



Help your dog to Control The Meerkat



What is control the meerkat?

Plus printable goal pages to track
your progress !





Welcome To Control The Meerkat



We believe that dogs are incredible beings that have wonderful brains with amazing capabilities. Here at Control The Meerkat we can help you to understand how your dog's brain affects their behaviour enabling us to work **with** your dog to make life easier for you both.

We are going to set your dog up for success by managing their environment to prevent them from performing any unwanted behaviours while we build up their confidence to create safety and relaxation.

The best way to do this is to **avoid** problem areas as much as possible **in the beginning**. For our lead reactive dogs this can mean not going on a walk for around 2 weeks, sometimes more. It may mean going out in the car to quiet areas, changing the location or time of your walks, or skipping walks completely for now.

For many dogs these situations are just too stressful for them at present, and they need some time to feel safe and confident before starting any training.

It's important for us all to have a distress holiday. Not taking your dog for a walk can be difficult as we feel our dogs need a walk, but for many dogs they'd rather stay at home where they feel safe.

Sometimes only going to certain places where you can avoid other people, and dogs, can be a great compromise. Many areas have secure fields that are ideal for building confidence when outside again. Some cemeteries can also be a great compromise if you don't find them too spooky!





When living with a reactive or sensitive dog it's difficult to always understand their point of view. We can't always figure out why they're reacting the way they are; it can be so frustrating. During the Meerkat course 'Dog-ter Spock & The Meerkat' we discussed why your dog can't always have control of their own actions, as they get hijacked by their emotional Meerkat. We need to understand exactly what is going on for your dog so we can help them to 'Control The Meerkat'. It's important that we remember this when they do react, it's often not within their ability to control themselves yet. If they react it's because they're not ready for that situation yet, we need to advocate for them and help build their confidence and emotional control so they can cope in these situations. The first things we need to be aware of when living with these dogs is distance from the 'threat', duration exposed to the 'threat', and other distractions in the

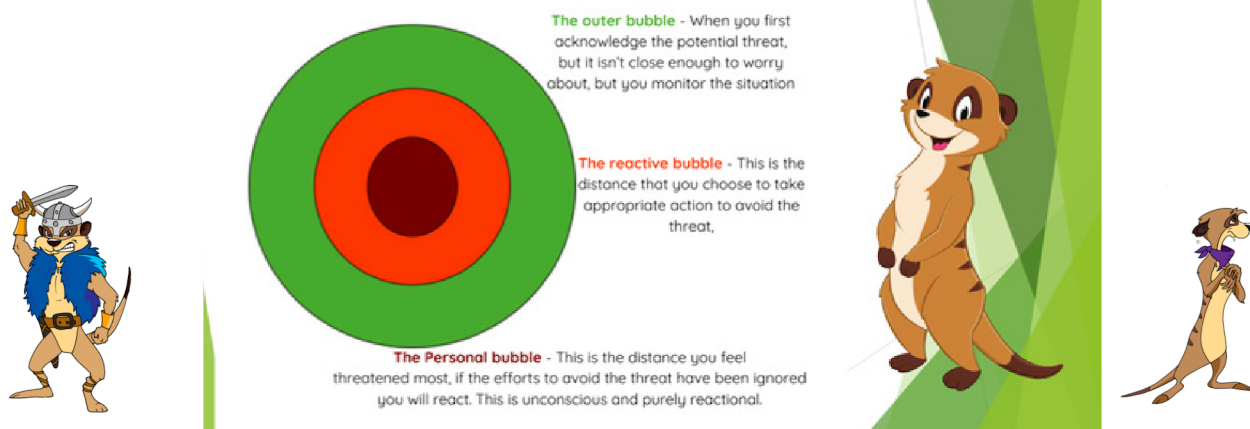
environment.

These distractions can include changes in weather, temperature, illness, pain / discomfort, fireworks, over excitability, people jogging, livestock, sounds from a school yard. Anything that will increase your dog's arousal or sensory levels will make it harder for them to focus, more so if they have an overactive Meerkat. You will notice that your dog is often able to take food and focus in some situations but not others or may even start to snap at the food, spit it out, or ignore you completely. They may be able to take food at one moment and listen, then stop. This is often due to how close they are to something they feel threatened or overwhelmed by. If they get too close their brain shuts down and their emotional Meerkat takes over! The longer something is present for can increase that threat level for your dog rather than lowering it.



If they get too close or get overwhelmed their brain shuts down and their emotional Meerkat takes over! The longer something is present can increase that threat level for your dog rather than lowering it. Our dogs may be able to cope for a short amount of time, but they soon can't. Other times they can relax in a situation but if anything changes, like a visitor moving, they're back to reacting. Occasionally, rather than our dogs relaxing with duration, some will shut down. They will stop reacting, but they're not calm. Their breathing rate is still high, they are jumpy and almost robotic. These dogs have a passive response to threats and are often our 'fawn' Meerkat. Please be aware that no behavioural reaction doesn't always mean relaxed, some may be our 'freeze' Meerkat, others the 'fool, Meerkat and appear ok as they're masking. Therefore, we have to Control The Meerkat, to relax your dog, before we can work effectively

Life in Bubbles



with them. We want to keep your dog in the green zone, as much as possible to help support your dog. All animals live within a series of bubbles, which are used when we feel threatened. These bubbles will change in size depending on the situation. For example, when walking down a busy street during the day you won't feel too threatened by the people passing you by, unless they come within your personal bubble.

However, if you walked along the same street at night you will notice people walking towards you sooner and you may even start to feel threatened before they get close. When they reach your reactive bubble you may choose to cross the street.

This assessment of threat is normal behaviour for every species and the distances at which we feel threatened are fluid and will change depending on the context of situation. In the above example, the only part that changed was the time of day.



It's important that during this time we keep your dog mentally and physically stimulated in other ways. This stress break allows us to teach our dog new coping behaviours and to increase your bond so they feel safe and secure with you.

We will be teaching them, in a safe environment, what they are expected to do in the situations they struggle in and reward them for doing so, gradually working through the rehabilitation until they can do this in other areas. Safety and relaxation will be a huge focus for your dog's rehabilitation, as many dogs really

struggle to regulate their emotions and switch off.

This inability to calm themselves down exacerbates their reactions when on lead. If they can't control themselves in quiet places when they're excited, how can we expect them to control themselves when they're reacting?

Helping your dog learn how to relax and chill out helps them to 'Control Their Meerkat' so they can help themselves and think in situations they struggle in. This is how our rehabilitation journey will begin



The management strategies within this journal and within our online membership community, and learning empawrium 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, as you can't remove a learned behaviour, 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 journal 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 often drive their unwanted behaviours.



Welcome



My name is Danielle and I'd like to welcome you to **'What is 'Control The Meerkat; part of the 'Control The Meerkat 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!

'What is 'Control The Meerkat' helps you to understand the world from your dogs perspective, so you can help them to learn how to regulate their own emotions and have the skills to cope with different situations.. 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.

'Self regulation' is a technique I've used for years to help dogs to cope with their emotions rather than relying on us to tell them what to do. This may work for some dogs, though the fallout can be when not told in time they struggle and react. This helps them to become well behaved as they can control their own meerkat and make decisions for themselves, making your life with your dog easier!

Good luck with your training!

Danielle Beck, BSc (hons), PGDip, MSc

Clinical Animal Behaviourists & Rehabilitation Trainer

Founder of Control the Meerkat



Understanding The Meerkat & Dog-ter Spock

Firstly I'd like to introduce you to our meerkat! This little guy on the right; this is Maurice. Then we have Dog-ter Spock, next to him. I want you to start imagining that inside the brain of your dog, lives these two guys; but Maurice spends a lot of time on your dogs shoulder and can affect your dog from there.

You know when your dog is focused and doing really well? They're driven and able to think? This is when they've got Dog-ter Spock in charge. They're able to control their actions, they are able to learn and their responses to situations are appropriate and proportional. How well they can do this is often down to their genetics, early development, and learning experiences too, as this is what build Dog-ter Spock.

So when we're setting up the environment, teaching our dogs behaviours, capturing and rewarding them and they can focus and take the treats / toys we know it's Dog-ter Spock that's in charge.



If something startles your dog, Maurice will notice first, and start panicking about it. There's a critical distance at which he can hijack the entirety of your dog's brain, control their reactions, and put them into fight and flight. They start reacting, we don't know what to do and that triggers our meerkat. Then everyone is overwhelmed. Once we move away from the situation our dogs calm down, we calm down, and then they look at us like they have no idea what just happened. Then their Dog-ter Spock comes back online going 'dude like it was a carrier bag, wasn't even a dog', but for that split second it triggered Maurice to hijack our dogs brain. And we need to work with our dogs to make sure that our dogs can 'Control The Meerkat' before we start to train them in situations they can't cope with.



Meet The Meerkats?



The Meerkat is an analogy developed by Clinical Animal Behaviourist Danielle Beck, MSc, to help caregivers to understand how the brain affects your dog's behaviour. Often our dogs react so quickly we lose control, they're like a different dog and the treats just don't work. This emotional hijacking we refer to as 'The Meerkat' and we can show you how to 'Control The Meerkat' so you can train your dog.

All dogs have a meerkat hanging out on their dog's collar and it is able to hijack them and take over whenever they feel threatened. Why do some dogs seem to have active meerkats and other calm? This depends entirely on your dog, their personality, genetics, development and breeding history, socialisation, their environment, any trauma they may have faced, and many more factors.

You can find out how active your dog's meerkat is by taking our Meerkat Quiz on the website!

Each Meerkat is based off the fight/flight responses available to your dog when they feel threatened. For many dogs when they are in a situation which they feel is threatening their brain literally changes and they get hijacked by their emotional brain – their Meerkat. Each dog will have access to all Meerkats. However, there is often a primary Meerkat that will be the main Meerkat for your dog and understanding which Meerkat hijacks your dog can really help boost their rehabilitation.

You can find out which alert or active Meerkat hijacks your dog by taking our new quiz!

We want to take the pressure off the dog when training as we can't train our dogs until we can control the Meerkat, and often we can't do that through conventional training. That's where we are different. We can help you to teach your dog how to help themselves!

Meet your Dogs Meerkats!



TO BE CONTINUED...



Meet your dogs Meerkats

FIGHT



For most species this is a last resort as it's very costly, but if all else fails you may be left with no choice. For many dogs with fight, they charge first and ask questions later. The best defence is a good offence. Many appear confident and some are, as this technique has often been tried and tested. These dogs are not nasty and many have a false sense of confidence and bravado as shouting at everything is a reliable way to keep threats at bay,

FREEZE



These dogs are too scared to move so they freeze, hoping the threat may see they're no threat and leave. This response can be misinterpreted as calm and ok. However, their body will be very stiff, you may see lots of nose licks, small lip curls and low vibrating growls. These dogs are not 'fine' or 'calm', they are shutting down and withdrawing. They are often highly tolerant but will react if pushed, which appears to come 'out of the blue'.

FOOL



Dogs that fool are goofy by nature and often unaware if a threat is 'real'. They're often confident in situations they know and 'play up' in others. They will try to avoid conflict through play and distractions, which generally gets them into trouble. They may appear over excitable, or over friendly. They often zoom and start interacting with their environment in a fast way with little thought behind their actions. They are often seen as 'thick' or 'stubborn' when they're actually overwhelmed

Meet your dogs Meerkats

FAWN



These dogs try to calm situations to avoid threat and conflict. Often the play police in group situations, they are often seen being over the top wiggly, often with their bellies close to the floor or rolling onto their back and repeat this. They will lick their nose / mouth, to appease the 'threat', to try to calm them and avoid punishment. They are seen as very biddable and compliant when often they're unsure and have a high need to 'people please' to avoid conflict.

FLIGHT



Avoid the threat, run away and/or hide. These dogs will try to move away, often bolting with their ears back and tight against their head, tail tucked, and panting heavily with large eyes. If they can't run, as they're on a lead or cornered they get scared and frustrated and will start to display more fight type behaviours as they try to intimidate the threat. These dogs are often better off lead and will choose to avoid situation.

How do the meerkats affect your dog?

Take the quizzes at
Controlthemeerkat.com
to find out !

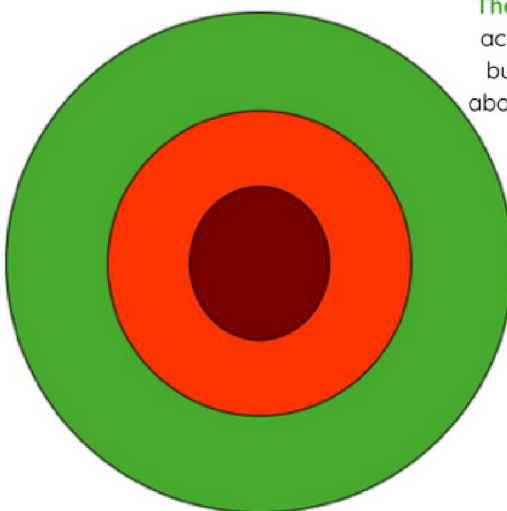
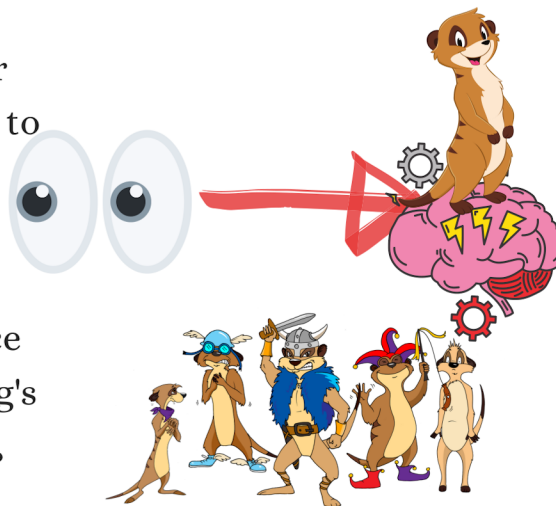


Dogs impacted by trauma



For dogs without trauma they have Maurice, who has access to all of the stress responses, fight/flight/fool/freeze/fawn. However, there are some dogs that get hijacked by the Meerkat a lot. These Meerkats hang out on the collar of your dog on sentry duty all the time, looking around for the next potential threat. For these dogs they often have a specific reaction for their 'go to' response; rather than access to them all. Their trauma has affected their brain and their reactions are no longer appropriate or proportional.

As dogs eyes link directly to their Meerkat, visual information gets to them faster than their Dog-ter Spock. So the Meerkat will spot something and start panicking about it. There's a critical distance at which they can hijack your dog's brain and control their reactions, putting them into their alert responses



The outer bubble - When you first acknowledge the potential threat, but it isn't close enough to worry about, but you monitor the situation

The reactive bubble - This is the distance that you choose to take appropriate action to avoid the threat,

The Personal bubble - This is the distance you feel threatened most, if the efforts to avoid the threat have been ignored you will react. This is unconscious and purely reactionary.

www.daniellebeck.co.uk — www.controlthameerkat.com



The Secret?



The secret to effective rehabilitation is understanding which emotions are driving your dog's behaviour. The consultation enables our Clinical Animal Behaviourists to do just this! Once we understand what is driving your dog's behaviour we can help them to cope and set them up for success!

We start by managing the environments they're in, to prevent their Meerkat from taking over when they become too scared, frustrated, or overwhelmed. Then we help them to learn how to 'Control The Meerkat', through games, relaxation exercises, and teaching them alternative behaviours and coping skills.

We need to avoid any situations that cause your dog stress in the short term, so they are able to start to relax. So this is where we will start. Until your dog can feel safe and relax they will find it difficult to learn, and utilise their new skills.

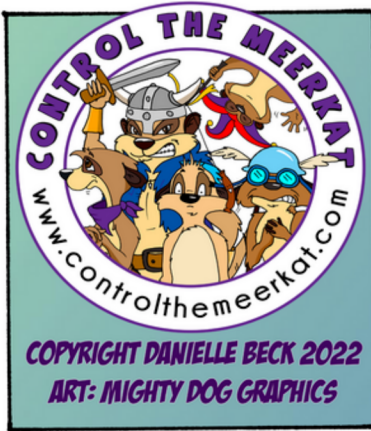
Everything starts at home. They need a safe **B.A.S.E.** to start from. Then we can create that space with you and you can become their safe place. Once they can control the meerkat in safe environments we can gradually start to expand this to new situations to help them relax and control the meerkat.



Danielle Beck

Danielle Beck, BSc (hons), PGDip, MSc
Clinical Animal Behaviourists &
Rehabilitation Trainer
Founder of Control the Meerkat

IT'S all ABOUT their B.A.S.E!



BONDING

SPEND TIME TOGETHER. NO NEED TO DO ANYTHING, JUST RELAX. IT MAY NOT SOUND LIKE MUCH BUT IT CAN HELP YOUR DOG FEEL CALM AND SAFE WITH YOU WITHOUT ANY PRESSURE TO DO ANYTHING.

ADVOCATE

LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR DOG WHEN A MEERKAT SUDDENLY HIJACKS THEM! GET THEM AWAY FROM THE POTENTIAL THREATS AND SAY NO TO OTHERS LOOKING TO PET OR PLAY IF NEEDED. **BE THEIR VOICE.**

SUPPORT

HELP THEM MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES IN A SITUATION. GIVE THEM TIME AND ALLOW THEM TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IN THEIR DECISIONS.

EMPATHIZE

TRUST YOUR DOG IF THEY'RE TELLING YOU THEY ARE SCARED OR UNSURE. THEY NEED TO KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND HOW THEY FEEL.

WHEN YOUR DOG FEELS THREATENED OR OVERWHELMED THEIR BRAIN GETS EMOTIONALLY HIJACKED WE CALL THIS THEIR MEERKAT HELP YOUR DOG CONTROL THE MEERKAT WITH A SOLID

B.A.S.E



TO BE CONTINUED...



IT'S ALL ABOUT THEIR B.A.S.E.

CREATING SAFETY & BUILDING
CONFIDENCE



BONDING



It can be difficult at times to stay connected with our reactive dogs. Every day things happen. We struggle to leave them, walks become a chore that we now start to worry about; it's exhausting. That's ok and it's normal to feel this way, help is here! The first step is stop doing the things that you and your dog find difficult. Then start to enjoy your time together again. Spend time relaxing in the same room, capturing calmness, understanding your dog's body language, playing together with no pressure to actually do anything. Sharing space and relaxing together is a great way to bond and help your dog start their rehabilitation journey.

ADVOCATE



Our dogs need us to use our voice and actions to help them. They're not ready to make the right choices on their own when we keep putting them in situations where they struggle, as they can panic. Their meerkat takes over and accidents can and do happen. Advocating for our dogs means to stand up for them, often to friends and family. Their walks will be different for a while and we need to be more hands off rather than hands on. Many reactive dogs have a history of trauma; therefore pressure and suppression won't help them. We need to ask other people not to approach, keep their distance, and keep their friendly dog away. This is easier said than done but our dogs rely on us to help them in these situations and to get them out of the situation ASAP

IT'S ALL ABOUT THEIR B.A.S.E.

CREATING SAFETY & BUILDING
CONFIDENCE



SUPPORT



Although we can greatly reduce their exposure it's a sad fact of life that there will be times where it's not always possible to avoid everything that will trigger or overwhelm our dogs. A situation can't be avoided, or you get closer than you would like, and your dog will react. It's these moments our dogs really need our support to feel safe. They can't learn while they're reacting and having their handler react at them, jerk their collar/harness or shout. This will only affect your relationship, or make them more overwhelmed. We can support them by not making the situation worse. This is not the time for training. This is the time for distractions, comfort, or increasing distance. What ever they need to feel safe.

EMPATHIZE



Trust your dog when they're telling you they're scared, worried, or overwhelmed. Our dogs don't lie. They tell it how it is and it's up to us to listen and show compassion. If they're tensing up their muscles, looking around constantly, holding their ears tightly back, showing the whites of their eyes, or refusing to walk, they are telling you they're not comfortable and need support. So let's put ourselves in their shoes and show some compassion. Yes the scary thing could be a plastic bag, we know it's harmless - they don't. Let's not invalidate them by thinking we know what they're feeling better than they do. Let's guide them and support them to safety.

4 Phases & 4 steps



01

CREATING SAFETY & BUILDING CONFIDENCE ✓

- Safety
- Relaxation
- Confidence building
- Foundation skills

02

FOUNDATION BEHAVIOURS & EMOTIONAL REGULATION ✓

- Foundation exercises
- If In Doubt; Chill Out
- Check -In
- Emotional Regulation - impulse/self control & Frustration tolerance

03

DRESS REHEARSAL! PRACTICING IN SAFE PLACES IN THE REAL WORLD ✓

- *Can they listen and relax in the home?*
- *Can they listen and relax in the garden?*
- *Can they listen and relax in quiet areas?*
- *Can they regulate themselves?*

04

LIVING WITH THE MEERKAT ✓

- Have a plan
- Be prepared
- Support
- Advocate



PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND GRADUALLY TAKE ON THE WORLD



Safety [

CREATING SAFETY

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHY YOUR DOG BEHAVES THE WAY THEY DO AND HOW YOU CAN HELP THEM TO HELP THEMSELVES.

If your dog doesn't feel safe; they're going to get hijacked by the Meerkat faster and more often. Safety is key. Knowing they have a place they can go to, where no one will bother them is so important; we all need our space. However, what about when we're outside? How can we help our dogs to feel safe on a walk? or when left alone?


First support them! We teach them that we won't put them in situations they can't cope with. We make a promise to them that we will do everything we can to keep them away from triggers, and difficult situations. We can then learn to read their body language and find out what uncertainty and apprehension look like in our dogs.

How do they hold their tail? their ears? Their body? Do they stare or look away? Lick their lips or yawn? Prick their ears or hold them back?

For many reactive dogs the ability to relax is extremely difficult for them. Many live in a state of anxiety, fear, or emotional conflict.

Once we know what this looks like for our dog, we can start listening and getting them out the situation, or give them prompts to help them to cope and eventually regulate themselves. Yes this isn't easy but it is necessary at this stage if we want to build safety and trust with our dog.

When outside, WE need to become their place of safety. We will advocate for their needs and get them out the situation until they feel like they're ready to cope with it on their own. Once you get there it's a wonderful feeling. But you have to earn their trust first. This is where we start.



SAFETY

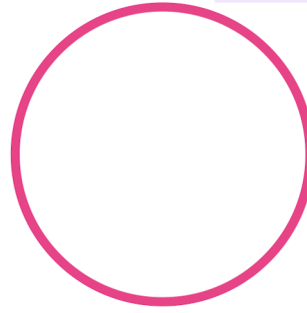
How to help my dog feel safe

Print this and start by thinking about what helps your dog to feel safe? The position of their bed? The type of bed? A particular room ? A toy ? You ? a sound proof area? Closed curtains or frosted covering on the windows? the absence of certain people or dogs? Then use the blank circles to map out all the different possibilities for helping your dog to feel safe. Put a star next to the circles that really jump out, or resonate with you. If you need more circles, draw them in. You can use different coloured pens or pencils for variety – or create your own map! Here's an example



Target Goal

Date



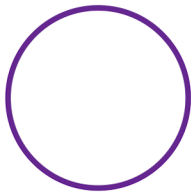
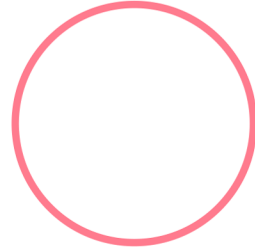
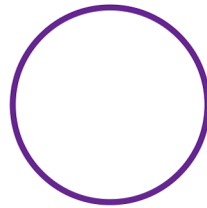
Almost there!



GOAL ROAD MAP

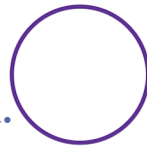


You got this!



Big goals start with a single step. Use this page to map out the action steps that will lead you to The first goal for your dog. Think achievable goals, small steps and really break them down.

Start with a single step - big or small.





RELAXATION

We know that people who have undergone trauma and stressful times find it difficult to relax. That part of their brain doesn't allow them to. Their 'Meerkat' part of the brain can't turn off enough to let them relax. They're on sentry duty constantly, which is exhausting.

If your dog has a medical concern on top of this they are even more sensitised, and will often bark, tense up, snap, and be irritable in ways that don't make sense. These dogs often react 'out of the blue', as their trigger was internal not external. The same can be said for dogs affected by trauma, as many appear to experience flashbacks and their reactions appear extreme in the context.



UNLESS YOUR DOG IS ABLE TO FEEL SAFE AND RELAX, THEIR ABILITY TO LEARN, AND PROGRESS, WILL BE HINDERED INDEFINITELY.

The secret to successful rehabilitation is not how much training you actually do, it's how well you can encourage your dog to relax and provide a safe environment for them to explore and learn safely. Trust and connection are the key, not training. In these situations less is more.

Once they are able to relax with you in the house, we can then start to gradually introduce them to other areas like the garden, car, quiet fields, and relaxing there too, building through your goal tracker. Picnics are great for reactive and sensitive dogs too. Pick quiet spots and just do nothing, let them experience the world with no pressure, and no threats. Are they able to relax?



RELAXING TOGETHER

PLAN RELAXING TIME TOGETHER INTO YOUR DAY

Plan a time to just sit with your dog and do nothing, no pressure, no exercises, no food. Just you and them at home. Books, or movies are great for this. When you start doing this a number of things may happen,

1. Your dog comes and lies next to you or near you, enjoys some fuss then sleeps – This is good, some may want soft, massaging strokes, others just want to be near you. They don't want you to touch them. Others may want company but at a distance while they get use to you. This is ok, it's quality time.

2. Your dog jumps all over you, brings you stuff, barks – This is a dog that needs to keep busy. Sometimes this is due to them not knowing how to switch off unless they're being told what to do. For others it can be due to anxiety and

they need to keep distracted, which can be a fawn, fool, or flight response. Responses will vary but most are either relax close or away from you, or jump all over you. These are ok. It's about spending time together and enjoying each others company with no pressure or conflict.

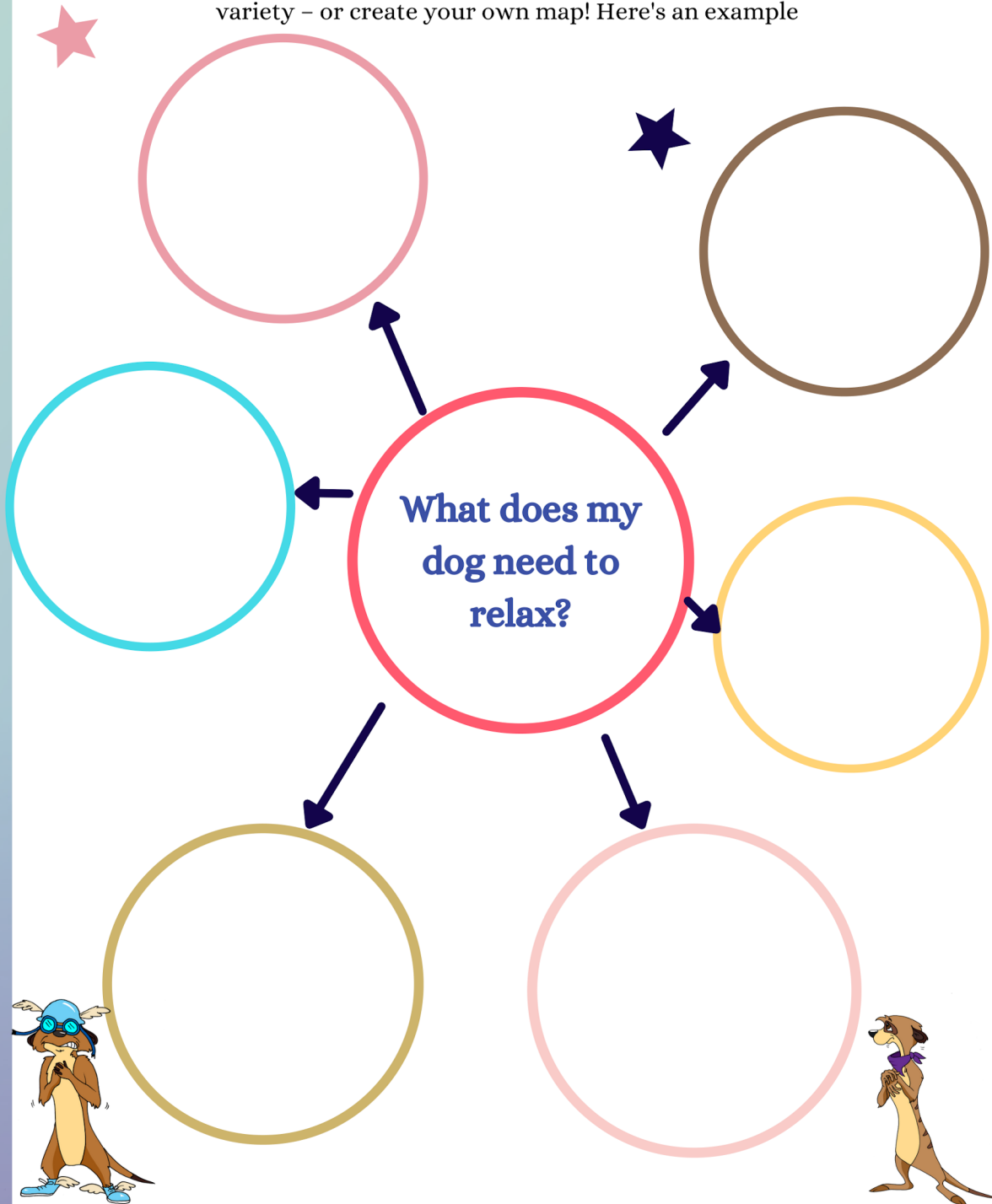


Did you know snuffling in search of food in a confined area, like scatter feeding on grass or a snuffle mat, puts your dogs brain into a meditative state?



How to help my dog relax

Print this and start by thinking about what helps your dog to feel safe? The position of their bed? The type of bed? A particular room ? A toy ? You ? a sound proof area? Closed curtains or frosted covering on the windows? the absence of certain people or dogs? Then use the blank circles to map out all the different possibilities for helping your dog to relax. Put a star next to the circles that really jump out, or resonate with you. If you need more circles, draw them in. You can use different coloured pens or pencils for variety – or create your own map! Here's an example



Confidence [KON
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CONFIDENCE BUILDING

IMPORTANCE OF SNIFFING AND CONFIDENCE

It may seem obvious but our dogs learn about their environment through their nose. You may have noticed that when a dog is unsure they will start sniffing.



Sometimes this is air scenting, other times it's focussed sniffing on the ground. This can vary between just checking out and not really focusing, to really focussed sniffing. Our dogs use sniffing as a way to feel safe, explore the environment, and calm themselves down. They also use it for search and hunting games, which are fun and build confidence. For all dogs, even those that won't take food. Sniffing to safety is where to start. It's simple and can start in safe places, then build to others. Scentwork has many different forms and we're here to help you find what works best for you and your dog!

SNUFFLE

Exploration allows your dog to explore calmly, it's like meditation for dogs. Snuffling involves scattering food, scented items, boxes for them to investigate and explore. Exploration in safe places helps engage the brain to be able to learn and form positive associations.

VS

SEARCH

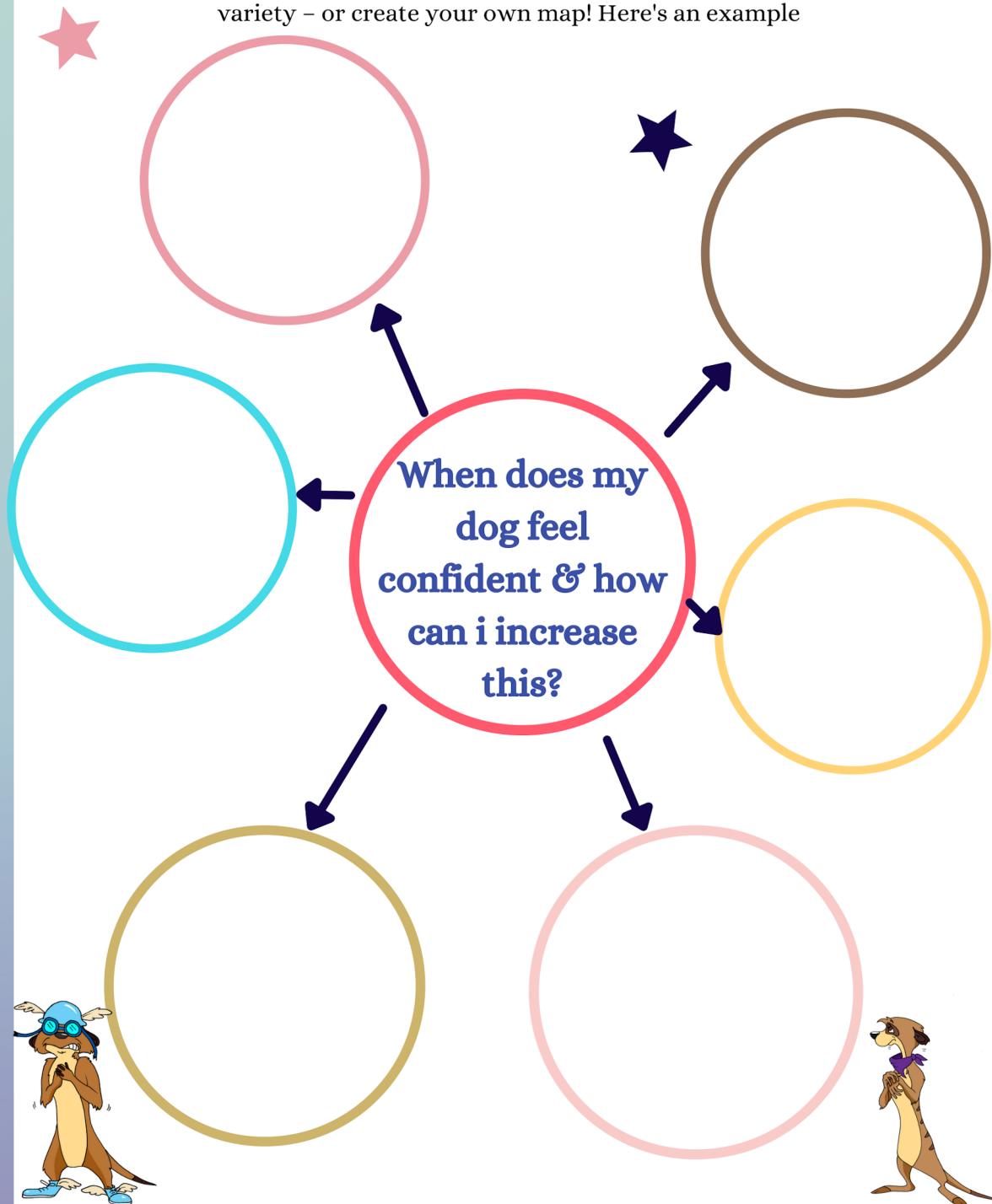
This is hiding specific scented things like food, or scented items in and around different objects for them to explore and find. It's a more active exercise and a great bond building experience for you both. You'll feel proud of how smart your dog is and is a must if you need to increase your bond and enjoy spending time with your dog

HUMAN OR DOG SCENT ON FBRC, LEAVES FROM OUTSIDE.
SCENTWORK ALLOWS YOU TO BRING SCARY INTO SAFETY **SLOWLY**



How to help my dog build their confidence

Print this and start by thinking about what helps your dog to feel confident? What really gets their tail wagging? Play? Parkour? Hunting? If they're shut down start small, nothing too novel. Start with familiar safe things and gradually change 1 thing. Use the blank circles to map out all the different possibilities for helping your dog to build their confidence. Put a star next to the circles that really jump out, or resonate with you. If you need more circles, draw them in. You can use different coloured pens or pencils for variety – or create your own map! Here's an example





FOUNDATION BEHAVIOURS

HELP YOUR DOG TO HELP THEMSELVES

We believe it's important for all dogs to be able to have the skills and understanding to be able to regulate themselves. Once a dog has mastered self regulation they are able to really start flying through their rehabilitation and life in general as they have the skills to cope and recover from situations.

There are 4 that we like to start with once our dogs are able to feel safe, relaxed and are starting to build their confidence.

1. Deep Breathing. Adapted from Dr Karen Overall, teaching your dog to breath can really help them to self regulate. Look out for the E-Book and bundles on our site!

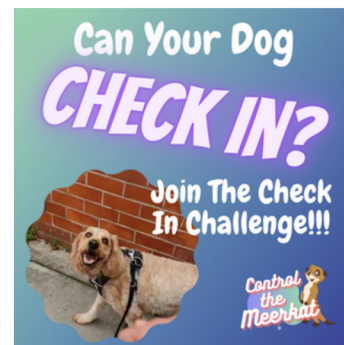
2. Foundation emotional regulation.

This is all about teaching our dogs how to start to pause and regulate themselves without our interference!

WE can give dogs the skills to do it themselves and then support them with it and build their confidence.

check out the FOUNDATIONS

COURSE



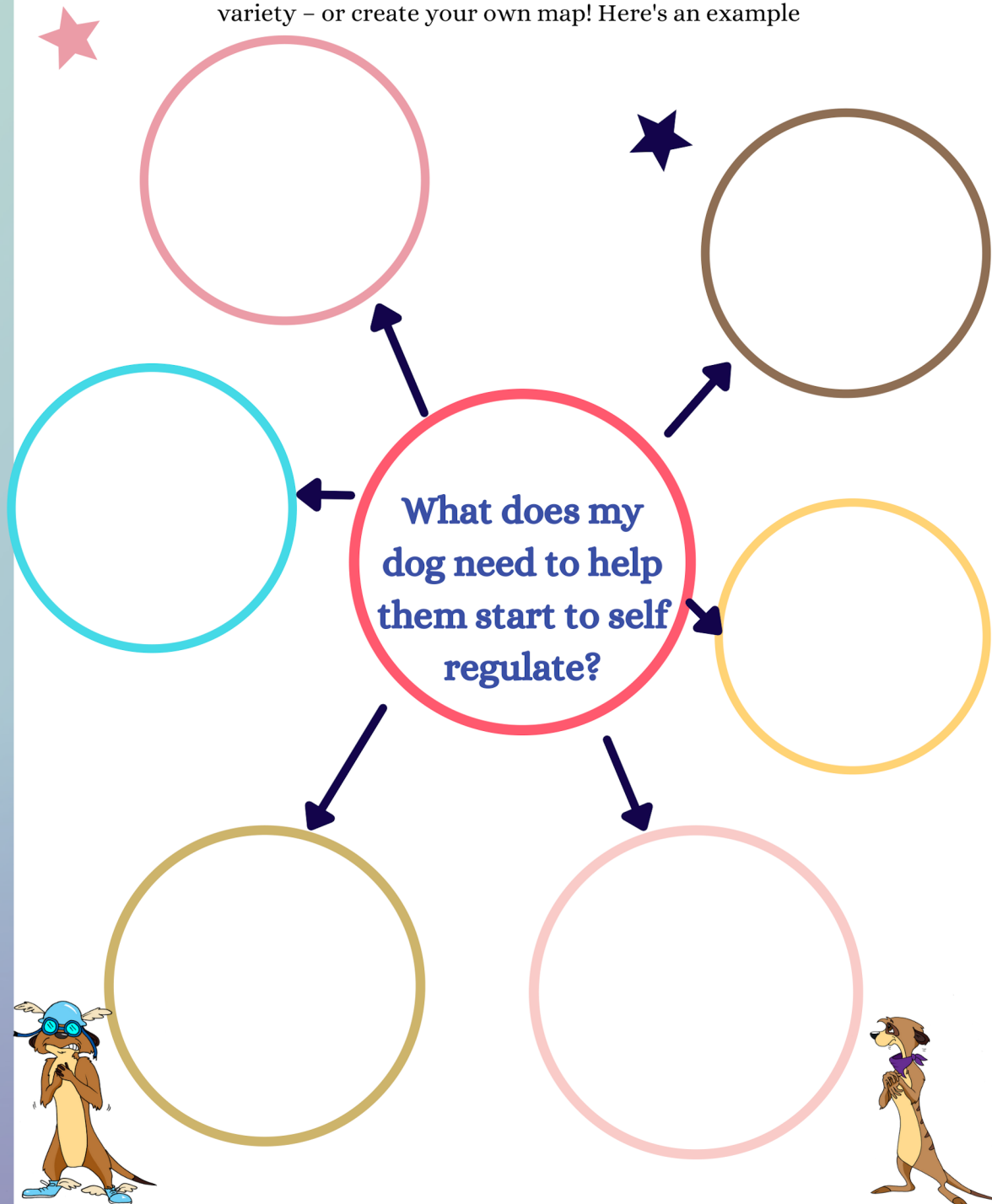
3. Auto Check In ! This teaches our dogs to regularly check in with you on walks without you having to nag them ! They can then learn how to look at something, regulate themselves and focus back onto you. Our FREE Check in challenge is where you start !



4. Chill Out. This is all about teaching our dogs to relax on cue so they can settle anywhere

How to help my dog regulate themselves

Print this and start by thinking about what helps your dog feel safe? The position of their bed? The type of bed? A particular room? A toy? You? a sound proof area? Closed curtains or frosted covering on the windows? the absence of certain people or dogs? Then use the blank circles to map out all the different possibilities for helping your dog to feel safe. Put a star next to the circles that really jump out, or resonate with you. If you need more circles, draw them in. You can use different coloured pens or pencils for variety – or create your own map! Here's an example

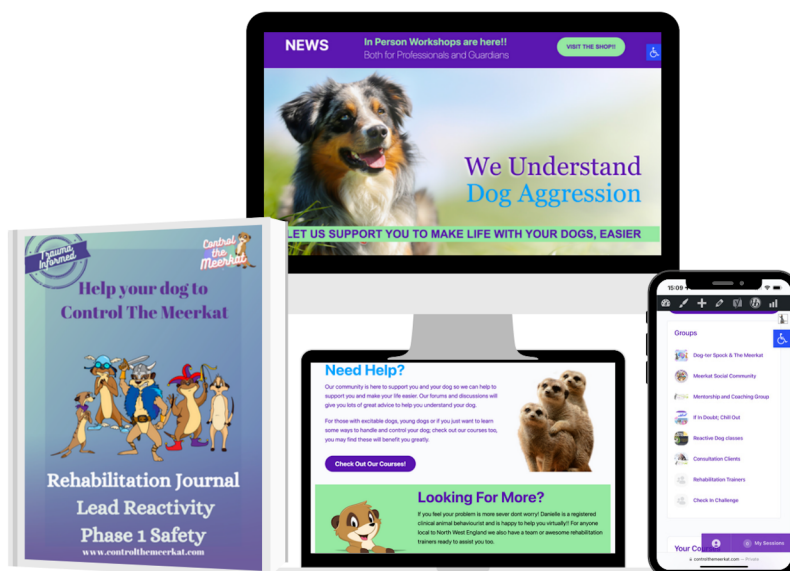


Foundation Exercises

Auto Check-In, If In Doubt; Chill Out, Take A Deep Breath & Foundation exercises

These skills are all based on our dogs 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 practise in different situations we build strong, effective habits that last



**INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS AND SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE IN
OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY & LEARNING EMPOWERIUM**



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

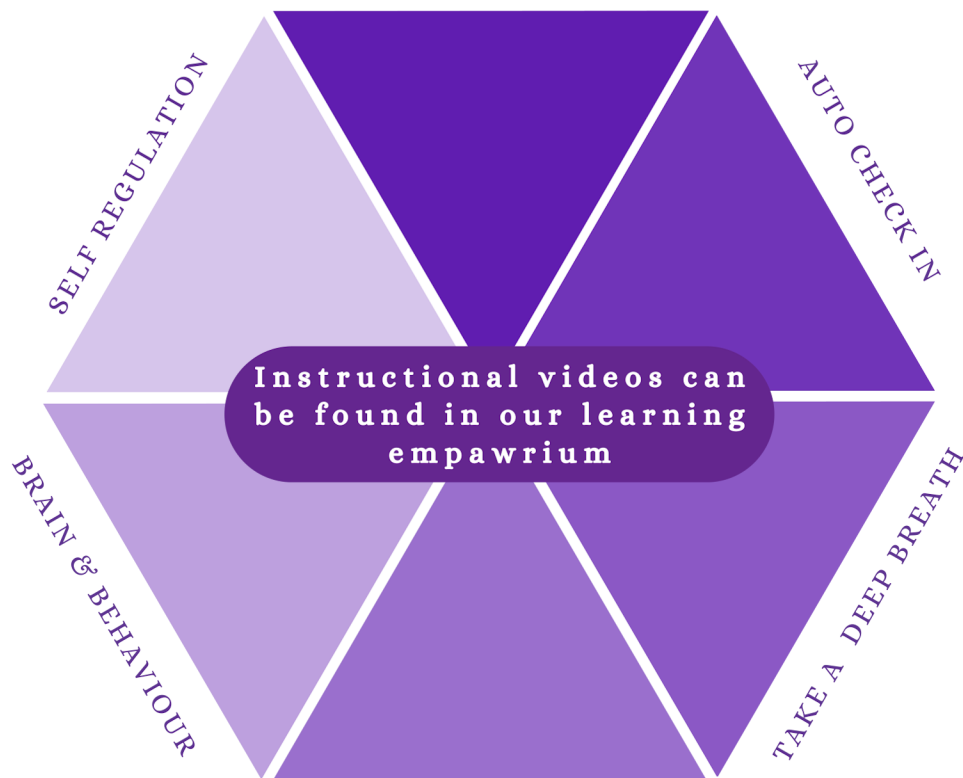
CONTROL THE MEERKAT



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."

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?*

**Come and join us and
over 200 other dog
owners**



**Learn how to help your dog
without all the jargon**

**Go to: controlthemeerkat.com
to learn more**

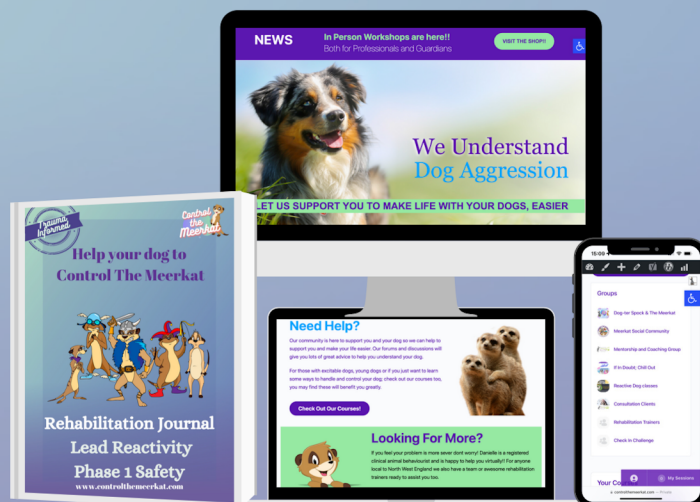




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