

After Class One - Week One Homework & READING:

Homework: This week we teach the foundation of paying attention; a very important skill! We will also be working on redirection and building positive feelings in your dog about other dogs and the places we train. That is not an easy task for fearful dogs but possible for most. I have made you a video to show you how to practice watch me. Use this link to get to my videos. Let me know if you need help doing that. Do videos: Watch me I & II And/or follow the written directions below. Here is the link! Just copy and paste it into your web browser. Let me know if you need help doing that.

Practice below: 10 minutes 2-3 times a day or more if you want!.

- A. Practice "Watch Me" Find your face All or None Reward Training for Attention.
- B. Practice Find Your Face (Read directions below.)
- C. This way direction changes
- D. Practice Sit & Down
- E. Practice rewarding good behavior often
- F. Practice in different environments
- G. Alert Trainer to behavior problems at home & Read applicable behavior blueprints
- H. Do the reading: especially the TRAINING GUIDELINES (below).



Homework Explanations:

Again video link to "watch me" watch I & II

1. Building Attention- 1st step. Practice "Watch Me." In one session:

- A. Put the treat on your dog's nose, say "watch me" and slowly bring the treat to your eyes. As your dog stares at the treat between your eyes say your marker word "yes!" and treat. Do this 5 times.
- B. Repeat above BUT this time put the treat in one hand and use your other hand to put your finger on the dog's nose and get his attention saying "watch me" and have him follow your finger to your eyes- as soon as he is looking at your finger between your eyes say "yes" and treat from your other hand. *You are getting your dog to perform for the empty hand since it has no treat in it.* This is what



you want. Eventually they will understand the hand without the treat in it is the one to perform for. (You are basically at this stage tricking them into thinking you have a treat in your hand but it's actually just your finger.) Do what you have to, to trick them into it. Do this 5 times.

- C. After that hopefully now you should be able to say Rover "watch me" and he will stare right up into your eyes. When he does say "yes!" and treat right away. Do this five times. Now up the ante in terms of time of attention required for a reward — first one second of attention, then two seconds, three, five, eight, and so on. Count out the time of attention in "good dogs" — "Good dog one. Good dog two. Good dog three, etc." Once your dog is paying attention for 20 or 30 seconds, you will notice that he is also in a sit-stay.
- D. Repeat step C above- but treat RANDOMLY- first every other time, then maybe every third time, then two in a row, then every 5th time, then every 8th time, then two in a row. Work up to treating every 20th time, etc. Then hardly ever. The goal is to be able to ask your dog Rover "watch me" and spread out the treats so that eventually you are not using treats at all anymore. You are saying "watch me" and they are looking at you ready for what you are going to ask them to do next. They are giving you the attention that many of you have told me you want from your dogs. Many of your dogs are already there. Ask for the "watch me" for more time and for less treats as your dog learns.
- E. Practice this in MANY environments: walking on the trail, through town, etc. All over. Go from a low to high distraction area and get progressively more distracting until you are in the highest level of distraction you can find. You are now teaching your dog to pay attention to you in any environment. You have to do this practice to get attention in these situations. The work you do now is critical for attention. When you go to a more distracting place you will need to go back to more treats to get the same response- that is OK.

2. Practice Find Your Face. 5-10 minutes, three times a day.

Once you have been working on watch me for a bit it's time to start training your dog to pay attention to you at the next level. Here's your next step to great attention building. Ignore everything your dog does until he glances at you for an instant. It doesn't matter how long you have to wait or how short the glance. For the first couple of trials you may have to wait for several minutes but soon you will find your dog will look at you within

seconds. As soon as your dog glances at you, say, "Good Dog," reward him with a piece of kibble and then take one large step (to break his gaze) and wait for him to glance at you again. After a couple of reinforced glances, up the ante in terms of time of attention required for a reward — first one second of attention, then two seconds, three, five, eight, and so on. Count out the time of attention in "good dogs" — "Good dog one. Good dog two. Good dog three, etc." Once your dog is paying attention for 20 or 30 seconds, you will notice that he is also in a sit-stay.

Now we are going to make it a little more challenging for your dog. After praising and rewarding your dog for looking at you, as you step away, turn your back on your dog to intentionally break his gaze. Give him plenty of time because now he has to work out that staring at your backside is not sufficient, but instead he has to come round in front of you to "find your face." Praise your dog as soon as he looks up at you and then repeat the sequence.

After a few trials, it's time to teach your dog to pay attention on cue. Say, "Watch me," turn away from your dog and praise him as soon as he makes eye contact. Now you will be able to perform this attention exercise in motion by asking your dog to "Watch" while you serpentine backwards away from your dog. Alternatively, ask your dog to watch you while heeling, or during sit-, down- and stand-stays.

3. **Work on "This Way"**. Take your dog for a walk. Every 20 yards or so tell your dog "Rover This Way!" and abruptly change direction. There is no need to yank your dog. Just change direction so that s/he learns that "this way" means go the other way. At first give him/her a treat each time s/he changes direction for about 3 reps, then treat every 6 reps, then no more treats on this one. You cannot do this too many times. It is a great exercise and we will be expanding on it in the near future. By Saturday you should be able to say your dog's name and "this way" and your dog should automatically change direction with you. This will happen if you practice each day, although don't be disappointed if it doesn't happen well in class because remember we have to train these skills in every environment. Once they know it in your living room, train it outside to up the level of distraction gradually. Then come to class and we'll keep working on it in one of the most distracting environments possible.

4. **Try doing some "this way" and "sit" and "watch me" in a sequence** so that your dog can change direction, sit and look up at you for attention. Give plenty of treats at first for the direction change the sit and the watch me. (Have them do all of these things and then reward after the "watch me.") Then of course phase out the treats so you can get more reps for less treats. Try to get to 20 "this way, sit, watch me's" without a treat.

5. **GO PRACTICE THIS IN DIFFERENT ENVIORNMENTS.** Especially if you have a dog that reacts to and barks at other people, things, or dogs. This is one of the very best things you can do for a dog who barks at (is reactive) towards people, dogs, or things. You want to keep the barking down to a minimum. For example if your dog is deathly afraid of children or other dogs and barks aggressively towards them the idea is to be able to put them near those things and have them *not* react. This is how you do it!!! Teach them this skill (this way, sit, & watch me in sequence) THEN go bring them to an environment where there are those things your dog reacts to but be sure they are far away. The dog has to feel safe. Give them a quick look at one of those things (the other dog, kid, the stroller) whatever the dog is fearful of or reacting to, and BEFORE THEY HAVE A CHANCE to react or bark at it, turn them around saying "this way" and once they are not focused on it anymore ask them to sit and watch you. Do this exercise over and over as much as possible around those things that trigger your dog. If your dog is lunging and barking at it you started too close to the thing/person. Start far away and get closer. If your dog barks at the thing or person you are too close. PRACTICE DOING THIS IN CLASS IF YOUR DOG IS REACTIVING TO OTHER DOGS. What you will find if you do this right is your dog will be able to get closer to the thing/person it is reacting to each time WITHOUT reacting to it! You have to keep doing this if you want your dog to not react as much. Do it many days, for weeks, until it makes the impact you want it to. It works! I went from 100 feet away to 20 feet away in just one session with this technique with a highly reactive dog who was barking and aggressive towards other dogs. Although that dog will not be able to be with other dogs in the near future, just getting him to be able to be in the same environment with other dogs on a leash is a huge accomplishment.

6. **Practice rewarding good behavior often. Any time your dog is doing something great- or is simply not barking, digging or being a problem, tell him about it!**

Be on the lookout for all behaviors you want your dog to continue. Observe your dog and whenever he does something you like, simply say, "Good dog" and give him a piece of kibble or a training treat. For example, reward your dog whenever he sits, lies down, stops whining/barking/howling/growling (shushes), stops jumping (four on the floor), looks at you, or looks cute. After you exercise your dog practice getting your dog settled down. Settle your dog down by giving a chew toy that s/he cannot resist. Sit on the dog bed with him or on the floor and if s/he is not food aggressive just pet him calmly rewarding for good calm behavior.

7. **Alert Trainer to behavior problems at home via email. Behavior blue prints:** email or give me a call this week about any common behavior problems. I have many blueprints which are short, to the point readings that address many common behavior problems. If you have one of these behavior problems please let me know and I will send you the corresponding behavior blueprint. If you follow the instructions on the print you can alleviate most of these problems. If that does not solve your problem ask questions and perhaps for a private consultation. Behaviors addressed include destructive chewing, digging, problems with children, excessive barking, fear of people, fighting, home alone, housetraining, getting a new dog or a new puppy, walking on a leash, and puppy biting. Let me know if you are having any behavior problems at home. If you can email about any problems, that would be fantastic.

8. **READ THE FOLLOWING TRAINING GUIDELINES- Very important!**



1. Best Buddy Dog Training of VT Training Guidelines



Be Patient and go from low to high distraction areas. If you are patient you and the dogs you are training will accomplish much more. If you are stressed about it your dog will feel that stress and it will not be the fun that training is supposed to be. When you first start training at home, try your best to get in a place with no there are no other dogs around and where there are as few distractions as possible. Once your dog knows a command well you can move to a higher distraction area. You will teach the behavior while on a walk for example. There are many cues that you will learn in class that can be reinforced while out on the walk. Asking them to change direction on the walk with the verbal cue "this way" teaches them to change direction and to pay attention to you. Once your dog can perform the behavior you are teaching in a low distraction area, move to a higher distraction area and then increase the level of distraction until your dog can perform for you anywhere.

Make It FUN & Keep sessions short! Training should be a fun game, not a stressful experience. Some dogs love training and are very motivated to go on for longer periods of time, while others get bored after just a few minutes. Try to use rewards that will keep the dog motivated. If she is not interested in your reward the motivation to perform will not be there. **Use an enthusiastic, happy voice when training and** while getting the dog interested- but not overly excited or the dog may become too excited to accomplish

anything. 5-10 minute sessions 3-4 times a day (or as many as you and your dog would like) are perfect. Don't overdo it; you want your dog to always want to come back for more.

Cue Words: When the dog does the behavior correctly you will need to "mark it" within one second and then reward it fairly quickly as well. This brief mark or cue precisely marks that moment the dog did the behavior, letting the dog know exactly what action is being rewarded. Although the actual food reward follows the marker a couple of seconds later, the dog learns to fully understand what behavior is being rewarded. This will make it much more likely s/he will repeat the behavior. Any word can be used as a marker and clickers work very well because they create a distinct sound - but the key is to be consistent. Your marker word can be "YES! Or "Good!" in an enthusiastic happy voice. *It is also perfectly fine to use a clicker as long as it is paired with the word "YES or "Good!"* Be consistent- always use the same marker word. The program instructor will show you how to create a positive association between the clicker and the behavior if you are interested in learning the clicker method. It can really happen the first time you teach the dog sit or "watch me" because you immediately pair the marker sound with a behavior and a reward. If you say yes, good boy/girl, and pet the dog as a reward, that is fine too as long as your first word marker "YES" is clear, enthusiastic and separate from any other words.

Do not add the cue word until your dog is doing the behavior 90% of the time. Stay is the exception to this. Once you add the cue word always say the cue word, the behavior you want them to do, BEFORE you lure them into position. Within one second of them getting the behavior right say "yes" &/or click and treat. The basic steps are:

1. Request
2. Lure,
3. Response
4. Reward.

For example: 1. Say, "Sit," 2. Lure the dog to sit by moving a food lure upwards in front of the dog's nose, so that 3. As the dog raises his head to follow the food, he compensates by lowering his rump to the ground and sits — the desired Response and so, 4. Reward the dog with a scratch behind his ear, by throwing Tennis Tug ball to retrieve, or simply just give him the food.

Be Aware of the Training Goals in lure reward training: Our first goal is to get the dog to perform a behavior through luring. This teaches them the hand signals. Our next goal is to add the verbal cue and to get them to perform the behavior with the verbal and hand signal. Our final goal is to get them to perform the behavior with the hand signal or the verbal signal alone. In other words when you say "down" your dog should go down with no hand signaling. Or if you want him to go down with only the hand signal and no verbal cue that is the other part of the final goal. This is important- you may not always be able to give hand signals if your hands are full or if you are too far away from your dog. In other instances perhaps you are talking to a friend, you may want to be able to give the

hand signal for down and you do not want to stop your conversation. This is an excellent test of training obedience.

Help Dog Reactive Dogs Be More Successful: If your dog is barking aggressively towards another dog on a walk, turn around and walk the other way until the dog calms down. Allowing him to continue to walk forward lunging toward the other dog is what he wants, and you are accidentally rewarding a bad behavior. You are better off walking the other direction for a little while until the dog you are walking calms down, or the other dog has passed. Reactive dogs like this can be rewarded when they are further away from other dogs and show signs of doing anything besides reacting to (barking or lunging) toward the other dog. Once we have learned the attention "watch me" cue in class you can use this to get your dog to pay attention to you instead of other dogs and thereby can circumvent any problems with your dog barking or lunging at the other dog. If your dog is barking or lunging at another dog usually it means your dog is stressed out. You need to change that stress response to one of contentment. We will learn how to do that in this course.

Phase Out Treats as a Reward. Food can be used to train the dog initially but you should move toward fading the food out and using other types of rewards as quickly as possible. Once a behavior is performed correctly 95% of the time, begin treating every other time, then every third time, and so forth but make this totally random. The length of time this takes is all dependent on the particular dog you are training. If possible, try to phase into using a treat one time, verbal praise and petting the next. If your dog likes toys, that is an excellent thing to reward them with. Once the dog is performing the behavior you want, it is actually more reinforcing to NOT treat every time, but every other time and then even only give treats sporadically and randomly. If you treat every other time dogs learn that on second trail they don't have to perform as well. That is why it is important to be random with the treating as they progress. It is important to keep your dog guessing as to when they will get the reward. For example treat every other time, then every third time, twice in a row, every fifth time, every 10th time, twice in a row, every 20th time, etc. Keep it totally random. If you phase out too soon they may stop performing the behavior so go back to kindergarten and show them again. Just remember at first treat a lot, and then demand more correct behaviors before rewards as time goes on. ALWAYS however give praise. That is never too much.

Never Reward bad Behavior: ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR DOG TO GO IN THE TRASH OR ON THE COUNTER?

Rewarding bad behavior even by accident teaches the dogs that the bad behavior is

getting them what they want. If you are teaching "down" for example and the dog's butt comes up, she will not necessarily do it correctly the next time. When we get to and teach "leave it" and the dog goes for it and you are not close or fast enough to take it away, she is just learning that she just needs to get to it faster than you. If you are at the end of the walk and ask the dog to sit and he just stands there and you reward him anyway or leave before he actually sits, that is an example of reinforcing a behavior that you do not want, which will make training much more confusing and less productive for the dog. Leaving food on the counter and leaving the dog unsupervised so that s/he has access to the food actually *trains the dog to go on the counter*. Never leave food on the counter unless you know your dog does not do this.

When your dog jumps up on you: Give him an alternative behavior to perform- such as sit or down and if that doesn't work give him a brief time out. Do not pet him and reward him for jumping up, even pushing him down repeatedly can be a fun game for him. So you must 1. Get him into a sit and stay (and then you can pet him) and if that fails give him a brief time out (Usually one minute even works). You can give him a time out in a quiet room or by stepping on his leash down low so that he cannot jump. When he is calm you can let him go. This may take MANY repetitions. Do not give up. It will change if you are consistent. Whatever you do, do not hurt or knee the dog. Pushing him back down does not always work- ignoring is a more constructive method because the dog gets absolutely no reward from you (including attention.)

Ways to sit, down, and wait for the food bowl:

SIT

Lure your dog by raising a food treat above his head until gravity takes over and his rump hits the ground. (You can use a toy instead of food to lure the dog as well.) When the dog's rear hits the ground, immediately say "Yes!" and reward with a food treat. Once the dog understands how to "sit" with the treats and the behavior has been performed reliably multiple times, work towards teaching sit with the hand signal facing palm up. Each time you raise your hand with your palm up, the dog should sit. As always reinforce each behavior with treats each time at first, then work towards rewarding less and less, treating randomly and very gradually building to less treats/rewards. This takes time and many sessions. Eventually the dog should sit with no reward and many sits should be expected before rewarding. Soon sit will be required for each door to open and the door opening will be the reward.



Tip 1. Wait until the dog is doing the behavior reliably before adding in a verbal cue. That is, do not say the word “Sit” until the dog is actually performing the behavior. Remember, the cue (your verbal “sit!”) does not cause the behavior; reinforcement (food, praise, petting, toy) causes the dog to want to comply.

Tip 2. Be sure to have the dog’s attention before asking the dog to sit. (See “Watch Me” Command)

Tips 3. Do not ask for more than five sits in a row in one place—too much repetition will start to bore him.

Tip 4. Work on having your dog keep the sit position for several seconds. To build duration, reward your dog multiple times at various intervals while he sits. Then, release the dog with the words “OK let’s go” and walking away gesture to indicate that your dog is free to move out of the sit. (Don’t give a treat after saying the release word; instead give it after he sits.)

Tip 5. As you and dog progress, change the location of where the dog sits in relation to you, so that your dog learns to sit in positions other than facing right in front of you. Your dog should be able to sit on either side of you, facing you, when your back is to the dog, while you are sitting, while you are holding objects, etc. Dogs do not generalize well, so teach your dog that “sit” means putting his rear on the ground no matter where he is.

Tip 6. Do not push on the dog’s rear—this is bad for a dog’s hips and it also teaches them that the push with your hand is the cue and not the spoken word or hand signal.

Tip 7: Some dogs jump up constantly when you attempt to teach them to sit. Many interventions can be tried in these cases. Do not let them jump up and then reward them. Again, that is rewarding undesirable behavior. You may have to hold their collar while you try luring them into position so they do not jump up. One volunteer used this method at first then each time she reached for the dog’s collar he would sit. With repeated training he eventually learned to sit on command.

DOWN:

This is an excellent video to demonstrate how to teach down and is favorite version, fairly easy to use since it teaches the dogs in small steps. Watch the instructor in class and if you have a computer and internet you can also watch the video by copying this URL link into your browser: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpAFj-p23ig> . If not your instructor will be demonstrating in class as well.

1. Start with your dog in a sit. Move a food treat in front of his nose so he can sniff it and is interested in it, then with your palm facing downward, move the treat FROM THE NOSE STRAIGHT DOWN TO THE TOES. Go as far as you can get their nose down and click/say “YES” in a positive voice as the treat goes down.

2. Each time slide the treat a little further away, rewarding each time if her nose follows your lure out. If she is NOT successful, go back to the beginning or to a place where she was earlier, and

start over- be sure she is successful. Once she is in the down position give her a “jackpot” by giving her a few more treats, or a very scrumptious treat (for example small pieces of chicken, hot dog, or freeze dried liver), and lots of praise. IF THE DOG’S BUTTOCKS COME UP AT ANY TIME DO NOT REWARD- start over instead. Remember NEVER reward the behavior that you do not want, only the behavior you do want. After that take a break and play. When you do down again use treats each time at first, when it is 99% reliable go to treats every other time, then every third time until you need no treats.

Tip: If you pull the treat down too fast, too soon, the dog can “lose it” and not go down all the way.

Next Step: Teach the Hand Signal for Down.

After a few repetitions of your dog successfully following the treat lure to the down position, hide the treat in your other hand (the non-luring hand), and use your empty hand (palm down, just as when luring) to motion the dog in a down position; as soon as the dog downs, immediately reward with the treat from the other hand. The palm-down motion of your hand will become the hand signal. Once the dog starts giving the down behavior reliably, you can add in the “Down” cue.



Once the dog is performing the behavior reliably, begin to use the hand signal only instead of luring with the treat. Reward at first when the dog performs “down” with the hand signal, then phase out treats and rewards randomly expecting more downs between rewards.

Tip 1. Every dog moves into the position at his own rate when first learning the down position, so do not get frustrated! Realize that the down can be a difficult position for some dogs because it is asking them to willingly put themselves into a vulnerable more submissive position. The nice part is it is usually very satisfying for the trainer when the dog does go down all the way.

Tip 2. For small dogs, you may need to sit on the floor, make a bridge with one bent leg, and use the “under the leg” luring method.

Tip 3. Work towards asking for the down position while you are in a standing position, rather than one where you lean over or squat and lure the dog down with a treat.

Tip 4. Never press down on a dog’s back or haunches.

Tip 5. Work on having your dog keep the position for several seconds. To build duration, reward your dog multiple times at various intervals while he’s down. Then, release the dog with the happy word “OK” and gesture to indicate that your dog is free to move out of the position. (Don’t give a treat after saying the release word.)

Tip 6. For dogs who will not lay down with the lure as described above: a) Try the lure while the dog is standing or sitting near a corner, so that the dog cannot scoot backwards and out of the down position. b) Try the lure on the dog’s bed or other comfortable surface. c) Use a higher

value treat. d) Simply sit on the floor and place your hand with a treat on the floor palm down, and hold your hand there while the dog tries to figure out how to get the treat. e) Ignore the dog and patiently wait until the dog lays down on his own, then reward with treats and praise.

Trainer Victoria Stilwell Teachers "Down" for Puppies in the with the method in Tip 6 above:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zn_GEhid88Y