

## Dog Talk LLC

***A Training and Wellness Sanctuary for Dogs and their Humans!***



### **Enemy Shoe! Ant at the Mall | STOP PLEASE!**

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A client said, "I don't get it, I can't get my dog (small breed) to do any of the things I ask closer to me." My reply, "show me" and "is this true at all times?"

Trainers, behaviorists, teachers and intuitives become good at what they do through listening and observing. With good intentions, observe yourself in relation to your dog, the dog's size, the situation, and in association to past events (imprints). It is usually the key to resolution for most problems, along with SAM (socialization and manners) and A.C.T. (Awareness Centered Training).

Kindly, I asked the client to shut off her cell phone. This person didn't walk into the training room. She flew in, with the dog in mid-air. She had a goal and wanted results. I respect that, but "have you asked your dog?"

Make time! This was a hard working, loving owner who loves her dog. If she didn't, she wouldn't have come. She was also stressed out to the point where a little change could make a big difference. She wanted to become a "therapy team", but knew she couldn't pass with a dog who wouldn't within 3 feet of her because she was afraid of her 🐾 SHOES!

I empathized, saved this person a lot of money, and the dog's paws! This person is now an advocate for other teams. The alternative was to forsake the goal and get the dog **Kevlar Booties!**

After calming down with **STOP** and **4.6.8 breathing**, took about 2-minutes, she was able to **focus** on the "**how come**." Walking around the room, I noticed that she was RIGHT. The dog wouldn't walk within 3-feet and when she talked to the dog, the dog would shake.

Keep walking please! Within 5-minutes, I asked her to take off her shoes. I'm not exaggerating when I say that at this precise moment she stepped to the right and onto her dog's paw. **YELP!** Without judging (what's the point) it was with crystal clarity that this dog had been stepped on time and again. This dog was smart! "Those big bad shoes are something to be fearful of. Why does my beloved owner call me to her, ask me to sit, then say ... let's go and crush my toes?"

It happens a lot with small dogs (and big dogs too although I find them more forgiving). In stocking feet, it still wasn't easy, but I knew that this dog saw those shoes as the **enemy shoe that captures and tortures**.

For this dog, it was like being an ant in the shopping mall on a holiday weekend. Not only is it a challenge to stay alive, but survival means offending the owner who thinks the dog is being belligerent.

Be mindful when your dog stays away from you, or of any behavior that is out-of-the-ordinary. It speaks volumes, especially if it is different at other times (cuddling at night in less dangerous slippers).

Taking in a deep belly breath to the count of 1,2,3,4 | Holding for 6,5,4,3,2,1 and a big exhale 8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 ... stop to enjoy your dog's paws, not step on them!

*Enjoy the Journey,*

*Living and leaning with dogs!*