

Meeting summary for January's Members Q&A (01/15/2024)

Quick recap

The meeting covered a range of topics related to pet ownership and behavior. Rachel and her team discussed the importance of observing a dog's behavior, particularly the "freeze" response, which can indicate stress. They also talked about the challenges of eating outside due to distractions and the use of calming tools. The conversation also touched on the treatment of dogs' ears and the potential health issues associated with gloves. The team also discussed their pets' health matters and the importance of desensitizing dogs to certain stimuli. Towards the end, they talked about the exceptional customer service provided by a company that supports its workers with dogs deemed as "dangerous dogs" under the Dangerous Dogs Act.

Summary

Laura's Dog Luna's Behavior Improvement

Rachel and Laura (iPhone) discussed the behavior of Laura's dog, Luna. Laura shared that Luna had a rough patch before Christmas due to skin issues, but they seem to be improving. Laura mentioned that Luna's behavior has improved since implementing suggestions from Marilyn, including changing their bed and washing everything at 60 degrees. However, Laura noted that Luna can get overwhelmed in busy settings, such as the pub, but they don't have a meltdown. Rachel emphasized the importance of observing a dog's behavior and body language, particularly the "freeze" response, which can be a sign of stress. Laura shared that they plan to take Luna to quieter places during less busy times.

Expanded Focus on Handling Dogs With Predatory Issues

Rachel shared about their team's expanded focus on handling all types of dogs, including those with predatory issues. They mentioned their interest in separation issues and how it could benefit both the owner and the dog. Rachel also expressed their commitment to

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learning new concepts for the benefit of their team and their clients. They shared their interest in a method called "predatory substitution training" and proposed setting up a lending library for their books among the team. Furthermore, they suggested the introduction of a Facebook page feature to keep track of their books among the team.

Dog Eating Distractions and Calming Tools

Rachel and iPhone discussed the difficulties some dogs have with eating outside due to distractions. iPhone shared their method of using treats and lick mats to distract their dog, Luna. They agreed that this technique could be beneficial for dogs in stressful situations, such as vet visits. The conversation also touched on the use of calming tools and the importance of maintaining a positive association with them. Rachel mentioned the need to use these tools outside of their intended context to maintain their positive association. They also discussed the use of pictures and patterns to distract dogs from potentially stressful situations. Towards the end, they discussed the treatment of dogs' ears, with one participant sharing their experiences and suggesting the use of a specific product. Rachel emphasized the need to be cautious due to a dog's allergies and other health considerations.

Dog's Aversion to Gloves Plan Discussed

Rachel and an iPhone user discussed their dog's aversion to gloves. Rachel proposed a plan to gradually desensitize the dog to gloves by starting with a homework task where the user teaches the dog to touch a hand target with no glove on. Once the dog is comfortable with this, they can gradually introduce the glove, starting on walks. Rachel suggested that this process could help change the dog's association with gloves from a negative to a positive one. The user agreed to this plan and agreed to keep the group updated on the dog's progress.

Pet Owners' Chat and Health Concerns

Kirsty and Rachel discussed their pets, particularly their dogs, Binky and Daire. Kirsty shared that Binky had some health issues and their duvet was too big for their washing machine, so they had to take it to their mom's. Rachel mentioned that Daire had been good, except for a few instances where they shouted at Binky. They also talked about the weather and Rachel's recent hospital appointment. The conversation ended with Kirsty mentioning an upcoming vet appointment for Binky.

Pet Health and Vet Visits

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Rachel and Kirsty discussed their pets' health matters. They decided to consolidate their pets' appointments for efficiency. A story about Rachel's dog, Rico, who loves going to the vet and gets excited for cheese, lightened the mood. They also mentioned waiting for an appointment and combining vet visits with other necessary treatments. A recurring issue with Yogi, a dog previously owned by Kirsty and Hannah, was discussed. Rachel was unsure if a new behavior in Yogi, noticed post-castration, was a new problem or a result of the surgery.

Dog Marking Behavior Investigation Assigned

Rachel and Kirsty had a discussion about the unusual behavior of dogs, specifically the act of marking on upright surfaces. They speculated that this behavior could be linked to hormonal changes, with Rachel noting an increase in marking behavior post-castration. The possibility of environmental factors was also raised by Kirsty. The conversation concluded with the agreement that further investigation was needed. Rachel also highlighted the importance of understanding anxious dog behaviors, such as marking, and avoiding punishment that could exacerbate the dog's anxiety. Hannah and Yogi were assigned to review anti-marking resources available in the membership as part of efforts to better understand and address the underlying causes of such behaviors.

Dog Barking Solution Proposal and Keyword Effectiveness

Rachel proposed a solution to the issue of excessive dog barking by capturing the dog's attention and redirecting it away from the home. They emphasized the importance of removing food from the equation during training. There was also a brief discussion about Luna, a dog with noise sensitivity, but no clear decisions or action items were identified. The effectiveness of a specific keyword in controlling a dog's behavior was also discussed, with the speakers noting its success in various settings. They also mentioned the need to gradually generalize the keyword. The conversation concluded with an example of a dog responding to the keyword even in the presence of a distraction.

Mobile Training Method Proposal and Reward-Based Training Discussion

Rachel proposed a shift in Jeff's training method from a physical location to a more mobile approach, allowing them to be with the dog regardless of the room they are in. The discussion also touched on the concept of predatory substitution training, which they were already implementing. Rachel emphasized the importance of rewarding the dog with treats every time a trigger, such as a postman or animal, appears. Kirsty voiced concerns about their dogs' weight, but Rachel reassured them that the treats could be factored into the dogs'

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overall food allowance. Rachel also stressed the importance of using treats to maintain the dog's attention and prevent the owner from losing patience, thereby avoiding guilt.

Dog Treat Nutrition and Sharing Resources

The discussion was primarily about dog treats and their nutritional value. The participants, Rachel and iPhone, discussed various treats they use for their dogs, including ones from Wuzzies and Button Up Box. They also discussed the idea of sharing these resources on their forum to help other dog owners find healthier treats for their pets.

Dangerous Dogs, Customer Service, and Sensory Issues

Rachel and Kirsty discussed the exceptional customer service provided by a company that supports its workers with dogs deemed as "dangerous dogs" under the Dangerous Dogs Act. They also shared stories about how the company's value-added services, such as a free vet service, have helped save dogs' lives. The conversation then shifted to a discussion about a dog's sensory issues with wearing coats. The owner of the dog shared their struggles to find a coat that the dog would tolerate and the decision to manage the issue differently, such as by keeping the dog warm during walks. Rachel reassured the owner that the dog was at low risk of cold temperatures due to their weight and age.

Dog Walking, Robes, Birthday Parties, and Emails

The meeting primarily revolved around walking dogs in colder temperatures, with Rachel sharing their experience of walking their dogs in minus 8 degrees Celsius. The team also discussed the idea of purchasing custom-made dry robes for the staff and getting matching car number plates. The concept of running dog birthday parties as a business venture was also brought up. The conversation touched on dressing up dogs, with Rachel, Kirsty, and others discussing their experiences and deciding to conduct a dry practice run. Rachel defended a local vet's intention to spread positivity, despite receiving some negative feedback. The meeting also covered the topic of pet trail weekend assessment, with Rachel mentioning that they and Marilyn always wear new gear provided by Marilyn. Rachel announced that the recorded meeting would be available shortly after conversion and confirmed the dates for the next meeting and a coffee morning. There was also some discussion about emails not received, with Rachel offering to have Marilyn resend them.

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