

Responsible Ownership

Primary needs of a dog within the family structure

- I. Clear definition of his position in the 'pack' from the beginning
 - A. Consistency in following the rules and boundaries with all family members and knowledge of consequences involved for each family member
 - B. Owner established territorial and psychological boundaries for the dog
 1. Designate a place for your dog's crate, den or bed. You need to decide where the dog will sleep and make sure that the dog sleeps there.
 2. Designate a place for your dog to eat and drink. Water should be available at all times. It is recommended that the dog's food should not be left down after feeding.
 3. Kitchen manners are essential to establish from the beginning. Your dog should not be taking food from the table, begging or being fed from the table.
 4. Designated doggy toys and play area. Designate a place for your dog to eliminate.
 5. By providing rules and boundaries, and providing calm assertive leadership in the "pack", your dog can develop positive behaviors that will substitute for other instinctual behavior patterns, such as chasing, fighting, etc.

II. Meeting the dogs needs

- A. Physical needs of food, fresh water, exercise appropriate for the breed
- B. Health needs of vaccinations, parasite control, and regular veterinarian visits as necessary
- C. Psychological needs
 1. Give your dog a sense of security by having the owner assume the position of 'pack leader' under any and all circumstances
 2. Always be consistent in your interactions with your dog. Corrections should immediately follow the dog's negative behavior. Correct your dog with well timed effective corrections and follow through until you get the desired behavior. Many times a simple verbal correction will be adequate. Show your dog the right behavior.
 3. Praise your dog after he follows your commands, but don't over do it. Praise should be short, simple and sincere without gushing or over emotion.
 4. Establish with your dog a system of communication with consistent commands and words, which he can understand.
 5. Teach him consistent rules and boundaries to enable him to cope with his environment. A dog does not understand a holiday or vacation from rules. Inconsistency will be perceived by your dog as weakness in the 'pack leader'.
 6. Approach your training with calm assertive energy. Teach him to respect and trust you by handling him in a consistent manner. It is your overall attitude, your state of mind and energy that the dog is picking up and processing in his mind. Dogs thrive on praise for a good performance. When your dog follows your commands obediently, then praise is appropriate and will support and instill this positive behavior.

III. Understand your responsibilities as a dog owner in your community

- A. Be aware of your dog's behavior when you are not at home. If problems exist (such as charging the fence after the mailman or meter reader) deal with these problem situations to avoid an incidence when you are not around. Keep your dog contained at all times. Adhere to leash laws, licensing and rabies vaccination requirements.
- B. Serve as a canine 'good will' ambassador to your neighbors. Be open to concerns that your neighbors might have about your dog and fix problems before they get out of hand. Be available as a resource to other neighbors, and be the good example others can aspire to.

Basic Canine Psychology

Dogs are PACK Animals
(Dogs will naturally seek their place in the pack)
Dogs are natural followers
Dogs need structure within the pack

* Survival comes through harmony in the pack.
Harmony in the pack depends upon a strong leader. *

DOGS WILL FOLLOW

OR

Assertive Leader **YOU!**

LEADING WITH CALM, ASSERTIVE ENERGY

Always follow through in this order:

- 1 Establish discipline
(Rules and boundaries)
- 2 Create behavior in the dog
(Calm and submissive)
- 3 Affection – Praise, touch, eye
contact, food, communication,
etc.

*Affection should come only AFTER
wanted behavior is established.*

**Dogs will be more receptive if
exercise is added to daily routine

Instincts

Dogs have 3 main instincts

1. Prey Drive – Chase
2. Predatory Drive – Capture
3. Protection – Guard the
'kill'/territory

*(More than one dog together will
intensify predatory instincts)*

These predatory instincts left
unchecked or unguided create many
potentially dangerous behavior
problems

*Without a leader present, dogs will revert back to instinct -
Unless conditioned or trained to do otherwise*