

## **Class 3 – Drop it, Leave it, & Down**

### **Possession of the Resource**

We need to understand that dogs are **Resource Guardians**.

Depending on the dog's perception of the value of the resource will determine how hard they guard the resource.

For example:

A rope toy may be easier to surrender than a squeaky tennis ball. Both of these could be easier to surrender than a marrow bone.

Rope Toy > Squeaky Tennis Ball > Marrow Bone

The role of the Pet Parent is to decrease the value of resources, not to increase the value.

If my dog grabs something that it should not have and I chase it around trying to get it away from the dog, what am I really doing?

(Most people will say that they are playing with the dog, but in actuality, we are...)

We are actually increasing the value of the item and it will be more and more difficult to have your dog surrender anything.

If I catch the dog and pull the resource out of its mouth, I am drastically increasing the value of the resource.

So, we need to teach the dog a new game called "Drop it" and "Take it"

### **Teaching Drop It ("Spit it out") – A trust building exercise**

- 1) Start off with a very low value item, like a rope toy. It is recommended to have the dog on leash.

Do not hold the leash, but if the dog tries to run away, you can step on the leash and move closer to the dog. If necessary, you can briefly play tug with the rope toy to increase the dog's interest and/or you can throw the toy to increase interest.

- 2) Have a lure ready to go. Once the dog has the toy in its mouth, approach the dog from the front. Move the lure close to the dog's nose and give the command to "Drop It!"

- 3) When the dog drops the toy and goes for the lure, lure the dog's head up and away from the toy. Use your other hand to slowly take the toy away and put it behind your back, then reward the dog.
- 4) When the dog is finished eating the reinforce (the reward/treat), bring the toy back and put it into the dog's mouth, while telling the dog to "Take It!"
- 5) Rinse and Repeat the process multiple times.
- 6) As the dog improves and begins to drop it quickly, you can start to increase to more valuable items (Squeaky toys, digestible rawhide, bully sticks, etc.)
- 7) **This is about building trust with the dog.**

If the dog is not willing to release the item, you can place a treat close to the side of the dog, while telling the dog to "Drop It!"

When the dog goes for the treat, **DO NOT** take the item away, just point at the item and tell the dog to "Take It!"

Repeat this multiple times (which builds trust) and eventually take the item away when the dog goes for the lure.

Finally have the dog drop it freely and take away the toy. Repeat the "Drop It!" and "Take It!" drill.

### **Teaching Leave It ("You Can Not Have It")**

\*\*\* At no point during this exercise should the dog be touched. \*\*\*

Step 1:

- 1) Have the dog sit.
- 2) Drop the leash and stand on it, allowing plenty of slack.

Holding the leash tends to give us the urge to pull back on it.

- 3) Have a large, smelly piece of lure in their right hand and a smaller piece in the left hand.
- 4) While the dog is sitting, place the right hand (with the large lure) directly under the dog's nose. Do not make the dog stretch to get it.
- 5) When dog tries to get the lure, close your hand. Continue to open and close hand, preventing the dog from getting the lure.
- 6) Introduce the command ("Leave It!") in a firm, high pitched, sharp tone. Really sound like you mean it.
- 7) Introduce the lure in the left hand and lure the dog's nose away (about 90 degrees away) from the right hand and reward.
- 8) Rinse and repeat the process until dog looks away from the lure in the right hand and looks toward the left hand as soon as someone says "Leave it!"

Step 2:

- 1) Have the dog sit.
- 2) Show the dog the lure directly in front of his nose and command the dog to "Leave It!"
- 3) Attempt to place the lure on the floor in front of the dog. If the dog gets up or stands, correct them and put them back into a sit.
- 4) Place treat on the floor relatively close to your right foot. Command dog to "Leave It!"

- 5) When dog tries to get the lure, quickly slide the right foot over the treat repeating the “Leave It!” command.

### **The Dog Can NOT Get the Lure!!!**

- 6) Introduce the lure in the left hand and lure the dog away from the lure under your foot, then reward. While giving reward, pick up treat that was placed on floor.
- 7) Repeat until dog looks away towards your left hand and does not attempt to go for the lure on the floor.

#### **Step 3:**

- 1) Have the dog sit.
- 2) Drop the lure on the floor and command and command the dog to “Leave It!”
- 3) If the dog attempts to get the lure, cover it with your foot and repeat the command.
- 4) When the dog looks away from the lure on the floor, reward with the hand that did not drop the lure, while picking up lure on the floor with opposite hand.
- 5) Once the dog has accomplished not attempting to get the lure, you can leave the lure on the floor and command the dog to “Leave It!” again.

“Leave It” can be used on anything (squirrels, birds, cars, people, dogs, sticks, etc.

#### **Teaching Down**

- 1) Have the dog sit.

- 2) Take treat and put behind your thumb in your hand. Your thumb should be facing towards you with the other four fingers sticking straight up.
- 3) Flip hand upside down. Your four fingers should now be pointing directly towards the ground, but your thumb should still be facing you. As you bring the lure down towards the dog's nose, flip it directly in front of their nose, so that they can lick at it.

We are "luring" the dog into the down position.

- 4) If dog does not lie down as your hand reaches the floor, slowly pull your hand out away from the dog on the ground. This will cause them to stretch out onto their stomach.

Some dogs (especially small ones) do not like the chill of tile floor, so a towel/blanket may need to be used for this. Larger dogs tend to slip and slide due to their weight on tile, so they may need to practice on a carpeted floor or mat.

If dog gets up from sitting position, be sure to restart from step 1.

- 5) Once the dog has accomplished lying down, push the lure slowly towards their chest. This will cause them to go from a "pouncing" position to a kicking their legs out to the side in a more relaxed down position.
- 6) Now we need to begin standing back up. Allow the dog to access the lure for a few seconds, then take the lure away and immediately return it before the dog gets up. Begin increasing the delay before returning the lure to the dog. Once the dog can stay lying down for about 2-3 seconds without getting up, then we need to begin standing up during delays.
- 7) After we inch our way up to a full standing position, then give the reward to the dog.
- 8) After repeating this process a few times, the dog should begin lying down as your fingers touch the ground. At this point, each time you bring your hand to the floor, stop a little higher up each time until the dog can see the cue while you are standing and lie down.