

DEALING WITH

DISCONNECT

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

- ▶ Slow/no response
- ▶ Sniffing
- ▶ Zooming
- ▶ Look away
- ▶ Other?

WHAT IS DISPLACEMENT

- ▶ Self-directed or Redirected SEEKING behavior (Grandin)
- ▶ Motor patterns that discharge tension (Lorenz)

OTHER SPECIES

- ▶ Offer a squirrel a nut
- ▶ Chickens with blocked feeder
- ▶ Rats lever pressing
- ▶ Humans in waiting room





WHY?

SNIFFING BEHAVIOR

- ▶ Instinctive behavior pattern
 - ▶ Totally normal!
- ▶ Out of context?
 - ▶ Displacement behavior



WHAT CAUSES DISPLACEMENT

- ▶ Frustration
 - ▶ Rate of reinforcement
 - ▶ Criteria too hard
- ▶ Confusion
 - ▶ Ambiguous cues
- ▶ Conflict
 - ▶ Scary environment
 - ▶ Fatigue

CONFLICT

- ▶ Fear?
- ▶ Stress?
- ▶ Both or neither?

HOW CAN I TELL WHICH ONE IS WHICH?

- ▶ Context
- ▶ Timing
- ▶ Other emotional signals
- ▶ Increasing or decreasing?

DISCONNECT IN RESPONSE TO A CUE?

POISON!

DISCONNECT DURING A TRAINING SESSION

- ▶ Reinforcement isn't working
- ▶ How to get it isn't clear

DISCONNECT DURING A TRAINING SESSION

- ▶ Gaps
- ▶ Unclear or too high criteria
- ▶ Conflicting cues
- ▶ Emotional state
- ▶ Fatigue
 - ▶ Cumulative stress

COMMON SOURCES OF GAPS

- ▶ Entering a new space
- ▶ After a reinforcer
- ▶ Moving the next thing
- ▶ End of the session

STRUCTURING SESSIONS

- ▶ Clear beginning and end
- ▶ Transition/Transport Plan
- ▶ In Case of Emergency

STRUCTURING SESSIONS

1. Check your reinforcement
2. Check engagement
3. Move through space (if needed)
4. Begin skill
5. Move through space again
6. End session

STRUCTURE OF A TRAINING SESSION



OUT-AND-IN

Use this game to begin any session in a new and distracting environment

1. Dog in crate, reward several times with door closed
2. Open door, reward in crate.
3. Release dog from crate, click the instant dog breaks then plane of the door.
4. Cue back into crate, reward.
5. Repeat.

PREVENTION

- ▶ Structure sessions to eliminate gaps
- ▶ Teach efficient reinforcement procedures
- ▶ Teach switching reinforcement
- ▶ Isolate cues
- ▶ Split SMALLER
- ▶ Alternate easy/hard
- ▶ Give mental breaks often
- ▶ Put it on cue!

THE POWER OF PATTERNS

- ▶ Patterns increase predictability
- ▶ Allow us to automate many tasks
- ▶ Leave more brain cells to the important stuff
- ▶ Humans and dogs find rhythm and predictability soothing

DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS

- ▶ Training pattern games at home gives us tools to measure dog's emotional state on the road
- ▶ Look for changes in responses
- ▶ Can you identify specific locations or events that change the response?

TEACH AND USE

- ▶ Teach these at home until both you and dog can do them without thinking
- ▶ Take on the road
- ▶ Measure response
- ▶ Incorporate into routine

DEVELOP A RITUAL

- ▶ Begin and end training sessions with set games
- ▶ Always start the same way
- ▶ Use this ritual on game day, too.

COMMON SOURCES OF GAPS

- ▶ Entering a new space
- ▶ After a reinforcer
- ▶ Moving the next thing
- ▶ End of the session

REINFORCEMENT SKILLS

- ▶ What to do after the treat
- ▶ Switching from one reinforcer to another
- ▶ Remote/stationed reinforcement
- ▶ Cued access to environmental reinforcers

THANK YOU!

FOR MORE INFO, VIDEOS, ARTICLES, AND PODCASTS

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