

October 2023 Coffee Morning

Balancing Commitments and Dog Walks

Hannah, Andrea, and Rachel discussed their weekend activities and the challenges of balancing commitments. Rachel mentioned the addition of weekend group classes at Wrenury and thanked Hannah (Rehab trainer) for taking over some of the sessions. They also discussed the importance of the walks they take the dogs on, despite some issues they've encountered, such as a strange man filming and taking pictures of the dogs. It was decided that they would not return to the location where this happened and would instead try different locations.

Dogs' Behaviour and Training Challenges

Rachel and Hannah discussed the challenges of dealing with dogs from different backgrounds and their reactions to different situations. They also discussed the importance of training dogs to deal with unexpected noises and to not bark excessively. Rachel shared some resources and strategies for managing these issues, and Hannah shared an incident where their puppy caused an accident with an oil man. Towards the end, they discussed the potential consequences of barking dogs, including possible legal action under the Environmental Protection Act.

Handouts for dealing with barking dogs are in your member's area.

Addressing Yogi's Barking Strategies

Rachel, Hannah, and Andrea discussed strategies for addressing Yogi's excessive barking. They considered different methods, including limiting rehearsal and using desensitization techniques. Rachel suggested exploring the noisy bottle game to help Yogi associate loud, predictable noises with positive outcomes. They also discussed the importance of identifying the specific sounds that bother Yogi and avoiding joining in or reinforcing his barking. Rachel emphasized the need for consistency.

Managing Yogi's Barking Habits

Rachel discussed various strategies for managing Yogi's barking habits. She advised against interrupting Yogi when he's barking at his friend and instead suggested using a food-based reward system when Yogi hears a noise and starts barking. She further suggested creating a routine where Yogi is trained to go to a designated quiet area when he hears a set of noises. Rachel also recommended investing time in teaching Yogi the meaning of the word 'quiet' through positive reinforcement. This involves capturing moments when Yogi is being quiet and rewarding him for it.

Introducing Quiet Cue for Dog Behaviour

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Rachel advised the team to use a new cue for quiet behaviour to replace negative commands. She suggested feeding the dog a treat when they're being quiet, teaching them to go to a quiet place, and testing their understanding of the 'quiet' cue. She emphasized that the timing of the treat feeding needs to be right and the reward should only be given for a short period of silence. Rachel also mentioned that the 'quiet' cue could be used in situations where the dog barks excessively, helping to manage their behaviour and make them more manageable in different settings.

Managing Separation Anxiety in Dogs

Rachel and Andrea discussed strategies for managing separation anxiety in dogs. Rachel emphasized the importance of gradual changes and using distractions to alter the dog's expectations. They also discussed the use of technology, such as cameras and remote dispensed treats, to help manage the issue. Rachel shared her personal experience of managing her dog's anxiety and emphasized the need to tailor solutions to individual circumstances. The conversation ended with Rachel expressing her rejection of nuisance barking cases, attributing them to unrealistic expectations from pet owners.

Dogs, Noise, and Training

Andrea, Rachel, and Hannah discussed their dogs' reactions to noise and sudden movements. Rachel shared an incident where her dog, Maisie, was triggered by her aunt's hand gestures and began excessively barking. The importance of rewarding dogs for following commands was also highlighted. Hannah shared an update about her dog's progress, noting that he was able to walk on a pavement with cars going past without barking and might be on track for further training. They also talked about the positive impact of castration on a dog's behaviour, with Rachel emphasizing the need to understand a dog's behaviour before making such a decision. Finally, they ended the conversation with a discussion about pictures of the dog.

Pet Frustrations and Communication Challenges

Hannah and Rachel discussed their experiences with their pets. Rachel emphasized the need for a safe space to express frustrations about their pets. Andrea shared her difficulty in communicating with her pet, highlighting its understanding of commands and needs. Rachel shared an anecdote about her dog's ability to communicate and how it surpasses human understanding. They also discussed the difficulties in training their pets, particularly in handling separation anxiety.

Dog Perception and Behaviour Modification

Rachel and Andrea discussed the perceptiveness of dogs in understanding human behaviour and routines. They shared examples of how dogs can recognize when their owners are preparing to leave and how they can react to triggers such as car keys or brushing teeth. Rachel noted that dogs are more aware than humans realize, as evidenced by their ability to detect changes in the house's smell throughout the day. They also touched on issues they've observed with their own pets, including a dominant dog named Nala who will not allow her younger sister Cassie to share a room with her.

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The discussion ended with a brief mention of a behaviour modification technique they use to manage Nala's territorial behaviour.

Dogs and Relationships

Rachel and Andrea discuss the issue of dogs and their relationship, with Rachel suggesting short visits for short periods of time to ensure a positive experience for the dog. They also talk about the age difference between the dogs, with Cassie being born in August and Nala being birthday being on Monday. Andrea shares a video of her sister's dog, who used to get on well with her, but their relationship changed after Cassie was spayed. Rachel suggests monitoring the dogs' behaviour and jotting down any incidents to avoid jealousy between them.

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