



## **BARRIER FRUSTRATION – DOORS, FENCES, etc.**

As your adoption counselor discussed with you, your dog displayed Barrier Frustration while in the shelter. This means that your dog may be more likely to be reactive when there is a stimulant present on the opposite side of a barrier than your dog. This is not to be confused with alert barking – barrier frustration is recognized as supreme reactivity with the potential to bite when a stimulant approaches the barrier. The dog is generally calm and friendly meeting the stimulant where the barrier is not present.

### **The Plan:**

Run a classical counter conditioning exercise with your dog. You will not see *immediate* results with this exercise as you are reconditioning the response your dog will have to the stimulant, this will take patience, time, and consistency.

### **The Practice:**

**If your dog is reactive to people passing the property line** (behind a fence), begin a counter conditioning exercise with him outside.

Place a long leash on your dog and go outside with them each time a stimulant may be present that your dog may react to.

Begin to play with or praise your dog (whichever is the stronger motivator) as soon as you see / hear the stimulant approaching that your dog is normally reactive to – *before* your dog starts reacting.

Continue to praise / play with your dog for as long as the stimulant is present. Be sure to keep the praise nice and calm to avoid overstimulating your dog.

If your dog leaves you to run to the fence, verbally praise them as long as they are investigating the stimulant without reacting.

If you can – call your dog away from the fence using upbeat tones, encouraging your dog to chase you.

If you cannot call your dog away, reach for their leash if you can safely grab hold of it without coming into close contact with your dog.

Encourage your dog away from the barrier using upbeat tones and the leash. Use a tension and release train of mind whenever using the leash.

Once your dog has settled / the stimulant is gone, return to praising and or playing with your dog.

Be mindful of how long it takes for your dog to decompress from each encounter as this will play a huge factor in the success of this exercise. Always provide adequate rest between each encounter whenever possible.

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## **Georgian Triangle Humane Society**

549 Tenth Line, Collingwood ON, L9Y 0W1  
705-445-5204 | [info@gths.ca](mailto:info@gths.ca) | [www.gths.ca](http://www.gths.ca)  
Registration Number 86800 4185 RR0001



**If your dog is reactive to people approaching your front door / looking to enter the home** place your dog on a leash and move them back from the door.

Do not allow your dog to access the visitor until they have calmed down. Directing your dog to sit and or stay may be helpful in this exercise.

If your dog is able to relax once your visitor is in the home (on the same side of the barrier as your dog), walk your dog up to your visitor and allow them to greet.

Direct your visitor to ignore your dog until you see nice loose body language from your dog.

Once your dog is relaxed you can remove their leash and your visitor can greet them.

If your dog is unable to settle in the home once your visitor enters, ask your visitor to meet you at the end of your driveway. If you are able to set this up pre-emptively (without your visitor approaching your front door) this would be ideal.

The walking introduction will allow the dog to acclimatize to your visitor's movements and voice while maintaining a distance the dog is comfortable with. Once your dog relaxes, lead your dog into the house with your guest following immediately after.

Remove your dog's leash once they are comfortable with your guest.

#### **Support:**

Our Behaviour Support Team can help to provide resources and tips if you experience concerns in the home environment. With your adoption the GTHS will provide an over the phone consultation in order to provide you with tips and resources to set your new dog up for success. In all cases of dog adoptions, the GTHS recommends hiring a professional dog training or behavioural consultant to ensure your relationship with your new dog starts off on the right paw! A list of local trainers is enclosed in your adoption package.

Our Behaviour Support Team can be reached at [behaviour@gths.ca](mailto:behaviour@gths.ca)

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