

1 **Ethology**

Part II

2 **Instincts and Emotions**3 **Instincts**

- An Instinct is the inherent inclination of a living organism towards a particular behavior – it is a ‘fixed action pattern’
 - Any behavior is instinctive if it is performed without being based upon prior experience, that is, in the absence of learning.
 - Suckling is an instinct
 - A baby will instinctively grab something if she feels she is falling
 - Mating is an instinct based on a fixed action pattern
 - Many behaviors combine instinct and learning
 - The instinct to chase combines with learning what is prey to result in hunting behaviors

4 **Predatory Behavior is an Instinct**

- Thus, predatory dogs are not normally angry –as often believed by their owners – they are following their instinct to hunt
- Natural selection makes it pleasurable for organisms to do what they have to do to survive
 - Hunt
 - Eat
 - Procreate
 - Sleep

5 **Predatory Instinct**

- This instinct is specifically geared toward finding, chasing and eating food
- It is tied to curiosity and anticipation – hunting is fun
 - Cat saves boy

6 7 8 **Dogs use the Predatory Instinct for...TONS of things!**

- And we us

9 **Useful**

10 **Useful**

11 **Just fun**

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13 **And occasionally tragic – although natural**

- Dogs kill cats
- Dogs kill small dogs
- Dogs kill other pets

14 **Emotions**

- Research tends to show that dogs have all the emotions that humans do
 - The brain
 - Reptilian Brain
 - Mammalian Brain
 - Human Brain
 - What they do not have to the same extent is our front brain - the - cerebral cortex, which houses decision making - the executive brain

15 **Emotions**

- Originate in the Amygdala
 - Deep in the reptilian brain
 - Which is why it is difficult for us to control them
 - Animals, of course, do not even try to

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17 **Emotion**

- Circumstance causes a physical response in the animal
 - (ie person approaches)
- Dog responds to the physical response in his body
 - Flight/fight/
 - freeze/faint/frenzy
 - The emotion we are dealing with is fear, but we must understand

that it is not controlled by any cognitive function –

- the dog is not controlling the emotion, the emotion is controlling the dog

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19 **Reflex and Cognition**

- Reflex
 - Involuntary action or response, such as a sneeze, blink, or hiccup
 - Produced as an automatic response or reaction: I pull, you pull back
 - Reflexive actions take place without thinking
- Cognition – Voluntary action or response to stimuli
 - Cognitive actions can only take place one at a time!
- It is important to ascertain a dog's emotional state if you want to know whether he or she is in a state where learning is possible

20 **Emotions in Motion**

- Stuffed Dobie
 - Normal
 - Cautious
 - Extreme

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24 **Prey drive?**

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26 **Reading Body Language**

- Making it simple...
 - Softness, fluidity – the more wiggly the body, the more friendly the dog
 - Squinty soft eyes, spine not straight
 - Tension, stiffness – the more frozen the body, the less friendly the dog
 - Wide eyes, straight spine

28 **Sometimes the breed gets in the way of body signals**

29 30 **Affection/Social Attachment**

- Dogs are (above everything) social animals
 - They domesticated us using proximity and affection
- Dogs will seek attention from conspecifics or other species – they need it to survive
 - They will even do so if mistreated
- This doesn't mean they understand us or other dogs – they have the ability to do so, but need to learn the skills

31 **Contentment/Happy**

- Physical State
 - Balanced
 - Ears relaxed
 - Mouth slightly open or closed lightly
 - Tongue may hang slightly out
 - Eyes soft
 - Tail in relaxed position
- Mental state
 - In the cognitive brain
 - Ready to learn

32 **Curiosity and Anticipation**

- Like humans, dogs show intense interest in their surroundings
 - When the seeking circuit is activated, the dog goes into a high state of enjoyment
 - The investigation of novel objects and places cause pleasure
- Anticipation – the perceived knowledge of what is to come – is likely one of the most powerful reinforcements there is

33 **Hostility**

- Anger is most often sparked by a perceived threat to safety or resources
 - Can be aimed at specific people or other dogs
 - Can be aimed at different types of people or dogs
- Anger is and looks offensive

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35 **Anger Hostility**

- Body Language – body forward, commisure forward and wrinkled (agonistic pucker), eyes straight ahead (can be either contracted or dilated)
- Vocalization – low, deep growl, offensive bark

36 37 **Anger**

- When a dog is *angry*, *there is generally cognition* - thoughts are taking place – the dog is actually choosing a response, although it is still difficult to get through to him or her
 - Ozzie
 - Friday
- In fact attempting to train an angry dog is generally counter-productive, as you are the last thing on their mind

38 **Anger – Rage - Hostility**

- Aggression is often caused by combination of fear/rage
- Dog believes resources are being threatened or space is being invaded
 - Territorial threat
 - Maternal anger
 - Anger against one particular person
- Techniques that work to modify behavior caused by fear do not work for an angry dog

39 40 42 **Fear and rage**43 **Little more on our brain....and theirs**

- How you feel determines what you do
 - In order to change behavior, you have to change feeling first...then thinking will change
 - Change the emotion, change the feeling, change the behavior
 - If you ask some people they feel, and they tell you how they think - they don't know the difference! (for Trekkies – Spock)

- Frontal lobe shutdown occurs when the brain is under pressure
 - Under pressure, you will blurt out anything at all! Your brain is wired like that so you go to binary mode fight/flight or shut down
 - 200,000 year old software (Amygdala)
 - Biology disrupts consciousness - you literally shut down
- Fix for humans – fix for dogs?
 - Breathing rhythmically and from the heart area will help you stabilize your feelings and think properly
 - Change and regulate your breathing, - make it rhythmic and smooth

44 **Fear**

- Is probably the most powerful emotion, as it is necessary for survival

45 **Fear**

- Is also the reason for many different behavior problems
 - Phobias
 - Panic disorder
 - Aggression
 - Human
 - Dog

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47 **Body Language**

- Body pulled back and down
- Ears back
- Eyes dilated, staring at target or avoiding target completely –often showing whites of eyes

48 **In fact, fear...**

- ⊙Is the most common cause of aggression in dogs
- ⊙Guardians do not read the signs well
 - People think fearful dogs are dominant
 - Or bully dogs are fearful (some are)

49 **The difference between fear and anxiety**

- Fear has a target or targets
 - Some dogs are afraid of other dogs

- Some are afraid of men
- Some are afraid of noises
- Anxiety is generalized
 - An anxious dog is worried about the environment he is in
 - He or she may also be worried about the future, if they cannot predict it
 - A dog with separation anxiety is worried about both – she cannot handle being alone and cannot believe that the owner will ever return

50 **Sociability and stress levels**

- Signs of stress/fear
 - Eye contact avoidance
 - Rounded eyes
 - Ears back, tail down
 - Panting, coat loss, sweating through paws
 - Yawning, stretching, genital checks, dropped tail
 - Sleep
- Signs of confidence
 - Direct eye contact
 - Forward stance

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- “I’m telling you, she’s dead. She’s never coming back.”
- “Shut up, Skeeter”
- “But what if he’s right, WHAT THEN?!”

52 **Three Herding Mixes with various degrees of fear based behavior**

53 **When fear leads to aggression**

- Dog feels intimidated
 - Staring by person or dog
- Dog feels trapped
 - On territory
 - Being approached by another dog
 - Being approached by a person
 - Hugging

54 **Mastiff**

55 **Temperament or learning?**

- Many puppies are born fearful and cautious
 - Ethologically appropriate
- Many pups are made fearful by poor socialization
- Adolescents that suffer trauma can become fearful

56 **When working with dogs or people**

- Analyze the emotional content first
 - Without addressing that, no behavior modification will work

57 **Important to remember**

- That animals respond differently from one another when they are stressed
- We know this theoretically, but it is very difficult to bring it to mind when we have a very scared animal to deal with – Watch this dog go from submissive (grin) to aggressive (agonistic pucker) and back again
 - Minpin

58 59 **Modifying the behavior of fearful dogs**

- Fear is not under the control of the conscious brain – really!
- You must make the dog feel safe
 - Leadership and management – and we will talk a lot more about this later!

60 **STRESS**

+

SPACE INTRUSION

=

**FIGHT/FLIGHT/MAKE FRIENDS
(ADR/PDR)**61 62 63 **Aggression is our #1 Behavior Problem**

- Why?
 - Humans do not respect space needs of dogs

- People holding their hands out
- Children hugging
 - These things are fine with temperamentally solid, well socialized, well trained dogs.
 - They might not be fine with unstable, unsocialized or untrained dogs

64 **Micro movements**

- Taking space – lean in
- Giving space – curve out

65 **Macro Movements**

- Lean out for fear
 - Body posture is back, ready for flight
 - Commisures forward for threat

66 **Taking Space the Wolfy Way**
Slow mo

67 **more on space**

68 **Too Close**

69 **Dog/Reporter**

70 **Canine Perceptions**

- Pups see other dogs as puppies, and behave as they would to their siblings
- Depending on their temperament and early experience, most adults see other dogs as
 - *Interesting*
 - *Challenging*
 - *Threatening*

71 **Human Communication**

- Linear – especially in our culture
 - Straightforward greetings
 - Extended hand
 - Direct eye contact
 - Straight forward movement

72 Canine Communication

- Non-linear (zig-zag)
 - Circuitous
 - Indirect eye contact
 - Body language depends on confidence level
 - More confident – faster – more direct
 - Less confident more conciliatory, slower, less direct

73 If Everything Goes Well in Puppyhood....

- Mother dog has taught puppies bite inhibition with the use of consequences
 - Snarl/bite leads to snarl/air bite or just snarl
- Puppies are above all things curious – they need to be persistent in order to survive
- And they need to play to learn

74 Body Language....