



ENTERING YOUR DOG'S MIND

Understanding Dog Behavior & How the Handler can Influence it for Better or Worse

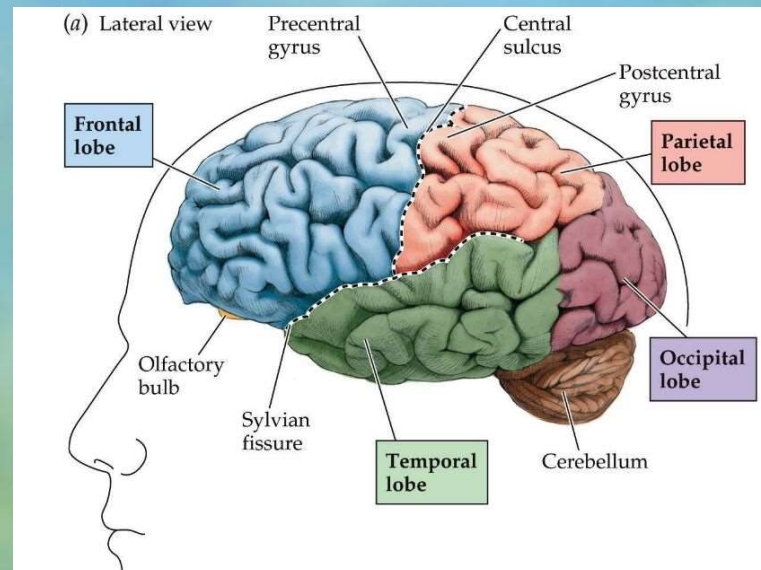
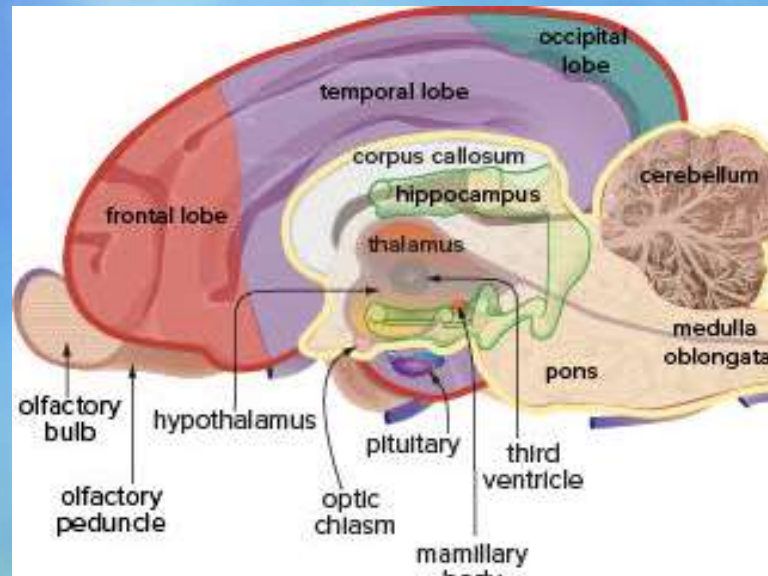
Sara Heesacker
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A LOOK ON THE INSIDE

Frontal Lobe- Involved in intellectual function, multitasking, strategic planning

Olfactory bulb - Only sense that goes directly to area in brain

Hippocampus - Responsible for value system in dog's mind

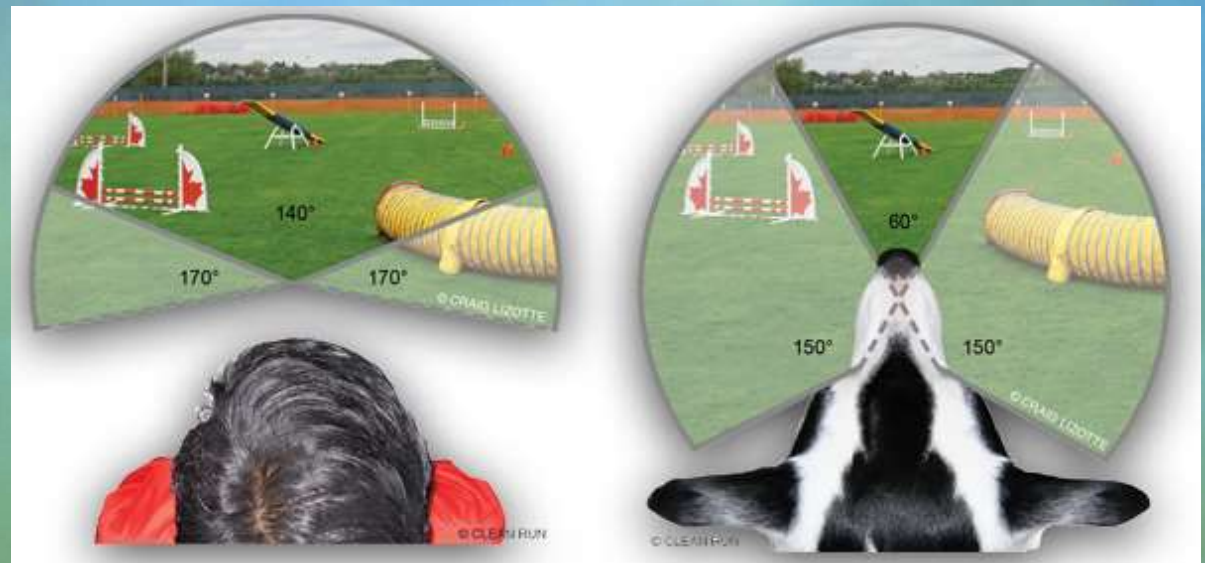
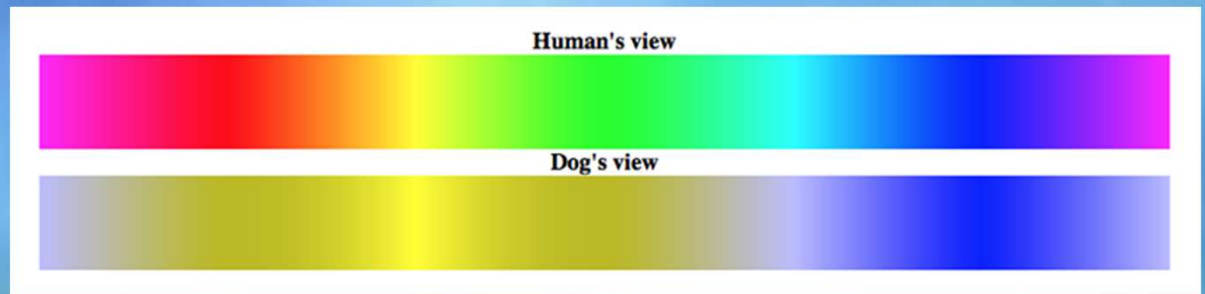


THE SENSES TELL THE STORY

Taste - Humans 9000 taste buds
Dogs 1706 taste buds

Hearing - Dogs hear 4 times the distance of humans

Sight - Diurnal
6 times weaker eyesight



NO PROBLEM FINDING SCENT...

It's about sorting out the multitude of scents that are there already

Most critical sense but most difficult for humans to comprehend

Olfactory Epithelium

A catacomb at the back of the nasal passage houses sensory receptors.

<i>Humans</i>	<i>Dogs</i>
1 in² surface area	30 in² surface area
~6 million receptors	~250 million receptors

cross section



Olfactory Bulb

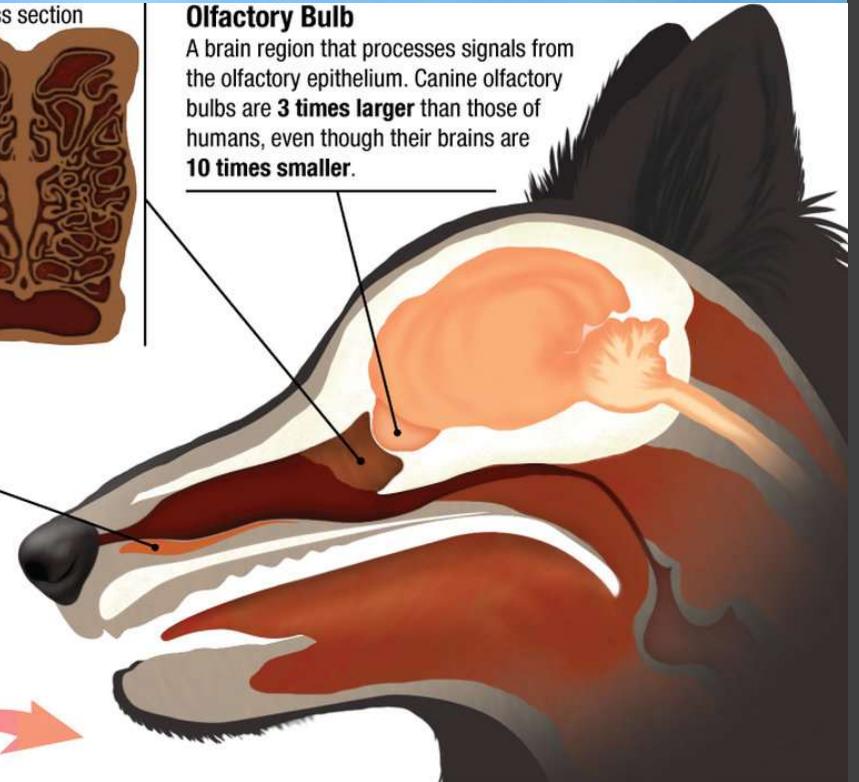
A brain region that processes signals from the olfactory epithelium. Canine olfactory bulbs are **3 times larger** than those of humans, even though their brains are **10 times smaller**.

Vomerinasal Organ

A sensory organ that detects pheromones picked up by a dog's wet nose.

Nostrils

Air is exhaled through the side slits, so it doesn't dilute the scent of incoming air.



HORMONES BEHIND LEARNING

Dopamine- related to reward and movement

Have to search it out and problem solve

Endorphins – “runners high”

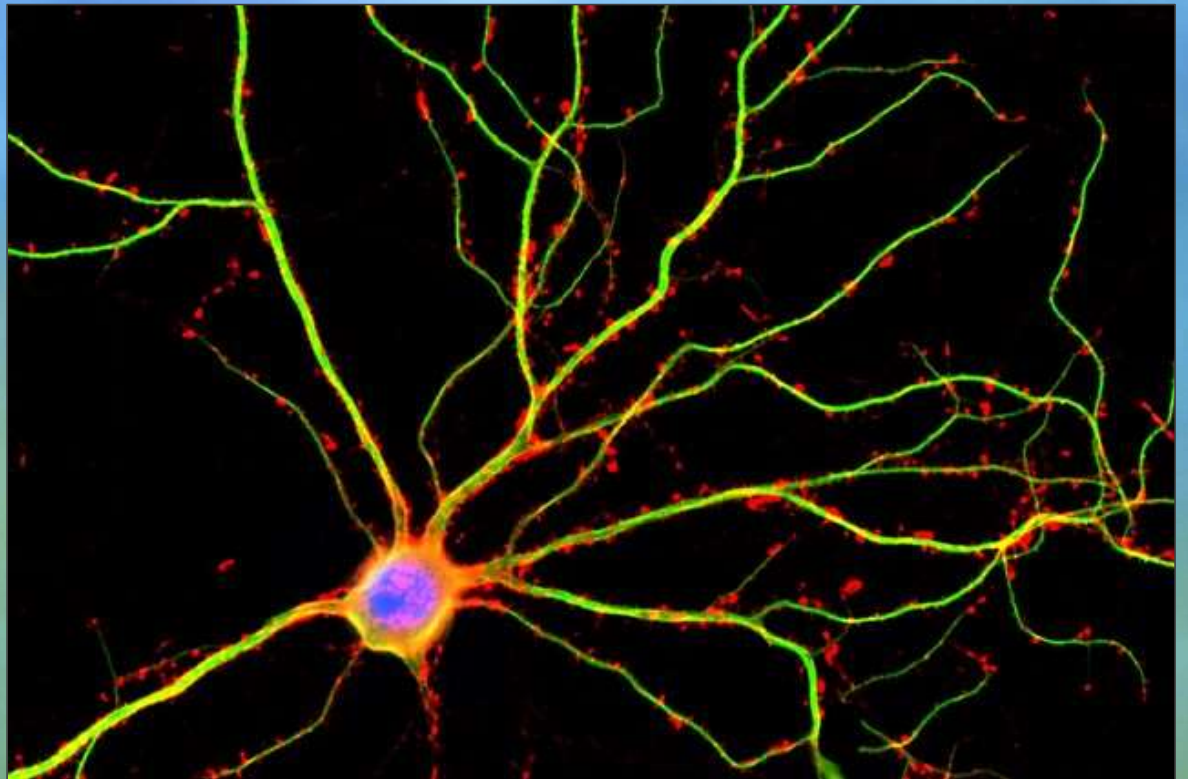
Designed to make you continue to fight

Serotonin- linked to emotional balance

lick and chew/ replay

Cortisol – “stress hormone”

Shrinks brain network



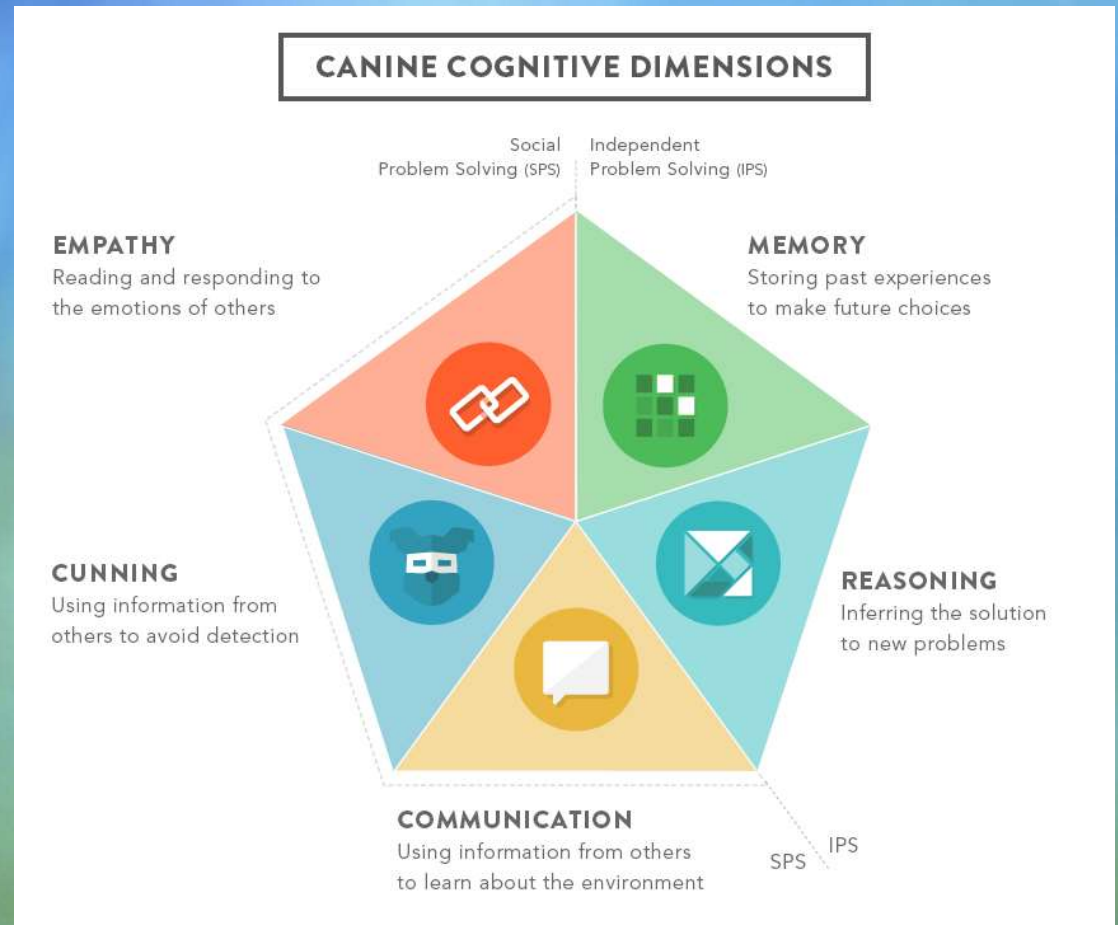
DOG TOO STRESSED TO EAT → TOO STRESSED TO LEARN

HOW IT ALL WORKS

Cognition requires use of

- Mind
- Intelligence
- Learned behavior

How does Obedience



PERCEPTION

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Small movements make a big change in dog's behavior

- Unconscious of hands
- How we tilt a head
- We radiate random signals

Dogs watch our eyes

- communicate authority

Be the
person
your dog
thinks
you are.



READING DOGS

DEVELOPING YOUR EYE

- Leaning toward me, away from me, standing square over all four paws
- Frozen still, breathing normally, breathing too fast with shallow breaths
- Corners of mouth (commissure) go forward or backwards
- Eyes soft or hard
- Tails are important...not as much as face



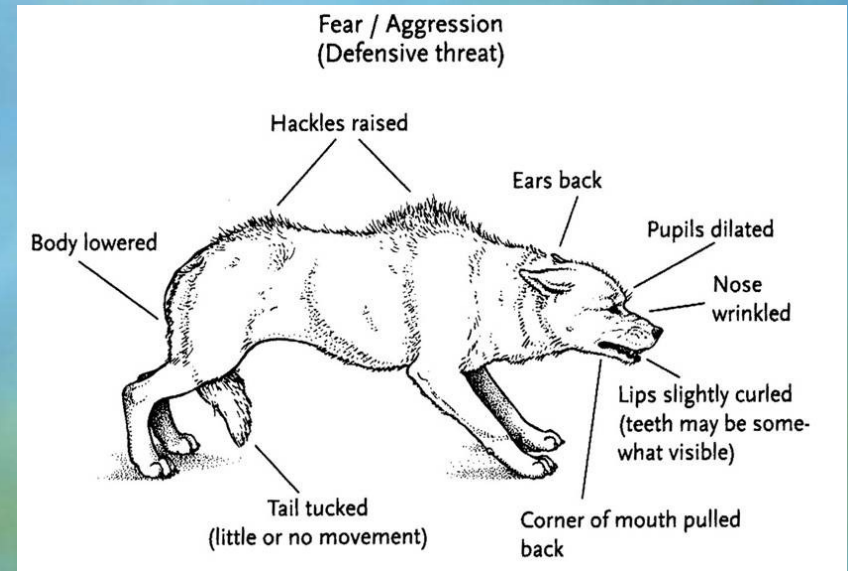
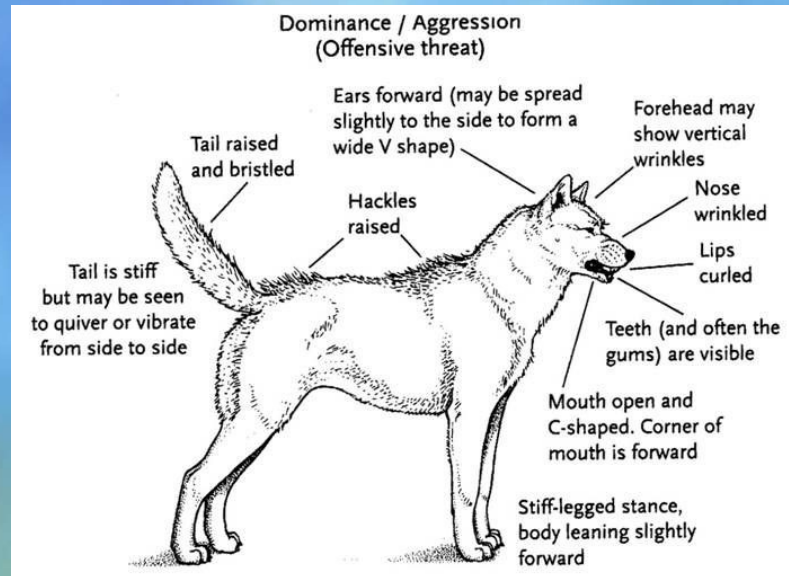
DEVELOP A “SEARCH IMAGE” FOR A SPECIFIC POSTURE...YOU’LL BE ABLE TO SEE SUBTLE CHANGES AND REACT QUICKLY AND MORE APPROPRIATELY TO DOG

READING DOGS

Aggression – intent to do harm

Frustration is a common reason dogs get aggressive

Patience is critically important life skill...if dogs aren't taught self control it can be very dangerous



INTERACTIONS WITH DOGS

POLITE VERSUS RUDE GREETINGS

Humans greeting dogs

How we are hardwired

Dogs meeting dogs

Posture communicates what they
think their social status is



TRAINING THE HUMAN

BECOMING MINDFUL OF OUR OWN ACTIONS!

What cue is my dog ACTUALLY responding to?

Flexibility of Language- A dog's nightmare!

Repetition Pitfalls

Create simple commands – that's simple right?

- Tone
- Pitch
- Speed

We are
what we repeatedly
do.
Excellence, then,
is not an act
but a
habit.
- Aristotle

YELLING MAY GET ATTENTION BUT AT WHAT COST?

CONSISTENCY WITHIN THE PACK

What do words mean?

What task are you asking the dog to perform?

Make sure your dog defines your signals the same way that you do

Define commands - a posture not a location



REINFORCEMENT

Behavior occurs -> Reinforcer occurs ->
Subsequent behavior

Positive

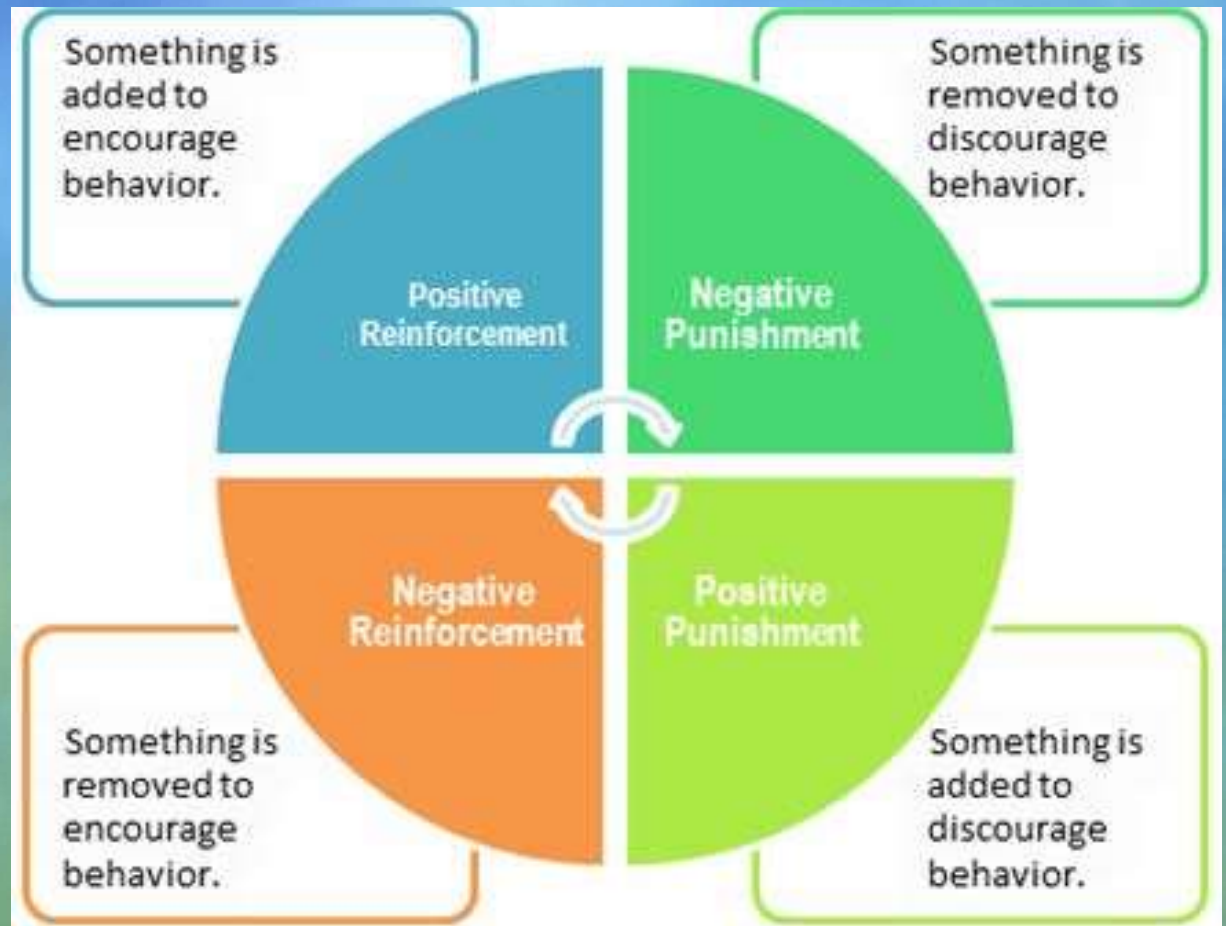
- Creativity, experimentation & initiative
- Long retention

Negative - something to avoid

Punishment

- Used to eliminate unwanted behaviors
- Human emotion to inflict pain, aggression or frustration
- Force reflects absence of power

Cue - a signal to the dog that he will be paid for performing a certain behavior



YOU CAN NOT REINFORCE BEHAVIOR THAT IS NOT OCCURRING!

SHAPING BEHAVIORS WITH MARKERS

CONTINUAL GIVE AND TAKE - WHAT AM I
REINFORCING?

- The progressive changing of behavior
- Opposite of drills and repetition
- Raise criteria in small enough increments

1. Train one aspect at a time
2. You choose what to reinforce
3. When learning new aspect, temporarily relax old ones
4. Quit while you're ahead

DOG LEARNING PHASES

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The dog first learns the behavior, you can use capturing or luring to teach your dog something basic. Reward **EVERY** good response.



Practice the cue-behavior many times until the dog responds correctly more than 80% of the time he is asked to. Then reward **RANDOMLY**.



Practice in different environments (starting with initiation and fluency) until the dog can respond correctly more than 80% of the time anywhere.



Your dog responds reliably to your cue. Once in a while you may need to remind him with previous steps.

SHAPING EFFECTIVENESS

HOW DO I KNOW THE DOG UNDERSTANDS

4 conditions to full understanding

Immediate after presenting conditioned stimulus

Never happens in absence of stimulus

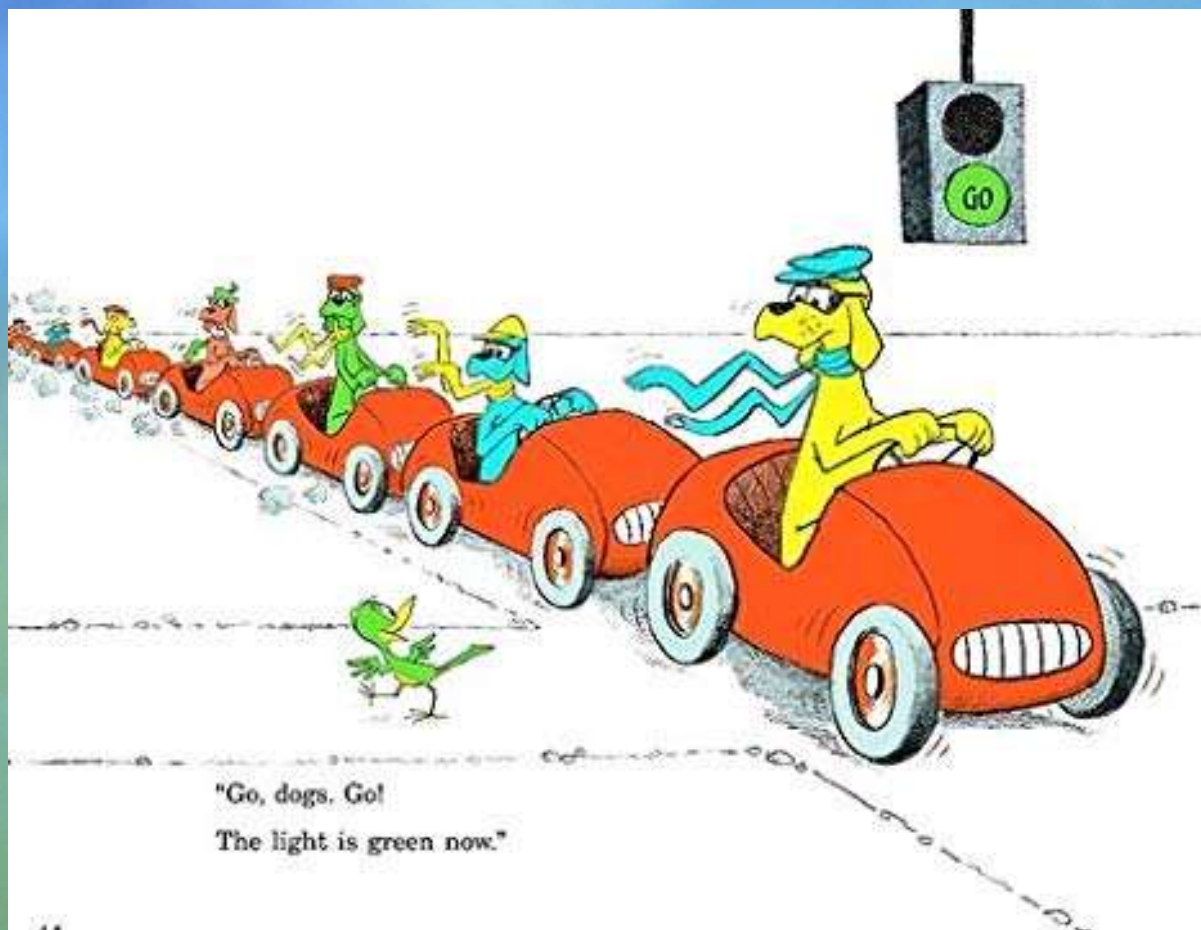
Never occurs in response to another stimulus

No other behavior occurs in response to stimulus

- Establish a second command?
- Jump the gun and anticipate?
- Breakdown in back chain process?

Too many tasks under pressure

- revert back to "default"



DOGS DON'T TRY TO BE DISOBEDIENT - HOW CAN I PROVIDE A CLEARER SIGNAL?

- The Dog's Mind: Understanding Your Dog's Behavior
Bruce Fogle D.V.M. M.R.C.V.S.
- Don't Shoot the Dog: The New Art of Teaching and Training
Karen Pryor
- The Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs
Patricia McConnell PhD
- Absolutely Positively Gun Dog Training: Positive Training for Your Retriever Gundog
Robert Milner

INCREDIBLE RESOURCES