

KPT#2

## KPT WEEK 2 REWARDS AND CORRECTIONS

### **Praise, Motivators and Rewards**

#### CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE REWARD

Praise can be defined as a reward for behaving appropriately. There are many different ways to praise a dog – can you name a few? (have class throw out suggestions). The types of praise are verbal, physical (petting), toys, games and food. The type of praise that you use should be geared toward a specific dog. Take some time to notice what means the most to the puppy; is it treats, toys, petting or verbal praise? Whatever you identify will be the best motivator for the pup. If the pup likes all of the motivators but especially loves liver treats, then you may want to use liver treats only in situations where it is difficult to get the pup's attention. However, if the puppy has little interest in treats, you will need to use other methods to motivate him. No two puppies are alike and what motivates each pup may change over time.

In using rewards, you must also look at what a specific puppy can handle. For example, if telling the puppy to Sit and rewarding him with petting causes the pup to break his Sit, you will need to find another reward. Calm verbal praise would probably be appropriate in this situation. In other words, the reward should not excite the pup so much that it cannot concentrate and thus gets a correction. As the puppy matures, he will develop more self-control and be able to handle more exciting rewards.

The praise and reward should also be tailored to the situation. For example, the young pup that does a Hurry should receive a lot of praise. A one-year-old dog, however, should receive a simple "Good Hurry". In other words, the praise or reward given depends on how difficult the task is for the dog. An eight-week-old pup may receive a tasty treat for a Sit while a year old dog will receive a treat for doing the Heel command. The puppy should always earn the reward that is appropriate for the difficulty of the task.

#### CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE CORRECTION

As with praise, corrections must be tailored to the specific puppy. What type of corrections can you think of (allow the class to throw out ideas)? The type of corrections that we use with dogs is verbal and/or leash corrections. These two methods, if used appropriately, will help to teach the puppy which behaviors are not acceptable.

A correction must always be firm, fast and forgiving. When I say firm, I mean that the correction must be strong enough to be effective. Giving a halfhearted correction will only teach the dog to ignore all corrections. We call this nagging. The corrections must also be fast. Dragging out a correction will only confuse the pup. A quick leash correction and/or a firm "Don't" immediately following an undesirable behavior is most effective. Finally, a correction must be forgiving. This means that the appropriate correction is quickly administered and then the handler moves on. The puppy should not be babied after a correction but it should not be continually punished for it either (give an example in class of an appropriate and inappropriate correction).

The correction must also be tailored for the age and temperament of the puppy. For example, an 8weekold puppy will receive a firm leash correction followed by encouragement to come to you when the leash becomes tight. An 8monthold puppy, however, will receive a harder correction and calm praise when he walks appropriately by your side. In addition, a soft puppy who is effected by a simple "Don't": may not require a leash correction as often as a more independent pup. You still need to be just as firm, fast and forgiving with each pup. The difference occurs in the severity of the correction.

#### TIMING

Dogs learn in the present only. Because of this principle, it is important that both praise and correction be given immediately after the act if completed. If you delay the consequences, the puppy will not associate the reward or the correction with his behavior. It is imperative for the puppy to understand exactly which action he is being rewarded or corrected for so that he may alter his actions accordingly. (Demonstrate both proper and improper timing with both praise and correction).

#### SHAPING

In the beginning stages of learning a command the puppy has little understanding of what his trainer is asking. The trainer must show him how to perform a command and then motivate him to repeat the behavior. For example, we may show a puppy how to sit by luring him with a treat into position. When the puppy first does the Sit command, he may Sit in front of you and roll onto one hip. Although the positioning is not perfect, the puppy is rewarded for performing the basic concept.

As the puppy becomes more accomplished at the Sit command, we can begin to shape his behavior. For example, we can teach the puppy that he must now Sit at the trainer's side and reward him for that behavior. Once he has accomplished that step, we can teach the puppy to sit straight without rolling onto one hip. Again, the puppy would be rewarded for accomplishing this next step. By taking an offered behavior and shaping it over time, we can gradually teach the puppy to perform the exact command that we are asking.

#### SUMMARY

Today we have talked about the appropriate ways to give praise and correction. My remaining calm and using reward and correction in a timely manner, the puppy raiser can help the puppy to develop into a responsible, well-behaved and happy dog.

## KPT: WEEK 2 LESSONS

### Lesson A: Sit with Placement or Lure

Note: A lure is the promise of a reward, something that entices the pup to do as you ask. A bribe is a lure gone bad. If a pup waits to complete a command until she sees you have a treat, you are bribing, not luring your pup. If you find that you **MUST** use food in order to get that pup to perform a command, you can bet you have slipped from using lures, to using bribes. Once a pup is motivated to do a behavior, stop luring him and only reward him.

#### Reason

- To teach the puppy what the Sit command means
- Establish control over the puppy, especially in distracting situations

#### How to teach: for placement

- Place the puppy in a sit by sliding your hand palm up underneath the collar and pulling slightly up while cupping your hand under the puppy's bottom and applying pressure into his "knees" as the puppy moves into position say "Sit"
- Briefly praise the puppy
- Tell the puppy "Release"

#### How to teach: for lure

- Hold a small treat by the puppy's nose and move it slowly upwards in an arc over his head
- As the puppy's nose follows the treat, his head will move up and his bottom down to the ground
- As he sits, praise him with "Good Sit" and then give him the treat

Tell the puppy "Release"

#### Tips:

- Say the command **WHILE** the puppy is moving into the sit
- Praise and or pet the puppy before giving him a treat
- Keep your hand steady and precise if using the lure method
- Avoid **PUSHING** the puppy's bottom into a sit

#### Homework:

Practice the Sit command using one of the above methods at least 3 times per day in the house or quiet environment

As the puppy improves, give him praise every time but alternate every second, third or fourth time giving treats

## Lesson B: Leash Work in Place

### Reason

- To teach the puppy to take responsibility for maintaining a loose leash
- To teach the puppy that being by the handler is safe and rewarding

### How to teach:

- Stand in place around moderate distractions and decide how much leash you will give the puppy
- Tell the puppy “Release: and allow him to play, explore, etc.
- If the leash tightens, give a sharp correction
- Bend down and encourage the puppy to come back to you
- Praise and pet him when he returns to you

### Tips:

Correct the puppy only when it pulls the leash tight

Give a sharp jerk as a correction; do not pull the puppy toward you

Encourage the puppy to you with a high voice, hand clapping, toys or treats; do not give the “here” command

### Homework:

Practice the above leash exercise three times a day in the house or yard

## Lesson C: Introducing the Halti (Lure) and the Dress Command

### Reason

- To teach the puppy to associate the puppy with positive things
- To teach the puppy to walk on a loose leash
- The halti is often used by graduates to gain more control over the dog

### How to teach:

- With the puppy in front of you, hold the halti in front of his nose so that it may be easily slipped on
- Hold a treat on the other side of the halti so that the puppy must move his nose into the halti in order to get the treat
- As the puppy’s nose moves into the halti, say “Dress” and give him the treat as you praise him
- Remove the halti and repeat the above procedure
- Build for time in small increments and fasten the halti at the back of the puppy’s head

### Tips:

- Allow the puppy to move his head into the halti; do not put the halti on his nose for him
- Say the “Dress” command as the puppy moves his nose into the halti

#### Homework:

- Practice the above procedure and build for time as the puppy becomes more successful and used to the halti
- After two days of practice, begin fastening the halti behind the puppy's head and then removing it; again, build for time as the puppy becomes more tolerant
- After five days, begin feeding all meals with the halti on; remove the halti as soon as the meal is finished
- Never leave a halti on a dog that is unattended

#### Addressing the public

The public often mistakes the halti for a muzzle. You may address their concerns by comparing the halti to a bridle on a horse. It allows the handler to obtain more control over the dog with less physical strength. This has two advantages. First, the halti is more humane than the correction collar because it requires less forceful corrections. Second, it allows a disabled person who may not possess a great deal of strength and coordination to effectively handle a dog. Finally, you may show them that the dog can open his mouth wide enough to eat, drink, play ball, chew bones, etc.

#### Lesson D – Speak

##### Reasons:

- Graduates may use this command to get attention or help if they are in a position where they can not call out for help
- Great trick for demos
- Helps teach the pup QUIET

##### How to teach:

Take two aspirin

Tie the pup and show him a favorite toy, treat, etc.

As soon as the pup barks or makes any noise in frustration say "Good Speak" and reward the pup.

##### Tips:

- Don't ever let the pup out of the crate as a reward for speaking.
- Try putting a treat inside the crate and getting the pup to "ask" to enter the crate.

## Lesson E - Wait

### Reason

- To teach the puppy to wait before exiting a crate to kennel which builds self control and ensures the puppy's safety
- To teach the puppy to wait at doorways so that he enters either with or after the handler; enforces the handler's role of leader

### How to Teach For The Crate

- As you are opening the kennel door, tell the puppy to "Wait"; his paws cannot cross the threshold
- If he tries to exit, push the door into him and tell him "Don't, Wait"; an alternative correction is the squirt bottle
- When he waits, tell him calmly "Good Wait"
- After a few seconds, tell him "Release"
- Build for time in small increments

### How to Teach for Walking Through Doorways

- As you approach a doorway with the puppy on leash, give the command "Wait"
- If the puppy does not wait, give a sharp leash correction straight back; (remember not to pull the puppy back, just correct)
- When the puppy waits, praise him with "Good Wait"

### Tips:

- Ensure that the Wait command is given as the puppy approaches the threshold
- It is important that the puppy receive the greatest rewards while he is waiting and not when he is released; however, do not become so excited that the puppy breaks his command