

### Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

### Transcript

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SG Hey everybody, welcome to another episode of Shaped By Dog. I am Susan Garrett, and today we're going to talk about how Hollywood has made life incredibly difficult for dogs. Now I'm not talking about the fact that certain movies popularize different breeds that maybe aren't the best pets for everyone.

That's not great either. And maybe I will do a podcast on how to know what breed of dog would be good for you. What I'm talking about is the personification that they give these dogs, they imply dogs in movies have human characters characteristics like Benji who solved kidnapping

How many times did Lassie run and tell mom and dad that Jimmy fell down the well?

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What's wrong with Timmy that he keeps falling down wells, and quite honestly, the truth about dogs is if Timmy fell down that well, he's very likely going to stay there. If it's going to be dependent upon the family dog to go and tell somebody.

Now, there are anomalies. There are definitely true stories of heroic events that dogs have done. I'm not going to take that away. But that's not the norm. Hollywood has set up this expectation that dogs understand English, that they understand full sentences, that they understand past tense and present tense and have a college degree and can solve kidnappings. And they've set this magical relationship as soon as a dog comes from the pound, there's this magical relationship that the dog knows what we want and how to live the right life and do the right thing all the time. Sometimes that happens. It's rare. It's rare. Well, I don't even want to percent it. Think of a percentage that a dog would come home from a rescue and magically do everything. It's an implied relationship that we just get each other kind of like Rom-Coms. I'm a big fan of Rom-Coms by the way, but truthfully, I don't expect to lock eyes with somebody across a deli and instantly know he's the one ... or get in a big fight with somebody that I bump into and then magically fall in love with him two scenes later.

Or think that anyone's going to be running to an airport after me to stay ... like these are movies that create this warped expectation of relationships because the truth is relationships are work ... that they develop when good choices are made, that your partner likes. And that the truth about dogs. That dogs do what's reinforcing. I mean most of us do, it's reinforcing. And those magical relationships with a dog absolutely can have happened; I've had I've been blessed with them now nine times or maybe I'm up to 10. Every one of the dogs I've ever owned, I've shared that magical relationship with.

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People to define their heart dogs. Once in a lifetime dogs. I've been blessed to have had that 10 times. Because I don't leave it to chance. Here's the thing about dogs, they develop great relationships, with dogs. So if you have another dog in the house and you bring in one dog in, they'll develop a great relationship with them at the expense of a great relationship with you. You want a great relationship with that dog, you're going to have to put in the work.

My mentor, Bob Bailey has this great quote, he says "the challenge of why training fails is because people expect way too much of their dog and way too little of themselves". You need to create an



environment of success for your dog. So how it works is what you know what you don't want. I've talked about that in a past podcast episode. You know exactly what your dog wants, what he loves, what's reinforcing to him, what is high value reinforcement.

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You can predict what he's going to want at any time during your training, or when he's at home, or when he's away at a park when there are other distractions, and you create an environment of success.

Know what he loves, predict what he wants, create an environment of success.

That kind of sounds like a great recipe for any successful relationship, right? Whether it be with a kid, whether it be with a partner, whether it be with a co-worker. That's not a bad recipe for creating a great, great relationship. It goes back to success in dog training, right?

That is the statement that I have said in every podcast, our dogs are always doing the best they can with the education we give them in the environment that we are expecting to perform. Let me give you an example. My late husband was a neat freak. When we met our first date when I went to his house, I knew probably going to last six weeks tops, once he sees my house because I was not a neat freak. I have definitely grown to be more of a neat freak over the years.

And I thought this was going to be ... because obviously this was something that was super important to him. When we built our current house (we were together for or 22 years before he passed away) .. when we built this current house, what we did was we changed the environment, so I could be a neat freak. We had a walkin closet that had laundry washer dryer right in the closet and all of the clothing like the dresser, the drawers, and everything was in the closet. So I would take off my clothes and put on clean clothes in the same place. The bedroom never got untidy because I didn't have any tools to get untidy with it was all in that closet.

And so, you can manipulate your dogs' environment as well so that they can have success. And it means using things like a crate or an exercise pen and people say well, I put him in a room. Well, if you put him in a room and he didn't have great exercise before you put him in there, you didn't do mentally stimulating games to kind of wear out his brain a little bit and you didn't give them access to things like bones to chew on then. It's probably not a surprise to me that you came back and your doorframe was missing because your dog destroyed it. And putting your hands on your hips and saying things like, what did you do?

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If you ever hear yourself saying that, you need to rephrase it to "what did I do?". Did I miss out on an educational piece for that dog? Did I miss out on setting them up in an environment of success? What did I do? It's not what did you do? Because here's something that I've been saying for 20 years in teaching seminars all over the world. I've said this and sometimes it brings people to tears and I don't mean this to make you feel bad about yourself. I mean this to inspire you. Our dogs are a reflection of our understanding of how to train dogs.

So my dogs, I think are phenomenal family pets. I can take them off-leash and walk them and know they'll come back anytime I call. If I throw a toy they immediately run out as fast as they can and run back and put it right in my hand. They play when I ask. They chew when I ask. Right? We have developed this great relationship. Right now, I've got dogs at my feet while I'm doing this podcast because they love hanging out with me. Actually, there's one under the desk pulling at me, as I said



that ... that's hysterical.

How does that great relationship happen? It happens by creating an environment where choice is out in front. So I mentioned the last podcast that when our dogs make a choice and that choice gets reinforced. The choice point gives a dopamine release to the dog. So they want to make that choice. So your training should set the dog up so that they make a choice. And then that good choice gets a reinforcement.

A great place to start is [my game "ItsYerChoice"](#). And it's kind of all one word, it's a word I made up, ItsYerChoice. I know it should be, it's your choice. Better English. However, the game is called, ItsYerChoice or IYC. You can go to my website - [DogsThat.Com](#) - scroll down to our blog and it's highlighted right there. ItsYerChoice. You can start today and create this amazing "TV like" relationship with your dog, all through choice. And it's kind of like it snowballs ... that people say relationships 50:50. 50:50 relationships I found don't work.

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They need to be 100% - 100:100. You can't have expectations that that person is going to do things for you. And if you have expectations of yourself that you're going to do everything you can. And that person you're in a relationship as the same expectations. That's what makes a great relationship.

Alright, so you need to grow your understanding if you want this amazing relationship with your dog.

You need to grow your understanding of how to create that great relationship because we can't have critical conversations with the dog although some people do try ... in the "what did you do" and "you know better". These are things that of they come out of your mouth in a conversation with your dog, come back and listen to this podcast.

And let's get inspired to learn more about how to create that great relationship with your dog by learning how to create a dog who wants to do what you want to do, because the dogs are all doing the best they can. It's our job to inspire them.

Let's make something really difficult like a dog getting their nails cut. It is possible to create a dog who wants to get their nails cut. It is possible.

It's all done through manipulating environment, creating good choices and being patient along the way.

But you need a starting point. So we start with the dog making a choice, and learning that when you make good choices, I'm going to reward you. And then we grow ItsYerChoice to a bigger choice. And that's where our game "[Crate Games](#)" come in. And while you're on the blog, you can do a little search for Crate Games. Knowing what your dog loves. That list of food, toys, and activities that I spoke I spoke about in our last podcast.

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Predicting what will be his favourite in any different environment, creating an environment for success. So, what does an environment for success look like? If I'm going to leave my dog and go to work, I'm going to make sure that the dog has at least an hour walk. I know it's going to mean you getting up a little earlier in the morning.

But if you can't do that hour walk before work, here's what you can do. You can do two 5-Minute games. That's all, two 5-Minute games. Then when you come home, you're going to do one more 5-Minute game before you make supper. And then after supper, you're going to go on that hour-long walk



with your dog. You both will thank me for that. And then sometime in the evening, you can do another 5-Minute game. You have now exercised your dog, got them exhausted and an hour would be a minimum. My dogs get two hours of exercise every day.

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So an hour of exercise, you've done mental stimulation, and these games aren't just mindlessly throwing a ball. These are games of choice that help lead you to an outcome you desire. So it might be you want your dog to come when they're called. Well, our [Recallers](#) online course (which I'm not suggesting that you jump into that right now .. it is that you just explore, we've got a lot of free things you can look at on [my blog](#)). But our Recallers, it teaches dogs to come when they're called, along with other things. It's 40 games, you play these daily games is your dog and you create a dog who wants to do what you want to do! Right?

Like, is it easier to get a kid to do something when they want to do it? Or is it they "have to because I said so". When you have "I have to because you said so" you're going to get not the best work, you're going to get a little bit of animosity, possibly some bitterness or resentment as time goes on. And when you aren't on top of it as the sergeant major, the jobs not going to get done, probably at all, but it's definitely not going to get the job done well. If you inspire a kid ... and I know another tactic can say is, "if you do your bed, I'll give you a quarter" ... and then you are walking into a relationship of negotiation with that child and I have seen that happen.

I have seen when kids get asked to do something, and they go "well, what if I do this instead?" – "No, I want you to do that" – "okay, well, what if I can if I do that, can I have a cookie? Can I have a snack? Or can I have my allowance two days early if I do?". I have seen relationships of negotiations with children. And I gotta tell you, that is an energy drain as well.

What I have seen as super-effective relationships is creating an inspired kid who wants to do something and then gets reinforced for it without the expectation. And they soon ... like me, I have learned to appreciate and like having a neat environment. In a million years, I wouldn't have thought it possible. But when I started dating John, I was 35 years old. I loved a clean environment. I had a cleaning lady that came every week, but I had to tidy up for like an hour and a half before she got there.

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And now, I kind of like having a tidy environment. I don't know it's somewhere over the 22 past years it happened. All right. So, it's thinking outside at the box, I get that it's stepping outside of a comfort zone. But my point is, dogs aren't little human beings. They are animals that we can have phenomenal relationships with. Relationships that bring you joy every day. Relationships where your dog 100% understands what's expected of them. And they want to do that every time.

Somebody wrote a review about my second book I wrote called Shaping Success. And what she wrote, it stuck with me because it was like, W/wow, she gets it. And she said "I envy the clarity to which Susan's dogs live their lives".

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And that is my wish for every dog on this planet, to have the ability to live their lives with such clarity that they want to do what we want them to do. And they're not feeling intimidated to have to do something, or they're not worried. They live a life where every day they get more and more confidence that they're doing the right thing. And that confidence comes through the reinforcement. And that is





## Episode: #03

# How Hollywood Made Life Tough for Dogs

what develops that amazing - a better relationship - than you see in Hollywood. It is possible. It all develops by starting with a common ground and putting in the effort.

Make the expectations of yourself far greater than your expectations of your dog. Make your expectations of how you're going to create a successful environment, of how you're going to deep dive into choice-based, game-based, reinforcement-based dog training, so that you can be the leader in creating this phenomenal relationship.

And I promise you, it will spill over into the rest of your life.

That it will spill over into how you look at relationships with the people in your life.

And that is where we have a life Shaped By Dogs.

We'll see you next time.

### Resources

[DogsThat.Com](https://www.dogs-that.com)

[Why "Choice" is the Critical Key to a Great Dog](#)

[ItsYerChoice Game](#)

[Crate Games Online](#)

[Recallers](#)





### About Susan

A world-leading educator of dog trainers, Susan is also one of the most successful agility competitors of the last three decades. She has won multiple Gold Medals at National or World Championship events with every dog she has ever owned over the past 30 years. Susan was one of the very first dog trainers to share knowledge online when she opened her "Clicker Dogs" website many years ago. Susan has helped hundreds of thousands of people enjoy a great relationship with their dogs through her workshops and keynote speaking around the world, award winning books, DVDs, magazine articles, blog posts, podcasts, free dog training and dog agility video series, and online dog training programs.



A natural teacher and an entertaining speaker, Susan is world renowned for her dog training knowledge and practical application of that knowledge. Her understanding of how to apply science-based learning principles to both competitive and family pet dog training has been pivotal in changing how dogs are trained.

Susan is now helping many thousands of dog owners in 82 countries have the best relationship possible with their dogs. The real joy for her comes from bringing confidence to dogs and their owner through playful interactions and relationship building games that are grounded firmly in the science of how animals learn.



### Meet Us Online

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