



# DOG REACTIVITY

TTU ANIMAL BEHAVIOR CLINIC

## What is reactivity?

Dog reactivity is when a dog has strong emotions toward a common stimulus, like fear (I'm afraid!) or frustration (I want to see them!). This leads to behaviors like jumping, barking, lunging, whining, or pulling on the leash.

## How can we work on reactivity?

While we are in the process of working on reactivity, we should try our best to avoid the triggers. This may mean taking your dog out when others aren't around. This is not the solution, but it can help us with training. Before we start training, we will need to acquire the stimuli/trigger in a controlled way - a friend to act as a stranger or in the car passing by.

## Identifying triggers and threshold

A trigger is the stimuli our dogs are reactive towards. This could range from a stranger walking by to a car driving. Threshold is the distance, volume, and exposure amount of the trigger that initiates a response from the dog. When working on reactivity, we always want to expose the trigger below the threshold level.

## Slow exposure paired with positives!

When we have our controlled stimuli, we will start slowly introducing this to our dog (remember before the threshold) in a positive manner. Pair this gradual exposure with lots of rewards. You will work on slowly increasing the exposure to the trigger, all while staying below the point of response from your dog.

## Check out these helpful resources!



## CONTACT US!



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