparing Your Dog for a New Family Member • When It's Not Chronic Renal Failure • Girl Talk: Female Reproductive System • Help for Hypothyroidism • Environmental Poop Bags

## DID YOUR DOG EAT YOUR COPY?

NOT TO WORRY...  
BACK ISSUES OF  
**Whole Dog Journal**  
ARE AVAILABLE!

**Order back issues in  
TWO  
convenient ways:**

Log onto  
**whole-dog-journal.com/  
pub/backissues.html**  
and immediately download  
the articles you want  
to your computer

**OR**

Mail this order form,  
along with a check or money  
order, to:

**The Whole Dog Journal  
P.O. Box 5656  
Norwalk, CT 06856-5656**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ BACK ISSUES @ \$7.50 EA.     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAGE & HANDLING     \$ 2.00

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED     \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Letters continued from page 22

#### CONSIDER YOURSELF WARNED

I hope you might publish something regarding paper shredders and dogs. I work from home and have a large paper shredder that I kept on “AutoFeed” in my den. I also have a Bearded Collie who has long hair on her tail. She was standing next to the paper shredder, wagging her tail, when the paper shredder just sucked her hair in.

Obviously, I now keep it off when I am not using it, but I would like to alert other readers to this potential hazard.

Robin Lestrangle  
Plainview, NY

## RESOURCES

### TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

Pat Miller, CPDT, Peaceable Paws Dog and Puppy Training, Hagerstown, MD. Train with modern, dog-friendly positive methods. Group and private training, Rally, behavior modification, workshops, intern and apprentice programs. Call her at (301) 582-9420 or see [peaceablepaws.com](http://peaceablepaws.com)

The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) has references to member trainers in your area. Call (800) 738-3647 or see [apdt.com](http://apdt.com).

Please note: APDT is dedicated to building better trainers through education, promoting dog-friendly methods, and encouraging their use. APDT’s membership is composed of trainers from across the spectrum of training philosophies. Membership does not necessarily ensure all members employ similar training methods, nor does APDT set standards of skill or competence. APDT encourages (but does not require) its members to use training methods that use reinforcement and rewards, not punishment, to achieve desired behavior.

### BOOKS

WDJ Training Editor Pat Miller is author of two books: *The Power of Positive Dog Training* and *Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog*. Both books are available from DogWise, (800) 776-2665 or [dogwise.com](http://dogwise.com)

### HOLISTIC VETERINARIANS

American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association (AHVMA), 2214 Old Emmorton Road, Bel Air, MD 21015. (410) 569-0795. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a list of holistic veterinarians in your area, or search [ahvma.org](http://ahvma.org)

#### PLEASE NOTE: Unauthorized copying or distribution of WDJ is not permitted

This publication is supported by sales of subscriptions and back issues. The fact that we are NOT supported by advertising sales gives us the editorial independence necessary to present a subjective and critical view.

Making multiple copies of WDJ articles for distribution, in print or on a website, without the permission of the publisher, is **unethical and illegal**. If you would like to share material from WDJ with a group, please contact our Reprint Manager, Mona Kornfeld, at (203) 857-3143.

## WHAT’S AHEAD

### Preparing to Feed a Home-Prepared Diet

*How to develop a complete, balanced diet for your dog, and prepare it yourself.*

### Beat the Yeast

*How a systemic yeast infection can drag your dog down, and how to help him overcome the yeast beasties.*

### Annual Dry Dog Food Evaluations

*A comprehensive guide to identifying healthy dog foods. Plus, a list of our past and newly approved foods.*

### Scared of His Own Shadow?

*How to help your dog get over problematic phobias.*

### Arthritis

*Dogs with this common ailment are perfect candidates for holistic treatment. A reminder: “Holistic” means using everything that works.*

### You Know You Should . . .

*. . . brush your dog’s teeth. Here’s how, and some tools that make it easier.*