

## Nothing in Life is Free

Learn to Earn Program - The fast-track to a well-behaved, balanced, happy dog and trusting relationship

**Basic Concept:** The basic concept of the Learn-to-earn is that the dog literally earns everything in his life that he receives from humans (food, praise, petting, etc.). Absolutely nothing is given without some “work” on the dogs end.

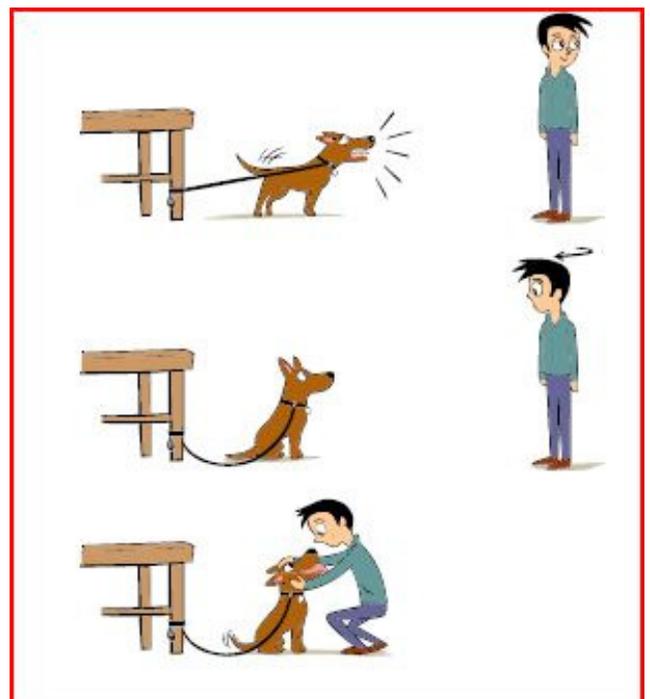
Dogs were bred to work, to serve a purpose and to have a job. Often times when dogs get bored, are not given a job or something to work for, behavioral problems can arise out of boredom and lack of purpose. We can combat boredom as well as create a happy, well-behaved dog by implementing the Learn-to-Earn program.

The Learn-to-earn concept is a concept that should be established as soon as your dog enters your home and should continue on for the entire life of the dog. Having a Learn-to-earn dog can make all the difference in the world for how dogs will behave as puppies, adolescents and adults. It reduces negative behaviors gently and naturally and encourages dogs to constantly strive for praiseful, happy owners. Most people can easily separate the Learn-to-earn dogs from dogs who work very little for the things they need in life. It is the difference between the dog who is staring at his owner, excited and happy to work for him/her and the dog who does things when he chooses and on his own time. Of all lessons to teach a dog, Learn-to-earn is a must!

This is something dogs are naturally great at. You're encouraging your dog to offer positive behaviors (sit, down, come) in exchange for something they want (to greet guests at the door, to play with other dogs, etc.)

**Learn-to-earn Dog:** Has to follow the commands Come, Sit and Stay before eating. He therefore, worked for his meal. He quickly learns “I give, you give”.

**Learn-to-earn Dog:** Upon guest's arrival, owner tells dog to “Get Back” and “Sit” without force and without punishment. Dog happily does so because he knows that once he gives to you, you will give to him (whether it be to greet the guests or a big treat for obeying). Dogs who are not taught to learn to earn often jump on guests, owners and children and will not obey commands when they are too excited. This is because from their point of view, why would they? They won't get anything out of sitting and leaving the guests alone. They don't know that if they give what you ask, they will benefit.



In the picture above, the man is teaching the dog Learn-to-earn by withholding praise and greetings until the dog gives something to him (in this case, a sit). When the dog is excitedly greeting, barking, whining and itching to get to him, he is being ignored or denied access to what he wants. The second the dog sits calmly, he is greeted happily and excitedly.

All you're telling the dog is that if he gives what you ask, you will give what he wants. The reward does not always have to be food. We can implement this with every aspect of the dog's life.

### **Practice!**

Dog wants to go for a walk? Sit and stay until leash is hooked up.

Dog wants to eat dinner? Sit and down until the food is down

Dog nudges you to be pet? Ask dog to sit and shake then pet him

### **Ask yourself:**

**What does my dog want?** To greet another dog? To go for a walk? To have a treat?

**How can I make him work for it?** A sit? A sit-stay? A down? Coming when called?

What if the dog doesn't listen when I give the command? Simple, he doesn't get access to what he wanted. If he wanted to be pet, you walk away. If he wanted to eat his meal, you stand there without paying attention to him until he does what you asked or walk away and come back in a few minutes and try again. You don't punish here- learn to earn is simply using the worlds natural consequences to get what you want. If he listens, he gets what he wants. If he doesn't, he gets denied whatever it was he wanted. I give, you give. He is happy and eager to work for us because it is beneficial to him and it makes his owners happy!

### **Always remember:**

Behavior that is rewarded will continue.

Behavior that is not rewarded and/or is punished will slowly die out because it doesn't work in getting them what they want.

Modified by Katelin Thomas for HSHV use from training material by Ian Dunbar & Sophia Yin