

Dog Socialization Techniques

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Under socialized or Semi- feral dogs

“Everybody does me good” Program

1. wait several days until the dog is comfortable with you bringing daily food and water
2. hand feed, hand water, and walk on leash (dog won't starve if offered food—it may take several days)
3. when you can pet the dog, have a new person repeat process (starting at step 2)

Goal: Dog sees that humans are his prime source of valuable resources, i.e. people do him good!

Shy Dogs

“Umbilical Cord” Method

1. using a 6-foot leash, tether dog to you for at least 2 consecutive hours per day
2. ignore dog (don't talk to him); expect him to pay attention to you—move when you move, turn when you turn, etc
3. after a few days, reward dog with extra special treats (hot dogs?) for voluntarily making eye contact with you

OR

use his daily kibble to hand-feed him throughout the hours he is tethered to you

Management

Suggestions to prevent the current behavior problems:

1. leave a long drag leash on dog or limit him freedom to roam
2. isolate him from your other dogs while at home (put him in separate room or crate)
3. don't expect him to look you in the eye like your other dogs (don't make threatening gestures toward him which make him practice his “feral” techniques) instead, use non-confrontational techniques:
 - a. Hand-feed all his meals to help him associate people with daily sustenance.
 - b. Don't make sudden movements.
 - c. Use non-threatening body postures
 - i. not looking directly at him
 - ii. approaching him by walking a curve rather than a straight line toward him
 - iii. turning sideways and bending down rather than towering over him
 - iv. petting him on the side of his body and head rather than reaching over him to pet him on top of his head or back
 - d. Find a treat the dog just can't resist, such as roast beef, boiled chicken, hot dogs, etc, and use a trail of treats to encourage him to take small steps closer to people, starting with just yourself
 - e. Encourage and allow dog to feel comfortable enough to approach others rather than forcing him to tolerate someone.
 - f. Give dog a routine; structure helps a dog feel more comfortable. For instance, have a set schedule for hand-feeding his daily meals, giving him walks, sitting with him to toss treats, handling/massage when dog is ready for that, etc.
 - g. Consider using a clicker to help dog learn. You can start by clicking immediately before hand-feeding him a piece of kibble, and do so for each piece. This way, you are giving the dog a sound which forces him to think about food, a good thing. As the dog gets more comfortable, you can use the clicker to mark calm behavior, or any behavior that is an improvement over his current fearfulness. I suggest a clicker because it is a unique, consistent sound, but you may also use a word such as “yes” or “good” in the same way, as long as you use it consistently to mark a behavior the instant it occurs, rather than before or after a behavior.
 - h. Once dog had bonded somewhat, begin a non-confrontational leadership program (aka “Nothing in life is free”). That could simply mean asking dog to perform a simple task ***before*** you give him access to whatever he wants, such as going outdoors, his food bowl, or a chew toy. It's a way to build a dog's confidence as well as a good working relationship with a dog. It also helps reduce tensions and anxieties that may arise because of a dog's uncertainties.