

# **Good Dog? Bad Dog?**

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## Dedication

A huge thank you to my far from “perfect” Airedale Lowry-dog who has helped hundreds of dogs overcome their fear of other dogs. He happily ignored them all.

Also to my husband Iain for becoming a computer screen widow and to my children Dylan and Chloe for putting up with the countless remarks of “I’m working”!

And finally to all my clients and their dogs for making my work-life a constant challenge and a joy.

# Good Dog? Bad Dog?

## (A fresh look at how we treat our dogs)

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## Introduction

Some dogs behave perfectly most of the time, others for some of the time and for a few, none of the time. For some owners the thought of even walking along the road with their dog evokes fears of nightmarish proportions. For others simply leaving their dog home alone for a few hours' results in hundreds of pounds worth of damage. For a few it is the fear and shame of yet another vets bill because their dog has damaged somebody else's better behaved pet. So can we aspire to the dizzy heights of perfection? Or are we expecting too much from our beloved companions? Do we really need or want to own the "perfect" dog and just what is "perfect" behaviour anyway?

### **For many years the "perfect" dog was one that:**

- Obediently walked close to their owners legs.
- Did not react to other approaching dogs or people especially children.
- Did not bark unless someone was trying to break into the house.
- Saved many an owner from certain death by fire.
- Chased a ball thrown by its owners, brought it promptly back and all in one piece.
- Sat when told, laid down, rolled over, came back and played dead for the queen.
- Was utterly obedient and under its owners "control" at all times or else it was throttled by the neck with a metal choke chain.

A tall order for most dogs and many fell by the wayside ending up in the numerous rescue centres that were springing up around the country. Nowadays, much of our philosophy and our ideals of how dogs are supposed to behave have changed. Instead of treating them as unruly humans we now try to understand them as dogs and look at how they behave naturally with each other. However, my experience as a clinical companion animal behaviourist has led me to realise that the more “traditional” views still remain strongly embedded in our minds and are still taught in some institutions around the country.

More recently there has been another train of thought suggesting that owners should dominate their dogs by behaving as if they were the “Top Dog” in the pack and that this will cure all conceivable problems. This view can be misleading and may sometimes have grave consequences.

- So why are we still getting it wrong?
- Why are so many dogs ending up in rescue centres or being put to sleep?
- Why are dogs and their owners still suffering from what we perceive as imperfect behaviour?

This book concentrates on changing the traditional views of how we perceive and treat our dogs using what we have learned from scientific research so far. By gaining a better understanding of why your dog behaves in certain ways you will begin to view your canine friend in a very different light and hopefully come to realise that none of us are or ever will be perfect.

The book starts at the beginning by looking at ways of how to choose and bring up a new puppy that may reduce the likelihood of future problems. It then goes on to cover different problems that commonly occur between owners and their maturing or adult dogs by discussing real case studies.

*These problems include:*

- Aggressive behaviour towards people and other dogs.
- Destructive behaviour when home alone.
- Nervousness.
- Attention seeking behaviour.
- Loss of toilet control.
- Aggressive behaviour towards other family dogs.
- It also covers basic unruly behaviour such as stealing, eating things it shouldn't, chasing other animals and lack of recall.

Each chapter emphasises the complexities of each set of problems, the different approaches used in trying to solve them and the underlying factors that may have caused them to occur in the first place. It is important to remember that each case is individual and that the diagnosis and treatment will not always be the same for a similar problem that another owner may be experiencing. If you are encountering a challenging problem it is wise to consult a fully qualified companion animal behaviourist referred by your veterinary surgeon.

**This book does not dispute that other methods do not always work. They may do in some cases, only that there is another way.**

## **Chapter One:**

### **What do we mean by “Traditional” views?**

For many years we were told that dogs needed to be “under control” and that to train them you used a metal choke chain. If they pulled on the lead, lunged towards another dog or showed any aggressive behaviour towards people you were told to snap back hard on the collar and then to release it. The theory behind this surmised that since the collar made a noise, the dog would react and understand that its behaviour was undesirable. However, this was not always the case; the dog did not always stop and did not always understand that its behaviour was undesirable. Instead these dogs associated the punishment with certain situations and would react even more “badly” the next time around. This consequently led to even more choking. Many dogs ended up, and still do, having to be treated for serious neck and back injuries.

**Choking is not the only punishment used and there are plenty of other methods such as:**

- 1) **The electric shock collar.**
- 2) **The rolled up newspaper.**
- 3) **The stick.**
- 4) **The citronella spray.**
- 5) **The shaker.**

### **Electric Shock Collars**

The **electric shock collar** is becoming more and more easily available and is often sold as a “guaranteed” quick fix to stop any unwanted behaviour. The collars administer an electric shock from a remote hand held device and the theory claims the dog will learn to behave as it will receive a shock if it doesn't. But what is the dog really learning? If it gets a shock every time someone approaches the dog may begin to associate people with bad things happening and may try even harder next time to get rid of them. It will not necessarily understand that it is being shocked for showing its teeth since it has performed lots of other behaviours during this time.

The dog may also learn that when it isn't wearing one, it doesn't get hurt and if the occasion arises where the dog is confronted with a person and is not wearing the collar, the situation may become very nasty indeed. You may be getting the dog to do what you want because it **has** to but not because it **wants** to and this is a very important difference to consider.

Many owners who previously used a shock collar also mentioned that once removed it became impossible to get it back on again and that some of their dogs could not get up off the floor with it on as they were shaking so much with fear.

**My advice is, if you are thinking of using one on your dog, would you use one on your children?**

A shock collar, stick or rolled up newspaper may stop the dog showing aggressive behaviour but this dog is being made not to behave aggressively, it is not learning to stop because it wants to and thus the problem is not being solved.

The thinking behind the citronella collar (a collar that sprays citronella at the dog) and the shaker (a can filled with stones that when shaken makes a loud rattle) is that the dog is distracted away from what it is doing. However, dogs are not stupid and some will quickly learn that if they bark for long enough the spray soon runs out and the noise of the shaker is just a noise and nothing else much happens. They quickly learn to habituate to it (ignore it) and the behaviour continues.

You may believe that you have to make the dog do everything you say. It is human nature to feel embarrassed and cringe when your dog begins to act inappropriately when approached by another human. You feel that you should be able to say the magic word and all will be quiet. However, when this doesn't happen, for whatever reason, you start to get agitated. Not only does the dog pick up on this and react even more badly because they may believe that you too are upset, but the approaching person also becomes anxious. It becomes a catch 22 situation. If an owner shouts at their dog to sit and it doesn't, they may shout louder and then may even resort to pushing its bottom down. But what is the dog learning? It is learning that every time someone approaches the owners gets cross and its bottom gets sore. You also have to ask the question why the owner has to keep shouting louder and louder. Their dog is probably not deaf and can

no doubt hear a crisp packet opening three streets away. Is there another way? Can they get their dog to sit because it wants to not because it has to?

### **The Top Dog view!**

A more recent view is that you can get your dog to do anything you wish simply by becoming the **“Top Dog”**, **“The Alpha Male”**, **“The Leader of the Pack”** by behaving in a **“Dominant”** fashion.

To do this you have to follow a series of **“rules”**.

#### **The “rules”:**

- Ignore your dog for 5 minutes when you first see it.
- Make sure you walk up the stairs first.
- Don't feed your dog if it asks.
- Eat first.
- Bark at your dog if it behaves badly.
- If the behaviour persists drag your dog from the room you are in.
- Ignore any attempts at interaction by your dog.
- Don't allow your dog to pull forwards on the lead.

The view is that by becoming “Top Dog, Alpha Male, Leader of the Pack” your dog will listen to you and do as you say. However this theory, based on observations of Wolves in captive situations, relies on the fact that in a natural domestic/feral dog pack there is such thing as a top dog. So is this true? Are dog packs run by one dictator that rules everything the others do? Well **NO** it is not as simple as all that. There are certainly decision makers, healthier, more confident and stronger dogs than others but is there one in particular that rules over all?

Research into domestic/feral dog packs, wolves in the wild and other animals that live in social groups suggests that there probably isn't. It is very dependent on the structure of the group, numbers of individuals, the sex ratio and the situation they find themselves in at the time.

For instance if a healthy, strong male dog who has just eaten a huge meal comes across a starving female who has puppies to feed, and there is a big juicy bone lying between them, which one is going to fight the hardest to get it? Probably the female. However, this doesn't mean she is "Top Dog" over the male. It simply means at this point in time she has more to lose and makes the decision to fight harder for it. He in turn decides it isn't worth the hassle and allows her to take it. In an aggressive encounter with the male in different circumstances it would be more likely that she would defer to him and allow him to take the bone.

When looking at what humans perceive as problem behaviour in dogs it is very important to look very closely at what the dog is doing and understanding why? This needs an extensive knowledge of dog behaviour and is not always as easy to fix as some "views" may suggest.

### **Dog Behaviour within a familiar group**

In dog society it is not the aggressor who decides the winner but the one who knows they can not win and thus defers (looks away and moves off, gives in). Dogs within a pack will have already worked out who they are likely to lose against in an aggressive encounter. After all there is no point in fighting and risking injury every time you meet a familiar face. There would be no dogs left today if they decided to use this type of strategy to decide who gets what. Instead one will defer to the other and conduct their own kind of “doggy manners”. They will for instance generally give up their food, mate, den or toy to the winner of these encounters. These “doggy manners” are what we strive to achieve from our dogs during this book. We will stop trying to force our dogs to act like little humans or treat them as if they were under some sort of dictatorship. Domestic dogs are not Wolves just because they are closely related any more than we are Chimpanzees. Although both dogs and Wolves and both humans and Chimps have similarities we all live and behave in very different ways. After all dogs will rip up carpets and jump through hoops to get to us, whereas a wolf will stay as far away from us as possible.

**So what can we do if our dogs begin to show behaviour that to us as owners feel is inappropriate? Do we have to resort to violence or behave like a dictator or is there another way to treat our dogs? Yes there is and this book will explain how.**

## Chapter Two

### Choosing the right puppy for you and training it the nice way.

Choosing the right puppy is probably one of the most important decisions you are likely to make. A dog is around for a long time. Therefore, it is essential that that you ask yourself the right questions to find the right dog for you:

- What sort of environment do I live in? How big is my house, garden and surrounding areas and how many other humans and pets also live here?
- Can I afford the cost of the puppy, food, bedding, toys, vets fees, training, insurance, grooming and possibly the replacement of damaged items?
- Have I the time to give my puppy what it needs and am I healthy enough?
- Where will it spend its time whilst I am away on holiday?
- How tidy am I? Could I cope with toilet training, shredded toilet roll and endless amounts of dog hair?

Once you are sure you can answer these questions adequately you will then have to ask yourself which type of puppy will be best suited to how you live your life. Obviously a large dog will not be advisable if you live in a small flat with no garden and one that sheds a lot of hair may not be advisable if you are prone to allergies. Likewise if you live a more sedentary life an active dog may not be the dog for you and if you love to walk for miles then a very small dog with short legs may not be what you are looking for either.

There are many breed types and it is a good idea to thoroughly research the ones that interest you and ask many questions. Do not be afraid to approach as many people as possible including your veterinary surgeon, local behaviourist, dog trainers and breeders. You can also visit your library or search the internet. Be aware that choosing the most fashionable breed of the moment may come at a high price and it is possible that the puppies have been bred intensely so may not have had the best start in life.

Once you have decided on a breed, where do you obtain one from? This is a very important part of the choosing process since a puppy's early environment can make a difference to how it turns out in later life. If you have chosen a pedigree, check that the breeder is reputable. Do not be afraid to ask around and visit the breeder before you actually see any of the puppies.

#### **Which puppy to choose?**

Choosing which one you like best is often based on how the puppy reacts to you. In most litters of puppies there is often a very bold one, a very nervous one and ones in between. It is very likely that the bolder pup will approach you first but not because it has picked you out for special attention. It's a bold pup and it will approach all new people in the same way. It may be that this one will become a little pushier once it has reached maturity. The cute little one at the back may pull on your heart strings but this may be the one that shows nervous behaviour when older. It is often advisable to choose the middle of the road pup, the one that is a little wary at first but comes happily towards you once you have sat down quietly. However, with the best intentions in the world, sometimes you just have to follow your heart.

### **How should puppies spend their early life?**

The best environment for puppies to grow up in is the one that they will spend their future lives in. Therefore, home bred puppies are more likely to show less behavioural problems than kennel bred ones. However, just because your puppy has been nicely socialised in its early environment does not guarantee you a problem free future just as not all puppies brought up in a barren environment will present you with behavioural problems in the future. However, you will want your puppy to have as good a start in life as possible, therefore, If the puppies are going to be born into a kennel environment ask the breeder how they are going to socialise them and offer to help with the process. If the breeder is agreeable visit the puppies regularly and take along children, adults and other dogs. Pop the puppies in and out of boxes, in and out of the car and take them for very short rides. Pick them up gently and examine them under the ears, belly, mouth and tail. You might be allowed access to a house and a garden where you can get them used to the general noise of home living. If the breeder is not agreeable, question why this may be so!

### **Rescue Puppies**

You may wish to give a home to a puppy from a rescue centre. The same guidelines apply, visit your intended puppy regularly and try to get it used to as many different experiences as possible. Your rescue centre may already have a puppy

socialising pen or room set up like a sitting room, where you can spend time with your pup.

**The types of experiences you can present are as follows:**

- Children of differing ages.
- Other dogs and pets.
- People of a different shapes, sex and sizes wearing a variety of clothing including hat and boots.
- Loud noises such as clapping, pots banging and doors slamming. Make sure you begin quietly and as the puppy becomes relaxed with that volume, increase it gradually. There are specialised compact discs (Sounds Scary) that you can use to help your pup cope better with noises such as thunder or fireworks.
- Electrical appliances especially the vacuum cleaner.
- Being picked up and being examined.
- Training sessions of sit and wait.

**Ask the staff questions.**

- Where did the puppy come from and at what age?
- If known what are its parents like?
- What sort of character it has, i.e. nervous, bold, aggressive or noisy. Does it enjoy a fuss?
- How does it get along with its litter mates?
- Is it eating well?
- Where does it go to the toilet?

By asking lots of questions you will get a better idea of how your puppy may turn out when it is older. I say “may” because even the sweetest of puppies, no matter how good a start they had sometimes turn into the dogs from hell when they start to mature, just like human teenagers. It is very common for adolescence dogs to be given away for rehoming during this stage of their life.

### **Basic ground-rules and general training the nice way**

Once your puppy comes home it is important to lay down some ground rules regarding what it can and can not do and stick to them. Start as you mean to go on. Very often new owners allow their cute little puppy to show behaviours that are not tolerated once the puppy had grown up. Hence the pup gets confused and frustrated and problems may occur.

#### **For instance YES or NO:**

- 1) Are they allowed into the dining area when you are eating?
- 2) Are they allowed upstairs?
- 3) Are they allowed up onto the sofa?

Allowing your dog onto the sofa as a special treat only on a Tuesday will only confuse it. Pups do not understand what a special treat is and they definitely do not understand what a Tuesday is. Set yourself some ground rules before you bring the puppy home and make sure the whole family understand why you are doing this.

### **Dogs on Chairs**

Much fuss is made about whether or not you should allow dogs on chairs or beds. In some books it is the 11<sup>th</sup> commandment, "Thou shalt not allow your dog onto the furniture upon pain of death". My dog has access to both. My reasons are that he prefers to sleep on a chair, he does not shed hair and he looks funny. However, when told to get down he does so with out so much as a grumble. If he were to grumble I would make the decision that he was no longer allowed and take a good look at our relationship. Use your common sense and make an informed decision.

Give your pup a place of its own to hide away in safely, especially at night. Pups often settle better if they are given their own cosy den, such as a crate with a blanket over the top and a basket within. You can also pop in some paper for them to toilet on. However, they will quickly learn not to feel safe in this environment if their owners make this special place a punishment area. Often if a dog misbehaves it is sent to its basket as a punishment. Dogs soon learn to associate the basket with being in trouble and will not feel secure in it. Therefore, allow the basket to become a nice place and not a bad one.

Instead of punishing them by making them sit in their basket, take something away from them instead. If they persistently want your attention take yourself away by ignoring them, if they are trying to snatch a treat or a toy in an inappropriate manner take that away, if they are trying to push themselves through a door, shut it. This leads us nicely onto ways of teaching puppies new instructions.

## **Puppy training**

### **Sitting**

A good way to start training puppies is to ask them to sit before they get anything nice including a treat, dinner, a fuss, verbal praise, lead on, door open or a toy. Puppies can learn this very quickly and all you have to do is show them the reward and wait until they sit back on their bottoms. You can move the treat forwards over their head so they fall back slightly. Once they are sitting repeat the word “sit” in a jolly manner and use the same tone of voice each time. Do not make it a command and shout or push the pup onto its bottom.

Sitting should be associated with a fun instruction, not a punishment; something the pup wants to do, not something it has to. This is where this sort of approach begins to differ from the more traditional approach of dog training. By shouting commands we are in effect punishing our dogs and why punish them for doing something we want them to do? Why punish them for behaving well. But it is surprising how many owners and dog trainers use this sort of approach and make all instructions firm commands. If we were to use this “Victorian” approach towards children today the telephone lines at “Child line” would be red hot. The danger with shouting is that if the dog chooses to ignore your instruction you end up having to shout louder and louder and louder until ..... Well then what do you do?

Trying to physically manoeuvre your pup into position will not work either. If you could show dogs how to do things like this you would also be able to teach them to make a pot of tea or put the kids to bed. Obviously this can't happen so why believe you can show them how to sit by this method.

## **“Learn to Earn”**

### **Teaching your pup to earn its reward.**

Once your puppy is sitting (timing is everything) show it the treat and ask it to take it. Once your pup is sitting pretty you can move onto the next stage.

In dog behaviour the lower status dogs defer to the higher status ones by looking and moving their head away. You can achieve this with your puppy by offering the treat asking the pup to **sit**. Once sitting, move the treat closer and if your pup goes to take the reward **without** you giving the instruction remove it quickly whilst saying a firm **“No”**. Keep doing this and eventually or quite quickly depending on your pup’s character it will stop trying to snatch and will instead blink and look away. Once it is doing this (remember timing is crucial) repeat the word **“wait”** a few times and then tell your pup to **“take it”**.

Allow the pup to come to you for the treat. If you move your hand towards it the pup may learn to take its cue from the movement of your hand instead of your voice. When the pup is enjoying the treat use a nice squeaky voice to praise it. The pup will then become conditioned to verbal praise thus in the future you will not always have to use treats as a reward since your voice will be enough.

Once your pup becomes good at this use it as a “learn to earn game”, using different rewards in different environments (inside and out). It helps to improve recall, reinforces your status (without the use of direct confrontation), teaches the pup that to get something nice it has to sit down first and thus it is not jumping up all the time. It also helps to teach your pup that when you are displeased nice things disappear and that you

actually back up your threat by removing it. If you simply use a cross voice and shout at the pup very soon you will have to shout louder and then louder still. The pup is not deaf but simply learning that it can ignore you since nothing much happens if it does.

### **More advance training skills**

Once this basic level of training is in place you can then proceed to more advanced levels by asking the pup to wait a little longer before taking the reward. You can incorporate this instruction during the wait phase of the “learn to earn game”. Ask the pup to sit and during the wait take a few steps back and then forwards again. At other times you can place the reward onto the floor. You can then teach your pup to lie down by rewarding and repeating the instruction whilst the pup is lying down. Therefore, you are teaching your pup to wait and it will willingly since it is learning that nice things happen if it waits. This is a much nicer way than forcing your pup to wait by punishing it if it doesn't.

### **Forcing the issue does not work and is not a quick fix:**

- Pushing your puppy down into a sit will only teach your pup that to get a reward it has to be physically pushed down by you first.
- Pulling your puppy back on the lead to stop it pulling will only teach it that to get to go forwards it has to be pulled back first.

### **The Importance of Timing**

Timing as I stated earlier is very important, dogs live in the here and now. I often see owners shouting at their dog for not coming back after the dog has actually come back. If you tell your dog off for not coming back when it is sitting in front of you, how on earth is it supposed to understand that you are displeased at something it did or didn't do two minutes ago! All it will understand is that it is being shouted at for what it is doing at that precise time and that is standing in front of its owner. Confusing for the dog? I should say so. Dogs live in the here and now and timing is crucial hence you say "no" whilst you are taking the treat away not before and not after. Therefore, "no" becomes your punishment word and will help you and your pup to understand each other better when it comes to your puppy doing things you do not want it to. For instance it may want to chew your shoe, you say "no" firmly take it away and then give your pup something it can chew on after it has sat and waited for it.

You can not show dogs what to do and expect them to understand what it is you expect from them. They do not copy your actions or understand long complicate sentences. What they are good at is putting two and two together. If jumping up makes you react to them, they will jump. If sitting looking at you whilst you are eating gets them a bit of sausage, they will beg and if barking at you makes you tell them to shut up, they will bark. Just because you don't see being told off as a reward doesn't mean your pup won't.

**As with small children often any attention is good attention.**

### **Any attention is good attention**

A prime example of this was illustrated by my little girl Chloe when she was two years old. Whenever I was talking to a client on the phone she would begin to try and get my attention away from the phone and back onto her. Initially she would simply try to talk to me, after these attempts were ignored with the help of a cordless phone; she tried to give me a book or a pretend cup of tea. This still didn't gain an effect so she showed her true colours and resorted to banging things about in her room. I thought I had won this by totally ignoring her at all times until that one fateful day when the phone rang whilst Chloe was on the toilet. As I was speaking professionally to a client I heard the plaintive cry of "MUMMY I HAVE DONE A DIRTY POO". I was in a fix. Do I ignore her and face consequences of having to buy a new carpet or do I react and face a lifetime of plaintive cries. I had to react after all I was a mum and new carpets are expensive. Therefore, every time the phone rang, I would hear the patter of tiny footsteps up the stairs to the toilet followed by that plaintive cry. She hadn't planned this clever approach, she wasn't old enough, she just happened to be on the loo when the phone rang and it worked for her so she did it over and over again. How she managed to produce so much poo each time I will never know.

Dogs don't plan either but it often looks like they do and I have come across some amazing attention seeking behaviours during my work. One dog, a Spaniel, called Lucy had learned to howl in a high pitched squeal whenever her owner was not giving her enough attention. It was so loud and she persisted for so long that the owner and her vet believed that something very odd was going on and a lot of money was spent on specialists, scans and tests. The owner would try to shut Lucy up by telling her to "be quiet!" and was of course reinforcing the howling by doing so. And anyway how does a dog know what "shut up" actually means? It may be aware of you becoming cross but shutting up is a complicated concept to learn. In the end when all else had failed she approached me and I recommended (amongst other things) that she ignore all Lucy's attempts at soliciting attention but to reward her by giving it back once the howling had stopped. It took two days, a very detailed behavioural modification programme and some ear plugs. Then all was quiet again.

We will keep returning to the concept of getting your dog to do something it wants to rather than has to. In the case described previously trying to shut Lucy up by force would not have worked simply because for Lucy any attention was good attention. The owner could have used fiercer methods of getting her to shut up such as a spray of citronella to the face or a shock collar. However, this would not have addressed the question as to why Lucy needed her owner's attention so badly in the first place. Acting as the "top dog" and ignoring Lucy would not have addressed her problems either since she needed lots of attention but of the right sort. Simply ignoring her would have made Lucy feel very distressed.

### **Other aspects of owning a puppy.**

#### **1) Toilet training how long does it take?**

How long is a piece of a string? Toilet training depends on your puppy abilities to learn, the environment it lives in and how much time you have available to pursue this. It's a bit like potty training some children take longer than others and every frustrated mother knows that at least half the other children in nursery have been dry for months. Remain patient and do not try and force the issue by punishing your puppy for not getting on with it. Likewise showing them a video of other puppies peeing appropriately will not do the trick either.

Puppies learn to associate different substrates with the pleasant release of emptying the bladder or bowels. You do not even need to reward them for going as going itself is a reward. Therefore, when its time for a tinkle, pop your puppy onto the substrate

of your choice. The more often they go on a particular substrate the quicker they will associate using this area. Pop them out at regular intervals especially after meals, first thing in the morning and last thing at night. If you see them about to go in the house firmly say “no” and remove them to a more appropriate place. Do not punish them for using the wrong place after they have already done it and especially **do not rub their noses in it**. Dogs are clever but not that clever! They are not going to be able to understand what it is you are trying to show them and this may cause them to go when you are not looking.

## 2) What to do and what to chew?

Puppies should not chew shoes, TV remotes, table legs, Lego or anything small that can be easily swallowed. There are many commercially available toys that are designed to be chewed and puzzled over. I love the types of toys that ask your dog to work hard to gain the treat. It gives them something to do that is mentally stimulating and rewarding. I often advise that owners feed their dogs using these toys. After all in the wild, food does not come in small plastic bowls, dogs have to work very hard to gain it and thus have time allotted to this activity in their natural doggy timetable.

## 3) How to play?

Toys that encourage **tug of war** should be avoided if your puppy begins to get overly excited or does not let go when you ask it to. Unfortunately this is often fraught with difficulty since many types of dogs love tuggy games as do most husbands. Play throwing or hiding games instead and always allow the pup to take the toy from you only after it has sat and waited (learn to earn game) as described earlier. Although you may believe your pup is only “playing”, these games are all part of learning what it can and can not get away with. Puppies do not stay puppies for long! The same goes with “**mouth**ing”

if your puppy starts to mouth you say “no” remove your arm/leg/pocket and stop the game by walking away. If they are hanging onto your trousers or skirt, unzip and walk out of them. But do remember to close the curtains.

When playing **rough and tumble**, another game enjoyed by dog and husband, think about what it is you are teaching your puppy! By coming down to its level you are deferring and by initiating contact sports you are challenging it. It can all get a bit confusing for the pup. Therefore, make it clear what types of play are appropriate for your pup at an early age.

If your puppy plays the **“look what I have got and you are not having it because I can run away faster than you”** game do not succumb. Instead pick up something else more interesting, turn your back and become interested in that toy, the now first prize. The toy your pup has will soon lose its appeal since you are no longer interested in it. It will promptly drop this and come up to you wanting what you have. Pick up the dropped toy and you can ask pup to sit and wait before getting the new one. What has happened is that by remaining calm, and using your brain you have managed to retrieve the toy or it may have been the remote control or the latest mobile phone without any undue hassle or by force. The pup has dropped it because it chose to do so not because it had to and you still reinforced your status since the pup had to sit, defer and wait before getting the new one.

**To help stop the novelty from wearing off you can rotate the toys weekly and to make them even more interesting add a little bit of the outside dirt onto them.**

#### **4) Puppy's social calendar?**

You may be told that to socialise your puppy to other dogs you must attend a regular course of puppy parties. Organised in an appropriate way these can be of great value to you and your new pup. However, by the time your puppy has had all its vaccinations the window of opportunity for socialising has closed and thus in this context too late. This biologically pre-programmed sensitive period in early life occurs from birth to around 14 weeks of age depending on breed type. During this period exposure to experiences and situations have a greater effect on later development. However, this doesn't mean your puppy will not learn anything. On the contrary organised in the right way these parties can help teach your puppy how to show appropriate behaviour with other puppies and adult dogs, humans and children and if they are held at a veterinary centre they teach your puppy that these places are actually nice places to visit. What they should **not** be is a free for all where the puppies may learn how to fight and that other dogs are so much fun that in later life they may show inappropriate over-excited behaviour when meeting one. There are some very well organised parties around the country and I have included an address at the end of this book to help you find one in your local area.

#### **5) Taking the lead.**

The first time on the lead can be a harrowing experience for a young puppy especially if it is pulled around the floor by its neck. Begin by using a soft collar and lead and allow your puppy to wander around the garden with it on. Do not pull at it or try to force your pup to follow you. Just calmly follow it around and then call the pup to you and reward with a small treat. Once your pup is used to having the lead on you can start to walk further a field. Begin by carrying it a short distance from your house, allow it to sniff

around and gently encourage it back. With each journey move a little further and further away until your pup begins to trot quite happily back on the nice loose lead. If it stops and pulls back do not yank it forwards, just stand there and calmly call the pup towards you and wait. If the area is safe you can even drop the lead and begin to walk away. Get your puppy used to walking on a loose lead and contrary to belief there is not an 11<sup>th</sup> commandment stating "Thou shalt have your dog walking to heel by your leg whilst looking directly up at you at all times and he shall absolutely not sniff at lampposts."

Unless you intend to train your puppy in obedience for Crufts, walking alongside quietly and having the odd sniff at a lamppost is a much more fun than being frogmarched around the block stuck to the side of your owner's leg. Most breeds of dog are not cut out for this type of intense training anyway and will never make the mark even if you wanted them to. Walking should be a fun and pleasant experience for all not a military procedure. I would rather see a happy and content dog interested in its environment than one walking "perfectly" to heel looking miserable.

#### **Pee-mail**

Sniffing at lampposts, trees, bushes and every clump of grass is a normal part of dog behaviour and the smells they omit are full of useful doggy information to be mulled over. For your puppy going for a walk where other dogs have been is like walking in a world full of post it notes from hundreds of interesting characters which are there to be read and digested.

**Dogs read and send pee-mails all the time and this helps to mentally stimulate them. Mental stimulation is as important as the physical aspect and should not be frowned at.**

## **Chapter Three**

### **Aggression just what is it and why does my dog behave this way?**

Problems regarding aggression are amongst the most common problems dealt with by behaviourists and the largest killer of dogs in the UK, Europe and the USA. There is still the old adage that once a dog has tasted blood there is nothing you can do but put the dog to sleep, hence the hasty death of thousands of dogs. However, it is a lot more complicated than that. There are many reasons why dogs show aggression and many different forms of aggressive behaviour.

#### **What does the word aggression mean to us?**

If we look in the dictionary it describes aggression as “an unprovoked attack” and “hostile activity”. Stick aggression into your computers thesaurus and words such as “violence, anger, assault” and “injury” appear. All very emotive expressions, but what do we know about dog aggression? Is what we think we are seeing genuinely unprovoked violent anger?

#### **What does aggression mean to dogs?**

Why do dogs show aggressive behaviour in the first place? Well we all know that they can bite their owners, other dogs and strangers, but why?

**The answer to this depends on the situation they find themselves in:**

- A dog may have learned that behaving aggressively gets it a valued resource.
- A dog may have formed a negative association with a particular situation and is defending itself.
- It may be frightened and is behaving aggressively to save itself.
- A female with puppies may be protecting them from what she perceives as harm.
- A dog may be in pain and is trying to stop it getting worse.
- A dog may have learned that fighting over food is the only way it gets any.
- Two dogs that live together may be competing for a valued resource such as bone or the attention of their owner.
- A dog might be meeting an unfamiliar dog for the first time and both may threaten and challenge each other.
- A dog may be defending itself or its territory from what it feels is a threat.
- It may be a breed type that has been designed to react aggressively towards other dogs.
- It may be a dog that has been bred to show high predatory behaviour.
- It may even be that the dog has been trained to show aggressive behaviour.

Some of these aggressive behaviours are quite normal or understandable, some may be out of context and therefore inappropriate and in some cases the aggressive behaviour is not normal at all. Thus there are many reasons why a dog may show aggressive behaviour and it is very important that you understand the reasons behind it and seek help from a qualified companion animal behaviourist.

**Do not try any attempt to correct this behaviour by a “do it yourself” method. The use of punishment or behaving as if you were “top dog” may result in disaster.**

### **Body language**

Dogs do not only show aggression by biting and growling at each other. One of the ways dogs communicate how they are feeling is by using body language. They exhibit a number of behaviours and postures many of which we are still yet to learn. By using different postures they can indicate to each other that if they were to fight, who the likely winner of this is going to be.

**Fighting every dog you meet is not a good strategy for survival, even if you did win most of the time, since it is likely that you would still gain an injury. Since there are few vets living behind bushes waiting to leap out with syringes full of antibiotics even a small cut could result in loss of fitness or even death.**

By showing each other their strengths they can make an informed decision whether to defer or not, in other words give in.

#### **These postures communicate lots of different meanings to other dogs:**

- Whether they are willingly to interact for example by wagging their tail.
- How big they are, by making themselves look larger and having the hairs on their body stick up.
- How much armour they possess by presenting the other dog with a row of shiny white teeth. Teeth also show how young and fit you are.

- How healthy they are by being able to bark and growl loudly and for a very long time. It's hard work shouting loudly for a long time.
- How strong they are by bowling another dog over and squeezing the back of its neck with its jaws. Some dogs even use mounting behaviour.
- How much mental strength they have by holding eye contact and not backing down.

Being able to show each other your physical strengths is a great indicator of who is likely to win a fight. However, I hear you all cry, "I've got a Jack Russell Terrier and he stands up to Rottweiler's". Well physical strength is only part of it, mental strength, the self belief that you are going to win or even the desperation that you have to, is just as important. Some dogs and some breed types have more "mental strength" than others and will win a battle of wills over much bigger dogs. Mental strengths include holding eye contact with another dog without blinking and having the audacity to even try in the first place.

Once a dog has decided the likely outcome of having a fight and what they have to gain from it, they can either increase the aggression to involve more serious behaviours such as actually biting or they can stop the fight by deferring.

**These deference postures are often the opposite of aggressive challenging ones:**

- Instead of becoming big and threatening a dog will become small by lowering its body and hiding away the ears and tails.
- They take all eye contact away and may move away.
- They give up all possessions to the victor.

Usually this is enough and the victor may mark his success with a little urine and wander off or invite a non-challenging interaction. However, not all dogs, for whatever reason, seem to understand this behaviour and continue to challenge after the other dog has deferred. This is a form of inappropriate aggressive behaviour.

**In these cases the deferring dog may:**

- Try to escape.
- Show even more deferent posturing by clamping its tail firmly between its legs and flattening its body to the ground.
- Roll over and sometimes even urinate. Some dogs show this form of fearful deference when another dog or human simply looks at them.
- Others may react to a continuous challenge by becoming defensive and reacting in an aggressive way even though their initial response was to defer.

There is a fine line between normal deference and really fearful posturing and like people all dogs have a slightly different genetic makeup and have experienced slightly different environments and will show varying extremes of this.

**Like people all dogs are different but some are more different than others.**

To help illustrate how complicated aggressive issues are, I will describe two case histories both with similar presenting signs. Both dogs were aggressive towards people they did not know, but both had completely different reasons why they showed this behaviour. Let's first meet a dog called "Molly".

***Molly's story.***

*Molly was an 18 month-old Border Collie who was obtained from a farm in South Yorkshire. The farmer had advertised the puppies in a local newspaper stating that they would make "great and intelligent pets". She was born in a barn on the farm and had five other brothers and sisters. Her mother was a working farm Collie and her father was also a working dog from another farm and although the owners saw the mother they did not see the father. They described the mothers character as very nervous but not aggressive and she did not want to interact with them. However, the puppies looked cute especially the one who cowered behind her mother at the back of the box. Being human they picked this pup to take home. Molly was 6 weeks old. She spent her first few weeks hiding behind the sofa but eventually came around and became quite happy in the company of her owners and their two young children.*

*The owners led a quiet life and did not have many people visit the house. If they did, Molly would keep away from them and hide. When she was 9 months old the owners decided that Molly should attend "obedience classes". The sort of classes she went to used a more "traditional" approach and recommended that all dogs wore a choke chain and collar. Molly was not used to one of these and began to pull away from it. The "dog trainer" saw this and told the owners to be a lot firmer with her and showed them how to pull back and release the chain. He only got to demonstrate this once as the second time Molly decided that enough was enough and began to growl as he approached her. The dog trainer became very angry, grabbed the lead from the owners and pulled hard. Molly reaction was to cry and lay flat on the floor. The trainer was about to repeat this when the owners stepped in to stop him, they left and didn't return. All was well for a few months until Molly began to mature and her nervous behaviour worsened. Instead of hiding when*

*people arrived at the house she began to sit in between them and her owners and if the visitors made a sudden move she would bare her teeth and growl. Her owners understandably started to worry and put her out of the room whenever anyone came to the house. As soon as the door bell rang, Molly was frantically bundled into the kitchen.*

*It came to a head one day when a visitor tried to approach and stroke Molly whilst she was in the kitchen. This person informed the owners that she had endless years of dog experience and “knew how to handle dogs”! Molly not knowing this promptly bit her and the person told the owners that Molly was beyond help and would have to be put down. The owners were distraught and asked their vet for help who referred her to me.*

*When I entered the house on the first consultation it was clear that Molly was scared to death of me. Her body carriage was low with her ears flat and tail clamped tightly beneath her legs. She stared hard at me and curled her lips. I did not challenge by look directly at her and ignored her completely. We had a nice cup of tea, some biscuits and chatted about Molly and general dog behaviour. Eventually, after an hour or so Molly came closer and seemed a little more relaxed. Her body carriage was still low but she had stopped curling her lips and her ears were pricked up. I still ignored her and waited for her to wander away. I then called her over calmly and produced a tasty treat from my bag. Without looking directly at her I offered her the treat but asked her to sit and wait first using the “learn to earn” exercise described earlier in the book. She came and willingly sat and waited for the treat. I did not look directly at Molly since she may have viewed this as challenging. Instead I allowed her to gain enough confidence to approach in her own time. However, by asking her to defer to me first before receiving the treat I was also saying indirectly that I was the stronger animal. She understood this body language and her*

*confidence grew as she learned that I was not going to make a grab for her. After the consultation she had become a lot more relaxed in my presence.*

*Molly had not been showing the previous visitor, whom she had bitten, that she was the "Top dog". She was simply reacting in a defensive manner and had tried to tell this person, in the only way she could, not to approach as she was frightened by what this person might do to her. However, this person had not understood Molly's body language and all Molly could do was to carry out her threat to bite.*

### **Common approach to greeting a dog**

Many people still approach a dog by staring at it and showing a whole row of teeth (we call it smiling). We then make loud cooing noises, bend over it and go for the back of the neck. This is what dogs do to each other when they are challenging one another. It is little wonder that some people get bitten when they approach a dog in this way. Luckily most dogs learn that we do not mean anything by this gesture and will ignore it and some may even enjoy the feeling. But some, especially if they feel threatened, may view this approach very differently. If you are meeting an unfamiliar dog for the first time, do not stare at it or attempt contact, just ignore it. The dog will feel a lot happier with this non-challenging approach.

**It is not being rude. Being rude is purely a human concept.**

*Why Molly behaved in this way was understandable if we look at her breed type and early learning experiences. Farm Collies have been designed by years of breeding programmes to show an instinctive predatory response to herding farm animals. This instinctive response is thought to be genetically linked with nervous/aggressive behaviour and many farm collies show defensive behaviour towards any animals/humans they find threatening. Molly's mother also showed nervous behaviour towards unfamiliar people. Farm Collies are also generally born outside the home environment and may not have had a great deal of early experience with different people. This may result with them having difficulties coping with new people in later life.*

*Molly's experience with the "dog trainer" would not have helped and may have left her with a very negative experience from which to refer to. Alongside all these reasons her owners may have also helped to reinforce her negative experiences by becoming distressed every time the door bell rang and bundling Molly into the kitchen.*

*For problems with this much complexity there is no such thing as a quick fix or an instant cure. In most behavioural cases there are many factors to consider and we hope that the owners are able to manage the problem safely and go some way in achieving positive results. Any owner expecting a perfect new and improved dog over night is going to be disappointed and will probably resort to the promises of quick fixes from some drug companies or electric collar manufacturers. In Molly's case it was important that she was never allowed to be put into a situation where she could bite again, defensively or not. Her owners were advised not to react anxiously but to make sure that the visitors were not allowed to approach Molly and that she either wore a muzzle, was on a house line or chewing on something tasty in the kitchen.*

### **Muzzles?**

Muzzling can be a useful accessory once the dog gets used to it. However, you must make sure that it is the right size for your dog. It is also important that the dog associates it with nice things rather than having it shoved on when ever another person approaches. Therefore, pop it on and off on a regular basis during the wait period of the learn to earn game.

**Not only does a muzzle protect other people and gives peace of mind to the owners but is a great deterrent in stopping other people trying to stroke your dog and thus frightening it.**

*It was also just as important to teach Molly that visitors were actually quite nice things to have around and a behavioural programme was designed in which Molly was asked to play a "learn to earn game" at a distance where she could see a person but they were not so close that she would react nervously. Over time the distance she could cope was shortened and eventually she was able to walk past people more confidently and allow people in the house without reacting aggressively. She will never be a bold and friendly dog since we can't give her a genetic transplant nor recreate her early learning experiences but we could help to teach her that people were not as scary as she once believed. Her owners will always have to be aware of placing her into situations she can't cope with but she is a lot calmer and hasn't bitten anyone since.*

**Bruce's Story:**

*The next case I want to talk about is another dog that had bitten a visitor but for very different reasons. This is Bruce's story.*

*Bruce was a long haired male German Shepherd of 18 months who like Molly was approaching maturity. They owners bought him from a breeder who showed German Shepherds and all the puppies were brought up in a home environment. The owners picked Bruce out of the litter because he immediately bound up and seemed to choose them. He was the biggest and boldest puppy and full of life. Bruce was taken to his new home at 12 weeks of age and was soon bouncing around and chewing everything in sight.*

*He was taken to "obedience classes" where the trainers only used positive reward methods. Bruce found it great fun and approached all the other puppies and bowled them over. He became quite a character and this behaviour was tolerated as his behaviour was described as "playful". He soon learned all the commands and was soon walking to heel, sitting, lying down and coming when called with joyous enthusiasm during these classes.*

*However, at home his behaviour was not always as good, he did not always sit and he did not always come when called. He would also constantly present his owners with toys to throw for him and the more his owners tried to tell him to go away the more toys he bought. If they tried to take the toy from him he would run away hanging on to it for dear life. He could apparently keep this game up all evening and would remain active at most times during the day and constantly paced around the room and the garden. He had also started to follow his female owner everywhere even when she went to the loo.*

*At first they thought this behaviour was funny and it was not until a family friend came to visit that they suddenly realised that they had a big problem on their hands. This particular family male friend was a regular visitor and had known Bruce since he was a puppy. They had always got on well and often played rough and tumble, a common pursuit particularly among the males of both species. However, on this particular visit Bruce was sitting between this friend and his female owner. The family friend just happened to lean over to give the female owner a letter he had received when Bruce suddenly leapt up and grabbed his arm. This was a particularly nasty grab and left the friend with 12 stitches. The owners rushed Bruce to their vets the very next day with the intention of having him put to sleep. The forward thinking veterinary surgeon took a detailed history regarding Bruce's early life, his character and the events of the previous night. He noticed that there may be a problem with status and protective issues and asked if the owners would be willingly to speak to me first. They did and Bruce is still alive to day albeit minus his manhood, a small price to pay.*

*Although the end result was the same in both Molly's and Bruce's case, that two people were bitten within the family home, the factors underlying them were completely different and each needed a different approach. Bruce was an intact maturing male show-bred German Shepherd dog and was the boldest puppy in the litter. In all probability Bruce did not choose his owners when he was a puppy, he would have reacted in exactly the same way towards anyone that came to see him. He grew into a big strong dog and learned all the usual "commands" needed to become the "perfect dog". However, just because he knew the commands, didn't mean he was going to carry them out. Instead he began to show selective hearing. He also learned that he could initiate contact when he liked and someone would react to him. He "played" rough and tumble games which he*

*often won and kept his female owner under close scrutiny at all times. In other words the humans around him would defer to his requests for resources and he emerged the victor.*

*So why if he got all he wanted would he have reacted aggressively toward the male visitor? Well probably for several reasons, although we can't actually ask Bruce or get inside his head to experience it for ourselves.*

*1) Bruce was bred from show stock to obtain a breed standard asked for by the Kennel Club. Initially German Shepherds had been bred as territory guarding dogs, not show dogs, and these guard dogs often show a more nervous character and hence find a lot of things threatening so may react in a defensive manner. However, show dogs have not been bred for their guarding skills, since a nervous dog is more likely to react defensively when poked and prodded by the judge and will not to present itself very well in front of unfamiliar people. Hence Bruce may be genetically pre-disposed to behave in a much bolder way.*

*2) Bruce had been given lots of attention by his owners whenever he asked for it. Therefore, his owners may have become an important resource for him to compete over. This deferring behaviour by the owners may have also increased his concept of where he belonged in the group.*

*3) Bruce was also beginning to mature into a fully fledged male dog with increasing amounts of sexual hormones being released. It is possible that Bruce may have viewed his female owner as an important mating resource and he was competing with the male friend.*

4) *It may have been that the male friend startled him by suddenly reaching out over the top and thus he reacted quickly in a defensive manner.*

*It may have been partly, all or none of these factors. It was my belief, after taking a full history that Bruce was showing behaviour more akin to competitive behaviour and was viewing his owners (especially his female owner) as very important resources. It was, therefore, important that these status issues were addressed and Bruce was no longer given attention on demand.*

***His behavioural modification programme included such recommendations as:***

- i. It was important that visitors to the house were safe; therefore Bruce was either kept calmly on a house line or had his muzzle on. All visitors were asked not to look, touch, talk or to approach him. However, Bruce was rewarded with treats or attention by his owners when he was calm. This enabled him to begin to associate having visitors around with nice things happening to him.*
- ii. To help him become less competitive his owners had to make sure that he learned to earn all his rewards and that he deferred to them first. They no longer gave in to his demands for attention and were very clear and consistent in their instructions.*
- iii. However, ignoring your dog is a miserable way to live for both parties since dogs are social creatures and have needs, so the owners were encouraged to play and interact with him but in a more appropriate way. There were no more games of rough and tumble but more instead of hide, throw and fetch.*
- iv. To keep him amused he was given puzzle games which consisted of toys in which the owners could place a small treat. He was also given raw hide chews and a Kong with a small smearing of fish paste inside.*

- v. *He was also given two good quality walks daily where he was allowed to run and sniff and play the “learn to earn” game described earlier in the book.*
- vi. *He was also neutered since this is known to reduce competitive aggression by reducing the amount of the hormone testosterone. This hormone produced in the testes makes the dog likely to fight more often and for longer than those dogs that have had their testes removed. And of course this will also help to stop any unwanted mini Bruce’s and Sheila’s running around.*

*Since he no longer views his owners’ as such important resources he does not show any of the competitive aggressive behaviours. However, at times he still tries to challenge his owners by thrusting the odd squeaky bone into their laps and they have to remember to ignore this behaviour. There is a life changing programme and because of his naturally bold nature the owners will always have to keep a lid on status issues.*

### **DOMINANCE**

I do not like to use the word dominance, as it conjures up all sorts of meanings for different people. Scantly clad ladies with high leather boots carrying whips and chains springs to my mind when I hear the word dominance? “To dominate” is described in the Collins Gem dictionary as to “rule, control, sway, and be the most powerful”. If you stick this word in your computer thesaurus you get similar results and words like “govern, dictate, take over”. Was Bruce really viewing his owners in this way and thinking up new ways to dictate to them his wishes? Probably not, dogs just don’t have the type of brain structure to be able to think like this. He was certainly challenging them for status but dominating is far too an emotive word to use and gives the wrong impression.

**Therefore, I prefer to use the phrase “status issues” and think of the dog as showing its strengths rather than trying to dominate.**

## **Status issues**

In doggy world, if the owner is deferring to their dog by giving in to constant demands for attention then the dog will expect the rewards that come with that status. Of course in natural dog groups changes in status occur at regular intervals as new dogs mature and old dogs become weak and ill. Being higher in status allows access to rewards over those of lower status such as mating opportunities, a drink of water, sleeping areas or food.

However, there is not one ruling dictator that rules above the rest. Dog society is a lot more fluid than that and is very dependent on how they are feeling at that time. For instance, some dogs' covert food over sleeping areas and are more likely to fight harder for a meal than a bed in one instance but may change their minds if they are particularly cold one night. Female dogs seem more willingly to fight harder over resources that involve bringing up puppies, such as food and den areas, whereas the males tend to fight harder over mating opportunities with females. Some dogs become very possessive over attention and will not allow another dog or human anywhere near their precious owner.

As I have mentioned earlier, fighting at all times is not a very good strategy since the victors may also become injured. Instead dogs will use behavioural postures to show their strengths until one decides to defer. However, some authors have picked up on the "dominance" aspect only and have described methods of training using only this small part of dog behaviour and use it subsequently to cover all problem behaviour. This they claim is all you have to do to get your dog to behave appropriately.

Others go even further than this approach by asking the owners to physically fight their dogs by scruffing them by the neck and wrestling them to the ground or by taking their food away from them. “So what’s wrong with that then I hear you cry”, well for one thing it assumes that this is what actually happens in dog society, that there is only the one leader. It also assumes that the dog can actually understand what it is you are trying to say. In both cases the assumption is misleading and used inappropriately these approaches can be damaging since they do not take into account the nervous, overly bold or those dogs that have not been successful in learning normal dog behaviour.

**So is there another way of addressing status issues that is less challenging to your dog?**

Yes, instead of trying to force the issue you could ask your dog to defer to you in a non-confrontational way. In other words stay in control by not having to fight them in a one to one battle. I have already described “**the learn to earn**” exercise earlier in the book and described how you can cleverly retrieve the remote controls, mobile phones and your best underwear by using your more complicated problem solving brains.

The idea behind the more non-confrontational approach is that we use the dogs own “doggy manners” to try keep our dogs within appropriate behavioural boundaries. However, trying to emulate being a dog is pretty difficult since we have no clear understanding of how dogs think or really view the world but we can try with what available evidence we already have. Fortunately today we have a much better understanding of how dogs behave, a clearer picture of their anatomy and physiology and how they learn.

### **How dogs learn to associate**

***This area is a book in its own right so instead of realms of text I will try and describe how dogs learn by discussing a situation most of us as dog owners will be familiar with.***

#### ***JUMPING UP***

*When a dog first greets you it can be a joyous affair, you encourage your dog by smiling, talking to it and giving it a big fuss. Then you get a bit cross because your dog is beginning to snag your new pure lambs-wool designer cardigan so you start reacting in a totally different way. The dog picks up on your body language and tone of voice and understands that you are not so happy. Therefore, it tries to please you more by jumping even higher after all that worked in the first place. By now you are really cross and the dog gets a serious telling off and probably a sore nose. Poor dog it has only shown you one behaviour, which, at first you rewarded and then you didn't. How is a dog supposed to understand that it can only jump up at you for 6.8 seconds and only on those days when you are not wearing a new lambs-wool cardigan? The answer is it can't. Jumping up worked the first time so the dog will continue to jump up and the more excited you get the higher it will jump.*

#### ***So what's the answer?***

*This is very easy you have to do is to say "No" and firmly ignore (no eye, voice or body contact) it by turning away. Eventually if it is not getting rewarded for jumping it will stop. Then you can reward it when it has its bottom planted firmly on the ground.*

***It has not stopped because it suddenly sees you as the leader dog and dogs do not jump up at leader dogs.***

***It has stopped because it has learned that jumping does not get it the reward it wanted, however, sitting on its bottom does!***