

### Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

### Transcript

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SG If at any time in your life you actually spent time as a child there's a very good chance that you have been hurt by words. And it's not just the meaning but it's the energy of the words. And today we're going to jump in to look at what that means for our dogs. Hi, I'm Susan Garrett and welcome to Shaped by Dog.

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Before we begin, it's been a while since I've read a letter out loud, and I want to share with you a comment that was left on one of my Facebook lives that I've done. And that's actually the topic of today's conversation. I did 14 Facebook lives in a row over consecutive days where I focused on one word.

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Now this is a comment that came in from Yumi Nagaoka. My Japanese isn't great so bear with me. Yumi writes *"Inspiring as always. The dog training in my country seems 20 to 30 years behind. Even when my dog was a small puppy, I gave him a lot of corrections. At the end of July of this year, I started Home School The Dog and the world has changed for me and my dog forever. I'm grateful for Susan and the team, but also grateful for my dog who showed me grace to start over our life together."*

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How beautiful is that? And that's the amazing forgiveness of dogs. And so back to the meaning and the energy of words. Now, you may have heard people say before that words have this vibrational energy. So, play this game with me if you can.

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Now if you're driving don't close your eyes. So, I would like you to close your eyes and repeat out loud each word I say and see how that feels in your body. Maybe you won't feel anything. But if you just sit with each word for a moment, what kind of feeling does each word conjure? So, I'm going to give you pairs of words. I'm going to start with easy ones.

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I'm going to say the word **love**. What kind of energy does that give you? What about **hate**. So, I'm saying them in the same tone and the same cadence, but for me, one of those words because of the meaning that we've been associating with it potentially has a different energy in my body.

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What about the word **soft** compared to the word **hard**? One definitely has a different feeling than the other. So, words they have this energy, even things like the word **training** compared to the word **teaching**. To me the word teaching has a lighter energy for me.

And so, when you think about the words, for me, the words that I shared over the last couple of weeks on these lives I did on social media, I did them on Facebook and YouTube. If you miss them, you can [find them on YouTube](#).



# Episode: #124

## The Woo Side Of Dog Training: Power of Words

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Each day I gave a live presentation, and they were from 20 minutes to 45 minutes long, on that word and the impact it has on me in my dog training or in my teaching of other people. So here are the 15 words. **Mindfulness, Inspire, Happiness, Connection, Joy, Empathy & Humility, Belief, Confidence, Kindness, Gratitude, Empower, Love, Grace, and Vision.**

Now for me, all of those words have such amazing energy, such a [positive energy](#). I think if you would just rehearse, repeat that list every day when you've started your day like you are going to start your day on a solidly good foot, right?

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And so, you can't just say, "Oh, here's my 15 words. This is going to make me an amazing dog trainer." because of course dog training is about human mechanics. It's about timing and criteria and reinforcement. It's about the ability to [manipulate environment](#) and have a really solid plan before you begin. It's about data and recordkeeping. Those things would be the paint colors of dog training.

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And those 15 words that I just said, those are the canvas that we're making this amazing connection with our dogs. Now think of these words. And I honestly don't know a lot of words. I started my dog training career in the eighties in a completely different space and a different focus than I do today with my dogs.

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But think of these words, if somebody was teaching you or coaching you on dog training and they were saying things to you like mindfulness and joy and empathy and belief and humility, and then these other words would be dominate, pressure, firm, correct, alpha. So, they're completely different ways of going about training dogs.

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Now, please don't throw hate on me. I'm not saying that somebody who trains dogs differently than us can't have compassion. I'm just saying that they have a different dialogue when they're teaching people. They have a different dialogue because they have a different outlook towards dogs. Now remember, as I always say, positive is not permissive. You know, it's really good to set amazing intention. It's really good to have these great vibes when you're about to undertake dog training.

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But at the end of the day, it's about human mechanics, about your timing, it's about your criteria, it's about your reinforcement. It's about the way you set up the environment for success for your dog. It's about [having that solid plan](#) and any of you who are in our online programs you know we give you those plans. So, I'm not saying that you could you know, wish upon a star and be a great dog trainer. And I have a history of a lot of success in a lot of dog training sports.

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I've competed at the elite level of obedience, and I've set world records in flyball and won world championships in the sport of dog agility. But first and foremost, my focus has always been about having an amazing dog. And wherever you are at in your dog training, you might be thinking, and I've heard this before, "Okay, Susan, I'm going to train your way for tricks. Oh, I can be super kind and super compassionate when I'm training tricks."



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"But the things I want my dog to do for real Susan, I got to change things up a little bit. I got to, I got to light a fire under their butt." And I've posted videos of my dogs out in the field. They do what I ask them to do without me raising my voice when I ask them one time. I can give them cues to do many different behaviors with one cue.

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So, I would put my dog's abilities up against any other dog trainers' abilities. And then they'll say things "Well yeah, but what if you had a reactive dog in a big crowd of dogs this methodology wouldn't work there." And there's two things I say about that, because that's kind of a common thing people throw back at us.

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Number one, that is not the majority of the dogs in this world. That definitely exists, but that is not the majority. Number two, if I was dealing with a dog that had that much reactivity, there is no way I would ask that dog to do that in a crowded area with other dogs. The anguish that dog would feel, the fear that they would have to lash out like that. That wouldn't be where I would be training the dog.

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So, it's just a different way of going about dog training and chances are if you're listening to this program that you are at least partially in with the way that I talk about the energy of dog training. But it could be, "Oh Susan, but I do high level 'this' sport and so I need precision." I can get you that precision. It's there. Just because somebody hasn't come up with a way doesn't mean that way doesn't exist. I believe we are just so early on on what we are about to discover in the world of reinforcement based and kindness-based dog training.

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We are just on the cusp because the vast majority of the world doesn't train this way. Because they're afraid 'what if it didn't work?' Well, here's the thing. When you're thinking of change, you can always go back to what you knew yesterday. But you're never going to know what something different will give you unless you're willing to change. There's this great poem I want to share with you. It's just a couple of lines from Eric Hanson.

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I love, love, love this poem. And this might just be a part of a passage of it. It might even be a book. But here it goes. It says, 'There was freedom waiting for you on the breezes of the sky.' And I believe this is a metaphor for our dogs in our lives.

*'There is freedom waiting for you on the breezes of the sky. And you ask, "What if I fail?" But oh darling, what if you fly?'*

And that's what I say to people who say, "Hmm I don't know about that. I need my dog to be reliable. Reliably come when they're called, when I call them."

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I have that reliability. Why can't you? You can't if you can't trust that you can and approach it as a dog training challenge I'm going to overcome. And I mean, people say, "Well, it takes so much longer." I disagree with that as well.



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Because I believe the time that you spend managing or correcting a dog for their lifetime or however many years that your dog doesn't listen, it takes very little time to create what I've got with my dogs. So, my dogs will have their behaviors by the time they're six months old.

And maybe I will tweak them so they, I want that recall no matter what. No matter if I send the other dogs running this way and you're running with them and I call you back, and you alone, you've got to leave the other dogs and come with me.

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So that's the kind of reliability that I want. So back to my words, as I said I have 10 other words and maybe I will do some other live but I'm going to share with you a couple of them. And let's just share one today because I don't want this to go too long. I really want you to absorb in the thought of energy.

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And so, one of the words that I tried to squeak in, I already did a double word, I couldn't put more words in, is a word that's really important to me. And it's that word **Alignment**.

I often interchange it with the word 'congruency' that for me I love the alignment of my life and it's been intentional. And it's been hard because guess what, I was one of those trainers that if my dog did some "Hey!" I would snap my fingers and point them, and I would blame, and I would get on them and shame and "You better know! What did you?!"

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Back in the eighties that was what I was taught. And so, alignment for me is knowing the kind of person I want to be in this world. Who I want to show up as to the people I care about? To my family, to my friends, to the people who work here at the DogsThat team. I want to show up as a person that's fair and kind and compassionate and genuine and fun. That's who I want to show up as.

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And so, if I train my dog as somebody who was looking to find something you did wrong and correct you for it, "That's not what I told you to do. No, that's not how I taught ya. You better learn what I taught ya." That there's a misalignment. Did you ever drive a car that was out of alignment? It doesn't go so swell.

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So, alignment to me is something we seek to get to. I am not perfect. And I will say to my dogs when I'm busy and they are like, "Ah, it's a walk o'clock, it's walk o'clock." "You guys go lay down." Like there are times and I will go when I review my day, I always go 'here's where I could have done better'. 'You know what, I could have just given them something to do because it was walk o'clock.'

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So that goes along with the rest of the words. So, when we do, we do seek to have alignment in our life every day. And when it doesn't work out for us, because we're human, we give ourselves grace. Because just like Yumi said, "our dogs are always willing to give us grace".

And so, I hope you understand this. I hope this isn't to 'woo'. Please leave me a comment. Write into us at [wag@dogsthat.com](mailto:wag@dogsthat.com).





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Go over to YouTube and watch this on YouTube and leave me a comment there. Does this make sense to you? Is this something that you think about? Is this something that you can take hold of and understand that the energy of the words create the environment to which your training happens in.

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Because training doesn't happen in a vacuum. Training happens with an intentional environment that we set up and that environment is set up through the words like mindfulness and happiness and joy and grace and belief and confidence. And, you get what I'm saying.

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I'll see you next time here on Shaped by Dog.

### Resources:

[DogsThat YouTube Channel Videos](#)

[Podcast Episode 8: Get Your Dog in the Belief Loop of Awesome](#)

[Podcast Episode 6: The Art of Manipulation:](#)

[Podcast Episode 119: The Rhythm Of Dog Training And How To End A Session](#)



# The Woo Side Of Dog Training: Power of Words

### 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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