

## **Aggression**

Includes Pack Hierarchy Exercise

**NOTE: This handout is to be used as an outline from class. It does not cover all aspects of, or all the different types of aggression that can be diagnosed.**

**Dog aggression is a serious problem for people, their families, and their dogs.** Dog aggression (in general) is easy to diagnose, but many times is difficult to treat. If your dog has bitten someone, and especially if he has drawn blood, he has a much greater chance of repeating this action.

### **Dominance Aggression**

Dominance aggression is many times seen when a dog perceives that his place in the pack hierarchy is being threatened. This can refer to his place in the "family" or in just the "dog pack" if there are two or more dogs in the household and it usually occurs when there is a change in the living environment of the dog in question, such as getting a new puppy, moving, someone moving out of or into the house, or a change in working schedules, and/or where the dog spends his time.

#### Scenario 1:

When dogs are insecure in their place in the pack, they will exaggerate the essence of where on the hierarchy ladder they think they should be. For instance, if you bring a new puppy or dog home and your original dog becomes insecure in his status, he may exaggerate his dominance.

Exaggerating dominance = aggression.

In his view, his aggression will secure his position. If you feel this is the cause of your dog's aggression, please read the "Two or More Dogs" article.

#### Scenario 2:

Some breeds of dogs, and some individual dogs, tend to be more dominant than others by nature. These dogs tend to be very intelligent as well, and if you're not careful they can have you trained before you realize what has happened. This type of dog, if in the wild, would be the leader of a pack of dogs. They have a strong "Will to Power" (WTP), meaning that they have a high potential for dominance and assertiveness. They are leaders. Because they are natural leaders, it is then your responsibility to make sure you are the leader by harnessing their "Will to Serve" (WTS.). A dog's WTS is directly affected by the training he receives (or lacks.). This means that the sooner you begin teaching your dog proper behavior, and the more time you spend teaching your dog, the greater his WTS will grow. When your dog is fulfilled by his WTS, his WTP will diminish. If you feel your dog has a strong WTP and is a natural leader, and that he may be "challenging" or "testing" you, the first recommendation would be to enroll him in a basic obedience class as soon as possible. Once your dog understands and can regularly demonstrate "sit," "down," "stay," and "settle" you can begin incorporating these commands in your daily activities. In order to harness a dog's WTS he must feel he is "serving" you. When you command him to "down" while you prepare his meal, "sit" before you give him a treat, "wait" before he goes out the door, you are taking control of these situations by becoming the "leader" and commanding your dog to "serve" you. This reassures the dog about his proper place in the pack hierarchy.

#### Scenario 3:

Some well-meaning people simply do not understand the behavioral patterns in dogs and can actually be the catalyst for some unwanted behaviors. A dog is a living, breathing animal. He deserves

respect; however, sometimes people confuse respect with giving in to their dogs' every whim and desire.

Do you move over on the couch or bed if your dog wants to lie where you are?

Does your dog "demand" when you should play with him?

Give him a treat without a behavior?

These are simple examples that show you are being submissive to your dog. You are leader of the pack, you should not be submissive to your dog. Many other instances, sometimes complex in nature, can signify your submissive position to your dog. When a dog does not sense that there is a leader of the pack he will many times instinctively assume the leader role. When this scenario happens, the people involved often don't realize that their dog views himself as the "true alpha, leader of the whole family." If a dog with a strong WTP assumes the leader role in the family, he may become very dominant and aggressive, as any good doggie leader would. If a dog does not have a strong WTP, yet assumes the leader role due to lack of anyone else assuming that role (according to the dog's perception), he will most likely experience a great amount of anxiety with his new awesome responsibility. This anxiety will infiltrate his instinctive protective behavior and (seemingly) unexplained aggression will occur. If this sounds like your dog, you also need to harness his WTS as mentioned above, but at the same time you need to change your behavior so that your dog will feel confident in you as his leader.

**In all of these scenarios, your dog needs to *know* where he stands on the hierarchy ladder.** He needs to know he is on the *bottom* of the ladder, below all humans. This does not mean you should be mean or harsh with your dog. Unfortunately, many normal "corrections" that are taught in many obedience classes are quite coercive. Sometimes very dominant dogs will not respond to force, punishment, or other means of a negative nature. Over time, (and sometimes quite quickly) these types of actions can be severely detrimental to your dog. If you use harsh techniques and coercion on your dominant dog, instead of making him feel submissive, it can trigger his "survival instinct." When dominant animals are cornered, they do not submit - their survival instincts kick in and they fight back. The more punishment, or threats of punishment, given the stronger their inborn survival instinct becomes. Therefore, it is very important that you teach with *positive reinforcement and praise*.

## **Fear Aggression**

**Fear aggression in dogs is usually misdiagnosed and misunderstood by the family involved.** Fear aggression does not display itself as fear. The dog usually does not look or act fearful, so the dog's family does not realize the complex behavioral patterns taking place within their dog.

**Many dogs that are fear aggressive were not properly socialized** when they were young. Others may have been socialized but may have experienced a traumatic situation (many times unbeknownst to their family). I have come across many people who purposely do not socialize their dog in the hope of making him a watchdog. This is a grave error. They usually produce a dog that displays many of the characteristics they were hoping for, with one catch: their dog is unpredictable. An unsocialized dog will react aggressively to a new person or situation, but their aggression is based on fear, not confidence. For more information on this subject, please read "[How to Train Your Family Watchdog](#)."

**A lot of the fear aggression seen in dogs manifests itself into dog-to-dog aggression.** These dogs will growl, snap, and pounce other strange dogs when they meet. Fear-aggressive dogs usually behave more aggressively when they are on lead, but can show aggression off-lead as well. It is

believed that the fear-based, dog-aggressive dog was either **not properly socialized**, or **experienced a traumatic event** with another dog. A traumatic event to a dog is not necessarily traumatic to a person, therefore it can be easily overlooked or may even be completely unknown to the dog's family.

## Pack Hierarchy Exercise

### “Two or more dogs”

**One dog, one master: Everyone knows their place.** One dog, one master with a family of "people": The people may not all know their place, but the dog knows he's last on the hierarchy ladder of his "pack" (your family). When you have two or more dogs everything becomes more interesting for every canine!

**When two or more dogs** are living in the same household they instinctively begin a repertoire of "pack behavior." I will try to cover the basics here.

**There is an "alpha" (top on the ladder) in every "pack."** You, or your spouse, should be regarded by all dogs as the true "alpha leader." But the interesting stuff is just beginning, because inside the "People + Dog pack" exists the "Dog Pack." The Dog Pack also consists of an "alpha" or "top-dog." Democracy does not exist in the doggie world, and many times well-meaning people can mess up the doggie hierarchy and create unwanted fights by trying to treat all dogs as equals.

It is believed that dogs do not care so much *where* they belong on the hierarchy ladder, just as long as they *know* where they belong. This straight belief becomes somewhat bent when dealing with very dominant dogs who obviously wish to be alpha, and very insecure dogs who obviously will be submissive to anyone and anything they encounter. But still as a belief, it holds some weight; especially when trying to convince people that they need not feel "sorry" for the "omega" (bottom on the ladder) dog. **Problems will almost always occur when well-meaning people feel sorry for the omega dog and unknowingly begin treating it as an "alpha," and creating vicious jealousy and dog fights in the process.**

**The first thing to do when you have two or more dogs is to figure out which one of your dogs is "alpha." The alpha dog usually displays the following characteristics:**

- ALWAYS wins at tug-of-war with the other dogs.
- RECEIVES the most attention from the other dogs, sometimes not wanting the attention.
- RARELY or NEVER licks the other dogs on the mouth.
- Wins all STARING CONTESTS with the other dogs.
- May become JEALOUS when the other dogs receive attention from you.
- May STEAL or GUARD toys, chewies, food, etc.
- Usually has FIRST CHOICE of the best sleeping areas.
- May push his way to be FIRST out and in doorways.
- May MOUNT the other dogs (male or female).

**In contrast, the "omega" dog usually displays the following characteristics:**

- ALWAYS gives up first at tug-of-war with the other dogs.
- GIVES the most attention and affection to the other dogs, usually licking their mouths, especially the "alpha" dog's mouth.
- LOOKS AWAY when being stared at by the other dogs, and probably by you too.
- Freely GIVES UP toys, chewies, food, sleeping areas, etc. to the other dogs.
- Rolls on back and displays "BELLY" to other dogs, and probably to you too.
- May pee upon greeting the other dogs, and possibly people too.

**In most situations the alpha and omega are the easiest positions to determine,** and if you only have two dogs, the determination is usually much easier to make! With more than two dogs you can

run into dogs trading omega positions depending on the day. You can also have a "close second" alpha dog that is either the "Alpha Female" to the true top dog: the "Alpha Male;" or the "Beta" who is a dominant dog, yet **still second to the "Alpha."** **This wonderful web of personalities will need to be explained in another article as it can get pretty complicated! For more information read the Three or More Dogs article.**

**Back to basics;** Once you've determined where everyone stands on the hierarchy ladder, it is your responsibility to *reassure them constantly* and make them *feel secure in their positions*. If an alpha dog does not feel secure in his position as alpha, he will usually exaggerate his position to reassure himself. Exaggerating dominance (i.e., alpha) = aggression. This can be a problem at best, and deadly at worst. Therefore, here are some suggestions on how to reassure your dogs.

**The alpha dog gets everything FIRST.** He gets petted first, his food bowl put on the ground first, fed treats first, allowed outside and inside first, etc.

**The alpha dog also gets FIRST CHOICE of everything.** He gets first choice of toys, chewies, sleeping areas, etc. This can be tricky. Although he gets first choice (because you respect his alpha position), he is not allowed to change his mind and STEAL toys, chewies, etc. by staring, growling, pouncing, or attacking. It is your responsibility that you do not allow him to be a "bully." He may be allowed to "guard" his chosen toy as long as he isn't growling at the other dogs clear across the room, not letting them pass through door openings, hoarding all the toys and guarding them, etc. If he begins this behavior, take his guarded object(s) away, put it out of sight, and sneak it into the dogs' "toy box" for someone to find at a later date. The easiest way to give your alpha dog first choice is to take two chewies or toys, present them to him, let him pick one, then give the other one to the omega dog.

**One of the best ways I've found to reassure pack position,** especially when there is a new furry arrival, is to give the dogs' food treats in pack order. For the sake of simplicity, let's say the alpha dog's name is "ROVER" and the omega dog's name is "TIPPY." Instruct all the dogs to sit. Then, say "Rover's Treat!" and give a food treat to Rover. Then say "Tippy's Treat!" and give a food treat to Tippy. This exercise alone spells out very clearly where everyone stands on the hierarchy ladder and also confirms they are both at the bottom of the "People + Dog Pack" because YOU are giving the food.

While you are doing the above suggestions it is important that you do not unwittingly encourage aggression in the alpha dog. This sometimes happens because people are under the false impression that they are supposed to lavish the alpha dog with attention, while almost ignoring the omega dog. If this happens, the omega dog may have a difficult time gaining confidence in herself because she is rarely praised for anything. And to make matters worse, the alpha dog may believe that your *true desire* is to ignore the omega dog and give *him* (the alpha dog) attention. Therefore, he believes he is *servicing* you by growling and showing aggression toward the omega dog. The "Humanization" article may give you more insight into this problem as well.

**This situation can be difficult and usually occurs when introducing a new dog into the pack.** Although the alpha dog may get more attention, do not lavish attention on him while purposely ignoring the omega dog. At the same time, you need to try to sneak in as much attention toward that omega dog as possible! Don't lock the alpha in another room to give the omega attention, rather, give the alpha a "job" to do, so he is serving you and pleasing you. Play fetch with him while you pet the omega dog (easier said than done, but possible), put him in a down stay while you groom the omega dog (after you groomed him first, of course). When you're done grooming, *release them both at the same time*, then **PRAISE the alpha first**, then the omega. Do not praise the omega less, just last.

**Avoid "holding" one dog.** Whenever a dog is on a lap, or within a "hug" (especially if the dog is *physically higher* than the other, i.e. on a chair, couch, or in your arms), they may become territorially protective of *you the territory*. If you *must* hold a dog, try to hold the alpha first to appease him, then put him in a down stay while you hold the omega. Release at the same time and praise the alpha first, then the omega. I have personally found that praising with food treats can be beneficial if you have a food-oriented alpha and you give the treats a (physical) distance apart from one another. If the dogs are commanded to "sit" before given a food treat every time before they are given a food treat, they should stay in the "sit" apart from one another until they are both done eating and you release them. This will inhibit any desire for the alpha dog to attack the omega for the food treat. If you have an omega dog that needs some confidence bolstering, read the article: "Building Confidence in a Shy or an Omega Dog."

**If your alpha dog is not reliable in a "sit," "down," "stay," and "settle"** this would be an excellent time to take him to (or back to) obedience class. Take each of your dogs to doggie class on separate nights. This is the best opportunity for you to have quality time with each individual dog and probably one of the only times you will ever have to do so!

### **“Three or more dogs”**

When you have three or more dogs in a household it can be more difficult to figure out the pack hierarchy. In any pack, the standard hierarchy is:

1. Alpha Male (Most dominant male)
2. Alpha Female (Most dominant female)
3. Beta (Second most dominant male)
4. Everyone in between
5. Omega (Most submissive)

The Alpha dog in the wild is a male dog. The domesticated Alpha dog in the household can be either male or female depending on many things, including who was there first, who is bigger and stronger, who is smarter, and who is neutered or spayed and who is not. The human presence complicates matters as well. Because the dogs in your family need to know that you are the true "Alpha," it can sometimes confuse things a bit in the "dog pack." For instance, if you are the true Alpha, is the Alpha Female a human or a dog? What about the Beta? You can see that it can get pretty messy when trying to decipher the intricate nature of pack order.

Instead of attempting the (probably) impossible task of explaining each and every variety there may be in a human/dog pack structure we can use a simple exercise to concentrate on your dog pack in your household.

### **Pack Hierarchy Exercise**

On a pad of paper, write down each of your dog's names so that they form a circle on the paper. Starting with Dog #1, define the relationship between him or her and Dog #2. To define their relationship draw a straight line from Dog #1 to Dog #2. Who is the dominant dog between the two? Adjacent to the line you just drew, put a "+" sign next to

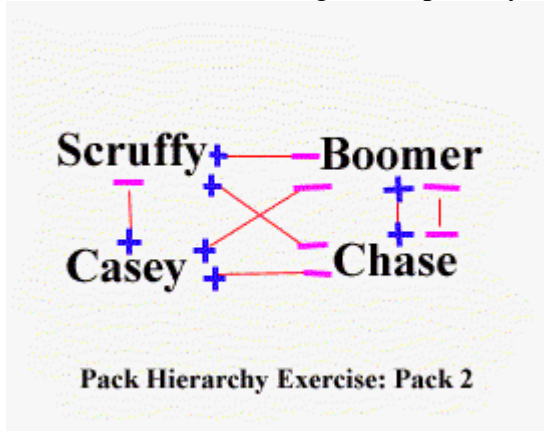
the dominant dog's name. Next, adjacent to the line, next to the submissive dog's name, put a "-" sign. Your diagram should resemble the sample below.



As you can see from the diagram, this pack has 5 dogs. We simplified the process by looking at the relationship between each dog with the another individual dog. With our results we can clearly see that Mike is the Alpha, Sugar is the Alpha Female, Tazzy is the Beta, Tippy lies in-between, and Lady is the Omega of the pack. Please take the time to do this exercise with your dog pack, it can be very enlightening. It is very important that you don't automatically place "+"s and "-"s by dog's names that you feel deserve them. Instead, take the time to evaluate each dogs' relationship with each other dog.

Unfortunately, most diagrams are not as cut and dried. Many times you will find overlapping roles and even cases where they "flip-flop" between dominance and submission. The more dogs your pack has, the more difficult it is for you to figure out where everyone stands. In some cases it is also more difficult for the dogs. It is recommended that your household dog pack should be no more than 5-7 dogs. This is a general recommendation as there are plenty of happy "packs" that have more than 5-7 members. However, more than 5-7 dogs is a lot of responsibility for the Alpha dog. This burden of responsibility can sometimes cause stress within the pack that can be the catalyst to challenges and fights. If you have quite a few dogs, and are having problems with some of them fighting, you may want to consider arranging their living environment so that they can form two distinct packs. What would be the Alpha dogs (or Female Alphas) of what would be two separate packs may very well be the ones that are fighting.

Let's look at another diagram of pack dynamics of our pack 2 example:



Here is a more realistic diagram of the intricacies of pack order. First, let's look at Scruffy and Casey. Scruffy and Casey are older dogs and were in the household long before Boomer and Chase. Scruffy

is male, Casey is female. It looks as if Casey is the Alpha of the pack and she may well be. But it is important to take a closer look at their relationship. When a male dog and a female dog are dominant over the rest of the pack they usually fall into the roles of "Alpha" and "Alpha Female." It may be possible that this Casey appears to be dominant over Scruffy, when in fact she may not be. It is believed that the male Alpha will not fight the Female Alpha, and therefore will take unending abuse from her! If you have two dogs that resemble this scenario go back to the "Two or More Dogs" article and see if your male dog isn't the Alpha. If he is bigger and stronger than the female, there is a good chance that he is really the Alpha. If he is not neutered, he has an even stronger chance that he is the Alpha. It is not unusual for an Alpha Female to become downright nasty with the Alpha male sometimes, even though she is not the Alpha. After all, she is the "mom" of the pack, and it's her job to keep everyone in line, and that she does.

Now we know that Scruffy and Casey are both Alpha dogs, one ranking second in command; which one is first and second depends upon further evaluation of their relationship by the family. If Casey does turn out to be the Alpha, that means Scruffy is probably much smaller or neutered (or both) and Scruffy takes the second Alpha role in place of the "Alpha Female" role. Are you thoroughly confused yet? Let's move on to Boomer and Chase.

Chase was adopted about a year ago as a puppy. He was the Omega of the pack to Scruffy and Casey. When Boomer was adopted a few months ago Chase was under some stress for awhile. Boomer was younger and smaller (at 8 weeks old) than Chase so it was obvious to all the dogs that Boomer was the new Omega of the pack. This took some adjustment for Chase and for a few weeks he was "acting up" in the family, being rowdier than usual and sometimes showing aggression toward Boomer. Chase was securing his new status in the pack. Scruffy and Casey's status didn't change, they just had another pack member to consider. But Chase had to change his role, and his behavior naturally changed as well.

I know you are still wondering why there are both "+" and "-" signs by both Boomer's and Chase's names. This is because Boomer grew up in the past few months. He is now bigger and stronger than Chase, but still respects Chase. Chase is more responsible than Boomer, mostly because he has been alive longer but also because Boomer has a "childlike" personality. If Boomer and Chase got lost, Boomer would most likely be the cause of their dilemma and Chase would probably lead the way home. Chase can also "stare down Boomer" and steal his food if he wants to. But in the backyard playing, Boomer has all the advantage. He can body slam Chase with little effort and Chase keeps coming back for more.

Boomer and Chase "flip-flop" their Omega role depending on the situation. Chase, right now, has the upper hand and is more dominant than Boomer. It will take another year or so before Chase and Boomer decide where they stand on the hierarchy ladder. It will depend mostly on Boomer's inner nature toward dominance or submission. They are both males, and both will be neutered. If Boomer chooses to dominate Chase, he will be physically able to do so; if he wants to be the playful baby of the pack and let Chase dominate, he can do that too.

Now we know where (or just about where) everyone stands in our Dog Pack 2. Now what? It is your responsibility to treat all pack members with respect in their appropriate roles. This reassures each dog where they stand, and lessens the possibility of any fighting. Scruffy and Casey are both Alpha dogs and should be treated as such. They should always be treated as Alpha over Chase and Boomer. Depending on which dog is the true Alpha of the dog pack determines the subtle difference in treatment between the two. Chase and Boomer are both Omega dogs, swapping their roles; however, Chase should be given the respect he deserves for being in the household longer. As Boomer grows

up, you need to watch their interaction carefully so you can reassure each dog in their appropriate roles.

Our last Pack Hierarchy Exercise will produce still different results.



This Dog Pack has the oldest female, Trixie as the first Alpha of the pack. Jake, the second Alpha (taking the place of the Alpha Female) probably would've been Alpha if Trixie hadn't been there first, in charge of the pack already, when he was adopted. Before Jake came into the picture, Trixie and Sadie were best friends. Trixie was dominant and Sadie was submissive. When Jake arrived as a pup, Trixie made sure everyone knew she was the "top dog" by sometimes "staring them down," stealing toys from Jake, and becoming less of a playmate with Sadie. Trixie was exaggerating her Alpha role so that Jake and Sadie knew where they stood, and she was reassured that she was "top dog." Sadie took a liking to Jake and if Jake and Sadie were not neutered and spayed they would probably mate. Even though Jake was a puppy, Sadie easily maintained her role as the Omega when Jake was adopted.

Next to enter the pack was Muffy. At first, Sadie did not like Muffy. Jake thought Muffy was a fun new friend, and Trixie watched everything from afar. When Muffy was adopted, Trixie's status did not change, it in fact was reassured by another submissive female. Jake's role was also not altered, he was still second in command and had a new playmate to boot. Sadie experienced difficulty with Muffy's arrival. Sadie would growl and snap at Muffy if she came too close to her. Sadie was under stress as she was leaving her Omega role, a role she had had since her birth. She was not experienced in being higher than anyone on the hierarchy ladder. She did not know how to behave in her new role and also felt displaced because she was no longer the Omega of the pack. Luckily, the dog pack's family realized the stress that Sadie was experiencing and began taking her to a doggie class once a week to help build her confidence. They began feeding treats to the dog pack in the new pack order, which reassured Sadie of her new position. After three weeks Sadie and Muffy began playing together. Sadie still needs her "private time" away from Muffy, but they get along fine now.

The next two dogs to enter the pack were Derby and Justin. They were adopted within one year of each other and are both males. As usual, Trixie welcomed her new pack members with reserved interest. Jake and Sadie grumbled a little when the pups would want to play too much, but handled the newcomers well. Jake and Sadie were both old enough and big enough so that neither Derby nor Justin could threaten their status. Muffy also welcomed the new kids on the block. She spent hours playing with one or both of them, always turning "belly up," showing that she was the Omega of the pack and happy to remain the Omega.

Derby and Justin are sometimes in a world of their own. They are inseparable and play together often. They stay out the older dogs' way, and are sometimes able to convince one of them to play, especially

Trixie. Trixie has established herself as the Alpha for her whole life, she feels secure in her position, and is now beginning to enjoy the playfulness of the two younger dogs when she feels like it. Derby and Justin are the "in-between" dogs. They flip-flop their status on a daily and sometimes hourly basis. Whichever one of them gets to the "favorite" doggie bed (of the ones not already taken by Trixie and Jake) first at night becomes the more dominant one the next day.

As you can see, every dog pack has its own individual characteristics. It is important to recognize the placement of everyone in your dog pack so that you can assure everyone of their status. The easiest way to do this is with food and games. The Alpha gets fed first... and on down the hierarchy ladder. When dogs feel secure in their status they can concentrate on serving you. And when they are serving you, they feel they are being productive and are happy.

When you have a "pack" (two or more) of dogs in your household, it is important that you spend quality time with each pack member. The best way I have found to do this is to take each dog to a doggie class on a separate night. If you have seven or more dogs, I imagine you won't be able to take each dog once a week. No matter how many dogs you have, it is good for the individual dog if they can get out of the house, away from their pack, on a consistent basis. They need to socialize with other dogs without the back-up of their pack members. You'll be surprised to see your dominant dog be hesitant and maybe even submissive around a new situation or dog. Your dog needs to gain and have confidence in himself and you as his leader to handle new situations, strange places, and other dogs. You may also see your Omega dog displaying dominant characteristics to another dog met at doggie class. It is good for your dogs to experience new things, as it gives them confidence and helps them bond with you individually. I cannot recommend doggie class more highly. When I say doggie class, I mean ANY doggie class. There are a lot of them to choose from! Of course, basic obedience should be your first choice, but after that, there are many choices out there; check out our "Activities & Sports for Dogs" at our Dog Links page for some ideas.

Having three or more dogs in a household can be an exhilarating pleasure. They can also be time consuming and a hassle to take care of if you are not prepared. I advise you not to jump into having lots of dogs without having two (or even three) first. They are individual beings that require love, care, attention, and plenty of playtime. For all of you dog lovers of the world, WOOF! to you and your pack, may everyone find their role in peace!

### **In Conclusion:**

**When working with an aggressive dog (or any dog)** it is *very important* that you teach with *praise*. Using aggression to solve aggression simply doesn't work. You want to harness your dog's WTS so that he becomes happiest when he pleases you. If he presently has a high WTP, or a strong fear-base for aggression, it will undermine your attempts to scold him. So... never scold him; teach him instead. Teach him how you want him to behave. He's behaving the only way he knows how and it's probably worked very well for all of his life! You need to give him a *reason* to change his behavior.

Be careful using harsh corrections with your dog. Harsh corrections or scolding can many times back-fire, making matters worse. If your dog perceives the correction as a "threat" he may react instinctively to your threat by showing aggression. This is very natural for him, because your perceived "threats" create a confusing and unstable atmosphere for your dog and lessen the bond between both of you. How can he "trust" you if he thinks you're always threatening him

**The important key to this goal is that YOU are ultimately in control of your dog**, and your dog is confident in your control. You can trust your dog around people and strangers, and feel protected at the same time

**Lastly, encourage *all petting* from family members, and *especially strangers* to only be on the neck and chest. Petting a dominant dog on the head or behind the ears can trigger a defense mechanism. Petting a fear-based aggressive dog on the head or behind the ears can be perceived as a threat. Petting on the neck and chest shows affection in a non-dominant manner.**

**Training and information within this handout is from the following sources:**

One is **Jean Donaldson** and her book [Dogs Are From Neptune](#).

Another is C.W. Meisterfeld, Ph.D. His philosophy of teaching based on mutual respect and trust has earned him many awards. He is the pioneer of canine psychoanalysis and Psychological Dog Training. He is considered the first canine psychoanalyst expert witness to be recognized/approved in the judicial system of the United States California Supreme Court. He has written many wonderful books, including one that I especially urge you to read if you're having aggression problems with your dog: "[Jelly Bean VS. Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde](#)." You can find more information about his philosophy at [Meisterfeld's Psychological Dog Training](#) website.

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