

Human Body Language and Its Effects on Dog Behavior

Myths, Choice, and Effective Communication

Heather Mohan-Gibbons and Trish McMillan Loehr



Agenda

- Review
- Canine vs. human body language
- Myth of dominance
- Giving choice during interactions
- Using your body language effectively
- Tools you can use



Review: Canine Body Language

Webinar 1

- All behavior occurs on a spectrum
- Use objective language (what a video camera can see)
- Avoid labeling



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Review: Canine Body Language

- Interpreting: “What does it mean when...?”
 - Humans: 10,000 expressions
 - 3,000 related to emotion
 - 50 expressions seen
- Consider whole body and context to inform



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Importance of Context



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Supplies Needed for Second Half:

4 ft or 6 ft leash

Slip lead



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Canine Body Language

- Deference: respectful yielding to the judgment, opinion, will, etc. of another.



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Human Body Language

- Direct approach
- Frontal
- Eye contact
- Close proximity
- Touch



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Human Body Language

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If people Were Dogs:



Dr. Sophia Yin: How To Greet A Dog Poster
<http://drsophiayin.com>

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Interspecies Miscommunication

- Easy to see how miscommunications arise
 - Avoidance
 - Escape
 - Lunging
 - Biting
 - Barking



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Interspecies Miscommunication

- Dominance model also gives mixed messages
 - go through door first
 - alpha rolls
 - take food away
 - muzzle grabs



Life As A Human.com

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Dominance Model

- Dominance: fluid relationship between individual animals to determine who has priority access to resources such as food and mates (not personality trait)



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~~Dominance Model~~

Voluntary hierarchy exist between dogs (and people are not dogs)



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Research

- Wolves avoid force (wasted energy)
- Dogs are not wolves
- Humans don't behave like dogs



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What to Do

- Avoid acting like a dog
 - Muzzle grabs, alpha rolls, etc., show lack of emotional control
 - We appear (unpredictably) aggressive



Evan Kafka: TIME Magazine

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What to Do

- Rather than “he jumps because he is dominant”
 - Consider what is reinforcing (your attention)
- Generates humane solutions & interactions



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Choice and Behavior

Choice:

- an abundance or variety from which to choose
- an alternative



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Choice and Behavior

- Some behaviors *are not seen* when there is a lack of choice



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Choice and Behavior

- Some behaviors are *seen* when there is a lack of choice



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Choice and Behavior

- Give choice when interacting
 - See more diverse behavior
 - Reduce defensive behaviors/bites
 - Clear communication
- Consider giving more choices
 - When approaching a kennel
 - Putting on a leash, etc.



Approaching a Dog in a Kennel

- Body language
- Leash
- Tone of voice



Approaching Nervous Dog



Myth: Never Feed a Barking Dog



Using a Slip Lead in Kennel

- Luring
- Roping
- Bracing door



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Walking with a Slip Lead

- Position of hands
- Tightness



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Got your leashes?

Ready to follow along with the next few slides?



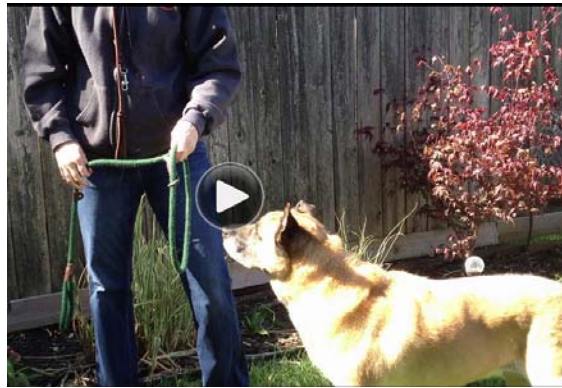
Figure 8 Leash

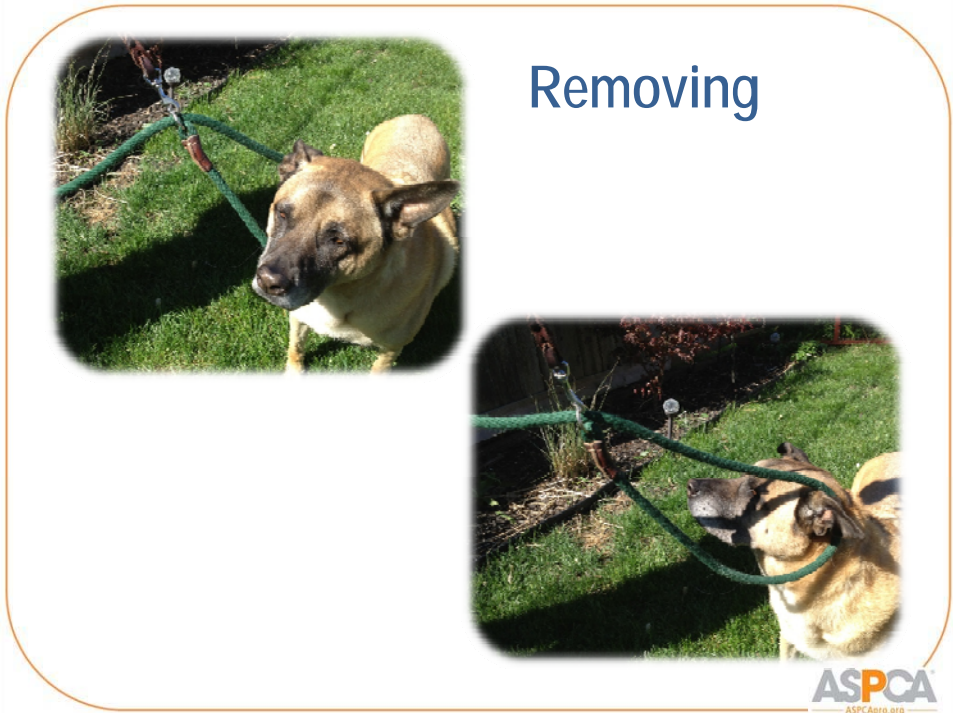
- When to use
- How to remove
- Making one with what you have





Figure 8 Leash in Action





Putting Dog Back in Kennel

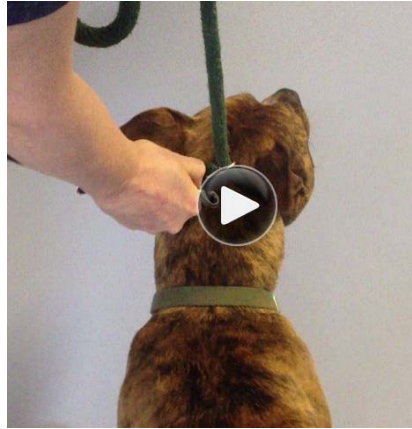


Figure 8 Leash – Home Made



Holding a Leash



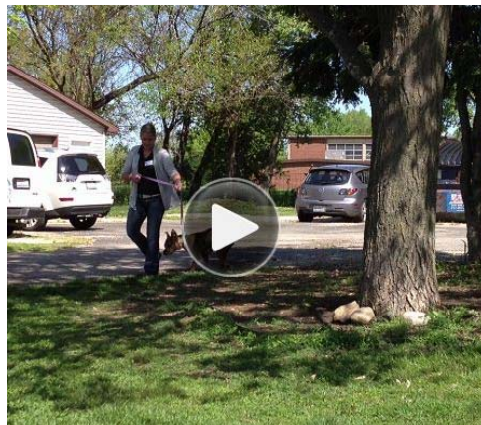
Willow or Oak?



Willow or Oak?



Willow or Oak?



Willow or Oak?



Why?



Summary

- Use your body effectively
 - Give choices; read body language
- Language we use clouds interactions (and adopters)
- Interactions are more like a dance partner rather than us being the boss



Summary

- Use quiet and non-threatening body language when approaching kennels and handling dogs
- Practice using a leash and a slip lead – each has its place
- Remember how to use your body (oak!) to have better control whenever you handle dogs



A FEW COMING ATTRACTIONS FROM ASPCA^{PRO}

www.aspcapro.org/webinars

- **Defensive Dog Handling: Leash Skills and Body Language** (May 10)
- **Reuniting Lost Dogs with Their Families** (June 13)
- **FIR: Rescuing Animals from Cruelty and Disasters** (June 19)

