

# Being the Thought Police: Antecedent Control



Changing their dog's unwanted behaviours is a difficult thing for people to achieve without knowledge and guidance. Why is that? What makes it so hard that people even give up on their dogs?

When training their dogs, people often fail to anticipate unwanted behaviours and simply react to them, often with punishment. There are a few issues with this approach, not the least of which is the ethical and moral considerations of applying aversives to animals and the fallout that can incur.

But how can you avoid this circle of unwanted behaviours and punishments? Anticipate the behaviour!

Dogs are not humans. They do not think the same way as we do. Many people adopt a dog and then expect them not to bark, chase, dig, steal food, pee in the house. You get the idea. The truth is, none of those behaviours is abnormal or "bad." We humans just don't like them, but how is a dog expected to know that?

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## FEBRUARY 2022

### THE OFFICIAL SPEAKING OF DOGS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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#### About Speaking of Dogs

Speaking of Dogs is a Toronto-based organization that launched in 2001 and is dedicated to educating and enlightening people about dogs through seminars, workshop forums, outreach and rescue. Our goal is to end cruelty, abandonment, mistreatment and homelessness of man's best friend.

*Speaking of Dogs Rescue is the operating name of Speaking of Dogs Rescue Program, a Canada Revenue Agency-registered charity based in Ontario.*

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# Dogs Looking for Homes

## A friend in need is a friend indeed

Without a doubt, a dog is a real friend. Our dogs come in all shapes and sizes, but they have one thing in common—they all need loving forever homes. Open your heart and your home to a rescue dog. You'll be glad you did. For complete information about the adoption process, please visit [www.speakingofdogs.com/adoption-process](http://www.speakingofdogs.com/adoption-process). For more information on each dog, simply click on their name.

## Baker

LABRADOR RETRIEVER  
LARGE, SENIOR, MALE

### FEATURED DOG:

Baker is a big, lovable Labrador mix who is estimated to be between 9 and 10 years old and weighs about 70 pounds. He came to us from northern Manitoba and was found in rough shape, with seeping wounds. He adjusted well to his first foster home in Manitoba, where his wounds healed. He got along well with their two dogs, even though one was always trying to steal his food.

Once in Toronto, Baker was welcomed by a foster mom who is a certified dog trainer, and she has been working her magic with him! He is now a pro at sitting and waiting before he goes out the door for walks (he used to be difficult to leash and would pull to get out the door in his excitement). He also waits patiently before devouring his food and knows "down," "sit," "leave it," "wait," "touch," and "go mat."

Baker was diagnosed with heartworm, but he has completed the three-dose treatment with our vet, and he is finally ready for his forever home! He is also up to date with his vaccinations and has been microchipped.

Baker has an excellent temperament when meeting other dogs – alert but friendly. He is also quite amiable with new people. He is affectionate and loyal,



always wanting to be near his foster mom and nudging her with his big head for a rub. He loves to be brushed!

Baker has also proven to be calm when left alone. He is crate trained and goes into his crate for meals and when lured with treats. He stays in his crate calmly if you need to go out, but he does prefer to be loose in the house and has not had any accidents or done any damage when left alone. However, his new owners would be wise not to leave food on the counter, as Baker

has been known to counter surf when left alone!

Baker is interested in cats but hasn't been up close with them, so we're not sure how that would go. He is good with children.

Baker is a big, lovable guy whose been through a lot but come out of it with the best outlook on life! He would be the perfect companion for someone who likes big dogs with lower energy. Could his forever home be with you?



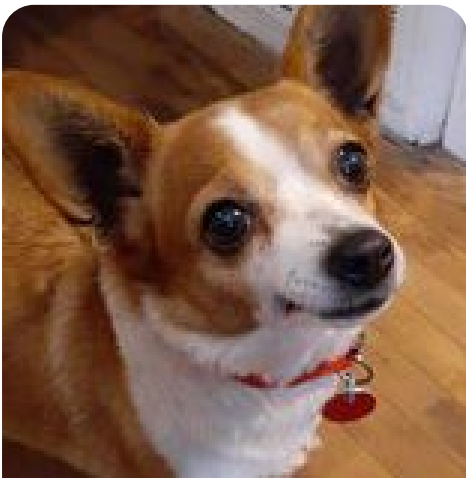
*Faye*  
TOY POODLE  
SMALL, SENIOR, FEMALE



*Sugar*  
PAPILLON / SPANIEL MIX  
SMALL, SENIOR, FEMALE



*Veeru*  
INDIAN PARIASH DOG  
MEDIUM, YOUNG, MALE



*Buttons*  
CHIHUAHUA  
SMALL, SENIOR, FEMALE



*Daisy*  
CAIRN TERRIER MIX  
SMALL, YOUNG, FEMALE



*Cedar*  
LABRADOR / SHEPHERD MIX  
MEDIUM, BABY, FEMALE



*Peek & Boo*  
BORDER COLLIE / LABRADOR MIXES | MEDIUM, SENIOR, FEMALES  
COURTESY POST FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO SHELTYE RESCUE



*Lainey*  
RETRIEVER / COLLIE MI  
LARGE, ADULT, FEMALE



*Kyra*

BELGIAN/ SHEPHERD MIX  
LARGE, ADULT, FEMALE



*Dazzy*

SHIH TZU  
SMALL, ADULT, FEMALE



*Auggie*

SHEPDOG / POODLE MIX  
LARGE, BABY, MALE



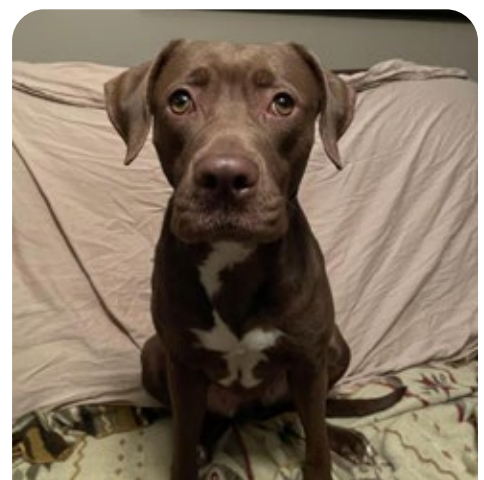
*Rocky*

GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG  
LARGE, ADULT, MALE



*Snoop*

WHEATEN / HUSKY MIX  
LARGE, ADULT, MALE



*Coco*

LABRADOR RETRIEVER MIX  
MEDIUM, ADULT, FEMALE

## FEBRUARY IS PET DENTAL HEALTH MONTH!

Many vet clinics are currently offering discounts and specials on dental cleanings, and many pet stores have dental treats on sale. If you're thinking your pet's teeth may need some attention, now is a great time to take care of it!

Not sure whether your pet requires dental care? Talk to your veterinarian, and [check out this resource from Veterinary Partner for more information.](#)

## WAGS AND WIGGLES FOR OUR SUPPORTERS – AND FOR BETTY!

Late actress Betty White was a life-long supporter of animals and animal welfare. January 17th would have marked her 100th birthday, and to celebrate her legacy and her life, animal shelters and rescues were encouraging people to make a donation in her memory. Speaking of Dogs Rescue was surprised and delighted to receive many donations! As many of you know, we take a great many senior dogs as well as special needs

and palliative cases. Those donations will allow us to help so many wonderful dogs in need. What can we say... Thank you for being our friend!



# Ask the Trainer



[\*Continued from page 1...\*](#)

So how should we deal with these behaviours? Step 1, recognize that many of these behaviours are necessary for a dog's health and wellness. Dogs need to do dog stuff. They need to sniff, search things out, chase things, and dig holes. There are some great articles out there on enrichment to help you find appropriate outlets for species or breed specific behaviours. A great place to start is back issues of this newsletter! We've featured many articles on exercise and enrichment. Check out our January 2021 and May 2021 issues. Facebook groups, like Canine Enrichment and the book that goes with it by Shay Kelly, *Canine Enrichment: The Book Your Dog Needs You to Read*, are also great resources.

Step 2, identify where and when these behaviours happen and then prevent them. This is called antecedent control or management of triggers. Think about when these behaviours occur most frequently. What happens right before the behaviour? Does the doorbell ring and then the barking starts? Is your dog fetching like a maniac and then grabs your clothes? These are called antecedents or triggers. The doorbell

cues the bark. The fetch is exciting, and the dog gets over-aroused and starts jumping, biting, and otherwise behaving inappropriately.

So how does one think ahead rather than just react to problems? You could, for example, put a sign on your front door, asking people to text first instead of ringing the doorbell. You could try to count the repetitions of fetch to learn whether there's a magic number at which point your dog tends to go crazy, so you can slow things down before that happens and keep your dog under their own control.

Step 3 involves working to change your dog's response to triggers by creating a training plan. For our barking at the doorbell example, that would involve conditioning the doorbell to mean "go to your mat and wait." Until that response is solid, the doorbell would only used in training. For our overexcitement during fetch example, you could gradually and slowly increase the number of fetch runs or teach a relaxing behaviour in between sets to help your dog learn to better regulate their arousal.

While it's important to let dogs be dogs and give them opportunities to bark, play, and run around, those behaviours are definitely not wanted at all times and in all places. If you can control the antecedents, however, you can control the behaviour. By changing the antecedents through training and conditioning, you can change your dog's behaviour long term. Be proactive, not reactive!



Maggi Burt, CPDT-KA,  
owner of Tailspin Petworx

# Adoption Update

*To: Speaking of Dogs Rescue*

*From: Jan Kraus*

*Subject: Abe*

Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

I just finished reading the newsletter and thought I'd give you a quick update on Abe. He is truly the most adorable dog ever! Back when I was able to take a couple of overnight trips out of the city, he let me know he was planning to go one way or another.

Like the Princess and the Pea, he prefers multiple pillows.

His groomer says he's one of the most cooperative dogs he grooms. Abe obviously adores the groomer, who is very generous with liver treats. I lack the photography skills to capture him in full Zoomy mode or in his hilarious bum jump and spin game. He definitely knows his name, has mastered the art of "sit," is getting better at "come," and is so friendly. When a few burly looking roofers were here to do some work, Abe boldly walked up to each one, tail wagging. Every last one of them bent down to his level, petted him, and cooed over him. It was a sight to behold.

He brings me so much joy and keeps me sane and well-walked during this pandemic. I'm always encouraging people to consider taking in a senior dog.

Thanks for choosing me to be his forever home.



# Happy Tails

## RECENT ADOPTIONS:

A big thank you to our foster parents and our new adoptive guardians for helping give these loving dogs a second chance.



Brady



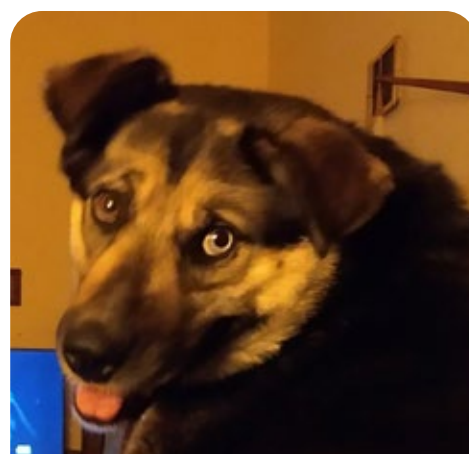
Carey



Nico



Jerry



Bella



Zoey



Sally



Scooter



Charlie

# New to Forever in Foster



Mika



Bella

**RECALL**

Click the link for details  
on this month's recalls:

- [Big Country Raw turkey](#)



Cheyenne



Fox



## GET SOCIAL WITH US!

If you haven't checked out our **Facebook page** lately, you're missing out! We have regular dog updates, funny posts, informative tidbits, and every Thursday we auction off fabulous items – all for the dogs!

Is Instagram more your thing? Our **Instagram page** is full of fun photos and useful info!

**Special thanks** to Vicki Chorely for organizing our Facebook auctions, to Jen Frayne for keeping our Facebook page updated and entertaining, and to Katie Saich for keeping our Instagram page engaging and instructive.



# In Memoriam



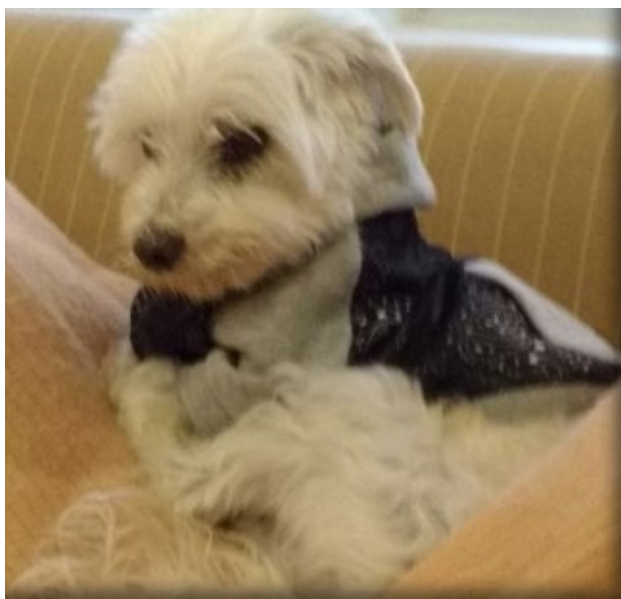
*Woody*

LOVED BY TANYA AND JUSTIN KOROLOW  
ADOPTED APRIL 2019



*Ruby*

LOVED BY BECKY, DAN, FINN AND ABBY LARMER  
ADOPTED MARCH 2018



*Bobby*

LOVED BY LYNDA AND TOM SANDERSON