



DOG REACTIVITY

What is reactivity?

Dog reactivity is when a dog has strong feelings towards a common stimuli, and presents a heightened response. This can stem from fear (I am afraid of them!) or frustration (I want to see them!). They may show us these strong feelings by jumping, lunging, barking, whining and pulling on leash.

Identifying triggers and threshold

A trigger is the stimuli our dogs are reactive towards. This could range from strangers walking by, to a car driving. Threshold is the distance, volume, 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!

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 isn't the solution, but 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 the "stranger" or in the car passing by.

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 a response from your dog!

Check out these helpful articles!



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