

Do Dogs Think We Are Dogs?



Am I A Dog Or Even A Killer Whale?

The last time I looked, I didn't have anal glands, fur, mobile ears, a tail, four legs or a wet nose. I can't even smell pee at two miles. I don't smell like a dog or even look like one. Though I am sure there are people who know me that may question the last two statements. Dogs are born live, therefore, they will always recognise their mother and all other dogs through smell, touch, sight, and sound. Pups, unlike human babies, are born blind and deaf. They can feel things, in other words, have the tactile sense and they have the sense of taste but have no sense of smell until two weeks old.

What I am basically saying is that my dogs know I am not a dog. It does not matter how many times I eat before them, or how many times I come in and ignore them, I still cannot convince them that I am a dog. Let's look at it in a couple of different ways: If we managed to convince a dog that we are also a dog, wouldn't all the dogs that show aggression to other dogs be aggressive to us? Do you believe the trainers in Sea World pretend to be killer whales (Orcas)? So that they can train them tricks? Can you imagine the Orca sees the trainer as another Orca? Do you think that a Killer Whale would allow the trainer to be the lead Orca in their pod of 18 foot long carnivorous killers?

I believe these trainers are seen as resource controllers, therefore in a position where they can train and manipulate these amazing animals. Remember, these are very bright and intelligent mammals. Recent scientific data suggests that the dolphin and killer whale may be more intelligent and adaptable than chimpanzees. But I doubt it could ever see man as another Orca. So why do we believe that a dog sees us as another dog?

Can We Be The Alpha?: In simple terms, I cannot be an Alpha of a dog pack. Dogs are conspecific. The term conspecific means they can only truly pack up with their own kind. Dogs are born live, therefore, they will always recognise their mother and all other dogs through smell, touch, sight, and sound. Pups, unlike human babies, are born blind and deaf. They can feel things, in other words, have the tactile sense and they have the sense of taste but have no sense of smell until two weeks old. By the age of six weeks, they have all their senses and are almost ready to be rehomed. I believe the best age to rehome a dog is seven and a half weeks, though under current UK law it is illegal to sell a pup under 8 weeks of age.

In light of recent scientific knowledge, this should be lowered by a few days because that is just before the first fear period which kicks in full blown at 8 weeks. Unlike birds, they do not bond and lock onto the first thing they see when they are born. Dogs know when they meet another dog that it is a dog. When they meet humans they see us as a totally different species. We are intrinsically locked into their lives because of the close ties we have created over the last fifteen to thirty-five thousand years.

See my beliefs on [The Origin Of The Dog](#) I also believe they see us as a major resource rather than an alpha. Whether they see us as a resource controller, will depend on how well you train and work with your dog. This is the key to understanding and working with your dog. Follow some of my tenets and the Jingler technique, and you will change the way the dog perceives you. You will suddenly, almost miraculously, find your dog sees you in a totally different light. It will give you mutual respect and listen to your commands, in a way it never has before. Ask the many thousands of clients that I have taught these techniques over the years. [References](#)



Can I Fool My Dog?: Even if I dressed up as Scooby-Doo, running around barking and peeing up the walls Would I be able to convince even the most naive of pooches that I am a dog. They would easily see through my cunning disguise and know that I am human. Therefore it is impossible for me to be an alpha or leader of their pack. **Why?** Even in our most fevered imaginations, can we believe that gesture eating, ignoring them when coming back home or going through doorways first, would be the magical formula to convince them that we are an Alpha dog?

The picture below is a pack of Wolves on a Buffalo carcass they have just killed. Can you see any of them waiting for the others to eat? I strongly believe this is seriously flawed logic. At best it can create negative behaviour and a breakdown in trust and communication. At worst it could cause serious behavioural problems. It is my humble opinion that rank reduction programs where we are told to act like an Alpha does not work in changing behaviour over the long term. In the short term you will see some changes in behavioural patterns, but long term there will be very little if any, beneficial change. Quite the opposite can happen. By ignoring and isolating your dog for long periods you can cause confusion, distress, anxiety, and distrust, which can affect the bond and special link you have with each other.

Do Wolves ignore each other or stand in orderly lines? Have you ever seen Wolves, Dingoes, Coyotes, or Wild Dogs ignoring their pack members when they return from a hunt, or a foray?



In reality, they have an intricate and stylised greeting ritual, which does not include sending each other to Coventry. They may shun a badly behaved pack member, but that is only temporarily and never when greeting after an absence. I use this short shunning method later in this article as the **"The Naughty Step"**

Do you ever see wild dogs or wolves lining up in rank order to eat? Just imagine all the timber wolves in a nice orderly queue with numbers on their backs. The Alpha male bellowing, "come in number nine it's your turn to eat. Now, what would you prefer Antelope or Buffalo?" The reality of what happens in wolf or wild canid packs is very different to these scenarios. They all just get stuck in and grab whatever they can. It may involve some snarling and ritualised aggression, which generally comes from the middle to lower end of the pack. there are no queues or orderly lines, or wolves ignoring each other. All this advice is just total nonsense.

The Alpha Roll: Yet another incorrect recommendation, which came about from the observation of captive Wolf packs. The only reason that a dog will aggressively pin another dog down on its side or over on its back is to injure it. By forcing an animal to submit in this way will make them think you are going to injure or even kill it. What really happens is the submissive dog will offer itself to the more dominant animal and will roll over, allowing itself to be ritualistically held. Not as rank reduction suggests, which is to force them into that submissive position. It is not surprising that a lot of people get bitten doing the alpha roll. The dog believes that the human is trying to harm them so they defend themselves. It can also cause problems like resource guarding or possession aggression, especially if you pin them down and then take something away that you do not want your dog to have. It will make the dog concerned for its food or other objects and could start to guard against you stealing them.



Rank Reduction: The problem I see with the people who advocate either the Alpha roll or rank reduction programs for all behavioural problems. They either do not understand, or they choose to ignore the fact that behavioural problems in dogs is caused by numerous factors. Those factors include genetics, poor socialisation, and both physical and mental illness. In reality pack dynamics only involves approximately 5% of the cases I treat. The proponents of rank reduction would have us believe that pack dynamics is the answer to each and every behavioural abnormality, **If only it were that simple.**

The Myth of The Alpha Pack: Scientists and biologists no longer use the term Alpha they tend to use the word **“breeders”** to describe the leaders of the pack. The reality is a wolf pack is a family unit. Mother Father and extended offspring. What we believed were the alpha's, are in reality the parents. So where did all this Alpha leader of the pack theory come from? For that answer we have, to look back to the study of captive Wolves by the likes of (1) R Shenkel. Schenkel started writing scientific papers just after the 2nd World war (1) and a marvellous individual called L. David Mech (pronounced Meech) . One of the most senior research biologists in the World, Mech was able to study Wolves for long periods at a time. Initially like Schenkel this was on Captive Wolves. The results appeared to bear out Schenkel's findings relating to the pack dynamics and the Alpha position of a single male and female within the pack. A whole new way of training was born. Unfortunately, it was created on scientific evidence that was with hindsight seriously flawed, though we were unaware of that at the time. Mech has since done exhaustive studies on non-captive free roaming Wolves and the results are startlingly different from those gathered using a captive pack. (2) Mech states in his paper dated 2000 called: *“Alpha Status, Dominance, and Division of Labor in Wolf Packs”*

“In captive packs, the unacquainted wolves formed dominance hierarchies featuring alpha, beta, omega animals, etc. With such assemblages, these dominance labels were probably appropriate, for most species thrown together in captivity would usually so arrange themselves.”

“In nature, however, the wolf pack is not such an assemblage. Rather, it is usually a family (Murie 1944; Young and Goldman 1944; Mech 1970, 1988; Clark 1971; Haber 1977) including a breeding pair and their offspring of the previous 1-3 years, or sometimes two or three such families (Murie 1944; Haber 1977; Mech et al. 1998).”

We were effectively following information that was gleaned from unrelated Wolves forced together in captivity. Their behaviour has now been shown to be very different in the wild. These recent studies show a pack as primarily a family unit, with the parents as the controlling influence on the siblings and extended family members. Forcing together unrelated Wolves from outside the familiar family unit creates massive aggression and dominance issues. That causes an unrelenting struggle for supremacy, dominance, and hierarchy that is never seen in free running wild Wolves. Dogs are also somewhat removed from their closest ancestors (the wolf), by many thousands of years. Dogs can only pack up with their own kind they are

“conspecific” This leads me to offer an alternative method of training and communicating with our dogs.





Resource Controllers: Though I clearly cannot be an Alpha (after all I am not a dog), I can be a controller of resources and a leader of sorts. I can change the behaviour of my dogs from unacceptable to acceptable very quickly. I can also initiate programs of change using psychology and sometimes just simple basic obedience training. My actions and how I relate and communicate with my pets is the basis of how I work, and why I get the high levels of success with all my clients and their dogs. To be a controller you need to convince your dog that mutual respect is required, that includes your own body space. I may not want to be jumped on every time I come in. Greeting is fine, as long as it does not include jumping all over me or my family and friends. This is considered rude and inappropriate by wild dogs and wolves. I believe we should strive more for democracy than outright autocracy, or the opposite which is totally ignoring the bad behaviour and only praising the good. Which appears to be the misguided belief of the so-called positive only reinforcement trainers. I use operant conditioning methods. if these trainers understood "operant conditioning" they would know there are four parts to it. Not just positive reinforcement in isolation. Please read my article "**Killing with Kindness**"_How can any animal, including humans, differentiate between right or wrong, if they are not shown or told?

How Do I Become a Resource Controller: What we must first ascertain is what is an important resource to your dog. In many cases, food is extremely high on the agenda, especially very tasty treats. But not always. A resource can also include toys, games, access, exercise, and anything else your dog may consider important. I tend to start with food and always use chicken or frankfurters available from any super market.

I think it is telling how effective my methods really are. Just type in Walking to Heel or Lead or Pulling on the Lead into Google in both I am first. That is simply because there are more people reading my articles like many other terms like Recall Training, Bowl Guarding, Possession Aggression Resource Guarding or Fearful Nervous Dogs I am first. See [My Google Positions](#). How my techniques work is to realign your dog to the fact that you control all the vital resources in its life. In my jingler instructions, you are actually saying this is my bone/treat, I am prepared to share it, but only when I give you permission". You are actually training control of one of the greatest resources of all **FOOD**. Permission around everything you wish to control is the key to working and training dogs successfully. That includes jumping up, mouthing, nipping, doorways, heeling, recall training, grooming, attention seeking and everything pleasurable to dogs. I often see dogs that believe they control the resources, will also not allow grooming, teeth cleaning or eye or ear drops etc. Once you have completed the exercises with The Jingler you will have set into your dog's mind that you are a resource controller, rather than the dog controlling the resources. Put this in place then all other training behavioural needs will slot into place. The dog will come to respect your body space and not abuse or invade it without being invited. You can then start working on the lead work, recall and many others unwanted behaviour's you wish to overcome.

Attention on Demand: The second part of being a controller is to control attention on demand. Many of the behavioural issues I see involving what the owner believes is dominance, which in reality a form of attention seeking behaviour. Attention seeking behaviour can include barking, biting, nipping, growling, jumping, destruction of objects, (especially in your presence) some toileting problems and object stealing can all be forms of this behaviour.

The Naughty Step: Now we are going to effectively mimic the naughty step type of behaviour training used in rearing children. Except with a dog, you have to effectively isolate them immediately the bad behaviour occurs. It is important to understand that social isolation should only ever be used for very short periods. This is nothing to with ignoring your dog when you come into the house, it is about non-reward for bad behaviour and attention seeking. Keep the dog



on a short lead, preferably 3ft long made of nylon, cut it down if necessary. I would only use this size and material for use as a house lead, not to use outside or walk to heel. If the dog is misbehaving such as barking, nipping, biting or other behavioural problems, simply pick up the lead with no command or visual acknowledgement and take the dog to another room. (a downstairs toilet is ideal). Place the dog in the room and shut the door trapping the lead in the door, so the dog cannot move too far away or entertain itself. Leave for a minimum of thirty seconds moving up to two minutes at the very maximum (unless still barking. Then let him out. If he continues with the same behaviour simply repeat the exercise until the behaviour stops. It will not take too long for the dog to realise that it is getting non-reward for its behaviour and gradually the problems should subside. Always praise for good behaviour but never ignore bad behaviour, act on it and be consistent and fair in all your training sessions. The naughty step is particularly good for dogs that are attention seeking. Dogs learn incredibly quickly as my Jingler video shows. That is why the dog learns in a very short time that attention seeking gets the opposite, **social isolation** and the behaviour ceases.

Some dogs are more stubborn, difficult, slow, control complex or pushy. Therefore give the dog time to understand that non-reward is happening because of the dog's behaviour. Losing your temper or becoming aggressive will only set the learning curve back and probably either frighten the dog or stimulate it into bad behaviour or aggression in return. Remember training should be little and often. **Always end any training session on a positive note, never ever finish on a negative.**