

Simple solutions for you & your dog



Everything you need to be able to understand your dog's behaviour

4 caring connections to help your dog become relaxed and responsive

By Julie Cluley



About Julie

My name is Julie
Cluley, A little Peace of
Mind Practitioner, Dog behaviour
Coach, blogger, lover of wild swimming, wine, and
my dog – Fudge.

I have owned and worked with dogs for over 14
years, so I have an excellent understanding of the
issues you're going through with your dog and most
importantly, I can help you solve them. I love
talking all things dog-related and the techniques I
use are proven to work.

I can help you remove concerns about how your
dog behaves (whether at home or in public),
provide the support you need in order to ensure
your dog is relaxed, responsive and feels happy
most of the time and I will help you improve your
relationship with your dog for the long term.

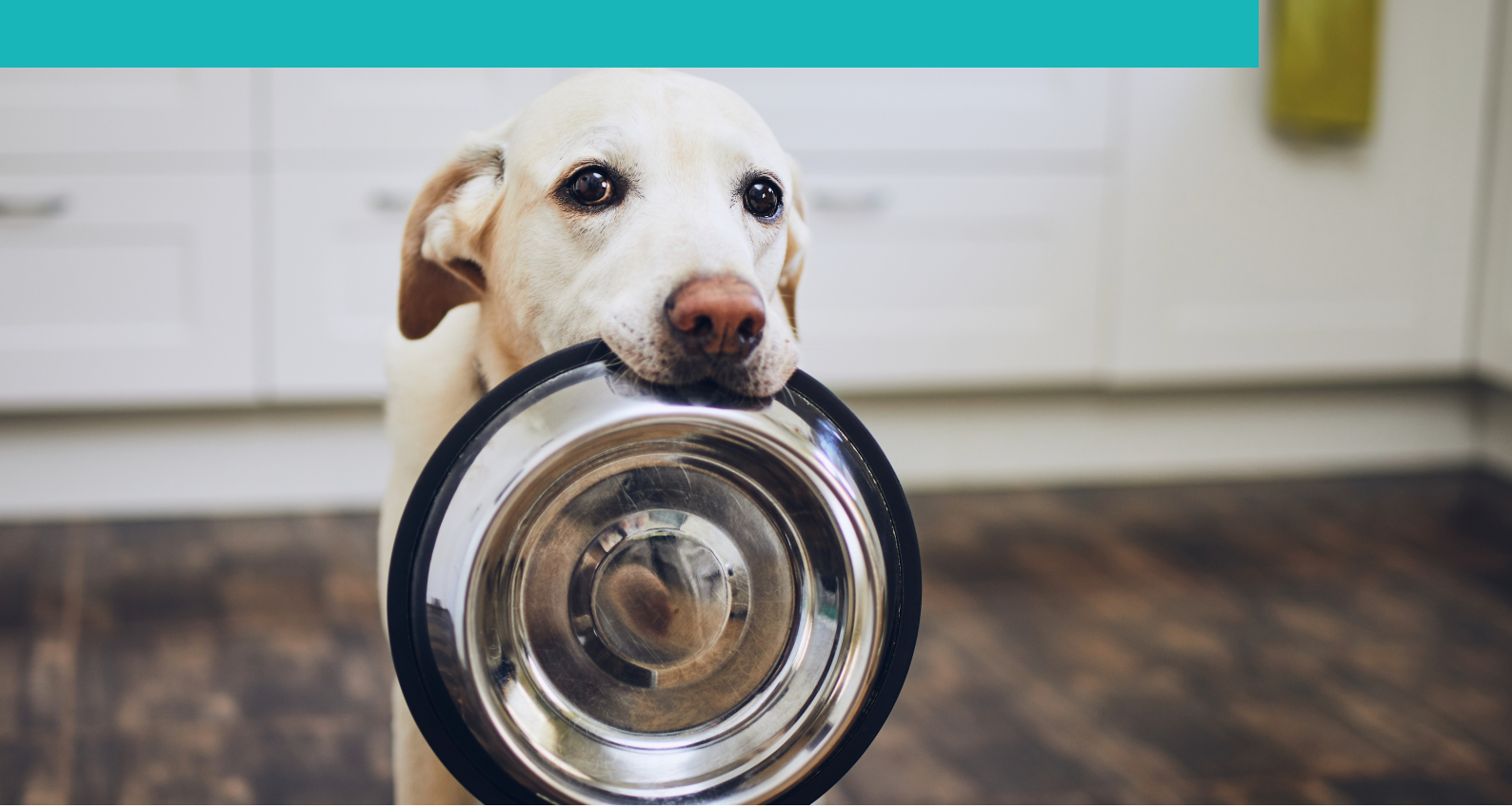
4 Caring Connections

From experience I have seen that often when we don't listen to our dogs during these situations they are more likely to take control themselves and because they are living in a world they don't understand, when they start to take control themselves and make their own decisions it will cause them to become stressed, anxious and unresponsive.

The aim is to make as many decisions as possible for your dog, so you can become their elected leader. All dogs with a good elected leader are able to experience life from a relaxed and responsive place.

These caring connections are a guide to making those decisions in a way your dog will understand and will help in your mission to become their elected leader.

Caring Connection #1



FEEDING YOUR DOG

Recognise that food is very important for your dog, without it they will not survive.

In a dog's world the leader of the pack i.e. the one that makes the most good decisions, will most certainly eat first. This will ensure that they remain strong, fit and able for the job.

In order to relieve a dog of the potential job of leader, which will ultimately cause them stress, we can take a few simple steps around meal times:



Do not worry about when you eat your meals or when you eat snacks it's not relevant for your dog's meal time.

Step 1

When you do decide to feed your dog, place a small peace of food behind their bowl so it looks like it's in their bowl. When your dog is waiting for their food take this one mouthful and place the bowl on the floor for them.

Step 2

Give your dog the opportunity to eat

Step 3

As soon as your dog leaves the bowl, no matter if they have finished or not, remove the bowl. Your dog's opportunity to eat and meal time is over.

Step 4

The next time you want to give your dog the opportunity to eat, repeat the process.



This process will ensure your dog will always have the opportunity to eat whenever you decide, but will not be able to eat just whenever they feel like it.

Over the years it has become very clear to me that dogs that are allowed to graze all day are receiving mixed messages regarding who is the decision maker and this process is so simple, it's a very easy way to show your dog – in a kind gentle way – that you make the decisions around food.

This process is also a great first step in your campaign to have your dog elect you as the leader.



Your notes...

What are your current feeding routines?

Changes you are going to make:

Caring Connection #2



SEPARATION AND ATTENTION

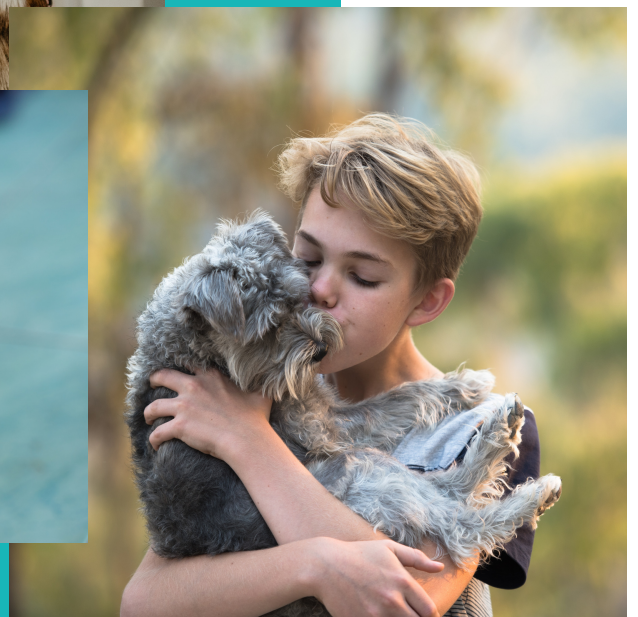
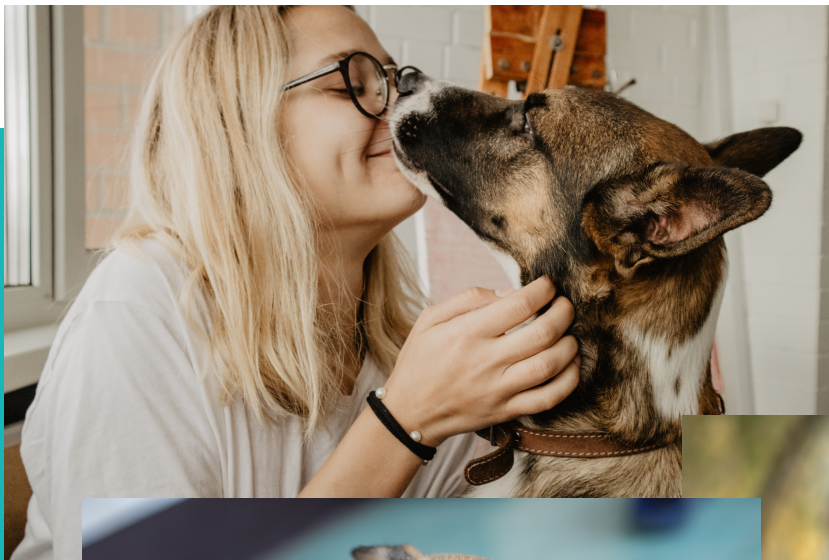
Continuing with our campaign to become an elected leader let's look at reuniting after separation and attention.

It's fairly well documented that dogs are pack animals and, as such, operate best when they have a strong, calm and confident leader. We humans tend to assume that – because we provide the food, shelter and have the cash to go to the vets should anything go wrong – we are the leader! **WRONG!**

If I could sum up in just one line what is the number one cause for almost 100% of the behavioural problems I see every day it would be this misunderstanding:

**Humans think they are the leader
but our dogs think they are the
leader.**

It's very helpful to first of all recognise this mix up
and secondly to start your campaign to
becoming elected leader.



When you reunite with your dog after you have been apart (even for as short a time as nipping to the loo) this is the time to show your dog you are up for the job of their leader.

Recognise that a dog will **instinctively** want to grab your attention. It may jump up on you, or it may by contrast studiously ignore you when meeting you after a separation.

Some dogs will even leap up at the thought of you leaving the room and try to follow you.

Recognise that although this may be annoying, be kind, it's their instinct.



Your notes...

How does your dog behave when you leave the room?

How does your dog behave when you come back into the room?

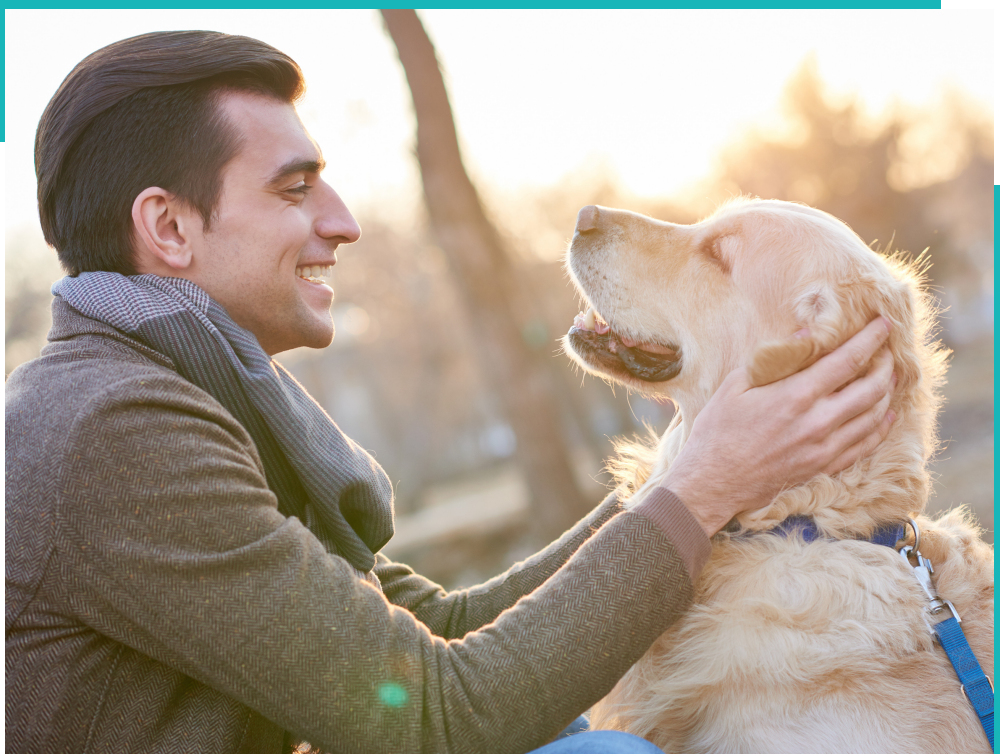
How best to greet your dog:

- **Don't make eye contact**
- **Don't make verbal contact**

Just allow them to do whatever their own personality is asking them to do.

Distract yourself if necessary, some dogs can be very persistent!

Once they have moved away and allowed you some space and relaxed in themselves, now is the time to call them over to you and play, cuddle – whatever you prefer.



Other areas that I have noticed many dogs will try to improve their own chances of the leadership role is when you sit down to relax, try to get some work done, or read a book.

They might demand attention when they decide by jumping up, barking at you, nipping, pulling at clothes, dropping a ball at your feet – the list is endless.

It can be pretty much anything that will get your attention when your dog has decided it would like it.



The key thing here is to remember they are not being naughty it's instinctive they just want to know who has been elected the leader.

Is it you or your dog?!

The best way to get yourself elected is not to respond in that moment.

Ignore the behaviour or if it is very persistent, distract yourself, remove yourself, do anything except respond either with a negative response or with a positive response.

Once the behaviour has stopped and they have fallen back into their natural state of relaxed and responsive, then you can call them over, play ball, cuddle, go out for a walk whatever you want to do.



Caring Connection #3



PERCEIVED DANGER

Recognise that your dog's idea of danger may well be different from yours. We call this perceived danger because the danger could be absolutely anything.

If your dog reacts in a worried way (e.g., barking, growling, biting, straining at the end of the lead, cowering, shaking, jumping up) there is a good chance it has perceived a danger.

The first thing to do in this scenario is be KIND. Acknowledge your dog is feeling frightened and worried. Move away from the problem and you could even quietly say "Thank you". Your dog is very likely trying to warn and protect you of the perceived danger.

If appropriate, keep your dog back and out of the way and take a look at the problem.

If you have ascertained there is not actually a danger, (e.g. it's the postman) you could place your dog in a **safe place** away from the perceived danger.

Get to know your dog and their signals if their body is rigid, tail high up or right between their legs, ears back, hackles up, lunging or barking these are all signs that your dog could be worried or frightened and this is a really good time to show your leadership skills and **help your dog trust you.**



Your notes...

[illegible]

Practice:

Acknowledge your dog is worried by calmly and quietly saying thank you. You are saying "I hear you" and understanding they are warning you of a perceived threat.

If they are still concerned i.e. still showing the worried behaviour. Make a show of taking a look at the problem, remain quiet and calm and give your dog time to settle down.

If they are still concerned it's time to take action and put them in another room or if you are out on a walk take your dog away or preferably home to allow them time to settle down.

Once your dog has calmed down and is no longer concerned, (this could take some time depending on the situation and threat) you can continue on with your day.



There are many many practical variations on this same theme. The important thing is to recognise when your dog is worried, listen and acknowledge your dog and give them time away from the perceived threat to fall back into their relaxed and responsive state.



Caring Connection #4



WALKS

In this pillar, we're looking at walking your dog (or as it looks to your dog, going on a hunt for food).

Recognise that every time your dog leaves your house and/or garden, your dog thinks it is going on a hunt usually for food.

Dogs will never choose to leave the safety of their home unless for food or to find a safer place. Taking your dog for a walk is great fun and many dogs enjoy it, but recognise that walking for pleasure or exercise is a human activity!

Despite what you've heard, your dog does not need to be "walked" every day in the traditional sense of the word, there are many other ways to exercise your dog.

Practice:

With all this in mind we want to make "walkies" the best fun possible for both you and your dog.

The first thing you can do is employ a tactic called SSCD, Stop Start and Change Direction.

I would recommend starting in your house or garden or if you don't have a garden, a nice quiet place with as little distraction as possible. This is the KIND way, as it helps both you and them to relax and be able to walk without either of you having to pull.

SSCD is simple: If your dog pulls, STOP and wait for your dog to realise you have stopped (don't pull, be patient, just stop and wait).

Then START again in another direction. Next time your dog pulls, STOP and repeat the process as above.

If you or your dog are struggling with this there is a good chance wherever you have chosen to start your practice is just too busy and distracting for either you or your dog or maybe even both.

It's a great idea to start without the lead in your own kitchen or living room and just encourage your dog to follow you when asked, maybe with the help of a treat to initially. Once they are walking next to you consistently, then introduce a lead and you can venture further afield.

RECALL

Encouraging your dog to respond to you when asked (also known as recall) is a really important part of communication and leadership.

I recommend starting this at home in your living room or garden. This is where your dog is most likely to get it right as there will be fewer distractions, so you can practice and give your dog lots of rewards for getting it right.

Once your dog is responding well, practice in a quiet park and build up to busier places.

If you find that your dog is not responding well to you, again there is a good chance they just feel too busy and distracted. Go back to the quiet of your house or garden and practice there.



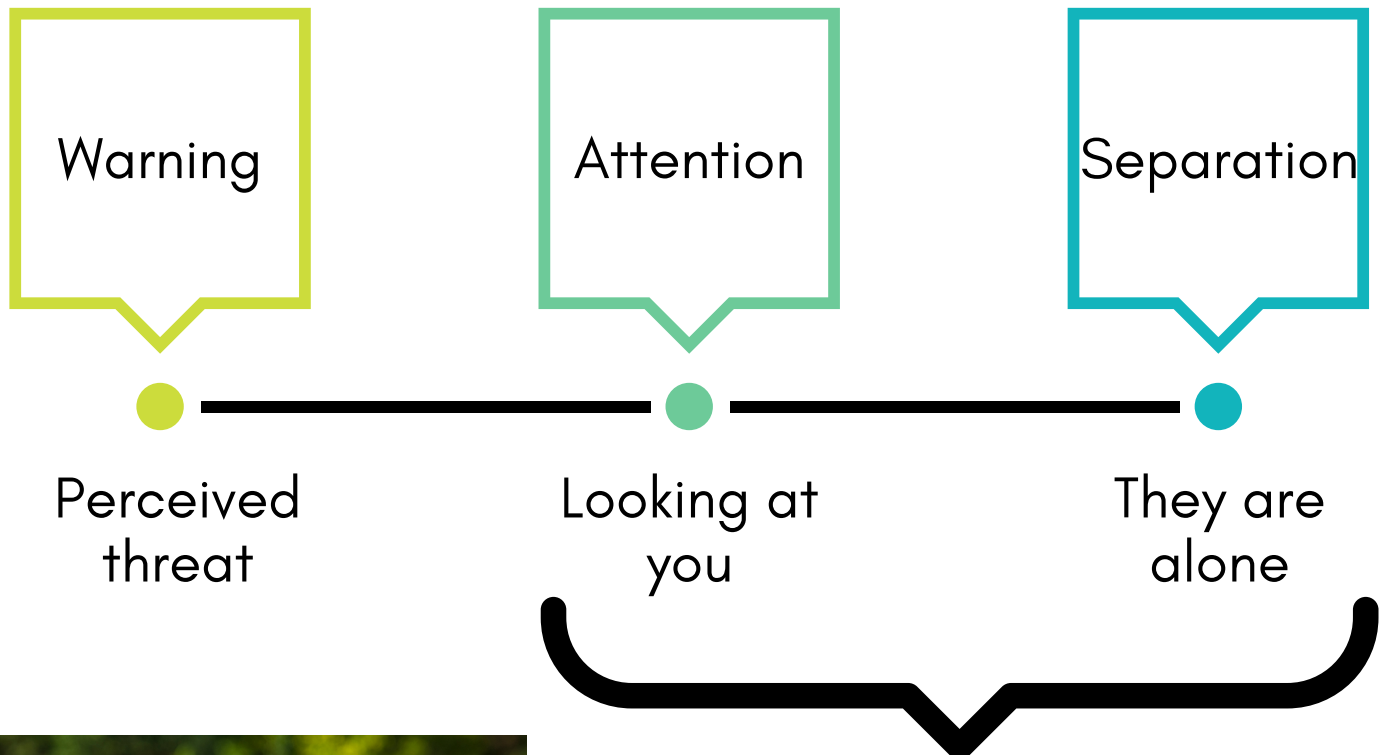
Your notes...

Note down the progress you and your dog are making each day on walks...

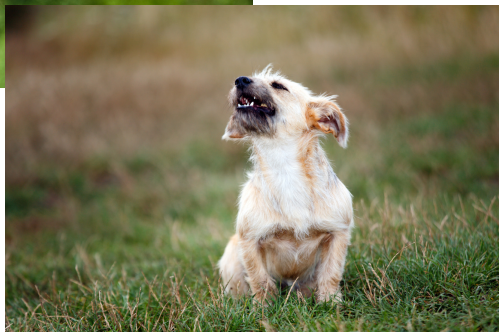
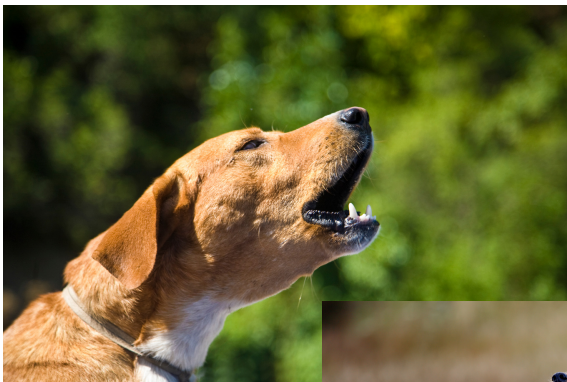
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Barking Bonus!

There are 3 main reasons for dogs to bark...



With these two barks the simple solution is **just ignore it**.



However that is sometimes easier said than done. So you might need to get creative.

YOU CAN LOOK AT THIS IN MORE DETAIL IN ONE OF MY ONLINE CLASSES

What now?

Once these 4 opportunities for caring connection between you and your dog have been established, there is a good chance that the annoying behaviour that brought you to me in the first place will have been dissolved without you actually having to deal with it directly!

The solution is rarely found where the problem occurs!

If you've started to take the time to practice these opportunities for caring connection and have questions or would like some help, I'd love to be able to help you help your dog be their most relaxed and responsive best self.

Check out my Deeper Love" – which will help you improve and develop a good relationship with your dog now and for the long term.

This is for you if you want to develop an even better understanding of your dog's needs, and find ways to improve the communication between you. I'll teach you simple methods to support your dog to become more relaxed and responsive more often.

Get in touch

You can join my free Facebook community today
for further support!



[Join Here](#)



And don't forget that if you would prefer
to work with me on a 1:1 basis you can
check out my private coaching [here](#).