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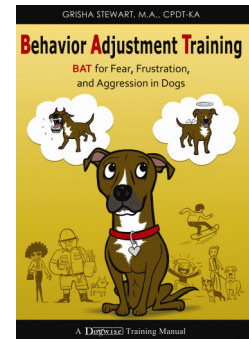
Behavior Adjustment Training- BAT for Fear, Frustration, and Aggression in Dogs

Ch. 1—Understanding BAT: Key Concepts

by Grisha Stewart, Dogwise Publishing.

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Since you're reading this book, your dog probably exhibits some behaviors that you'd like to change or you are a dog trainer helping other people change dog behavior. Or both. I've only ever had two clients say to me, "My dog is perfect. We just need some training ideas for entertainment," so I'm guessing you're probably in the first category. That's me, too. I developed Behavior Adjustment Training (BAT) not only to help my clients, but also to rehabilitate my own reactive dog, Peanut.

There are a number of key concepts to grasp in BAT. This chapter will serve as a brief introduction to these concepts while the rest of the book will provide more details and examples, including the next chapter about how I began to utilize them when working with Peanut. These key concepts include:

- Functional Rewards
- Replacement Behaviors
- Default Behaviors
- Thresholds and sub-thresholds
- Triggers
- Set-ups
- Reinforcements
- Bonus Rewards

Ask yourself "why?"

If your dog is exhibiting some behavior you don't want, you may have wondered, "Why is he doing it?" Does he not love you? Is he trying to dominate you? If he knows you don't like whatever it is he is doing, then why does he keep doing it? Is he not your best friend, after all? I think the answer is that he behaves the way he does simply because he has some need that the behavior helps him meet. He may not even find the behavior particularly fun to do, as is the case with most reactivity. *But your dog has learned that behavior is a way to get what he wants or needs.*

Think creatively about what your dog gets as a result of doing a **problem behavior** (whatever he's

doing that you want to change). In other words, what is the **functional reward** for his behavior? Think of the functional reward as a "real life" consequence that reinforces the problem behavior. Has your dog learned that barking at strangers makes them move away? The fact that the person moves away creates safety in the dog's mind by putting more distance between him and a stranger. That is the functional reward for his barking.

Once you know the functional reward(s) for your dog's problem behavior, the next step is to find other behaviors you can encourage your dog to do that can reasonably lead to that same reward. For example, you can reward your dog's choice to turn his head away from approaching strangers instead of barking at them. That would make looking away a **replacement behavior** for the problem behavior of barking. Sniffing the ground, yawning, sitting, or looking at you are also appropriate possible replacement behaviors for reactivity. Reinforce the replacement behavior(s) by using the same functional reward that your dog earned from doing the problem behavior. For example, when he looks away (a replacement behavior), happily walk your dog away from the stranger, thereby increasing the distance between dog and stranger (the functional reward). That's the core concept of Functional Analysis—using the functional reward of the problem behavior to pay for more appropriate behaviors. The functional reward concept can be applied to just about any problem behavior. Behavioral Adjustment Training is a way to apply the scientific concept of Functional Analysis to reactivity problems: use the functional reward of reactivity to pay for more appropriate social behaviors.

Grisha Stewart's DVDs on BAT training have made her a popular seminar presenter all over the world. She is the owner of Ahimsa Dog Training in Seattle, which offers a wide range of dog and puppy classes and an online store.