

NMHP Conference 2013 Notes

Calm, Cool, and Collected Cats: Reduce stress to increase adoptions!

Jacqueline Munera, CCBC, PCBC, CAP 2. Positive Cattitudes!

Guess what? Distressed humans are bad for cats!

www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/nov_dec_2009/people_care_starts_with_you.pdf

www.hsperson.com/ info about being a human with Sensory-Processing Sensitivity, which many people involved in rescue work are.

Book *Switch: How to change things when change is hard* by Chip and Dan Heath can be helpful for people in rescue that want to make lasting changes in organizations, communities and ourselves.

Behavioral health: Not woo woo stuff!

Excellent article on feline environmental guidelines by The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) and International Society of Feline Medicine (ISFM)

www.catvets.com/guidelines/practice-guidelines/environmental-needs-guidelines

Cats: Social or Not?

Primary determinant factor in social organization: food supply and other resource availability

Feral/free range can be solitary due to scarcity of supply

Home ranges overlap, cooperative time sharing, kitten rearing, mating, etc.

Did you say “Kitten Classes”?

Work WITH your veterinarian for appropriate infection control guidelines!

Video: Treat toss game

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYp65taFKJ4

What about a bit of Nip? Catnip that is!

Approximately 30%-50% of cats studied do not respond at all.

The response to catnip is inherited and is also modified by factors such as age, experience, stress, and estrus.

Test out and monitor cat responses. Adjust usage time, place, situation, etc. according to each cat

Physical condition affects behavior: Painful cats are not happy cats!

Video: Cat in long term pain study

Courtesy of Dr. S. Robertson & Dr. D. Lascelles. Robertson SA, **Lascelles BDX**. Long term pain in cats – conditions, diagnosis and management. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 2010;12:188-199

Valuable resource for assessing pain related behavior in cats

www.animalpain.com.br/en-us/

Cat toe-amputation DOES contribute to physical and behavioral problems.

Video: toe amputated cats

www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFkfvZ2apAY&feature=youtu.be

Note about cats with toe amputations (colloquial term: declawed)

- May affect an individual’s confidence and sociability.
- Changes in weight bearing, movement, structure and functionality can lead to and/or accelerate degradation of the joints, pain, tenderness and irritability.

- Many problems go undetected because they are not visible 'to the naked eye': nail re-growth, pus and infection, 'frozen' joints due to tendon retraction, phantom sensations

Currently, multiple studies on partial toe-amputations in cats support the fact that the procedure contributes to physical and behavioral problems. Additionally, we can look to scientifically valid research involving other species that indicate physical modification of a body part (i.e., tail docking, toe amputation, ear cropping) often affects an individual's confidence and communicative ability. Physiologically, there is no doubt that cat-toe-amputations cause changes in weight bearing, movement, structure and functionality. All of which can lead to degradation of the joints, pain, tenderness and irritability. Many cats also suffer from long undetected problems under the skin which include nail regrowth, frozen joints due to tendon retraction, infection and pus pockets that are being indicated as a risk factor for kidney disease. The most current research on humans who have had amputations indicates that 100% of them have some sort of long-term phantom sensations, many of which are uncomfortable or painful. Keep that in mind when applying WIMCS to cats that have had toe amputations.

Newer information suggests that partial-toe-amputation does not save cats' lives, as a very high percent of cats being surrendered to shelters have had the procedure. A high percentage of those cats are killed due to behavior problems including aggression and not using the litterbox. Multiple shelters are now not accepting 'declawed' cats due to the recognition of the above mentioned physical and behavior challenges.

For the most current information about partial-toe-amputations please refer to www.pawproject.com and www.littlebigcat.com/category/declawing/

Unlabel Me

How many of you would have labeled the cat in the research on pain, as 'aggressive'?

Labels can be extremely damaging and in general we want to avoid placing labels on the cats in our care. Please review work by Dr. Susan Friedman at www.behaviorworks.org for more information about the damage of inappropriate labeling and how to correctly use Applied Behavior Analysis to modify behavior. Below is an excerpt from Straight Talk about Parrot Behavior*, originally presented at the StopPDD Conference, Nov 2004

"In psychology, terms like dominant, aggressive, and shy are a mix of vague, ambiguous labels and hypothetical constructs. A hypothetical construct is an inferred mental process used to explain the underlying cause of behavior. By definition constructs are not tangible entities and are best understood as place holders for a time when science reveals more about the way in which our internal and external environments interact with the body's physiological systems to produce behavior. People say parrots bite because they have an innate need to dominate us; however we know that the environment is involved in all facets of what we do. In fact, the only evidence that a dominance drive is the underlying mental process that explains biting is the observable behavior itself. There is no direct measure of dominance drive because it doesn't exist as an entity – it's an idea. Something that doesn't have a tangible form can't cause behavior. To think so is simply unscientific thinking. From a behavior-change perspective, the most relevant cause of present behavior is past consequences."

Respondent conditioning and operant learning are ALWAYS occurring!

Video: Why is Pedro so upset?

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTAU8WmNwgU

Respondent Conditioning

Videos: Barking dogs annoy cats

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkFMTKVt8DA&feature=youtu.be>

Positive Association?

Video: Daphne disgusting food!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=028Pzr1Lusc

Kitty determines reinforcement!

Video: Learner determines reinforcer

www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtFymBNZxSk&feature=youtu.be

Video: Daphne brushing and pilling

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALk8K6NMy4E

Video: Daphne brush and shot

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi_tTRL8qVI&feature=youtu.be

Auditory/Acoustics

Webinar by Patricia McConnell on Canine Behavior and Acoustics at www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2013-09-12-190000-2013-09-12-200000/canine-behavior-and-acoustics

Coppola article available at www.grandin.com/references/noise.in.animal.shelter.html

Coppola (2010) Noise in the Animal Shelter Environment: Building Design and the Effects of Daily Noise Exposure. *JOURNAL OF APPLIED ANIMAL WELFARE SCIENCE*, 9(1), 1-7

Resources

- <http://bestfriends.org> articles on all things rescue, sheltering and behavior
- www.animalsheltering.org articles on all things rescue and sheltering
- **ASPCapro** www.aspcapro.org/ articles and webinars on all things rescue, sheltering and behavior
- www.maddiesfund.org/Maddies_Institute.html many free cat related webinars including "Making the Case for a Paradigm Shift in Community Cat Management"
- **What Is My Cat Saying?** Jacqueline Munera and Carol Byrnes available at www.dogwise.com
- **Manual of Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Dogs and Cats**, by Karen Overall
- **The Behaviour of the Domestic Cat** by Bradshaw , Casey & Brown
- **Cat Behaviour Described** www.learnaboutcats.co.uk/
- **Assessing pain related behavior** www.animalpain.com.br/en-us/
- British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals CatSense System: The Emotional Life of Cats by Nadine Gourkow: www.sPCA.bc.ca/welfare/professional-resources/catsense/
- **Pictures of Cats online illustrated cat encyclopedia** <http://pictures-of-cats.org/>
- **Low Stress Handling for Dogs and Cats and Towel Wrap Techniques for Handling Cats with Skill and Ease** by Dr. Sophia Yin
- Dr. Susan Friedman's **Behavior Works** fantastic Applied Behavior Analysis resources www.behaviorworks.org/htm/downloads_toolkit.html
- Dr. Jenny Conrad's **Paw Project** www.pawproject.com
- Dr. Jean Hovje's **Little Big Cat** www.littlebigcat.com/category/declawing
- **Catalyst Council** www.catalystcouncil.org/

- www.catinfo.org Cat feeding, health and vaccine info
- www.crijopets.com/ “NEW GENERATION” Feline Adoption Room Equipment
- **Switch: How to change things when change is hard** by Chip Heath & Dan Heath
- **The Science of Consequences** by Susan Schneider
- **Complete Cat’s Meow** by Darlene Arden
- **Naughty No More** by Marilyn Krieger (clicker/operant training for cats)
- www.clickertraining.com clicker training resources for all species
- www.2ndchance4pets.org/ 2nd Chance 4 Pets is an organization that works to reduce the number of pets that are euthanized in the United States due to the death or disability of their human companions. More than 500,000 pets are surrendered to U.S. shelters each year because their owners passed away and never made plans for the continued care of their pets. Many of these healthy, adoptable pets are euthanized in shelters.

2nd Chance 4 Pets is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit animal welfare organization. Our nationwide volunteer team works to provide pet owners, veterinarians, and members of animal care organizations with comprehensive information and lifetime care solutions to ensure the welfare of companion animals. We are committed to providing pet owners information that will help them plan for their pets’ continued care should the pets outlive them.

From 2nd Chance for Pets website:

The following letter is reprinted by permission of Mike Arms, Executive Director of the Helen Woodward Animal Center. Mike is a hero to thousands of homeless animals and an inspiration to pet owners and animal welfare groups. If you are in the San Diego area, stop by and see the Helen Woodward Animal Center, a haven for pets in need. For more information about the Helen Woodward Animal Center please go to www.animalcenter.org.

Could this happen? You Bet!

This morning I woke up feeling great. Ran to the door and found my best friend waiting for me. We went for our usual morning walk. My friend does most of the talking, but I am happy just to be listening. My best friend’s words are always soothing and comforting. After our walk, we went back home and had breakfast together. I got kissed on my nose and my best friend went off to work. Now comes my boring time. I walk around the house making sure everything is safe and secure, then I just lay on the couch or the bed or the easy chair waiting for my best friend to come home.

Today is different. Night has fallen. My friend normally is home by now. It is getting late. I’m starting to worry. I hope she gets home soon. I’m starting to get hungry. You know I don’t care if I get to eat or not. I don’t complain. Please come home. I miss you. I am so tired now. Why is it getting light out again? This is so strange. I need to get on the bed. I can smell my friend was here. This is where I feel safe. Wait! I hear someone at the door-it must be her, No, it is someone I don’t know. Who are you? Why are you coming in here? Are you going to hurt me? Rob my friend’s home? What am I supposed to do? I know. I will act mean. I will growl, bark, defend my friend’s home the best that I can. They have just put a leash on me. They are trying to talk calmly to me, but I don’t trust them. I will still act mean. I just heard them say my friend’s name and something about a fatal heart attack. Now I am in a small cement barred area. This is not the food I normally eat. These are not the smells I normally smell. I am so scared. I still need to act mean. I know my friend must be trying to find me. I have been here for about a week now. I hear people talking about me being aggressive. Wait. They are opening my door. They are putting that leash on me again. My friend must be here. Now I am in the exam room. Oh I see the needle again. My friend always told me the needles will help keep me healthy. I felt the pinch-this needle is different. Something is happening. I feel very sleepy...where is my friend?

We know how much you care about your beloved pets. Please make sure this does not happen to your friends

