

### Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

### Transcript

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SG Hey everybody, welcome to Shaped by Dog. I am Susan Garrett and if you own a dog, there is a very good chance that at some point in your dog's life they are going to get jumped, possibly attacked by another dog. And believe it or not, how you respond to that event could actually exacerbate the damage, the emotional damage done to your dog or puppy.

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And I would like to make sure that that doesn't happen to you. So sometimes these "jumpings" happen when you're walking your dog in the neighborhood or a lot of the times it happens at dog parks or doggy daycare, neither of which I am massive fans of, but with a big Asterix, because there are some very, very good puppy daycares. I was actually at one last week. So more on that later. But sometimes it's not even, there's nothing you can do.

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Just yesterday my 11-week-old puppy, This! was "jumped" - I use that quote jumped - at her puppy class. The owner of the older puppy who chased her down was super apologetic and I'll get to more on what happened in what I did later, but it could have been a very emotionally traumatic experience for This! because she took off running and ended up running into a corner and hiding behind a garbage can.

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And when I got her out, she actually for the first time in her life growled at this other puppy, so cliff-hanger, more on that later. You may be familiar with the term helicopter parent and that's somebody who goes around, and I've seen it firsthand, goes around and tries to control the experiences of their child so nothing bad ever happens to them.

You know, they swoop in like a helicopter. They swoop in if the child, you know, trips and falls not even waiting to see if the kid gets up and brushes himself off.

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And research has shown this actually can lead to some huge anxiety problems and even depression as those children get older. Flip side of that, my younger brother, him and his wife they've got, they're great parents.

They've got two great kids. And Jason was telling me about teaching his four-year-old to ride a two-wheeler bike and she was getting really good. And at the end of their street at their cul-de-sac there's this big hill. And he would always tell her to stop and use the brakes and go down this hill, which she always did.

But one day she went flying by and she was a confident kid said, "out of my way daddy", and went flying down this hill, looking over her shoulder at her dad and then looking over the shoulder caused the front wheel to start wobbling and sure enough she went over the handlebars. And Jason said skidded to a stop on her face.



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So, she got up screaming as you could imagine. And she had a big cut on or scratch on her face on her chin and she's boo-hooing and crying. And by the time Jason caught up to her, she was getting back on her bike and just boo-hooing and keep on peddling. That's the kind of response you want for my five-year old. I mean, ideally there's no broken bones jutting out. But that's the opposite of a helicopter parent.

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And I actually found a term which I found fascinating, it's called a dolphin parent. And when I was doing research for this podcast and a dolphin parent is somebody who is playful and supportive, but still has very discrete rules for their children. And when I was reading this, I immediately thought of Momentum. Momentum is definitely a dolphin parent, the way she raised her puppies, that she was super playful and supportive and encouraging and built up confidence in all of them. But she's very clear with rules.

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And now with This! still living with her, if I actually call This! and she doesn't come, Momentum will actually tell her off which is kind of funny. Anyway, I digress. Helicoptering, I think a lot of people recognize as bad, but it's not the best thing for the child. And it's not the best thing for your puppy either. Because you aren't allowing them to learn the consequences of their behavior. That you're not allowing them to learn how to recover when they stumble.

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We want that to happen without your interference. And you know, it's kind of related to [episode 12](#), where I talked about how you're helping isn't really helping. Allow the puppy or dog to learn from their experiences. Now if your dog or puppy gets jumped - and I'm not going to talk today about how to break up a dog fight or anything like that. I'm just talking about the aftermath because this is, I think something that's really not well understood and it's difficult. What I'm going to suggest to you is going to be difficult for you to get right. Even though it's simple. It's going to be very simple, but very difficult.

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So, if your dog gets jumped, there could be a negative conditioned response happening with that puppy. So, the science would call it single event learning. And you know, in fight or flight animals, it's important that they learn from bad things that happen because you know back in their brain, in the, you know, back in the Neanderthal days for dogs. Were there dogs back with Neanderthals? I like to think so. That kept them alive because they have to learn from the getting out of the clutch of a lion that, "Hey! That was a good thing. And you better do that again".

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Single event learning is often associated— you know, here's the thing for all of us wanting to train our dogs, it's associated with things that are very scary or potentially painful, more so than things that are, things that we, you know, wouldn't it be great if our dogs learn not to party in the house with a single event learning, doesn't happen very often.

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Okay. So, what happens when a dog gets jumped is that they get an attachment to, there is a conditioned negative response, and it could be to the environment so they may not want to go back to that geographical area.



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If you were like walking by a house, it could be that they learn all houses with fences if it was a dog came out from under a fence or over a fence and got them, they might not want to go buy houses with fences.

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It could be a negative emotional attachment to the dog, to the size or the breed or the color or the sex or the smell of the dog. So, there's no controlling what, like what the dog gets a negative attachment to. And you will notice this because the dog will quite often have an avoidance.

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Either an avoidance of going near that situation or avoidance of being around that dog. And it could happen immediate right after this event happens. They could then now not want to be anywhere near that dog. They might've expressed their anal glands that might've, depending on how bad it was.

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And it could also lead to aggression and believe it or not I saw both of those in This!, my 11-week-old puppy. What happened this weekend was we were playing at different stations and I am trying to be very aware of what all the other dogs in the classroom are doing, because I know I'm a lot of fun and I know that encourages other puppies to want to be with me. But I had my back turned, This! and I were about to play at a station that had a lot of inflated disks, kind of fitness disks. And so, I was just about to do that and I saw the corner of my eye, I saw this dog coming so I went to grab her, but she saw the dog as well and she took off.

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And of course, her taking off cause the dog to chase her and it was an older puppy I'm guessing five or six months old. It was a Border Collie. As I said, it chased her into the corner, and she got him behind a garbage can and was obviously very scared.

The owner grabbed the dog was super apologetic, took the dog away. I got This! out and she wouldn't engage with the tug toy, first thing I do. "Hey! Get that thing, see puppies chase you and then you get that thing". And she wouldn't engage with that tug toy and she kept staring at the dog and then she started growling at the other puppy.

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So immediately I had to change her state, change your physiology. Right? So, I took off running and she chased me and then I did a little hand touch and then she tugged and then we immediately went on to all of these different inflatable disks. So, every one looked very different and every one gave her the opportunity to engage with something different. And then she tugged again, she got cookies and tugged, and all of that happened within seconds of that dog chasing her.

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Now I want to acknowledge she wasn't physically harmed. She was just really, really scared, nothing like that has ever happened to her. However, that could be the start of some real phobias that could develop for your puppy if that happens to you. I've had this happen more than once.

So, Swagger had a similar event but worse where the dog actually jumped him and shook him and grabbed him and Swagger got away and the dog hunted him down and got him again.



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Swagger was a little older, he was five months old at the time, but it still created a very similar response. Avoidance and then growling at this dog or growling at any dog that looked like him. And then Swagger actually started attacking puppies like the next day if he saw puppy, he would attack it. But we fixed all of that.

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And I'm going to share with you what played into that. Okay. So, I read this book, it was several years ago by Jane McGonigal. The book was called "Reality Is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World".

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And in the book she talked about how, if you suffer a traumatic ex— or see something that is very traumatic, a way that you can prevent PTSD is to immediately start playing a game like candy crush or Tetris. And what these are, visually pattern, like is pattern matching games. And what that does is it prevents the brain from forming the visual memories of that traumatic event. It's amazing how the brain works. And so, Jane McGonigal has this quote "play, don't replay".

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Now I'm not saying what I'm doing with my dog is preventing PTSD or if that PTSD even, it can happen in a dog. What I'm saying is play don't replay is a big part of what I've always done when my dogs have been jumped by other dogs. And like I said, I don't think I've owned a dog - I don't know, Feature and Momentum probably - I don't think have been jumped by other dogs.

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But I, I've rehearsed a way of going, so I want to give you what to do once you get your dog out. Now our human reaction, especially if you're just minding your own business walking down the street and somebody's dog gets away from them and then they jumped them. Or as I was, I was in puppy class, my puppy is minding her own business and we're just playing in this other puppy came over and chased her.

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It's easy to get angry. We are angry. We're angry because we want the best for our puppies. We don't want anything bad to ever happen. So, we have to turn that emotion towards somebody else. So, we start, "What the heck is wrong with you? Why didn't you have a hold in your dog? What, what is that dog?!" And you scream and all of that just adds more emotional fire to the fear your puppy or dog is feeling. You can't control what happened.

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You can't control that other person or their dog. Having that other person feel bad about themselves or their dog. Or having that other person feel guilty or shame doesn't change what happened.

So, a great model for life is to always check, is my emotion, negative emotion related to something outside of my control? Am I mad because somebody in another car just cut me off? You can't control that.

You can only control your emotional response. He cut you off, you hit the brakes, you get everyone safe and go, "Whoa. He must've been in a hurry. Wow. I bet his pants are on fire sitting in that car."



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So, you've got to practice responding to something that maybe sends you from zero to a thousand on the anger scale and redirect it to something, especially when your dog is around. I mean, the only way you're going to get good at this is rehearsing it in everyday life. Behind the wheel. Things that happen that are nothing you can control. They're out of your, other people, you can't control, you can only control your responses to them.

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So, if your dog gets jumped, most important, like, I don't even remember seeing that other woman come and get her dog. I don't remember, the only reason I would even be able to tell you what dog it was is because she apologized a katrillion times to me.

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So, what I did is I just kind of put my arm and got the dog out of there. I got This!, I started immediately trying to play, she was avoiding, I changed her state by running and back and forth with her. I got her engaged. I went immediately to the station with the blow-up things. We played some stuff. Everything was lighthearted and playful. And then I, it was a very short session, and I put her away and then I brought her back out and I did it again. So, play don't replay.

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Again, it's like when my Jack Russell twice got jumped at the end of an agility run. White screaming little dog, and then she came outside of the ring and then a big dog jumped her, and get the dog off and immediately, "Get that thing! This is what happens. You do agility, you get jumped and then you get that thing. That's the way it is." And when I get my dog away, then I go up and talk to the person. By that point, I've calmed down. And a lot of the times I will say, if it, "Is your dog friendly?" In this case I knew this puppy was friendly.

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It's just a puppy who got excited by me playing with my dog. And so, I asked her, "Do you think after class we could allow these puppies to meet each other?" I don't want This! to think there are dogs that are going to kill her out there. And so, they had a nice meet and greet after. And that might not always be the best idea if your dog has been injured or if there's a chance that that other dog might be bad to your dog, don't do it.

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I've had people who say, after their dog has jumped my dog, "Can you bring your dog around?" And I could tell if their dog jumped my dog with a malicious intent. No! "Can you bring your dog around? I want to correct my dog and let them know that's not right." No, no. That is not in the best interest of my dog. You sort out your business and all sorted out mine.

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So, three parts to this, your dog gets jumped, you want to control your emotions number one, number two, make sure your dog isn't physically hurt in any way. And if so, get to a veterinarian immediately, even if it's just a puncture wound that doesn't go very deep. You don't know what's below that surface, right? And play with the dog, throw cookies on the ground, get them to engage with you somehow, change their physiology until they engage with you. And then create a plan to help counter condition any possible negative emotional response that have been attached to that incident.





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Obviously, the best thing to do is always to be on top of things so you know what other dogs in your environment, but as the saying goes, poop happens and sometimes things are outside of your control. And so, what happens then is how you control yourself in order to make the absolute best out of a bad situation for your dog, so that the absolute best case scenario is your dog looks to you and you aren't losing your poop, yelling at somebody. Your dog looks to you and you are just zoned in on them and go, "Hey, let's run over here and let's do something else." And that's the first step to great recovery. You're going to have to practice this though. I remember I said, it's not going to be easy. It's simple, it's just not going to be easy. Start looking for your everyday life, things are outside of your control that you kind of lose it a little bit and you really shouldn't be losing it.

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All right. I'm going to step back to puppy daycare. Last week, I went to a good friend of mine who runs a puppy camp she calls it. And these are great. She has an ex-pen that she puts puppies of a similar age that she knows will interact very well happily with each other. And she won't put another puppy in that group unless she knows they will interact very happily with each other.

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And because This! was, This!'s first time at puppy camp, she had a little ex-pen on the outside of that group so This! could see the other dogs, because she'd never see non Border Collies before. She could watch them. And when her confidence showed through her - [episode number 4](#) her TEMP -, when she looked like, "Hey, I really want to meet those other puppies!" then we put her inside.

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That's a structured, organized puppy play that will help bring out the best in your puppy. But as I said before, not all doggy daycares are conscientious and structured and good. So, don't just turn your dog psyche over to just anybody. You be the best advocate for your puppy.

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Now, one other thing I want to say to you, if you are on [Instagram](#) and you do **Instagram stories**, we've got **DogsThat emojis**, there's a Shaped by Dog emoji, there's a swipe up emoji, there's all kinds of cool emojis. When you go to the **emojis in Instagram**, just **type in DogsThat** and you're going to see some of our personalized emojis. [Feel free to use them](#). Let's spread the good word about Shaped by Dog. We'll see you next time.

### Resources:

[Book: Reality Is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World by Jane McGonigal](#)

[Podcast Episode 12: When Helping Your Dog is an Illusion](#)

[Podcast Episode 4: T.E.M.P. \(Tail, Eyes/Ears, Mouth, Posture\)](#)

[Susan on Instagram](#)

[DogsThat Gifs](#)



### 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.



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