

PAWSITIVE METHODS

Free Clinic Series

Operant Conditioning

What is Operant Conditioning?

OPERANT CONDITIONING IS A METHOD OF LEARNING USING REWARDS AND PUNISHMENT, OR SIMPLY PUT, 'LEARNING BY CONSEQUENCES'.

IT DIFFERS FROM CLASSICAL CONDITIONING IN THAT OPERANT CONDITIONING DEALS WITH VOLUNTARY ACTIONS *FOLLOWED* BY STIMULUS WHILE CLASSICAL CONDITIONING DEALS WITH INVOLUNTARY ACTIONS *PRECEDED* BY STIMULUS.

Rewards and Punishment

REWARDS, PUNISHMENT, AND EXTINCTION OR IGNORING THE ACTIVITY, CAN HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON CANINE BEHAVIORS, DESIRABLE OR OTHERWISE. PROVIDING SOMETHING THE DOG PERCEIVES AS PLEASANT OR BY REMOVING SOMETHING THE DOG PERCEIVES AS UNPLEASANT IS REWARDING. THE DOG PERCEIVES THE CONVERSE ACTION AS PUNISHMENT. THAT ALLOWS OPERANT CONDITIONING TO OFFER THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES FOR A SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR.

1. **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT – REWARDING THE ACTIVITY BY PROVIDING SOMETHING THE DOG PERCEIVES AS DESIRABLE. THIS WOULD TEND TO INCREASE THE FREQUENCY OF THE BEHAVIOR, WHETHER DESIRABLE OR NOT.**
2. **NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT – REWARDING THE ACTIVITY BY REMOVING SOMETHING THE DOG PERCEIVES AS UNDESIRABLE. THIS WOULD TEND TO INCREASE THE FREQUENCY OF THE BEHAVIOR, WHETHER DESIRABLE OR NOT.**
3. **NEGATIVE PUNISHMENT – PUNISHING THE ACTIVITY BY REMOVING SOMETHING THE DOG PERCEIVES AS DESIRABLE. THIS WOULD TEND TO DECREASE THE FREQUENCY OF THE BEHAVIOR, WHETHER DESIRABLE OR NOT.**
4. **POSITIVE PUNISHMENT – PUNISHING THE ACTIVITY BY PROVIDING SOMETHING THE DOG PERCEIVES AS UNPLEASANT. THIS WOULD TEND TO DECREASE THE FREQUENCY OF THE BEHAVIOR, WHETHER DESIRABLE OR NOT.**
5. **EXTINCTION* – IGNORING THE PREVIOUSLY REWARDED ACTIVITY. THIS WOULD TEND TO DECREASE THE FREQUENCY OF THE BEHAVIOR, WHETHER DESIRABLE OR NOT. THIS TECHNIQUE MAY RESULT IN AN EXTINCTION BURST, AND ALTHOUGH GENERALLY SHORT-LIVED, THE UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR MAY ACTUALLY INCREASE DURING THIS OUTBURST.**

Trainers Name: Wayne Shaffer

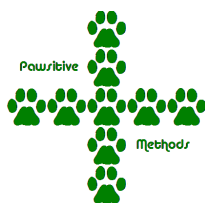
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Rev FCOC021110a Page 1 of 4

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THE FOLLOWING CHART SUMMARIZES THE CONDITIONING POSSIBILITIES AND THEIR PROBABLE OUTCOMES.

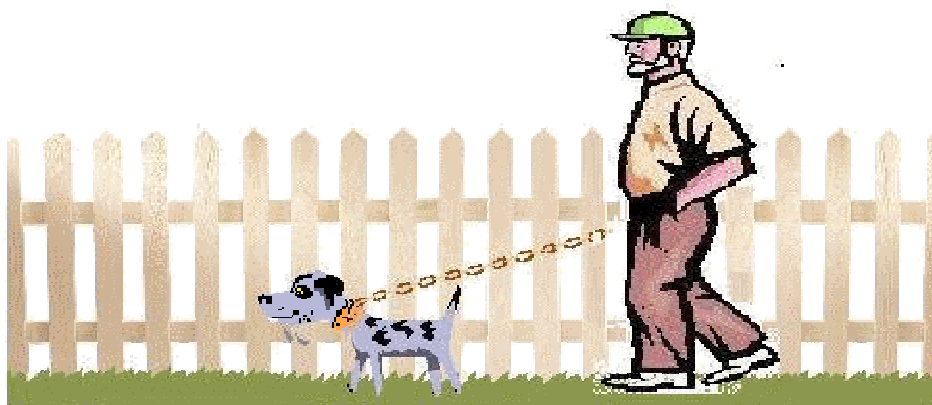
	REINFORCEMENT (BEHAVIOR INCREASES)	PUNISHMENT (BEHAVIOR DECREASES)
POSITIVE (SOMETHING ADDED)	POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT: SOMETHING PLEASANT ADDED	POSITIVE PUNISHMENT SOMETHING UNPLEASANT ADDED <i>(WE DO NOT USE THIS METHOD)</i>
NEGATIVE (SOMETHING REMOVED)	NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT SOMETHING UNPLEASANT REMOVED	NEGATIVE PUNISHMENT SOMETHING PLEASANT REMOVED
EXTINCTION (BEHAVIOR IGNORED)	BEHAVIOR DECREASES NOTHING ADDED OR REMOVED	

Application

BRINGING THE PIECES TOGETHER

BASED ON THE TWO REWARD SYSTEM - A TECHNIQUE BY JOHN FISHER

PLACE THE DOG IN A THREE OR FOUR POINT HARNESS, THE HARNESS SHOULD BE ADJUSTED SO THAT THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF COMING OFF; COLLARS WITH MARTINGALE ADJUSTMENTS WORK EXCEPTIONALLY WELL. TETHER THE DOG TO A TREE, POST OR OTHER SECURE SPOT WITH A FOUR TO FIVE FOOT LEASH. THE HANDLER SHOULD BE PROVIDING THE DOG WITH PRAISE AND/ OR TREATS (POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT) FOR THEIR GOOD BEHAVIOUR.



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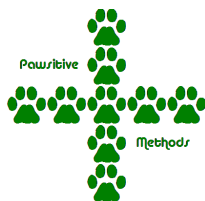
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Rev FCOC021110a Page 2 of 4

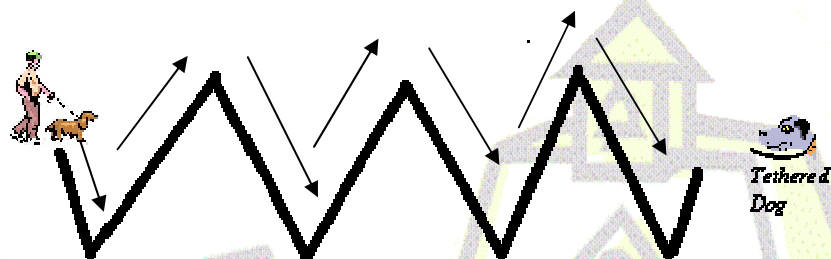
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ANOTHER PERSON COMES INTO VIEW, AT A DISTANCE, WITH A DOG ON LEASH. THEY WALK CALMLY AND QUIETLY, APPROACHING THE TETHERED DOG IN A ZIGZAG FASHION. IF THE TETHERED DOG REMAINS CALM, THE OWNER CAN PRAISE THEIR DOG.



IF THE TETHERED DOG BEGINS TO BARK OR SHOW OTHER SIGNS OF AGGRESSION, TWO THINGS IMMEDIATELY HAPPEN: (1) THE OWNER OF THE TETHERED DOG INSTANTLY TURNS HIS BACK AND MOVES AWAY FROM THE DOG; (2) THE OTHER DOG AND HANDLER STOP WHERE THEY ARE AND REMAIN THERE.

WHEN THE TETHERED DOG STOPS AGGRESSING, HE RECEIVES TWO REWARDS: (1) THE OTHER DOG AND HANDLER EXIT THE SCENE IMMEDIATELY. (2) HIS OWNER THEN RETURNS TO HIM AND REWARDS THE DOG FOR CEASING THE UNWANTED BEHAVIOUR.



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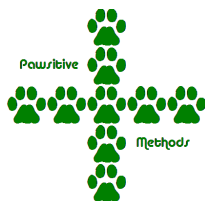
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Rev FCOC021110a Page 3 of 4

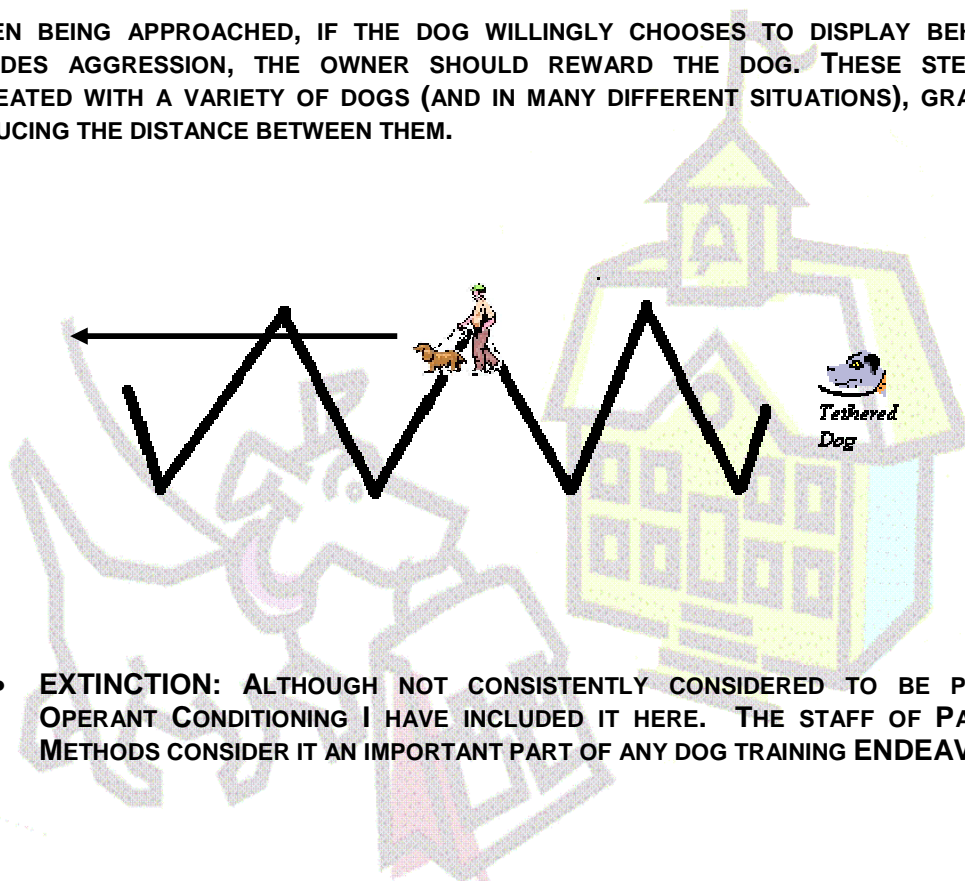
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WHEN BEING APPROACHED, IF THE DOG WILLINGLY CHOOSES TO DISPLAY BEHAVIOUR BESIDES AGGRESSION, THE OWNER SHOULD REWARD THE DOG. THESE STEPS ARE REPEATED WITH A VARIETY OF DOGS (AND IN MANY DIFFERENT SITUATIONS), GRADUALLY REDUCING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM.



- **EXTINCTION:** ALTHOUGH NOT CONSISTENTLY CONSIDERED TO BE PART OF OPERANT CONDITIONING I HAVE INCLUDED IT HERE. THE STAFF OF PAWSITIVE METHODS CONSIDER IT AN IMPORTANT PART OF ANY DOG TRAINING ENDEAVOUR.

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