

Nothing in Life is Free Program



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Otherwise known as N.I.L.I.F, this is a training program for all dogs of all ages and breeds.

It's produces fast results with the consistency of the owner.

NILIF stands for Nothing In Life Is Free. This is the attitude that you should take when training and interacting with your dog.

When your dog runs to you, don't pet him. Give a sit command and when he complies, then give him what he wants, (praise). If he ignores the sit, go back inside and ignore him.

Dogs are "hedonists". This means, "pleasure seeking, and pain avoiding". This works very well in line with training. By incorporating this ideal, we can introduce discomfort when the dog will not comply with a command and we can in turn provide pleasure in the form of attention.

Although the above method may sound harsh, it is how professional dog trainers all over the world train and live with their own and other people's dogs, and one of the main reasons why we get results many times faster than a novice.

When you start to adopt the above example, you will find the dog running to you and sitting without being told to, happily. Meaning he has learned to sit when he greets you, not jump up on you.

Many dog owners have a similar complaint, which is, the dog jumps on people, and he just won't stop doing it. Why is this so? Dogs don't jump on other dogs, so it's unnatural for them to do so.

Well, humans are to blame, as with most things...

When we get a new dog or even a puppy, we encourage the dog to jump on us; we actually train it to do so.

The training goes like this; you call the dog and when he comes to you, put out your hands to catch his paws. When he does jump up, you reward him with praise and petting. You have trained him well; this reward based training is very firm in the dog's mind and very hard to reverse.

The NILIF program can be adapted for teaching any command; because dogs are Hedonists (pleasure seeking pain avoiding) they will soon learn how to please you in obedience work.

By being consistent with your praise for good work and correcting for non-compliance, the dog will remain happy in the fact that he can avoid correction and get his pleasure with compliance.

Making a clear line between right and wrong will make a happy, well-balanced dog.

The main idea of this program is to teach the dog that he must work for what he wants, dogs that come up and stick their head in your lap, paw you or jump on your for attention are "gaining their own success".

While you may think you have smart dog, all you're teaching the dog is how to make you do what he wants.

This can be a recipe for disaster with the right, or should I say, wrong dog.

Another good example is at dinnertime, when you prepare your dogs dinner, hold the dish high and give a sit-stay command.

Place the food down and make the dog wait until YOU say he can eat. This will do many things:

- Affirm your place as the pack leader.
- Strengthen the sit command.
- Strengthen the stay command.
- Improve the "okay" or "free" command.
- Reward the dog with food for complying with your command under distraction.
- Allow him to understand that he eats when you say.

I like to use an analogy I call "the bag of tricks". I call behaviour a trick and the dogs mind the bag. Here's how I explain it in training class.

The dog comes to us with some tricks already in his bag, such as jumping up to get attention. The better this trick works, the higher it's placed in the bag, meaning the more it will be used. If the dog finds the trick of jumping up never works, or worse, brings discomfort, that trick will be called on less often until no more.

You can add and remove "tricks" from the bag with training. The NILIF program is excellent for this. When your dog comes running to you, he will no doubt offer some "trick" to get you to pet him, feed him etc. If you start offering no reaction, watch how many unwanted tricks, behaviours, he starts to offer.

He might jump up, bark at you, nip you and many other unwanted behaviours, like the dog that barks at you when you talk on the phone...

I won't please a dog by reacting at all, in fact I will walk away from a dog like this. Even as little as saying "no, get down" is some sort of reaction. What I will do is offer the dog a known command, and when the dog complies, I then give the praise the dog was looking for.

It won't be long, if you're consistent, before you will have a dog that sits quietly when he wants attention. You can then expand that, when you grab the leash, teach the dog he must sit quietly or you won't fit the leash.

This program works extremely well on dominant dogs as it takes the control away from them without force. Which keeps you safe, unlike many other programs.

I have found through consistent obedience training and the NILIF program, I can rehabilitate a dominant aggressive dog in a matter of weeks. The key we look for is when the dog starts to look to you for guidance, this is when you have regained leadership.

Try re-programming yourself to not reward the dog for breathing, make every interaction one where your dog performs some small or intricate task for everything you can offer. You will be surprised just how happy the dog will be, and how much faster normal training goes as you will have increased the value of your attention.

www.k9pro.com.au located in Sydney however do have distance education courses available.