

..... Appendix B

CLIENT HANDOUTS

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION PROTOCOLS

The following protocols are the ones used with clients and problem pets at the Behavior Clinic at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (VHUP). They have been developed and refined to meet the pets' needs and to minimize the client's confusion about how to work with a problem dog. These protocols were developed with much help, input, and initiative from the students who have worked in the Clinic. Some of these were modeled after and share commonalities with suggestions and programs (published and unpublished) of Drs. Ian Dunbar (Dunbar, 1991), Bruce Fogle (Fogle, 1990), Roger Mugford (Mugford, 1992), and Victoria Voith (Voith, 1982a,b; unpublished), and trainers Carol Lea Benjamin (Benjamin, 1985), and David Weston (Weston, 1990), and Ruth Ross (Weston and Ross, 1992). After I began to develop client handouts for treatment of specific problems, many practitioners asked for and received copies of early editions of the protocols for their use. Their comments and suggestions have been invaluable. Alterations were made by my student assistants, generations of students, and me to address the peculiar needs of problem pets and their people. Accordingly, as more is learned about behavioral problems and their treatment, these protocols will evolve.

These protocols are written for the average client. Practitioners should ensure that they themselves can understand and execute these protocols before recommending them to clients. In all cases the initial round of behavior modification should occur under the practitioner's supervision with his or her guidance. Videotaping the clients can help illustrate where they have not best responded with the dog or where the dog was signaling some intention or anxiety that the client missed or did not understand. Only after clients understand the program, have had it demonstrated to them, and can execute some part of it flawlessly with their pet should they begin to practice in earnest by themselves. The reasons for this are as follows:

1. These are *not* obedience exercises. At the outset clients should be disabused of the notion that this is fancy obedience. First, although sitting is part of obedience training, the goal of these programs is not just to have the dog sit, but also to relax and be receptive to changing its behavior while doing so. It is critical that clients understand and appreciate this difference. Dogs that are stressed or anxious cannot successfully learn a more appropriate behavior, and they certainly cannot associate that behavior with having fun or with good things. Second, if clients perceive that all we are doing is trying to teach the dog what it has already learned in training class, they will not see the need to comply. If we offer nothing different, what

is the point of behavior modification? It is the practitioner's job to teach clients that behavior modification and obedience training, although sharing many similarities, differ in the premise, interactive reward structure, goal, and outcome. Most dogs that undergo behavior modification have had some form of training and know how to sit. For a dog to do this successfully in a class (or even a show) situation, the dog does not have to be relaxed. That is not true for behavior modification.

2. The biggest problem is appropriate timing of rewards and corrections. Dogs read nonvocal communication or body language far better than most humans do. It is easy for them to subvert the exercise and to shape the behavior of the client. Problem dogs have been doing this already. Someone from outside the relationship needs to be able to comment on timing problems and instruct clients as to when to change their posture, their tone, or their quickness of praise or reward. Most clients are quite good at learning to do this, but they need help. After the initial demonstration the clients should show the practitioner what they are doing to find out if it is correct or if the practitioner can make recommendations. This can be done in a quick 10- to 15-minute appointment (and support staff can be responsible for this), or clients can send a videotape and make an appointment for a critique in person or by telephone. If the clients do not see any improvement or are having serious difficulties, the following problems may exist: (a) they are pushing the dog too hard, too fast (common in today's faster-is-better world), (b) they are giving confusing signals, or (c) their timing is wrong. This is hard work—it is not magic. The practitioner needs to provide help along the way.

3. The practitioner must work *with* the client. In the case of a very fearful or very aggressive dog, the practitioner may not be able to demonstrate the exercises or fit a halter during the first visit. In such cases, after fully cautioning clients about possible risks, the practitioner can ask whether the clients feel comfortable attempting the first round of the behavior modification protocols while the practitioner talks them through it. For reasons of liability it is important to explain that this is *not* the desired technique; however, if clients cannot eventually work with the dog or if the clients are perpetually afraid of the dog, the situation will be hopeless.

If the practitioner can work with the dog, he or she should do so both to teach the dog the appropriate behaviors and to demonstrate to the clients what is desired. Viewing a videotape that can be played back and critiqued after the session can help. When the dog works well with the practitioner, it is the clients' turn. It is of no benefit if the dog is perfect for the practitioner, but a horror for clients. It is not sufficient to demonstrate the protocols successfully without then giving the clients the chance for emulation. It is irrelevant that the dog is perfect for the practitioner—the practitioner does not go home and live with the dog. The clients must be able to accomplish the protocols; hence, it is inappropriate simply to send them home with sheets of paper.

4. Finally, if there is potential for a dangerous behavior that will need to be corrected or avoided, it would be optimal if clients do not discover this when there is no one to help them. A run-through of the program will minimize, but not ablate, this chance.

These programs use praise and food treats as rewards. They do not use hand signals. A brief commentary on these facets is warranted.

Many humans have a tremendous resistance to using food rewards for dogs. The charitable explanation for this is that they do not understand that a food reward is *not* a bribe, but rather a salary. A bribe comes *a priori* (before the desired behavior) as a lure to distract or compete with the dog's current focus so that it does not commit a behavior that the clients are otherwise impotent to control. This is a sad, but common situation in which clients find themselves. A reward or salary comes *a posteriori* (after the desired behavior) in exchange for a behavior perfectly executed in response to a request from the clients. This means that the dog is attending to the clients' desires, awaiting their intentions, deferring to their needs, and responding appropriately, for which it has learned it can *earn* a reward.

Clients are generally receptive to these differences and quickly realize that not only have they been bribing their dogs, but also that they have not felt good about themselves for doing so. A reward structure sets the standard for compassionate but disciplined control.

The less charitable reason that many humans dislike food rewards, preferring to use only praise, is that they feel the need to control, dominate, and subjugate. Dogs are good targets for these needs.

When clients tell me that they want the dog to work only for praise, I always ask them why they feel that way. I seldom hear a logical, internally consistent reason, but I often hear that they want the dog to be willing to respond to their vocal commands or that the dog should obey them. This is about *them*, not about the dog. It is valuable and important for dogs to respond to vocal commands, but these can be coupled with salaries or rewards for a more consistent, reliable, attentive, and collaborative response. Psychologists have demonstrated that intermittent, unpredictable, but not *rare*, reward structures improve performance on any task. Clients are usually receptive to this logic, especially after a demonstration. They have to make the decision to comply; when asked if they would work at their job without a salary, most clients readily admit that they would not perform or work without some tangible reward. If the clients execute this reward schedule appropriately, their dog will often be willing to work largely for vocal commands and praise.

Some dogs work better for play (the receipt of a ball) than they do for food rewards. This is perfectly acceptable, although a little more difficult for clients to execute. *All* dogs should have praise coupled with the salary. As the dog progresses, the praise continues while the treats become intermittent to maintain the dog's interest and attention.

Hand signals are commonly used in obedience and can be useful for dogs and clients. These protocols are for use with problem dogs or young pups. They need every bit of help available. Hand signals are a needless distraction in such cases. Once the dogs master the programs, they will have no problems coupling the learned vocal cues to visual ones. Until then, these dogs should work in calm, quiet circumstances without distraction for vocal cues and a consistent reward structure. Dogs can learn all the words for the commands that they will need for these programs. Hand signals at this stage only distract their attention from the behavior modification process; for very aggressive dogs, such signals put the person using them at risk. Without exception, dangling body parts in front of an aggressive dog is not recommended and will make the animal more anxious. If clients wish to add hand signals later, they can easily do so by using the same principles enforced here: kindness, clarity, and consistency.

B-1 PROTOCOL FOR DEFERENCE: BASIC PROGRAM

Dogs' social systems are very similar to those of humans. They live in extended family groups; they have extensive and extended parental care; they work as a group or a family to help care for the offspring; they nurse their young before feeding them semisolid, then solid, food; they use play as one form of developing social skills; they communicate extensively vocally and nonvocally; and, most important, they have a social system that is based on deference to others. Fights for status or control are notoriously rare among wild canids such as wolves. Except in what humans perceive to be abnormal social conditions, most human social relations are structured by negotiation and deference to others rather than by violence. Deference-structured hierarchies mean that the individual to whom others defer may differ depending on the social circumstances. Status and circumstances are not absolute. In the human situation, a child may defer to his parents' requests but then be the leader on the playground to whom other children defer. Dogs are similar.

Much has been written about dogs viewing their human families as their packs. Although the pack comparison is not exact, dogs are social and generally look to their people for guidance. Dogs often become problems when they cease to do this or if they never do this. This program is the first step in both *preventing* such problems and in *treating* all forms of behavioral problems. All social animals create some form of rule structure. This structure allows them to communicate with each other. Because dogs are so similar to humans in so many ways and so frequently appear to be attentive to every word, it is assumed that they are complying with human rule structure. Puppies actually need guidance in how to do this, and problem dogs need to have a consistent, benign, kind rule structure explicitly spelled out for them. This is a kind of benign doggie boot camp: if the dog knows a consistent rule or behavior that will get the attention of its people, the dog will then be receptive to guidance. This is a form of discipline. People often confuse discipline with violence or abuse. The following program should be executed without violence or physical abuse. In fact, for most dogs, withdrawal of attention is a far more profound correction than is physical abuse. Abused dogs or those consistently mismanaged with physical punishment either learn to override the punishment or learn to seek it because it may be their most common contact.

The intent of this program is to set a baseline of good behavioral interaction between the client and pet and to teach the dog that it must consistently defer to people to receive attention. This is done in a safe, kind, passive manner and is more difficult than clients frequently acknowledge. The reason is as follows: if the clients are talking, reading, or watching television and the dog comes up to them and rubs, paws, or leans against them, the clients usually passively reach out and touch or pet the dog. The *dog* controlled that entire interaction. Score: dog, 1; human, 0—and the people do not even know that they were conveying any signals other than affection to the dog.

Under no circumstances can the clients touch, love, or otherwise interact with the dog unless the dog defers and awaits their attention. This is done by having the dog sit. Sitting need not be prolonged (5 to 15 seconds), and very young puppies may not do it perfectly because they are wiggle worms. Regardless, pups as young as 5 weeks of age can learn to sit and attend to the client (look at them for cues, make eye contact, look happy and attentive while being

quiet) in exchange for a food treat. As soon as the puppy sits, the person should say "Good girl (boy)!" and give a tiny treat of something special. Also praise and pet the pup (see "Teaching Sit," below).

For a dog that already knows how to sit, the only problem is going to be to reinforce this for everything that the dog wants. The rule is: *the dog must sit and be quiet to earn anything and everything it wants for the rest of its life*. This includes sitting for the following:

- Food and feeding
- Treats
- Love
- Grooming
- Being able to go out—and come in
- Having the leash, halter, or harness put on
- Having feet toweled
- Being *invited* onto the bed or sofa (if desired)
- Playing games
- Playing with toys
- Having a tick removed
- Having a wound checked
- Being petted or loved
- Attention
- *Anything the dog wants!*

All the dog must do is put its bottom on the floor or ground, be quiet, look at the client, and await the client's cue. This takes only seconds, but its value is inestimable. *All* dogs should learn this, and *no* dog is too old to learn this. If the dog is older or arthritic, it might be more comfortable lying down. All puppies should be raised with this simple but powerful deference behavior. This *will not* take away a dog's spunk, fire, or individuality. It *will* allow the client to have a far better relationship with the dog and to control the dog. The latter can be critical if the dog puts itself in a potentially injurious position.

If the client has a very pushy or very energetic dog, the client may find that constantly monitoring and correcting the dog's behavior is exhausting. If this happens, the client will become angry with the dog and will not practice the behavior modification correctly, *and* the client will eventually be worn down by the dog. If the latter happens, the dog will have learned to hone its obnoxious behaviors. For such clients, a better option may be to banish and ignore the pet, unless they are actively working with them. This is *not* the same as the withdrawal of affection recommended by many training manuals. Withdrawal of affection will make anxious dogs more anxious and will make clients feel sad, angry, or guilty. Such circumstances will worsen, not improve, the situation. However, by giving themselves permission *not* to have to monitor the dog's every breath, clients can then better comply with this protocol and the protocol for relaxation: behavior modification Tier 1 when they are with the pet. In fact, unless clients are absolutely willing to exhibit the extensive degree of vigilance recommended here, it is preferable to banish the dog to a place where it can be ignored but not neglected. Such places should be dry and comfortable, protected from the elements, safe, and somewhat amusing for the dog. Amusement or stimulation can be provided by toys, balls, marrow bones, or Kong toys filled with peanut butter. Caution is urged in using food with *any* dog with *any* food-associated aggressions. Clients must be able to retrieve the dog and then induce it to practice these protocols. If clients choose to actively banish or ignore the dog as a part

of the method for enforcing the protocol for deference, they must be willing to establish and maintain regularly scheduled periods of interaction in which the deference protocol is *always* enforced and in which Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the behavior modification protocols can be practiced. This will take a minimum of 20 minutes twice a day. Several (8 to 12) 10- to 15-minute sessions per day are preferred when banishment is used. Remember, *any time* the dog is with the client, the protocol for deference *must* be enforced. This means no attention for the dog unless the dog is quietly sitting.

What does such a protocol do to treat or prevent problem behaviors?

1. Sitting and deferring for everything the dog wants, forever, reinforces the innate social structure of the dog and teaches it to look to its people for cues about the appropriateness of its behavior.
2. Deference behaviors can act as a form of "time out": they give the dog respite from a situation so that it does not worsen. The dog can learn that if it responds to a person's request to sit, the person will help it decide what the next best behavior is. This is a great relief to dogs that are anxious about appropriate responses (i.e., many dogs with behavioral problems).
3. Deference behaviors allow the dog to calm down. A sitting dog is less reactive than one that is running around; thus these behaviors allow the dog to couple a verbal cue, a behavior, and the physiological response to that behavior. This has a calming effect.
4. Deference behaviors, consistently reinforced, allow the dog to anticipate what is expected and to be able to *earn* attention.

Points to Remember

1. Starting immediately, the dog must earn everything that it wants for the rest of its life. The dog does this by quietly sitting and staying for a few moments (deferring to you).
2. The dog is requested to sit by using its name and then saying "Sit." This can be repeated every 3 to 5 seconds as needed (this is *not* an obedience class exercise).
3. If the dog resists or refuses to comply—*walk away from the dog*. The dog will eventually follow. When the dog appears or demands attention, ask it to sit as prescribed above. If the dog resists, walk away from the dog. Sooner or later this dog will capitulate. Outlast it.
4. As soon as the dog sits, reward it with praise. A food reward will hasten the process for a dog that does not know how to sit. The next step is to teach the dog "stay" (see "Teaching Stay"). Remember that the dog must stay until released. Because the point of this protocol is to enforce deference that is generalizable, quick releases are desired. Later you can practice long stays and downs as part of an overall relaxation and behavior modification program (see "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1").
5. Watch for subtle, pushy, defiant behaviors that the dog may exhibit. Expect to occasionally make mistakes—do not fight with the rest of the family about it. This will not help the dog. Expect to be a little frustrated. Remember that dogs read body language far better than you do and that they are watching for their opportunity. Use that watchful behavior and shape it into deference behaviors.
6. Remember that everyone in the household must be consistent and work with the dog. Children need to be monitored to ensure their safety and to help them not teach the dog the wrong behavior. Children must understand

the difference between a food salary and a bribe and must be taught not to tease the dog. Dangling food in front of a dog at a distance is an invitation to get up and lunge. Everyone must return to the dog to reward it, tell it to stay, and quickly couple verbal praise with the food treat that should magically appear on an unfolded, flat hand.

7. Reward the dog. This should be fun—for everyone.

Teaching Sit

Consider using a food reward or salary, particularly if the dog must reshape undesirable behaviors. Many humans have a tremendous resistance to food rewards for dogs. The charitable explanation for this is that they do not understand that a food reward is not a bribe, but rather a salary. It is important to understand the difference and to avoid bribes.

A bribe comes a priori (before the desired behavior) as a lure to distract or compete with the dog so that it does not commit a behavior that the clients are otherwise impotent to control. This is a sad but common situation in which clients find themselves. A reward or salary comes a posteriori (after the fact) in exchange for a behavior perfectly executed in response to a request from the clients. This means that the dog is attending to the clients' desires, awaiting their intentions, deferring to their needs, and responding appropriately, for which it has learned it can *earn* a reward.

Clients are generally receptive to these differences and quickly realize not only that have they been bribing their dogs, but also that they have not felt too good about themselves for doing so. A reward structure sets the standard for compassionate but disciplined control.

Food rewards may not be necessary to teach and enforce deference behaviors to dogs that already know how to sit; they can be very useful in teaching puppies that do not know how to sit how to do so. Puppies are babies and have short attention spans. Food helps them focus.

If the food treat is held in one of the client's hands between two fingers and that hand is first placed in front of the pup's nose and then raised up and back, the pup's head will begin to move to follow it. Gradually the pup will sit because it is easier and more comfortable to do so. If the client is saying "Sit (2 to 3-second pause), sit (2 to 3-second pause)," and so on while doing this and as soon as the puppy accidentally sits says, "Good dog!" and *instantly* gives the treat, the pup will be reinforced in the appropriate time. This must be repeated until the puppy does it flawlessly and without hesitation. This generally takes less than 30 minutes for a pup that has not yet developed bad or inattentive behaviors.

Is it necessary to push on the puppy's bottom to make it sit? No, and given how big people are and how small puppies can be, it might be unwise to do this. This is especially true for dogs that might be predisposed to later hip problems. There are three other choices:

1. Clients can gently put a hand behind the puppy's bottom so that as the dog backs up, it bumps into the hand. The client can then gently shape the puppy to sit and reward as mentioned previously.
2. Clients can have another person stand behind the pup with his or her feet near the pup's haunches; as the pup backs up the person's feet and legs will shape the puppy's body in the sit position.
3. A Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar or Halti can be used to help the client quickly teach the pup to sit. See "Protocol for Choosing Collars, Head Collars, and Harnesses" for more information.

Teaching Stay

"Stay" can be more difficult to teach than "sit" because the tendency is to rush the dog and proceed at a pace more suitable for the person than for the dog. This response is rooted partly in the client's feelings that if the dog does not comply instantly, the dog is stupid and the client is in error. This is not true, so everyone can stop feeling guilty. There is much variation in dogs' abilities to relax and stay, and clients often unwittingly give inconsistent signals with their body language. Among the most common of the inconsistent signals is talking to the dog over one's shoulder and telling it to stay while going away from the dog. Dogs that do not know "stay" will not learn it by this approach and will be distressed.

Before the dog can learn to stay, it first must know how to sit. If the dog is physically more comfortable lying down, that is fine. This is not an obedience class, no points will be awarded, and no trophies will be given. The point is to start the animal in a posture of deferential behavior. Sitting is a less reactive posture than is standing, and lying down is less reactive than sitting. Some dogs are calmer lying down, so it is preferable for them.

Next, tell the dog to sit, verbally praise it, say "stay," and take a microscopic step backward. Repeat "stay," go back to the dog, repeat "stay," and reward. A sample sequence proceeds as follows:

"Bonnie—sit—good girl! (treat)—stay—good girl—stay (take a step backward while saying stay—then stop) stay Bonnie—good girl—stay (return while saying stay—then stop)—Bonnie—good girl (treat)—okay!" (the releaser and Bonnie can get up).

Note the Following

1. Use the dog's name—this will get it to attend to you. You can use it frequently, unlike in obedience, provided it attends to you. In fact, the name should be the cue to orient toward you. If the dog does not look at you immediately, put the treat near your eye. The dog needs to focus. (You can couple the treat next to your eye with the vocal signal "look.")
2. Repeat the commands. This is *not* obedience—the dog needs your reassurance. As the dog improves or learns more, repeat the commands less frequently and at greater intervals. This is what psychologists call "shaping" a behavior.
3. Reward the dog appropriately. Eventually the food treats will appear less predictably. At the outset the dog needs everything possible to help it.
4. Remember to use one or two words consistently as a *releaser*—and remember that if you use those words while talking to the dog, the dog will get up. If the dog gets up before released, make it stay and stay again, and wait 3 to 5 seconds before you release the dog. This prevents jack-in-the-box behavior.

As the dog becomes more experienced and masters staying at a short distance, *gradually* increase the distance between you and the dog. *Do not* go from getting the dog to stay within 1 meter of you to walking across the room. The temptation will be great and you will have only provoked conflict and anxiety in the dog, which defeats your goal. A more detailed approach to reinforce stay is found in the "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1."

This protocol can be done with the dog on lead with a head collar. Head collars, when coupled with long-distance leads, allow you to reinforce sitting and to correct the dog if it gets up.

B-2 PROTOCOL FOR RELAXATION: BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TIER 1

Introduction

This program is the foundation for all other behavior modification programs. Its purpose is to teach the dog to sit and stay *while relaxing* in a variety of circumstances. The circumstances change from very reassuring ones with you present to potentially more stressful ones when you are absent. The purpose of the program is not to teach the dog to sit; sitting (or lying down, if the dog is more comfortable) is only a tool. The goals of the program are to teach the dog to relax, to defer to you, to enjoy earning a salary for an appropriate, desirable behavior, and to develop, as a foundation, a pattern of behaviors that allow the dog to cooperate with future behavior modification (generally desensitization and counter-conditioning). This protocol acts as a foundation for teaching the dog context-specific appropriate behavior. The focus is to teach the dog to rely on you for all the cues as to the appropriateness of its behavior so that it can then learn not to react inappropriately.

About Food Treats

This program uses food treats. Please read the logic behind this approach in the "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program." Remember, the treats are used as a salary or reward—not as a bribe. If you bribe a problem dog, you are defeated before you start. It is often difficult to work with a problem dog that has learned to manipulate bribes, but there are creative ways—often involving the use of head collars—to correct this situation. First, find a food that the dog likes and that it does not usually experience. Suggestions include boiled, slivered chicken or tiny pieces of cheese. Boiled, shredded chicken can be frozen in small portions and defrosted as needed. Individually wrapped slices of cheese can be divided into tiny pieces suitable for behavior modification while still wrapped in plastic, minimizing waste and mess. Consider the following guidelines in choosing a food reward:

1. Foods that are high in protein may help induce changes in brain chemistry that help the dog relax
2. Dogs should not have chocolate because it can be toxic to them
3. Some dogs do not do well with treats that contain artificial colors or preservatives
4. Dogs with food allergies or those taking monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) drugs may have food restrictions (cheese, for dogs taking MAOIs [deprenyl])
5. Dog biscuits generally are not sufficient motivation, but some foods are so desirable that the dog is too stimulated by them to relax—something between these two extremes is preferred
6. Treats should be tiny (less than half the size of a thumbnail) so that the dog does not get full, fat, or bored
7. If the dog stops responding for one kind of treat, try another
8. Do not let treats make up the bulk of the dog's diet; the dog needs its normal, well-balanced ration

The Reward Process

Rewarding dogs with food treats is an art. Learning to do so correctly helps the dog focus on the exercises and keeps everyone safe. To prevent the dog from lunging for the food, keep the already prepared treats in a little cup or plastic bag behind your back and keep one treat in the hand used to reward the dog. That hand can then either be kept behind your back so that the dog does not stare at the food or can be

moved to your eye so that you can teach the dog to look happy and make eye contact with you. The food treat must be small so that the focus of the dog's attention is not a slab of food but rather your cues. A treat of the correct size can be closed in the palm of the hand by folding the fingers and will not be apparent when held between the thumb and forefingers. When presenting the dog with the treat, bring the hand, with a lightly closed fist, up quickly to the dog (do not startle the dog) and turn your wrist to open your hand.

When starting the program, let the dog smell and taste the reward so that it knows the anticipated reward for the work. If the dog is too terrified to approach, you can place a small amount of the treat on the floor. Then ask the dog to "sit"; if the dog sits instantly, say "Good girl (boy)!" and instantly open your hand to give the dog the treat instantly while saying "stay."

Getting the Dog's Attention

If the dog does not sit instantly, call its name again. As soon as the dog looks at or attends to you, say "Sit." If the dog will not look at you and pay attention, do not continue to say "Sit." If you continue to give a command that you cannot reinforce, the dog learns to ignore that command. If necessary, use a whistle or make an unusual sound with your lips to get the dog's attention. As soon as the dog looks at you, say "Sit." Use a cheerful voice. Some people may have to soften or lower their voice almost to a whisper to get the dog to pay attention to them. Often this is because they have given all their previous commands to the dog by yelling. The dog has very successfully learned to ignore this.

If the dog is looking at you but not sitting, approach the dog to close the distance, raise the treat gently to your eyes, and request "sit." Often just moving toward a dog helps the dog sit. Not only have you decreased the distance, but you appear taller and to be over the dog; such behaviors are used in canine communication to get the lower (in relative elevation) dog to obey the desires of the higher one. You can use these innate dog behaviors as long as you are careful. Never back up a dog that is growling. Never corner a fearful dog. Never continue to approach a dog that acts more aggressively the closer you come. Remember, the point of the program is to teach the dog to relax and look to you for the cues about the appropriateness of its behavior. The dog cannot do this if upset.

If the dog still will not sit, consider using a head collar. By using a long-distance lead you can request that the dog "sit" and gently enforce this from a distance by pulling on the lead. Reward with a treat as soon as the dog sits.

Cautionary Note:

If your dog is aggressive or if you are concerned about approaching it, do not do any of these exercises off-lead until the dog is perfect on-lead. Fit the dog with a head collar and work with the dog only on a lead at the outset. The halter allows you to close the dog's mouth if the dog begins to be aggressive. This is an ideal correction because it meets the rule that psychologists have established for ideal "punishment": you have interrupted the dog's inappropriate behavior within the first few seconds of the beginning of the behavior so that the dog can learn from the experience. Be gentle but consistent. Taking your anger or fear out on the dog will only worsen the behavior. As soon as the dog responds to the halter and calmly sits, reward the dog and continue. *Never reward a dog that is growling, lunging, barking, shaking, or urinating.*

After the dog sits for the first time you are ready to begin the program. Remember the following guidelines:

1. Use the dog's name to get the dog to orient toward you and to pay attention. If this does not work, use a whistle or a sound to which the dog is not accustomed.
2. Once the dog is attending to you (paying attention) say "sit" and give the dog 3 to 5 seconds to respond. If the dog *does* sit, reward it instantly; if not, repeat the "sit" command in the same calm, cheerful voice. You may want to experiment with voices to see the tonal qualities to which your dog best responds.
3. Do not worry about using the dog's name frequently or about repeating the commands if the dog responds. This is not obedience class, but if you later wish to take the dog to obedience class, the dog will do well if it did well on these programs. Making the adjustment will not be a problem.
4. Do not chase the dog around the room to try to get it to comply with you. If necessary, choose a small room with minimal distractions and use a leash. A head collar provides even more instantaneous response. *Use head halters and other collars kindly.*

A sample sequence could look like this:

"Bonnie—sit—(3-second pause)—sit—(3-second pause)—Bonnie, sit—(move closer to the dog and move the treat to your eye)—sit—(Bonnie sits)—good girl! (treat)—stay—good girl—stay (take a step backward while saying "stay"—then stop) stay Bonnie—good girl—stay (return while saying "stay"—then stop)—stay Bonnie—good girl! (treat)—okay (the releaser and Bonnie can get up)!"—(Bonnie happily gets up and watches calmly for your next signal.)

Note that you talk nonstop to the dog during these programs. This type of talking is not allowed in obedience classes but is desperately needed with inexperienced puppies and problem dogs. These dogs need all the cues that they can get. They need the constant guidance and reassurance of hearing your voice with clear instructions. These instructions and reassurances should occur in the context of shaping or gradually guiding their behavior toward more appropriate behaviors. You will have to learn to read subtle cues that your dog is giving and use these to your advantage. You will find it easier than you believe. The one thing that you absolutely *cannot* do is to talk a continuous stream to the dog without receiving the context-appropriate responses to your requests. If you rush through everything, you will only stress the dog and teach it to ignore everything you say. This is not good. A corollary of this admonition is that it is necessary to use consistent terminology and brief phrases and to do so in an environment when no one else is carrying on long, loud, distracting conversations.

Avoiding Problems

Do not push or pull on your dog or tug on its collar to get the dog to sit. These types of behaviors can be viewed as challenges by some dogs and may make them potentially dangerous. Use the methods discussed previously. If you really believe that the dog needs some physical help in sitting, use a head collar.

Do not wave your hands or the treat around in front of the dog. This acts as a distraction and confuses the dog. Part of the point of this program is to make the dog calmer and less confused. Excitable behavior on your part or unclear signals can make your dog more anxious. This does not help.

It is important to be calm. Your dog will make mistakes. This does not reflect on you. Problem dogs and new puppies

require a lot of patience. The people who have had the most success with these protocols have been those who work the hardest and most consistently.

Do not let your dog be a jack-in-the-box. You must control the situation, and you must achieve that control by convincing the dog to defer to you. If the dog gets up to get the treat every time it is offered, the *dog* just controlled the situation. If the dog does this, consider whether you were too far away from the dog when you offered the treat. If so, move closer. Ideally, the dog should be able to get the treat just by stretching its neck. The dog should not need to get up. If you have a small dog, this may mean that you need to squat down to offer the reward. Be careful if the dog is aggressive because your face is now close to the dog. If you are close enough for the dog to do the exercise properly and the dog still gets up, close your hand over the treat and say "No." One advantage of holding the treat in this manner is that you can safely deny the dog the treat as the last second if the dog acts inappropriately. Then ask the dog to sit again. After the dog sits, say "Stay," wait 3 to 5 seconds, say "Stay" again, and *then* give the treat. The two "stays" with the period between them will reinforce the dog that it cannot get up when it wants to—the dog must be released. By asking the dog to stay twice, you are telling it that whenever it makes a mistake, it must do *two* things to recover from it. A sample sequence follows:

"Susie—sit—(3 to 5-second pause)—sit—(Susie sits)—good girl!—stay (start to give treat and dog gets up)—no!—(close hand over treat)—sit—(Susie sits)—stay—(3 to 5-second pause)—stay—good girl!—stay—(give treat)—okay!" (Dog is now allowed to get up and does so.)

Do *not* tell the dog that it is good if it is not. Do *not* reward shaking, growling, whining, or any other behavior that may be a component of the behavior you are trying to correct. If the dog gets impatient and barks for attention, say "No! Quiet!—stay—good girl—stay—good girl—(treat)—stay. . . ." If a vocal command is not sufficient to quiet the dog, remember that a head collar (especially the Gentle Leader/Promise) can be pulled forward to close the mouth and abort the bark before it starts, so that your correction is the most appropriate possible.

Finally, if you accidentally drop a food treat and the dog gets up to get it, do not correct the dog (the dog did not make the mistake and you did not deliberately drop the treat). Just start at the last point.

The Protocol

The Protocol is a program that was designed so that your dog could learn from it without becoming stressed and without learning to ignore the tasks because they were too predictable. The protocol intersperses long activities with short ones. You may have to adjust some activities to your particular needs. The pattern is actually spelled out in the program. It is preferable to reward the dog *only* for performing each task perfectly. If this is not possible for your dog, you can use a "shaping" procedure in which you first reward the dog for a behavior that approaches that indicated in the task. The next time you do the task, the behavior *must* be closer to perfect to be rewarded. If the program is done correctly, your dog will perform the task perfectly within a short time.

The Protocol is a foundation for desensitizing and counterconditioning your dog to situations in which it reacts inappropriately. The pages can be used as one day's tasks, or you may proceed at the dog's pace (which may be faster or slower). Some exercises are weird (asking you to run in cir-

cles or talk to people who do not exist), but these can be very helpful in getting dogs to learn to relax in a variety of circumstances. Before you start the actual exercises, you must practice with the dog so that it can sit perfectly for 15 seconds without moving. Do this with food treats as described previously. Once your dog can sit this way and look happy and as if it worshipped the ground you walk on, you are ready for the more challenging stuff.

Theoretically the tasks are grouped in 15- to 20-minute units. Your dog may have to go more slowly or may be able to go quickly. *This is not a race, and people who push their dogs too quickly create additional anxiety problems!* Watch your dog's cues. Once the animal can sit for 15 seconds perfectly, reward it only when it approaches perfect *behavior* or perfection on the other exercises. Use the shaping behaviors discussed previously if needed. If the dog really cannot perform an exercise or task, return to one that the dog knows flawlessly, reward the perfect performance, and stop. Every member of the family is to work 15 to 20 minutes per day with the dog, but it may be less anxiety provoking and more stimulating for the dog if this is done in three or four 5-minute segments.

If everyone in the family cannot or will not work with the dog, the people who are not participating *must not* sabotage the program. They minimally must comply with "The Protocol for Deference." If they cannot or will not do this, they should not be interacting with the dog at all. If there is a problem with noncooperation in the household, the dog will not behave as well as it can.

Remember that the keys to success are consistency and appropriate rewards. This means that, although we want you to work 15 to 20 minutes once or twice per day, you should work only for as long as both you and the dog are enjoying and benefitting from the program. If this means that you use six 5-minute intervals to accomplish three or four of the tasks, that is fine. Please do not end on a bad note. If the dog's behavior is deteriorating or its attention is dissipating, do one final, fun, easy exercise and stop. By pushing the dog past its limits, you induce anxiety, and the dog backslides.

When the dog is able to perform all of the tasks and exercises both on- and off-lead in one location (the living room), repeat them all in other rooms and circumstances (the backyard or the park—use a lead here). When the dog performs all the tasks perfectly in all places with all household members, you are ready for Tier 2 of the protocols, which focuses on your dog's specific problems.

If at any point you cannot get past one task, try breaking that task into two or three component parts. If this still does not help, call the veterinarian who recommended the pro-

gram and who is working with the dog's behavior problems. He or she will be able to help you determine the root of the problem. Please do not just continue accepting suboptimal responses. The goal is to improve your dog's behavior. Videotaping while you work with the dog can help. Not only can you show the veterinarian what you are doing, but also you can be a more objective critic of your approach if you are not also an active participant.

Finally, remember that the dog will give you lots of cues about how it feels. We are rewarding the physical changes associated with relaxation and happiness and so will also reward the underlying physiological states associated with this (parasympathetic part of the autonomic nervous system). This means that if the dog is relaxed, its body is not stiff, the jaws hang relaxed and are not tense, the ears are alert or cocked but not rigid, its head is held gently at an angle, and the eyes are calm and adoring, you will be rewarding the nervous system responses that help your dog learn. If you mistakenly reward fear, tension, aggression, or avoidance, you will not make as much progress. If it is easier for you and the dog to be relaxed if the dog is lying down, do that.

Good luck, and do not get discouraged. Many dogs go through a period of 3 to 7 days when their behavior gets worse before it improves. For the first time in their life the dogs have a rule structure they must follow, and they get frustrated while learning it. As they discover they are rewarded for being relaxed and happy, their behavior will improve. These programs are more difficult for the people, in many ways, than they are for the dogs. Stick with it!

A sample map/floor plan is provided that illustrates a physical layout that works well for these types of protocols.

PROTOCOL TASK SHEETS

The task is listed on the left. To the right is a space for your comments about the degree of difficulty of the task for the dog, how many times it had to be repeated, or other questionable behaviors that appeared during the task. You should discuss these with your veterinarian at the reexamination appointment.

Remember after each task to verbally praise the dog and reward it with a treat for perfect performance before going on to the next task. Each set of exercises is designed for a day or a block of time. Warm-up and cool-down periods are provided.

At the first sign of any anxiety (lips retracted, pupils dilated, head lowered, ears pulled down and back, trembling, scanning), return to an exercise with which the dog is more comfortable or break down the exercise that produced these behaviors into smaller steps.

Day 1: Dog's Task

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit while you take 1 step back and return

Sit while you take 2 steps back and return

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit while you take 1 step to the right and return

Sit while you take 1 step to the left and return

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit while you take 2 steps back and return

Sit while you take 2 steps to the right and return

Sit for 15 seconds

Sit while you take 2 steps to the left and return

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit while you clap your hands softly once
 Sit while you take 3 steps back and return
 Sit while you count out loud to 10
 Sit while you clap your hands softly once
 Sit while you count out loud to 20
 Sit while you take 3 steps to the right and return
 Sit while you clap your hands softly twice
 Sit for 3 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit while you take 1 step back and return
 Sit for 3 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 3 seconds

Day 2: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you take 1 step back and return
 Sit while you take 3 steps back and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you take 3 steps to the right and return
 Sit while you take 3 steps to the left and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you take 3 steps to the right and clap your hands
 Sit while you take 3 steps to the left and clap your hands
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you walk one fourth of the way around the dog to the right
 Sit while you take 4 steps back
 Sit while you walk one fourth of the way around the dog to the left
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you take 5 steps back from the dog, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit while you walk halfway around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you walk halfway around the dog to the left and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you jog quietly in place for 3 seconds
 Sit while you jog quietly in place for 5 seconds
 Sit while you jog quietly in place for 10 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you jog one fourth of the way around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you jog one fourth of the way around the dog to the left and return
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds

Day 3: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit while you take 2 steps backward and return
 Sit while you jog 5 steps backward from the dog and return
 Sit while you walk halfway around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you walk halfway around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you take 10 steps backward and return
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit while you take 10 steps to the left and return
 Sit while you take 10 steps to the right and return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you walk halfway around the dog to the right, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you walk halfway around the dog to the left, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit for 10 seconds

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit while you jog 10 steps to the right and return
 Sit while you jog 10 steps to the left and return
 Sit while you jog in place for 10 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit while you jog in place for 20 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you jog backward 5 steps and return
 Sit while you jog to the right 5 steps and return
 Sit while you jog to the left 5 steps and return
 Sit for 5 seconds while you clap your hands
 Sit for 10 seconds while you clap your hands
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds

Day 4: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you jog backward 5 steps and return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you jog halfway around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you jog halfway around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you jog backward 5 steps, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you clap your hands for 20 seconds
 Sit while you move quickly backward 10 steps and return
 Sit while you move quickly 15 steps backward and return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you jog halfway around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you jog halfway around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the left and return
 Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the right and return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you walk all the way around the dog
 Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
 Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit while you walk around the dog, quietly clapping your hands, and then return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you jog quickly around the dog
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds while you clap your hands

Day 5: Dog's Task

Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the right and return
 Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the left and return
 Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
 Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you walk around the dog, clapping your hands
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you walk quickly backward, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
 Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance, clapping your hands, and return

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

- Sit while you go to an entrance and just touch the doorknob or wall and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit while you walk quickly backward, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
- Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you go to an entrance and just touch the doorknob or wall and return
- Sit for 20 seconds
- Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you go to an entrance and just touch the doorknob or wall and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit while the doorknob is touched or you move into entryway and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands
- Sit for 10 seconds while you jog in place
- Sit for 5 seconds

Day 6: Dog's Task

- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 20 seconds while you jog back and forth in front of the dog
- Sit for 15 seconds
- Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
- Sit while you walk quickly backward, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you go to an entrance and just touch the doorknob or wall and return
- Sit for 20 seconds while jogging
- Sit while you walk around the dog
- Sit while you walk around the dog, clapping your hands
- Sit for 15 seconds
- Sit for 20 seconds
- Sit for 30 seconds
- Sit while you walk quickly backward, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you go to an entrance and just touch the doorknob or wall and return
- Sit while you open the door or go into the entranceway for 5 seconds and return
- Sit while you open the door or go into the entranceway for 10 seconds and return
- Sit for 30 seconds
- Sit while you walk quickly backward, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you go to an entrance and just touch the doorknob or wall and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway and return
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway, clapping your hands, and return
- Sit while you open the door or go through the entranceway for 10 seconds and return
- Sit for 30 seconds
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds and return
- Sit for 20 seconds
- Sit for 10 seconds while you clap your hands
- Sit for 5 seconds

Day 7: Dog's Task

- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 20 seconds while you clap your hands
- Sit while you take 10 steps backward and return
- Sit while you walk around the dog
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway and then return
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway, clapping your hands, and return

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit while you open the door or go through the entranceway for 10 seconds and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds and return
 Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway and return
 Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit while you open the door or go through the entranceway for 10 seconds and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds while you clap your hands
 Sit while you jog in place for 10 seconds
 Sit while you jog three fourths of the way to the right and return
 Sit while you jog three fourths of the way to the left and return
 Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway, clapping your hands, and return
 Sit while you open the door or go through the entranceway for 10 seconds and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds

Day 8: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds while you jog and clap your hands
 Sit while you back up 15 steps and return
 Sit while you circle the dog and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 25 seconds and return
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds while you sit in a chair (placed 5 feet from the dog)
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds while you jog and clap your hands
 Sit while you back up 15 steps and return
 Sit while you circle the dog and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 30 seconds and return
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit while you circle the dog and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 25 seconds and return
 Sit for 5 seconds while you sit in a chair near the dog
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, sit in a chair for 5 seconds, and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 20 seconds while you jog and clap your hands
 Sit for 15 seconds while you run around the dog
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds while you turn around
 Sit for 5 seconds while you sit in a chair near the dog
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, sit in a chair for 5 seconds, and return
 Sit for 10 seconds

Day 9: Dog's Task

Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds while you turn around
 Sit for 5 seconds while you jog
 Sit while you walk around the dog
 Sit while you jog around the dog
 Sit while you jog around the dog, clapping your hands

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

- Sit while you jog twice around the dog
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands
- Sit for 20 seconds
- Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the right and return
- Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the left and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
- Sit while you circle the dog and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 25 seconds and return
- Sit for 5 seconds while you sit in a chair near the dog
- Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, sit in a chair for 5 seconds, and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit while you bend down and touch your toes
- Sit while you stretch your arms
- Sit while you stretch your arms and jump once
- Sit while you touch your toes 5 times
- Sit while you stretch your arms and jump 3 times
- Sit for 15 seconds
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 5 seconds

Day 10: Dog's Task

- Sit for 5 seconds while you clap
- Sit for 10 seconds while you touch your toes
- Sit for 15 seconds while you sit in a chair
- Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the right and return
- Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the left and return
- Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 5 seconds
- Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the right and return
- Sit while you walk quickly 15 steps to the left and return
- Sit while you walk approximately 20 steps to an entrance and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return
- Sit for 5 seconds
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return
- Sit while you disappear from view, knock quickly but softly on the wall, and return
- Sit for 5 seconds
- Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 5 seconds

Day 11: Dog's Task

- Sit for 5 seconds
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit while you disappear from view, knock quickly but softly on the wall, and return
- Sit for 5 seconds

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, and immediately return
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, wait 2 seconds, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, and immediately return
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, wait 5 seconds, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, and immediately return
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, wait 10 seconds, and return
 Sit for 5 seconds while you jog around the dog
 Sit while you walk around the dog
 Sit while you jog around the dog
 Sit while you jog around the dog, clapping your hands
 Sit while you jog twice around the dog
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
 Sit while you circle the dog and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds

Day 12: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds while you clap your hands
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit for 20 seconds while you hum
 Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 25 seconds and return
 Sit for 5 seconds while you sit in a chair near the dog
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, sit in a chair for 5 seconds, and return
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit for 20 seconds while you hum
 Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 25 seconds and return
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the right and return
 Sit while you move three fourths of the way around the dog to the left and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
 Sit while you circle the dog and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, knock quickly but softly on the wall, and return
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, and immediately return
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, wait 2 seconds, and return

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit for 30 seconds

Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," and return

Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," wait 3 seconds, and return

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit for 5 seconds

Day 13: Dog's Task

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit for 15 seconds while you hum

Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands and hum

Sit while you disappear from view for 20 seconds and return

Sit while you disappear from view for 25 seconds and return

Sit for 5 seconds while you sit in a chair near the dog

Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, sit in a chair for 5 seconds, and return

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit while you disappear from view, knock quickly but softly on the wall, and return

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return

Sit for 30 seconds

Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, and immediately return

Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, wait 2 seconds, and return

Sit for 30 seconds

Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return

Sit while you disappear from view, knock or ring the doorbell, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return

Sit for 30 seconds

Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return

Sit while you disappear from view, knock or ring the doorbell, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return

Sit for 20 seconds while you hum

Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit while you jog around the dog

Sit for 10 seconds while you clap your hands and hum

Sit for 5 seconds while you jog in place

Sit while you jog around the dog, humming

Day 14: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit for 5 seconds while you clap your hands and hum

Sit while you run around the dog

Sit while you walk back and forth to the door

Sit while you leave the room, quickly knock or ring the doorbell, and return

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit for 10 seconds

Sit for 5 seconds while you clap your hands and hum

Sit while you run around the dog

Sit while you walk back and forth to the door

Sit while you leave the room, quickly knock or ring the doorbell, and return

Sit for 5 seconds

Sit for 10 seconds

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, and immediately return
 Sit while you disappear from view, ring the doorbell, wait 2 seconds, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return
 Sit while you disappear from view, knock or ring the doorbell, say "hello," wait 10 seconds, and return
 Sit for 30 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," wait 10 seconds, and return
 Sit while you disappear from view, knock or ring the doorbell, say "hello," wait 10 seconds, and return
 Sit for 20 seconds while you hum
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds

Day 15: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands and hum
 Sit while you disappear from view, knock or ring the doorbell, say "hello," talk for 10 seconds, and return
 Sit for 20 seconds while you hum
 Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," invite the imaginary person in, wait 5 seconds, and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," invite the imaginary person in, wait 10 seconds, and return
 Sit while you disappear from view, say "hello," talk (as if to someone) for 5 seconds, and return
 Sit for 5 seconds while you clap your hands and hum
 Sit while you run around the dog
 Sit while you walk back and forth to the door
 Sit while you leave the room, quickly knock or ring the doorbell, and return
 Sit for 5 seconds
 Sit while you leave the room, knock or ring the doorbell for 3 seconds, and return
 Sit while you leave the room and knock or ring the doorbell for 5 seconds
 Sit while you leave the room and talk for 3 seconds to people who are not there
 Sit while you leave the room and talk for 5 seconds to people who are not there
 Sit while you leave the room and talk for 10 seconds to people who are not there
 Sit while you run around the dog
 Sit for 10 seconds while you sit in a chair
 Sit for 30 seconds while you sit in a chair
 Sit for 15 seconds while you clap your hands and jog
 Sit for 5 seconds

For Future Repetitions

- Repeat all tasks in different locations.
- Repeat all tasks with all family members.
- Repeat all tasks with only every second or third task being rewarded with a treat. (Remember praise!)
- Repeat with only intermittent treat reinforcement. (Remember praise!)

You and your pet are now ready for Tier 2.

Comments about response or difficulty

B-3 BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TIER 2: PROTOCOL FOR DESENSITIZING DOMINANTLY AGGRESSIVE DOGS

Before desensitizing your dog to gestures or actions that may inadvertently encourage the dog to exhibit dominance aggression, you should have been working with the first two behavior modification protocols: "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1." In addition, you should have been complying with the "Protocol for Dogs With Dominance Aggression." The purpose of this program is to begin to shape the dog's undesirable behaviors into behaviors that are more desirable. You need to continue to observe the recommendations in "Protocol for Dogs With Dominance Aggression."

At the outset of these tasks, one person should be able to request that the dog sits and stays, both on- and off-lead, in the same format as recommended in Tier 1. The person giving the dog cues or commands (the rewarder or handler) is the one responsible for rewarding appropriate behaviors with food treats. Because the dog has already completed Tier 1 of the program with this person, the dog should not view this situation as confrontational. The goal of this protocol is to desensitize and countercondition the dog to gestures that it may or has considered challenging. This protocol requires the cooperation of a second person, the helper. The helper is to stand (or sit, if necessary) approximately 3 meters from the dog, off to the side of the animal. This means that the dog knows that the person is there and can see the person in its peripheral vision but that the dog can still attend to and focus directly on the person giving the cues. With one arm bent at the elbow and held at waist height and with the palm of that hand facing the floor, the second person should start to make small circles in the air. As the dog learns to ignore this distraction and relax while receiving treats as a reward for the relaxation, the helper will gradually make larger circles, move them from waist to shoulder height, approach the dog, make the gestures quicker, form the movements closer to the dog, and, eventually, reach down, press on the dog, and roll the dog over. This is a kinder, less threatening, more beneficial outcome than an "alpha roll," a "dominance down," or other forceful "dominance" exercises.

The program starts with the helper forming small circles close to his or her own body. While the dog sits quietly and attentively and looks as happy as possible (remember—unhappy or anxious dogs do not learn well to change their behavior), the size of the circles can be increased. If the dog remains relaxed, the helper can step closer to the dog, again decreasing the circle size. After the dog relaxes, the circle size is increased. Remember, larger gestures, closer to or over the dog, are potentially big threats to dominantly aggressive dogs. Repeating the pattern of small circles—relaxation—larger circles—relaxation—approach—small circles—relaxation—larger circles—relaxation, and so on, the helper should continue to approach the dog.

The team should work to the point at which the dog is able to sit quietly and remain inattentive to the handler with the rewards when large circles are made over the dog's head. Gradually the helper will approach the dog and attempt to touch and then push on the dog.

The program will take you through all the necessary steps. Remember, the following rules apply for this tier of the protocols as well as for the others:

1. You are only to reward the dog when it reacts appropriately. Never bribe the dog.

2. If the dog becomes distressed or anxious and cannot successfully complete some part of the program, back up and slowly work on the exercises with which the dog has problems. If the dog just cannot get past one suite of tasks, contact the veterinarian with whom you are working. Regardless, make sure that each session ends on a positive note.
3. Keep sessions short—15 to 20 minutes once or twice a day. If either you or your dog have trouble with that time block, use shorter but more frequent sessions (5-minute sessions eight times per day). Shorter sessions may work better for some dogs that appear to be unable to complete a suite of exercises.
4. If at any time you feel that the dog is becoming aggressive or if you or your helper feel threatened, stop for a few minutes and then resume.
5. If the dog appears to lose interest after a few days, make sure that you are rewarding it at the appropriate times in the response sequence. You may also need to change rewards at some point and use the dog's propensity to be interested in novel items.
6. If you or your helper feel safer or more comfortable with the dog on-lead, practice for the first few times with the dog on-lead. It may be best to work with a head collar. This can be an excellent idea because some dogs view all hand signals as threats and the Gentle Leader Promise System allows you to close the animal's mouth, thereby both preventing an injury and issuing a correction at the most appropriate time. If you use a halter, hold the leash in one hand and reward with the other. If you choose to just use a leash, put it under your foot with a small amount of slack. This leaves both your hands free, but requires that you can quickly slip your other foot across the leash so that the dog's head is held closer to the floor.

During these tasks the dog should remain attentive to the person giving the cues and rewards while the helper performs the potentially distracting activities. A brief glance at the helper is acceptable *if and only if* the dog is immediately responsive to a quick request to look at the handler (use the dog's name as you see the dog turning toward the helper: "Sparky, here!") or if the dog spontaneously returns its attention to the handler.

The helper forms small circles close to his or her body. When the dog sits quietly and attentively, the circles are increased in size and speed. If the dog remains relaxed, the helper can step toward the dog, again returning to the smaller circle size that is less threatening. As the dog relaxes the circle size should again be increased. It is sometimes helpful if the rewarder anticipates the next phase of the helper's actions and gets the dog's attention before the animal has time to be concerned. For example, as the helper steps forward, the rewarder could say "Sparky!" (use an upbeat tone) and reward the dog (if it behaves appropriately) as the helper makes his or her move. Go slowly. Large or quick gestures can be threats to dominantly aggressive dogs. By proceeding slowly, the helper can continue to approach the dog with progressively more complicated desensitization gestures.

Clients are often frustrated by this slow approach. Remember that regardless of your stage in the program, there are earlier tasks that you would not have been able to execute without the commitment to the desensitization and counterconditioning.

The helper eventually works to the point at which the dog is able to sit quietly and remain attentive while the

helper makes large circles over the dog's head. The circling hand should gradually be lowered until it just touches the dog's fur. If the dog permits this, the helper can gradually begin to apply more pressure to the dog with each pass of his hand. *Watch the dog carefully as the touching begins.* Many dominantly aggressive dogs will tolerate gestures that do not involve physical contact but will become aggressive at the least intimate contact. The rewarder is responsible for monitoring the dog's facial and eye gestures for the *least* sign of displeasure. At the first sign of this, the helper should back off. It is far wiser to not take any chances. You can always return to working at a less reactive level and gradually build to a more intimate level. A dog that may be unable to tolerate contact while off-lead may be able to learn to do it—and enjoy it—while on-lead wearing a head halter. Use every available option.

The objective of this program is to gradually work up to

Dog's Task

Make small circles at 3 meters
 Make large circles at 3 meters
 Make small circles at 2.5 meters
 Make large circles at 2.5 meters
 Make small circles at 2 meters
 Make large circles at 2 meters
 Make small circles at 1.5 meters
 Make large circles at 1.5 meters
 Make small circles at 1 meter
 Make large circles at 1 meter
 Make small circles at 0.5 meters
 Make large circles at 0.5 meters
 Make small circles at 0.25 meters
 Make large circles at 0.25 meters
 Bend at the waist at 0.25 meters and make small circles above the dog's head
 Bend at the waist at 0.25 meters and make large circles above the dog's head
 Make small circles immediately above the dog's head
 Make large circles immediately above the dog's head*
 Quickly and lightly brush the dog's fur while circling above the dog's back*
 Repeat the above and brush for a slightly longer time*
 Repeat, increasing pressure slightly*
 Repeat, with petting pressure*
 Press gently on the dog's shoulders*
 Press moderately on the dog's shoulders*
 Press firmly on the dog's shoulders*
 Press firmly on the dog's back*
 Keep increasing pressure on the dog until the dog is pushed to the ground*
 Massage the neck, shoulders, and hips*
 Roll on to back so that the dog's belly is exposed*
 Massage the belly, groin, and chest gently*

*CAUTION: These gestures can be viewed as threats by the dog; observe the dog's signaling carefully and do not take risks. Not all dogs will succeed at the highest levels, but frequent repetitions often allow them to do so.

For Future Repetitions

- Repeat all tasks in different locations.
- Repeat all tasks with all family members.
- Repeat all tasks with only every second or third task being rewarded with a treat. (Remember praise!)
- Repeat with only intermittent treat reinforcement. (Remember praise!)

the point at which the helper can push the dog to the ground without any resistance. Once this is possible, the entire program should be repeated in different rooms, indoors and outside, and from different positions relative to the dog (behind the dog and, the more threatening position, in front of the dog). Everyone in the household should practice as both the rewarder and the helper. The ultimate hope is that people will be able to rush up and hug the dog. *Not all dogs will attain this level of behavioral change.* Caution is urged, and some dogs may *never* be able to be hugged and surrounded by strangers. One of the benefits of these programs is that you will become aware of gestures that signal the dog's limits and can decide whether you wish to attempt to modify these.

A sample map/floor plan is provided that illustrates a physical layout that works well for these types of protocols.

Comments about response or difficulty

B-4 BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TIER 2: PROTOCOL FOR DESENSITIZATION AND COUNTERCONDITIONING USING GRADUAL DEPARTURES

Dogs with separation anxiety often begin to experience anxiety at the first cue that you will be leaving the dog's sight. The first set of protocols concentrated on uncoupling cues for departure from the actual event and on reinforcing general relaxation and responsiveness to your vocal cues (see "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1"). This program concentrates on desensitizing and counterconditioning the dog to being left alone for gradually longer periods.

It is not sufficient that the dog does not bark or destroy something when left alone. The goal of this program is to reinforce relaxation and behaviors associated with actually feeling calm when left alone (i.e., happy looks, lowered heart rates, and slowed respiration). Once again, *go slowly*. It is particularly important that dogs with separation anxiety do not become stressed or made more anxious during this protocol. Speed is *not* a measure of success—behavior is. Remember to shape the dog's behavior by rewarding even the smallest, incremental hint that the dog is more relaxed than previously. If at any time you notice outward physical and physiological signs that the dog is becoming anxious while working, break the suite of tasks on which you were working into smaller components. Outward physical and physiological signs of stress or anxiety can include panting, increased heart rate, lowered head with ears retracted, lips pulled back horizontally, dilated pupils, "redder" eyes with or without movement, shaking or shivering, whimpering or

Day 1: Dog's Task

- Sit for 5 seconds
- Sit for 10 seconds
- Sit for 20 seconds
- Sit while you take one step back
- Sit while you take two steps back
- Sit while you take one step to the side
- Sit while you take two steps to the side
- Sit while you take three steps back
- Sit while you take three steps to the side
- Sit while you walk around the dog
- Sit while you take 10 steps backward and return
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway and return
- Sit while you open the door or go into the entrance for 10 seconds and return
- Sit while you take one step to the side
- Sit while you take two steps to the side
- Sit while you take three steps back
- Sit while you take three steps to the side
- Sit while you walk around the dog

Day 2: Dog's Task

- Sit for 20 seconds
- Sit while you take 10 steps backward and return
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway and return
- Sit while you open the door or go into the entrance for 10 seconds and return
- Sit for 30 seconds
- Sit while you disappear from view for 5 seconds and return
- Sit while you go through the door or the entranceway and return
- Sit while you touch a doorknob
- Sit while you rattle a doorknob
- Sit while you turn the doorknob, but do not open the door

whining, and blowing in and out of "cheeks." If you see any of these signs, the dog is too distressed to effectively learn to change its behavior. Backtrack and return to a level at which the dog does not react inappropriately and can respond happily. Break the tasks with which the dog had difficulty into smaller components. All of the following tasks can be broken into smaller components. Everyone in the family who is involved with the dog must be able to successfully complete the program.

When the program is completed in one calm area, it must be expanded to other areas: other rooms, indoors or outside, inside a fence or outside, and so on.

Remember to use the dog's behavior to help you decide how to adapt the protocol for the dog's specific needs. If the dog is perfectly calm when left in a car but is distressed when someone leaves, start by practicing the tasks in the car. If the dog is calm when all but one person leaves the house but panics when that person leaves, start by practicing with departures involving people for whom the dog does not panic. If the dog appears to keep a good calendar and does not become distressed when people leave on weekends, start by practicing the tasks in the protocol repeatedly on weekends.

Remember to shape the dog's behavior by rewarding even the smallest signal that it is more relaxed with each succeeding task. Be patient. Do not become angry. Do not punish the dog. Stop and return later if you are feeling stressed.

A sample map/floor plan is provided that illustrates a physical layout that works well for these types of protocols.

NOTE: As usual, for the following tasks always remember to return to the dog and reward it after completing the task.

Comments about response or difficulty

Comments about response or difficulty

Sit while you touch a doorknob
 Sit while you rattle a doorknob
 Sit while you turn the doorknob, but do not open the door
 Sit while you open the door a few centimeters and quickly close it
 Sit while you open the door 0.25 meters and then close it
 Sit while you open the door 0.5 meters and then close it
 Sit while you walk back 10 steps
 Sit while you rattle the doorknob
 Sit while you open the door 0.5 meters and then close it
 Sit while you open the door 1 meter and then close it
 Sit while you step into the door but remain in view

Day 3: Dog's Task

Sit while you turn the doorknob, but do not open the door
 Sit while you open the door a few centimeters and quickly close it
 Sit while you open the door 0.5 meters and then close it
 Sit while you open the door 1 meter and then close it
 Sit while you step into the door but remain in view
 Sit while you step into the doorway
 Sit while you step through the doorway
 Sit while you step through the doorway, close the door just slightly, and immediately return
 Sit while you step through the doorway, close the door, wait 5 seconds, and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 10 seconds and return
 Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 15 seconds
 Sit while you disappear from view for 15 seconds and return
 Sit while you step through the doorway, close the door, wait 10 seconds, and return
 Sit while you step through the doorway, close the door, wait 20 seconds, and return
 Sit while you go out of the door and firmly close it
 Sit for 20 seconds
 Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit for 5 seconds

Comments about response or difficulty

Day 4: Dog's Task

Sit for 10 seconds
 Sit while you go out of the door and close it:
 and wait 5 seconds
 and wait 30 seconds
 and wait 45 seconds
 and wait 90 seconds
 and wait 2 minutes
 Sit while you go out of the door and close it:
 and wait 3 minutes
 and wait 4 minutes
 and wait 5 minutes
 and wait 7 minutes
 and wait 10 minutes

Comments about response or difficulty

Continue as above until the dog can sit quietly and relax while left alone for 30 minutes. Generally, if the dog can be relaxed while left alone for 30 minutes, the dog will be able to relax when left alone for normal durations, prohibiting any startling or disastrous consequences. This means that if your dog is afraid of thunderstorms and one occurs while it is left alone, relapse is possible. Treat all of the problems.

For Future Repetitions

- Repeat all tasks in different locations.
- Repeat all tasks with all family members.

- Repeat all tasks with only every second or third task being rewarded with a treat. (Remember praise!)
- Repeat with only intermittent treat reinforcement. (Remember praise!)

Antianxiety medications may help some dogs that otherwise are unable to succeed in this program. Remember, if it is decided that medication could benefit your dog, you need to use it *in addition* to the behavior modification, not instead of it.

B-5 PROTOCOL FOR TEACHING YOUR DOG TO UNCOUPLE DEPARTURES AND DEPARTURE CUES

There are two components to beginning to teach dogs to *not* react anxiously when you leave them. The first involves resisting the normal tendency to reassure an unhappy dog, and the second involves teaching the dog not to respond to cues that tell it you might leave. Tier 2 of the program actually teaches the dog the third component, gradually learning to be left alone.

Dogs that become distressed after you have left probably became distressed before you left. You need to be alert for such cues as panting, pacing, whining, digging, trembling, not eating, and so on and ensure that you do not inadvertently reward such cues by telling the dog that it is "okay." The dog does not think it is okay, and you are rewarding and reinforcing the dog for being anxious. Rather, before the dog becomes distressed, even if it has just awakened, make every effort to reward the calm behavior. Talk happily to the dog, groom slowly, or massage and rub the dog's belly and chest. If the dog becomes upset when you leave, do not fuss over the dog. Try some of the initial Tier 1 exercises to determine whether these will calm the dog. If they do, reward the dog profusely. If they do not, proceed to leave, placing the dog in a crate or pen, if that is normal, and do not fuss over the dog. See "Protocol for Dogs with Separation Anxiety" for further details.

It is important to start to teach the dog that it can divorce the signals you give when you are about to leave from its anxiety at your departure. Remember, dogs read body language better than humans. The cues that you need to work on include all of those that induce anxiety as described previously.

When you are not leaving, start to go through the same routine that you pursue when departing. For example, if you always take your briefcase to work, pick it up and then watch television or read a book. If you always go to the health club with a gym bag, pick up your gym bag and make dinner. If you only wear high heels and makeup when you go to work, wear them instead on a Sunday and spend the day by the fire reading the newspaper. You get the idea.

Remember, you are responsible for identifying the cues that start to upset your dog. All dogs are different. Some dogs only react when the keys are picked up, others only when the car is started, some because of the hour at which their people awake when going to work, and still others because of the presence or absence of a meal or a type of food. These are typical examples; your dog may respond to something different.

Any specific event that triggers anxiety in your dog should be uncoupled from your actual departure.

In addition to using cues that signal to the dog that you are leaving, and then staying home, you can use cues that tell the dog you are staying home and then leave. For example, if you only eat breakfast on weekends when you stay home, start eating breakfast on weekdays. If you only wear jogging clothes on weekends, wear them to work and change there.

On days when you are not leaving the dog, you can start to develop some specific cues that tell the dog that you are not leaving. For example, you could play a specific, easily recognizable piece of music. You can then use this piece of music to help teach the dog to relax when you are leaving (or, by remote control, when you are not there). This is called a bridging stimulus and can be very useful in cases of milder anxieties or as animals begin to recover.

The anxiety induced by the specific event that your dog associates with your departure is often a self-fulfilling prophecy. If the dog can be taught to not become anxious in the first place at the time when the cues are given, this will help the dog learn to not be anxious when you are gone. Remember that what we know about anxiety indicates that it is a *cascade type of phenomenon*: once you get upset, it is easier to become more upset more quickly.

Antianxiety medications may help some dogs that otherwise are unable to succeed in this program. Remember, if it is decided that medication could benefit your dog, you need to use it *in addition* to the behavior modification, not instead of it.