

PAWSITIVE METHODS

Canine Leadership

An Introduction

BASIC CANINE LEADERSHIP, AN INTRODUCTION.

ONE CANINE ALPHA, ONE CANINE LEADER

EACH MEMBER OF THE PACK WILL HAVE A NATURAL SPECIFIC POSITION, OR RANKING, WITHIN THAT PACK. IT IS IMPORTANT TO US, THE LEADER, TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ORDER. YOU MAY NOTICE ONE OF YOUR DOGS THAT ALWAYS SEEMS TO BE IN CHARGE, ONE THAT ALWAYS SEEMS TO GET THE BEST OF EVERYTHING, ONE THAT IS IN FRONT, ONE THAT GOES FIRST, THE ONE THAT IS ALWAYS AT THE TOP OF THE HILL. IN A WILD PACK THIS DOG WOULD BE REFERRED TO AS THE “ALPHA.”

ALL OF THE OTHER DOGS WILL FALL INTO LINE BEHIND THIS “ALPHA”, WE WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS DOGS’ POSITION WITHIN THE PACK, BUT WE ALSO WANT TO ASSUME THE LEADERS ROLL. THIS IMPLIES THAT THERE WILL STILL BE AN “ALPHA” DOG, BUT THAT WE WILL BE THE “LEADER” OF THE PACK.

THE ALPHA AND THE LEADER ARE NOT THE SAME THING IN OUR ENVIRONMENT.

ACKNOWLEDGE THE ORDER

WHEN INTERACTING WITH YOUR PACK IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE EACH MEMBERS POSITION. ONCE YOU HAVE DETERMINED THE POSITION, OR RANK, OF PACK MEMBERS IT IS IMPORTANT TO REINFORCE IT.

ALWAYS GIVE THE MORE DOMINATE ANIMAL THE FIRST EVERYTHING. THE MORE DOMINATE ANIMAL SHOULD GET THE FIRST FOOD, THE FIRST TOYS, THE FIRST ATTENTION, THE FIRST EVERYTHING. CONTINUE TO ACKNOWLEDGE EACH PACK MEMBER IN ORDER, THE SECOND, THE THIRD, ETC., UNTIL ALL MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED; THEN, AS A FINAL GESTURE, DO ONE FINAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE “ALPHA”. THIS WILL HELP THE PACK TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE IN CHARGE AND THAT YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THE ORDER OF THE ANIMALS THAT ARE BELOW YOU, INCREASING THE STABILITY OF THE PACK.

BEING IN CHARGE

PACK LEADERS DECIDE IF, WHERE AND WHEN. PACK LEADERS CONTROL ACCESS TO EVERYTHING; THE ACTIVITIES, THE TOYS, THE FOOD, WHERE MEMBERS SLEEP, EVERYTHING.

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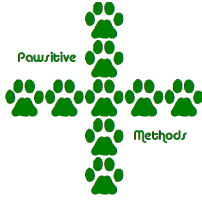
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ACTIVITIES

NEVER ALLOW YOUR DOG TO DETERMINE WHEN AN ACTIVITY BEGINS OR ENDS. PACK LEADERS ALWAYS START AND STOP ALL GAMES AND OTHER INTERACTIONS. DOGS MAY BARK, BEG, PAW, JUMP OR PERFORM OTHER BEHAVIORS IN THEIR DEMAND FOR SERVICE. MOST OF US EVENTUALLY GIVE UP AND GIVE THE DOG WHAT IT IS AFTER. THIS SIMPLY REINFORCES THAT BEHAVIOR. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU, THE PACK LEADER, DO NOT RESPOND TO THESE DEMANDS FOR SERVICE. DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THESE ADVANCES, IGNORE THEM.

Toys

DOGS LOSE INTEREST IN THINGS FAIRLY QUICKLY, YOU CAN SEE THIS WHEN YOU TAKE YOUR DOG FOR A WALK. THE FIRST TIME YOU PASS A CERTAIN SPOT YOUR DOG WILL LITERALLY DRAG YOU TO IT SO THEY CAN SMELL, SEE, TOUCH, LICK, ETC. IT. FIVE MINUTES LATER YOU CAN'T GET YOUR DOG INTERESTED IN THE SAME SPOT. THIS IS VERY MUCH LIKE THE KID AT CHRISTMAS, LOTS OF TOYS, BUT NOTHING TO PLAY WITH.

PICK UP ALL OF YOUR DOGS TOYS AND PUT THEM AWAY. DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH TIME YOUR DOG SPENDS CHEWING CHOOSE ONE OR TWO TOYS FOR YOUR DOG. MAKE THE TOYS AS SPECIAL AS POSSIBLE BY STUFFING THEM WITH FAVORITE TREATS, SMEARING WITH PEANUT BUTTER, OR ANYTHING ELSE YOU CAN DO TO GET THEM INTERESTED. REMEMBERING TO ACKNOWLEDGE PACK ORDER, GIVE THE DOG(S) THE TOYS. AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE, BUT NOT ON A SCHEDULE, SWITCH THE TOYS OUT. THIS WILL HELP TO KEEP THE DOG INTEREST IN THE TOYS, (HELP PREVENT THE "MY DOG HAS A LOT OF TOYS BUT HE DOESN'T PLAY WITH ANY OF THEM" SYNDROME), PROVIDES SOME EXCITEMENT ("WOW! HAVEN'T SEEN THAT IN A WHILE!"), PROVIDE MENTAL STIMULATION ("WONDER IF, WHAT, WHEN...?"), KEEP YOUR HOUSE CLEANER, AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT LETS YOUR DOG SEE JUST WHO IT IS THAT CONTROLS THE TOYS.

THE BEST OF EVERYTHING

PACK LEADERS EAT FIRST AND THEY GET THE BEST PARTS. PACK LEADERS CONTROL WHEN OTHER PACK MEMBERS EAT AND WHEN THEIR TURN IS OVER.

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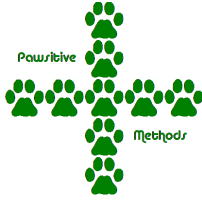
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EATING FIRST

WHEN PREPARING YOUR DOGS MEALS TAKE A MOMENT OR TWO TO LET THEM SEE YOU EAT SOMETHING, EVEN IF IT IS JUST A CRUST OF BREAD. THIS ALSO IMPLIES THAT A GOOD TIME TO FEED YOUR DOG IS AFTER THE FAMILY MEAL. YOUR, AND ALL OF THE OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY (THE PACK LEADERS), EAT FIRST; OTHER PACK MEMBERS EAT NEXT.

THE BEST PARTS

FOOD FROM THE TABLE IS GOOD FOR PEOPLE, NOT DOGS. NEVER GIVE YOUR DOG TABLE SCRAPS. THIS CAN CAUSE A LOT OF UNWANTED ISSUES. YOU MAY FIND YOUR DOG NO LONGER "LIKES" THEIR FOOD. THE "GOOD STUFF" FROM THE TABLE IS FOR THE PACK LEADERS (YOU), NOT FOR THE DOGS.

WHEN TO START

UNLESS YOUR VETERINARIAN SUGGESTS OTHERWISE, THE GENERAL RECOMMENDATION OF PAWSITIVE METHODS IS TO SERVE TWO MEALS PER DAY, AT REGULAR INTERVALS, WITH ABOUT 1/3 OF THE FOOD PROVIDED IN THE FIRST FEEDING, AND THE REMAINING 2/3 IN AT THE SECOND MEAL. THIS WILL HELP TO MAINTAIN EVEN BLOOD SUGAR, HELP PREVENT BLOAT, AND PROVIDE YOUR DOG WITH MORE INTERACTION THAN "FREE FEEDING". SINCE CANINES TEND TO POTTY AT INTERVALS DETERMINED BY WHEN THEY EAT, THIS METHOD CAN ALSO GREATLY BENEFIT YOUR EFFORTS AT HOUSETRAINING. FROM THE LEADERSHIP ASPECT A DOG THAT IS SLIGHTLY HUNGRY WILL MOST LIKELY HAVE BETTER FOCUS DURING THE DAYLIGHT HOURS AND MAY SLEEP BETTER AT NIGHT WITH A FULL STOMACH.

WHEN TO STOP

EACH MEAL IS TEN (10) MINUTES LONG. AFTER THAT THE BOWLS ARE PICKED UP AND PUT AWAY. WALKING AWAY FROM THE BOWL, OTHER THAN TO GET A DRINK, OR IF CALLED AWAY BY A PACK LEADER, IS ALSO THE END OF THE MEAL.

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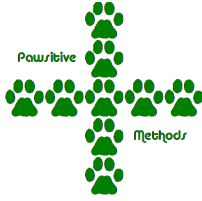
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PLACES TO SIT, REST AND SLEEP

DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON FURNITURE OR, TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON FURNITURE!

THE TRUTH IS THAT EACH ONE OF US WILL MOST LIKELY, AT SOME POINT, BREAK THIS RULE. BEFORE WE GET TO THAT POINT THE DOG MUST HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING THE BEING ALLOWED ON FURNITURE IS BY INVITATION ONLY. IN THE NATURAL PACK ENVIRONMENT THE PACK LEADERS ALWAYS ASSUME A POSITION ON THE HIGH GROUND. THIS ALLOWS THEM TO GET A BETTER VIEW OF THEIR WORLD AND TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTIONS ARE NECESSARY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE PACK. IT IS CRITICAL TO THE PACK THAT ONE MEMBER IS IN CHARGE AND THAT EACH OF THE PACK MEMBERS DO THINGS THAT IMPROVE OR PRESERVE THE PACKS WELL BEING. WE NEED TO BE IN THAT LEADER'S POSITION.

RESTING AND SLEEPING

PROVIDE YOUR DOG WITH A SPECIAL PLACE TO REST. ALMOST ANYTHING WILL WORK AS LONG AS THE PLACE IS RESERVED FOR THE DOG AND IS LOWER THAN THE PLACES YOU NORMALLY OCCUPY. PLACING AN OLD TOWEL ON THE FLOOR WILL SUFFICE. TAKE SOME ACTIONS TO MAKE THE SPOT MORE DESIRABLE FOR THE DOG. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE PLACING A TOWEL ABOUT HALF WAY DOWN IN YOUR LAUNDRY BASKET FOR A FEW DAYS. IT WILL TAKE ON THE SMELLS OF YOUR ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD, MAKING THE DOGS SPOT SPECIAL.

BEING IN FRONT

LEADERS GO FIRST

PACK LEADERS GO FIRST. PACK LEADERS GO THROUGH DOORWAYS AND GATES FIRST, PACK LEADERS ARE THE FIRST INTO THE POOL; *PACK LEADERS ARE THE FIRST TO GET/SEE/EAT/SMELL/ENJOY EVERYTHING.* TEACH YOUR DOG THAT YOU ARE THE ONE THAT ALWAYS GOES FIRST. LEADERS DON'T FOLLOW, LEADERS LEAD.

LEADERS DECIDE WHERE TO GO

USE ANY OPPORTUNITY THAT PRESENTS ITSELF TO CHANGE DIRECTIONS. WHEN WALKING THROUGH AN AREA WITH TREES WEAVE BETWEEN THEM, CHANGING DIRECTIONS FREQUENTLY. THIS WILL ADD TO THE EXCITEMENT OF THE WALK, INCREASE FOCUS, AND HELP CONFIRM YOUR STATUS AS THE LEADER. TRY WALKING BETWEEN POLES AT A SHOPPING CENTER, PERIODICALLY USING DIFFERENT ROUTES.

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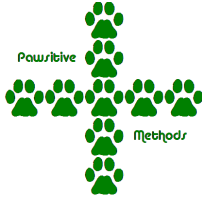
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PARTING OF THE PACK

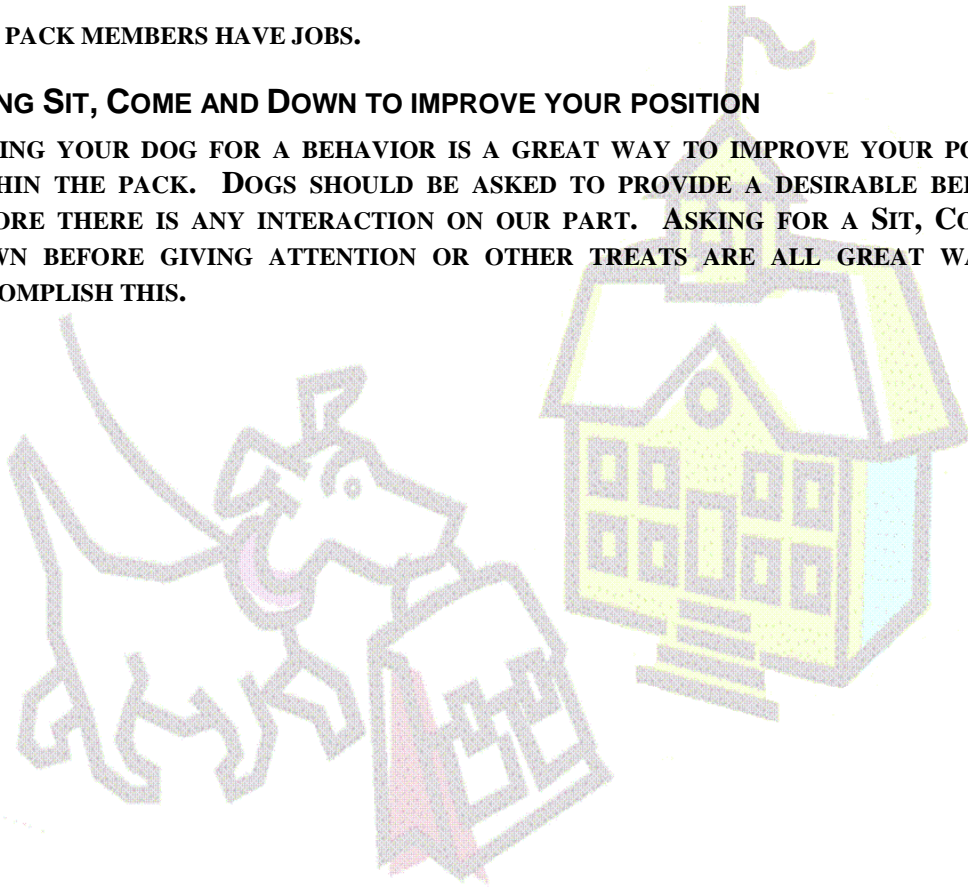
PACK MEMBERS MOVE OUT OF THE WAY OF PACK LEADERS. TEACH YOUR DOG THAT THE DEN (YOUR HOUSE), AND EVERYTHING IN IT, BELONGS TO YOU, THE PACK LEADER. THIS INCLUDES THE FLOOR. WHEN A PACK LEADER CROSSES THE ROOM THE PACK MEMBERS MOVE OUT OF THE WAY.

BEING THE LEADER

ALL PACK MEMBERS HAVE JOBS.

USING SIT, COME AND DOWN TO IMPROVE YOUR POSITION

ASKING YOUR DOG FOR A BEHAVIOR IS A GREAT WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR POSITION WITHIN THE PACK. DOGS SHOULD BE ASKED TO PROVIDE A DESIRABLE BEHAVIOR BEFORE THERE IS ANY INTERACTION ON OUR PART. ASKING FOR A SIT, COME OR DOWN BEFORE GIVING ATTENTION OR OTHER TREATS ARE ALL GREAT WAYS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS.



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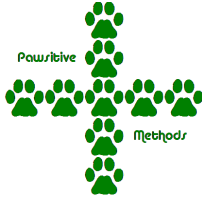
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NO FREE LUNCH

ONE METHOD FOR IMPROVING YOUR POSITION WITHIN THE PACK, AND TO GET MORE DESIRABLE BEHAVIORS IS CALLED “NO FREE LUNCH”. ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO START A “NO FREE LUNCH” POLICY FOR YOUR DOGS IS TO ASK FOR A BEHAVIOR BEFORE MEALS. THIS HELP THE DOG TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT NEEDS TO WORK FOR A LIVING AND THAT HELPS YOU TO BECOME A STRONG LEADER. WORKING CAN BE SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS DOING A SIT BEFORE GETTING A TREAT, OR STANDING CALMLY BESIDE THE DOOR BEFORE YOU PUT ON THE LEASH. IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE ANYTHING COMPLICATED OR DIFFICULT; IT JUST NEEDS TO BE SOMETHING THE DOG DOES TO EARN THE REWARD.

EXERCISE

MOST PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPANION ANIMAL TRAINING; BUT MISS USING IT TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS TO LEADERSHIP. MAKE TAKING THE WALK, PLAYING BALL AND OTHER FUN THINGS YOUR DOG LOVE PART OF YOUR LEADERSHIP EXERCISES.

IF YOUR DOG LOVES TO PLAY “FETCH”, USE IT. SIMPLY ASKING YOUR CANINE COMPANION FOR A SIT BEFORE TOSsing THE BALL AGAIN WILL SUFFICE. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE PRESENTED.

GENERAL

GET YOUR DOG INTO A BASIC COMPANION COURSE. LOCATE A TRAINER THAT PROVIDES TRAINING USING POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT, AVOID TRAINER THAT ADVOCATE PUNISHMENT, OR NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT METHODS. TRAINING CAN BE REWARDING, FUN AND HELP TO BUILD A STRONGER BOND BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR CANINE COMPANIONS. BASIC COMPANION, CANINE GOOD CITIZEN, FUNGILITY, AND OTHER CANINE (HUMAN) COURSES ARE TIME WELL SPENT.

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