

 **Absolute Dogs.**



F.O.C.U.S.

3 MINUTE GAMES, REAL-LIFE RESULTS

FOCUS is super key to a brilliant life for both you and your dog,
and boosting it is massively fun:

F FOCUSSED
MAGIC HAND

O ORIENTATION
GAME

C CUE CONTROL
IN AROUSAL

U UNBEATABLE
RELATIONSHIP

S SUPER SNAPPY
"MIDDLE"

F FOCUSSED MAGIC HAND

We simply LOVE this game. It develops crazy good focus, awesome foundations for loose lead walking and proximity value, it helps to level energy in a super awesome way, it is arousal balancing and also engaging and FUN! Games don't get much better than this one!

Top Tip: *Can your dog catch? Yes I know it does sound very very simple, why not give it a go? Start by not even thinking too hard on the game itself and actually just do the art of catching - it's a skill in itself! It may sound easy but really, just go out and give it a go.....*

F FOCUSSED MAGIC HAND

HOW TO PLAY:

Step 1: Without your dog have a handful of food in an upturned hand, maybe 5-10 pieces maximum and drop it from your hand to the floor through your fingers with you taking control! Make sure you decide when each piece should fall and at what pace. Adjust the height to make sure that you are super comfortable without your dog!

Top Tip: *If you can do this well without a dog then try it on the other side, most handlers are better doing it on one side than the other! It's important you can be versatile and do this exercise on both sides!*

Step 2: Have your dog on lead at your side. Use your 7-10 pieces of food and go to the same position that you have already practiced! Have your dog stand roughly under your hand and let food fall from the sky as your dog starts to work out what is going on! Don't worry your dog probably won't try to catch them just yet. Don't rush as your dog will need time to adjust to figure out where they are coming from!

Top Tip: *There is no hurry at this stage. Try to wait for your dog to lift his head to re start the game. At that point let the food drop. Don't adjust the food for your dog, let your dog adjust to where the food is!*

Step 3: Your dog is now starting to try and catch we hope - try to wait for the FOCUS up and as they do release the food from the sky. Your dog will get better and better at the focus up as you time it cleverly with the food falling from the sky! It's the best way to reward spontaneously and your dog will never know when it's coming as the hand is upturned so doesn't really give any clues!

Step 4: As your dog is getting better and better at the game and at catching you can start to make minor adjustments with your body to help them to work out where to place themselves for future focus games on the move! Subtle and soft movements only please, nothing too big and dramatic, think more like weight shift style than big steps, keep it soft and adjust only very very slightly!

Top Tip: *Don't try to move too far or too much before you have the subtle adjustments. These subtle adjustments are the foundation steps for success and they are FUNdamental!*

Step 5: Take this show on the road. Try this in one new place per day, just static at first, don't add movement, static only! Try this in a good few places and then gradually start to add more and more steps in as you feel it's going well!

Magic Hand is a super game to teach:

- Focus
- Attention
- Foundation for proximity games
- Body awareness

We are sure you will find many more uses, these are just the start! Have FUN and get magic hands!

ORIENTATION GAME

The orientation games creates:

- A crazily focussed dog!
- It promotes confidence in distracting environments!
- It creates a default bounce back! whenever your dog leaves you on a walk!
- It's the start of a super retrieve!

Dogs can often find themselves wanting to interact or react with things in the distance and independently from the owner. This makes it very difficult to give them freedom in distracting environments and trust they will bounce back.

We created the orientation game for this exact reason! It works on the specific behaviour of orienting to you.



O ORIENTATION GAME

HOW TO PLAY:

Step 1: Start this game in a very easy, low distraction environment where your dog is used to playing with you!

Step 2: Throw a piece of your dog's dinner out (about one meter away)

Step 3: After they finish eating it, of course, they are going to look back at you for more. At that moment of them orienting back to you, mark the movement with a "YES" or a CLICK (if you use a clicker).

If they do not look back at you right away, just wait them out and mark the moment they do look back. You may have to start playing this game on lead first.

Step 4: Follow the marker with the reward of throwing another piece of food out to continue the game.

Step 5: Play this everywhere, and as often as you can!

BONUS GAME:

RUNNING ORIENTATION GAME!

Great for focus, reliability, fun, great foundations for recall and retrieve....this is just soooo much fun....but remember to stay within you own physical limits here.

How to play.

- 1) Put a treat on the floor
- 2) As the dog eats the food, run away!
- 3) As soon as your dog runs towards you MARK that great choice (with a "yes" or "good")
- 4) As they reach you, put another treat on the floor and RUN!
- 5) Repeat and repeat! Work within your own physical limits....if you want to give yourself more chance to move away, drop a few extra treats on the floor!

C CUE CONTROL IN AROUSAL

More often than not, the skills associated with focus, whether that is offering of eye contact, orientation to you, listening to you - are not the problem, but rather whether these can be performed as the arousal (excitement) levels increase.

Like most things, this ability to focus in high arousal comes with practice, and here's a game we love to play for this:



C CUE CONTROL IN AROUSAL

HOW TO PLAY:

Step 1: Place something one metre ahead of your dog on the ground that they absolutely love, for example high value food, toy, or eventually (once you get good at this game) maybe even a real-life event, e.g. their dog friend or a swimming opportunity.

Step 2: Gently hold your dog by their harness, send your dog to go and “get it” and then let go of their harness!

Step 3: Repeat this until your dog is clearly anticipating getting the exciting event!

Step 4: This time ask for a behaviour they know on verbal cue - for example, sit, down, spin, etc.

Top Tip: *Do you have any verbal cues? Don't worry if you don't, fast track now to middle and start teaching that one! And with verbal cues if your dog doesn't already know any others then we like to teach:*

- **Sit** • **Tall** • **Head low**
- **Down** • **Left** • **Bend**
- **Stand** • **Right** • **Middle**
- **Pretty** • **Reverse**

To be honest the list is non exhaustive. We hope you get to have fun with it!

Keep an eye on the monthly “**3 Minute Inspiration**” challenges as we tackle all of these on there each month! There are many behaviours you can put on verbal cue - many are super easy and fun and will help you out and about with off lead control!

There are then four possible outcomes from this:

- 1)** They perform behaviour correctly, send them to “get it”.
- 2)** They don't perform the behaviour correctly and try to get the food or toy regardless, jump ahead and beat them to it (make it a bit of a competition!)
- 3)** They don't perform the behaviour and look a little like they are stuck on the spot, like the lights are on but nobody is home. This is because they are too aroused (excited) to be able to function at that level. Calmly stroke them on the side, get them moving a little to stop the stickiness and try again now that their arousal levels are a little lower.
- 4)** They don't perform the behaviour correctly and manage to beat you to the toy. What do you think you should do? Laugh about it - it's no big deal and you know for next time to change things up.

Play this with all kinds of rewards, all kinds of cues and higher and higher excitement levels to help teach the concept of listening no matter how exciting the environment is!

U UNBEATABLE RELATIONSHIP

So many dog training and behaviour struggles go back to deficits in the relationship between dog and owner. It's easily fixed when you realise three things:

- 1) Relationship impacts and is impacted by every interaction with your dog!
- 2) Relationship is completely changeable!
- 3) You are in control of how good your relationship is with your dog!



U UNBEATABLE RELATIONSHIP

Look at it as a **bank account** - the more in the bank account, the better the relationship!

You can pay into your **relationship bank account** by having an interaction with your dog they like - it might be playing with them, training them, rewarding them for doing something you like, even cuddling them!

Interactions they don't like - things like intimidation, being punished, told off or even you getting frustrated with them - withdraws from the account and makes it lower!

Up your positive interactions, reduce your negative interactions and your relationship increases. Of course, there are going to be times when things don't quite go to plan, but, with this framework, you can compensate for the occasional negative interaction by doubling up on the positives in response!

A game that works well in investing in the **relationship bank account** is building eye contact as a positive interaction.

All Eyes on Me!

Simply by rewarding your dog any time they look into your eyes. Progressions could include them looking away from a piece of food or toy in order to get or upping the level of environmental distractions - fun, fun, fun!

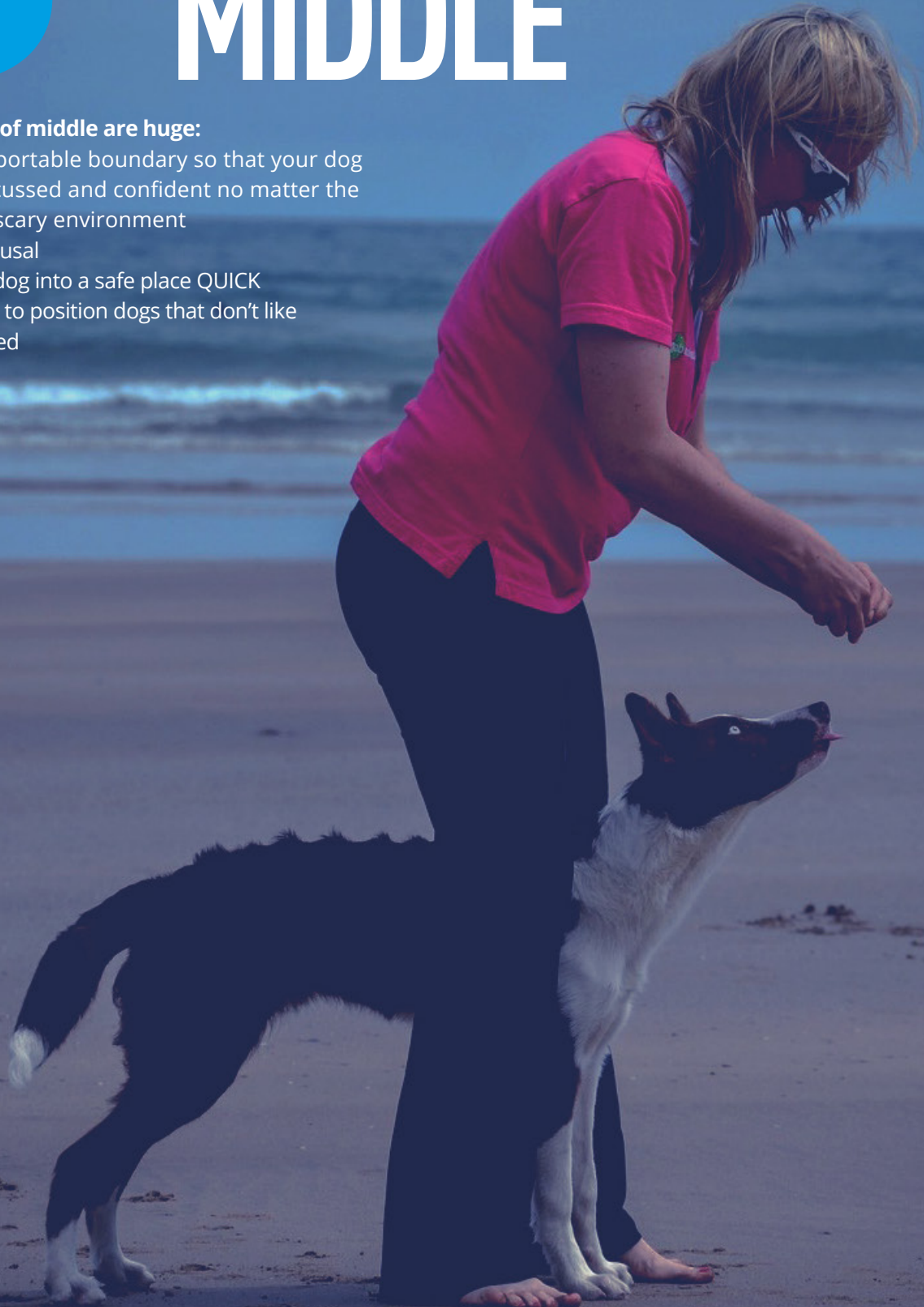
Relationship Success Formula



S SUPER SNAPPY "MIDDLE"

The benefits of middle are huge:

- It acts as a portable boundary so that your dog can stay focussed and confident no matter the exciting or scary environment
- It lowers arousal
- It gets your dog into a safe place QUICK
- It allows you to position dogs that don't like being handled



S SUPER SNAPPY "MIDDLE"

HOW TO PLAY:

Step 1: We like to shape this trick, which means rewarding successive approximations of the final behaviour - or rewarding things your dog does that are closer and closer to the final behaviour in mind!

Step 2: To do this, we mark and reward turns and steps towards behind us to start with, rewarding by placing the treat or toy behind us and eventually between legs.

Step 3: Do this until your dog is consistently heading around your leg and then between your legs. At this point, placement of the reward should always be in the final position - between your legs.

Step 4: Build duration into maintaining position between your legs by providing a rapid rate of reinforcement in this position. Then work on reducing the rate of reinforcement while your dog stays in one place.

Step 5: Now work on the final behaviour, a sit! You can:

- 1) Shape the sit by marking and rewarding weight shifts backwards until your dog sits.
- 2) Cue a sit, repeat a few times and then wait your dog out for him/her to offer it.
- 3) Cue a hand target with your hand above your dog's head such that he/she sits when targeting.

Top Tips: *If you want a high energy, tucked sit, then using a hand target is a really good way to get this! Tucked sits are more accurate to maintain the final position and you can shape these also, or, if your dog has a specific cue for a tucked sit, then use method two with that cue!*

Step 6: Build duration into maintaining the sit position between your legs by manipulating rate of reinforcement again. Here is where you can add your release cue too!

Step 7: Work on proofing the sit for you moving away now by rewarding for sit maintenance as you change position!

Step 8: When you are happy with the final behaviour, introduce your cue ("middle", "centre", "position") just before your dog performs the full behaviour and rewards lots!!!!



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