



Help your dog to Control The Meerkat Self Regulation Frustration Tolerance

Plus printable check list to track
your progress !



Welcome



Hello there,

My name is Danielle and I'd like to welcome you to the '**frustration tolerance**'; part of the '**Control The Meerkat, Self Regulation, collection**'. We all know that life happens and it's not all fairies and puppy tails; despite our best effort! Therefore, I've created 'Control the meerkat' to help **YOU** to understand **YOUR DOG**, and learn all about what you can do to help them to cope, when life happens!

The '**self regulation collection**' It's one of the best starting exercises for dogs that struggle with their emotions, nervous dogs and those impacted by trauma, or dogs who get far too excited far too quickly! This collection builds off our foundation exercise '**How To Take A Deep Breath**' and expands on these principles of teaching your dog how to self regulate. It's far easier to help our dogs in the situations they struggle in, if they have the skills to regulate themselves first. This enables them to pause and think, without getting hijacked by the Meerkat.

That's what **Control The Meerkat** is all about, we show you how to help your dogs help themselves. It's not about obedience and telling them what to do; it's about teaching them the skills they need to manage themselves. By doing this our dogs learn how to regulate their own emotions, and calm themselves when they feel excited, frustrated, scared, or overwhelmed. This is where we begin.

Good luck with your training!

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Clinical Animal Behaviourists & Rehabilitation Trainer
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Self Regulation

Frustration Tolerance



These skills are all based on our dog's ability to think for themselves and work out what to do. We need to support and guide them by setting up the environment and being fast with marking when they made the choice. By giving them opportunities to make the right choice it speeds up their learning, and ability to regulate themselves. This type of training can help build confidence in anxious / fearful dogs and reduce frustration in excitable dogs, and those that get overwhelmed.

The skills are small and simple at first but with regular practice in different situations we build strong, effective habits that last.



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OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY & LEARNING EMPOWERIUM**





Introduction to Frustration Tolerance



Next, we have the frustration tolerance training! This is the one that we all want to get to. However, to really succeed here we need the dogs to understand the foundation concepts of self regulation. If you haven't already you will get the most out of starting with those books. If your dog already has some impulse and self-control. Then let's go!

So when it comes to frustration tolerance training, we have to induce frustration for the animal to learn how to tolerate it. So we have to be very, very careful to make sure that our dogs are at the emotional intelligence and self regulation level to be able to control the situation so they're not going to be in distress.



For example, we wouldn't take a dog to the middle of a really exciting area, put our foot on the lead and expect them to settle, or watch quietly. We also wouldn't have them running around everywhere, playing with all the other dogs and then ask them to come back and then do nothing, or call them off a squirrel mid chase. That's far too much to expect, so we're not going to do those kinds of things...yet!

Many dogs starting this journey get overwhelmed quickly and get hijacked by the Meerkat. Therefore, they're not going to be able to do what we're asking them to do. It's too much at this early stage and they're going to have a huge frustration burst. It'll get very explosive, very quickly, which isn't going to be nice for anyone.





Inciting a large frustration burst can be dangerous for some dogs and their caregivers as many can't control themselves enough to regulate. They will jump, bite, and scratch to let it out so they can then calm down, not to mention it's not very good ethically.

We want to make sure that we take into account their emotional well-being when we're doing these exercises. So please do not push your dog. Focus on the self control exercise first and add in the impulse control and gradual duration. Really ensure that your dog understands that to get what they want they need to wait.



In the self control exercise your dog is learning patience and the beginning of delayed gratification. 'If I wait, I can have that'. 'So if I want that and wait, I can have it'.



Frustration tolerance training is going to change that slightly. There's going to be. 'I want that and I can't get to it' and they'll get frustrated about it. It'll be mild enough that they can control themselves as they've practiced then release them. The restraint or barrier in these exercises adds some mild frustration, they calm down and then they can be released.



How to Start



Step 1 - Restraint & Release

We start to build in that mild frustration of a restraint first. That changes it from self control, where they were free to frustration tolerance. We want to see your dog go 'I see it. I want it. How do I get it?'. The previous training helps give them the skills to be able to pause and think rather than get worked up.

If we take the example where we're throwing the toy for our dogs.

- Hold onto the lead to keep them restrained. A harness and lead is best.
- Throw the toy out for them.
- Wait for them to stop pulling. Just hold. We're not jerking leads or correcting them, we're just waiting for them to regulate themselves and pause.
- Once they stop pulling, we release them, they can go and get it.

We can vary this to whatever it is they're pulling towards. Food, toys, a person, a smell or bush on a walk. If you can regulate yourself and tolerate the frustration, you can get what you want...for now.



Step 2 - Restraint, Check-in & Release

Can you regulate yourself? yes Can you control yourself? fantastic!
Now can you look at me?

So now we've got the stop part, can we get the think part to be able to say, "I want something, I can't get to it, can I think and look to you?"

Yes, go, go! All we want is a check in.





This is where practicing those 'Auto - check ins' can really come in handy!! Our dogs start to learn that if they want something that they can't have, or are unsure about, they can check in with you and then we can guide them.

So then we build an "If I want something. I check In. I get it". "I want something. I check In. I get it". Once your dog gets really good at that, we're going to increase the criteria slightly to:

"I want something. I can't have it, but I can have this".

This is where once our dogs start checking in with us, we can say have this instead of that. This part is vital for our dogs to learn how to move on from not getting the original item. They have to cope with the disappointment and frustration of not getting what they wanted and getting something else helps bridge that gap, making it easier later.





So our dogs learn

"I can't have that, but I can have this. I can't have that toy, but I can have this toy. I can't go and see that person, but I can come and play with my caregiver. I can't go and see that dog, but I can sniff the grass over here or I can eat the treats down on the floor over here."

We're gradually guiding them away from being able to see something and go in straight away to see something and change in the opposite direction. Once they get used to doing that, we then start to go:

"OK, you want something, you can't have it and you can't have anything else because life sucks."

But that's a really, really hard ask and only really experienced dogs, mostly adults, can do this reliably as teenagers really struggle here. Their brains are wired to be impulsive at that age and this can be impossible for some in real situations. However, these games if repeated will build the foundations to build these behaviours as effective habits when they're older. Then they will be able to do these in real life situations, without having a huge hissy. It's our job to give them lots of practice in safe ways, away from the problem situations before we're able to ask them to do this.



Step 3 - Introducing Chill Out - real life frustration tolerance

'If in doubt: Chill Out' really comes in handy here. Are they able to chill out and watch the world go by? Can they watch other people playing without being able to run after them? Are they able to want to go and see something, not be able to have it and continue focussing on you or are they still focussing on going back? That's where these exercises come in for our reactive dogs.

It's all about can you control yourself ?

Often in dog training we're so busy teaching our dogs and telling them what to do in different situations, we forget to give them a chance to do it themselves. They just wait until they're told what to do as that's what we have taught them. Often there's elements of frustration too as they don't know what to do in the situation, because they're being restrained or restricted in some way. They can't do what it is that they want to do, whether that's bark, lunge and fight, whether it's run away, they don't know. And that conflict results in frustration. They don't know what do and don't have the skills to regulate themselves yet...so they get overwhelmed and hijacked by the Meerkat and it's not good for anyone.

If they learn to regulate themselves and Control The Meerkat we can reduce that reactivity.



What's next ?

If you can teach them to tolerate the frustration and manage their emotions, they start to learn that emotional regulation. We can then start to help them practice how to use it in more exciting and eventually difficult situations, as unlike before they will now have the skills to cope.

Can we start to use that with your anxiety? yes !

Can we start to use that with your fear? yes !

And that's where exercises like Take a deep breath really come in handy.

Have a look at the other exercises in the Meerkat Collection and I'll really look forward to seeing you in our community and learning empawrium





Checklist

Make a note of the items you use and how your dog responded for each session and watch their frustration tolerance regulation grow !

Notes





MOVING FORWARD

Sooo, what should I do next ?

Well now you're starting to understand there's more to helping your dog than training alone, are you curious what else you can try with your dog? Would you like them to be more responsive? Are you still struggling and finding your dog can settle inside, but struggles outside, as they are reactive on their lead? Do you just want to be able to take them out for a walk without them barking and lunging? Or be able to actually leave the house, as they struggle when left? or even take objects off them without conflict? Then the 'Control The Meerkat' series is for you!

I love it! Who is this for exactly?

Control The Meerkat is for all people who want to understand and help the reactive dogs that share their lives. It's a community built to help owners to meet others in the same boat, and learn how to help their reactive dogs, help themselves. There are private forums, learning resources like this, instructional videos and webinars too

Sounds AMAZING! How does it work?

Simply visit the website and choose the course or membership subscription that's best for you! You can even book a consultation with a Registered Clinical Animal Behaviourist; and join our 6 or 12 month rehabilitation program.

Click here to get started: controlthemeerkat.com



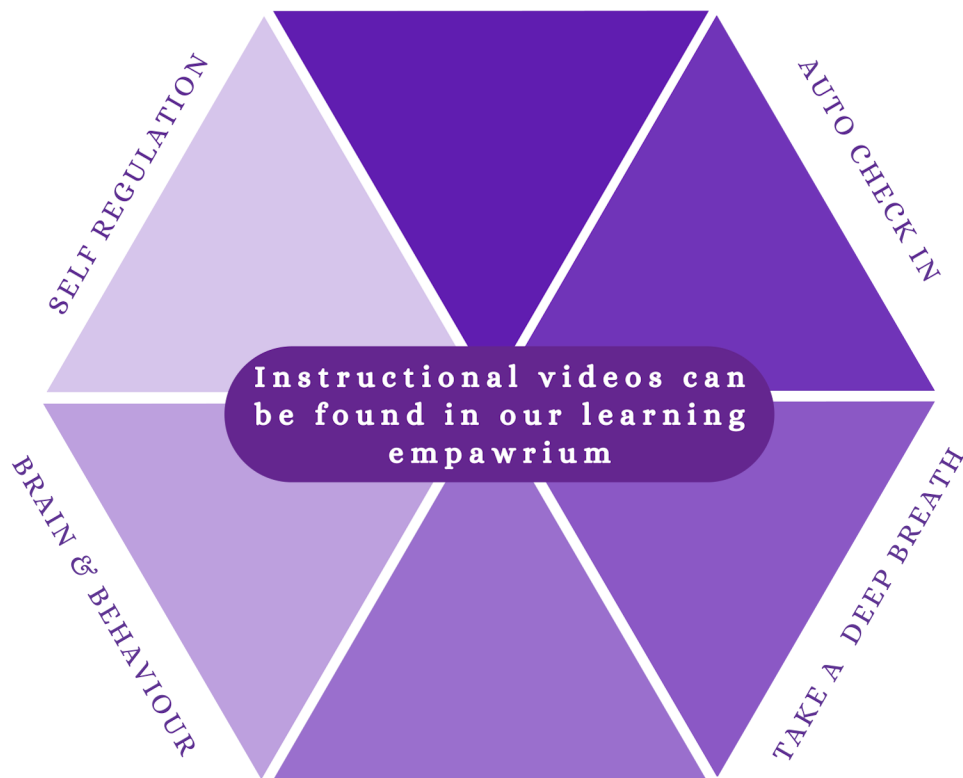
CONTROL THE MEERKAT



collection



IF IN DOUBT; CHILL OUT



FOUNDATION EXERCISES

The management strategies and games within Control The Meerkat are to help you and your dog to learn new coping strategies, and remain as calm as possible. These techniques will not fix the problem, but they will make it easier to manage your dog whilst you are working through the program to have more long term results. As we go through the rehabilitation journey your dog will learn new ways to 'Control The Meerkat', which will help change their behaviour into something more manageable to make your life with your dog easier.

After-all, it's often the underlying emotions that drive their unwanted behaviours.

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"Sometimes the smallest step in the right direction ends up being the biggest step of your life."

Notes



MEET THE *Author*



Danielle is an enthusiastic and passionate clinical animal behaviourist, rehabilitation trainer, and mum of one. Her mission is to help, and inspire dog owners to create an easier life with their dogs. She aims to help caregivers to understand their dogs and enable them to manage themselves; by sharing her knowledge and experience with you. She currently lives in Greater Manchester, UK, with her partner, 9 year old son, 2 dogs, and a cat.

"Define success on your own terms, achieve it by your own rules, and build a life you're proud to live."

-Anne Sweeney



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*PS. Want to take the
next step?*

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over 200 other dog
owners**



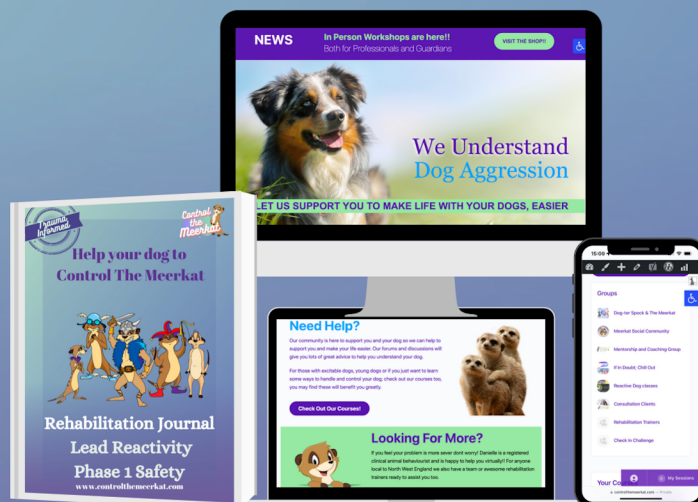
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