

Socializing your Reactive Dog

Usually when dogs begin to act aggressively, for example, barking, jumping and spinning, when they see another dog; most owner's reaction is I need to socialize him, let's go to the dog park. That is the worst thing you can do for your dog. First, it's not fair to the young dog that is submissive and just wants to be loved by other dogs and second, if there is another dog that is reactive as well, you may be looking at a dog fight.

How can my dog not like other dogs?

When your puppy is with his litter and mother, he is learning dog on dog interaction. But that interaction must continue once you adopt or buy him. If you seclude your dog from other dogs, that builds frustration and the dog eventually learns to dislike other dogs. Some dogs don't like other dogs because at a young age they were dominated or bitten by another; that created a fear of other unknown dogs.

Leash Frustration

Dogs that are not allowed to play with other dogs when they want to develop leash frustration; it means they will act crazy in order to get near another dog. If allowed to play at a young age, combined with obedience, this leash frustration never happens. If always kept from other dogs, this frustration can turn into aggression because they do not know what to do once near a dog

Can I change this behavior?

If your dog is young, yes. An older dog, probably not. But you can teach your dog to be respectful and calm around other dogs, even if the other dog is acting aggressively. And, you may have a situation where your dog is great with some dogs, but is not social with all dogs or upon initially meeting another dog.

Step 1: Obedience Training

With discipline on your part, you will be able to take your dog anywhere and keep him calm and obedient around other dogs. But, keep in mind, when someone tries to approach with another dog you will need to tell the person to keep a safe distance from you, especially if their dog is out of control. Initially, I would suggest private lessons with a trainer and his or her calm dog(s) to teach your dog

how to be calm around other dogs. Then, once your dog can remain calm around a trained dog, add distractions of not trained dogs.

Step 2: Proper dog on Dog Interactions

When introducing your dog to another, meet in a neutral area and go for a brisk walk. No sniffing, no touching, no barking or jumping...just walking. Walking establishes a bond. Never allow the dogs to meet nose to nose or nose to tail, you are just walking together. First, with a lot of distance then slowly you close in so the dogs are walking side by side.

Conclusion:

Dog reactivity or aggression does not have to be a problem. You must know and accept your dog's temperament and not put him or her in situations where he feels he needs to be reactive or aggressive. Just like you don't like all people you meet, some dogs are the same. With extensive training and discipline on your part, you will learn how to read your dog and know when he is pushed to his limits.