

# THE INNER DOG



POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS

## Tips for Helping Fearful Dogs

- **BUILD A RELATIONSHIP BEFORE DOING ANYTHING ELSE!!**
- **SLOW DOWN.** Time has no meaning to a fearful dog. Time is a human condition so be like the dog. Time is your biggest ally.
- **DON'T be judgmental.** Every dog is unique and fear is in every species. It allows us to survive.
- **99% of all aggression in dogs is fear based.** A truly aggressive dog, one that seeks to maim or kill anything and everything, is genetically or neurologically damaged.
- **DON'T wear a hat or sunglasses-** it changes our shape and dogs need to see our eyes.
- **STOP** and turn or crouch down sideways to present a less intimidating figure
- **LISTEN** to what the dog is telling you. Take the time to read the dog's body language and do what the dog is asking you to do.
- **DON'T approach the dog.** It's up to the dog to decide if it wants contact with you. Even if the dog approaches you to investigate, **DON'T** take that as an invitation for physical contact. The dog will tell you when it wants your touch.
- **DON'T put your face up to a fearful dog's face unless you want plastic surgery.**
- **DON'T make prolonged eye contact (more than 1-2 seconds).** Quick glances are OK.
- **DON'T stick out your hand for the dog to sniff.** The dog started sniffing you long before you approached and doesn't want you to invade its personal space.
- **DON'T force a fearful dog to do something unless it's an emergency.**
- **DON'T use force to scare the fear out of dog;** science has told us there are much better ways to learn and force only increases the fear and reduces trust.
- **RELAX:** Use a calm, soft voice. Sing to the dog. When we sing we breathe normally and so we relax which can help the dog to relax.
- **If the dog is in a kennel or crate or any place it considers its safe place,** stay outside of it, sit on the ground with your back to the dog and read out loud, sing or even take a nap.
- **When you walk a fearful dog for the first time, DON'T try and get it to interact with you, play with you etc.** Just walk the dog, let it explore and habituate to its surroundings.
- **Teach children how to be appropriate with any dog and ALWAYS supervise their interactions.**