**Have available low, medium, and high value treats. For example, low value may be dry dog food, medium value may be soft dog treat, high value may be bits of meat. Your dog determines the value!**

How to Train Focus

Put simply, positive training works by giving the dog something he wants when he does something you want. The dog gets positive reinforcement (good stuff) in exchange for doing something you want. **Everyone wins**. Before you can train your dog to sit, or walk on leash, or come when called, you need to get his attention. Here’s how to make your dog want to look at you.

1. Start with choosing a single word as a verbal marker for the behavior you want. It should be one syllable, and not the dog’s name. Many people use “YES!”. You will be saying this word enthusiastically, in a positive, upbeat tone (and saying it the same way, each time)
2. Get a bunch of tiny, tasty treats (no bigger than your little fingernail) such as cheese, meat, cut up jerky treats – something your dog REALLY LIKES. Put the tiny treats in a bowl within your reach (not your dog’s reach!).
3. Charge up the word – with your dog in front of you in a quiet indoor location (free of distractions), say the word (upbeat tone, with enthusiasm!) and give the dog a treat. It doesn’t matter what the dog is doing, sitting, standing, or whatever, as long and he is not doing something you don’t want, such as barking or jumping up. Repeat saying the word and then giving the treat about a dozen times. **Make sure to say the word first, then give the treat - they are two separate actions. (You should NOT be moving your treat hand while you are saying “YES!”)**
4. Capture a glance – now wait for the dog to look at you, and as he is glancing at you, say “YES!” and drop a treat in front of your dog. When he looks at you again, say “YES!” and drop another treat. Don’t say anything to prompt your dog, wait for him to offer the behavior. Each time he glances at you, say “YES!” as he is looking at you, then drop a treat for him. Do this for a few minutes a couple of times per day, and you will see that your dog will begin to focus on you more (because it has paid off!)
5. Add the dog’s name: Practice capturing a glance a few times and then, next time he looks at you, say his name as he is looking, then say “YES!” and treat. Dog looks at you, you say “Rover” then “YES!” and treat (say his name in a pleasant, positive tone). Repeat this a few times, then try saying his name when he is not looking at you, and when he DOES look, say “YES!” and treat. Now you are attaching his name as a cue to pay attention to you. Keep practicing, it will pay off in your dog’s quick response to his name.