

B-6 TIER 2: PROTOCOL FOR DESENSITIZING AND COUNTERCONDITIONING A DOG (OR CAT) FROM APPROACHES FROM STRANGERS

The "Protocol for Desensitizing and Counterconditioning a Dog (or Cat) From Approaches From Strangers" is written primarily for dogs, but the clever client can adapt it for cats. It is intended to be started after "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1" have been successfully completed. This protocol will work for animals that respond inappropriately (fearfully, aggressively, or fearfully aggressively) to either strange animals (primarily dogs) or people. The execution of this protocol requires the cooperation of several people and sometimes another dog or cat. If the dog's problem involves other dogs, a second dog will be required. If the dog is very aggressive toward or fearful of other dogs, the first dog that works with this one should preferably be one to which this dog is accustomed and to which it does not respond. Later another dog, generally one not in the household, will be required.

It is best to set these tasks up in a T-shaped hallway. If you do not have a T-shaped hallway, the dog can be placed in a room off a hall. The point of this physical restriction is to allow the dog, even when using its peripheral vision, to see a stranger for only a brief moment at the outset of the protocol. A momentary glimpse lessens the dog's anxiety and allows the desensitization techniques emphasized in Tier 1 to be used.

Ask the dog to sit and stay, or to lie down and stay if this is more relaxing for the dog, in the doorway or hall. Have the dog facing the hallway where the person or dog will approach. The further the dog is from the door or hall, the less the dog will be able to see of the approaching stranger, and the more momentary any glimpse of the person or dog will be. Use this. If your dog is very anxious, move the dog far away from the approacher. Only when your dog has become relaxed at this long distance should you gradually move it closer to the approacher and repeat the tasks described in this protocol. As soon as your dog sits, stays, and relaxes, reward it with a small treat. Make sure that what you are rewarding is that the dog remained relaxed and was attentive to you. As the stranger passes, the dog is permitted to quickly glance at the stranger but should not react inappropriately or anxiously by putting his hair up, whining, growling, barking, trembling, salivating, or looking distressed. At all times the dog should look happy and look at you adoringly. If the dog looks at the approacher for more than a moment, as soon as you say the dog's name (in a happy, upbeat voice), the dog should look at you and be relaxed. Remember that a tone of voice that conveys that you are worried for the dog or angry that the dog is not instantaneously responding only increases the dog's anxiety. If you approach this task gradually, the dog will eventually respond instantaneously; it just may be unable to do so right at the outset.

The dog must look at your face and eyes—not at the food rewards. Once the dog does not react at all, you can make the rewards intermittent, but at the outset you need to reward the dog for its constant attention. Be very quick with the food rewards: as soon as the dog responds to your call or voice command, give the reward. The potentially anxiety-provoking event—the movement of the approacher—should be timed to coincide with and take place during the reward phase of the exercise. The following tasks can be varied by having the stranger approach the dog from the front

and from the back, but you should start with the dog facing you and sitting sideways to the approach of the stranger.

If cooperative strangers are not available or for further practice, these exercises can be performed in shopping centers, parks, or other busy places using fortuitous strangers *if* and only if you have good control over the dog's head and can be confident that it does not pose any risk to the strangers (dog or human). For dogs that need reassurance or a little more restraint, practice these exercises using a head collar. This not only prevents the dog from bolting but also allows you to safely turn the dog's head away from someone else and toward you within the time frame (the first few seconds of the behavioral process) that will allow the dog to learn from and be rewarded for the correction.

These same tasks can be used for dogs that have problems with interdog aggression. Instead of having a stranger walk by, have someone (preferably a person with whom the dog is comfortable) walk by with another dog. Begin the exercises with the strange dog walking next to the wall in the hall. This places the approaching dog as far away as possible from the one with the problem *and* uses the person as a buffer and signal to relax for the dog with the problem. After all tasks have been successfully and calmly completed the first time, repeat the same exercises with the strange dog walking on the *opposite* side of the person who is walking down the hallway.

If a strange dog is not available, you can first use another dog of your own or use dogs that are behind fences or in the park, leashed. Remember, other dogs may have problems, too, and you not only need to protect other dogs from your dog (use a head halter), but you also want to protect your dog from them. This is often not easy to do if any of the other dogs run free. Use sound judgment and err on the side of caution.

If your dog has problems only with a particular dog or a particular class of dogs, start with a dog or class of dogs with which there is no problem and then gradually begin to use the problem dog. You may need to do so intermittently at first.

You will need the cooperation of other people and dogs to succeed in this protocol. You can get this cooperation by being cautious and ensuring that your dog can injure no one else. Head halters can speed the rate at which the dogs can learn these exercises because they correct the dog before it can become fully upset and experience a cascade phenomenon of inappropriate behavior. Head halters also can provide an extra degree of protection for the approacher dog and should be used for both dogs in all circumstances when the problems exist between the dogs. If you cannot find appropriate strangers (dogs or people) with which to practice the approaches, ask if your veterinarian can set these up in his or her practice. If at first you practice under extremely controlled circumstances (the veterinarian's office), you eventually need to practice under less controlled circumstances.

Again, for each step you are rewarding the dog, not just for not reacting, but also for relaxing and being happy and confident while it does not react. If you have difficulty with any of the following tasks, break them down into simpler, smaller, more manageable tasks. Your dog's behavior will tell you what is manageable. Do not make the dog more fearful. It is better to work for three 5-minute periods that the dog enjoys than for one 15-minute period when the dog becomes distressed.

The intent of this program is to teach the dog that someone can walk quickly up to it, touch it while making noise, and keep going. If the problem is with another dog, the intent is to teach the dog that another dog can pause in front of it, sniff, and then pass without ensuing problems.

Dog's Task

Comments about response or difficulty

- The dog sits, stays, and relaxes while:
- A stranger passes quietly and quickly down the opposite end of the hall
 - A stranger passes quietly and at a moderate pace down the opposite side of the hall
 - A stranger passes at a slow pace down the opposite side of the hall, making a slight noise (i.e., scuffing of feet)
 - A stranger passes at a slow pace down the opposite side of the hall, making slightly more noise (i.e., the jangling of keys)
 - A stranger passes quietly and quickly down the center of the hall
 - A stranger passes quietly and at a moderate pace down the center of the hall
 - A stranger passes slowly down the center of the hall, making a slight noise
 - A stranger passes slowly down the center of a hall, making more noise
 - A stranger passes quietly and quickly down the near side of the hall
 - A stranger passes quietly and at a moderate pace down the near side of the hall
 - A stranger passes quietly and at a slow pace down the near side of the hall
 - A stranger passes at a slow pace down the near side of the hall, making a slight noise
 - A stranger passes quietly down the near side of the hall, pausing momentarily in the doorway
 - A stranger passes quietly down the hall, taking one tiny step into the doorway and momentarily pausing
 - A stranger passes quietly down the hall, taking one brief step into the doorway, pausing briefly, and glancing at the dog
 - A stranger takes two steps into the doorway
 - A stranger takes two steps into the doorway and briefly pauses
 - A stranger takes two steps into the doorway, briefly pauses, and glances at the dog
 - A stranger takes three steps into the doorway
 - A stranger takes three steps into the doorway and briefly pauses
 - A stranger takes three steps into the doorway, briefly pauses, and glances at the dog
 - A stranger walks quietly and quickly through the doorway and passes the dog
 - A stranger walks quietly and quickly past the dog, and reaches slightly toward the dog
 - A stranger walks quietly and quickly past the dog and briefly reaches close to the dog
 - A stranger walks quietly and quickly past the dog, briefly reaching slightly toward the dog
 - A stranger walks moderately quickly past the dog, briefly reaching slightly more toward the dog
 - A stranger walks at a slow pace past the dog
 - A stranger walks at a slow pace, briefly reaching toward the dog
 - A stranger walks at a slow pace, briefly reaching slightly closer toward the dog
 - A stranger walks at a slow pace, briefly pausing next to the dog
 - A stranger walks at a slow pace, briefly pausing next to the dog and glancing at it
 - A stranger briefly pauses next to the dog, glances at it, and reaches slightly toward it
 - A stranger briefly pauses, glances, and reaches slightly more toward the dog
 - A stranger pauses and looks at the dog (*do not stare*) for 5 seconds

- A stranger pauses and looks at the dog (*do not stare*) for 10 seconds
- A stranger pauses and looks at the dog (*do not stare*) for 20 seconds
- A stranger pauses and looks at the dog (*do not stare*) for 30 seconds
- A stranger pauses and looks at the dog (*do not stare*) for 45 seconds
- A stranger pauses and looks at the dog (*do not stare*) for 1 minute
- A stranger pauses next to the dog for 1 minute then reaches slightly toward the dog
- A stranger pauses for 1 minute and reaches closer to the dog, almost touching it
- A stranger pauses for 1 minute, reaches closer to the dog, and touches it
- A stranger pauses for 1 minute, reaches down, and pets the dog

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-7 TIER 2: PROTOCOL FOR DESENSITIZING AND COUNTERCONDITIONING DOGS TO RELINQUISH OBJECTS

Some dogs have difficulty relinquishing objects about which they care. These can range from objects such as bones, whose value people can generally appreciate, to illogical objects such as seeds harvested outside and brought into the house. All dogs should be able to relinquish possessions of any kind to their people on request. Not only is this a sign that they are willing to be deferential to their people, but also it is a behavior that could save their life some day if the object that they are so fiercely protecting can hurt them.

The point of this protocol is to teach the dog to relinquish any object to its person *on request*. If you cannot teach the dog to willingly relinquish one class of objects—and this may happen if those objects are bones—it would be far preferable to omit these from the dog's repertoire forever. Remember, the goals of this program are twofold: by decreasing the dog's anxiety if it is inappropriately protecting an object, it is hoped that the dog will learn to relax and be less anxious when presented with the object, and, finally, minimization of any danger to any person who may come in contact with the dog when it is protecting the object, regardless of whether the person thinks that such protection is rational. When dogs learn to behave appropriately, they become safer.

Before starting this tier of the behavior modification programs, all dogs should have successfully completed "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1." To begin the tasks in this protocol, select an object in which the dog has no interest—a paperweight or a rock from outdoors. The object should have *no value to the dog* and certainly should not frighten the dog. Ask the dog to sit and stay or to lie down and stay, and relax, and then place the object about 2 to 3 meters from the dog so that the dog can see the object. Reward the dog for relaxing. Instruct the dog to stay; then pick up and quickly return the object. Return to the dog and reward the dog if it relaxed and did not move. Continue to pick up and replace the object, moving it progressively closer to the dog in a gradual manner. Each time you pick up and replace the object, remember to return to the dog and reward the dog if it ignored the movement of the object and relaxed (see the following task sheets). If at any point the dog picks up the object, ask the dog to drop it. This is a command that all puppies should learn, and you can use this protocol to teach it. If the dog drops the object, tell the dog that it was good, but do not reward it with a food treat. After this, ask the dog to wait or stay for 5 to 10 seconds; if it does so, reward the dog with a food treat. If the dog does not drop the object after a second request, you can either isolate the dog or leave the room.

Dog's Task

- The dog should sit, stay, and relax when:
- The object is placed on the floor 3 meters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object
- The object is placed on the floor 2.5 meters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object
- The object is placed on the floor 2 meters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object
- The object is placed on the floor 1.5 meters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object
- The object is placed on the floor 1 meter away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object

If you leave the room you have denied the dog both your attention and control of the situation. The dog will ultimately seek you out. When it does, ask the dog to sit, request that it wait, and pursue some exercises from Tier 1. Then start with the tasks in this protocol again.

Isolating the dog may be difficult if the dog also has any aggressions toward you. Aggressions involving possession often coexist with other aggressions that may involve people. Alternatively, you can use a Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar when you work with the dog. If the dog does grab the object, you can safely interrupt the theft in the act and reinforce the dog's relaxation. If you are concerned about your ability to take an object directly from the dog, you should use a head collar for the first round of these exercises.

After the dog is able to sit quietly and relax, even if the object is removed from directly in front of it, select a different item with which to work with the dog. The next object should be one about which the dog cares slightly more. Repeat the entire protocol as listed in the following task pages. Continue to repeat all of the tasks, sequentially selecting an item that is progressively more interesting to the dog.

Finally, if your dog is able to complete the entire protocol and appear relaxed and happy when you pick up even the most valued of its items, you may wish to start "take it—drop it." This is another exercise that all puppies should learn. Start with objects in which the dogs have a mild interest (a broken squeak toy) and proceed to objects in which the dog has a keen interest (a rope toy or plush dog toy). Consider using rawhides or real bones *if and only if* your dog is not aggressive around food. It is ideal to start puppies by teaching them to relinquish rawhides, but if you begin to have problems with aggression, talk to your veterinarian. It is always safer to deny rawhides and real bones to dogs that have the potential for problem behaviors. The dogs will not be deprived if you do so.

Finally, remember all of the work that you emphasized in Tier 1 of the protocols. Use body language cues to tell whether the dog is relaxed or distressed. Distressed dogs cannot learn or focus and may shake, tremble, whine, salivate, move their eyes from side to side, pull the corners of their lips horizontally backward, and so on. Remember, for these protocols to work best, it is not sufficient that the dog is just sitting and staying. The dog must be relaxed while doing this. Dogs that can learn to enjoy the exercises will progress at the fastest rate. As for the other protocols, if at any point the dog continues to have difficulty with the tasks, divide them into smaller units and continue. If the dog works best for three 5-minute periods instead of one 15-minute period, do the former first and then work up to the latter.

Comments about response or difficulty

The object is placed on the floor 0.5 meters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object

The object is placed on the floor 0.25 meters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object

The object is placed on the floor 10 centimeters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object

The object is placed on the floor 5 centimeters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object

The object is placed on the floor 2 centimeters away from the dog; briefly retrieve and replace the object

The object is placed on the floor, touching the dog's feet; briefly retrieve and replace the object

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!)

Advanced Section (And For Puppies)

Have the dog sit and relax while you hold out an object in which the dog is interested and do the following:

Dog's Task

Put the object in the dog's mouth or, if the dog will take the object itself, offer it with the request to take it and let the dog hold it for 1 second, then repeat above

Put the object in the dog's mouth or, if the dog will take the object itself, offer it with the request to take it and let the dog hold it for 1 second, then repeat above

Put the object in the dog's mouth or, if the dog will take the object itself, offer it with the request to take it and let the dog hold it for 2 seconds, then repeat above

Put the object in the dog's mouth or, if the dog will take the object itself, offer it with the request to take it and let the dog hold it for 3 seconds, then repeat above

Put the object in the dog's mouth or, if the dog will take the object itself, offer it with the request to take it and let the dog hold it for 4 seconds, then repeat above

Put the object in the dog's mouth or, if the dog will take the object itself, offer it with the request to take it and let the dog hold it for 5 seconds, then repeat above

Repeat the previous exercises with progressively more fascinating (for the dog) objects.

Ultimately, you should be able to request that the dog take and drop virtually anything.

Antianxiety medications may help some dogs that other-

Put the object directly under the dog's nose or gently in its mouth and say, "Take it"; before the object can be fully grasped say, "Good boy (girl)!" and then say, "Drop it"; reward the dog for allowing you to take the object, although the dog never truly held it. Gradually advance to letting the dog hold the object for, at first, a very short time. Reward the dog with praise or a tiny treat when it responds to "drop it." Slowly increase the amount of time that the dog can have the object before you request that the dog drop it.

Comments about response or difficulty

wise 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-8 TIER 2: PROTOCOL FOR DESENSITIZATION AND COUNTERCONDITIONING TO NOISES AND ACTIVITIES THAT OCCUR BY THE DOOR

Some dogs that cannot be left alone become anxious whenever any activity occurs by doors. Some dogs that are fearfully aggressive or those that are protectively or territorially aggressive react whenever anyone comes to a door and rings the doorbell or knocks. Because the reaction level at the door is a key in the dog's increasing anxieties, clients often need to work separately on desensitizing and counterconditioning the dogs to noises and activities around the door. This protocol is designed to help you teach your dog to relax and to be calm in such circumstances. As with the other protocols, it is expected that you have completed "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1." You may use this program to help with the last part of Tier 1.

Place the dog in the middle of the room (see suggested layout drawing) with its side facing the door. This allows the dog to use peripheral vision but will not draw all attention to the door. It is best to have two people to practice this protocol: one person acts as the rewarder, and one person acts as the stranger. It is best at first if the stranger is a person with whom the dog is comfortable.

The goal of the protocol is to get the dog to relax when given a cue to do so, despite the fact that someone is at the door. Some people prefer that the dog be permitted to bark once or twice as a warning before being quiet. This may be possible, but for some dogs, even reacting to that limited extent may send them into a cascade of behavior that is undesirable and inappropriate. It is not sufficient that the dog is sitting or lying quietly—it must not be showing any of the physical signs of underlying physiological stress (shaking, trembling, panting, salivating, increased heart rate, averted gaze, frequent eye movements, and so on). Relaxed animals can learn, and animals that enjoy the tasks learn faster.

When the dog is sitting or lying down and is relaxed, give instructions to the stranger to begin to knock softly and briefly (see the following task list). You should review the plan with the stranger before you practice with the dog so that you two can communicate without confusion. This helps prevent anxiety in the dog. As soon as you hear or anticipate that you will hear the knock, call the dog to look at you. As soon as it looks at you, say, "Good boy (girl)!" and reward with a treat. If the dog glances quickly at the door but otherwise does not appear to be upset and either sponta-

neously returns its gaze to you or responds to a soft signal from you (pursing of your lips, clearing your throat, saying the dog's name, and so on), you can reward the dog. If the dog reacts or stares at the door, call the dog to you; farther away from the door, repeat, with the stranger knocking more softly. If this does not work and the dog continues to react, take the dog out of the room, practice some tasks from Tier 1 when the dog is calm enough to successfully do so, and start again at a softer level of knock with more distance between the dog and the door.

A Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar can help correct the dog at the point in the behavioral sequence of reacting to the door when the dog is best able to learn from the experience (when it first starts). You can also prevent the full-blown inappropriate behavior and help the dog relax while using a head collar.

Finally, if you must remove the dog from the room, you will be best served by being able to do so with a verbal command. If your dog will not respond to a verbal command to come when it is upset, you will need a head collar to kindly and gently lead the dog toward a more appropriate behavior. If you have any doubts that you can easily correct the dog with a verbal command, or if you or the stranger are concerned about personal safety, please use a head collar. If you work with the dog, it will learn to couple the verbal command with the collar direction, and you will gradually be able to work off-leash. If this never happens, it is not a disaster. Provided you are with the dog, you can use a head collar and a long-distance lead to correct inappropriate door behavior. Do not leave leads or head collars on an unsupervised dog; the dog could injure itself.

If you do not have someone to help you practice the tasks, you can still participate in this protocol. Make a tape recording of the tasks as listed with appropriate pauses between them, and start with the volume very low. As your dog's behavior improves, increase the volume. This also works well for dogs that react more to the people on the other side of the door than they do to the sounds.

The following tasks will help you teach your dog to react more appropriately at the door. Remember that you can use a baby gate to keep the dog in a room away from the door so that you do not get into a contest of wills at an entryway. If the dog is less upset under gated circumstances, you can progress more quickly with the program because the dog will not continue to learn from and reinforce its inappropriate behavior.

Dog's Task

- Dog sits and relaxes while:
- Person knocks briefly and softly
- Person knocks softly for 5 seconds
- Person knocks softly for 10 seconds
- Person knocks moderately and briefly
- Person knocks moderately for 5 seconds
- Person knocks moderately for 10 seconds
- Person knocks normally, briefly
- Person knocks normally for 5 seconds
- Person knocks normally for 10 seconds
- Person knocks loudly for 5 seconds
- Person knocks loudly for 10 seconds
- Person bangs on the door briefly
- Person bangs on the door for 5 seconds
- Person bangs on the door for 10 seconds

Comments about response or difficulty

- Person rings the doorbell briefly
- Person rings the doorbell for a normal length of time
- Person rings the doorbell for 5 seconds
- Person knocks on the door normally and turns the knob
- Person opens the door 2 centimeters
- Person opens the door 5 centimeters
- Person opens the door 10 centimeters
- Person opens the door, steps into the doorway, and then closes the door (do not enter)
- Person opens the door, steps through the doorway into the room, then exits
- Person opens the door, enters the room, and closes the door behind him or her

Once the dog can sit and stay while a familiar person can come to and through the doorway, repeat the task list with someone who is less familiar to the dog.

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-9 PROTOCOL FOR DOGS WITH PROTECTIVE AND/OR TERRITORIAL AGGRESSION

Dogs with protective or territorial aggression protect people or places regardless of whether there is actually a threat. This is an inappropriate, out-of-context response and one that is potentially dangerous to the person or other animal that the dog perceives is trespassing. A dog that was behaving appropriately would either take its cues as to the appropriateness of its behavior from its people or from the context. Dogs that make good contextual distinctions generally give some low-level threat (a bark or a growl) and then make their decision about whether the threat is real on the basis of response that they receive. This is one reason that it is foolish to bark back at or growl at a barking or growling dog: the dog correctly perceives your response as a threatening answer and then becomes more aggressive. Children are particularly tempted to behave in this in appropriate manner and should be explicitly taught not to do so.

Clients often find protective and territorial behaviors desirable in their dogs and want the dogs to protect them and their property. If there truly is a threat (an attack or a break-in), it appears that dogs treated for problem protective or territorial aggression will still react to repel the intruder. It is almost impossible to teach dogs to act in an appropriately protective manner unless they show signs of interest. Once the dog appears to be willing to protect, those traits can be enhanced through training. The problem is that appropriate protection and inappropriate protective aggression are two very different circumstances. Clients are often concerned that if they control their dog's inappropriate, out-of-context protective or territorial aggression that their dog will no longer protect them or their property if there is a threat. This is not true, and it is kinder and safer for everyone to take action to ensure that the dog learns not to react inappropriately.

Dogs can protect people or animals in their household from other people and other animals (protective aggression), or they can protect a space (crate, car, yard, room, house) from other animals or people (territorial aggression). These become problematic behaviors because the dog responds as if there is a threat when none exists. For example, when someone hugs the client in the presence of the dog, the dog threatens or bites the person hugging the client. In this example the dog exhibits the same behavior that it uses to repel an intruder who physically threatened the client.

Some dogs react inappropriately even if no one touches their person—if the client stops to talk to someone on the street the dog may start to growl. Clients often report that these dogs do not react if the client does not acknowledge the presence of the passerby, whereas other clients complain that their dog begins to react even if the dog sees another person on the street. Both behaviors are a part of a continuum of problematic behavior. In either case the person that the dog threatens can be a total stranger (e.g., a delivery person) or someone known to them, but not well (e.g., the client's cousin). Only in rare cases will the dog inappropriately protect one household member from another. This situation sometimes arises when children are involved. Dogs that are not sure whether the threat is real may protect the child against being yelled at or hit by the parent. If no physical abuse of the pet or child is, or has been, involved, this is an undesirable, exaggerated, and inappropriate response. One of the requirements that will then be factored into the treat-

ment of the dog will be to find ways to correct the child that do not put the dog in the position of threatening the individual who is correcting the child. On the other hand, if abuse has been involved, an aggressive response can be a learned survival tactic.

It is a common belief that dogs are territorial animals and that they will protect their turf (bed, crate, house, yard). Animals often protect such areas but usually do so by marking and posturing, rather than by threats and violence. The dog that responds to another dog that walks past its crate by growling, snarling, and lunging without first posturing, staring, or waiting to see if the other dog takes the bed is acting out of context—the dog perceived a threat where there was none. The dog that guards the front of its crate from children by pacing and scanning is acting inappropriately—there is no threat. The dog that is loose in the yard and snarls frantically at anyone who comes into the yard has a problem. The dog that will not let anyone enter the house, instead positioning itself by the door and then lunging and snapping at anyone who attempts to enter, is not exhibiting appropriate behavior. Some dogs will be fine with strangers off-lead but vigorously protect their people when on-lead. Some dogs are fine in the yard but become very aggressive when they are put behind a fence, which leaves no doubt as to the extent of their turf. Usually dogs that exhibit protective or territorial aggression do so because they are unsure whether there is a problem. This causes them to be anxious in any similar circumstance. Accordingly, this protocol, as for Tier 1 of the behavior modification protocols, emphasizes removing sources of the dog's anxiety.

Dogs with protective and territorial aggression can be perfectly appropriately behaved in other circumstances. If no one approaches them on the street, they can be well behaved with the family. If no one enters the yard or if they are in the house when someone enters the yard, they can be well behaved. Some dogs that defend their yards or beds are perfectly fine and nonreactive when not near those locations. Both of these aggressions can have extremely variable patterns associated with them; however, both share in common demonstration by the dog of the out-of-context, inappropriate, exaggerated, preemptive defense behaviors in the absence of a true threat.

The best improvement is seen for dogs whose people can very **discretely** identify the situations in which the dog will respond inappropriately. At first, these situations are to be totally avoided. After the dog has successfully completed Tier 1 of the behavior modification protocols, Tier 2, which focuses on teaching the dog not to react to the cues that are associated with the inappropriate aggression, can be begun. The following checklist is designed to help you control or avoid basic and common situations in which most dogs with these problems will react.

Checklist

- 1. Avoid any and all situations that may elicit the aggressive behavior. If you cannot instantly stop the inappropriate behavior by use of a verbal command, the dog should be removed from the situation. For example, if you cannot answer the door without the dog barking and growling and without having to cling to the dog's collar while it snarls and snaps, the dog cannot go to the door with you. Simply tell the person to wait a minute and place the dog in another room behind a closed door or in its crate until the person has left or is well settled into the house.

- 2. Some people want to be able to take their dog to the door expressly for protective purposes. Regardless, as your dog's behavior improves, this will be a task that it will be expected to negotiate without inappropriate reaction. If you cannot instantly abort the aggressive behavior with a verbal command, consider a head collar for all situations in which your dog might react. A Gentle Leader Promise System Canine Head Collar can allow you to interrupt the dog as it begins to react inappropriately, can close the dog's mouth, humanely, rendering the dog safer, and can help you remove the dog from the situation without an intensification of the behavior. All of these are critical for the dog's learning process. The head collar can be worn indoors so that the dog can be corrected at doors or as people within the household pass by. Do not leave head collars, or any other device on which any animal can become hung, on the dog when the dog is not being directly supervised.
- 3. Warn your neighbors that head collars are not muzzles. This means that the dog can still bite, although now you have the option of closing the dog's mouth to prevent this. Obviously, no one should tease the dog, but for clients who need for the dog to be able to protect them, this behavioral flexibility is important. Use of head collars still permits *appropriate* protective aggression. Do not make excuses for inappropriate aggression. For problem dogs, inappropriate aggression is far more common than appropriate aggression; do not let your dog manipulate you.
- 4. If the dog growls or lunges, say "No" sharply and disrupt the situation by leaving or by bringing the dog into another room. The use of a head collar can facilitate this. For the dog to learn from the correction, it must occur within the first 30 to 60 seconds of the onset of the suite of behaviors in which the aggression occurred (i.e., within the first few seconds of the aggression). If you cannot use a verbal command that reliably achieves this result alone, you need to use a lead and preferably a head collar. For dogs that may also have dominance aggression, which can cooccur with protective and territorial aggression, grabbing the dog when it reacts can put the client at risk. These dogs should be wearing head collars so that the risk can be minimized.
- 5. Dogs can be let out of a room in which they have been placed *only* under the following circumstances:
- The dog is quiet and calm
 - The dog, when released, willing and perfectly performs a few exercises from Tier 1 of the protocols, thus demonstrating willingness to defer to the clients and to take cues as to the appropriateness of its behavior from them
 - If the visitor is still present, the dog is introduced to him or her on a head collar; the visitor does *not* solicit the dog, instead letting the dog come to him or her; when the dog comes, the visitor requests that the dog sit; the dog complies, and the visitor verbally praises the dog but otherwise ignores it.
- If these are not possible, the dog stays banished.
- 6. Warn your neighbors and friends that *any* dog that is aggressive, for whatever reason, can be dangerous and that it is important that they comply with your instructions to minimize danger to the dog and to themselves. Emphasize that such compliance will help the dog improve. This is also true for dogs that are protective or territorially aggressive with other dogs. In such circumstances the other dog must also be able to respond appropriately.
- 7. Sudden arm gestures or motions can be perceived as a threat to dogs with protective aggression. Caution people to avoid them and be alert for potential problems so that you can avoid them.
- 8. If your dog continues to bark, growl, or ignore you in any circumstance and working through a series of Tier 1 tasks that the dog knows well does not help the dog relax, sequester or banish the dog to another room. Taking attention, and control for attention, from these dogs is one of the most effective and safest disciplinary actions. As soon as the dog is quiet or subdued, it can be released, but you must do this as for number 5, above.
- 9. If your dog exhibits territorial aggression only when you are in the house, make sure that the dog is placed behind a secure door when any repair person comes. This should also hold true for a friend's visit if you cannot enforce numbers 5 through 7, above.
- 10. If your dog exhibits territorial aggression only when you are not present, never leave this dog in a situation where it can have or obtain access to delivery people, repair persons, and so on.
- 11. No dog with territorial aggression should ever be left alone, loose outside. The dog knows what it considers its turf; humans do not.
- 12. If your dog has protective aggression, it should not be put in the situation where it is with you in a fenced yard; someone that they may perceive as a threat can enter.
- 13. Never leave a dog with territorial aggression behind a fence, electric or otherwise. The fence defines their boundaries absolutely and will render the dog more confident and dangerous. Remember, visitors cannot see an electric fence and so are deprived of any warning. Problem dogs forfeit their freedom in these contexts. There is no room for negotiation.
- 14. If you decide to build a pen or run for your dog, make sure that it is not near any sidewalks, driveways, service areas (propane tanks), doorways, or any other areas to which strangers might need or have access. Not only does the logic in number 13 above hold here, but the dog's behavior will worsen by exposure to what the dog perceives to be threatening circumstances. Furthermore, the dog could pose a risk to others.
- 15. If your dog protects its crate, bed, or eating area, do not facilitate this. Selectively exclude the dog from areas by using baby gates, or make the exact location of the protected area (e.g., the dining location) unpredictable. If your dog decides to protect these areas from another animal in the house, do not leave them alone unsupervised. Always make sure that they are separated behind secured doors when not supervised, *and* place the dog that is being territorial in a place that is a less desirable area that is not as defensible or worthy of defense (e.g., a spare room, rather than your bedroom). The animal that is behaving appropriately should always have free reign and be able to move, unimpeded, throughout the rest of the house. You may have to move the area in which you keep

the aggressive animal frequently so that the animal does not begin to feel that it is *its* area.

- 16. Get a "Dog on Premises" sign. This is not an admission of a dangerous dog; it is a civically responsible reminder that a dog is on the property. Anyone who has a dog should have such a sign.
- 17. If you have a dog that you know is protective, territorially aggressive, or both and small children come to visit, banish the dog, regardless. Children can be unpredictable and may inadvertently provoke an aggressive dog. Do not talk yourself into taking the chance.
- 18. Do not use any form of physical punishment.
- 19. Remember that by correcting your dog's problem aggressions you will not remove any appropriate protective behaviors.
- 20. Consistently practice and enforce "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Program Tier 1." When you and your dog have successfully completed Tier 1, you will be ready to move on to the relevant components of "Tier 2: Protocol for Desensitizing and Counterconditioning a Dog (or Cat) From Approaches From Strangers" and "Protocol for Desensitizing and Counterconditioning to Noises and Activities that Occur by the Door."

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-10 PROTOCOL FOR DOGS WITH INTERDOG AGGRESSION

Interdog aggression can be highly variable, but it generally appears between 1 and 3 years of age and is more common between dogs of the same sex. This makes sense because interdog aggression generally focuses on issues of social status and control, which become apparent at social maturity (approximately 18 to 36 months of age in dogs). Interdog aggression can occur between dogs that are either unknown or known to each other. In the latter case it can be initiated by a young dog that is becoming socially mature or by the older dog that perceives the changing status of the younger dog.

Very few dogs are aggressive to other dogs because they never learned how to interact with them when they were young. Dogs focus primarily on the parent(s) and litter mates until they are 5 to 8 weeks of age, when they become very receptive to interaction with people. Puppies form hierarchies within the litter, and these social orders are maintained both by some agonistic behavior (posturing, vocalizing, and snapping) and by active and passive deference by the other pups (rolling on the back and urinating or looking away). The few studies of this issue indicate that these puppyhood hierarchies appear to have no association with the relative status of the animals when they reach social maturity. Hence they should not be associated with any interdog aggressions that are related to social status. It is conceivable (but probably rare) that some dogs that never see other dogs when they are puppies might have some problems relating to other dogs; however, these problems are often related to fear (see "Protocol for Treating Fearful Behavior in Cats and Dogs" and "Protocol for Dogs With Fearful Aggression"). The majority of dogs that have problems with interdog aggression have a problem with relative social status and have had no untoward experiences as puppies.

Interdog aggression is not associated with sexual maturity (approximately 6 to 9 months of age), although there is a role for testosterone in interdog aggression. Testosterone, the male hormone that is greatly decreased by castration (the removal of the testicles), stimulates dogs to roam and mark with urine. These two behaviors take dogs into the path of other dogs, increasing the chances for a conflict about status or rank between two dogs that do not live in the same household. Testosterone also facilitates fighting: intact (non-castrated) male dogs react quickly, react to a higher level overall, and take longer to calm down. Castration greatly decreases roaming, urine marking, and fighting between dogs and appears effective in diminishing all of these behaviors in about 60% of all dogs with such problems. It is important to remember that all behaviors have learned components. The fact that a hormone facilitates the development of a form of aggression does not mean that diminishing that hormone will simply "fix" the problem. If a dog has exhibited a series of behaviors for a long time (e.g., years), that dog has learned about the behavioral patterns and his response. Accordingly, simply removing the hormones that help that response does nothing about the learned component. That is a role for behavioral modification.

The situation with intact (nonspayed) female dogs is not so simple. Hormonal cycling does not appear to facilitate aggression between female dogs in the same sense that testosterone facilitates aggression between male dogs; however, clients often report that many intact bitches experience "mood" changes before and during estrus (heat). Many bitches also experience changes in appetite and activity lev-

els during or preceding their heat cycles. If there were some mild status-related problems between the female dogs in the household, they might be exaggerated at such times. If there is an intact male dog in the house, he might become highly motivated to pursue one of the female dogs and further disrupt the social order. There are few in-depth studies of any association between female hormones and aggression, but available studies indicate that female hormones do not play a large role in interdog aggression.

Both male and female dogs are healthier if they are neutered. Not only do fewer infectious and cancerous problems related to the reproductive tract develop, but females, if spayed early, have a lower risk of mammary cancer. Furthermore, roaming can be fatal to a dog. No dog is a match for a car, and, in many areas, dogs are driven off private property by guns. Most communities and townships have "dog at large" ordinances that prohibit free-ranging, wandering dogs. This is safer for the dog and for people.

Dogs that react to unknown dogs generally do so for two reasons: they are either afraid or they perceive, with or without cause, that the other dog represents a social or hierarchical threat. Dogs that fear other dogs can be spontaneously afraid of them or be afraid because they have been attacked. These problems are addressed in the "Protocol for Treating Fearful Behavior in Cats and Dogs" and "Protocol for Dogs With Fearful Aggression."

Dogs that react as if there is a challenge about social status when there is none are reacting inappropriately and out of context. If there is a challenge (staring, hackling up, placing a paw on shoulders, growling, snarling, snapping) of any kind, a reaction might be appropriate, but it is important to remember that, as for people, rules apply to many normal social behaviors in dogs. If the approaching dog just stares at your dog and your dog lunges for the other dog's throat, refusing to let go even when the other dog is whimpering and has rolled over, your dog is not behaving appropriately.

Most interdog aggression occurs between housemates, and it occurs more commonly between same-sex housemates. It is not unusual for two dogs to have lived together harmoniously for 2 years before problems occur. These problems are not related to "inappropriate or incomplete early socialization" or because someone did something to the dogs. The development of these problems reflects the intrinsic change that all social animals experience when they become socially mature. The more common scenario for interdog aggression within a household involves the younger dog that was fine as a puppy but, now that it is becoming socially mature, challenges the older dog. Challenges to the older dog can include blocking access to a bed or crate; lying on the other dog on a couch; stealing the other dog's biscuits, rawhides, or toys; blocking the other dog's access to food, shoving past the other to get out or in a door or car first, and posturing in a ritualized display where the challenger approaches the other dog's shoulders in a perpendicular manner.

Challenges can involve staring, vocalizing, or outright aggression. Challenges may start with staring and escalate to aggression. Regardless, it is important to treat the problem as soon as it becomes apparent. The longer that it is allowed to persist, the worse the dogs' behavior will become.

A similar scenario can occur even if the younger dog is not challenging the older animal. In such cases the older dog begins to sense the change in the younger dog and spontaneously starts to react. Alternatively, the younger dog may try out some of the behaviors that develop with age (pushing

on another dog) and not be the least bit aggressive, but the older dog perceives the younger dog as a serious problem and becomes aggressive.

In general, the dog that is challenged responds in one of three ways: (1) it acts absolutely deferential and shows the other dog that it is not interested in holding a higher rank (rolling on its back and urinating, looking away, waiting for the other dog to be first at everything), (2) the dog fights back and wins or loses and that outcome is accepted by both dogs, or (3) both dogs jockey for status and each is unwilling to concede status to the other. In the last situation the aggression continues and may be prolonged, confusing, and dangerous. In the second situation the situation resolves, but the process of resolution is still potentially dangerous. Most behavior modification recommended for dogs with interdog aggression is derived from the first situation.

Much has been written about ranking dogs numerically and determining the "alpha" dog. Such paradigms usually fail in profound cases of interdog aggression because the situation is not that simple. Interdog aggression is associated with status relationships between dogs. These relationships are not absolute. They change with age and health status. The manifestations of the relationships can be affected by the people who are present and by how those people interact with the animals. Some relationships apply only to feeding and sleeping orders. Because dog hierarchies, like those of people, are not linear, the amount of aggression exhibited may depend on which dogs were where and when they were there. A dog that challenges one dog may not care about another dog in the household that, to all outward appearances, seems to act the same and be the same age and sex. Chances are they are not acting identically, and it is in the subtleties that the problems with the relationship occur.

Treatment of interdog aggression focuses on setting and maintaining a new social order. In general, reinforcement is given to the dog that is best able to maintain social status when this is contested in a fight. (Generally, but not always, the younger, the larger, and the more physically fit the dog is the more confident it is). Preferential treatment or attention reinforces that dog as the higher ranking dog. In some households in which the problem dog (C) attacks one dog (A) but mildly pushes around another dog (B), the dogs might respond to all being reinforced in a linear manner (A over B and C, B over C). How this is best done warrants some discussion, but two important cautions must be issued.

First, never physically punish these dogs. Doing so only raises their level of distress, and they may feel that they have to fight you. This reaction could manifest itself as fear, pain, or redirected aggression. None of these choices is good, and you could make a bad situation worse.

Second, if possible, never reach between two fighting dogs. Most people have good intentions and want to separate fighting dogs to prevent injury to them. If you place your body parts between the dogs, the dogs might accidentally mistake you for the other dog and injure you. When this happens, the dogs usually withdraw, but the damage is already done. Instead, if you know your dogs have a problem, watch them closely whenever they are together and keep cardboard, a broom, a bucket of water, a hose, or a blanket handy. These are all "remote-control" items that can be used to separate the dogs safely. In general, once the dogs are apart, they start to calm down and you can remove the aggressor. Removing the victim if the aggressor is unrestrained may enhance the helplessness of the victim to the aggressor. If no small children, high-strung people, or ner-

vous animals are in the house, a loud noise such as that generated by a foghorn can also help separate the animals. Remember that any animal that is injured is in pain and is frightened. These animals can bite without being malicious. Avoid this by transporting them by means of blankets and loose muzzles.

Checklist

- 1. First, separate all dogs involved in the interdog aggression at all times when unsupervised. This will not be difficult for interdog aggression involving dogs on the street but can be difficult within a household. If the aggressor can be identified, that dog should be confined to the less desirable room (a spare bedroom, rather than your bedroom; a pen in the heated, well-lit basement, rather than the kitchen where the dogs are fed). All other dogs should have free range. If more than one dog is actively problematic, the problem dogs should be confined and the nonproblem dogs can be left loose. If every dog is a problem, they should all be kept in crates where they cannot see each other or threaten each other.

If your dog reacts only to other dogs on the street, avoid them until you have completed "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Program Tier 1" and can begin "Tier 2: Protocol for Desensitizing and Counterconditioning a Dog (or Cat) From Approaches From Strangers." Always walk your dog on a head collar. At the first sign of any inappropriate behavior, ask the dog to sit and relax. Close the dog's mouth with the head collar. If the dog still reacts, turn it around immediately and ask it to sit and relax. If the dog still reacts, remove the dog from the situation as quickly as possible. Use the head collar to close the dog's mouth and lead it to a place where it can sit and relax.

- 2. Bell the dogs with different sounding bells. If they are loose you must be willing to supervise them. The bell will signal you when the aggressor is approaching and when the problem dogs are close together. The dogs can approach each other if and only if you are confident that you can control them from a long distance. If not, you have three choices:
 - a. Crate one or both dogs.
 - b. Keep one dog behind a baby gate.
 - c. Use harnesses or head collars on each dog and restrain them so that they cannot interact with each other.
- 3. Choose an order in which to reinforce the dogs. Hints about what will be most successful can be derived from the dogs' behaviors, as follows:
 - a. For example, you have two dogs and the younger one has begun to passively challenge the older dog; the older dog is snarling and most of the time the younger backs off. The older dog is larger and stronger than the younger dog, just as healthy, and not much older. Reinforce the older dog over the younger dog.
 - b. The older dog perceives a threat from the younger dog, but the younger dog is not actively challenging the older one. The older dog is weaker than the younger dog, and, although the younger dog is sweet, it is huge. Reinforce the younger dog.
 - c. The younger dog is actively challenging the older dog and is getting very aggressive. The older dog is fighting back and the younger one is meeting the

challenge. The older animal is arthritic and weaker, but the dogs are fairly evenly matched in size. It will break your heart, but reinforce the younger dog.

- d. One of the dogs perceives a challenge, and the other one does not seem to be bothered. The challenger is becoming more violent, but the recipient continues to actively and passively defer. The last time the challenged dog rolled over on its back and the other moved in for the kill. *Caution:* this is the problem scenario. Reinforce the challenged (deferential) dog. This may be very difficult to execute successfully, but if you cannot give this dog some status (regardless of whether it's the younger or older dog), it will be a terrific victim. Remember, these aggressions are inappropriate and out of context. *Do not assume that the dogs will not injure each other.* They can seriously disable or kill each other in such circumstances. If the dog that is deferential cannot hold its status, you must either keep the dogs continuously separated or find another home for one of the dogs. If you decide to place the challenger, that dog can go only to a home where it will be the only dog.

Reinforcing the chosen dog has active and passive components. First, separate them as discussed previously. Second, enforce higher status by feeding one dog first, letting it outside before the other dog, giving it a treat or toy first, walking it first, playing with it first, grooming it first, and so on. You can also have the dog sleep in a crate or on a bed in your room or on your bed (if you like this and the dog never growls at you while you are sleeping), whereas the other dog is banished to a room or crate outside your room. Each dog needs daily individual attention. The dog that is being reinforced should always get the attention first in the presence

of the other dog if this can be done quietly. If necessary, restrain the other dog with a harness. If you are walking the dogs as a group, make sure that the dog that is "out in front" is the dog that you are trying to reinforce.

- 4. Fit all dogs with Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collars or a harness, and gradually reintroduce them to each other when there is no attention being given. For example, watch television while they both sit quietly, secured at a distance where they can see each other but cannot lunge and connect. If the problem dog stares at the dog you are trying to reinforce, squirt it with a water pistol or a compressed air canister. If the dog that you are reinforcing stares at the other, ignore it if the other dog does not growl. If the other dog growls, use the air canister or water pistol. If the aggression intensifies, remove that dog and banish it. If the dog that you are reinforcing stares at the other dog and the other dog looks away, reward them both with food treats—that is exactly the behavior you are trying to reinforce.
- 5. Make sure that you have followed "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Program Tier 1." The next phase focuses on desensitizing the dogs to each other. This is true whether your dog reacts to dogs within the household or to strange dogs on the street (see "Tier 2: Protocol for Desensitizing and Counterconditioning a Dog (or Cat) From Approaches From Strangers" and "Protocol for Introducing a New Baby and a Pet" [the principles are the same].

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-11 PROTOCOL FOR DOGS WITH DOMINANCE AGGRESSION

The most common behavioral problem with dogs that are aggressive is dominance aggression. Any dog that is aggressive for any reason can be potentially dangerous to humans and to other dogs, but dogs with dominance aggression can be particularly dangerous because their problem is rooted in a struggle with people over control.

Much has been written about dogs' perception of people as part of their pack. This simplifies the situation. It is more likely that dogs and humans are able to live successfully together in all the situations that they do because dog and human social systems are so similar. Dogs live in extended family groups, have extended parental care, and use extensive vocal and nonvocal communication. More important, dogs have social systems that are based on deference, not on physical violence and control.

Many people envision dogs as constantly fighting for control and status. In fact, every study of wolf and wild dog behavior has indicated just the opposite: *aggression and violence are the exceptions*. The key to the domestication of pet dogs and to humans' working and service relationships with them is based in this social similarity: both social systems are maintained by deference structures and extensive signaling systems that communicate deferential and other behaviors. This means that there is a hierarchy and that some animals in both systems are higher ranking and others are lower ranking, but this hierarchy is relative, not absolute. Status can be affected by the relative age and sex composition of the social group and by performance or skills. Because dogs share so much in common with people regarding social structure, they also share many signals that we can recognize. Most people are able to recognize the message conveyed by dog signals, but many people have trouble with cat signals. Cats are not derived from animals that share our social systems, and we have not selected them to act in the same capacities as we have selected dogs. Canine signals are recognized because of convergent social systems. Unfortunately, this also presents a problem.

The same type of signal can be given in a context in which we, as humans, would recognize the signal to mean one thing and the dogs would recognize it to mean another. For example, most people state that they think that their dogs are giving them a "hug" when the dog places its paws on the person's shoulders. More often than not, this is not a hug, but rather a challenge. In communication between dogs, pressing on another using the front feet is an unambiguous challenge. Dogs do not "hug" in the same context as do humans. In fact, many humans have been squeezed by others under the guise of a hug and correctly recognized the gesture as a threat. This is the importance of *context*.

The issue of mimicry further complicates the interpretation of situations involving "hugs" or "smiling." People can teach their dogs to hug on command or unintentionally teach them to do this by rewarding with attention what the people perceive as loving behavior. Another example of mimicry occurs when clients say that the dog "smiles" at them when they play. First, dogs do not have the same facial musculature as people (that is why they do not have as many facial expressions) and do not technically "smile" in the same sense as humans. We all know what we mean when we see a very happy dog with mouth open and mouth pulled back, but it would not be correct to attribute to that gesture all of the interpretations humans use when they talk about "smiling." In some human cultures smiling is a threat. Sec-

ond, in interactions between dogs the "smile" is not seen. However, dogs are great mimics and can learn to be rewarded with love and praise for a facial expression that the human finds pleasing.

The preceding discussion is very important in treating dominantly aggressive dogs because most people do not recognize the majority of behaviors that are correlated with dominance aggression as problematic. *These dogs are focused on control*; to help them it is imperative for the client to recognize and abort even subtle behaviors associated with dominance aggression. Dominantly aggressive dogs routinely dislike being pushed from a sofa or a bed, will act aggressively when a human stares at them, dislike having their shoulders or back pushed on, may react aggressively when someone reaches over their head (even if this is only to put on a leash), may become aggressive when corrected verbally or with a leash, and intensify their aggression if physically punished.

Many such dogs are quite subtle and cause clients to redirect their activities. These dogs will lie in front of doors or furniture so that the person has to avoid those areas and may lean against or have a paw resting on the client at every opportunity. Clients often ask how they can distinguish these behaviors from those that are merely pushy or attention seeking. Clients can learn to carefully test and determine whether the response is appropriate in the specific context. If the dog leans against you simply to get attention, you should be able to physically move the dog without the dog becoming aggressive. This may be too risky a test for some dogs that are thought to be dominantly aggressive. Clients can learn to look for more subtle cues. Dogs that lean on you to be close or for attention do not stiffen, open their eyes, and then move so that they are again touching or pressing on you—most dominantly aggressive dogs do. Dogs that are seeking closeness usually respond to verbal cues to get off or down and then use solicitous behavior (turning their head on their side, rolling over, whining, wagging their tail, putting their ears loosely back, and so on). Dogs with dominance aggression may "talk back," become stiffer, or become aggressive. Caution is urged.

Not all household members may be equally victimized by dominantly aggressive dogs. Young children are often perceived as a threat by some dogs because the children are at the same eye level as the dog and their staring is perceived by the dog as a threat. The more compliant person in the household may be victimized more frequently than the person who is firm with the dog because the dog is sure of its position relative to the person who sets rules but is only sufficiently confident to push around someone who is not confident. Conversely, some dominantly aggressive dogs know that they can push compliant people and thus do not challenge them. Instead they challenge the person who is more forceful. Dominance aggression is a highly variable condition. Any dog that is aggressive for any reason can be potentially dangerous. Every year dogs kill people. The first rule in treating aggressive dogs must be to take all precautions to ensure people's safety. These same precautions will also keep the dog safe.

Before discussing specific instructions pertaining to dominantly aggressive dogs, it is necessary to address one final area of confusion. Many people confuse dominance with dominance aggression. A dog can be dominant without being dominantly aggressive. Dominant dogs can be pushy, can talk back, can snort at people, but are never aggressive in the listed contexts. They are pushy. There is no evidence that

pushy puppies will become the dominant dogs in a household grouping of dogs, and there is no evidence that pushy dogs become dominantly aggressive. By definition, dominance aggression is a manifestation of inappropriate, out-of-context responses to specific situations related to control. Pushiness or dominance is a personality style. In fact, many people prefer pushy or dominant dogs because they work well in obedience situations and because some people believe that these dogs are "personality plus." Regardless, they should never be inappropriately aggressive.

Finally, dominance aggression usually develops at social maturity. This generally occurs between 18 and 36 months of age in dogs, although it can occur later or earlier and still be normal. This explains why your dog may be perfectly normal as a puppy and then at about 2 years of age seem to suddenly change. Although the majority of dominantly aggressive dogs are male, this condition is not controlled by hormones, although the presence of testosterone may exacerbate the aggression. The fact that dominance aggression occurs at social maturity is another hint that clients did not "cause" the problem. Some female puppies that exhibit true dominance aggression are very young (8 to 24 weeks); these dogs may have been exposed to androgen in utero. Although they represent an exception to the social maturity rule, these dogs still respond to behavior modification.

Finally, recent evidence indicates that many dogs exhibit dominance aggression because they are unsure of their role in the social hierarchy. Aggression in such situations may have its roots in anxiety. It is critical that the treatment of the aggression focuses on decreasing anxiety. A fair, enforceable rule structure will accomplish this without resorting to physical violence or attempting to be solicitous and will reassure the dog.

The key to treating all aggressive dogs, especially dominantly aggressive dogs, is to avoid all the circumstances in which the dog might be provoked to react inappropriately. This means that you must be a good observer of your dog. If your dog growls whenever you stare at it, do not stare. This instruction is in conflict with instructions commonly found in training manuals, but consider the following logic. You are asking the dog to respond to your challenge (the stare) with a challenge. An anxious dog will only become more anxious if you pursue the threat. The behavior here is truly abnormal: the dog *cannot* back down from a threat. If you do so, you put yourself at risk for intensification of your dog's aggression. You are not giving in to the dog; you are avoiding a circumstance in which the dog might manipulate you and in which its anxiety can only intensify. As you progress through the protocols and Tiers 1 and 2 of the behavior modification programs, you will gradually teach the dog that it must defer to you to get any attention. These rules also lessen the dog's anxiety. Later you will desensitize the dog to situations in which it responds inappropriately. You cannot do all of this simultaneously. Remember, every time a dog has an inappropriate response, three things happen:

1. The dog learns from it and learns your weaknesses and fears (dogs read nonverbal communication well, probably better than you do).
2. You reinforce the inappropriate behavior simply because it continues to happen.
3. The dog backslides because it is upset and made more anxious by an aggressive event. Most dogs act as if they find the circumstance of their exhibition of aggression traumatic; they realize that something untoward hap-

pened but cannot escape it. Remember, these dogs do not disobey simply to disobey you; they are behaving this way because they are abnormal and need help.

The safest strategy in dealing with any aggressive dog, particularly one that is dominantly aggressive, is to give the dog attention only when it defers to you (see "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program"). This simple rule is generalizable to every situation in which the dog can ever find itself and will help enforce the types of behavior that not only help the dog, but also that you desire.

Checklist

- 1. Do not reach for the dog or the dog's collar or pull its legs. First, have the dog sit and stay, then you can push a leash or preferably a Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar on the dog. All head collars allow you to control the direction of the dog's body and more safely control the dog. The Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar allows you to close the dog's mouth if it becomes aggressive. This keeps you safe and stops the dog from intensifying the aggression when the dog can best learn from it. If you cannot reach over the dog without eliciting an aggressive event, use a lasso-type leash to walk the dog.
- 2. Do not disturb the dog while it is resting, sleeping, or lying in front of a door or on the sofa or bed. Do not walk over the dog. Always ask the dog to come to you and then to sit and stay. Make sure that you do not shove the dog from a sofa or bed or push it away if it paws at you or pushes on you. Always give the dog warning of your intentions and then ask the dog to come and sit and stay for any attention.
- 3. If the dog scratches at or jumps on you or others, do not push or shove the dog down. Instead, turn away, fold your arms, and slough the dog off.
- 4. If necessary, walk the dog only on a head collar. Warn your neighbors that it is not a muzzle but that the dog is undergoing some behavior modification. Ask them to help you help the dog.
- 5. Do not play aggressively with the dog (slapping at it or wrestling). Play *only* with toys. You can greet the dog with a soft sock toy and play tug *only if* you start the game with the dog sitting, you ask the dog to take the toy, the dog takes the toy only on command, the dog relinquishes the toy when requested, and . . . you always win the game. If you cannot do all of these facets exactly, do not play tug with the dog—you are setting it up to fail.
- 6. Do not let the dog sleep on your bed. You may not even be able to let the dog sleep in your bedroom. This minimizes the potential for an inadvertent threat when you are sleepy and least able to anticipate problem behavior. The key is to set the dog up to succeed not to fail.
- 7. Feeding time may be a reactive situation. Many dogs with food-related aggression also have dominance aggression. If necessary, feed the animal in a separate room with the door closed to avoid any aggressive incidents. If you have small children you should be able to lock the door. If you give the dog table scraps, all scraps should be placed in the dog's dish. The dog should not be allowed to beg at the table and must sit and wait at all times before approaching its dish. Do

- not feed the dog from the table if it becomes aggressive around food because this creates a potentially explosive and difficult-to-control situation.
- 8. *Do not physically punish the dog. No exceptions.* You will always lose because the dog will become more anxious or aggressive. If the dog growls or lunges, tell the dog "no" and disrupt the situation. You can do this by asking the dog to come into another room and sit or by leaving the dog. If the dog is wearing a head collar, pull the collar shut and say, "no," then quickly lead the dog away from the inciting event. If it is necessary to remove the dog from the room or from a situation, wait for the dog to become calm, then practice a few of the sitting and staying exercises so that it realizes it must act appropriately to get "good" attention. Remember, try to avoid any aggressive events.
 - 9. Warn your friends and neighbors that any aggressive dog can be potentially dangerous and that they must comply with your instructions to minimize danger to the dog and to themselves. If needed, when people visit have the dog in another room and introduce it only on the Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar and only when everything has become quiet. If you cannot do this, the dog may not mingle.
 - 10. If the dog continues to bark, growl, or ignore you in any circumstances and returning to an exercise or task that the dog knows well still does not work, abandon the dog or sequester it in another room. Banishment is the most potent form of correction that you can use because it removes the dog's ability to control any part of the situation. These dogs are usually anxious and rely on the constant interaction and manipulation to reassure themselves. Removing that option and replacing it with a consistent rule structure that helps the animal relax can be the first step to teaching a more appropriate behavior.
 - 11. Once the dog is controlled with the two tiers of the behavior modification protocols and the techniques discussed previously, it is important to continue to reinforce the appropriate behavior in the dog for the rest of its life. Lapses invariably result in regression. This is because these dogs need reassurance. Aggression is not cured, but it can be controlled. Dominantly aggressive dogs are not normal, but they can learn to behave normally.
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-12 PROTOCOL FOR TREATING AND PREVENTING ATTENTION-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

Many dogs and cats are very attached to their people and often solicit attention from them. The manner in which they do so can affect the manner in which the people interact with them. Pets that receive little attention from clients, those that are particularly needy for attention, or those that may never have had any guidelines set about acceptable behavior may resort to extremes to get attention.

Dogs may jump on their people, constantly nudge them, pull at their clothing, nip at them, or bark at them. Cats may scratch people, paw at them, pull their clothing, howl, pounce, or stroll up and down their person's body when that person is asleep. Sometimes pets become destructive or eliminate in inappropriate places. Both cats and dogs can learn to steal objects or knock them from forbidden surfaces if this gets them attention. Many cats scratch furniture because they know that it will result in someone chasing them.

It is important to remember that if an animal is severely needy of attention, for whatever reason, it will get that attention by any means possible. For an animal that craves attention, even negative attention is better than none. There is a parallel with children: if a kick is the only attention a young child receives, he or she will return for that kick. It is important that pets do not learn that misbehavior is the best way to satisfy their need for attention. This is particularly true for the pets that are overly anxious. These animals are not just misbehaving—they are abnormal, and negative attention can worsen their behavior. Many aggressive dogs are anxious.

The biggest obstacle in treating this mild but annoying behavioral problem is not the pet—it is our own tendency to automatically reach out and touch any animal that brushes against us. We are more likely to do this especially if our defenses are down—when we are reading a newspaper, napping, or watching television. Cats and dogs know this and take advantage of it. If the problem is bad enough to be annoying, people must be vigilant if they are to correct it.

The mode for the treatment of attention-seeking behavior is the same as for prevention. Although most attention-seeking behaviors are not dangerous, like aggression, they are annoying, and annoying behaviors prompt complaints. Annoying behaviors cause people to take their pets to shelters. It is critical to control such behaviors. Fortunately, this is not difficult.

First, people should establish a regular schedule of interaction. *Some degree of predictability is particularly important for anxious animals.* The person should focus on the pet at a regular time for at least 15 minutes twice a day. Scheduling this interaction makes it easier to do and allows both the person and the pet to look forward to it. During this time the pet could be taught obedience exercises (cats learn to fetch quite well for a food treat) or tricks (the American Humane Society has a videotape on this subject) or could be walked or encouraged to participate in aerobic exercise. The latter could be good for both the client and the pet. Some people who have treadmills can teach their larger dogs to use them. For people and pets with more sedentary style, the attention can involve grooming, massage, or petting and talking. Behavior modification exercises designed to teach a pet to sit, stay, and relax can help. It is important to tailor the type of interaction to both the person's and the pet's needs. Very young puppies and kittens have a huge requirement for

aerobic, interactive play. A walk will not meet this need, but throwing a ball or frisbee might. The exuberance of youth will turn into obnoxious attention-seeking behavior if the dog's or cat's needs are not met. Structured time for play and attention provides an outlet for the pet but also ensures that the person does not feel guilty when he or she wants some quiet, non-pet time. Play provides an opportunity to strengthen the pet-person bond. That strengthened bond, coupled with an improved understanding of the pet's needs and behaviors, will make the person more patient with the pet and more receptive to its needs. All of these should decrease the pet's need to solicit attention through inappropriate or undesirable behaviors.

Whenever the person and pet are not interacting during the scheduled times, some mechanism must be used to reinforce the pet's good behavior and discourage its undesirable behavior. If the cat or dog demands attention by using one of the behaviors described previously, the person should ignore the pet. If the pet backs off or sits down and awaits the person's attentions, the pet should be commended and petted or caressed. If the person wants to then interact extensively with the pet, that's fine; but the point is that the person should be allowed to say no without being mauled or bothered.

Regardless, do not push the pet down. If the pet does not automatically back off, slough the animal off (stand up or back up and let them fall off) and say, "No! Down." As soon as the dog backs off, have the dog sit (cats can be taught this, too, but people generally do not seem to be as interested in training cats) and say, "Good dog (cat)!" If the dog acts like a jack-in-the-box and comes back jumping, move further away and refuse to interact until the dog sits. Then repeat the reward. If the person is consistent, the pet will eventually learn. It is important that the person *not* push the pet down or shove it away using his or her feet. Dogs, especially, will interpret this as play and, rather than being corrected, will interpret the correction as fun.

Cats are very adept at getting people to play with them using their feet; every time the person moves his or her foot, the cat plays back by grabbing him or her again. It is important to stand still to dissuade the cat. If the cat persists, startle it. Use the minimum amount of startle necessary to get the animal to stop the behavior. Remember, the object is not to cause a fear or anxiety disorder. Once the cat stops the undesirable behavior, redirect its activity to a toy. Cats often nibble on their people for attention either when they are sitting in the person's lap or when the person is asleep. Any cat that does this should be unceremoniously dumped from the lap or bounced from the bed by moving the bedcovers. It is important that the cat not be able to misinterpret the person's response as play.

If these measures do not correct the behavior, it is time to intensify your response. Get an air canister (the pressurized air used to clean computers and cameras), a foghorn, or a battery-operated water pistol. Use a holster and keep the behavior modification device of choice handy. If more than one person is being victimized, everyone needs to be so equipped. As soon as the cat or dog even looks like it might push on you or swat at you, startle the animal with the air canister or the water pistol. The earlier in the sequence of the attention-seeking behaviors that interruption occurs, the better the response.

If you need to be reminded to pay close attention to the pet, sew a bell to its collar. The point of any of these devices is to startle the animal sufficiently so that it aborts the be-

havior and leaves. As soon as you see the animal again, ask it to do a more appropriate behavior and reward it.

If the pet becomes aggressive when you ask it to perform a deferential behavior (e.g., sitting), more severe problems than attention-seeking behavior exist and you should get help in dealing with them.

If the pet still persists and is not aggressive, consider banishing the animal to another, neutral room. You can effectively banish aggressive pets by removing yourself to a place they cannot go. Remember, these pets are desperate for attention, and the worst punishment that they can receive is to be deprived of the potential to get attention. Do not cuddle them or verbally reassure them that you are not a bad person while you are doing this; this only either reinforces the undesirable behavior or sends mixed signals. Do not leave them in isolation. Give them the chance to demonstrate that they have corrected the behavior. When they are good, let them out and ask them to do a more appropriate behavior (sitting or waiting for grooming) and then reward them. Remember not to let the animal out until it has stopped any inappropriate attention-seeking behaviors, including meowing and barking.

The final step is the easiest and most frequently ignored: reward the pet when it is calm. People tend to ignore these pets when they are sleeping or being good because they are so used to them being pests and do not want to disturb them. This is unfortunate because this is the perfect time to talk calmly to the pet and, if the animal is stretched out, to rub its belly or gently massage it. The pet is now doing exactly what you wish it would do more often—encourage it! Tell the animal it is terrific and give it a food treat.

Finally, for dogs, this type of appropriate behavior can be reinforced daily by requiring that the dog briefly defer to you by sitting and staying for anything it may want. This includes love, grooming, eating, going out, playing, having a leash put on, being petted, or even having a wound examined. This is an excellent start to getting a dog to take all the cues as to the appropriateness of its behavior from you. All dogs should learn this, and any dog older than 6 weeks of age can learn it quickly. Make sure that as soon as the dog's bottom does hit the ground, you tell it that it is wonderful.

CHECKLIST

- 1. Regular interaction schedule:
15 minutes in the morning
15 minutes in the evening
- 2. Correct with saying "no" and sloughing off. Redirect activity to more appropriate objects (toys).
- 3. Do not push down.
- 4. If the behavior persists, use a battery-operated water pistol, a foghorn, or an air canister. Use these judiciously and do not use a foghorn if any animal in the house is afraid of noises, if there is a young baby, or if your neighbors would be disturbed.
- 5. If the behavior still persists—banish the dog. Release and reinforce the good behavior with a command and reward the dog when it is quiet.
- 6. Reward the dog whenever it is quiet and calm.
- 7. For dogs, reinforce at all times that the dog must sit and stay for anything it wants.

B-13 PROTOCOL FOR BASIC MANNERS TRAINING AND HOUSEBREAKING FOR NEW DOGS AND PUPPIES

The following steps are designed to help you begin training and housebreaking any dog. They are divided into two sections: puppies and older dogs.

Puppies

Puppies become adept at interacting with other dogs between the ages of 4 and 8+ weeks and with people between the ages of 5 and 10 weeks. They learn to explore new surroundings between 5 and 16 weeks, and if they are not exposed to these by about 10 weeks of age they can become neophobic (fearful of the unfamiliar). This means that dogs that miss these "socialization" or sensitive interaction periods do not necessarily develop problems associated with that lack of experience, but they may be more at risk for such problems. The following recommendations are designed to minimize risk. Accordingly, in the first 2 months that you have the puppy, you should make sure that the pup interacts with other dogs and people of all ages and sexes, experiences cars and traffic noises, meets other animals it lives with such as farm animals, and gets accustomed to environments in which the adult dog is expected, by you, to function. If you intend to show the dog, take the pup to shows early, even before it is old enough to be entered.

The best time to start training a dog to eliminate in a desired location is when the puppy is between 7½ and 8½ weeks of age. This is when the puppy is best able to start to choose a preferred substrate and to act on that choice. This does not mean that the puppy will not have accidents after that time: it will, but the foundations for easier housebreaking are best laid at that age.

Some puppies are not as developmentally advanced as others at the same age and may do well forming a preference for an area for urination and defecation but may not have the physical muscle and nervous control necessary for extended periods without accidents. There is much variation in the rates at which puppies develop, just as with human children. This control comes with age if the puppy is appropriately reinforced and if there is no physical problem.

If you have truly done everything "right" and the 6- to 9-month-old-puppy is still not completely housebroken, it is important to look for an underlying medical problem, such as an infection, that may be contributing to or causing the problem. Sometimes a slight amount of dribbling, particularly if the dog is excited, can be normal. For example, although not true for every dog, it is not uncommon for female puppies to dribble urine because of some of the hormonal and anatomical differences that distinguish them from male dogs. This usually improves with age, but in some cases when it does not, the puppy may respond to the hormones that become abundant during an estrous or heat cycle. This usually starts at about 9 months of age and continues about every 6 months if the puppy is not spayed or neutered (ovariohysterectomized).

A word on spaying and castration is in order. Spayed pets are healthier pets. They are less likely to roam, are not at risk of dying of uterine infections or unintended pregnancies, and have a greatly decreased risk of mammary cancer if spayed no later than 1½ years of age. If the decision is made to allow the puppy to have a heat cycle, the owner is absolutely responsible for always keeping the puppy on a leash, in sight, and away from male dogs for the extended period

before, during, and after the actual discharge phase of the cycle. Otherwise the puppy *will* become pregnant. Fifteen to 20 million unwanted pets are killed annually in humane shelters in the United States. No one needs any unwanted and unplanned puppies, and it is an unkindness to allow a *puppy* to bear puppies. Even if the dog is a superior quality breeding dog, no responsible breeder would encourage or allow a *puppy* to be bred and have babies.

Castration is also an excellent idea for male puppies that are not to be bred. They fight less with other dogs, they urine-mark less frequently, they roam less, and they are healthier. If your dog is not an absolutely top-quality breeding animal (i.e., all parents and grandparents are free of any genetic disease or problem, its temperament and those of its parents and grandparents are flawless, and its pedigree is liberally sprinkled with champions), *do not breed the animal; neuter it*. This is a kindness. Most of the dogs brought to humane shelters are purebred dogs, and 60% of all breedings result in the death of either the mother or one or more of the puppies.

With the considerations in mind, barring any physical problems, housebreaking a puppy is time consuming because it requires attention to the puppy's signals and consistent action, but it is much easier than trying to correct inappropriate elimination behaviors that could have been avoided by the right approach at the start.

Crates

Decide whether you will crate-train the puppy. This is generally an excellent idea for most puppies and can be an essential step in the housetraining process. Small, enclosed areas encourage the pup to develop conscious muscle control to inhibit elimination at inconvenient times.

Crates are available from pet stores, mail order houses, and some kennel clubs that may rent them. If you are planning to travel with the pet, buy a crate. Airlines require it, and you can even check in to some of the finest hotels if you are willing to crate the dog.

Some pups immediately feel more secure when left alone in a crate with blankets, toys, food, water, and, if the crate is large enough, an area for paper for urination and defecation. Get a bigger crate if the pup will spend all day in it. Young (8-week-old) puppies need to eliminate every hour (more if eating, playing, or just awakening) and will need an area they can start to use for this. If the crate is small, an older puppy will be unlikely to soil it; however, no puppy can be expected to last 8 to 10 hours without urinating or defecating.

Crates should always be placed in family areas, not in the damp, dark basement or the garage. You want the puppy to learn to love going into the crate. Feed the puppy in the crate with the door open: ask the puppy to sit and wait (see "Protocol for Deference: Basic Program" and "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1"), put the food inside, and release the puppy. Teach the puppy to wait to go into the crate by using biscuits to reward the dog for restraint. Correctly *reward* with treats or toys; *do not bribe*. Remember, a bribe is an action taken to lure an animal away from an undesirable behavior that rewards the animal a priori; a reward is an action taken a posteriori when the animal has willingly complied with a request. A reward is a salary; a bribe is blackmail.

Each day give the puppy a toy, a blanket, and something to chew (a biscuit, a big sterilized bone that has been stuffed with peanut butter, a Nylabone [TFH Publications, Neptune, NJ] [these are available for purchase from good pet suppliers],

or a KONG toy [Kong Co., Lakewood, CO] stuffed with peanut butter), and put the puppy into the crate for some quiet time. This is quiet time for all of you and will provide you with the ability to give the dog a safe place to relax and calm down ("time out") whenever the puppy is driving you crazy and you do not have the patience to work with the pup. Puppies are babies and need their own quiet time, too. During these short (5 to 10 minutes to start) sessions, stay quietly in the room with the pup, but do not respond to attempts to get your attention. The puppy is capable of amusing itself. As the pup becomes more accustomed to the crate, extend the period of time that the dog is in it and go to other areas of the house. Before you release the pup from the crate, ask the pup to sit. When the pup does sit, praise it. When the puppy is let out of the crate, do not fuss over the pup for a few minutes or it could learn to associate release from the crate with lots of attention. Do this later after the pup has performed a few "sits" and "downs" for you.

The crate should be kept clean. If it is soiled, use hot water and nonirritating soap or baking soda and vinegar and rinse well and dry. Use an odor neutralizer. Crates should be placed in well-lit areas but not where they will get the heat of the afternoon sun—the puppy could easily overheat and die. Timers can be used on lights so that the pup is not left alone in the dark. Radios and televisions can be turned on for auditory company and to mask scary street sounds ("white noise").

Never leave anything around the pup's neck (a loose or choker collar) that can tangle and hang on any part of the cage or anything in it. The puppy could strangle and die a painful death.

The crate has three main purposes:

1. To encourage the dog to start inhibiting the urge to eliminate
2. To keep the puppy safe from all the disasters from electric cords to toxic substances that lurk in the average home
3. To keep you sane when the puppy is too rambunctious

Puppies *are* rambunctious. They need an *aerobic* outlet for their energy. The crate is *not* meant to keep them incarcerated or to substitute for that need for aerobic exercise. Do not think that you can keep the puppy in the crate for 8 to 10 hours per day and then not have to play energetic games at night. If you need an animal you can keep caged for most of its young life, consider a gerbil.

Alternatives to Crates

If you are not going to crate your puppy, confine it to one area (kitchen, den, sunporch) at first. This gives the dog a greater sense of security when you are not home and minimizes damage. Leave a radio and a light on for the pup. Expand the areas to which the pup has access gradually, only when the puppy has not eliminated or destroyed anything in the area to which it was previously confined. Baby gates are useful. If you will be gone for more than 2 to 3 hours, the puppy will have to urinate or defecate and you must provide the pup with an area to do this (litter box or newspaper, see following discussion). Make sure that the room is puppyproof: no cupboards with chemicals or toxic substances that the dog can enter; no strings, ropes, slippers, magazines, or mail the dog can shred or ingest and possibly cause an intestinal obstruction. As with a crate, the dog should have a blanket, water, toys, and a few biscuits. Caution is urged in confining puppies to bathrooms, where they have been known to drown in toilets, or in kitchens, if they can reach and turn on the stove accidentally.

Elimination Paradigm

Puppies develop substrate preferences for urination and defecation. This means that if you teach a dog to urinate on newspaper, the pup will learn to seek out that substrate. This can be a problem if you have not finished reading the newspaper and place the unread section on the floor. Although it is more difficult to teach a puppy to go outside to urinate and defecate after it has learned to use newspaper, it is not impossible. It is preferable to teach the dog to go outside at the outset, but this may not fit your schedule. The following are options:

1. Take the puppy outside every 1 to 2 hours. Puppies have high metabolisms and small bladders. Let the puppy sniff a bit; do not just pull the pup and keep walking. Sniffing is an important part of the elimination sequence in dogs. If the dog is just rampantly plowing ahead sniffing, instead, stop and walk quickly back and forth. *Do not jerk the dog.* Sensibly walk the puppy with a head collar or harness (see "Protocol for Choosing Collars, Head Collars, and Harnesses"). Use a short rather than extendable lead so that you can quickly correct the dog and respond to its cues. This movement simulates normal dog elimination precursor behavior. The pup will eventually squat—pay attention and praise it. When the dog is finished, tell the pup that it is brilliant. You can give the pup a little piece of biscuit as it squats on a desired substrate (grass); this may help encourage the association between squatting on that substrate and good experiences.
2. Regardless of the frequency of your other walks, take the pup out 15 to 45 minutes after each time it eats. These are the range of times that it takes after food is eaten for the intestine to be stimulated. "Food" includes biscuits and rawhides, both of which stimulate elimination. Watch for behaviors that tell you the dog may be ready (pacing, whining, circling, a sudden stopping of another behavior) and intercept the animal. If you pick the pup up and it starts to leak or the act of picking up the pup starts the leak, get a cloth and clamp it to the pup's genitals. This will stimulate the pup to associate inhibition of elimination with those muscle groups. It also keeps the floor cleaner. Again praise the dog as it is squatting and *immediately* after it has finished.
3. Take the puppy out immediately after any play *and* naps or after it has awakened at night. If this is the first walk of the day, put your clothes on and have your cloth ready before you even approach the crate.
4. If you must train the pup to paper or a litter box, put the box or paper in one place, preferably close to a door. Take the puppy to the paper frequently and praise the pup if it squats. You may want to put heavy-gauge plastic under the newspaper to protect the underlying substrate in case the pup misses or the urine soaks through the paper. Getting the puppy outdoors still requires you to be home for a while. While the dog is being trained to paper, you still must take it out at least three or four times a day (after meals, awakening and play). Praise the puppy immediately during and after the squat. To wean the puppy from the paper, gradually start to move the paper 1 to 2 inches per day closer to the door. Spy on the puppy during week-ends and, as it begins to squat on the paper, rush outside and wait for the dog to urinate or defecate. This also helps stop the dog from being fearful outside. Praise the pup in excess. Paper training may slow the process of getting the puppy to develop an outdoor substrate preference but may be your only option. Some people with small

dogs elect to have the dog permanently trained to paper or a litter box. That is easier for small dogs and fine if it works for you, but if you do not want the dog to rely on these devices, you must go through the amount of work described here.

5. If you have an older dog that is housebroken, take it with you when you take the pup out. Dogs learn very well by observing, and this may speed up the process.
6. Dogs are generally faster to housebreak for defecation than urination. This may be related in part to the fact that puppies urinate more frequently than they defecate. For some very "clueless" dogs, it can help to take either a urine-soaked sponge or a piece of feces to the area you would prefer the pup to use. This may help the animal learn to associate its scent pattern with the area, but it cannot be used in the absence of the other steps previously mentioned.
7. For puppies that are older (7 to 9 months) and still seem to have no awareness of appropriate elimination behavior, diapers can help. This is *not* a substitute for the process previously described, but an addition. Dog diapers or britches are available at pet care outlets and are sold primarily for females in season (heat). The uncomfortable sensation of a damp diaper next to the skin helps teach some dogs to inhibit themselves. You must be willing to bathe and powder any dogs that might soil themselves to prevent urine burns or fecal contamination. A thin layer of petroleum jelly can help provide a protective coating.

In addition to all these steps it is important to note that even if you have 120 acres and the dog will have free range, you need to be standing next to the dog, rewarding it for eliminating on an appropriate substrate, or the association will *not* be made. It is not acceptable to do this through a window or when the pup comes back in. Free-range dogs learn to eliminate anywhere. This is not what you want.

Reward the puppy with a longer walk and more play outside after it eliminates. Do not play with the puppy or allow it to play with other dogs before it eliminates. If the only time that the pup has to watch the air, chase leaves, and hear birds is when it is outside to eliminate, you may be worsening your housebreaking problems. If the pup is brought back in right after eliminating, the dog can learn both to avoid or postpone elimination outside and to save walks for exploration. After all, the pup can always eliminate indoors.

Finally, if you want your dog to start to learn to eliminate on command, give the command, and no other interaction, until the pup does it. Say "empty" or "go pee," and make sure that your last command coincides with a squatting event. Then tell the dog it is brilliant. Use this with play after elimination and your pup will be more than willing to do your bidding.

Punishment

You will notice that no mention of punishment for housebreaking has been made because punishment has virtually no role in housebreaking a dog. Animals and people make associations between acts and consequences; this is how we learn. Finding a puddle of urine in the rug and the dog cringing *does not* mean that the dog knows it has erred. This action probably means that this has happened before: you have come home, grabbed the dog, dragged the dog to the urine, and hit the dog. The dog *has* made an association: you come home and the dog gets hit, but it is the wrong association (or at least one you did not intend for the dog to learn). In fact, if you have punished the pup, the pup probably cringes when

you come home even if it has not urinated on the rug, but you do not notice.

You *must* couple the correction exactly with the action that needs correcting. If you see the puppy start to squat (preferably) or in the act of urinating or defecating on the rug, *startle it*: a sharp "no," coupled with a loud noise (clapping of hands, banging of a pot, blasting a foghorn) will startle the pup. Use the lowest level of stimulus necessary to achieve the startle. For some very meek pups this might just be saying "Shame. . . ." The concept of shame probably does not exist for dogs, but your tone of voice will be very potent. The startle merely interrupts the behavior and gives you a chance to reinforce a better behavior. After the pup is startled, grab the pup and take it outside, praising the pup when it urinates or defecates on an appropriate substrate. Psychologists have shown that we learn best and most quickly when surprised, thus startling the dog with an unpleasant stimulus when you catch it in the act is the best way to teach association of unpleasant actions with eliminating in the wrong place.

There is *never* any excuse to hit or beat a dog.

Early Training

No puppy is too young to learn to earn what it wants by sitting and staying. All pups should be taught to sit and stay for walks, food dishes, water, play attention—anything. The fastest way to teach this is with food treats—tiny pieces of biscuits, treats, jerky, or even cheese. This technique allows you to use only voice commands so that your moving hands do not distract the pup. Later you can add hand signals and other cues. The puppy will accidentally sit the first time: hold the treat in one hand in front of the dog's nose; gradually move it close to the ground and repeat "sit" until its bottom is on the ground. *Instantly* open your hand for the treat and say "good pup." As the puppy matures you can begin to expect it to distinguish between "sit" and "down" by using those words to mean only what they say; at first, the pup only has to get its bottom on the ground (see "Protocol for Relaxation: Behavior Modification Tier 1"). At first, use the words "sit" and "down" to mean exactly that, but reward the pup if it does either; reinforce the dog to distinguish between the commands by being particularly enthusiastic if it does so. You will gradually shape the behavior. Later, as the pup is more mature, you only reward it for "down" when it lies down and "sit" when it sits instead of lying down. The earlier you start to teach a dog to look to you for cues and to defer to you for anything it desires, the better. All dogs should be taught discipline, manners, and to respond to clients' requests. This is particularly true for large-breed dogs that can be unpleasant, at best, and dangerous, at worst, when out of control. No dog needs to be hit or otherwise physically or verbally abused to learn to do this.

Older Dogs

The same basic training and housebreaking rules apply for older dogs, but older dogs can be more difficult to housebreak because they may have to unlearn some less favorable behaviors. Older puppies or dogs who have been in kennels for extensive periods may have developed a preference for the substrate on which they were kept.

While doing all of the previously mentioned exercises, you must be very vigilant whenever the dog is around substrates it had used in the past. Expect to do a lot of monitoring and correcting. Spying on the dog can be made easier by putting a bell on the dog's collar. Incarcerate the dog any

time you cannot monitor it. *Be patient.* If you have ever tried to lose 5 pounds, you know how hard it is to break a habit.

Put a cow bell, sleigh bells, or jingle bells on a string by the door and teach the dog that when it bats the bell, you open the door and let it out. Demonstrate this the first few times by taking the dog's paw and saying "knock," and whacking the bells. Then tell the dog "good dog" and let it out. This process will give you an auditory cue for when the dog has to go outside so that you can further reinforce the good behavior. You must be willing to take the dog out every time that the bell rings when you are home. Dogs can learn not to ring when you are not there. You can hasten this learning by placing the bells on the door only when you are home and removing them when you are not home. This is also a useful technique for older puppies.

On the positive side, these older dogs are usually so grateful that they were rescued and can now be loved they will work wonderfully for praise and interaction. Use this.

Checklist for Housebreaking a Puppy

- 1. Put bells on the puppy so you know where it is at all times; this way you can interrupt and correct it
- 2. Crate the puppy
- 3. Take the puppy to a desired area
 - Immediately on awakening
 - Immediately after playing (especially if the puppy voluntarily slows play)
 - 15 to 30 minutes after any food

- Minimum of 6 to 8 times per day
- Every 1 to 2 hours optimal

- 4. Restrict the puppy's access
- 5. Maintain regular feeding times and no free access and take up food after 30 minutes
- 6. Walk the puppy on a leash!
- 7. Do not allow play until the puppy has eliminated
- 8. Take 15- to 20-minute walks
- 9. Permit sniffing
- 10. Concentrate in one area—take small steps
- 11. Allow play and interaction after elimination
- 12. Reward the puppy after elimination
- 13. Appropriate corrections—startle
- 14. Reinforce scent (older dog, feces in correct area)
- 15. Use a variety of substrates (show or traveling dogs)
- 16. Use vocal commands (empty, potty, go pee)
- 17. Be patient
- 18. Use odor eliminators and appropriate cleaning
- 19. Provide nonelimination-associated aerobic play

Checklist for Housebreaking an Older Dog

- 1. See puppy checklist
- 2. Identify preferred substrate
- 3. Gradually switch preferred substrate
- 4. Concentrate on rewarding appropriate behavior
- 5. Startle when caught in the act
- 6. Crate—use natural inhibition
- 7. Short lead for leash corrections
- 8. Walk and reinforce the dog frequently; teach dog how to "knock" at door using a bell, for example