



UNPACKING EACH LAYER

What do the layers mean and what can you do to address them?

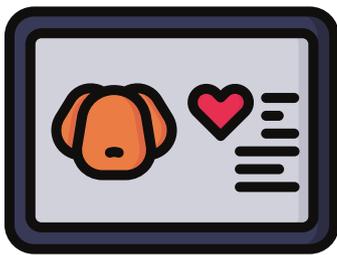
Health:

Health and wellbeing absolutely impact behaviour.

Think about the last time you had a headache and how that affected your mood.



If you see a sudden change in behaviour, it is always worth considering a vet check.



Chronic health issues can increase the base layer of stress.

For example:

- an allergy that leaves them itchy.
- an inflamed stomach from food intolerances or poor diet.
- toenails that are touching the floor, causing foot pain.
- not getting enough sleep or adequate rest during the day.

Lifestyle:

Dogs are social creatures that thrive on opportunities throughout the day to activate both their mind and body. The lifestyle layer is about giving your dog **biologically appropriate activities**. This incorporates exercise, social interactions, overcoming challenges and problem solving, foraging, nose-works and play. While this is influenced by breed and genetics, each dog must be understood as an individual.

You need to figure out what behaviours and activities are fulfilling to YOUR dog, and find a way to provide them—or surrogate activities that are safe for them to do.



5 things you should aim to offer your dog each day:

1. **MOVE** Every breed requires different levels of physical exercise and understanding what these are for your dog is important!
2. **PLAY** Dogs are social creatures and need social interactions as much as they need to breathe air!! This doesn't mean dog parks with unknown dogs. It means rough housing and goofing around with loved ones. This releases happy endorphins in both you and your dog and it's a great way to bond. Play might also include tug, fetch or other interactive games.
3. **SNIFF** Give your dog some sort of activity that allows them to use their nose. A scatter feed, or an on lead walk purely to allow them the experiences to sniff new things.
4. **FOCUS** This might mean a 3 minute training session to teach them something new or offer your dog some behavioural enrichment to allow problem solving opportunities.
5. **REST** Give your dog time alone to do nothing. To rest their mind. This might be time on their bed, in a crate or even practising being calm whilst tied up on lead.



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Clarity: confidence via consistency

Clarity is the dogs understanding of what is expected of them, the rules that make up their world and how to navigate their environment. Some dogs need a lot of clarity, others need none and are very good at working us humans out by themselves.

One way to provide clarity is by giving our dogs a consistent structure. We create clarity in our communication by using markers.

Markers are a word or sound we use to 'mark' a precise moment to your dog during training.

- A reward marker like "yes" or a clicker tells your dog they did the right thing and a reward is coming. It gives us time between marking the behaviour and delivering the reward.
- A release marker like "ok" tells your dog they can stop the behaviour being asked of them and are free to make their own choice.

My personal marker system (you can use whatever words you want to condition).

"Yes" is a terminal marker meaning the dog can break behavior to get her reward from me.

"Good" is a duration marker meaning she needs to keep doing what she is doing and I will deliver a reward to her.

"Get it" is a terminal marker to get her reward away from me (like throwing food or a toy).

"Catch" is a terminal marker to get her reward that I throw up in the air at her.

"Okay" is a terminal marker to freedom in the environment. This is a release cue that tells the dog the behaviour is over and they can now do what they please.

"Uh uh" is a non-reward marker. It means the behaviour offered is incorrect and to try again.

"No" means I do not like that behavior and I do not want you to continue with that.

CLARITY



PRECEDES



SUCCESS

Leash:

- Most dogs find leashes annoying as they prevent them from doing what they want to do. It's important to learn how to use the leash as a communication tool and not just a restraint.
- Loose lead walking develops from working with your dog and showing them what to do.
- My favourite equipment to use when teaching loose lead walking is a flat collar and 1.8m lead.
- Slip leads can also be used effectively to teach your dog how to turn off lead pressure, showing them how to respond to a tight lead, to make it loose again and get rewarded.
- Regardless of the type of equipment you use, this training should be gentle and you should avoid heavy handed lead 'pops' or excessive pressure - you do not want to see any signs of choking.
- Think about loose lead walking like a job we are giving our dogs.
- Make sure you pay them well during the learning phase!

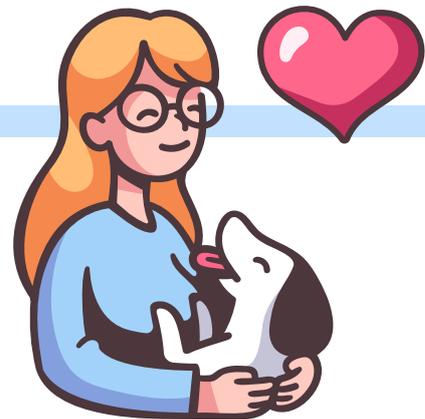


LIVING WELL TOGETHER

The stuff I recommend you develop in order to live your best life with your canine companion.

Skills for People:

- **Know how to motivate and fulfil your dog**
- **Learn how to play** games your dog loves.
 - Play is a fantastic confidence builder as well as a great way to strengthen the bond between you and your dog.
- **Advocate for your dog** at all times.
 - This means you never put them in a position where they feel the need to defend themselves. You always have their back and will speak up for them to communicate your needs.
- **Develop clear markers**
- **Work on your reward delivery (both timing and placement)**
- **Practice your leash handling**
- **Have a basic understanding of dog body language**



Skills for Dogs:

- Loose lead walking
- A recall so that they come when called.
- Drop on cue and stay in a down position, until released.
- The ability to be calm when someone has to run hands over them for health checks or grooming.
- The ability to calmly approach and be near people without jumping, barking or feeling unsafe.
- Crate training
- The ability to be at liberty, to make their own good choices and relax without the need to be commanded to do so.

