

Just Behaving vs. Modern Dog Training Methods: A Guide for New Puppy Owners

Monday, February 3, 2025 8:29 PM

Just Behaving vs. Modern Dog Training Methods: A Guide for New Puppy Owners

Introduction: The Problem with Mainstream Training Approaches

Bringing a new puppy home is exciting, but how you raise that puppy determines whether they become a balanced, well-mannered family member or an excitable, demanding companion. Many modern dog training methods focus on obedience rather than behavior, using excessive positive reinforcement, treat-based luring, and play-driven engagement. While these techniques can create well-trained dogs, they often fail to produce well-adjusted, naturally well-behaved ones.

At **Just Behaving**, we take a different approach—one rooted in **mentorship, calm leadership, and natural correction**. Our method does not rely on food rewards or excessive excitement to teach manners. Instead, we emphasize **raising dogs to maturity, preventing unwanted behaviors, and using structured leadership to shape a dog's behavior over time**.

This guide will break down how Just Behaving compares to mainstream training methods and why our philosophy leads to **calmer, more respectful** dogs.

Core Principles of the Just Behaving Methodology

1. Prevention is the Key to a Well-Mannered Dog

Most behavior problems arise because of **what owners allow during puppyhood**. While mainstream training often focuses on **redirecting or replacing bad behavior**, Just Behaving emphasizes **never allowing bad habits to form in the first place**.

How Just Behaving Differs:

Mainstream Training	Just Behaving Approach
Allows jumping, mouthing, barking, and excitement, then attempts to train these behaviors away later.	Prevents these behaviors from developing by setting clear, structured expectations from day one.
Uses redirection with toys or treats when a dog does something undesirable.	Uses instinctual corrections , space management, and calm disengagement to stop unwanted behaviors.
Encourages high-energy play and interaction.	Promotes calm, structured interactions and discourages hyperactivity.

Example:

- **Jumping Up on People:** A mainstream trainer might ignore the behavior or lure the puppy into a sit with a treat. **Just Behaving** teaches owners to **calmly step into the puppy's space**, using body pressure and redirection to show that jumping is not an option.
- **Demand Barking:** Traditional training might teach the dog to bark and then be quiet for a treat. **Just Behaving** teaches puppies that barking gets them nothing—**removing engagement until they are silent**.

2. Natural Correction Over Treat-Based Reward Systems

Modern positive reinforcement training focuses on **rewarding good behavior and ignoring bad behavior**, assuming that if a behavior isn't rewarded, it will disappear. This is **not how puppies learn from their mothers or other adult dogs**.

How Just Behaving Differs:

Mainstream Training	Just Behaving Approach
Uses treats to teach behaviors and reinforce commands.	Uses natural corrections from body pressure, presence, and disengagement.
Ignores bad behaviors, assuming they will fade.	Confronts unwanted behaviors immediately , just as a mother dog would.
Avoids saying “No” or using correction.	Uses calm, structured discipline to set clear expectations.

Example:

- **A puppy nipping at hands:** A mainstream trainer might ignore the behavior and offer a chew toy instead. **Just Behaving** corrects immediately with a firm, neutral response (e.g., light mouth closure, stepping away, or a calm verbal cue like “ah-ah”).
- **A puppy pulling on the leash:** A treat-based trainer might use food to lure the puppy back to the handler. **Just Behaving** teaches the puppy that pulling stops all forward movement—when the leash goes tight, the walk doesn’t continue.

3. Teaching Maturity, Not Just Tricks

Many training programs focus on obedience commands—sit, stay, down, come—but do **not teach a puppy how to exist as a calm, respectful family member**. Just Behaving emphasizes **emotional development and maturity over robotic obedience**.

How Just Behaving Differs:

Mainstream Training	Just Behaving Approach
Uses clickers, treats, and high-energy training sessions.	Uses structured daily life as the training environment.
Teaches dogs tricks and commands but does not emphasize calmness.	Emphasizes a dog’s ability to settle, respect boundaries, and self-regulate.
Creates dependency on external rewards.	Teaches dogs to behave properly because it is expected—not because a treat is offered.

Example:

- **Meal Time:** Instead of making a dog “sit” and “stay” for a treat before eating, **Just Behaving** encourages the puppy to settle naturally before feeding time—no commands, just expected behavior.
- **Going for a Walk:** A mainstream trainer might use a treat every time the dog checks in. **Just Behaving** uses leash pressure, structured pace, and natural corrections to teach **calm walking without constant reinforcement**.

4. Leadership Over Excitement

Many modern training approaches **overemphasize engagement, excitement, and constant interaction**, leading to hyper-dependent, high-energy dogs. Just Behaving prioritizes **calm leadership and structured bonding instead**.

How Just Behaving Differs:

Mainstream Training	Just Behaving Approach
Encourages excitement and play as primary ways to bond with a dog.	Teaches calm companionship , fostering deeper trust and respect.
Uses excessive verbal praise and energy.	Uses quiet presence and structure to communicate expectations.
Builds a dog that expects high-energy engagement at all times.	Builds a dog that is comfortable in quiet, natural companionship .

Example:

- **Coming Home:** Instead of rewarding a puppy with high-energy excitement, **Just Behaving** owners ignore excitable greetings and only interact when the dog is calm.
- **Guests Arriving:** A mainstream trainer might train the dog to “sit” and take a treat when guests enter. **Just Behaving** prevents excitement by **managing space, controlling interactions, and setting expectations for calm behavior from the start.**

Conclusion: Why Just Behaving Produces Naturally Well-Mannered Dogs

The Just Behaving method is not about tricks, constant treats, or artificial commands. It is about **raising a dog the way nature intended—with leadership, structure, and instinctual correction.** By focusing on **prevention, calm leadership, and maturity,** we create dogs that do not just “listen” but **truly understand how to exist in a human household with ease.**

If you want a well-mannered dog who behaves because they respect you—not because they expect a reward—**Just Behaving is the path to follow.**