

Wellness Plan

WHAT EVERY DOG OWNER
NEEDS TO SUCCEED

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Thank you so much for joining me in providing the best possible life for your dog!

And congratulations for taking a big step!

- Have you already tried group classes, private dog training, books, TV shows and Internet searches without getting the results you had hoped for (i.e. a dog that listens)?
- Has your dog's behavior become life disrupting?
- Do you just want to live in harmony and enjoy life with your dog?
- Do you want the skills to be able to understand how your dog thinks and how to EFFECTIVELY communicate back to them what you need?
- Is Dog Daycare and Dog Parks not an option due to Fidos's behavior?
- Do you just want your dog to listen!?

If any of these questions relate to you, **you're not alone.**

Before we get down to the nitty gritty, I want to share with you WHY this type of wellness plan is so important for you and your dog.

Many, if not most, dogs living in our culture are already suffering from behavioral symptoms from a wide variety of causes. Maybe your dog was sick, injured, abused, threatened or scared.

Maybe it came from a puppy mill/shelter/rescue or has a genetic predisposal to whatever problems you face. Either way, if your dog falls into any category other than “perfect”, then this program is for you.



First and foremost, let's not rely on training to solve behavior problems.

We have been wrongly told that to solve our dog's behavior problems we have to focus on training, consistency and a ton of other methods that just don't work. Even if you have been enrolled in a “positive” training class, you will find that your problems still aren't solved. However good your intentions are to figure out how to train your dog, you're likely going to fall short again and again.

We've been brainwashed to think that ALL of our dog problems can be solved with dog training and your total dedication and consistency. Sorry, guys, you've been duped. Actually, most professional dog trainers have been duped too. And here's why:

There's a difference between well behaved and well trained.

I want to say that again...There is a difference between well behaved and well trained.

Helping a dog become WELL BEHAVED, balanced, polite and a pleasure to be around has nothing to do with dog training.

Excuse me?? Yep , that's right!

What you WANT (and need) is a dog that's not annoying, sad, aggressive, destructive and is able to go enjoy the world with you.

Using "training" to make this happen will result in frustration and disappointment time and time again (not to mention waste a lot of money). And NO, it's not because you don't love your dog enough and aren't consistent. It's because what you're being told to do doesn't work. Period.

Training has a time and a place.

Now, I'm not saying there's no place for training. "Dog training" as we know it is useful in teaching NEW skills but does little to nothing to help you actually communicate with your dog in a way they already understand. And that is why you are here, to learn to communicate what you need from your dog.

Learning how your dog communicates and reciprocating that technique and behavior can really seal the deal in the relationship between you and your dog.

By learning this way of communication your relationship with your dog can strengthen and begin to grow and flourish through leadership and trust. But in order for this to really take hold, you've got to make sure the dog's emotional, physical, individual and unique needs are met.

A Wellness Plan ensures the dogs are thriving and everything that affects their behavior is addressed. It means a healthy, balanced environment that allows the dog to relax and become naturally well behaved. You , and your dog will be forever grateful to be able to breeze through courses later – if you even need it!

Of course, if you have an extra 15 hours a week to devote to training your dog, you can get away with ignoring your dog's lifestyle and wellness plan. But if you have a job, interests, family, hobbies and, basically a life outside your dog, don't miss this important step. Do you and your dog a favor: read on!



RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

The recipe for success:

Like all great things in life, you've got to be armed and ready with the right components to be successful. Holistic Wellness Plans are no different. And no, it's not just a frilly name, it's serious stuff!

Okay? Time to focus:

Here's the best recipe:

This guide will teach you all you need to know about the 7 key areas of a Wellness Plan:

1. Exercise
2. Home environment
3. Nutrition
4. Management Strategies
5. Restrictions and Safety
6. Therapeutic Tools for Stress Relief
7. Action Plan

Success comes easy when you have the right answers.
Each category holds a TON of misconceptions. Some of which may surprise you, so I'll do my best to give you the inside scoop.
After all, we're shooting for SUCCESS here, not a repetitive cycle of failure.

Each key area can be looked at as “influencers” of your dog's problem behavior. Here is where the root cause and treatment of just about any problem you face will be found. You may never discover WHICH part really did the trick in the long term, nor does it matter. The point of a wellness plan is to tackle the problem from every conceivable angle so your dog has no choice but to start healing TODAY.

As you go through this information, please keep in mind that it's a guide and outline to follow. Some of the things mentioned may not be applicable to your situation—and that's okay. Once you have an idea of what to include in your plan, you can access the exact instructions for each piece that you DO need. I'm always prepared to help customize wellness plans because every dog and family are different.

1) Exercise



The right kind of exercise can make a world of difference, where the wrong kind can have devastating effects on your dog's behavior. Here's a list of the common problems and how to fix them:

If you are walking your dog for 30 minutes or less, stop. Take a moment to think about how much your dog's energy level increases just when you get the leash out, the struggle to get the leash on, out the door and down the street. How most people begin their walks actually increases a dog's energy and decreases their ability to focus. By the time your dog's energy level starts to come back down, the walk is usually over. Simply put, short walks produce more energy than they burn and it's just not worth it.

Walks should last a minimum of an hour. Straight. Meaning, you can't break an hour walk into two 30-minute walks unless you want to drive your dog mad. Trust me, they'll drive you mad in return. So, when you walk, make a point to go the extra distance to make it worth your dog's time and yours.

DO NOT fall into the trap that playtime is exercise time – for example daycares, dog parks and playing in the backyard.

This does not have the desired effect and oftentimes leaves your dog overstimulated mentally. This also can escalate quickly into a dangerous situation. Think of your dog as a perpetual 5yr old. If they can get into it, they probably will.

Walking in general doesn't constitute actual exercise, especially if they are in front and all over the place. Breathe more life into your walks by using loose leash walking (and NO, not retractable ones unless you want to get someone injured). Walks are also a great time for solidifying leadership and trust so that the walk can be enjoyed by both you and your dog.

Don't take the same boring route either. Spice things up! I recommend taking your dog to at least one new location and one hiking trail per week. So, there's two days of activity that will brighten your week! It's also great for human relaxation and refreshment. Two birds, one stone!

Finally, get a calendar and plan out your week in advance. This will help keep you on track and accountable for the sake of your dog. No more excuses.

2) Home Environment



As a culture of dog lovers, we are guilty of failing our dogs when it comes to setting up our home environment. Not because we are lazy and don't care, but because NO ONE HAS TAUGHT US it's a thing we should even be concerned with. It's important to understand how to break up your space into what I call "micro environments".

Now, each dog and home is different, so many of the things you can improve upon will be unique to your situation. However, there are still some great guidelines to follow that will help you make better choices.

First on the list, A CRATE!

Our dog's crate should be their zen den. If your dog isn't currently crate-trained, START NOW! This is absolutely mandatory because dogs NEED a den where they can completely relax and shed stress from the day. A dog without a den is a dog that can't regulate their own emotions and energy level. This is NOT healthy for your dog and can lead to stress issues. Each dog is different, so I suggest you also work with your personal coach to create a perfect crate environment and routine for your dog that will get the

maximum therapeutic benefits.

Take it a step farther and add some other awesome stuff to your dog's outside environment. Sand boxes can be baited with super yummy treats that must be discovered and the almighty squeaky toys that must be DESTROYED. Baby pools make great sand boxes, by the way, and can double as a watering hole on hot days

Another healthy and helpful tip is this: don't OVERINDULGE your dog with toys. For instance, if you have a bunch of toys, bones and other "stuff" left out for your dog all the time, it will all become utterly boring to your dog. This can also result in your dog learning that anything and everything is up for grabs. I've met with endless dog owners who have fallen into this trap, so time to climb out now. Offer one, maybe two things at any time, simply pick up the toys and exchange them for a new one from your toy box every few days. This will ensure each toy stays exciting and novel.

3) Diet



If you haven't fallen down the rabbit hole of dog food, don't. Let me sum it up for you by saying this: most dog food is poor quality and isn't worthy of making it past the front doors of the store you're buying it from. Leave it on the shelf, and be aware of these things

that you should avoid:

Grain-Free doesn't mean much. This is the newest misconception in the pet nutrition world. It should be absolutely understood that grains aren't terrible when the QUALITY of the grain to begin with is wholesome. Pet food manufacturers simply use disgusting, rancid ingredients in their food. It's the difference between you eating a freshly roasted chicken and a sick chicken that's been dissected, ground up and left to rot for weeks before consuming it. The quality of ingredients, not the ingredients themselves, is what makes the difference.

Look for foods free of "Natural Flavor" and "Rosemary Extract". Stay with me here... I feel you drifting off. This is a BIG deal. Even bigger than grains and food allergies. Why? Because these ingredients are TOXIC TO YOUR DOG'S BRAIN.

Imagine trying to change your dog's behavior when their brain is being poisoned every day. Talk about a roadblock. This issue is important for you as well because human food is loaded with the stuff. It's worth further investigation for your own health.

If possible, find a dog food company that uses baking for their cooking process. Nearly every single dog food brand currently on the market uses a process called “extrusion” which cooks the food under high temperature and pressure. This is because the **INGREDIENTS** themselves are nasty and rancid. A company that bakes the food is also a company that used 100% fresh ingredients, guaranteed.

Feeding Schedule:



Now that you know how to find a great brand of dog food, we need to focus on **HOW** and **WHEN** to feed your dog. This is another important step that is almost always missed. If your dog’s feeding schedule is off, you could be setting yourself up for yet another roadblock. Here are some things to consider:

Dogs under 1 year old should be fed three times per day. Of course, you can and should supplement with bones/chews that provide teething relief and the opportunity to busy themselves for a while without a ton of extra calories.

Dogs 1 year and older can typically be placed on a 2x meal per day schedule. Or 1x per day. The exception is gastrointestinal problems and if your dog is a canine athlete, running hours per day.

So, far and wide most of our dogs should eat twice a day or once a day.

FREE FEEDING IS A BAD idea all the way around. Free feeding is when you leave your dogs food out – all the time. They are stuck digesting food 24/7, which can be taxing on their mind and body over the long haul, they can become picky about food, have depression-like symptoms from their body being bogged down too often and a host of other symptoms which are better avoiding to begin with.

By the way, WHEN you feed them can be flexible. It doesn't need to be the exact time every day. As a matter of fact, I prefer feeding to be flexible because it helps your dog develop yet another coping skill which will help both of you in your overall success. The rule of thumb is this: feed your dog right before you will be busy for a few hours. This ensures they will feel satiated and ready for a nap while you're busy living your life.

4) Management Strategies



Ever wonder how service dogs become so well behaved? Nope, it's not in the extensive training they receive. One of the most effective techniques to transform your dog into a well behaved

companion is through a well-rounded management plan. So many of the complaints dog owners have can be reduced, if not solved, with this step. It's also where things can become a little nebulous, which is why I always suggest that you enlist your canine coach to help you batten down the hatches on your Holistic Wellness Plan. Either way, read through and understand as many of these tools you can and *gasp * USE THEM!

Leash. Yes, really! A leash is SO much more useful than just used as an umbilical cord on walks. It can work wonders in helping you through a variety of situations with your dog in the home. Dog jumped up on the couch and won't move: grab the leash and guide them down! Dog tries to bolt through the door before you're ready: step on the leash to prevent their celebration of success! Dog won't stop jumping on guests: step on the dang leash. BAM! Problem is 60% solved.

Tethering. This is a huge personal favorite of mine and many of my clients over the years. You can use a tether and a variety of training exercises to really gain momentum in your training plan while preventing your dog from rehearsing all the wrong things you're trying to curb. It's a very flexible tool and is successful in helping jumping, separation anxiety, begging during meals, potty training, teaching your dog to settle, reactive behaviors, destructive chewing... The list goes on, folks.

Crate. Yes, your dog's zen den was worth another mention here.

Why? Because the crate also works as a management tool to prevent issues when you can't be with your dog.

For instance, new dog that isn't housetrained? You got it, use the crate to prevent your dog from using your whole house as their personal perm-a-potty. Crating is also great to prevent your dog from destroying your home, rehearsing reactive behaviors, or harassing your toddler while you're in the shower, to name a few



5) Restrictions

This section is a little more flexible in terms of planning and can be individualized. You can also ask yourself this question too: “Is my dog a danger to themselves, people and/or other dogs?” If you answered “yes”, I highly advise you talk with your personal dog coach to create this section. A list of restrictions may be very valuable if not downright mandatory, especially when dealing with a potentially dangerous dog. Here's a sampling to give you an idea of how you can create your personalized plan:

If your dog has bitten people in your home, do not allow them to have access to visitors even while on leash. A home tether system can be used to create a physical “buffer” between your

dog and guests. Guests should also be prepped to NEVER pet your dog.

If your dog repeatedly runs away while off leash – never allow them off leash!

If your dog has a habit of jumping over your fence in the backyard, they should never be allowed unsupervised while in the yard.

If your dog has a history of aggression towards other dogs, AVOID DOG PARKS and other group dog settings!!!

You get the point – if your dog makes poor choices and if those choices are dangerous, just avoid giving them the chance to screw up even more.

** These are management tools to use until you fully understand how dogs communicate and how to use that information.

6) Therapeutic and Stress Relieving Strategies



One of my favorite areas (besides exercise)! The topics and ideas we're about to delve into are under-utilized yet deliver such enormous benefits that I encourage you to look a little further into each.

As always, if you are unsure of what your dog will benefit from the most, please consult with your dog's coach for a precise plan. Your dog will thank you for it!

Tellington Touch (www.TTouch.com) is an incredible massage-like technique designed to calm the nervous system, reduce anxiety and can do wonders in strengthening the bond between human and dog.

L-Theanine is a fabulous supplement for anxiety and reactivity. You can go to www.VIRBACvet.com to check out ANXITANE. They have fabulous information there.

Anxiety Wraps are rooted in TTouch.

Take your dog on long walks in the woods and on nature trails. Believe it or not, connecting with nature and allowing both you and your dog to explore will release tons of feel-good hormones that will leave you both feeling wonderful.

Chiropractic care is another terrific addition for some dogs. Especially if your dog has a history of pulling on leash and ADD-type behaviors, chances are your dog will benefit from an adjustment.

Also, just a good old fashioned rubdown can work wonders.

Move the skin around and massage the muscles. If your dogs eyes roll back in his head, don't panic, that's what happens when it feels good!!!!!!

7) Action Plan



Don't put the cart in front of the horse.

It's not uncommon for me to suggest for intense dogs that the owner should first implement all other areas of the wellness plan first before embarking (Ha) on the journey itself.

This is why communication and training belongs at the very bottom of the list — and for good reason. The delay between the wellness plan and the continuing plan can range from three days to four weeks. This depends purely on the severity of the behavior/problems/dysfunctions.

You need to understand this one point:

The rest of the wellness plan is designed to resolve the root causes and other influencers of your dog's behavioral problems. If you miss this crucial step, you will have to work ten times harder on your continuing plan while reaping less results.

The truth is you can implement ANY dog training system at this step in your holistic wellness plan. That's the beauty of it.



You are now miles closer to the lifestyle you WANT with your dog. Remember that you don't have to do everything on this list, and that it's just the beginning.

It's simple to create a winning plan that only spells success. Whatever it is you decide to try, just remember to use this as a guide to get started. There's no need to spend countless hours of trial and error; just focus on what is in your plan. This will save you tons of time, money and frustration.

If you want help in moving forward from here, contact me and we can start customizing your very own program!

Our programs focus on learning to understand the way your dog communicates and learning how to lead your dog so that he may relax and enjoy being a dog!

I'm so excited to help you live the life you and your dog deserve.

Yours Truly,

