

I Am My Dog's Health Hero!

Your Dog's Brain Wellness, Gut Wellness and Training
All Work Together to Explain Your Dog's Behaviour:
What You Can Do About It!



A-OK9

a-ok9.com

Reactivity

Behaviour struggles like “reactivity”, barking in and out of the house, pulling on lead and generally being distracted represent a complex interaction between:



**YOUR DOG'S
BRAIN WELLNESS**



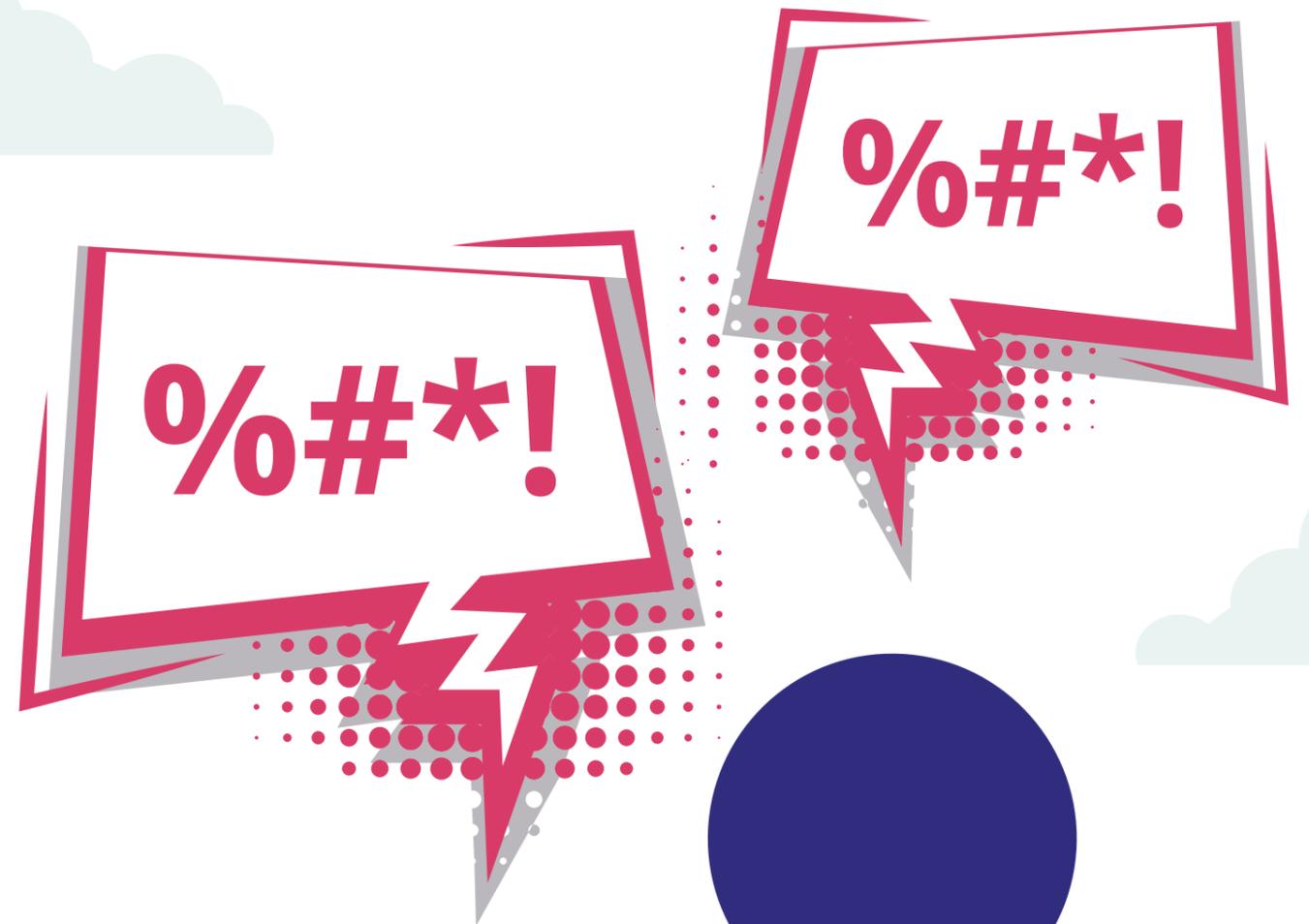
**YOUR DOG'S GUT
WELLNESS**



**YOUR DOG'S
TRAINING**

And when things get bad, it can sometimes seem tricky to know which to tackle first.

The often forgotten influencers of whether your dog is a stressed-out canine or chilled companion are their brain and gut!



Your dog's **BRAIN** wellness!

As often discussed in humans, levels of brain chemicals (such as serotonin) influence your mood, your calmness, your energy levels and the choices you make.

It's exactly the same for animals too - in fact, numerous studies supplementing these chemicals to dogs' diets (in their precursor form) have shown transformational effects on their behaviour with this alone (Bosch et al., 2009; DeNapoli et al, 2000; Kato et al., 2012).



Your dog's GUT wellness!

The gastrointestinal (i.e. the gut) nervous system and the central nervous systems (i.e. the brain) have been shown to be closely linked and interacting, and this has been implicated in a variety of stress related conditions, such as lack of calmness, fear and anxiety - the most common causes of behaviour struggles in dogs (Heijtz et al 2011; Kirchoff et al 2019; Yang et al., 2019) -

Ever Felt "HANGER?"

Even more exciting? There's increasing evidence showing that the microbiome (i.e. the community of tiny microbes that live inside your dog's gut) directly creates neurotransmitters (like serotonin) as well as well as influences production of these chemicals in other body areas. This, in turn has a huge direct impact on brain health!



Signs of a breakdown in your training, your dog's brain wellness or your dog's gut wellness:

- Barking
- Lunging
- Pulling on Lead
- Being Distracted on Walks
- "Reactivity" to dogs, people or other animals
- Aggression
- Noise Phobia
- Separation Anxiety
- General Anxiety
- Shyness
- Lack of Motivation for Interaction or Training
- General Lethargy

The Reality of a Three Step Cycle Influencing Our Dog's Behaviour and General Well-being!

...and other dog owning struggles represent a complex interaction between:



STEP 1
YOUR TRAINING



STEP 2
BRAIN WELLNESS



STEP 3
GUT WELLNESS



Dog Behaviour Transformation Happens with Great Training, Optimal Brain Wellness and Optimal Gut Wellness!

So - you are probably thinking, how can I make this happen?



BRAIN-GUT-BEHAVIOUR BOOSTERS

BOOST 1

You Get Out What You Put In!

You can actually ensure peak mental and physical health by what you feed your dog! What we feed our dogs represents the building blocks by which they maintain a calm, confident and balanced approach to life.

In fact in humans, a “junk food” based diet has been found to be harmful to the gut microbiome. But, aside from not feeding your dog the equivalent of artificial “junk” food - what could you feed them instead to promote brain and gut health?

Well, the gut microbiome is closely involved in the metabolism of tryptophan, an essential amino acid for dogs (i.e. it cannot be made and has to be supplied by diet), and tryptophan is a biochemical precursor of the neurotransmitter serotonin! Low serotonin levels have been linked with increased depression and anxiety in humans, and increased behaviours associated with aggression in dogs, cats, rats and pigs.

Therefore, key to enhancing this process is firstly supporting gut wellness and, secondly, promoting adequate sources of dietary tryptophan.

Natural Sources of Tryptophan:



WELLNESS HACK:
CALM-K9 has high levels of tryptophan in a manageable and tasty powder form!

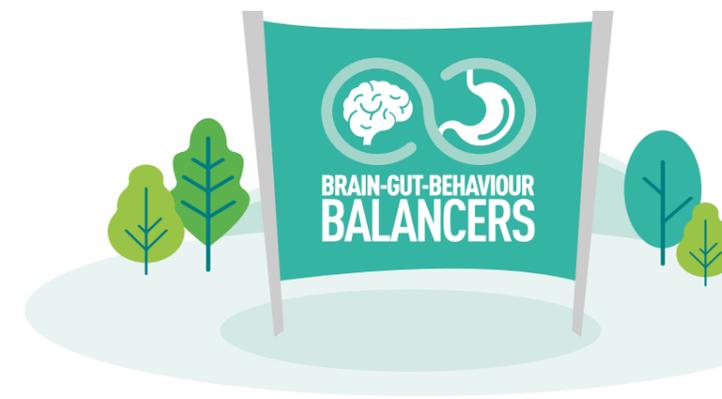
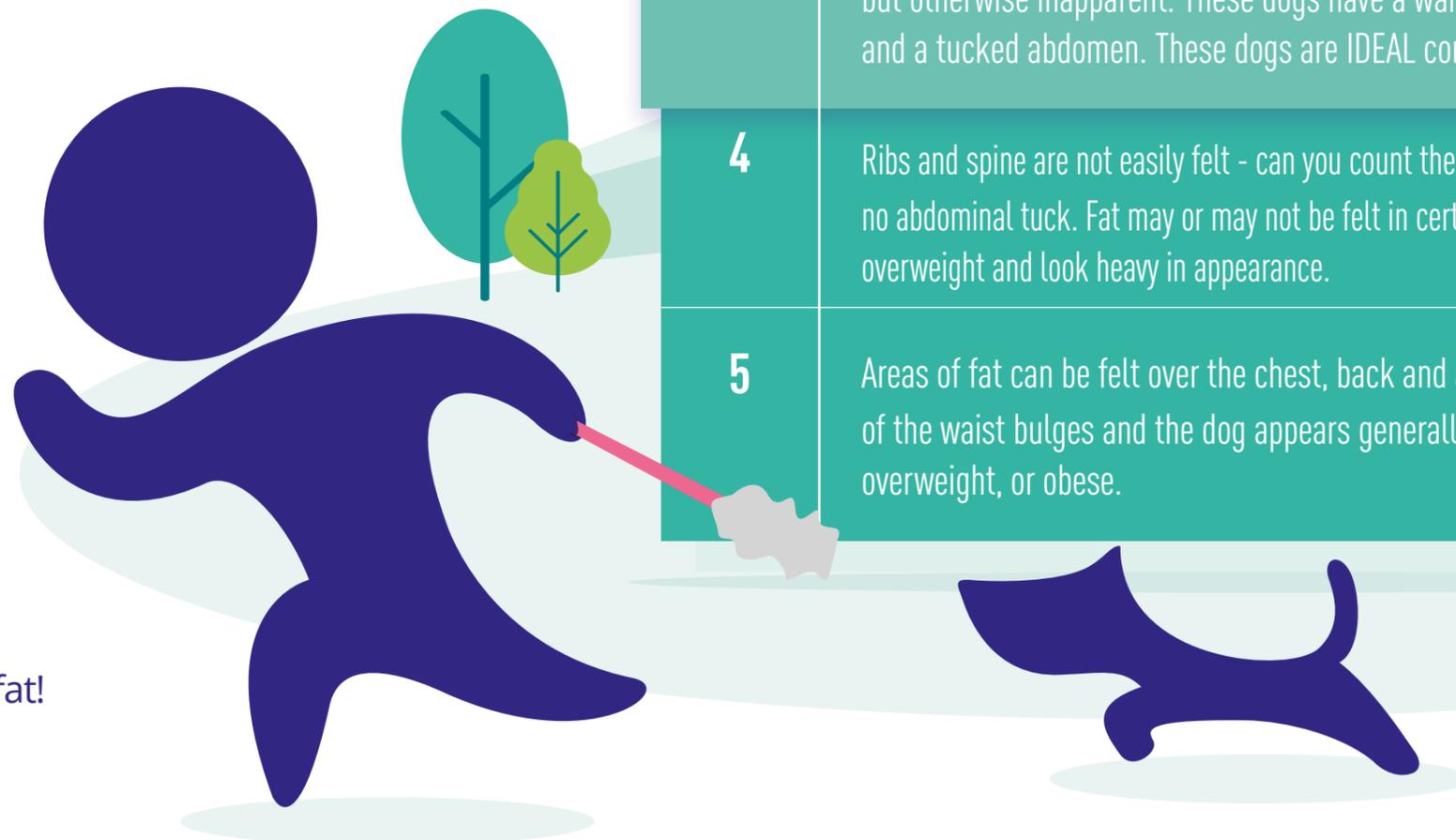
BOOST 2

Exercise & Fitness

Exercise & Physical Fitness Promote Microbiome Diversity!

Exercise has been found to boost microbiome diversity in humans and avoids the negative impacts of obesity on gut and brain health too (Clarke et al., 2014)

The same is true for your pooch. Do a 'body condition score' on your dog to find out how they're measuring up, by calculating their brain-gut score using our simple tool. You are aiming for a 3 for optimal brain and gut health! Each point represents a 10% change in body fat!



BODY CONDITION CALCULATOR

SCORE!	DESCRIPTION!
1	Ribs, spine and hips are easily seen at distance and the bones feel sharp to touch. Dogs in this condition appear emaciated.
2	Ribs, spine and hips are easily felt and can be seen when close. These dogs have an obvious "waist" when looking from above and a very tucked abdomen (tummy). These dogs appear skinny.
3	Ribs, spine and hips are easily felt and may be seen easily when stretched out but otherwise inapparent. These dogs have a waist when viewed from above and a tucked abdomen. These dogs are IDEAL condition and often muscular.
4	Ribs and spine are not easily felt - can you count them?! There is no waist and no abdominal tuck. Fat may or may not be felt in certain areas. These dogs are overweight and look heavy in appearance.
5	Areas of fat can be felt over the chest, back and at the base of the tail. The area of the waist bulges and the dog appears generally swollen! This is extremely overweight, or obese.

Exercise is arousing.

Fitness doesn't need to be

It's easy to give our dogs a chase game, allow them to play or take them on a long walk in the expectation that it will wear them out. It's a typical response to an overactive dog isn't it? Give them more exercise.

But if your dog is reactive or overactive because he can't relax and his arousal bucket is full, then exercise is going to increase that arousal level, not alleviate it.

After an arousing or over stimulating event, we recommend 72 hours of calmness, and that includes avoiding arousing and stimulating exercise.

This doesn't mean no exercise at all. In fact, we have a great programme called Triple F which contains a toolbox of fitness games that includes a lot of activities for your dog to do that are calming but still build fitness - and you can play them at home! The **Triple F Fitness Programme** is a full fitness formula starting from foundation level and up.

Not only is this great for when your dog needs some downtime away from the outside world, but also on those rainy days, in extremes of temperature and a great brain and gut wellness boost too!



You can grab the **Triple F Programme** as an instant digital download at:

absolutedogs.me/solutions



Absolute Dogs[®]

TRIPLE-F

FAST

Strength, Style,
Cardio Fitness

FIT

Proprioceptive Ability
& Core

FLEX

Flexibility. No Stiffness
Through Joints & Body

and remember to use coupon code: **GAME30** to get 30% off

BOOST 3

A lack of Calmness negatively affects the gut microbiome and wellness!

Frequent excitement, fear and so-called “reactivity” cause a reduction in blood flow to the gut, making it a less hospitable environment for the gut bacteria community, as well as directly negatively impacting the gut microbes themselves. This could lead to a vicious cycle of worsening gut wellness, brain wellness and behaviour.



What to do about it...

The calmness triad & strategies to empty your dog's bucket

You are going to inspire calmness to support your dog's behaviour, brain wellness and gut wellness through a combination of the calmness triad, calmness strategies and some calmness games! Firstly, structure your dog's day to promote calmness with this 3-step calmness protocol known as The Calmness Triad:

1. Passive Calming Activities

Employ your dog in a calming activity where your involvement is minimal. It is their time to enjoy some enrichment. This could be things like, Scatter Feeding, Stuffed Kongs, Filled Tracheas, Dehydrated Treats, Scenting, Puzzle Feeders

2. Calmness Protocol.

Or as we like to call it; the REWARD NOTHING Game. Pick moments when your dog is naturally calm, catch them doing what you want and reward it! Success with this game only comes when you embrace your inner-ninja! What we mean by this is the way in which you deliver the reinforcement. Make it as non eventful from your part as possible. Calmly pick up a piece of your dog's food, calmly walk over to where your dog is, and calmly place

it down on the bed that they are on and walk away. Be as ninja as you can possibly be!

3. Active Rest

Making sure that your dog gets enough rest is so essential to their ability to be calm. If that means popping your dog into a safe space where their choices are limited then that is the way to go. You might use a crate, a pen, a suitable boundary (remember, you need to limit choices for anything except rest) or a smaller room in the house. It's important to build up value for the spaces that you are going to use and for the independence that your dog needs to be happy and relaxed in their area. Do this by initially keeping sessions short, staying nearby (visit often) and making the area super rewarding by providing calm feeding opportunities.

PASSIVE CALMING ACTIVITIES

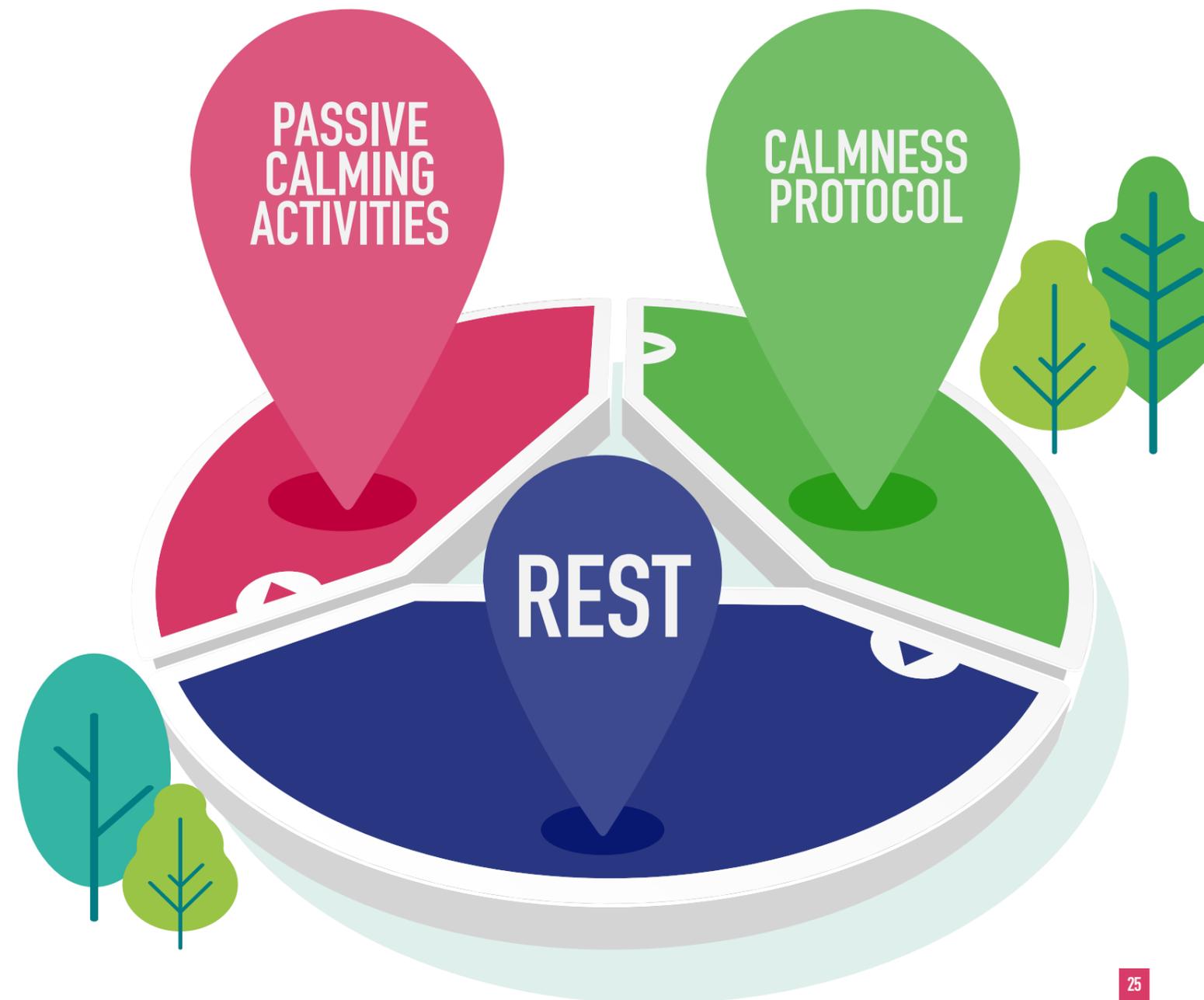
- Scatter Feeding
- Meaty Bones
- Filled Kongs
- Treat Balls
- Filled Tracheas
- Dehydrated Treats
- Scenting
- Puzzle Feeders

CALMNESS PROTOCOL

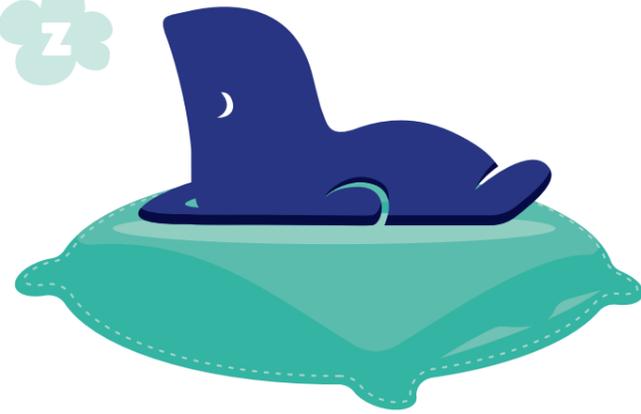
Feed whenever calm, time feeding with external distractions and if you want to not train at any time pop them in a crate or give them a passive calming activity. Don't get frustrated.

REST

- Crates
- Pens
- Rooms
- Experienced dogs on raised beds



Calmness strategies



Calm Zones: For a dog that needs to learn calmness, thinking about having some space in your house that is just calm space is super important. Think about having rooms for training and play and rooms where you chill. If you frequently play crazy tug or throw and fetch in the lounge and then want to sit down to a relaxing movie in the evening, there is no distinction for your dog who may sit throughout the film staring at you waiting for you to play. We call this rehearsing the room! Practise the energy that you want your dog to choose when being in there. Calmness creates more calmness!

Ditch the Food Bowl: If you really need to focus on calmness, then you need all the help that you can get to communicate to your dog that calm is the way to be. The best way of doing

that is to use as much of your dogs daily food allowance for rewarding and encouraging calm behaviours. Calmness feeding can include a snuffle mat, a stuffed hoof, kong or other toy, or scatter feeding. Scatter feeding is a really awesome and super easy method of feeding to encourage calm. You can use it at home and out on walks. The activity of snuffling on the floor and searching out the food is super calming for your dog – especially when you time the scatter feed with outside distractions.

Ditch the routine: Dogs are born predicting. It's a survival skill – learning to predict where the food will be and when there's danger is essential for survival. Increasing flexibility and limiting opportunities for prediction will truly enhance calmness for your dog.



Before games, life with my dog looked like, going on stressful walks with a dog that snapped and lunged at every dog she saw.

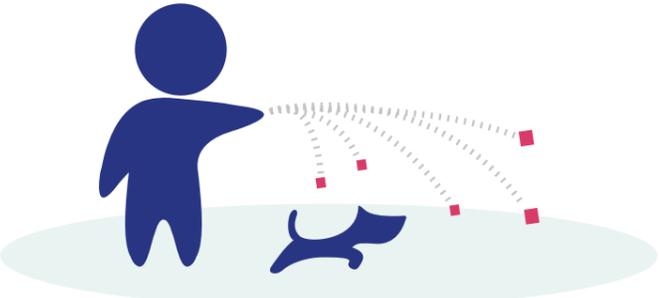
Now I can go for walks and have no response to dogs all around us and have the tools / games needed to help us work through situations.

Shalonda Van Schuyver

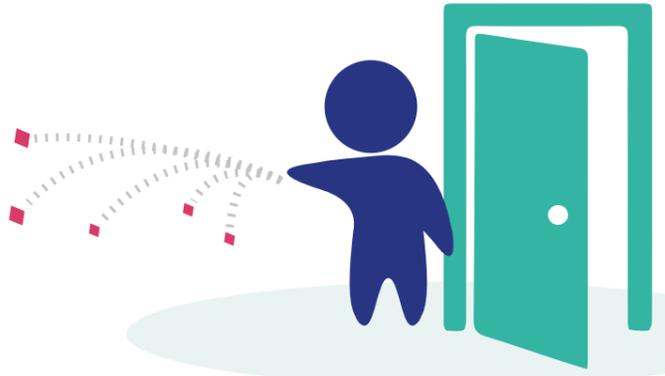


FREE BONUS GAME

Scatter Feed



1. Scatter feeding is a simple but very useful strategy to use in different situations. It lowers excitement levels, allows to achieve better focus and a calmer behaviour with multiple dogs



2. Scatter feeding on arrival to collect or greet a dog is a great way to build trust and confidence while lowering excitement levels at the same time



3. Dogs entering a vehicle can be an exciting event... lower the excitement levels by scatter feeding into the cage or crates as they enter the vehicle



4. Taking dogs out of a vehicle can be can send energy levels skyward again...lower the excitement levels by scatter feeding as the exit the vehicle



5. Life is exciting and daily distractions can increase energy levels, scatter feed away from any distractions to regain focus with single or multiple dogs

Calmness Games

Ready to get your game on! Playing games to enhance the concept of calmness is your next ingredient in the mix. Enjoy playing our top 3 calmness games with your dog, follow the steps for each game and you'll be onto a winner!

DMT Distraction, Mark, Treat & Orientation Marker

1.
You will need

YOU + DOG + FOOD + LEASH & HARNESS

2. Pair a verbal calm marker eg 'Niiiiiice' and calmly reinforce with food...Repeat several times. Place a piece of food on the ground, then say your calm verbal marker 'Niiiiiice' as they orientate to you

3.
No distractions, on lead. Say the calm verbal cue 'Niiiiiice'. Feed for orientation calmly back to you

4. Distant positive distractions. Say the calm verbal cue when you see distant distractions, feed when they calmly orientate back to you

5. Distant more challenging distraction...mark...'Niiiiiice' when you see distraction, feed when they calmly orientate back to you

6. Progress to see a distraction... offering a calm response, then mark 'Niiiiiice' and deliver treat

Aeroplane Feeding

If your dog is super busy, this is a perfect game to slow things down and create some stillness

1.
You will need

DOG + YOU + TASTY FOOD + BOUNDARY OPTIONAL

2. You can use a boundary (a bed, a mat... anything for your dog to sit on or stand on) with a piece of food in your hands and slooooooowly deliver a piece of food

3. If your dog gets excited the aeroplane reverses and the food moves away from your dog

4. When your dog is still again deliver the food sloooooowly. No snatching! No grabbing!

5. This helps make your dog much more thoughtful and calm around things that excite them. **Sloooooow speed is key here**

BOOST 4

Sleep is POWERFUL!

Sleep pattern changes and disruption have been shown to have negative effects on both brain wellness and gut wellness, causing a double whammy negative impact on behaviour (Voigt et al., 2014)!

Making sure your dog has plenty of sleep and makes up for it when they miss out on it after busy periods is vital to optimal brain-gut-behaviour balance!

Your dog won't necessarily make the choice to sleep in exciting or stimulating or busy environments (They clearly don't know about the negative impacts on their gut microbiota ;-)), and this is where as owners we need to help them out by providing them with a calm, quiet and secure environment to settle down.

BRAIN-GUT-BEHAVIOUR
BALANCERS

BOOST 5

CALM-K9

Working to support your dog's brain and gut by incorporating the right things into their diet as well as keeping on top of training is no easy task

The vicious cycle of worsening behaviour, spiralling down brain wellbeing and decreasing gut vitality until recently could feel impossible to surmount.

We created a supplement that supports brain and gut in a scoop-a-day while you focus on the training - helping to:

- unlock the hidden progress you might have been making all along,
- support the gut microbiome,
- provide dietary tryptophan,
- promote general wellbeing,
- support your training,
- Inspire calmness and rest, through a combination of natural ingredients, developed into a tasty powder you add to your dog's food!

Grab your pot at a-ok9.com



Check out what others have to say



This is Joanna's story:

Just started my second pot for my noise sensitive girl Rayah! I have to say that I have noticed GREAT improvement! She is less reactive, more able to disengage, walks better on lead and is generally more affectionate! ””



Here is Donna's story:

We started to continue to give our dog Calm-K9 past the 50 days despite the fact we saw initial marked improvement in her behaviour. We can't deny how good her skin and coat look! She clearly had a microbiome imbalance in her gut which was causing very confusing allergy symptoms! Her ears have remained clean without cleaning, whereas normally we are constantly cleaning them! We have been working through the concepts and games, and we have a fab, healthy, optimistic dog, who is maybe a little on the 'wild' side! She is also becoming more thoughtful in play, watching her tilt her head as she's playing!





This is Carol's story:

We have been VERY happy with our Calm-K9! We have three dogs, two are VERY reactive outside! Before Calm-K9 it was very hard to get their attention and keep it. They would bark and lunge at sounds, dogs, people etc. When we had guests come round we would put them in their crates and they would bark the entire evening! ””



Here is Lorena's story:

Great results in my house! My nearly 10 year old dog has always been lead reactive to other dogs and had a broken greeting chain, but it was easily managed. 30 days into Calm-K9, and Summer is barely dog reactive at all. No reacting when in the car, disengaging from other dogs on walks, and even had several calm and complete greetings with similarly sized off lead dogs! I was extremely sceptical about it, but I'm now very happy I tried it! ””



This is Casey's story:

This stuff is AMAZING! It worked so well with one dog, I tried it on the other too! I have just purchased 5 more tubs! We have reduced barking and my first dog doesn't trigger stack which is amazing! His reactivity levels are at 2-3, whereas normally they'd be at an 8! My other dog used to growl when groomed, and now lets me brush her! I could go on and on! ””





This is Tina's story:

This has made a HUGE difference in Kurtis! He is a rescue from the streets of Iran and was really struggling with walking, he was reacting to everything, barking and lunging etc. He would lunge at cars driving by and it was really scary! He has now been on Calm K9 for about 2 months and I have started to notice a difference in the last couple of weeks! Last night we went for a walk and he didn't lunge at anything! Not cars, people, even another dog walker! He seems to be more chilled at home and comfortable in his own skin. He attends training twice a week and they have also noticed a difference in him!



This is Wendi's AMAZING story:

Peggy is a great dog, but she suffers from severe separation anxiety. We have been working on it for 3 years, and can still only leave her for 1 hour before we get hysterics. She has been using Calm K9 for 3 weeks now, and we have left her TWICE for over 2 hours!!! OMG I so hope this is a turning point for her!



Here is Aleksandra's story:

We've been using Calm K9 for 50 days now and it has 100% helped Maia's reactivity to dogs! She usually does not tolerate pushy dogs, body contact, paws, mouths, growling, puppies, bouncy dogs and meetings on a lead for longer than 3 seconds! As soon as she feels threatened in any way she will react and become defensive. She is also food/water possessive. In the past 50 days, we have had ONE, just ONE isolated incident where she became reactive, it was with a dog she'd fought with before and the reaction was after A LOT of pushing from the other dog (my fault). To put that in perspective, even with dogs she knows and meets several times a week, she would react 1 to 2 times a week, so this is HUGE for her! That is not all! While on lead, two strange dogs ran up to her and pestered her for a good 2-3 minutes before the owner caught up...NO REACTION! While off lead she was growled at by a dog...NO REACTION! Another dog ran up to her water bowl while she was drinking...NO REACTION! I am astonished, I was sceptical at first, but I am so so so happy with the results we are seeing! If you are considering giving Calm K9 a go, don't hesitate, GO FOR IT!





Here is Linda's story:

On 10th February, my 13 year old boy Rocky suffered a vestibular episode and was very poorly. He stopped eating for 4 days and I thought I would lose him. On 15th February when he started to eat soft food I started to give him the Calm K9. It was like he was completely shutdown and he wouldn't even make eye contact with me at his worst. On 21st February he had a vet check and the vet said that he is remarkably bright!!! He is almost back to his cheeky self and walking without going sideways! I was told by the vet that he would take weeks and weeks to recover, yet he has bounced back remarkably quickly! The light is back in his eyes! The only difference I can put it down to is the Calm K9! I am so relieved and so pleased!



This is Nicky's story:

Back in October we were considering putting Louis to sleep as we thought his quality of life was poor and he was very distressed. However, I have had Louis on the Calm K9 since its launch at Super Trainer Live. My old boy has gone from strength to strength! The supplement has certainly helped his mobility too, at age 13 he now wants to join us for a second walk in the morning despite his arthritis and stiffness! He is really enjoying meeting other dogs of all sizes he's never met before and he is trotting for the first time in 9 months! He also has problems with itchiness, he is on a medication for this. We have tried unsuccessfully in the past to reduce the medication, and within 2 days of a reduction he was licking again! However, we reduced the medication, it's been a week and there has been no itching, licking or scratching!





This is Fran's story:

OMG, my 13 year old boy is galloping around the park (and I mean galloping) I could not believe my eyes this morning! It's amazing, he's been on it for 2 months now, he just gets better and better, but today my jaw was hanging as he shot across the park to greet a friend and shot back to let me know he had found her. Even after a long walk he was asking for the ball at the end of it, he bounded after it several times. I am telling everyone how great this



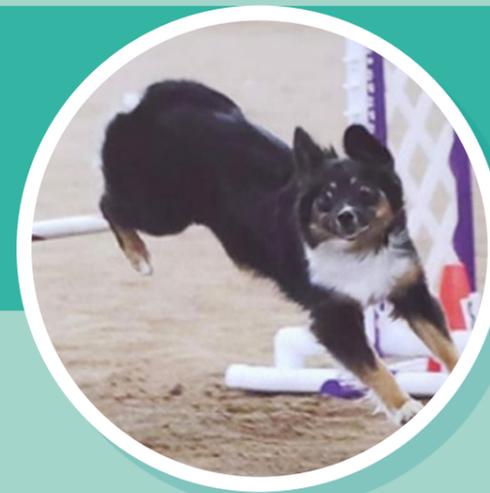
Here is Sarah's story:

Biggie has always been a little nervous ever since he was a puppy. He has always been super reactive to big dogs. We moved a year and a half ago and his behaviour deteriorated, he was constantly on edge and definitely not living his best life. We got so far with just treating him when he was worried, but he wasn't relaxed and was always ready to snarl. We got Calm K9 in December and it didn't work for us as quickly as others, but in the last few weeks the difference is astounding! He made friends with a Whippet, and was even fine with me stroking a large Labrador right next to him! This morning a massive dog came to sniff the same bush as him and Biggie didn't even seem to mind, he continued to sniff and off we went! We are seeing amazing differences, I can't tell you what a difference it has made. He seems to be living a much more relaxed life.



This is Sandii's story!

It is absolutely working for my over-the-top agility dog! Finally she can run a course without spinning, barking and biting me! Love this stuff! She has changed dramatically for the good! Just started our third container, but started to notice a difference after the first!



The POWER of a Whole Dog Approach

As you have probably guessed from all the ways that **brain-gut-behaviour** balance can become disrupted, these problems are self-perpetuating - entering a vicious cycle of worsening behaviour and health and, in turn, even worse behaviour.

Whether your dog struggles with pulling on the lead, barking and lunging or simply being a little overexcited, a whole dog approach, factoring in rebalancers of the brain-gut-behaviour interaction ensures a long, happy, healthy and stress-free life for your dog (and you!)



References

Bosch, G., Beerda, B., Beynen, A. C., van der Borg, J. A. M., van der Poel, A. F. B. and Hendriks, W. H. (2009) Dietary tryptophan supplementation in privately owned mildly anxious dogs. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 121(3), 2009/12/01/, pp. 197-205.

Clarke SF, Murphy EF, O'Sullivan O, Lucey AJ, Humphreys M, Hogan A, Hayes P, O'Reilly M, Jeffery IB, Wood-Martin R, Kerins DM, Quigley E, Ross RP, O'Toole PW, Molloy MG, Falvey E, Shanahan F, Cotter PD. (2014) Exercise and associated dietary extremes impact on gut microbial diversity. *Gut* Dec;63(12):1913-20.

DeNapoli, J. S., Dodman, N. H., Shuster, L., Rand, W. M. and Gross, K. L. (2000) 'Effect of dietary protein content and tryptophan supplementation on dominance aggression, territorial aggression, and hyperactivity in dogs.' *J Am Vet Med Assoc*, 217(4), Aug 15, 2000/08/23, pp. 504-508.

Heijtz RD, Wang S, Anuar F, Qian Y, Björkholm B, Samuelsson A, Hibberd ML, Forssberg H, Pettersson S. 2011. Normal gut microbiota modulates brain development and behavior.

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America 108:3047-3052

Kato, M., Miyaji, K., Ohtani, N. and Ohta, M. (2012) Effects of prescription diet on dealing with stressful situations and performance of anxiety-related behaviors in privately owned anxious dogs. *Journal of Veterinary Behavior*, 7(1), 2012/01/01/, pp. 21-26.

Kirchoff NS, Udell MAR, Sharpton TJ. (2019) The gut microbiome correlates with conspecific aggression in a small population of rescued dogs (*Canis familiaris*) *PeerJ* 7:e6103

Yang B, Wei J, Ju P, Chen J. (2019) Effects of regulating intestinal microbiota on anxiety symptoms: A systematic review. *General Psychiatry*, 32.

Voigt RM, Forsyth CB, Green SJ, Mutlu E, Engen P, Vitaterna MH, et al. (2014) Circadian Disorganization Alters Intestinal Microbiota. *PLoS ONE* 9(5): e97500.



A-OK9[®]

aok9.com