

Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

Transcript

00:00:10

SG Hello everyone, welcome to another episode of Shaped By Dog, or if you're watching on video, it might be 'shaped by humidity' as my hair has gone a little crazy. I am Susan Garrett. I want to share with you that I've been teaching dog training all over the world, giving seminars for probably 30 years now, more than 30 years actually. One of the things that I'm really well known for is my ability to help people create drive in unusual dogs. I mean, dogs that wouldn't normally be driven. Why is drive important? Because it gets us engagement allows us to train a dog a lot easier. This episode isn't about drive by the way, but I'm going to be getting to that.

00:00:53

There are two things that are important when I'm engaging a dog and getting them more driven for work. The first is building in words that become triggers, that the dog anticipates something amazing is about to happen. So, the easiest word and the most common is the word 'ready'. So, you don't just go to the dog and say 'ready'. And by sharing this episode with my dogs around, there might be some barking. I'm not sure we'll find out.

00:01:17

It's almost like a challenge when you say to the dog, "are you reeeaaaadddy?". And you're building up anticipation, "reeeaaaadddy?", that something amazing is about to happen in my dogs (no, I know peach pie), that something amazing is about to happen. (Just kidding. I'm not really). So, building in a verbal cue is part of everybody. The whole house is awake right now. The second part of building drive is engaging something in the dog called the opposition reflex.

00:01:54

You've probably all seen the opposition reflex in action. When you push against the dog, they automatically are wired to lean into that push. You push on their chest they're going to lean into that push, and it creates energy. So, when you release that it's like coiling in a spring and it creates a momentum forward, alright? So, opposition reflex.

00:02:19

This is something like when we're working with dogs to teach them in the protection sports. We want a dog to fly after somebody and bite a sleeve that they're wearing. Right. So, we will hold them back saying motivational words. And that's exciting them, they're getting more and more driven. You let go of that coiled up spring and they fly forward. Do the same thing in fly ball. It's a common to use a restraint recall in agility to just create that intensity, that energetic excitement. Boom. Okay. That's all about building drive.

00:02:57

But today I'm going to talk to you about the opposite of drive and that is self-control. A dog holding position and how your help is not helping. And why you need to not be trying to help because your help is not helping. I'm going to give you a little backstory. And this backstory involves the newest member of our team here at headquarters central. So, Chelsea has joined our team, part time right now.



Episode: #12

When Helping Your Dog is an Illusion

00:03:33

And my dogs love her. They know her well because she actually does canine massage as well as equine massage. She was teaching that before she started to work for us here. Now, one of the parts of being on the job with us here is that something you do may very well end up being a lesson that I share with the world.

00:03:53

So, you can't be too shy about what goes on because the world's going to know about it. And this is what happened yesterday. Kim asked Chelsea to let the dogs out. Tater Salad went super close to the door. She opened the door, he had to move. She gave him his release word. And because she didn't want him to just bolt out the door. Now, if you might refer to the last [podcast episode on permissions](#), when you give a dog permission, you're reinforcing what they're doing at the time. And if what they're doing at the time is trying to escape, you actually are teaching them "you better try to escape more often".

00:04:27

Kim caught that she suggested we call Tater Salad back in and try it again. So, this time, what Chelsea did was she tried to help so Tater Salad could be correct. And this wasn't a conscious thought. I'm sure. As she opened the door, her leg came up across Tater's chest in order to protect him from leaving. Which I'm pretty sure he wouldn't have left anyway, but that's just human nature.

00:04:54

The dog failed once I want them to be successful this time and really it wasn't the dog that failed. It was Chelsea that failed. And so, the leg going up along the dog's body meant he, he had a barrier that he couldn't bust through. The help is not helping. Because what you've done is you've created that condition that we try to create when we want to build drive. In that we create a physical barrier against what the dog wants. The dog wants to go busting outside. Good things are going to happen when he, when I go outside. So, we create that physical barrier by holding the dog back so that we can remove it and say break and everyone's happy. What do you mean that's not helping? It helped, the dog didn't go outside.

00:05:45

It helped, that physical barrier helped. But all that you're doing is creating the dog to want to burst through that leg. You're creating an oppositional reflex. I see it all the time in dog sports. People leave their dog at the start line, but as soon as they take off the leash, they have to grab hold of the dog because the dog is going to leave.

00:06:09

So, they're controlling the dog, or they might put the dog in a sit and back away saying "stay, stay, stay". Which sounds a little bit like ready, reeeaaady... (I'm not going to keep going – laughs - my dogs are not happy with this podcast episode). Your help is not helping. In order to get control, which guess what, control is an illusion people, you've got to let go of that. Think inspiration, not control. In order to get what you want, you need to do what nobody wants to do. You've got to allow the dog to fail and failing is an F word in dog training. And maybe we're going to talk about that in an upcoming episode.



Episode: #12

When Helping Your Dog is an Illusion

00:07:01

You need to allow the dog to fail. Think, um, how come when we let a dog, let our dogs fail? Because they're going to get sad. They're going to get demotivated. They're not going to want to work with us. They're going to hate us because failure's a bad thing isn't it? Not when it's done within the context of a game. And that's what all of my dog training is. It's just a game with rules that when you play by the rules, like I opened the door and you don't try to bust through it and you don't try to lurch forward and start scooching your body and go into a vulture pose.

00:07:35

When you hold position and go, yeah, I'm chill. When you tell me I can go, I'm going, but I'm chill here waiting. That's all taught, not at the front door, but a way, way, way away from the front door. A great stay at the start line is never taught in front of a start jump. And never taught in front of an agility jump. The agility jump is the last piece to put in front of a dog. Think of it as a distraction.

00:08:05

It's a game. And failure within a game is failure that is tolerable. Babe Ruth, struck out, I think three times as many, or got out at the plate probably three times as many, maybe not quite, but close to three times, as many times as he got a hit. Wayne Gretzky missed, one of the greatest hockey players of all time, because that's the kind of an example a Canadian should be giving.

00:08:32

Wayne Gretzky, he scored, I think, close to a thousand goals in his career. But he missed I'm guessing five, six, seven times as many shots as he got goals, maybe 10 times. I don't know. And how could Babe Ruth and Wayne Gretzky and other great sports icons tolerate moving forward in sport when they missed that many. And they were the great ones. Because failing within the context of a game is inspiring. And that's why I encourage everybody to look at games as a way of teaching any lesson. I don't care if it's two people. If it's two kids in particular. Especially children who are struggling in, within the context of traditional learning models.

00:09:30

Games make failure exciting. Games make failure fun. And that's how I have set up my entire life. That is how I get stuff done in my business. Everything is set up within a game, a game that I can win it. For example, I don't know if I've mentioned this example before, I hate cardio, but I've set up my morning routine so that the thing that I love best about my morning routine is meditation and my infrared sauna. I now combine the two of them. I do cardio and then I get to meditate in the infrared sauna. It's a win, it's a win for me. Reading is something I've always felt, you know it's super important for me to read. But I really, being dyslexic I struggled reading. And actually, after I graduated university, I didn't read a book for 10 years. 10 years because I made it a commitment to myself - you know what, if you just get your BSC, you don't have to read anymore.

00:10:21

And, but I realized reading is, you know, leaders are readers. I need to read. And so, I made a game of reading by getting a book and putting a tab on the first seven chapters with the days of the week. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. And the challenge was I had to read a chapter a day. But I gamed the system. Yeah, you might call it cheating. But I gamed the system.



Episode: #12

When Helping Your Dog is an Illusion

00:10:57

In that I started reading every book on a Saturday, so I had two days to get a head start on moving, but I had to move, Monday's tab had to be moved before midnight, Monday night, which I go to bed probably 9:30, so a lot earlier than that. That's how I got into the habit of reading. Last month I read five books. Like, that's crazy.

00:11:25

Making things a game for yourself, for your children, and in particular for your dog, is how you are going to inspire behavior. Control is an illusion. And I, as I mentioned in yesterday's podcast, when you try to control another animal, it, you're setting yourself up for number one, judging their behavior and what they do. Number two, being frustrated when your expectations of what they should be doing are not met. And that frustration might even lead to anger, which sets up an adversarial relationship with that animal, whether it be a child, a co-worker, somebody who you're supervising, and in particular a dog.

00:12:14

From the other point of view, when you are trying to be controlled, it creates bitter taste in your mouth. Resentment, the same frustration. Don't try to control me. You'll either do one of two things. If that control is so oppressive, you'll either give up or you'll die fighting. And we see that in the real world, when authority tries to control people. We see that in dog training, with the need for punishment and heavy intimidation, the people who feel they need to do that. Control is an illusion.

00:12:52

True success comes from inspiring the behavior that you're looking for by creating engagement. That engagement gets buy-in from the other participant, whether it be a child, or a dog. When you get buy-in, then the rules can be taught with failure. And it's, as long as you're creating games that the outcome, the choice you want is obvious, and the rewards for choosing correct are astronomical. So, for me, if you were starting a game, all I had to do was, "Susan choose, green peas or chocolate cake?", boom, I choose chocolate cake. That's the choice I wanted you to make. Alright, that's fun. So, you've got my buy-in. You've got my engagement. Wait, what's the next layer of this game.

00:13:39

That's what we do with our dogs. That's what good dog training does. It gets buy-in. And guess what happens? You not only get the behavior you want. You grow a relationship that you won't believe. And you end up with a lifetime of happiness for you and a lifetime of joy and freedom and happiness for that dog.

00:14:00

That's what educating should be like for everyone. That's what enforcing rules should be like for everyone. It is possible. We'll talk more about allowing failure in an upcoming episode of Shaped By Dog. That's it for today. Please subscribe and do me a favor. If you have a friend, a family member who has a dog, please share this podcast with them. Let them know how, it's a different way of inspiring behavior. What it looks like.

00:14:37

That's it for today. We'll see you next time on an upcoming episode of Shaped by Dog.





Episode: #12

When Helping Your Dog is an Illusion

Resources

[Shaped By Dog Podcast Episode 11: The Power of Permission in Dog Training](#)

[Vlog Post: Understanding Your Dog's Triggers](#)

[Blog Post: Identifying and Using Positive Triggers for Your Dog](#)



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

- Website <https://dogsthat.com>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SusanGarrettDogAgility/>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/SusanGarrettDogsThat/>
- TikTok <https://www.tiktok.com/@dogsthat>
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/dogsthat>
- Pinterest <https://pinterest.ca/dogsthatcom/>
- Twitter <https://twitter.com/susangarrett>
- YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/c/DogsThat>
- YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/ClickerDogs>

