



Deviant Dog



to Dream Dog



Separation Distress to De-stress

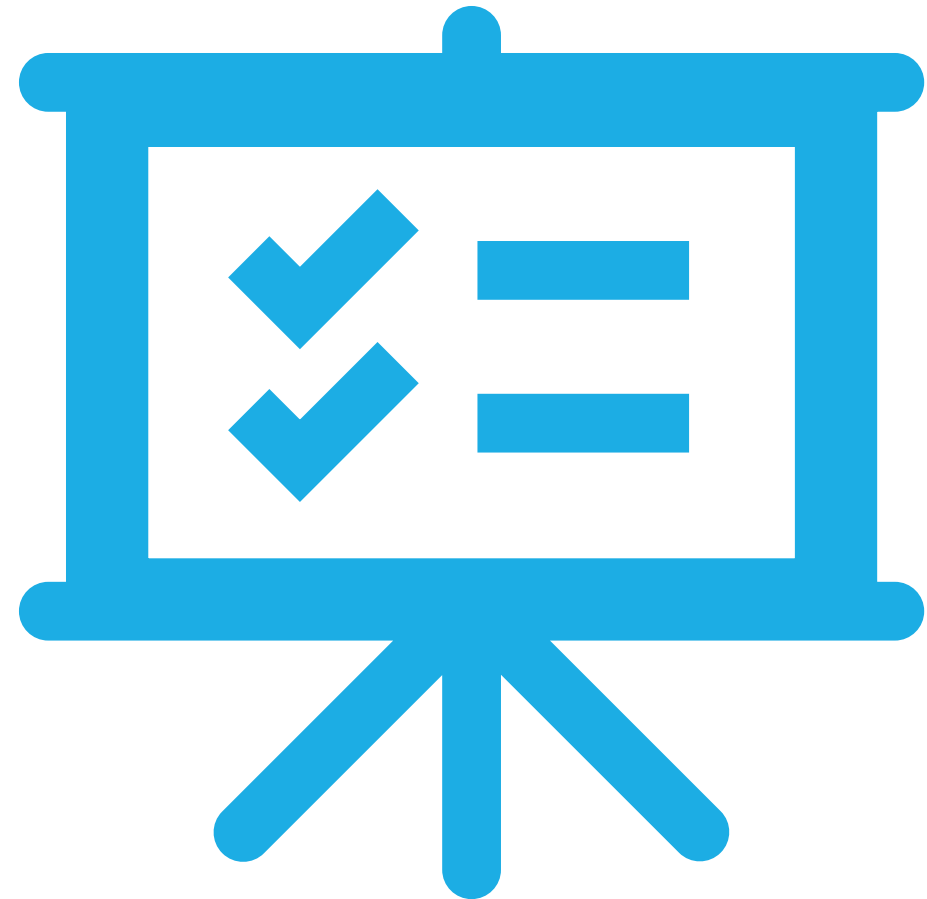
An innovative concept approach to Separation Related Behaviour.



The Four Principles Of Transformation

Before continuing...

Please make sure you have watched the videos under 'Our Approach' in the 'Welcome' unit to understand the content we will be explaining in this presentation.





Introduction Week - Homework

Stress Bucket

- Think about how full your pupper's stress bucket is.

Ditch the Bowl

- Consider how you want to ditch the bowl. What strategies will you choose e.g:
 - Filling Kongs
 - Puzzle Toys
 - Scatter Feeding etc...

Look at the games library

- Have a look at the game library on the next slide.

Games Library

- ▶ Throughout this presentation, this games library will be referenced.
- ▶ To access the library, simply go to <https://dogsthatlearn.com/vault>
- ▶ You will be guided which section to access and when at specific points in our videos.



Who is this content for?



This concept training approach is the most effective way of tackling your dogs Separation Related Behaviour (SRB).



Designed for *you*, the dog owners who want even *faster* results that can transform SRB struggles into strengths.



Digging deep into understanding your dogs struggle with SRB.



This is essential knowledge for if you have to leave your SRB struggling dog whilst you head to work.

The Dog End Of The Leash





The Dog End Of The Leash...



Specific breeds of dog are known to be more vulnerable to SRB. This can include breeds such as Siberian Huskies and Border Collies.



It's important to consider the age of your dog when dealing with SRB. Puppies, for example, are designed to 'shout and scream' when left alone as a survival strategy and so that's what they do.



Veterinary diagnosis of Separation Anxiety is only given *after* the dog is 9 months old. Prior to this, it's seen as normal behaviour.

However: Many people *do* want to work on their dog's ability to be left alone, *well* before 9 months old.



This program *is* suitable for both adult dogs and younger puppies.

Risk Factors

- ▶ It's been recognised that dogs likely to develop SRB are those in an environment where:
 - ▶ There is a single adult owner.
 - ▶ Your dog is suffering from departure anxiety and excessive greeting upon your return.
 - ▶ Your dog follows you around the house.
 - ▶ Your dog, or even *you*, have a full stress bucket.



The Stress Bucket



- ▶ Many things through the day pay into your dogs stress bucket. These can be:
 - ▶ Good things such as playing exciting games, long walks, car journeys and playing with toys.
 - ▶ Bad things such as being worried when meeting other dogs, reactivity, strange noises, novelty, car journeys
- ▶ When the bucket overflows, problem behaviours may result.
- ▶ Your dog needs 16 hours of sleep & rest per day (more if they are a puppy).
- ▶ Applying our calmness protocol will help empty your dogs bucket, before it overflows.
- ▶ A full bucket takes 72 hours to empty.





How severe is your dogs struggle?

There are degrees of severity in SRB. For some dogs, this can be an absolute panic and fear driven extreme behaviour.

- In some dogs, it can be so extreme that they can self-mutilate or cause severe damage around the home.

SRB shows itself in a variety of ways when it comes to different dogs. Some dogs may have some behaviours such as:

- Barking, Chewing, Howling, Trying to escape, Pooping (Ehem 'Inappropriate Soiling'), Drooling, Pacing, Weaving.



- ▶ Blackwell investigated SRB in dogs by asking owners if they thought their dog had SRB.
 - ▶ Of those who said no, 33% found that their dogs actually *did* have SRB after watching recordings of their dogs when they left.
 - ▶ Many dogs, who seem to be lying quietly are found to actually be stressed when their hormones are measured.

Well done for noticing that your dog has Separation Related Behaviour and being prepared to help.

Knowing your dog has SRB



Misconceptions of SRB causes

- ▶ Pallastrini (2010) found that the first 10 minutes of the owner leaving is the most important and when indications of SRB will first show itself.
 - ▶ This means that it is *not* boredom or lack of exercise, which is a common misconception.
 - ▶ Another misconception is that rescue dogs are more likely to have SRB's because they have been abandoned to a rescue centre. This is just a story that is told. It is likely that the SRB is likely the reason the dog was abandoned in the first place.
 - ▶ Yet another myth is that SRB is because a puppy is taken from its mum too early. In fact, from 5 weeks old, if the environment allows, the pup will choose to distance *itself* from its littermates. Thus learning the skill of independence.
 - ▶ A fourth misconception is that 'spoiling' your dog is a likely cause of SRB. E.g. being allowed to sleep on the bed, cuddling on the couch, feeding it 'human' food from the plate.



Week 1 - Homework

Boundary Games

- Look at the Boundary games in the library.
- Start Teaching your dog to love their crate/boundary

Training Struggles

- Make a note of any difficulties or questions you may have. Feel free to post them to our Facebook group.

Your Powerful Partnership



Your Powerful Partnership



There are many different concepts we need to consider when thinking about our dogs personalities, the environment, the situation we find ourselves in, and moving forward with our Powerful Partnership.



The key concepts we are going to discuss in relation to SRB are:

- Independence
- Tolerance of Frustration
- Optimism/Pessimism
- Novelty
- Calmness
- Disengagement



Independence

Remember: The pup from as young as 5 weeks begins to assert its independence and chooses to have time away from their litter siblings.

- ▶ There are three parts to building up independence and being happy by themselves.
 - ▶ First is the distance away from the owner and litter siblings. This may start off with just a few feet at first, gradually the pup/dog will get used to being more independent and be comfortable with increasing the distance apart.
 - ▶ Second is being comfortable with a barrier between the pup/dog. Perhaps a visual barrier between you and your pupper. Can your pupper deal with not being able to see the owner and still being happy. Building up to being in a different room.
 - ▶ Third is the time. How long is your pupper comfortable with being away from company.

The games we suggest at the end of the presentation will help build up your pupper's independence.



Micro-Shaping Independence

For some dogs you cannot even leave the room without your pupper showing SRB. We need to 'micro-shape' their brain and 'baby-step' our way to greater independence.

- Each choice away from you should be rewarded by a treat thrown away from you. If the pupper only goes one or two steps away from you, then throw the treat three or four steps away.
- If pupper chooses to go behind a barrier (e.g. a table or sofa), throw the treat a step or two further.
- We're always rewarding steps away and encouraging more. Be careful not to throw the treat to far away.
- As always, keep it easy and set up for SUCCESS

Boundary training is very helpful for building the concept of independence and tolerance of frustration. (See boundary games in the games section of this presentation.)

Open-plan housing means that you need to be creative in the use of barriers, stair gates, crates, boundaries and puppy pens.

Tolerance of Frustration

1

Many of the inappropriate that our pupper do, such as barking, howling, scratching, crewing, are the result of a lack of their tolerance of frustration.

2

This is when your pupper wants something that they expect, but can't have immediately. They want instant gratification which isn't always available.

3

Behaviour that results in lack of tolerance include, Barking, chewing, scratching at the door etc, to get to the owner when there is a barrier.

4

The games we suggest in our games section of this presentation will help with your pupper's tolerance of frustration.



Optimism and Pessimism

All animals have a level of optimism and pessimism. These are thought to be intrinsic characteristics, within the personality, of the individual animal.

In a survival context, animals that are more pessimistic may take fewer risks, live longer, reproduce and protect their young very effectively which leads to the perpetuation of this characteristic.

In the domestic setting the optimistic dogs who are confident learn readily and are not overcome by struggles and are less easily worried by events are the ones that thrive.

Because of the mentality of expecting the worst, they will be more stressed, worried, predicting more negative events and are likely to give up when faced with challenges they find hard.

It is very easy to put too much pressure on a pessimistic and reactive (sensitive) dog.

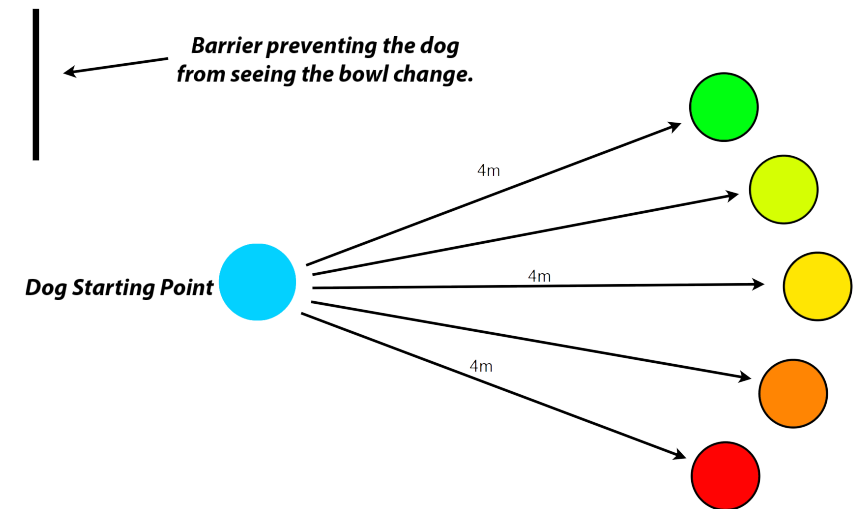


Optimism Studied

- ▶ Mills performed a study into optimism in dogs and had two groups.
 - ▶ The first, or control, group of SRB dogs were on fluoxetine, an anti-depressant, together with the standard treatment protocol for SRB.
 - ▶ The second group were on fluoxetine, the standard treatment protocol along with a few minutes of optimism games per day.
 - ▶ The results concluded that those who played the optimism games (experimental group) improved significantly more than the first (control) group.
- ▶ With optimism building, we can build positive associations with all different kinds of ambiguity and novelty; *not* just the micro-triggers that we have already identified for your pupper's SRB.
- ▶ To help with optimism, there are activities in the games section.

Testing your dog's optimism.

1. Place a bowl in one of two locations in either corner of a room.
2. When the bowl is in one location (positive), there is a high value treat in it.
3. When the bowl is in the other location (negative) it is empty.
4. Keep your pupper behind a screen on the other side of the room (approximately twelve feet if possible) and then released.
5. Pupper soon learns that one location is a good thing, e.g. the bowl placed in the positive position.
6. Once pupper goes to the bowl on the left when released the judgment bias test can start.
7. The bowl is then placed in varying positions between the positive and the negative side.
8. The very pessimistic pupper will not approach the bowl even if not far from the positive position because she assumes it is empty. The very optimistic pupper may check it out – ever hopeful.
9. If you observe your pupper's everyday behaviour you will be able to judge her outlook on life.





Event:	An optimist:	A Pessimist:
Presented with an unusual object in the middle of the room.	May not change behavior and carry on, or they may assess the object before moving on.	May show avoidance of the object, change their behavior or implement a coping strategy such as sniffing the ground.
A usual object has moved place in the room. (E.g. a lamp or chair)	May not change behavior and carry on, or they may assess the object before moving on.	May show avoidance of the object, change their behavior or implement a coping strategy such as sniffing the ground.
During a training session, your dog offers a behavior in response to a cue or in a shaping session and you remain unresponsive or ambiguous for a few seconds.	May try the same thing again or try something new.	May leave you or implement a coping strategy like sniffing, itching etc. May struggle to try again.
A dog freezes or gives another ambiguous signal.	May move on or try an alternative behavior.	May become worried and react.
A person behaves, is dressed or adopts a posture or outline that is unusual.	May not change behavior and carry on or may assess them and then move on.	May become worried and react.

Which sounds like your pupper?



Novelty

Often a dog that is lacking confidence worries about novel objects which means that they are paying into the stress bucket.

Novel objects can be *anything* that your pupper gets worried about, and our human world is full of novelty to our puffers. Even a simple, regular walk can be packed full of novelty, which for some of our puffers it can be really difficult.

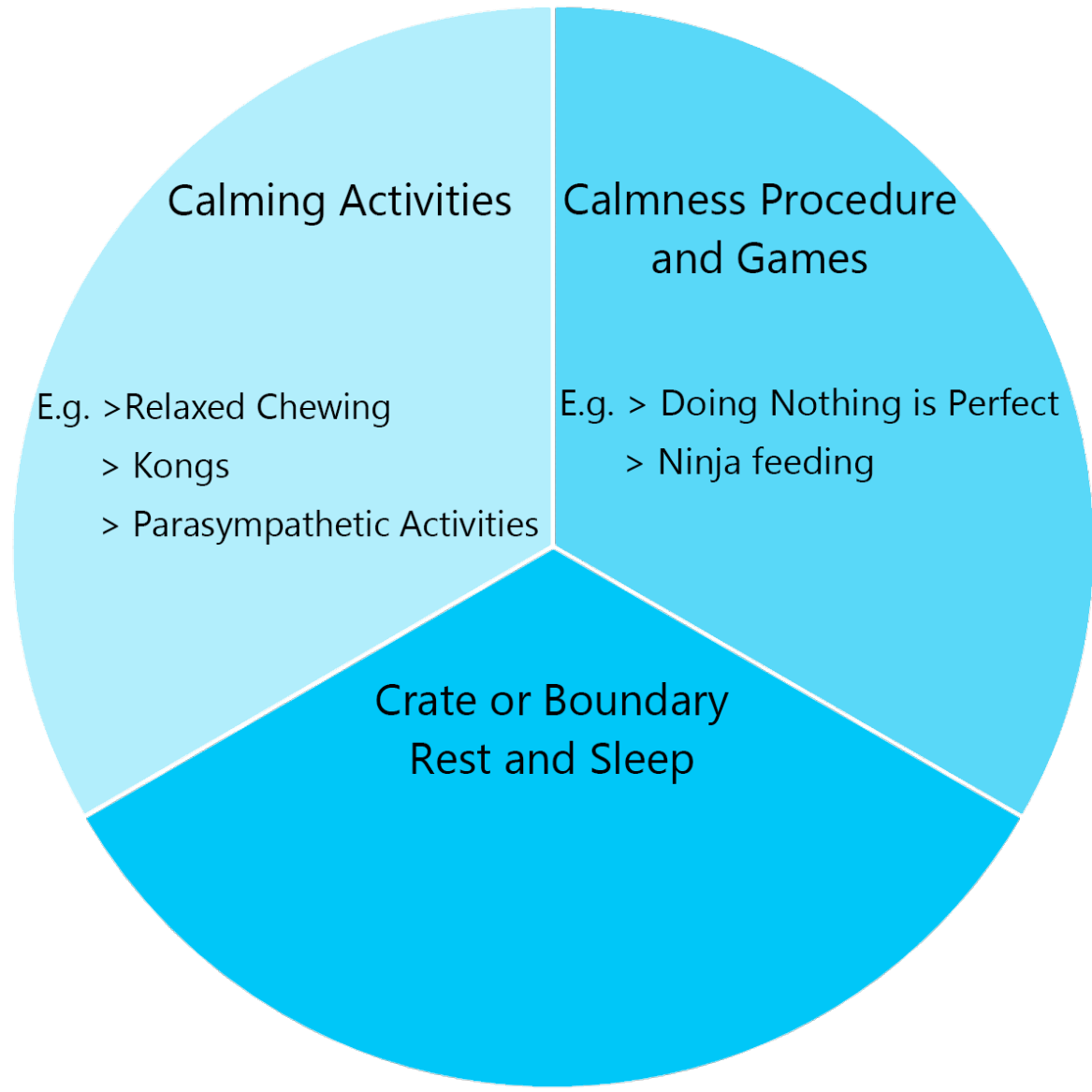
Novelty can include any of the 5 senses. Our puffers can have fears of strange noises. This can appear alongside SRB too.

We can deal with this in the games section of the presentation.

Calmness (...or a Lack Of)

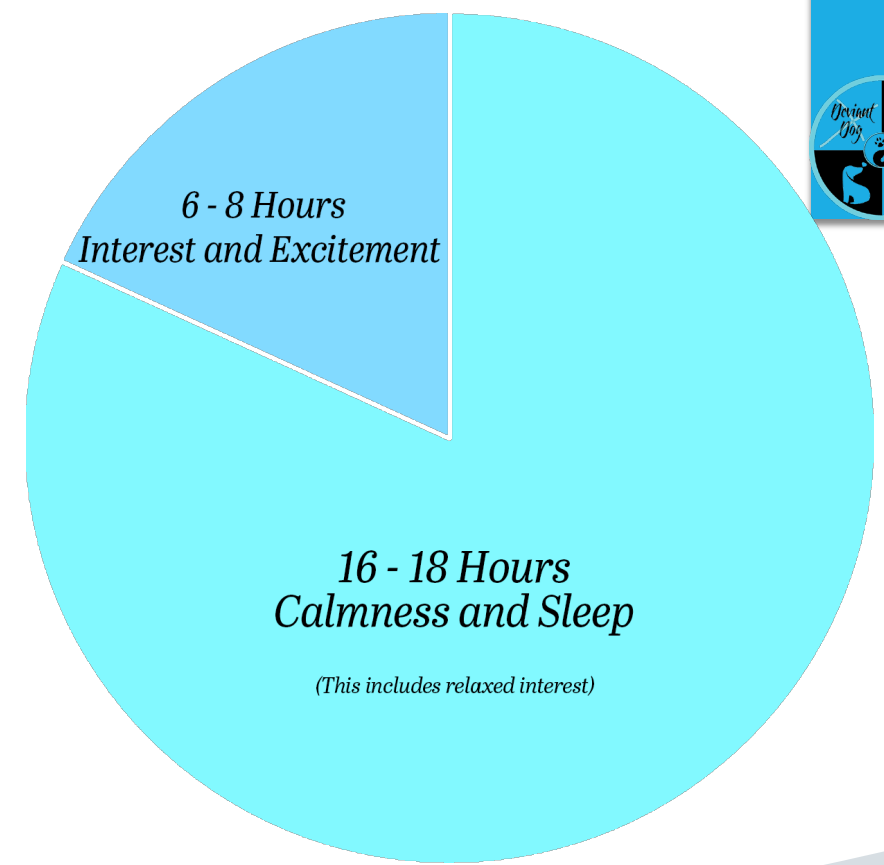
- ▶ How full is your puppers stress bucket? Bucket fillers include:
 - ▶ How often pupper is left alone; For each time they are left alone, more stress is paid into the bucket.
 - ▶ What else does your pupper struggle with?
 - ▶ Dog-Dog reactivity, Dog-Human reactivity, Excessive Barking, Pulling on the lead, Fence Running, Barrier Frustration etc.
 - ▶ What percentage of the day does your pupper spend in calmness?
 - ▶ Check out the 24 hour daily journal.
 - ▶ We are looking for a minimum of 80% calmness, 90% if you can.





The Calmness Triad

See the games section for the games and activities.



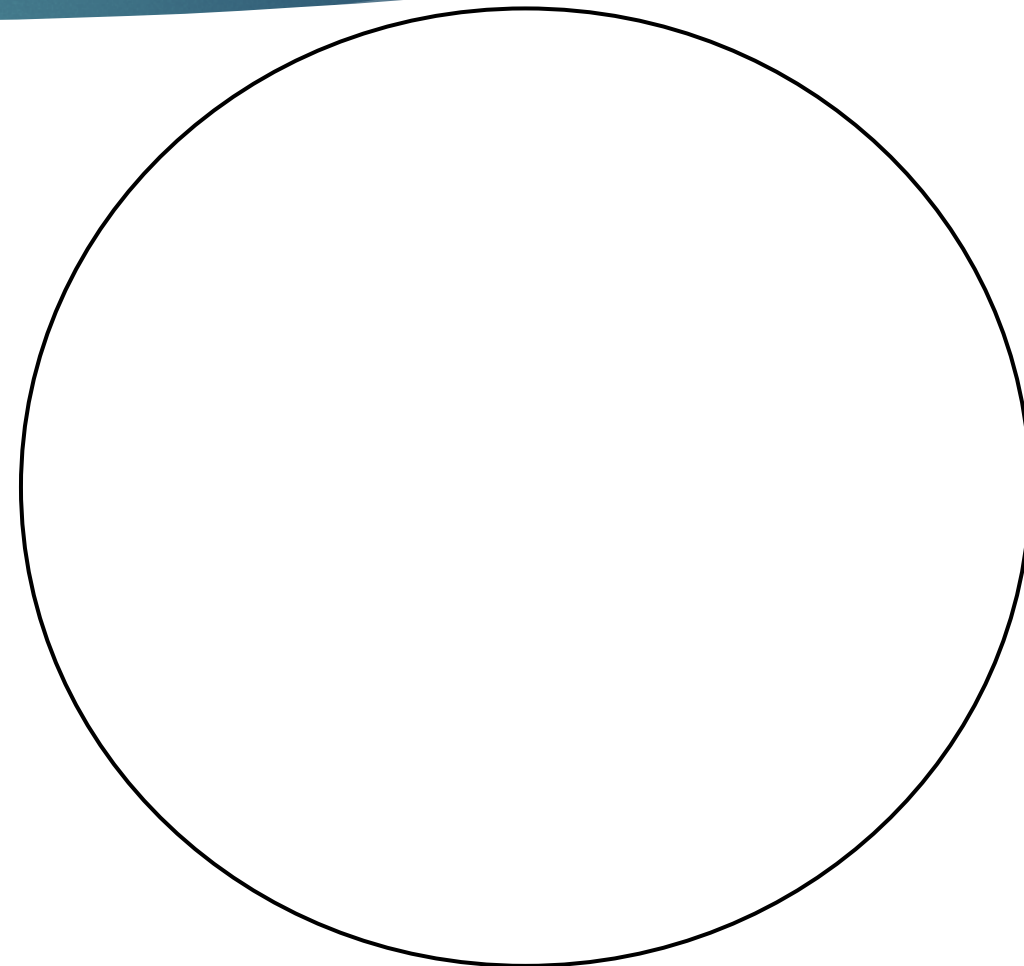
Which circle is more like your pupper's activity level?



Activity:

Make your own calmness circle. What do you feel your pupper goes through in a day. Consider:

- ▶ How much sleep does your dog have?
- ▶ How many hours does pupper seem anxious.
- ▶ How many hours interested vs excitement etc.





Disengagement

Lack of disengagement is something that we definitely need to address with a dog that suffers Separation Anxiety.

In this case, your pupper finds it hard to disengage with you. They are determined to stay with you and follow you around.

You may notice a lack of disengagement in other areas of your puppers life. Can they come away from other dogs, people or even just something that smells nice to them?

Often people describe this as obsessive; it could be repeatedly wanting to have the ball thrown, staring at objects etc. When this is the case, they are deaf and blind to you.

Don't worry if this is your pupper, we have games for that too! Have a look at the games section for more.

Week 2 - Homework



Score your pupper's:

- Independence
- Tolerance of Frustration
- Optimism
- Novelty
- Calmness
- Disengagement

Use a scale of 1-5:

- 1 being Extremely Unsatisfactory.
- 5 being Extremely Satisfactory.

E.g. A dog may score 4 for disengagement if they can often disengage, but not always.

Look at the games library

- Leash off, Game on
 - We will choose 3 games best suited to you and your pupper during our 1-to-1 coaching calls.
- Have closer look at your dog's optimism by doing the optimism test discussed earlier.

Managing Your Environment





Managing Your Environment

- ▶ Strategies you should have already utilised:
 - ▶ Ditching the food bowl.
 - ▶ Specific management strategies for your pupper's SRB's (detailed in Module B). This focuses on the baby steps of developing independence.
 - ▶ Further management strategies will have been implemented to minimise bucket fill. As discussed in 'The Dog End Of The Lead'. This includes the calmness protocol and ensuring enough sleep for your pupper.
 - ▶ The specific management plan for your pupper will include details of which games are best to develop other skills which will help SRB.
- ▶ All of the above will be tailored specifically for you and your pupper's circumstances. This will be a part of your coaching calls; there will also be a follow-up written strategy (homework) for you to implement before the next coaching call.
- ▶ By now we will have worked out specific percentage of food delivered for calmness and which concept is most important for your pupper. For example, it may be 60% on calmness, 20% on independence and 20% optimism.

The Safety Net... Our Special Secret Sauce for Success

- ▶ The safety net is a specific non-repeated, non-regularly occurring sequence of events.
- ▶ If you need to go to work, and can't take your pupper, what then?
 - ▶ Be aware of predictors of you leaving: Both:
 - ▶ Appropriate - Opening the door and leaving, getting keys etc.
 - ▶ Inappropriate - Changing Clothes, Having a shower, thinking that any movement you make means you are leaving them.
 - ▶ Your SRB pupper is anxiously searching for predictors.
 - ▶ We need to take control of the predictors of separation. Then pupper can live a relatively normal life in the mean time. This will minimise the bucket filling in that you are taking active control of these predictors.
- ▶ We advise you keep leaving to an absolute minimum and we will have worked out any alternative strategies to avoid leaving whilst training is in process. But if absolutely necessary and unavoidable, you will need your safety net.

...The Safety Net



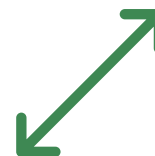
Remember: The safety net is a specific non-repeated, non-regularly occurring sequence of events.



If you need to leave your pupper, wear a particular pair of shoes or coat. Never use those shoes or coat at any other time (e.g. just going into the garden).



When leaving, put your pupper into a specific room, area or crate that is only used when you are leaving. Or, put a particular blanket over your crate (something distinctive) so they know that other times you put them in the crate does not mean that you are leaving.



The same strategies can be used if you have to do particular procedures with the pupper. E.g. giving eyedrops. Use a particular pair of gloves or blanket in order for them to see an easy predictor of what is going to happen.



The idea is that we are controlling what our pupper sees as a predictor and they only need to look for one thing in order to know what is happening.



Eventually, upon following feedback from your pupper, we can phase out the safety net as training and game playing takes effect. For example, if you pop out to the shop for 10 minutes and are not going to trigger SRB, then you will not need your safety net.



Week 3 - Homework

Build up your boundary games:

- Build up more duration.

Safety Net

- If you *need* to leave your pupper alone. Consider your safety net.
 - E.g. Yellow sheet over their crate, or wearing distinctive wellies when you leave.
 - Share your safety net with our group.

Look at the game library

- Continue playing earlier games.
 - You may be advised to play some more games depending on your coaching calls.

The Human End Of The Leash





The Human End Of The Leash...

Clear communication, leadership and role modelling.

- Clear communication is incredibly important in improving the partnership between you and your pupper.

There are several things we need to look at in order to improve our relationship with our pup. These include looking at:

- The Mirror Effect
- Congruency
- Patience
- The Interactive Dialogue Loop
- Positive Leadership
- What is a normal dog? How long will it take?
- Safe, Calm and Happy Land

The Mirror Effect



Your pupper will often mirror back to you what you have sent out to them. An anxious human can lead to an anxious pupper.



A frustrated human can result in a fearful and frustrated pupper.



Maybe pupper is shouting (barking) and you are also shouting (maybe shouting to shut them up).

From your puppers point of view, you are mirroring them.



On a positive note, a calm human will be mirrored by a calm pupper.

Congruency

Your pupper knows how you *really* feel. You may be able to control your body language and facial expression to lie to a human, but your pupper will know that it is not real.

- If you try for fake calmness, then they will know that it is fake.

Just as we want pupper to be truly comfortable, calm and confident. We need to work on ourselves to be truly comfortable, calm and confident.

- It is easier to change our pupper over ourselves.

We need to develop more self-awareness and self-control. We need to work on mastering our thoughts, emotions and behaviours too!



Patience



If we can be patient whilst our pupper processes the information, give them time and take the pressure off. It will lead to a more successful outcome.



Often, we just need to wait for our pupper to make the good choice and then we can *really* let them know that we are happy with that choice.

The Interactive Dialogue Loop



All communication, games and lessons will require you to be flexible. Remember to train the dog in front of you.

Your need to be clear of your goal. If you are stressed or distracted, then remember the mirror effect. Our pupper will reflect our stress. Pay attention to their feedback.

It's a good idea to be present and live in the moment. Your main focus should be your pupper and what's happening there and then.

- If you are thinking of the future and what may happen, you may get anxious.
- If you are remembering the past, you may carry negative emotions from what happened then.

Imagine a bubble around you and your pupper. Keep your focus within the bubble. Only you and your dog exist.

Positive Leadership



Your pupper will thrive when they have clear guidelines. The more clarity you have, the easier and happier life gets for you and your pup. Without this, life can be confusing, difficult and frustrating.



Think of being a good parent, one who makes *great* decisions and helps to project security and safety.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Role model appropriate behaviour | Be calm and confident |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|



If we can shift our perspective to find a common purpose (e.g. playing fun games and relaxing together) then your pupper will trust you more.

“I just want to have a normal life with my dog.”



“I want to go on normal walks, to have a normal household where we can have people to visit.”



What is the definition of normal?

Normal is simply a *human* construct. Few people have what they may think of as normal.



Many people do struggle with stressful households. They may have ‘difficult’ dogs. Many dogs struggle with SRB. It’s one of the most common behavioural problems.



“How long will it take for my pupper to be a normal dog?”

“If it takes to long, I may need to rehome my pupper!”

You may ask yourself these kind of questions. You may think you can't live with your pup like this for much longer, that they are causing arguments or you may believe that if it continues you may have to rehome your beloved pupper.

We need to come away from this mindset. When we are thinking these questions, we are becoming anxious and frustrated. Think about the previous slides.

Simply work on what you can do, just right now, for you and your dog to be safe calm and happy.

Safe, Calm, Happy Land

- ▶ Try to keep your pupper in, 'Calm/Happy Land' with some positive excitement and plenty of enrichment activities.
- ▶ Avoid 'bucket-filling' activities for both you and your pupper. The stress bucket applies to you too.
 - ▶ Consider how many stressful experiences *you* have had today. What happened yesterday and the day before? Remember that it takes 72 hours to empty the bucket.
 - ▶ How full is your bucket? It's worth being aware of this before you start training. Remember the mirror effect.



Ask Yourself



Why you should or shouldn't do something with your pupper or take her somewhere.



What you can do to maximise success with *everything* you do with your pupper.



How you can devise baby-steps to build the confidence and expand the trust between you and your pupper.



Remind yourself that your pupper only needs 30-60 minutes of hard, fast, fun, off-leash experience per day. Much of which can be done in a middle-size garden.



Are other family members on-board with your training?

It is a frequent lament that other members of the family may not take onboard your new ideas and training. This can hold back the transformation, but you can still make progress.

Simply continue to role model, apply the new skills and techniques. The results will speak for themselves.

- ▶ Keep in mind that the majority of people are resistant to new ideas that challenge previous learning.
- ▶ Be aware of the group stress bucket. Each family member has their own stress bucket. These combine to make a family stress bucket.
- ▶ Be your pupper's advocate. Respect their emotions, pay attention and keep calm and confident. Stay present, focused and connected.

Remember the question, 'How long will it take?'. It's not your pupper's choice, it's *yours!*



Mutual Health and Mental Wellbeing

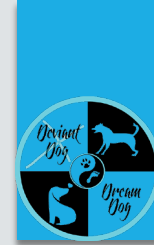
There is a strong connection between you, your mental and physical health and the mental and physical health of your pupper.

There is plenty of research and evidence displaying the link between thought, emotion and behaviour.

There is a very popular trend of mindfulness, being aware and living in the moment. Work on reframing any negative thoughts you may have.

You may have heard of SMART targets. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Sensitive targets. This may be a technique you will find useful in breaking your overall goal into baby steps.

You may like to have worksheets, written plans and feel hugely motivated if progress can be measured. You can then track how far you have travelled in your journey. This program has several such worksheets and opportunities to take objective measurements.



Holistic Tools

- ▶ Holistic can aid your puppies SRB. They can help alleviate your pupper's stress while boosting your relationship. They will help you too!
- ▶ Such tools include:
 - ▶ Aromatherapy and Essential Oils
 - ▶ Flower Essences
 - ▶ Herbal Treatment
 - ▶ Acupuncture, Acupressure, Shiatzu and Red-Light therapy.
 - ▶ Other Energy Therapies such as Crystal Therapy and Reiki.
- ▶ Sonia holds diplomas in many holistic therapies for both animal and human use. She will be happy to discuss their addition to your program in the coaching calls.
- ▶ You can view some of this information in the final chapter of our book. Which we have included in this program.



Week 4 - Homework

Boundary Games

- Work with some distraction elements.

Further Reading

- Check out the Holistic Toolkit pdf which is in the week 4 section on Teachable

Look at the game library

- Continue playing earlier games.
 - We can choose some more games if appropriate... Or if they just take your fancy.



Weeks 5-8



During these weeks, you will be given more games and activities to meet your pupper's specific needs.



Continue to practice the games from previous weeks and please post your progress in the Facebook group. Don't be afraid to post any questions or training struggles you may have there.



If you are struggling with any of the games, just take a look at the 'Play Success' pdf in the game library which should troubleshoot any issues you may have.