



**Punitive dog training, whispering and outdated behaviour therapy:**

**What might it be doing to YOUR DOG!**

## **Our Statement**

**There are still huge numbers of 'stamp and jerk' dog trainers and whisperers** at large with their choke chains, spiked collars, shock collars, rape alarms, correction sticks and bullying attitudes who haven't chosen to move on into the humane, modern age of dog training.

**ASK WHY?** of those trainers who still want to be cruel to dogs by training with punishment, correcting jerks and coercion when kind training methods are so much better, and are so very widely known and applied all over the world these days?

**ASK WHY?** of those 'behaviourists' who persist in deploying those long out-of-date 'dominance reduction' and one-size-fits-all 'nothing in life is free' programmes in the name of behavioural therapy. **Why** are they telling you to ignore and thus punish your dog? Don't they know that this threatens the bond you have with your dog and potentially inflicts huge psychological damage on him? *Click Here* for more information.

**'SAY NO!'** to all of them! There is no such thing as **'Being Cruel to be Kind'** in the name of dog training or behaviour therapy. Such dog trainers,

whisperers and behaviourists are simply being '**Cruel to be Cruel**' with these long outdated, inhumane and discredited techniques.

Don't be fooled by the fact that they may be members of some institute, council or guild. Ask to see their Code of Conduct. If they don't have one, '**SAY NO!**' and walk away. If they do have one, see what techniques and equipment are **NOT** excluded and so might be employed with your dog. **ASK WHY** they might want to abuse your dog with any such unpleasantness, then, if you are not satisfied that your dog will be safe from harm, protect him! '**SAY NO!**' and walk away.

**To support us and sign our secure online petition - [CLICK HERE](#)**

## Participating Individuals

- **Dr June Williams DipCABT, EdD, MEd, CertEd, MA(Hons), APDT 850:** Member of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT)
- **Kirsty Peake DipCABT, MPSA, APDT 681:** Chairman of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT)
- **Anna Patfield BSc, DipCABT:** Committee of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT)
- **Jo Scott RVN, DipCABT:** Committee of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT)
- **Vivian Silverstein DipCABT, APDT 713:** Committee of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT)
- **Mark Wild BSc(Hons), CertEd(FE), DipCABT:** Committee of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT)
- **Professor Peter Neville:** Partner of the CENTRE of APPLIED PET ETHOLOGY (COAPE)
- **Val Strong MSc:** Partner of the CENTRE of APPLIED PET ETHOLOGY (COAPE)
- **Robert Falconer-Taylor BVetMed DipCABT MRCVS:** Partner of the CENTRE of APPLIED PET ETHOLOGY (COAPE)
- **Karin Landsberg DipCABT, CertCAB:** Director, ThinkingPets, South Africa and licensed presenter of COAPE courses in South Africa
- **Andrzej Klosinski MA, DipCABT:** Director, Amichien, Poland and licensed presenter of COAPE courses in Poland
- **Val Harvey DipCABT:** Chairman, Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT UK)
- **Professor RK Anderson DVM, MPH, DACVPM, DACVB:** Distinguished veterinarian, a founding father of human-companion animal bond studies (USA)
- **Kathleen R Terry MS, JD:** Intellectual property attorney (USA)

## Participating Organisations



ASSOCIATION of  
PET DOG TRAINERS

### ***Participating Veterinary Practices***

[Click Here](#) for the list

## Comments, Quotes and Discussion

**On February 23, 2006 the New York Times** quoted Professor Nicholas Dodman (veterinary behaviourist and director of the Animal Behaviour Clinic at Tufts University, Boston) as saying of the television programme 'Dog Whisperer with Cesar Millan' *"My College thinks that it is a travesty. We've written to the National Geographic Channel and told them they have put dog training back 20 years."* The National Geographic channel now transmits a disclaimer to *"not to try this at home"* below the credits for Cesar Millan's programme.

**In their letter dated 5th September, 2006 to the National Geographic Channel** from the American Humane Association (the oldest national US organisation protecting children and animals) they stated that *"The training tactics featured on Cesar Millan's 'The Dog Whisperer' program are inhumane, outdated and improper"*. The letter's author, veterinarian Bill Torgerson, DVM, MBA, who is vice president of Animal Protection Services for American Humane Association noted that the safety of a woman and her German shepherd were jeopardized in one episode by the use of an electric shock collar, which forced

the tormented dog to redirect its aggression at its owner, biting her arm. *"Furthermore, the television audience was never told that Mr. Millan was attempting to modify the dog's behavior by causing pain with the shock collar"*, he said.

Please [Click Here](#) to watch the video broadcast from KOMO News in the USA titled **'Are the Dog Whisperer's methods harmful?'** and decide how you feel.

**Dr June Williams DipCABT, EdD, MEd, CertEd, MA(Hons), APDT 850** of the COAPE ASSOCIATION of PET BEHAVIOURISTS and TRAINERS (CAPBT) one of the largest such representative bodies in the UK for dog trainers and behaviourists, comments further:-

*"Research, expert opinion, and the teachings and combined experience of COAPE tutors and CAPBT practitioners, members of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and many others substantiate and promote that punitive methods of training dogs and approaching behaviour problems simply do not work - especially when dealing with aggression cases."*

*"Moreover people who use aggression to deal with cases of canine aggression only ever exacerbate the problems. How many other animals would stick around to be abused in this way and not fight back? How long would a cat put up with being threatened or hurt by being yanked about on a choke chain? And whether you agree with the idea of training performing sea mammals or not, could killer whales and dolphins possibly be 'trained' in this way?"*

*"It is truly amazing just how many dogs do not bite these so-called experts or their poor owners and it is sickening just how many traumatised, fearful, cowed dogs I have to deal with in my training classes and behaviour practice who have had such training methods inflicted on them. Why do such people apparently get a kick out of bullying dogs? It is a reflection of the devotion and endurance of the dog that the vast majority continue to adore owners who punish them so awfully in the name of the training; it is certainly not an endorsement of the methods or the total lack of ethics behind them"*

*"We are human, not canine and so it is clearly illogical to employ any models of 'dog behaviour' in communicating with dogs especially when, like 'pack hierarchy' and the concept of 'dominance' they are scientifically unsustainable, ridiculously simplistic and so very outdated. It is also often a sure route to being bitten!"*

## **What sort of people would want to treat dogs this way?**

**It's clearly time to question** why such people are out there abusing dogs and exploiting their owners. **Why** would any trainer/whisperer/behaviourist or anyone want to use any painful treatments when, presumably, they are only working with dogs and owners in the first place because they like them?

**Perhaps they don't look at dogs** and their emotions in the same way as the rest of us. Or maybe they are so hooked on what they think works by using punishment in training that they are reluctant to look around to see everyone else has moved on long ago to using kinder and more effective methods.

**Or, perhaps, sadly,** there are even more insidious reasons as to **why** they want to keep using such methods beyond simple ignorance or a reluctance to move into the modern age of training.

**Clearly, people who use** these methods don't actually understand how dogs learn or care how they feel. Ignorance is no excuse in this age of massively available information in so many media. These people are simply being **'Cruel to be Cruel'**. So **ASK WHY?** before you let your lovely dog anywhere near them! If you don't like what see or hear, protect your dog and **'SAY NO!'**

## **Dog Social Behaviour**

The scientific community has now accepted that 'dominance', linear hierarchy, and the idea of an alpha figure exerting power through aggression does not apply to wolves in a natural, wild (non-captive) environment, let

alone to pet dogs in human families. Such wolves live in extended family groups that cooperate in order to survive and reproduce.

**Dr L. David Mech** an internationally respected authority on wolf behaviour and ecology, wrote in the journal 'International Wolf', Winter 2008 *"Hopefully it will take fewer than 20 years for the media and the public to fully adopt the correct terminology and thus to once and for all end the outmoded view of the wolf pack as an aggressive assortment of wolves consistently competing with each other to take over the pack."*

**Dr June Williams** adds *"Your dog, far removed from a wolf, is not attempting to take over your family when displaying unwanted behaviour. Instead, he is behaving like an adolescent, one who needs a parental, guiding form of leadership that is '**...established when a pet owner can consistently set clear limits, communicate the rules by immediately rewarding the correct behaviors and preventing access to or removing the rewards for undesirable behaviors before these behaviors are reinforced.**'"* to quote Dr. Sophia Yin commenting in the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior's position statement on the use of dominance theory in behavior modification of animals"

**The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior comments further:**  
*"Modern trainers and behaviorists focus on reinforcing desirable behaviors, avoiding the reinforcement of undesirable behaviors, and strive to address the underlying emotional state and motivations, including medical and genetic factors, that are driving the undesirable behavior..."*  
*"...the use of dominance theory to understand human-animal interactions leads to an antagonistic relationship between owners and their pets."*

**Dr June Williams:** *"I deal with aggressive dogs daily and never use aggression of any sort, nor seek to arouse dogs any further in the name of treatment. I have special classes for dog-aggressive dogs, which are designed to help them and their owners. I only ever use techniques of positive reinforcement in these classes, and the withdrawal of anticipated rewards for unwanted behaviour, and steady, calm desensitisation. I also never forget that I am human and I use my human brain to monitor the emotional and mood states of the dog and assess what is reinforcing the aggressive behaviour using the methods taught by COAPE and others. I don't make false interpretations of the motivation for aggressive behaviour, nor try to copy and emulate some inaccurate version of canine 'hierarchy' to explain it as that would only serve to confuse the dogs I am treating!"*

## **Equipment Concerns: ASK WHY? SAY NO!**

**Dr June Williams:** *"Much of my behaviour work is with clients who have gone down the punitive route early on in training their dogs, or who have used such means in attempts at behaviour modification and only to find that they then have major problems and a situation that is much more difficult to deal with later."*

*"As well as long ago rejecting shouting and all forms of physical and psychological, punishment in training and behaviour therapy, I also refuse to have anything to do with the implements of sadistic and cruel approaches to training dogs, such as choke and check chains, spiked collars, 'training' sticks and electrical devices of any sort."*

These should all be placed in museums, along with the canes that used to be used to 'discipline' our children in the name of education. Aerosol hissers and screeching rape alarms should join them there, as should the old fashioned tin cans filled with stones to rattle at dogs as they too only serve to scare dogs rather than deal with the real causes of behaviour problems. These products and approaches are designed to have an arousing effect on dogs and do little to help them stay relaxed, calm and focused so that we can treat those causes or train alternative behaviours.

Everything that we have said should be in museums will serve to remind us just how far many people have come in this field in the UK in COAPE, the CAPBT and the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and in so many other enlightened organisations, behaviour practices and training clubs around the world.



## ASK WHY? SAY NO...

**Dr June Williams:** *"When confronted with a trainer, whisperer, behaviourist or other 'specialist' who asks you to **hit, shout, shock, frighten or maybe totally ignore your dog for weeks on end**, I urge you to go with your gut instincts – **protect your dog and just walk away**. People who use these methods in the name of educating or rehabilitating dogs are just so wrong, even if they do appear regularly on television twice nightly displaying their 'methods'"*

*"Then, call a CABPT member who will help using only kind, effective and positive techniques and who will be a modern professional who has signed up to a Code of Conduct that prohibits the use of all unpleasant equipment and punitive and coercive techniques. Then you can enjoy training your dog!"*

### **COAPE Association of Pet Behaviourists and Trainers**

(<http://www.capbt.org/>)

For effective help using only kind, effective positive techniques from a modern professional who has signed up to a **Code of Conduct** that prohibits the use of all unpleasant equipment and punitive and coercive techniques.

**Love your dog!** Train him kindly and he'll love you in return!



## Return to My Dog Is Special Website

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