

Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

Transcript

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This podcast episode is for everyone who owns a dog. It's for [new puppy owners](#), [new rescue owners](#). It's for people who are in [the midst of a challenge](#). It's for people who are working towards a big, hairy, audacious goal, like working in a sport, a dog training sport, being the best at something. It's for anybody, including [professional dog trainers](#). It's even for someone like me. Because this podcast episode is about moving forward.

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Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. Now this topic is one that I spoke about recently at our [Inner Circle](#) Live event. And it's about connecting the dots. It's about achieving your goals. It's about setting your goals. Really, I've talked a lot about [goal setting](#) on this podcast, but there's something else.

There's a reason why people aren't getting success with their dogs. So, think about where you are right now with your own dog. Are there goals that you set maybe a year ago that you haven't even touched? Are there things that you thought are going to turn out differently than where you ended up today?

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Are there things that you're still working towards, but you're really struggling at [the rate that you're traveling](#)? Or have you just given up altogether? Because if you have a puppy, if you have a new dog, if you have [a dog that you're challenged with](#), or if you have a family pet, what's going to happen is you're either going to be [applying a daily training program](#) that's leading you towards somewhere or you're managing that dog's behavior, which probably means more time on a leash, less freedom to enjoy life.

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Maybe you're walking like when it's dark out where you're not going to potentially see other dogs or other people because of your dog's behavior. It maybe means you're not taking your dog on outings, or you're going to lock your dog up when guests come because of your dog's behavior. Maybe your dog has to spend time [in a crate](#) or an ex-pen because of a current challenge that you just haven't figured out a way to overcome.

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So you're either actively training, you're managing. When you're actively training, you might be involved with some management, but the difference is you're progressing when you're adding training to your management, or you might be in the third group. And it's one where you're either you've given up or you're just hoping it's going to get better on your own.

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You are at a place, or you may be at a place where you're just [justifying your dog's behavior by the breed](#) or your busy schedule or your active family, or you're just blaming the dog. Like there's no hope. It's who he is. Or have you just learned to tolerate it? You know, we just replace the couch every now and again once he's destroyed so much of it that we can't really use it functionally.

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So train, manage, justify, tolerate, or hope it gets better. Those really are the three categories. That last one. Blame, tolerate, justify is all one category. So that's where people are with their dog training goals. Now in [podcast episode number 195](#), I spoke about setting goals for yourself and your dog training.

But this episode is different because as I've mentioned many times, I set goals. I set big goals at the end of every year, for the following year. And I break those goals down into quarterly goals that I review. Every three months and those quarterly goals, they get broke down into monthly goals. Now, how do we achieve those monthly goals?

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This is the topic of today's episode, because no matter what it is that you are trying to achieve, let's say your goal is to have the most amazing family pet ever. Or your goal is, "I really [want to do dog agility](#)," or "I really want to have a consistently fast agility dog. I haven't got there yet with my past dogs."

"Or I want to be on a podium at a national championship" in whatever dog sport that it is that you love. Or "I want to be on a world team" that limits you down to, I don't know, maybe the top 400 dog and handler teams in the world. Or, "I want to be on a podium at a world championship". Now we're narrowing down to the best three in the world, whatever it is that your vision is.

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And for most of you listening to this episode, it probably is to have the most amazing family dog. Well, we've got to talk about what does that mean? What does that amazing family dog do? Or what does the world champion of dog agility do? What are the skills? What are the talents that, that amazing family pet or phenomenal world champion agility dog.

What does that look like? Because just saying, "yeah, I want an amazing family pet this time next year" and not have any idea of what that looks like. It's like setting out from here, Alberton, Ontario and saying, "I want to get to Los Angeles, California. I think I have some Recaller members there. I want to meet up with them all!" and not having any map.

"I'm just going to get out the door and get in my car and I'm going to have at it. I don't really know what direction I'm heading in. I don't know what road to take." And so, what helps you to get that goal of the amazing family pet is knowing what exactly that looks like. Obviously, it would be [house trained](#), I would assume.

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What does house training look like? What are all the things that that means? Because it's not just, "Oh yeah, they don't pee or poop in the house". There's way more to it than that. So, if the dog is house trained, "my amazing family pet will have [a rocketing recall](#), like a head whip when I say their name.

They'll have a great ability and a drive to want to [walk on a loose leash](#) no matter what distractions. Actually, my amazing family pet has become really [immune to distractions](#). Distractions have become white noise to them and their environment. No matter where we go, no matter what we're doing. My great family pet has a [protocol of meeting guests](#) in our home and is very well behaved when they meet guests in my home."

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Do you see what I mean? Like there's all these skills. If you want an agility dog that's going to win a world championship, there's, you know, even more details to the list of skills that involves. But I want



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you to think about what it is that you want, and then what does that look like? Get great detail about what that looks like.

And you'll probably come up with at least 10 to 20 skills. Now, if it's an agility dog, there's going to be a lot more than that. If it's an amazing obedience dog or retriever trial dog or [protection dog](#), there'll be a lot more skills involved, but I promise you all of those skills, no matter what sport it is you're picking will get a lot easier if you start with an amazing family pet.

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That list of skills. Now within those skills, there's going to be what I talked about to my Inner Circle, [milestones](#). Milestones. For example, you want an amazing recall. One milestone will be when you reach for your dog's collar, they kind of meet you partway. When you say your dog's name, they whip their head around and you break it down to as many different milestones as you can think of.

So you can start that list right now. How many things go into an agility dog having a [phenomenal start line](#)? Something that is sadly missing in a lot of agility dogs. How many little milestones can you come up with? Now it's not just that "my dog will hold a sit while I get by one jump" because so often what people do is they'll just move faster to the next jump.

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"Well, I'm going to go really fast so my dog doesn't break" or they give the release cue before the dog is going to break because they know their dog's going to break. And what you think you're doing is giving that dog that release cue so that they aren't breaking, but what the dog is learning is to release quicker.

So, there's so many milestones that you can build into every single skill that goes into whatever your big, hairy, audacious goal is. So, we're breaking things down. And why do we break it down? For two reasons. Number one, it creates places that we can set our sights on as a destination. I know if I want to go to Los Angeles, I'm going to head out to get to the Canadian border.

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What Canadian border? Like East? No, the one that's going to take me South. So, I'm probably going to go to Detroit, Windsor border, and I'm going to start heading down that way. What highways will take me to that? So, there's milestones. "Hey, we got across to Detroit. Let's stop and gas up with that really low cost American gas."

Woo, woo, woo. There's a milestone. So milestones not only help you set the course, the destination, they give you opportunities to celebrate. And that is such an important part of dog training because you need to be able to reflect back on where you were, and know you achieved that one milestone that's going to take you towards those big, hairy, audacious goals that you want.

So you have your starting point of the challenges that you have right now, or if you have a new puppy or a new rescue dog, the list of All of the things that go into being the kind of family pet you would dream of having. One that is quite [relaxed at home](#), regardless if you're there or not. One that maybe doesn't get on the furniture, whatever it looks like to you.

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And now we're going to break that down into the little milestones that give you opportunity to celebrate and also gives you a roadmap of how to get to the goals, how to get to those destinations, how to get to your dog training Los Angeles, what it is, where it is that you're heading. So, we have the big, hairy, audacious goal that we can break down into quarterly goals and into monthly goals.



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And from those monthly goals, I can say, here are the milestones I think I can achieve this month. I've got those list of all the skills and all those skills can be broken down into little milestones. Those go into I think I can pack in this many in a month. That will lead me closer to getting my monthly goal.

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And then you can break that into "this week here are the milestones I'm aiming to hit." And you're going to pick up the ones you didn't hit from last week and add them. So then today you can say "what milestone is going to be maybe the longest for me to hit this week? I'm going to start working on it today. And then I might build in another one tomorrow. I might be working on two milestones."

Do you see what this looks like? Because it gives you something to do with absolute certainty that's going to take you closer to where you want to be. Now, [for me, that is just games](#), game, game, game, game, game. What game am I working on that's going to lead me towards a better behaved family pet?

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And the skills that lead me towards that better behaved family pet is also what leads me towards a consistent and fast agility dog. A consistent and fast agility dog leads me towards a nationally ranked dog, which leads me towards a world team dog, which leads me toward a world champion dog. And so, most of you listening to this, you're going to stop at that amazing family pet.

But if you stop too early, you're going to be stuck in justify, [blaming](#), tolerating land. The place where you live with [a little bit of frustration](#). And I know your dog is not living the most fulfilled life. I know it can be better, and I know it is possible for you. So, if you are sitting here wondering, going, "well, Susan, I don't know how to break house training into milestones, or I don't know how to break down keeping the bars up and agility into milestones. I just don't see it."

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Jump over to YouTube and leave me a comment. Let me know what it is that is your big goal. Let me know what milestones you've thought of, and I will pick one of those comments and I will flesh out some of those milestones, maybe a little bit more than you already have. Now I always, I just think it's fun to live life with a dog progressing somewhere.

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I think it's engaging for the dog. It's enriching for the dog. You find that the naughty behaviors around the house are going to dramatically decrease. And you will have that chart that's taking you somewhere. You will also have the reasons to celebrate. And sometimes I bet most of you listening to this are training alone.

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Yeah, it's fun to get together with buddies and train, but most of us we're training alone. So, having those milestones in place gives us a reason to play [daily quickies](#), gives us a reason to have one longer training session every day, maybe even two. It gives us a reason to consistently train the dog and that my friend, will only lead to a better place for you and your dog.

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So jump over to YouTube, let me know what you're working on, list out all of the skills you think your dog needs to get to where you're working. And if that's too much, let's say it is you want to have an amazing agility dog, just list out the one that is the biggest challenge for you and what you believe the milestones are.



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And I may pick your comment to flesh that out further. I know once you start living from goals to milestones, your successes are going to skyrocket. Your confidence in yourself and your confidence in your dog is also going to skyrocket and life will be a lot different for you and your dog. I know that because it's the way I live my life with my dogs. I'll see you next time right here on Shaped by Dog.

Resources:

[YouTube Playlist: Puppy Essentials with Susan Garrett Dog Training](#)

[Podcast Episode 207: Rescue Dog Behavior: Training Rehomed Dogs Chat With Nadine Hehli and Simone Fasel](#)

[Podcast Episode 104: Naughty Dog Behaviors And How To Deal With Them](#)

[Podcast Episode 37: Dog Training as a Career](#)

[Inner Circle People: IC Peeps](#)

[Podcast Episode 228: Navigating Failure In Dog Training: What's Your Plan B?](#)

[Podcast Episode 31: 5 Simple Hacks to Help Your Dog Learn Faster \(Reinforcement Process\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 227: My Foolproof Strategy To Overcoming Dog Training Challenges](#)

[Podcast Episode 172: How To Teach Your Dog Anything With My Training Plan](#)

[Podcast Episode 30: Why Dog Crates Are Not Dog Cages](#)

[Podcast Episode 232: Canine Predatory Motor Sequence: Understand Your Dog's Prey Drive To Enrich Your Life Together](#)

[Podcast Episode 195: Making Your Mind Your Most Powerful Dog Training Tool](#)

[YouTube Playlist: Dog Agility and Dog Sports Tips with Susan Garrett](#)

[Podcast Episode 48: Potty Train Your Puppy in a Week \(Easy 3 Step Process\)](#)

[Susan Garrett's Blog: How Do I Train My Dog To Come When Called?](#)

[YouTube Playlist: Loose Leash Walking with Susan Garrett](#)

[Podcast Episode 24: Distraction Intensity Index: Help For Dogs Who Chase Chipmunks, Bicycles, And Neighbor's Cats](#)

[Podcast Episode 121: How To Stop Dogs Jumping Up On People](#)

[Podcast Episode 211: Confident Working Protection Dogs: Training Chat With Matt Folsom Of Modern Malinois](#)

[Podcast Episode 41: Get a Behaved Dog by Celebrating Milestones!](#)

[Podcast Episode 117: What's More Important Than Your Dog Training Sessions?](#)

[Podcast Episode 191: Get Your Dog To Calm Down With This Common Sense Protocol For Relaxation](#)

[YouTube Playlist: Dog Training Games with Susan Garrett](#)

[Podcast Episode 20: Bridging the Gap Between Blame and Kindness in Dog Training](#)

[Podcast Episode 230: Finding Joy Amidst Frustration And Shame In Dog Training – DeCaff's Story Part 2](#)

[Podcast Episode 190: Using Daily Quickies To Fast Track Your Dog Training And Grow Your Dog's Skills](#)



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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- Website <https://dogsthat.com>
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