

Your dog wants to have a deep lifelong relationship with you. It's an invitation. **The Heart of Your Dog** will help you identify your dog's highest unmet needs. You will learn how to fulfill those needs and better communicate with your dog. In the process you will build new connections to your dog's heart.

You will also learn how to teach the essential commands your dog should know. They are specially designed to bring you and your dog closer. Your dog will be inspired to learn all it can about you and your world. Throughout its life you will be rewarded with the constant love and gratitude that flows from the heart of your dog.

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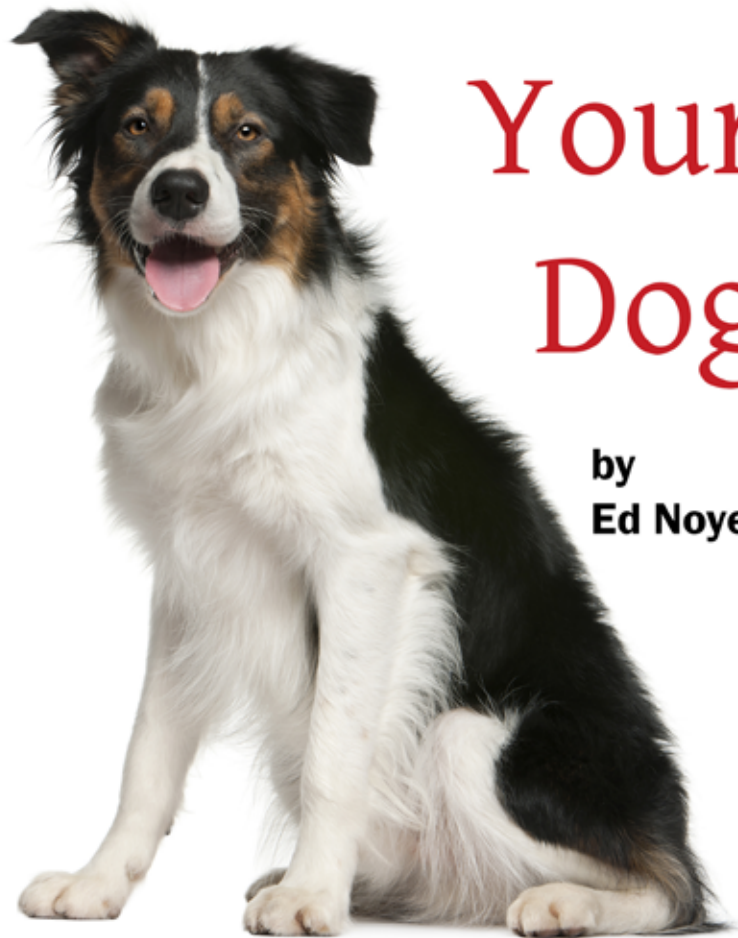
Ed Noyes developed the techniques in this book by working with dogs for over 30 years. From the coast of Maine he writes and blogs about his unique methods and helps others with their dogs. ed@heartofyourdog.com



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The Heart of Your Dog

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by
Ed Noyes

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How to create a deep lifelong relationship with your dog using a new stress-free teaching method

Enjoy this free chapter: “Where Dogs and Humans Meet”!

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The Heart of Your Dog

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Where Dogs and Humans Meet

As puppies, dogs are playful, easily imprinted, and eager to belong to your family/pack. Successful membership requires that they have the ability to establish friendly relationships, along with a desire to conform to your rules.

From the earliest times, dogs that could read humans and understand human emotions were selected for breeding. The genes that expressed this ability were passed on through successive generations. The result is a closeness between the emotional lives of dogs and humans. Consider the personality traits that we share.

Love
Jealousy
Affection
Appreciation
Anger
Forgiveness
Regret
Hatred
Passivity
Domination
Kindness
Curiosity
Courage
Sorrow
Loyalty
Tenderness
Joy
Playfulness

This is hardly an exhaustive list. Some qualities are controversial, such as regret. Also, not all dogs demonstrate every trait, just as they are not all manifest in every human. In general, though, they regularly appear in both dog and human populations. Can you name another animal capable of this many human emotions? This explains why dogs have found a special place in the modern family.

Eye contact is an important way that your dog tunes-in to your emotions and reads you. For most animals, staring is a sign of aggression. If you stare into a wolf's eyes, you'll be inviting trouble. Dogs haven't entirely lost this instinct to feel threatened. If you ever get into a confrontation with a dog, even with your own dog, you can escalate the encounter with your eyes.

If your dog is especially protective of its food dish, try this experiment. First, pick a time when your dog is hovering over its dish. Stand perfectly still at a safe distance and get your dog's attention. Look it straight in the eyes without any expression on your face, then look at its dish. Look back at your dog's eyes. Keep going back and forth. Notice how your dog reacts.

For most dogs, aggressive eye contact is the exception. More often your dog will welcome what you may call a staring contest. Even though its eyes seem to be fixed on your eyes, your dog is actually looking for subtleties in your facial expression.

Your dog expresses emotions with tail wagging, barking, and physical movements. Compared to humans, its face is expressionless. Your body movements, along with your voice, also express your emotions; however, most day-to-day expressions happen with your face. Your dog will usually understand what your physical movements mean and will understand a number of spoken words, but the big *tell* for your dog is found in your face. If your dog was more wolf-like and threatened by eye contact, it wouldn't have the ability to understand so much about you.

The importance of your facial expression is easily understood in everyday communications. The same words in a phone call and in an email can be interpreted differently; however, when we're face-to-face, the meanings are clearest.

Because dogs are not threatened by eye contact, they've developed a knack for reading faces. Correctly construing human emotions and intents must have been a favored trait for which dogs were selectively bred.

You can use this canine talent to help build a better relationship with your dog. Three things need to happen:

1. You need to give your dog access to your emotions by frequently engaging with it and using eye contact.
2. You need to be consistent and not send conflicting messages. Don't do anything that might confuse your dog.
3. You need to encourage successes. When your dog correctly reacts to your expressions, it needs positive reinforcement.

Encouraging success can't be accomplished in a lesson. It happens when it happens. The first step is to simply do more staring. Sometimes your dog will stare simply because it wants something and needs your attention to make it happen. It could be about food, water, or a bathroom break. You should be aware of those situations and respond appropriately. That's one form of encouragement; however, when your dog is reading you, that's an even better opportunity to offer encouragement.

Let's say your dog just woke up from a nap and is checking in with you by looking into your eyes. Reciprocate by staring back and maintaining that connection for a few seconds, then try flashing a sincere grin. If your dog wags its tail, hurray! You'll know it correctly read your face. Give it a big hug along with a good dog. Try to spot more random opportunities like this to reinforce your dog's reading skills.

Whenever I think about *dogness*, I find myself envious of the amazing abilities of dogs to smell and hear things beyond the range

of humans. We would all love to have those canine talents, yet which human features would dogs want? Maybe they have a deep enough appreciation to desire our special intellect. Perhaps they would like to have our ability for language and speech. Well, there's one human feature I'm certain every dog would love to have — arms and hands with articulating fingers. Imagine your dog being able to scratch any part of its body and easily pluck out those nasty ticks; no more struggling to grip bones. It would be so easy to grab things to smell and eat like the squirrel that didn't get away. Those itchy ears would be a thing of the past.

Our hands are important to dogs. How often have you been minding your own business and your dog nudges your hand with its nose? It's telling you to scratch, pat, and pay attention.

Chimps are considered to be much more intelligent than dogs, yet they have no clue when it comes to hand signals. Dogs understand pointing and gesturing. Professional trainers often rely on dozens of complex hand signals to give directions. As you'll see, there are several circumstances where basic pointing is a useful technique for you and your dog.

Unfortunately, there are times when hands can create problems for dogs. If you've ever been to a shelter and met dogs that have been severely abused by people, you've probably noticed some of the sad consequences. A dog beaten into submission will cower if you try to touch it with your hands. Meanwhile, a dog that has fought against cruelty will try to bite your fingers. When a dog is beaten with a stick or some other instrument, the dog doesn't blame the stick. It knows that the person and the hand behind the stick are responsible. These mistreated dogs require special handling to recover from their trauma. The good news is that even though it takes time, abused dogs usually respond well. When they do accept human contact again, they often become fantastic companions. The message is simple — never strike your dog with your hands. Correction: Never strike your dog, period.

In his classic *Call of the Wild*, Jack London describes a sled team commanded by an aggressive alpha-male dog. The other dogs, including Buck the hero, form a more or less linear hierarchy of submissive followers. In the story, the alpha-male keeps the pack members in check and enforces the role of each dog, resorting to violence when necessary. London's story bolsters a popular myth about the way wolf and dog packs behave.

Until recently, it was believed that wolf packs were always ruled by a powerful alpha-male that subdued the rest of the pack with regular dominance behaviors, such as mounting and pinning. The alpha-male's reign lasts until another wolf gains enough strength to initiate a credible challenge. According to the narrative, a savage fight ensues. If the old alpha wins, he retains his position. If he loses, the challenger becomes the new alpha.

It's interesting that many parallels to this alpha-male model can be found in many human settings like in sports, warfare, and business, where intimidation can be a decisive factor. This behavior is also observed in other primate groups, such as chimp communities, where alpha-male leadership is chosen by domination over the other males. While many other factors are important in human and chimp social order, it's easy to see how we've projected our patterns of behavior when making assumptions about the way wolf packs are organized. New evidence offers a different explanation of social order in wolf packs.

The new research has found that wild wolf packs are more like families. The alpha wolf is actually similar to a parent figure, leading a cooperative pack. Leadership is acquired by consent from family relationships and not from aggressive dominance and submission behaviors. As a wolf pup grows up and reaches the age of two or three, it often leaves the pack anyway to find and pair with a wolf of the opposite sex to start a new pack.

Today, many trainers still rely on strategies based on the alpha myth. While dominance and submission is observed among dogs, using that as a training technique can have unintended consequences. A submissive dog can be forced to comply, yet it can also lose the confidence fundamental to its happiness. It's also been discovered that excessive human dominance can backfire and provoke aggressive behavior in otherwise tame and cooperative dogs. It's not worth the risks. Besides, do you want your dog conditioned to calculate its family relationships based on who is dominating whom? There are more important matters you'll want your dog to think about.

Knowing that wolf packs behave like families is good news because it suggests a better way to work with your dog to establish a deeper relationship. Just as you engage with your children and guide them through life, you can use the same strategies with your dog. If your children see you as an overly aggressive and domineering parent, you may get them to obey in the moment, but in the long run your children are more apt to grow up resentful, troubled, and possibly defiant. The path to your dog's happiness is not unlike the path you follow to raise happy kids.

When your dog is welcomed into your family/pack aggressive intimidation by you is unwarranted. Instead, you should gently assert your role as the parent/leader. Done properly, your dog will happily accept this relationship and quickly discover its appropriate role in the family/pack.

It's important that each family member negotiates a similar relationship with your dog. At first your dog might try to bully a weaker family member, particularly a young child. If safety becomes an issue, you'll have to intercede, yet it's far better for each family member to independently assert and establish a friendly relationship with your dog. Doing that early on is much more effective, and it will leave a more lasting impression on your dog. If you always have to scold your dog when it's bullying one of your children, imagine what goes on when you're not around. It's rare, but bad things do happen when an aggressive bully-dog mixes with a defenseless small child. Those tragedies can be easily avoided.

Dogs want to belong. Teaching how your household works and how you expect it to fit in is an important priority for your new dog. It's right up there with housebreaking.

As you read about the techniques I recommend, you won't see me use the term *obedience training*. Most parents won't use obedience training to describe how they raise their children. Some believe that these terms are acceptable for dogs because they're naturally dumb and can't socialize with humans without being forced to obey. These trainers believe you must become the alpha, or your dog's *master* (another word I don't use). If it's wrong to use these words to describe your relationship with your children, it should be wrong for dogs, too. This isn't about political correctness, it's about the mentality you bring to your role in your family/pack.

If you want to reach your dog's heart, you need to think as a parent/leader, not as a master. It's not the words themselves that are harmful. When your dog hears them, they don't register one way or another. Instead, I'm suggesting that you get them out of your head because they're inconsistent with the deep relationship I'm advocating.

Make no mistake, dogs and human children are not the same. You value your children above all others. In every respect there are significant differences between dogs and children; however, it's safe to say that in several ways dogs are child-like. Consequently there are many parallels that inspire some helpful techniques for guiding your dog's behavior.

When you become a responsible parent/leader in your family, you're naturally protective and nurturing. You don't impose your will

unnecessarily. You're the leader by consent. When your dog accepts your leadership, you should reciprocate by doing everything you can to fulfill your dog's needs.

In 1943, Abraham Maslow published his famous paper, *A Theory of Human Motivation*. His *Hierarchy of Needs* is often represented by a pyramid with the most basic needs at the bottom. Figure 1 is a diagram showing one popular version of Maslow's theory. I prepared a new pyramid representing a *Hierarchy of Canine Familiaris Needs* (Figure 2). Take a moment to compare it to Maslow's version.

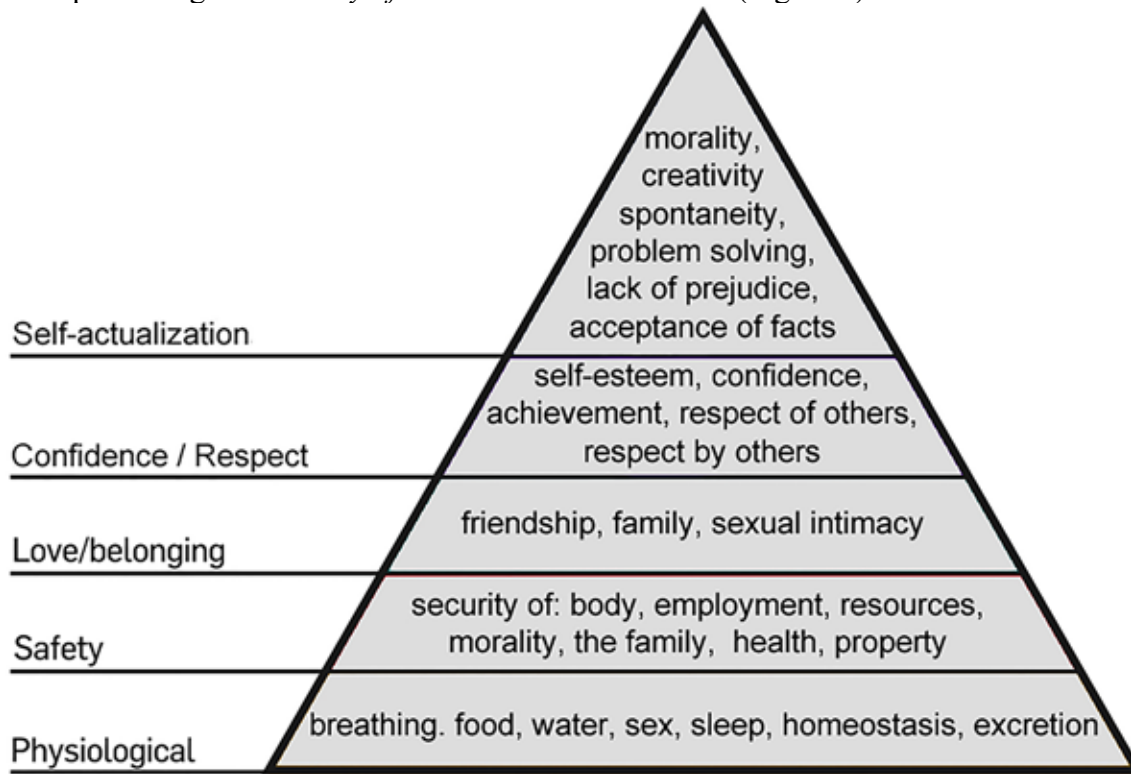


Figure 1: Abraham Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, 1943. Derived from "An interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs" by J. Finkelstein / CC BY

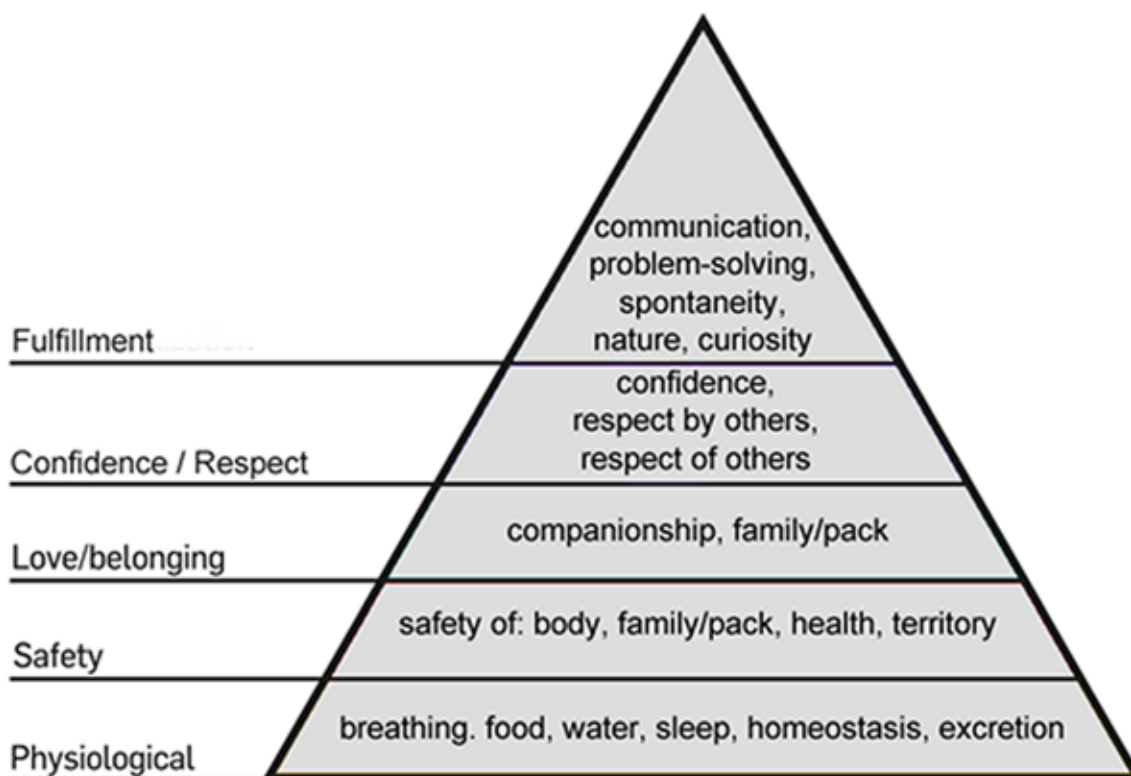


Figure 2: *Hierarchy of Canine Familiaris Needs*, 2014.

In the two pyramids, the physiological and safety needs of humans and dogs are almost identical. Assuming your dog is fixed, sex is eliminated as a consideration.

Morality, employment, resources, and possessions don't apply to dogs.

Your dog's toys could be called possessions, but they're hardly needs in the sense that possessions are important to humans. In its place I put territory. Your dog needs space and will mark ownership of its territory. It will feel threatened when a strange dog or other animal invades its territory. It will instinctively attempt to defend the space. Having a secure territory helps satisfy your dog's need to feel safe.

In a sense, work dogs have employment, but it's a stretch to equate it to human employment. Work imposed by humans doesn't pass for what can be called a canine need.

Once these physiological and safety needs are met, you should address the other needs that are close to your dog's heart and higher up the pyramid. We can equate love, companionship, and family/pack to the human need for friendship and love. Your dog naturally craves your love and is eager to establish a lifelong bond with you. Reciprocating that love should be an obligation you enthusiastically accept when you bring a dog into your home.

Self-esteem isn't associated with dogs. Dogs are not vain, so our concept of the need to be respected is of no concern to your dog; however, to reach your dog's heart, you'll still need to show respect for your dog's position in the world. Specifically you should respect its role

in the family/pack and respect its personal space. When you show this kind of respect, your dog is guaranteed to respect you in the same way. Mutual respect is desirable in human relations and should be equally desirable in your relationship with your dog. Ideally, it is a cornerstone of all relationships. With mutual respect you and your dog will have more opportunities to engage on a common plane and widen the channels of communication. It's hard to imagine how you can reach your dog's heart without mutual respect.

As long as household rules are followed, your dog needs the confidence to assert itself like any other family member. Your dog should have the freedom to show its personality and try new things. You shouldn't arbitrarily suppress quirky canine behavior. A dog lacking confidence will be difficult to reach.

Self-awareness in dogs is a controversial topic. Cynics believe that dog behavior is little more than involuntary responses to stimulus. They point to Ivan Pavlov's 1901 conditioned reflex experiments. Pavlov was able to use a buzzer to trick dogs into drooling after repeatedly sounding it prior to mealtime. Since I salivate in anticipation of a delicious meal, too, I have to reject Pavlov's conclusions about reflexive dog behavior.

People who have spent years working with dogs and observing them in a wide variety of situations will attest to their thinking ability. For example, there's no doubt in my mind that dogs dream. I don't have laboratory data to back up that conclusion, yet every dog I've known from time to time while napping will move its legs, often with muffled yelps, as if to be running and chasing. If this is evidence of dreaming, isn't more implied? We know that dreaming is an activity of the subconscious. Does the existence of a subconscious in your dog tell us that your dog must also be *self*-conscious and thus self-aware? No one knows for sure but put me in the camp with those who say, Yes!

MRI examinations have shown that the same regions in dog brains and in human brains are activated when experiencing similar emotions. Evidence like this is mounting, and it supports my belief that dogs are genuinely astute and knowing animals.

For all that I am advocating, the final conclusion of the scientific community doesn't matter much. We know that your dog has an emotional heart. That's sufficient for me. I simply want to show you how to reach it. Unlocking your dog's intellectual potential, whatever it may be, is just a part of that process. In Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, self-awareness is a prerequisite for self-actualization. In my *Hierarchy of Canine Familiaris Needs*, I decided to straddle this canine self-awareness/self-actualization debate for the time being. Instead, I suggest a broad category that I call Fulfillment to better represent your dog's highest needs. Within that category are five important needs: nature, curiosity, spontaneity, problem-solving, and communication.

Nature

Humans have created civil societies and vast artificial landscapes to enhance our survival. We rearrange the chaos of nature and battle entropy to make the world fit our purposes. Those things provide the context in which we seek our self-actualization. Dogs are less interested in civil society and artificial landscapes.

When we contemplate unspoiled nature, we discover beauty and inspiration. Too often we also see it as something that needs changing. Your dog is attracted to nature in a different way. It sees a potential home. It's happy to flow through nature as it exists. Improvements are unnecessary.

If your dog is unhappy and then allowed its freedom, it may decide to slip away and seek a pack of feral dogs to join. Family dogs, and particularly those living in an urban landscape, have an unmet need to be in nature. Your dog yearns to experience more than the hum-drum of kitchens and manicured yards.

Once your dog has fully bonded to you and your family/pack, and you're confident it won't run away when it's off leash, you should provide as many experiences in nature as possible. Take your dog with you on hiking and camping trips. Let your dog become the animal it was designed to be. Its senses will be liberated and overwhelmed by all the new smells and sounds. Your dog will love it. It needs that experience. Imagine if you were forced to wear glasses that filtered out all but one or two colors. You would never be able to experience the fullness of the world or the fullness of your human potential. How can your dog feel fulfilled, if it's isolated from the incredible assortment of sensory experiences to be had in nature? When you give your dog the freedom to be in nature as often as you can, you'll be touching your dog's heart.

Curiosity

Curiosity is an important way that puppies learn. Unless your puppy gets into something dangerous or it egregiously violates a household rule, curiosity should be encouraged and rewarded. To a puppy, everything is new, so everything inspires curiosity. By the time your dog is two or three, the home environment is adequately cataloged and curiosity diminishes.

It's possible to create new waves of curiosity by exposing your dog to new people and places. Taking your dog for rides is one way. Opening the window to let in refreshing scents will enhance the journey. In cold weather your dog will probably stick its nose to the vent, if the settings are for outside air. Time spent alone in a parked car does nothing. Whenever possible, let your dog out for a short walk to inspect what's around. A boring landscape of small patches of grass, scrawny trees, and dumpsters isn't exactly a romp in the woods, but it's sure to reveal hundreds of new scents that your dog will find worthy of exploration.

Spontaneity

Spontaneity is easy for dogs, since they don't do a lot of planning. However, too often spontaneity atrophies when life becomes a constant routine. You can liven things up by being more spontaneous yourself. Dogs quickly adapt to routines. Your dog probably recognizes the jingle of your car keys and knows what that means. Your dog has observed how you get up at the same time each morning and proceed through a predictable routine before running off to work. Maybe your dog follows you around noticing everything you do step-by-step; boring.

Why not mix it up? Do something unpredictable. Fall down on the floor and start playing with your dog for a minute or two. Run around the house and try to get your dog excited. Your dog will probably think you're crazy at first. Make it a plan to do this on a random basis, maybe two or three times a week. Your dog will pick up on it and anticipate that a surprise may be in the works. Hopefully your dog will even try to provoke your surprise behavior. When this happens, reward your dog with a special crazy act.

There are plenty of games like this that your dog will love to play and initiate spontaneously. You may also find your dog creating original

variations. Invent as many opportunities for your dog to be spontaneous as you can. It's too easy for your dog to fall into a rut. Don't let that happen.

Problem Solving

Work dogs spend a significant part of their lives solving problems. They're trained to analyze situations and perform the correct services to produce the expected results. Rescue dogs, police dogs, drug sniffing dogs, guide dogs, and herding dogs confront new challenges every day. In most cases they relish the opportunity to resolve the issue and serve their human companions.

The family dog has far fewer problems to solve. That doesn't mean your dog wouldn't benefit from an occasional challenge. Create a game that will incorporate your dog's special skills and have some fun at the same time. Grab one of your dog's favorite toys. Maybe it's a tennis ball. Preferably it's something slobbered over, so it will be easily recognized. Call your dog over and show the object. Use it to tease your dog for a few seconds. Cover its eyes, then have someone quietly hide the toy somewhere in the room. Let your dog go and watch the wild search begin. After a few successful searches, your dog may even invent a strategy. You can then add an extra challenge that could trick your dog at first. Hide the toy in the same place on successive searches until your dog immediately goes to that one place again and again. Once you're sure your dog will go there the next time, hide it someplace completely different. How quickly it solves the problem isn't as important as your dog's enjoyment of the challenge. Most breeds will love this game. Some breeds won't. My experience with huskies, for example, is that they're apathetic to tennis balls, Frisbees, and most toys. Your experience with huskies may be different.

Communication

Communication is the ultimate fulfillment need for you and your dog. If you can't express things to your dog in a way that your dog understands, your dog will be less motivated to connect with you. Likewise, when your dog does try to communicate and you don't respond appropriately, your dog is apt to become discouraged and apathetic about the prospects for communication.

Think about your human parenting. If you and your children can't communicate, unhappy outcomes are sure to follow. For any dog, a complete failure to communicate can result in serious behavioral problems. Too often it becomes a deal breaker for the dog's membership in the family. A sad goodbye trip to the local shelter might be the final result.

The good news is that dogs have an incredible ability to understand human language. Some super-dogs have been taught over 300 words. Your dog only needs to learn twenty to thirty words and phrases to connect with you and have a deep relationship. Pay attention though because your dog probably won't stop with only what you choose to teach.

My dog Chimo has learned many words on her own. For example, I have two sons, eleven and twelve, who are always coming and going. They have responsibilities around the house, and it's not unusual for them to be upstairs making it necessary for me to yell their names for one reason or another. Chimo has quietly observed all this and noticed who appears when a name is called. One day Chimo, needing a bathroom break, nudged my hand. It was James' turn to walk her, so I said, "Go see James," not expecting any response. She listened attentively, then proceeded to trot over to James and start nudging him.

Chimo is always tuned in to conversations, scanning the words and deciphering the language to find out what's going on. I know there are dozens of other words and phrases that she's picked up through simple associations. I'm sure when she hears me tell my boys to "go brush your teeth," she knows what will happen next, even though it doesn't involve her. It would be tough to test this particular bit of knowledge, but since she independently learned their names, there must be much more that she understands.

What follows are my specific techniques and commands that will help you better communicate with your dog. The particular words you use aren't important, so feel free to use whatever you like, as long as you're consistent. Some of the commands are built on sounds used in other commands. Keep that in mind before you deviate from what I use. The order in which you teach them isn't important either. Every combination of dog and household is a little different, so some commands may be more relevant to your situation than others.

It's my hope you'll use what follows to build a lifelong relationship that will fulfill your dog's special needs and bring to you all the companionship and happiness that your dog has to offer.