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*Kindness and Care for Animals®*

[WWW.MSPCA.ORG](http://WWW.MSPCA.ORG)

# Canine Communication 101

# Agenda

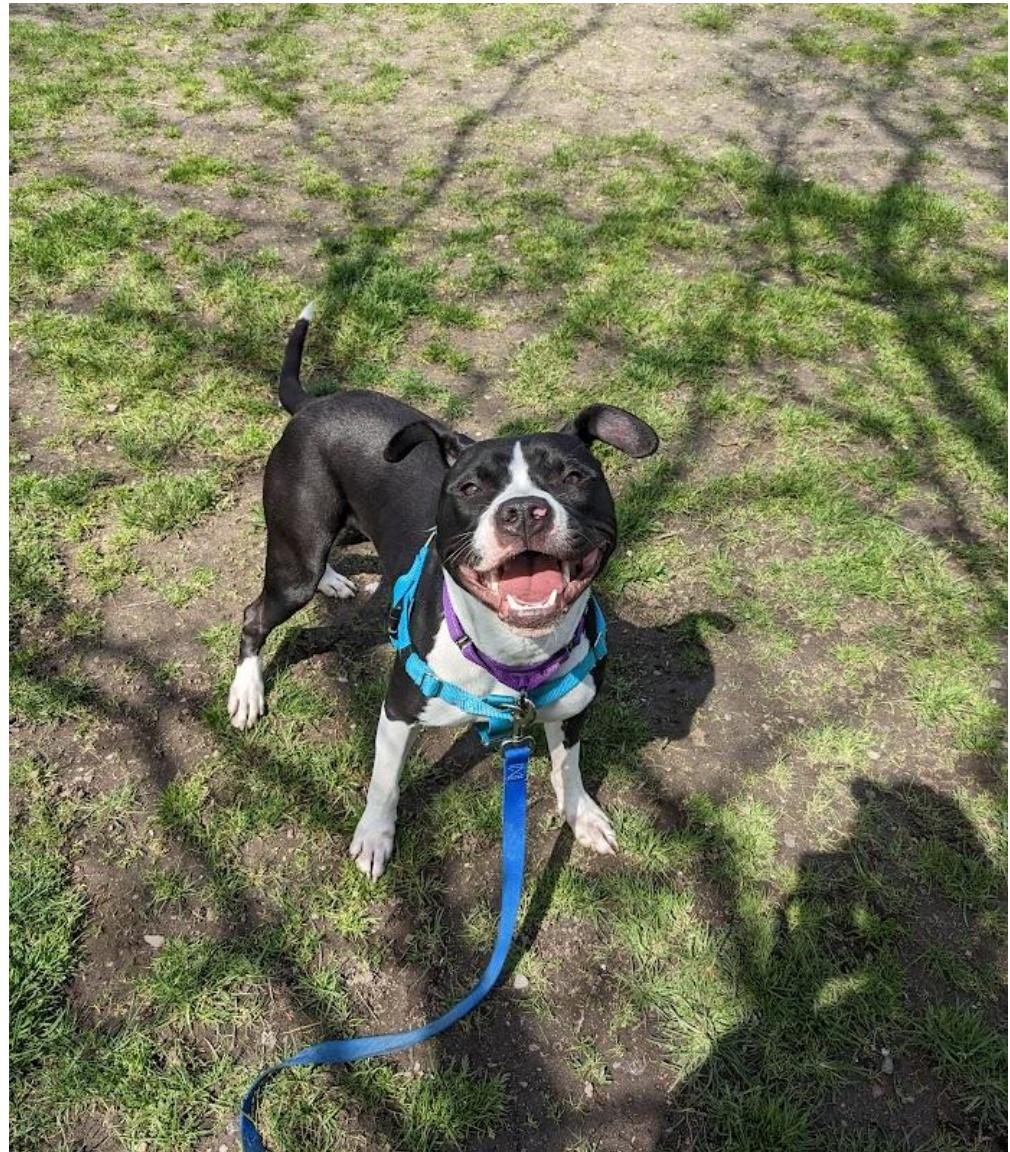
## Welcome!

How Dogs Communicate

Stress and Behavior

Considerate Approach

Applications



# How Dogs Communicate

# How Dogs Communicate

## Observe the **dog**

- What is the dog doing?
- What does the dog look like when “neutral”/“at rest”?

## Observe the **environment**

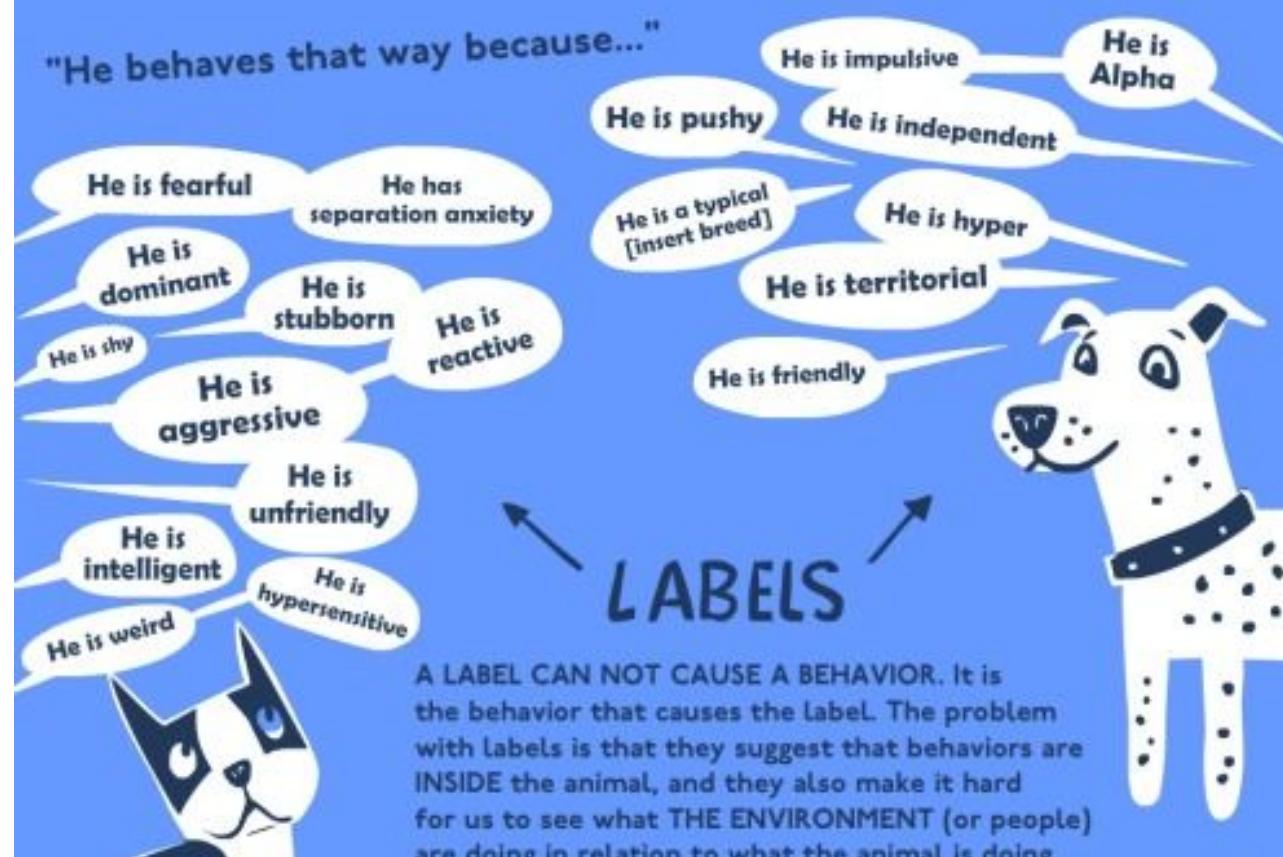
- What is the context (what are they responding to)?
- Where/when did the behavior occur? Who was there?

## What's the **function** of the behavior?

- What is the outcome (consequence) of their behavior?
- What are they “asking” for?



"He behaves that way because..."



A LABEL CAN NOT CAUSE A BEHAVIOR. It is the behavior that causes the label. The problem with labels is that they suggest that behaviors are INSIDE the animal, and they also make it hard for us to see what THE ENVIRONMENT (or people) are doing in relation to what the animal is doing. BEHAVIOR and ENVIRONMENT are inseparable.

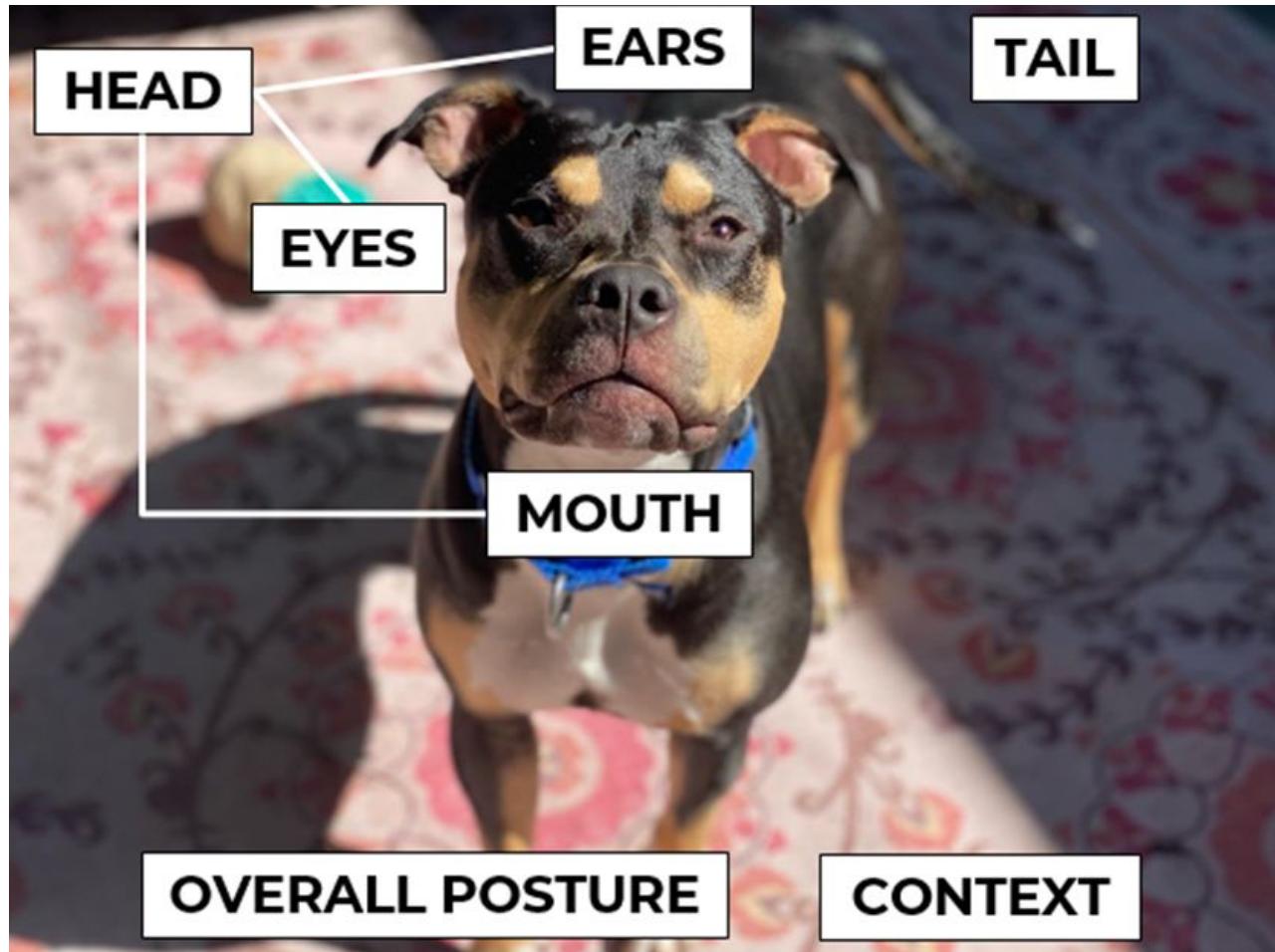
ALWAYS ASK:  
**What is the animal DOING and  
under WHAT CONDITIONS?**

#LLA #BEHAVIORSCIENCE #LEARNINGSCIENCE #SCIENCEMATTERS

[behaviorworks.org](http://behaviorworks.org) | [doggiedrawings.net](http://doggiedrawings.net)

Lili '18

# How Dogs Communicate



# Context

## Environmental Conditions

Transitions

Other dogs

Strangers

Resources

Other animals

Invasive handling

Car rides

Pain/physical discomfort

*Distance*

*Duration*

*Intensity*



Eyes

# How Dogs Communicate



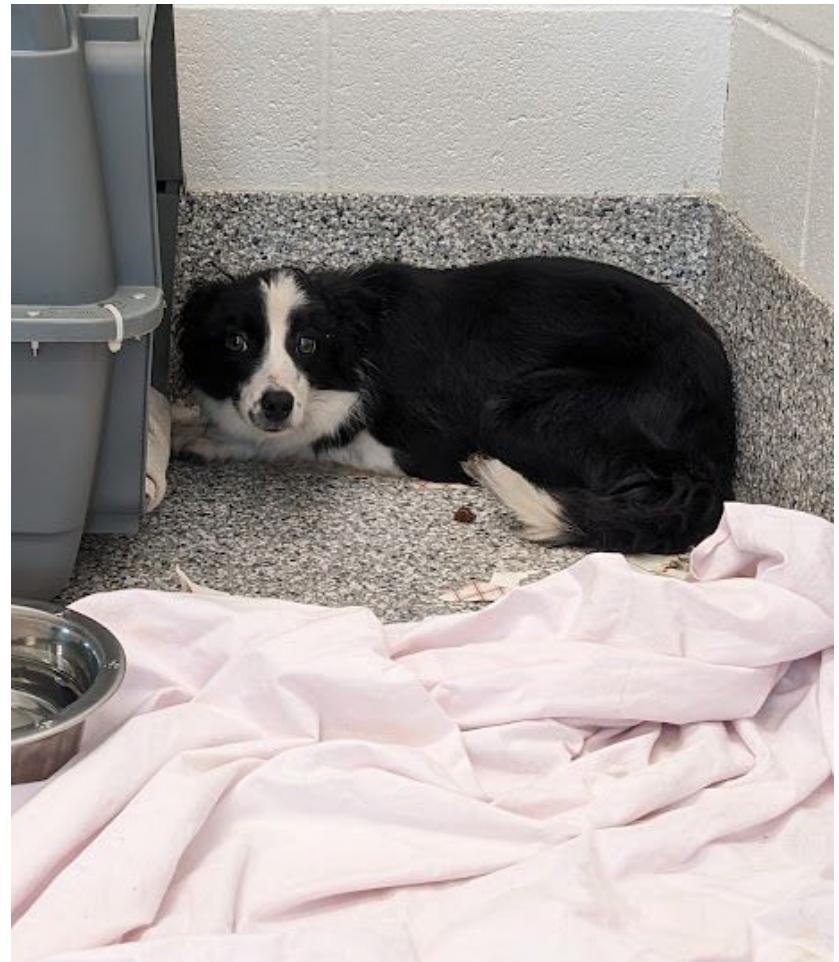
# How Dogs Communicate



<https://wildewmn.wordpress.com/2013/06/04/the-threat-of-stillness/>

Ears

# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate



Mouth

# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate

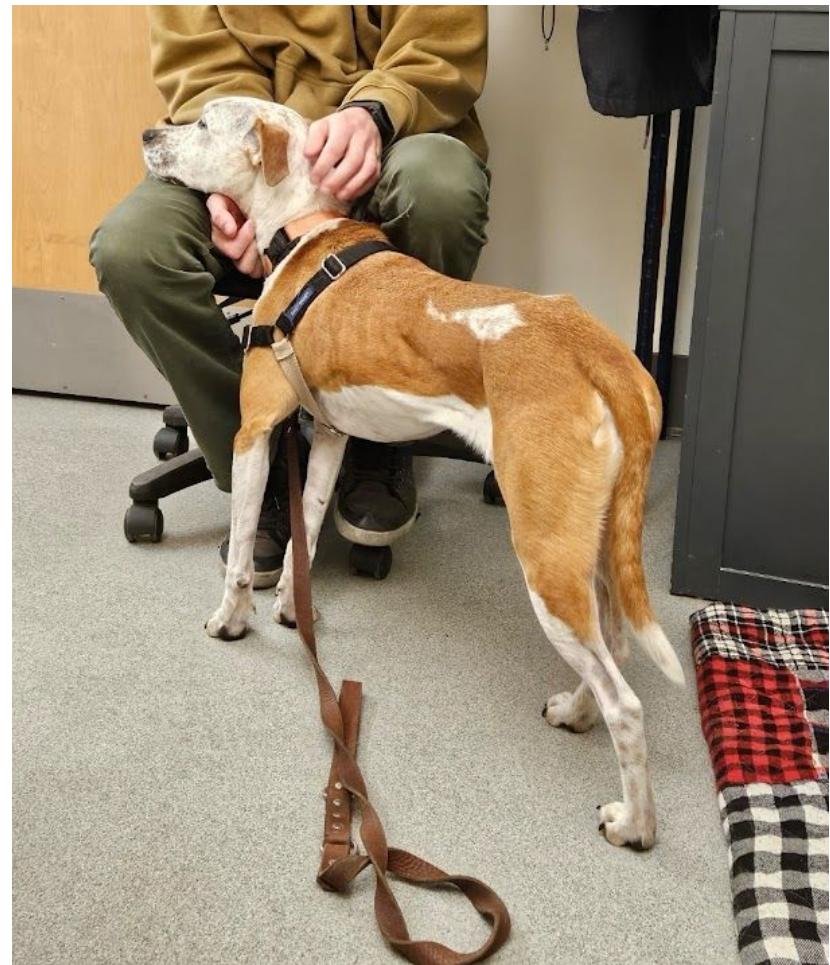
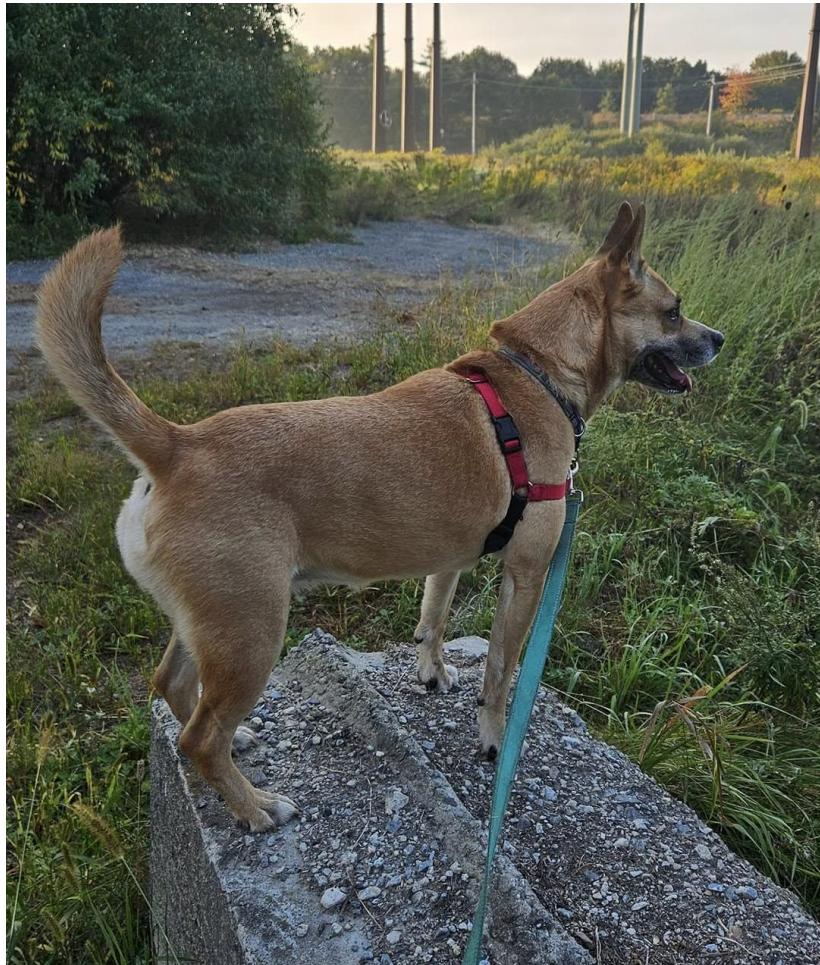


Tail

# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate



## Overall Posture and Movement

# How Dogs Communicate



<https://blogslobbertraining.wordpress.com/2012/08/07/body-language-draft-3/>

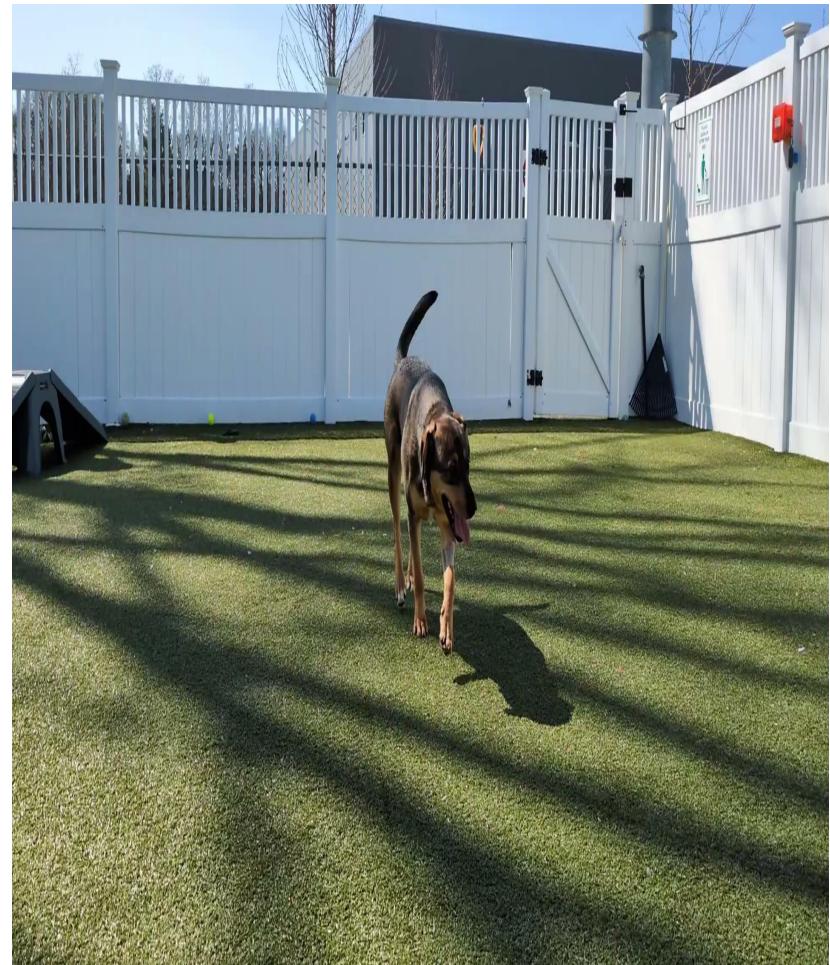
# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate



# How Dogs Communicate

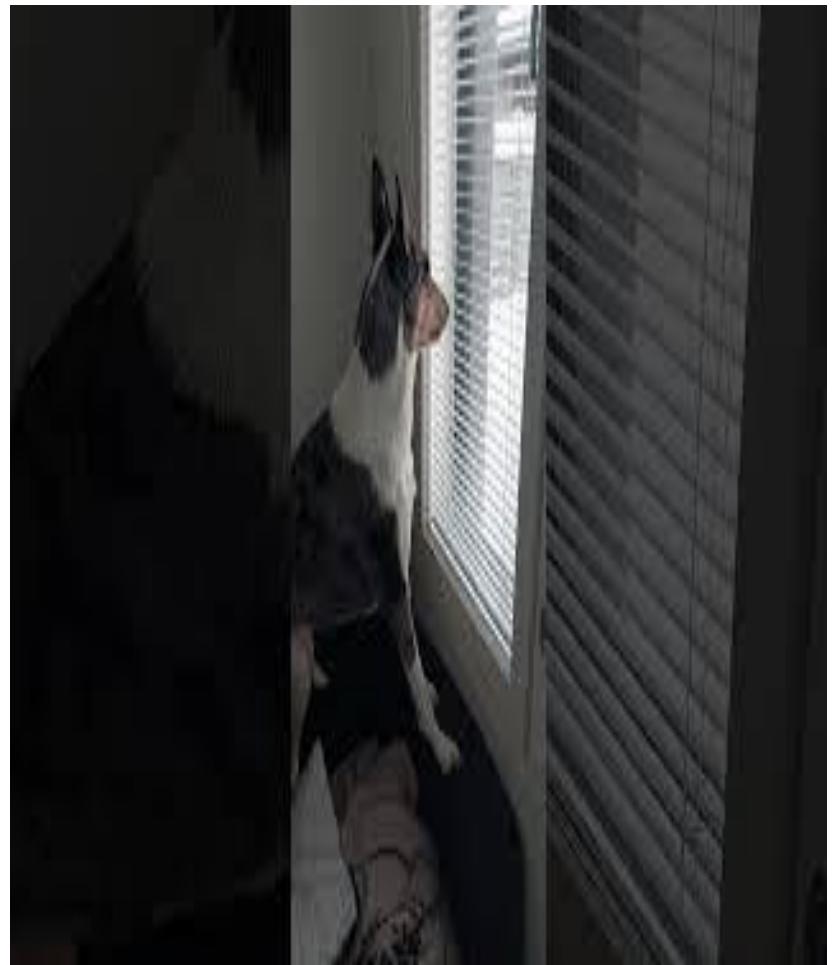


# How Dogs Communicate

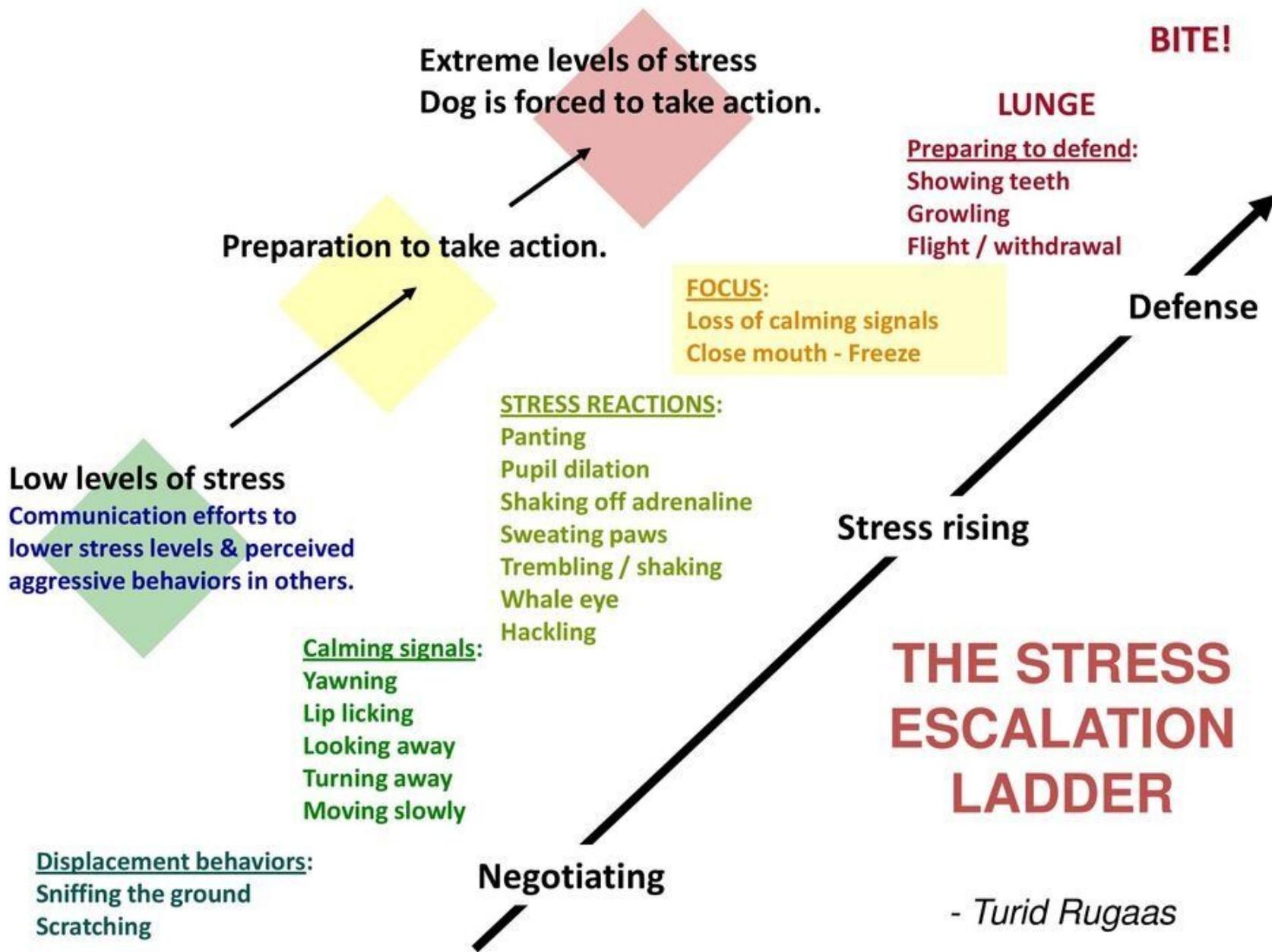


# Vocalizations

# How Dogs Communicate



# Stress and Behavior



# Stress and Behavior



# Stress and Behavior



# Considerate Approach

# What is a Considerate Approach?

Consider how the animal perceives the environment (sensory experience)

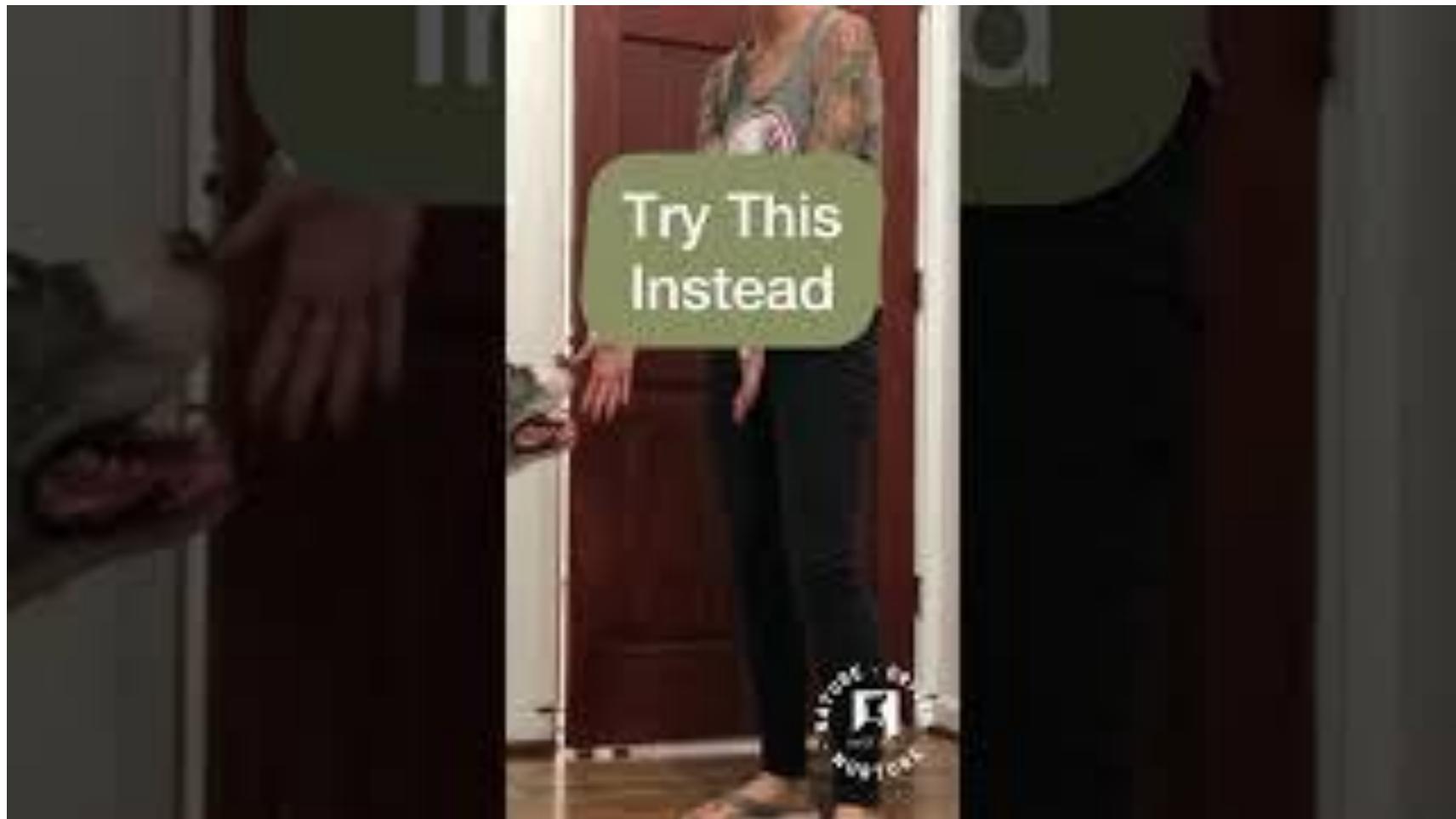
Consider how an animal perceives our behavior (our intentions don't matter!)

Maximize choice and control over outcomes

- Prepare for every interaction (do you have the information and tools you need?)
- Can the owner or a friend help?
- What adjustments are feasible, in this moment?



# Considerate Approach



# Considerate Approach

## DO

Keep your torso upright, bend at the knees  
Angle your body slightly away, avert gaze  
Kneel, stand, or sit in a chair  
Toss food underhand/behind the dog  
Speak softly, move calmly/deliberately

## DON'T

Hinge at the hips, loom over  
Hold direct eye contact, face head on  
Sit all the way on the floor, kiss or hug  
Lure closer with treats, reach into their space  
Speak loudly, move quickly or “rile” up!







# Petting Consent Test





## Applications: Considerate Approach

# Situational Awareness

Approaching their kennel

Attaching their leash/slip lead

Picking them up

Approaching/reaching for their toy

Approaching/petting while they are eating/drinking

Access to you (sitting on ground, licking face)

Proximity to other dogs

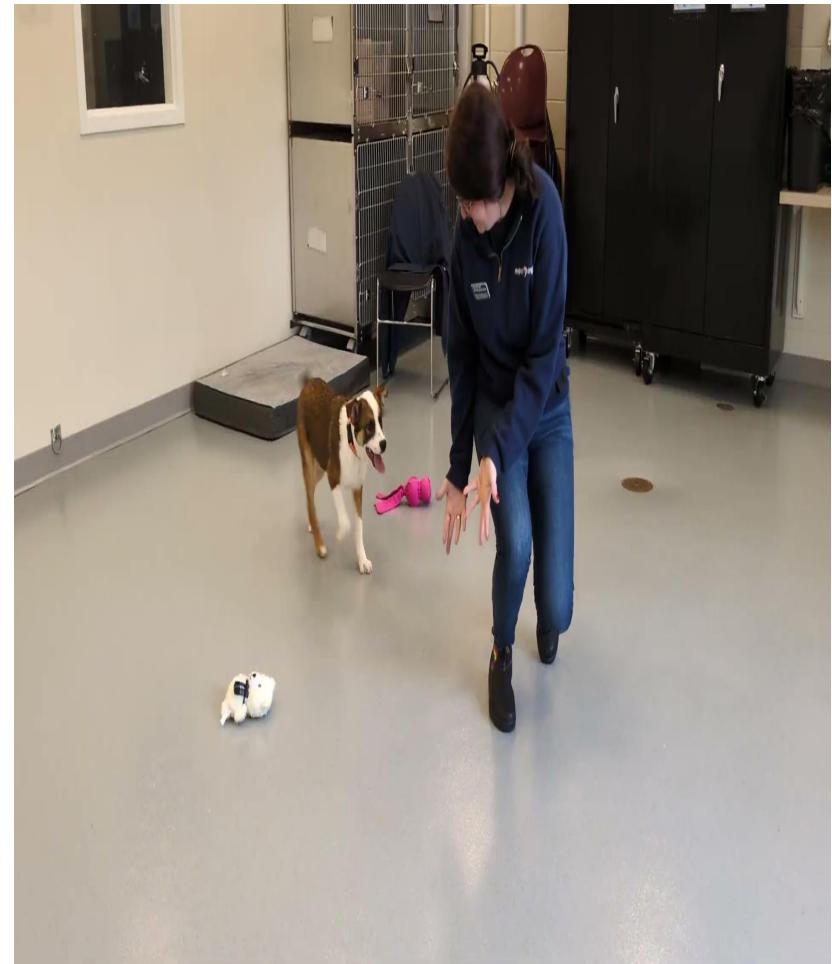
Greeting strangers



# Attaching a Slip lead



# Picking Up



# Stalling



# Key Takeaways

Always observe both the dog and the environment. WTF?

These are **not** our dogs at home, and stress impacts behavior!

Apply a considerate approach and situational awareness, to every interaction!

Be prepared with what you need!



# Questions?

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