

The Concept of Training: Training Training

by Liz Myhre

<http://www.telisphere.com/~myhre/>

Many people dive into a class without training Training itself. Before you can do anything with a dog or puppy, it must: One, have a long enough attention span to be trained, and Two, must understand the Concept of Training.

Without an understanding that it's being trained to do something, a pup may see you have food in your hand, and certainly want it, but have no clue they're supposed to do something for it. So they either try to grab the food, or meander off to other things when unsuccessful.

Once they catch on, life is so very much easier. They think "ah, mom has food there in front of me, I need to do something!" And they try their best, often trying everything they've learned before, to do what you want them to do. For training this or that, you can use a variety of training techniques such as shaping (clicker training, or similar), physically manipulating the dog through the motions of what it's supposed to do, or my favorite, having a young dog watch an older experienced dog demonstrate the behavior (see "Dogs Training Dogs" article). The later, BTW, is an excellent method of training the Concept of Training!