

Lecture Notes: What They Said

Susan Nilson presents a brief selection of the many sound bites delivered during the Kanab Training and Behavior Workshop presentations

"Training is no longer something we do to animals but something we do with animals. It is a conversation. We want participation rather than compliance. Let dogs choose the behaviors they are most comfortable with rather than tell them what to do." - Chirag Patel on rethinking dog training.



"People overgeneralizing wolf behavior to dog behavior causes all kinds of problems. It is the differences between dogs and wolves that make it possible for us to live with them. Dogs come out of the womb ready to learn and with a prepared inclination to bond with humans and other species." - Janis Bradley talks confirmation bias.



"A lot of dogs are resilient to accepting aversives but birds are not so forgiving. A lot of parrots are set up for failure because they are imprinted on humans and don't actually know how to be a parrot. This can lead to behavior issues, including separation anxiety, and feather plucking behavior." - Lara Joseph on the evolution of aviculture.

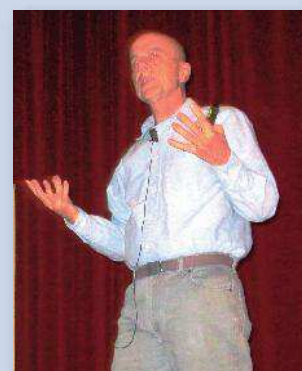


"Rabbits are intelligent and active and will get bored sitting in an empty cage, so enrichment is essential. In the wild, they will spend up to six hours a day foraging. Prey animals don't get to control anything in their environment so if you empower them in training by giving them choices (e.g. give them a safe place to retreat) it can be very powerful." - Emily Cassell on helping rabbits adjust to their new home.

"The first study at Best Friends found that the dogs' cortisol levels significantly dropped with just one overnight foster stay. Once the dogs were returned to the shelter, the dogs' cortisol levels increased similar to what they were before they left but did not increase. While the sleepover was beneficial, the reduction in stress did not sustain long upon return... Sleepovers may act much like weekends to our work week. They don't make all our stress go away, but allow us to rest and recharge, before facing the next week." - Sherry Woodard discusses Best Friends Animal Society's Sleepover Study and additional external studies.



"Dogs are the only species in the world with a strong disposition to bond with their own species and another species (i.e. humans). Evidence now suggests that the dog-human social bond has surpassed that of the dog-dog social bond. Canine social pain seems to be the worst kind of pain in the animal kingdom because no other species has undergone bonding to another species like the dog has." - Dr. Franklin McMillan on social pain in dogs.



"If you go onto Google and search for images of 'dogs and kids,' I challenge you to find a photo that shows an appropriate interaction between a dog and a child." - Niki Tudge on improving dog bite safety in the community.



"If we teach something when the learner is stressed or frustrated, that emotion gets built into the behavior. Giving the animal choice leads to a more relaxed/confident animal, more cooperation, and empowers the animal." - Louise Stapleton-Frappell discusses bridging stimuli and clicker training for success.



"Stop focusing on labels and focus on behavior. You can use a happy voice as an antecedent to drive behavior, but there is no science behind this. Dogs will learn based on consequences. We give time-outs when it's not the dog's fault and, in reality, it is because the human hasn't set up the environment properly." - Chirag Patel (right, with PPG president, Niki Tudge) questions common ideas in dog training.



"Adopters who stop in front of a kennel to look at a dog decide whether or not to move on within 20-70 seconds. Once out of the kennel, adopters give dogs an average of eight minutes. Aside from physical attributes, the most important thing to adopters was dog engagement and interaction. Simple enrichment techniques, including training some easy behaviors, can increase a dog's desirability to adopters." - Sherry Woodard on what adopters look for.



"Research in animals has demonstrated that a single exposure to a severe stressor may alter synaptic transmission in the fear pathway, resulting in long-lasting neurohormonal changes and increases in anxiety-like behavior, increased startle responses, and alteration in the excitability of the fear circuit. These neurohormonal alterations appear to explain long-term behavioral changes long after removal of the threat." - Dr. Franklin McMillan discusses psychological trauma and post traumatic stress in dogs.

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"Language can affect people's attitudes and perceptions of common canine behaviors, and animal professionals should be mindful of this. The lay population is most bothered by home-related issues such as house soiling and destruction of furniture, and attitudes towards these issues are most susceptible to be influenced by language. The lay population does recognize 'aggression' but is 'less bothered' by it than professionals." - Janis Bradley talks smiling vs. snarling in dogs, and owners' perceptions of behavior vs. those of pet professionals.

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"Done right, you can help your business while helping dogs. Use your time wisely. Re: training people vs. training dogs—training people can create a broader impact than working with dogs." - Tia Guest explains how to help your business by helping shelter dogs.



"When a learner is exposed to an aversive (unpleasant) stimulus at varying intensities, threshold is the point at which the stimulus elicits orientation but not sensitization or potentiation. When a dog is over threshold, he does not respond to handler cues and is uninterested in food. This transitions to lunging, growling, barking and even 'shut down,' where he becomes unresponsive and withdrawn." - Glenn Pierce explains more about working near or at threshold for results in shelter dogs.



"The learner determines the reinforcement. The size/amount of the positive reinforcement needs to be worth working for and needs to accommodate the behavior being trained. Be aware of the acquisition phase vs. the maintenance phase and constantly reevaluate. Ask yourself, 'What does the CAT want to do?'" - Jacqueline Mason Munera explains the importance of giving feral or fearful cats



"When working with wild animals, we can't always perceive what they perceive. They have excellent peripheral vision but poor depth perception. They are often afraid of new things and respond very differently to stimuli than cats and dogs because they are prey animals. Rabbits live in large groups and are social animals. They

can be just as interactive as cats and dogs; in a good home they can live up to 12 years of age and more." - Emily Cassell explains the world from a bunny's perspective.

"Forcing a fearful dog to meet and be touched by a stranger can increase fear and feelings of conflict. Sometimes it is difficult to spot subtle signs of fear and anxiety, but the animal disengaging is a very clear sign." - Louise Stapleton-Frappell talks rescue dog 'fundamentals and teaching tricks for husbandry and nice manners.



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