

3. Is this method right for all dogs?

Thousands of dogs of all breeds and temperaments have successfully, happily graduated from Koehler courses throughout the world. Why not your dog too?

4. Why are the classes so big? Will I get personal attention?

Dogs trained in quiet, calm settings only obey in quiet, calm settings – not in the hustle and bustle of real life. Thirty other dogs are a wonderful distraction, along with a goat, rabbit, hamburger, cat food and other distractions we bring to class. We have found that students trained in a private setting never do as well as participants in our group class setting. If you really think you need extra personal attention, talk to Stephanie, she is always ready to help!

5. Will we be using food treats?

NO. Food treats are great for getting dogs to do tricks, run agility courses, and look good in the show ring. However, food treatment training is worthless in producing an off-leash reliable dog in real life distractions, because eventually the distraction is desired more than the treat and your dog will not obey. Guide dogs, police dogs, search and rescue dogs – dogs that require serious obedience are NOT food trained. We will be using good leadership, instruction, repetition, distractions, patience, praise, and when appropriate, correction.

6. What about no-force methods I have read about?

If there were a no-force method that could truly produce off-leash reliability, Scotch Pines would be delighted to teach that method. Sadly, because of the psychology of the dog, no-force methods (clicker, treats, etc.) produce a trick performing dog that cannot be trusted off-leash in the presence of distractions. (A dog a quarter mile away in hot pursuit of a rabbit will not come for a cookie!) This truth is even admitted by treat trainers and those who use inductive, rather than compulsive, methods. Here are their quotes:

“Can inductive training override instinctive behavior, such as a male dog’s pursuit of a female in season, or the hunting dog’s following the trail of game? Our experience is that it cannot. . .”

-Joachim Volhard, Teaching Dog Obedience Classes

“The most potent reinforce wins out over the less potent . . . be advised that if you are trying to obtain COME using freeze dried liver, but the forest is offering rabbit trail...the forest will win.”

-Jean Donaldson, The Culture Clash

7. Some people have criticized the Koehler method as harsh because it involves a collar yank for correction. Will this training break by dog’s spirit?

All you need to settle this question is to watch our graduates and talk to their owners. The self-confident, happy obedience of the dogs, and the delighted enthusiasm of the owners, will immediately dispel that notion.