

[Begin Dog Training]

[Music]

Interviewer: They're our companions, our buddies; they give us unconditional love, keep us entertained and bring great comfort. They're our dogs and we love them. But left untrained and undisciplined, they can be nothing short of unwanted guests in our homes.

Hello and welcome; today we'll be learning together some valuable tips about living with and successfully training *man's best friend*. Here to help us with that is Author, Columnist, Dog Training Expert, Howard Weinstein; and Howard is a Trainer and a Behavioral Consultant, as well as the owner of Day One Dog Training. Welcome Howard.

Howard Weinstein: Hi, Connie; how are you?

Interviewer: I'm good. I was so sad reading about your history; your father was actually allergic to dogs, so you weren't able to have a dog growing up.

Howard Weinstein: Yes; we had a one-week disaster. As--as with many kids, when I was nine I was unstoppable in terms of pestering my parents into getting a puppy.

Interviewer: Right.

Howard Weinstein: And my parents grew up during the Depression in the Bronx in New York and people just didn't really have pet dogs in our family. And so nobody knew anything about raising a puppy. And I finally convinced them to--to let us give it a try so we went and--and adopted a puppy from the *By-the-Way* Animal Shelter on Long Island where I grew up and she was a very cute little six week-old Beagle Bassett, little floppy ears, little brown and white dog--really adorable. The first night--holy terror; nobody got any sleep. She went to the bathroom an awful lot and within a week it was pretty clear we had no clue. And this is 1964 when this happened, so there weren't a lot of trainers around, there weren't a lot of books around, videos; DVDs didn't exist, so we were kind of on our own and after about a week during that summer we gave up and we brought the puppy back to the shelter. And the--the funny thing is my mother was the most resistant to getting this puppy and she was the one who snuck back to the

shelter the day after we brought the puppy back to see if she was still there because mom missed her so much. The puppy's name was Cookie. But by then Cookie was so cute she had been adopted and I'm sure she had a nice long happy life with somebody; but it wasn't with us. But that sort of scarring experience [**Laughs**] when I was nine stayed with my whole life.

Interviewer: Well scarring but you also fell in love with dogs at that point and so time went by and after college when you were independent you decided you were going to finally have your dog.

Howard Weinstein: I had always loved dogs. I was the kind of kid who walked my neighbors' dogs when they went on vacation, so finally when I was in my 20s--did some research, picked out a Welsh Corgi as the breed that I thought I wanted and got this little puppy who I named Mail Order Annie from a breeder in New Jersey and after two weeks we were having such a hard time with house-training that I almost gave her back to the breeder. And I was determined not to have a repeat of the disaster we had--had when I was a kid, so we stuck with it and Annie was very patient with me as I learned how to be a dog trainer with her. And obviously I did not give her up and I had her for about 15 years, and it was one of the best experiences I've ever had in my life. And that's actually why I became a dog trainer.

Interviewer: So you and Annie learned together?

Howard Weinstein: We did indeed.

Interviewer: And you believe that training can and should start the--the actual day that your dog comes home with you. Now why is that so important?

Howard Weinstein: Well puppies are learning--a lot of trainers and behaviorists call them little sponges; they're learning from the time that their eyes open and their little feet start working and they start exploring their environment. So since they're learning anyway we might as well step in and teach them what we want them to know. As many of our listeners, if they've had dogs will know, dogs are creatures of habit and routine. The question isn't whether they will get into habits; the question is whose habits will they develop--the ones they come upon naturally, which are usually the things we don't like, or the ones we teach them which are the things that make them great pets and companions?

Interviewer: Hmm; so there isn't actually a--an age that is too young to begin training dogs?

Howard Weinstein: No; in fact, a lot of breeders will actually start doing a little bit of training when the puppies are six and seven weeks old and some people if they're lucky and they get a puppy from a--a determined and diligent breeder will get puppies who are almost house-trained at about eight or nine weeks which is very rare, but it's proof that they can learn that there are some places that are okay to go to the bathroom meaning outside or on paper and not other places like your carpeting.

Interviewer: That's a great thing; if you can get a puppy that's that far along when they come into your home--now why is obedience training so important to both dog and the owner in just a general sense?

Howard Weinstein: Well because what it's really doing is it's establishing the right relationship right from the outset which is why getting back to the early question it's important to do it immediately. When puppies come to live with us they're going from an environment where there is pack order with their brothers and sisters and mom and of course the breeder and when they come to live with us, if there are no other dogs already there, puppies look around and they go cool. We get to start all over. I think maybe I'll be in charge. And they do try, so if we establish right away that humans are in charge and puppies aren't puppies are fine with that because dogs by nature are either leaders or followers and we don't really want our dogs thinking they're the leaders of the pack.

Interviewer: Right.

Howard Weinstein: So if we start teaching them basic obedience commands, what's okay, what's not okay, guiding them out of trouble by using a leash in the house to keep them with us, using baby gates and crates to keep them confined when we can't watch them, also to keep them out of trouble, and really important--teaching them right away that we control the resources that are important to them, because if you think about it what's most important to puppies and dogs it's in no particular order, attention and affection, food, treats, toys, going out to play, going out for walks. If we give them those things for free it's pretty natural for them to say humans are my servants. But if we teach them actually that they have to work for the things they value meaning we teach them to sit and then require

them to sit before we give them their meals, before we give them treats, before we give them some petting and attention then it's kind of like teaching a little kid to say please and it really does work. And so not only does it teach them obedience commands but it teaches them how to use those commands to get the things they want from us in a way that we find enjoyable rather than jumping on us and barking at us and biting us to get attention.

Interviewer: And it also retains that pack order that you talked about--

Howard Weinstein: Yes.

Interviewer: --the--the humans are the leaders and the--the dogs are the followers. Now I think I've had a follower dog and a leader dog and my--my current dog who is a German Shepard and she is so smart, she seems to be a little more submissive and we've--I think we've done a much better job of training her than we did the previous Golden Retriever who was more of a leader. He liked to do things his own way I think. But that personality trait of being a leader or a follower does that stay with them throughout their lives if you--if you do train them to you know follow you?

Howard Weinstein: Yeah pretty much; as long as we're consistent setting up rules that are reasonable, teaching them how to obey the rules and how to get the rules to get the things they want from us they really--again it gets back to what we had said earlier about them being creatures of habit and routine. Once the routines are set unless we change them they're not going to change them because they're pretty much okay with them. It's kind of one of the little secrets that dogs don't want us to know. They don't care how they get what they want--if they actually get what they want; so if we teach them that the best way to get what they want is to sit and stay and look adorable, like my little dog Mickey is doing right now, then they're cool with that. On the other hand, if they think they can get what they want by being annoying and it's our word--not theirs--they just know if it works or not, and if barking gets them attention there is no reason for them to stop barking. So kind one of the truths of--of dog training is if you're not happy with the way your dog behaves and you want to change that you have to change the way you interact with your dog and once you change your interactions they kind of pick on it and they go oh, okay; that's the new rule huh? And they're really fine with it either way but we naturally want them to do the things that we want them to do and not the things they cook up on their own.

Interviewer: Well it just makes life a lot easier doesn't it? Now I want to talk about how we start with say a young puppy but you actually say in a lot of your material that it's never too late which is great because a lot of people are adopting and you know from shelters or from you know the--the different rescue places and why don't we talk a little bit about how we start. Say we bring a young puppy home; I mean what is like the very first thing you want to establish?

Howard Weinstein: One of the first things I think is getting them used to having a collar and a leash and spending substantial amounts of time in a crate and thinking about life from a puppy's point of view, when they live with the breeder most puppies pretty much come and go as they please; very few of them spending any time in crates. Maybe they're gated or penned in an area but they're really unrestricted. They don't have leashes or collars on and so we buy them, we bring them home; the first thing we do is we put a collar on and we put a leash on which keeps them from going where they want to go and we put them in crates or use baby gates to confine them to a safe area like a laundry room or a--a kitchen, and so immediately we're restricting their lives left and right and restricting their freedom. So a lot of puppies rebel right away because they say you know what? I've been around for eight weeks and nobody has ever done this to me before. Why are we doing it now? If you make it less of a battle of the wills and more of a coaxing sort of procedure you can coax puppies to follow you on a leash. If you drag them they're going to dig their heels in, sit down, lay down--almost everybody who has ever dealt with a puppy has had an experience of literally dragging them across the sidewalk and it's a wonder that sparks are not flying out from under their little rear-ends. But if you suddenly stop trying to drag them and you turn around and face them and maybe squeak a squeaky toy at them, all of the sudden they perk up and they go oh are we going to play a game now? And once you make it a game and--and coaxing instead of dragging and forcing they're pretty much okay about it. Another thing that people can do to get them used to being on leashes is when you take your puppy out on a leash basically let him go where he wants to go as long as you're keeping him out of trouble, keeping him out of the street, keeping him from eating things you don't want him to eat, but generally speaking let me take the lead, let him wonder and explore a little bit and you just kind of follow along. And by doing that the leash becomes a connection rather than a restriction. And within a week or two they go hey you're going to put that leash on me and we're going to go out and have fun. And then it's a positive thing instead of a negative one.

Another thing that's important actually is using a leash in the house with a young puppy because you can't confine them all the time and most people do eventually want their puppies to have free run of their homes. And the best way for them to learn to do that safely is attached to you at the end of a six-foot or four-foot leash. It's like an umbilical cord that keeps them out of trouble. If they're never more than four or five feet away from you there's not a lot of trouble they can get into; they won't get very far with chewing on your furniture or nibbling the end of your tasseled carpet or anything like that. And you're right there to correct them; plus if they're that close to you you're going to be near them if they look like they're thinking about potty time and you can zip them right outside.

Other things I think that are important are giving them some socialization but not too much because it can be really overwhelming in that first two weeks. For puppies again from their point of view it's as if they've been abducted by aliens and dropped on a new planet. And even though it may be a nice planet and they have a comfortable place to be and people take good care of them and have toys for them and feed them and hug them and love them, it's still stressful. And so those first two weeks it's not a bad idea to invite a few friends over. If you've got kids, have a couple of friends come over at a time to play with the new puppy rather than having an entire neighborhood descend on your house because that can be really overwhelming for--for little puppies who aren't used to that.

Interviewer: Sure, sure.

Howard Weinstein: And then of course you do want to start teaching them some basic obedience, teaching them to sit, teaching them to come at the end of the leash, and--and start using the concept of rewarding good behavior and correct incorrect behavior.

Interviewer: Now I would think in--in terms of socialization that it would be important to introduce that puppy to the immediate family and how--have them bond just like you would bond to a new baby with the immediate family for at least a few days.

Howard Weinstein: Yeah; I think that's helpful and you know like I said if you want to have a few friends come over at a time and play with them they're not going to be there all day; they're going to be there for a half hour or 45 minutes and then they'll leave and the family members are still there, and puppies are pretty good at figuring

out what's going on in their new environment and that's mostly what they're doing in that first week or two. They're figuring out who lives here, what do they smell like, where is the food, what is the sound of the food being served to me, where do I sleep, the smells, the schedules; you know all those things that are just getting to know the basic environment and then usually within a week or two they're--they're familiar enough with their new home environment that they're pretty comfortable and--and by then they usually know who lives there and who doesn't and that's really--really it's in that week or two that you want to use their name a lot. Every time you're sitting with them and petting them use their name.

Interviewer: Oh good point; yes.

Howard Weinstein: So they learn that the name is them; when you say that name you're--you're talking to him and sometimes people look at me like they've had their dogs for six months and they say I'm not sure he knows his name yet. But usually they're pretty quick about things like that and--and speaking of words and names, dogs are capable of learning 100 or more individual words and phrases.

Interviewer: Really?

Howard Weinstein: So the sooner you start learning--start using those names repetitively, using phrases over and over again, almost everybody has had the experience of having to spell the word *walk* because dogs learn pretty quickly--

Interviewer: [*Laughs*] Yes.

Howard Weinstein: --who is taking the dog out for a walk and they hear that magic word and then they run to the door and they go yeah, who's taking me out for a walk? So people start spelling it--who is taking the dog out for a w-a-l-k?

Interviewer: Right; you can't get much past a dog when they--once they learn a few words like that.

Howard Weinstein: Right, right; and people don't realize that they only have to say w-a-l-k about twice [*Laughs*] before their dogs understand that it means the same thing as walk. So then I don't know; I guess sign language might be the next thing or Morse code.

Interviewer: [*Laughs*] Okay; let's go back to that crate because when I got my first dog when I was in first grade--Tippy came to live with us and he was a great dog but they--nobody was crate training at that point and he did--he chewed everything in the house and he you know--he just wasn't as obedient, so consequently he ended up in the backyard a lot and he was away from the family and everybody in my family feels guilty about Tippy's life. He was a great dog but we didn't get to him early enough and the crate I think would have been such a great resource for us.

Howard Weinstein: Well basically a crate is--is like a combination crib and playpen. And if you think of it comparing a puppy to a one and a half or two year-old child very few parents at least if they're clue(ful) [*Laughs*] are letting one and a half year olds run around the house unsupervised. So you try to watch them and supervise them and--and keep an eye on them but you can't do that every waking minute of the day. At some point mom or dad or caregiver has to do something where they can't watch the toddler. So what do they do? You plop them in a crib or a playpen where they've got their toys. They can lie down and sleep; they've got things to keep them busy but mainly they're safe and it's basically the same way with puppies. They're--they're very curious like little kids are and they don't know what's dangerous like little kids again and so again in comparison everything goes into their mouths. Now it could be that they chew up a shoelace or a shoe or something which is you know not a great thing but they can also swallow socks which is bad; they can chew on electrical cords which is even worse; so when you can't watch a puppy in the same room, same space as you're in--in visible--within visible distance where you can literally keep an eye on them then they really should be in their crate or a puppy playpen as an alternative. Most pet stores and a lot of the online pet supply places sell puppy playpens which come in various sizes; some are plastic, some are metal, but it's a good alternative or an option to crating all the time. In fact, what a lot of people will do if they've got enough space usually in a kitchen because the floor is easy to clean, they'll set up the playpen and then put the crate in the playpen. So the playpen gives a puppy a little bit more room, a little bit of a--of an alternative to being locked in the crate but it's still a limited space and it can't get into much trouble and if they have an accident it's in a limited area where it can be cleaned up easily.

But the idea of crating is if you teach puppies quickly that crates are positive places to be, not only does it keep them out of trouble when you can't watch them but it's a big help with housetraining. But

the trick is to use it in as positive way as possible and some of the ways that you can make have a positive connotation for dogs, especially young puppies is feed them their meals in the crate. Puppies generally eat three or four meals a day; so you're not leaving food in the crate but at those specific three or four meal times, you dish the food out and you put it into the crate and your puppy eats in the crate and then you remove the bowl when your puppy is done or when 10 or 15 minutes is up. So if the crate is associated with--with dinner--

Interviewer: Right.

Howard Weinstein: --that's a big plus.

Interviewer: Who wouldn't want to be in there?

Howard Weinstein: Absolutely. Another thing is to have some toys that you save as crate toys, things like the rubber cong type toys. Those are toys that are hollow and you can stuff some peanut butter in; you can even mix some of their dry kibble in with the peanut butter and some people will freeze a peanut butter stuffed cong. So basically you have a peanut butter-cicle and if you have one or two of those in the freezer for those time when you want your dog to be in the crate for you know 20 minutes, a half-hour, even a couple of hours, if at the moment that you put him in the crate you take out one of these special toys or two of them and you give them these toys in the crate they come to associate the crate with these super special toys that have food in them, and because the peanut butter takes some time for them to lick out it keeps them busy for anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes or more. And they're really having such a good time that they don't mind being in the crate.

Another thing that's important is to actually use the crate for short periods of time when you're home even in the same room as your puppy. A lot of people will only use crates when they're leaving or at night; now night it's no big deal. They're sleeping, they don't really care; but if people use crates other than night-time only when they're leaving their puppies home alone then puppies sometimes start associating the crate with being left home. And so that makes them think you know what; I don't like going in here anymore. But if you use it for short periods when you're actually there you know sitting down, reading the paper, drinking your cup of coffee, you want the puppy in the room with you but you don't want to have to watch him to keep him out of trouble that's when you take one of those cong toys out or similar type toys where you can stuff some food or peanut

butter in, give your puppy that in the crate, and leave him in the crate--be with him in the same room but he's crated. And that's really using it like the crib and playpen idea. And that way they don't associate it with being left home alone; they do associate it with being with you but entertaining themselves with a toy that's got a real play value to it because it's got food in it.

Interviewer: Right; I've actually been visiting people when the dogs just go into the crate voluntarily you know to--and they probably have one of those cong things. I wish I had known about the cong thing [**Laughs**]-the peanut butter cong, whatever it is.

Howard Weinstein: If you use a crate properly most dogs actually do think of it as their little safe space and they retreat to it when they want to be alone.

Interviewer: It makes sense.

Howard Weinstein: Like their little fortress of solitude for super-puppy.

Interviewer: Uh-hm; now how do we know when they're ready to leave the crate?

Howard Weinstein: Ah [**Laughs**]-that's more of an art than a science. Giving puppies too much freedom too soon is probably one of the most common mistakes. I see it all the time and if you ever go to an animal shelter or check an animal shelter website you'll probably notice that more than half the dogs at most shelters are less than one year-old which means they're still puppies. And I think one of the major reasons that they end up at shelters is if people do a puppy class when their puppies are young, you know three or four months and they work real hard on housetraining, when they're eight or nine months old people are thinking well; my dog is not pooping on the rug anymore; he's not chewing everything in sight anymore; he's got his adult teeth so he's not teething; why can't I give him free run of the house? And they do and that's when puppies are teenage puppies, which is a period that goes from about six or seven months to about two years; although in the case of Labs and Golden Retrievers it could be closer to three years. And teenage puppies--we use that term because they're very much like teenage humans; sometimes they're great and sometimes you want to strangle them. Sometimes they're perfect and sometimes when you talk to them it's as if you are just talking from another planet in a language they don't understand.

Interviewer: I know exactly what you're saying.

Howard Weinstein: They look at--they either don't look at you or they look at you like who are you talking to? They also get very impulsive; so that's the age range where puppies do some really destructive behaviors--chewing holes in walls like my dogs did originally years ago, pulling down curtain rods, eating house plants, knocking over the kitchen trash cans--why do they do these things... because at the moment it seemed like it was a good idea and boy was it fun. And it's kind of like the 16 year-old kid who is an honor student and his parents think I can trust these kids at home because they're perfect. And mom and dad go away for a long weekend and then they come home and they find beer cans on the lawn and the car is in the pool in the backyard and the parents say what were you thinking? And the kids go--thinking? Sort of a non-existent concept for teenage humans--

Interviewer: Good analogy.

Howard Weinstein: --and--and very often to teenage puppies, so most puppies--most puppies really shouldn't be given free run of the home.

Interviewer: Are those your teenagers in the background?

Howard Weinstein: Yes; they are my little 10 year-olds. I don't know what they were barking at.

Interviewer: So we definitely want to get past the teenage period before we take them out of the--

Howard Weinstein: Yes; before you give them a lot of freedom.

Interviewer: --crate?

Howard Weinstein: So there's a period where after they're a year--year and a couple of months you can start giving them what I refer to as conditional freedom, meaning if you can see them they don't have to be in the same room as you. And I'll tell you a story about how this--this almost didn't work for us. When--when my two Corgis that I have now; they're both 10 years old; when they were about a year and a couple of months old we started giving them some of this conditional

freedom. For most of their first year they and I lived in the kitchen most of the time. **[Laughs]**

Interviewer: Oh my gosh.

Howard Weinstein: We--we moved one of our computers into the kitchen so I could work in there and that way I could keep an eye on them without having them crated all the time. We did use a baby gate; we used puppy playpens, but a year and two months so we started saying okay if I can see you, you don't have to be in the kitchen with me. So one day I'm sitting in the kitchen, working at the kitchen table and they were in the living room probably no more than 15-feet from me and they were there for about 20 minutes and every time I would look up they were--as far as I could tell--lying side-by-side under this big wooden rocking chair that we have in the living room. And they didn't seem to be doing anything. Well parents will--have all heard the--the--the admonition that if it's too quiet in the family room or in the basement you want to go see what trouble the kids are getting into.

Interviewer: Right. **[Laughs]**

Howard Weinstein: So I finally walked over to see what they had been doing for the last 20 minutes of apparent nothing I mean in terms of their activities, and I realized why they had been so happily quiet for 20 minutes. They had been taking turns chewing on the rocker on the bottom of the rocking chair and they chewed about an inch and a half of--of wood off it in that 20 minutes. Did they get scolded? Yes; but it was really my fault because I wasn't watching them closely enough and freedom was rescinded for another few months. And then we started working on it again but that little incident illustrated what I called the human co-conspirator theory, which basically is when puppies do something wrong there's a human co-conspirator. They don't do things wrong in a vacuum; they do things wrong because we either didn't do something we should have done to prevent it or we did something that allowed it to happen. So I always tell my training clients when your puppy does something wrong, first you've got to remember he doesn't know it's wrong; second you want to ask yourself what was the human role in that mistake? It's a shared mistake--what did I do that allowed it to happen? What can I do differently so it doesn't happen again?

Interviewer: So we're retraining ourselves as we're training--

Howard Weinstein: Pretty much yeah.

Interviewer: --the puppies?

Howard Weinstein: I mean I've had clients say to me even though people have told them don't let your puppy sleep in bed with you at the beginning and I've had people say to me well the third time my puppy peed in our bed and I'm going what was it about the first two times that didn't make you rethink this strategy? **[Laughs]** But sometimes it's easier to say it's the dog's fault than it is to say that was a human stupidity. And we can fix our end of the deal and when we do it usually takes care of the puppy problem.

Interviewer: Okay; well let's go back to rewarding. Something tells me Howard that it's really good to be a dog in your home. So let's talk about some of the rewards that you might have used and be kind because I haven't had dinner yet; so--.

Howard Weinstein: **[Laughs]** Well praise obviously is always at the top of the list.

Interviewer: Okay.

Howard Weinstein: You know you can't over-praise a dog I don't think. I mean if they've done something good--even if they're just lying there happily chewing on a toy that's good behavior, so you want to go over and--and let your puppy know that that's a good thing to do by giving him a little bit of attention. But treats--treats have been a bone of contention so to speak among trainers for--as long as there have been dog trainers. And old-fashioned trainers never used treats. But this was before the sort of rise of what we refer to as positive reinforcement training. And some trainers I think actually recommend using too many treats; so the way that I like to do it is when you're teaching a puppy or a dog something new use treats frequently to reward them when they do the right thing because it really does help them remember and pay attention. But once they're--they're good at it the fancy psychology term is intermittent reinforcement. You want to scale back and make those treats random and unpredictable because the kind of treats that we're talking about are tidbits and they can range from your dog's kibble which if they like their food is a really good training treat because it's what you're already got a big bag of, it's cheap, and it's good for them, but some dogs are not that thrilled with their food as training treats. You can use Cheerios--plain, non-sugared Cheerios; there's really nothing hazardous in a Cheerio. For

store-bought treats I actually use a brand called Mother Hubbard because they're--they say they're all natural and they're small and you can break them into smaller pieces. The idea is you really want it to be a small treat, maybe the size of your pinky fingernail or a piece of dog kibble. Some people need to find something a little more enticing because their dogs are--are jaded [**Laughs**] or they're just not that--

Interviewer: Or spoiled.

Howard Weinstein: --excited about Cheerios or kibble and then you can use little tiny pieces of American cheese or you can use little tiny chunks of hotdogs that are cut up; some--most dogs love carrots and if your dog likes carrots then you can chop--

Interviewer: Really?

Howard Weinstein: --carrots into small pieces. So there's a variety of things that you can use. If--if--for people who use commercially manufactured treats I would suggest reading the label to find out what's in it because a lot of the commercial treats--one of the reasons that they're so appealing to dogs is they're high in fat and high in sugar and neither of those things are particularly good for your dogs, plus if they get a lot of those kinds of treats they're not going to want to eat their regular food because they're going to want to hold out for the good stuff.

But positive reinforcement training sort of started with trainers who worked with dolphins and killer whales and sea lions at Sea World type shows, because if you think about it you can't really force a killer whale to do something and so trainers had to figure out a way to motivate these really big strong animals with big sharp teeth to jump through hoops and do behaviors that they normally do in the wild anyway but you want them to do it on command in front of an audience of thousands of screaming wet people. And so obviously what they figured out was well these guys like fish. So if you reward them with fish they'll do the tricks. And it works, and so trainers started to think maybe 20 years ago well why aren't we doing--doing this with dogs? It works with these other animals and dogs are smart, and so when more and more trainers started doing positive reinforcement instead of coercive training using you know painful techniques like choke collars or prong collars or shock collars it worked. Positive reinforcement training worked great with dogs.

So using treats is fine; most trainers have come around to this way of thinking and most trainers recommend a lot of use of treats at the beginning, scale it back as you move along, and eventually the treats don't have to be very often.

Interviewer: I was going to say because well just allow me to brag a little bit. My German Shepard, Matty--Matilda who is one of the smartest dogs **[Laughs]** there ever was I know. She--we have trained her to run down the driveway which is fairly long and bring up the paper every morning. Well we have been giving those bacon treats pretty much every day and she seems to like them but I really feel like she could take the treat or leave it; I think her--she gets so much satisfaction from bringing that paper to us every day that I think you know she's happy with the praise.

Howard Weinstein: You're right and you hit on something that's really important about most dogs. They like to do jobs; most dogs originally were bred to do certain jobs but your German Shepard probably isn't really guarding much. My Corgis don't have a herd of sheep to take care of and so when they don't have the job that they were bred to do and they really--their job becomes being our pets, so if you can give your job like you have with Matty that's great. For a lot of people it's simply that your job is doing what I ask you to do and being a good dog. And you're right; they really do like the feedback that they get. The like the fact that--dogs are natural clowns--most of them, and if they think that we're laughing and we're happy because of something they did they're thinking cool; nice things will happen for the dogs when the humans are happy. And so they do; they figure out behaviors.

My dog Mickey when she was a puppy, her way of getting attention and she weighed about 15-pounds at the time--was to hurl herself at you from across the room. Needless to say we wanted to get rid of this behavior as quickly as possible. **[Laughs]** So we stopped her from doing that mostly by using a leash and we taught her to sit. So Mickey said okay; I can sit for attention. So she'd sit right at your feet and she'd look up at you waiting. And if you didn't pay attention to her she'd take her little round hand and she'd tap you on the foot which was absolutely endearing and adorable and of course we would give her attention. So 10 years later if Mickey wants your attention or she wants to be nice to you or she thinks you're upset, she'll come over and she'll gently pat you with her hand and it still is as adorable as it was then. But she figured out almost accidentally that this was a

good way to get positive attention--the fact that it happened to be incredibly cute was a bonus for us.

Interviewer: Now my sister-in-law's dog who is a mixed breed--what is it--a Retriever and a Poodle--like a Cock--what are those--what is--?

Howard Weinstein: Labradoodle?

Interviewer: Labradoodle thank you; she actually rings a bell to come in the house and to go out when she has to go do her business. Have you ever seen that?

Howard Weinstein: I have; in fact a lot of people--it's sort of related to one of the most desperate questions that people ask me--especially with puppies is when will my puppy learn to tell me she needs to go to the bathroom or how can I teach my puppy to tell me when she needs to go? And some people really go to the effort of doing things as--as overt as teaching their dogs to ring a bell at the door or to go to the door and bark. The only drawback to that is when they're grown up and they don't need to go to the bathroom 53 times a day anymore, they only go the four or five times that you take them out, they've learned that if they go and ring the bell someone will take them out. **[Laughs]** So in some cases it's--you wonder who trained who.

Interviewer: Yeah; I did notice she was ringing the bell an awful lot while I was there.

Howard Weinstein: **[Laughs]** So I actually prefer to suggest to people that they really might not want to teach their dog to do that. It's the same thing as teaching them to speak; it's usually something they end up--the people end up regretting because if your dog learns to bark and that she'll get a reward when she barks you can see where that might lead.

Interviewer: Yes, absolutely.

Howard Weinstein: **[Laughs]** Sometimes we need to be careful about what we teach them. If we inadvertently reinforce a behavior that we're going to end up hating then it's not so good.

Interviewer: Yeah; that makes a lot of sense but sometimes we just don't know. **[Laughs]** Now go back to choker chains; are they pretty much passé at this point?

Howard Weinstein: You know a lot of people still use them and they still sell them in the stores and some trainers unfortunately are still using them. The truth about choke collars is most people don't use them properly. And if you don't use it properly the way a professional trainer can or an experienced dog owner can you can actually do some permanent damage to dogs' throats.

Interviewer: Seems very--

Howard Weinstein: I had one case of a--a client--I guess it was about--it was last year, about this time last year; she had a Pomeranian which is a little tiny fuzz ball and she had talked to a trainer who came to her house and this guy was one of the old-fashioned type trainers who insisted on using choke collars. Not only did he insist on using choke collars on big dogs with muscular necks like a Labrador Retriever, he insisted on using a choke collar on this little Maltese whose neck is a--not a whole lot bigger than your thumb and the--the woman who owned the dog was mortified and at the end of the hour she kind of shooed the guy out and she was--she was just really upset that he had used a harsh coercive training technique on a little tiny dog.

Interviewer: Yeah; that's sad.

Howard Weinstein: And I--I don't know how she got my name--maybe from someone she knew I think but she--the first thing she asked me was please tell me you don't use choke collars and I said I don't. With small breed puppies you never want to use anything like a choke collar. In fact, with small breed, toy breed type puppies, what you really want on them is a body harness because that takes all the stress off their throat and their throats are so small and so unprotected by any real muscle that you really want to make sure that you don't do some damage. Even a little dog doing a lot of pulling with a neck collar, you know pulling you down the street when you walk them, they can actually crush their windpipes and it can be a permanent injury. So the body harness on the little toy breed type puppies keeps their throat safe and a four-pound dog can't really pull you that hard anyway.

With bigger breed puppies, I almost always start out with a regular neck collar because it's not going to do too much damage and in any case it's not like a choke collar which tightens on their neck. If puppies do a lot of pulling I will either recommend a body harness which doesn't fix the pulling but it takes the stress off their throat.

There are couple of new pieces of equipment which I use a lot these days. One is called the Gentle Leader Head Collar, which is similar to a head halter for horses in that you control your dog by the head instead of by the neck, so not only does it take all the stress off their necks and their throats, but you--it's much easier to control a dog by its head because if the head goes in one direction since the head tends to be attached to the body, the body usually goes in the same direction. And it gives you much finer control with a whole lot less muscle power; the company that makes it calls it Power Steering for Dogs and it really is. So with a lot of the big breed puppies--German Shepard(s), Rottweiler(s), Retrievers--Goldens, Labs, any other big breed puppy that gets really big really fast and really strong really fast starting to use a head collar like the Gentle Leader early pretty much fixes the pulling problem and it gives you physical control over a dog in a way that you can actually teach them to behave properly. And the same company, the General Leader Company, also makes a body harness called the Easy Walk Harness which is similar in principle to the head collar in that the leash hooks to the front instead of to the back and if you're leading your dog by the front he can't go where you don't want him to go. So these are really good alternatives in terms of equipment that are more effective than choke collars--that are more humane than choke collars and ultimately make people feel better about what they're doing with their dogs because nobody likes it when their dog is coughing and choking.

Interviewer: Sure.

Howard Weinstein: And isn't stopping pulling; so my feeling is if you've got a piece of equipment that simplifies the process and works better and is more humane why not use it?

Interviewer: And if you use the Gentle Leader say or the Easy Walk Harness do you eventually transition into the leash from there or--?

Howard Weinstein: You can--you can.

Interviewer: You can go back and forth as they--?

Howard Weinstein: Some people with the Gentle Leader with the head--the head collar, they're so pleased with how it works and there's no downside to it that they just use it for their dog's whole life. Other people say okay; he's not pulling me down the street anymore and he weighs 60-pounds, so that was really a problem, so now I can actually spend the next six months teaching him to walk properly on a leash

and then when he's grown up that's a person who put the extra effort into training him to walk properly who can stop using the head collar if they want to. But there's honestly no downside to using it forever, so it's really--it's not a choice that people have to make at the beginning. Once they start using something like the Gentle Leader Head Collar they can make that choice about whether to use it forever or to stop using it later on depending on how well behaved their dogs are.

Interviewer: Good--good information. Now we've talked about puppies; how about with an older dog that may have been rescued, may have come from a shelter? My brother adopted or rescued Dexter--I didn't know I had so many doggie stories, but I do I guess. **[Laughs]** Dexter, he's a great dog; he's so sweet. He's got the greatest temperament but he's got some quirky little habits and I think he was about four when my brother adopted him, and so you know it was--it was a lot different than having a puppy in the home. So how--how would you address obedience training with a dog who has a--has a past shall we say?

Howard Weinstein: Yeah; it's a little like buying a used car and--and of course everybody says go to shelters. It's a great way to adopt a dog who needs a home and it is. But I find that some people don't go in with their eyes open; so the first thing that you want to do if you're adopting a shelter dog is really--don't fall in love immediately which is sometimes hard to do.

Interviewer: Hmm; okay.

Howard Weinstein: You know your heart goes out to these dogs and the ones who look so sweet and just beg you to take them home, people get carried away with that and they don't evaluate so the best thing if you can--if they know anything about the history of the dog, which in some cases shelters don't because in some cases they're strays or in some cases people just kind of drop them off and hurry off--you know leave as quickly as they can. If there is a history find out as much as you can about it.

Interviewer: We actually heard that Dexter had been thrown out of a car on a highway.

Howard Weinstein: Awe.

Interviewer: I mean it was a horrible story.

Howard Weinstein: Yeah.

Interviewer: And so once you hear that story of course you--you just want to take that dog in and--

Howard Weinstein: Absolutely.

Interviewer: --and you know everybody loves him but I'll tell you what; he can get into any container. I mean there is not a container that he can't--and he loves creamer you know--the powdered creamer, so he'll get into the creamer. He--my brother takes him to work and he'll go into the room where they have the coffee set up and he'll get into the creamer and he comes out and he's got you know creamer all over his face. **[Laughs]** So he's--he's--he's a tricky thing but he's so sweet; so. I--I don't know; I think everybody felt kind of bad for him and didn't give him a lot of discipline but he certainly is well loved.

Howard Weinstein: Yeah; I think if you get a dog from a shelter and there's no--there's no major problems and most shelters won't try to adopt out dogs who have major aggression problems or anything like that, you know the first couple of weeks I'd say observe this dog closely, don't give him too much freedom, figure out his personality, figure out if he has any quirks, figure out if he's clever enough to open the refrigerator and eat everything in it which some of them can do--.

Interviewer: Survival.

Howard Weinstein: Yes, absolutely; and also try to figure out as quickly as possible if this dog knows any commands. And a lot of the dogs that end up in shelters somebody did train them. In some cases, they just couldn't keep them anymore or in some cases dogs escape from yards and become strays. So the sooner that you can figure out if your dog--your new adopted puppy or dog actually knows anything in terms of basic obedience commands, well that's just going to make your life easier, so you can use the familiar words, use treats to see if you can get your dog to sit; if they start doing every command the first time you ask them either you're the world's best trainer or you have a pre-trained dog which is always a good thing to find out.

Interviewer: Great.

Howard Weinstein: Some people will actually hire a trainer like me to go to the shelter with them to evaluate a dog that they're thinking of adopting. I did this with a client last year and this was actually a

puppy that they--they kind of liked at the shelter here in Howard County in Maryland and he seemed like a really nice puppy. He was outgoing; he was playful--didn't seem like he had any major behavioral issues and they adopted him. It was--he did develop a few quirks later but he ended up being a great dog and--but they felt comfortable because they got a professional point of view.

Now is an evaluation by a trainer going to be absolutely foolproof? No; because we will only get to see them for a short period of time but we can give people some insight as to whether this dog is over--overly shy, overly aggressive--and any information that you have that's useful like that before you actually bring this dog or puppy home I think is going to make the process go more smoothly and--and make it more likely to be a successful adoption process. There's a statistic floating around that something like half of all dog adoptions and purchases end up in failure meaning they're either returned to the shelter, returned to the breeder, resold to someone else, or as you mentioned in some cases--awful cases, simply abandoned or thrown out of cars. And I think a little caution and forethought and preparation probably doubles your chances of making this a successful venture.

Interviewer: So go in just like you said in the beginning--go in with your eyes wide open, so that--

Howard Weinstein: Absolutely.

Interviewer: --you--you don't have any preconceived ideas of the perfect dog but you know your eyes are wide open; so--. **[Laughs]**

Howard Weinstein: And in a lot of cases even with an older dog that you're adopting from a shelter or a rescue group it's still not a bad idea to--to work with a trainer for a couple of private sessions because at that point most classes are really for puppies or younger dogs.

Interviewer: That's a great idea. That's a great idea.

Howard Weinstein: But it's probably worth the investment just for peace of mind to know that your dog is as good as you think and to start teaching him things that he or she may not know having come from the shelter with a history that's sort of unknown. But it really kind of gets you off on the right foot, and one of the things that I really enjoy about my job as a trainer is making people feel comfortable and confident in what they're doing because confidence

really adds to the relationship. If you're confident with a puppy or a dog then they're more likely to look to you as a leader. And if you're not they're going to go well somebody has got to be in charge here and if it's not the human I guess it's got to be me. Any--anyone who has watched the Dog Whisperer on the *National Geographic Channel* sees him a lot and he's a great trainer but he's so clearly a natural. I'm not sure that even professional trainers like me could do some of what he does. **[Laughs]** I really am amazed at the way he calms aggressive dogs down. But he talks about the fact that calm assertiveness is how you want to relate to your dog and it's true because it makes the dog feel comfortable that you're in charge and they need to know that.

Interviewer: Howard, I'm sure you've seen a lot of different types of behaviors in dogs. What are some of the common pitfalls or maybe some of the quirky behaviors that you've seen that your clients have overcome with their dogs?

Howard Weinstein: Well there was this story--since you have a German Shepard, you'll appreciate this; there was a--getting back a little bit to what we talked about earlier, about the equipment that you use to train your dog, this is when I was still using choke collars and a woman called me and she had a 110-pound one year-old German Shepard--

Interviewer: Wow.

Howard Weinstein: --and it's a female dog, nice dog--not mean or nasty, aggressive, or anything but excessively excitable. Every time she was outside and saw a kid riding a bike or rollerblading or joggers running past or school buses driving past and this woman weighed about the same amount as her dog did **[Laughs]** and when her dog reared up on her hind legs you're talking a big dog here. And so we were trying to get the dog who had gone through some group puppy school earlier at about six months of age, so she knew basic commands. But when dogs get either afraid or excited about something instincts override training. And we tried working with a choke collar to get her to do a better sit/stay or down/stay when these triggers would--would come within range and we weren't making a lot of progress. And so the--the owner told me they had used the Gentle Leader in the group puppy class six months earlier but her dog was one of those dogs who just sort of flipped out when they put this on her head. And the trainer gave up on it too quickly and said you're probably not going to be able to use that with her; just put it away.

So we took it out and we tried it one more time and this time six months after the initial experience with the--the head collar this puppy was fine with it. She really didn't care, so we thought ah, let's--let's work with this a little bit. And her goal was to be able to walk her dog in the park every day without her looking like she needed police help. **[Laughs]**

Interviewer: Right.

Howard Weinstein: And so we worked with the head--with the Gentle Leader Head Collar for one or two sessions and then the--the owner worked on her own and she called me about three weeks later and said we're walking in the park every day and people are stopping me and complimenting me on how well behaved my dog is. **[Laughs]** So that's what convinced me to start using this myself and--and it was really amazing to me that we could make that kind of progress just by switching from one method to another method. So proper equipment I think is--is a big help. Jumping behavior, barking behavior--those are behaviors that people generally find really, really annoying and in some cases it's just a matter of if your dog barks at everything that passes by the front of your house when you're not home then gate your dog in the kitchen at the back of the house when you're not home. Your dog will nap the whole time and nobody will you know--nobody in the neighborhood will end up being disturbed by this.

What are some of the other things I could say?

Interviewer: Well since we were talking about German Shepard(s) and I was bragging earlier but now I have to confess that my German Shepard isn't completely perfect. She has a submissive urination issue; when people come to the house she pretty much pees on their foot if they say hi.

Howard Weinstein: Yeah.

Interviewer: And we--you know we've read about it and we've read--I mean I--do you have any advice for other dog owners with this kind of problem?

Howard Weinstein: That's actually a very common problem.

Interviewer: Oh good.

Howard Weinstein: How old is Matty?

Interviewer: Matty is four now.

Howard Weinstein: Okay; yeah it's--in dog language it's actually a compliment, however most people still don't really appreciate it when their foot gets peed on. But it's what puppies will do with--with larger older dogs to tell them I'm a tiny baby. Please don't hurt me. They also tend to scrunch down real low and they get real wiggly and they really look--which in the case of your German Shepard must look kind of funny to see this big dog trying to act like a tiny puppy.

Interviewer: Right, right.

Howard Weinstein: But it's--it's--it's something that's instinctive and they really can't help it. So the way that you can help a dog get over that and--and it's obviously easier if you can do this when they're young and--and are doing it because well you know when you're a young puppy everybody is bigger and older than you. But even with an older dog, the idea is to get him to focus on something else instead of their nervousness and generally what works is getting them to sit and stay and practicing it outside [**Laughs**]---where it matters less.

Interviewer: Like as soon as you come home?

Howard Weinstein: Huh?

Interviewer: As soon as you get--you come home instead of saying hi, you just have them sit and stay?

Howard Weinstein: Yes, yes; you make--if you make the greetings and the departures less enthusiastic, make them calmer--even in a lot of cases ignore a dog for five or ten minutes when you come home--

Interviewer: Yeah; we do that.

Howard Weinstein: --but if you've got people coming in your front door to visit you well you know they're coming so what you might do--first off, put your dog on a leash and have treats with you. Now a dog in order to overcome this needs to be good at a command, such as sit/stay because sitting--as soon as their rear-end hits the ground it's over; they can pee on your foot again. But a stay--that's a duration as long as you want it to be. It could be five seconds; it could be five minutes. So if your dog is being asked to do a command that is

ongoing for a fairly lengthy period of time instead of being over in a half a second, at least part of their brain is focused on oh they asked me to stay; I really don't want to stay. I want to wiggle and pee on that guy's foot but they told me to stay so I'm going to try really, really hard to do that. And if you can reinforce the stay with a couple of treats then they're focused on you, the stay command, and the treats. And they're less focused on being nervous about meeting that person coming in your front door.

Interviewer: Okay.

Howard Weinstein: And then if that person either walks by them so that there really is no greeting or greets them very calmly you know even gets down a little bit, kind of crouches down especially with smaller dogs, it diffuses the anxiety of the greeting and it's a way to help dogs outgrow the submissive urination thing which they don't necessarily as you've discovered outgrow on their own and with time.

Interviewer: Right, right.

Howard Weinstein: But it gets back to one of the other important things about obedience commands and why it's so important to teach dogs as many commands as you can think of. I mean a lot of people will stop with two or three but that's a waste of really good little doggie brains.

Interviewer: If they can learn 100--

Howard Weinstein: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Yeah; we're underachieving.

Howard Weinstein: So when you teach dogs obedience commands you bolster their confidence. So for dogs who are shy and nervous like Matty in certain circumstances and my dog, my other Corgi Callie, when they're listening to a command they're focused on the person who gave them the command and that helps them defer to your leadership and it helps them be more confident in situations that would otherwise make them nervous or anxious.

So the--the obedience commands have so many uses and I find that some trainers and training books because they know--the trainer who wrote the book or the trainer who is doing the class, they know how to make the connection between this is the command and this is

what you use it for--that they forget to teach it to their--their pupils, their students. So it's real important for trainers and training books to make the connection of here's the sit command, here's the stay command, here's what you use them for after you teach them to your dog; and that's one of the things that I tried to do in my book.

Interviewer: Are there any more commands that you can suggest to us and we all know sit, stay, down--?

Howard Weinstein: Well pretty much sit is first; down--sit/stay, down/stay, come when called--those are kind of the basics. Wait is another command which is a kind of variation on stay but it's more like saying freeze for a second or two so your dog doesn't run out the door or so that you can dry his feet off when he's muddy. So maybe six or seven basic commands, but I actually encourage my clients to teach their dogs tricks because tricks are fun for everybody and they're cute and they give your dog a whole bunch of other choices of cute things to do when they want your attention. So one of our favorites with or dogs is what we call *prairie dog* which is sort of a begging position but their rear-end(s) are sitting on the floor, so they just kind of sit up in a begging position and it's really cute. And they look like little prairie dogs popping out of their little burrows and Mickey and Callie learned that fairly young and they discovered it was the show stopper.

Interviewer: Oh yeah.

Howard Weinstein: So if nothing else gets attention they'll just pop up and do *prairie dog* at random moments and it always cracks you up and how can you not pay attention to that?

Interviewer: It's very theatrical.

Howard Weinstein: Yeah.

Interviewer: Very cute; well we had a German--Golden Retriever, Laddie; I haven't talked about Laddie. He--he was a Frisbee champion. He entered that Ashley **[Whip-It]** Frisbee thing for a couple years and he did really well but we--he loved to swim so we would take him swimming in lakes or wherever and we taught him to shake away from us, so he wouldn't--you know how they come out of the water and they just want to--

Howard Weinstein: **[Laughs]** Right.

Interviewer: --shake and get you soaking wet? Well he would wait until you know he was far away enough from us so he wouldn't get us wet. We said shake and he would shake; it was so cool. So I guess they can do a lot more than we give them credit for.

Howard Weinstein: Yes.

Interviewer: Now have you noticed that training varies from breed to breed--the--the ease of training dogs varies? Are there certain breeds that are more adaptable or more quick to learn?

Howard Weinstein: That's a tough question. I generally assume every dog can be taught what we want them to know. But there are differences; some dogs are more stubborn. Some breeds are more stubborn. Sometimes it's male versus female. I find females generally a little easier to train but individuals from the same litter can have totally different personalities. So what I like to do is take a basic approach and then improvise as necessary. Some dogs are very high energy and nervous and they need to be--have a calmer approach. Some dogs are really laid back and they need more enthusiasm from their trainers and owners to get them really interested in the training. So it's--really it's not that different from teaching humans; two kids can be equally smart but if they have two different personalities, teachers learn obviously with experience how to approach each child to get the--the best out of them and--and make sure that they learn the most they possibly can.

Interviewer: Right; that makes sense. I like you Howard; you're so hesitant to stereotype--even dogs. **[Laughs]** That's good. Do--do you think dogs have individual personalities?

Howard Weinstein: Oh absolutely.

Interviewer: Yeah? Do you have any stories to tell us about--

Howard Weinstein: **[Laughs]**

Interviewer: --strong--dogs with strong personalities or--?

Howard Weinstein: Well my first Corgi, Annie, the one I got as an adult and kept and had for 15 years fortunately, she could have gone to law school and this is one of the little incidents I wrote about in my book. When I--when I got her my roommate at the time before I was married also had a puppy; she had a Collie puppy and I had Annie, my

little Corgi and the dogs slept in the kitchen. So when it was time for lights out we'd say okay everybody into the kitchen. And Hawkeye the Collie who was just the sweetest dog, he would go into his corner and turn around three times and lay down and he was practically asleep. Annie would set one foot into the kitchen and then scamper back out and she'd look at you like you said to go into the kitchen. Technically I went into the kitchen. So I'd have to look at her and I'd say in a very serious voice *all the way in*, and then she'd look at me for a second and then she'd hunch her little shoulders and then she'd trudge into the kitchen and she'd go to sleep on Hawkeye's tail. And then we'd close the gate. But she did this almost every night when this was--for the three years that the two of them lived together and it just--it was--it--you can't not laugh at that; I mean this is a do who is--who is scoping out the letter of the law versus **[Laughs]** the spirit of the law; so--.

Interviewer: Right; she could have been an attorney. Well you claim that Annie actually helped you write your book *Puppy Kisses Are Good for the Soul*.

Howard Weinstein: Yes; she did. I've been a writer for way longer than I've been a dog trainer and having started with her as a rookie dog owner who knew absolutely nothing and--and having it come out as one of the best experiences in my life, well after she died I noticed that a lot of people would say oh we're so sorry and they would commiserate and then they'd tell me stories about their pets. In some cases dogs and some cases other kinds of pets, and I realized that there's this universal love thing that goes on. Your pet could be a snake or a guinea pig or a dog but if you love your pet you love your pet. And so I thought there was some value in sharing what I went through with her and it started out just as a sort of memoir about life with Annie. And I promised her at the end of her life that I would write a book about her. But it turned into a training book and the reason--it's sort of two books in one almost. A lot of it is the--the experiences that I went through going from--starting from being a rookie dog owner to being a dog trainer and--and I'm happy to say and--and certainly don't mind saying that she taught me most of what I know about dogs. It took me half her life to start learning those lessons. The sub-title on the book--the total title is *Puppy Kisses Are Good for the Soul and Other Important Lessons You and Your Dog Can Teach Each Other*, because I do think it's a two-way street.

Interviewer: It definitely is.

Howard Weinstein: But I--I wanted to put down all these stories about her because it occurred to me they're universal and--and I think it's like--if you think about great song lyrics and this has always struck me because I've also been a writer of other things in my life--when song lyrics are specific the song becomes more universal. Songs that are generalized, **[oobie, doobie, doo]** lyrics--they go in one ear and out the other and nobody really remembers them. But it's the song that tells specific things about specific people and experiences--those are the ones that really stick with you even if it's not an experience you went through.

Interviewer: And touch us; right.

Howard Weinstein: It becomes universal because of the specificity and I found that that's what I wanted to do with this book. And I also wanted to try something a little different. A lot of training books are great at teaching you how to teach your dog the basic commands. But a lot of them I've noticed the trainers who wrote them apparently never made any mistakes because they're certainly not putting them into their books and I've made every mistake it's possible to make. And so what I wanted to really write was the book that I wish someone had given me when Annie was new because it would have made the first three years a lot easier. I would have known what to expect. I would have had a blueprint--not only of how you do training but how all this fits into living with a dog for 15 years which if you're lucky is what--what we get to do. And so those two things I think are a little bit different about puppy kisses and a lot of other training books. First of all, all the mistakes are in there because they're typical mistakes. I've made them all and I learned lessons from them eventually and to me mistakes are how you learn to do better. If you can admit you've made a mistake and learn a lesson from it, you shouldn't make that same mistake again. There are so many new ones to make you move on.

Interviewer: **[Laughs]** And it's much easier to learn from other's mistakes than it is from your own; so--.

Howard Weinstein: Absolutely; so if I can streamline the process for people who read the book I--that's one goal and the other goal is especially with people who are doing this for the first time where they've never had a puppy before or they had a dog as a kid but you know when your mom and dad are in charge of things it's not the same as when you're the responsible adult. I wanted to give people an adult of what it was like to have a dog for 15 years and how a dog fits

into your life; so it goes through all phases of my 15 years with her, you know--things like relationships, getting married, moving, clinical depression, dealing with family members. It just--it's all in there and--and I really get a kick out of seeing a letter or a comment at www.amazon.com from a reader where they say wow; you know your dog sounds so much like mine. And that's what I was looking for because it is that universal experience that we have when we love our **[pets]**.

Interviewer: Well they are so--big a part of our families and you know dog lovers love their dogs, so it's important to have that book. And I'm looking forward to reading *Puppy Kisses Are Good for the Soul*. And Howard Weinstein, I can tell--as I'm sure our listeners can--that you are a true dog lover, and how can our listeners find more information about your Day One Dog Training business or your book, *Puppy Kisses for the Soul*; do you have a website?

Howard Weinstein: Well I do; it's www.puppypawspress.com just like it sounds and--

Interviewer: Okay.

Howard Weinstein: --the book is available either from www.puppypawspress.com or from www.amazon.com where they're selling it at a fair discount these days. So it can be ordered either way and if people want to read a little bit about the book before making a decision they can go to www.amazon.com and just under the search type in *Puppy Kisses*. You don't even have to type the whole title; *Puppy Kisses* will get you to our page at Amazon and you can read reviews and read an excerpt or two from the book and read a little bit more about what's in the book. And that's pretty--

Interviewer: I can't wait to read it. In fact, I think I'm going to read it to Matty when I get home. **[Laughs]**

Howard Weinstein: **[Laughs]**

Interviewer: You think she'll appreciate it? I'm definitely going to teach her a few more tricks or a few more commands because she's smart enough to learn several more at least.

Howard Weinstein: Well our dogs are 10 and they're still learning new things. My wife is actually doing more of the teaching than I am

these days but they've learned to sneeze on command; they've learned to do little **[ru-ru]** barks on command.

Interviewer: Cute.

Howard Weinstein: And it's really funny to watch them try to figure it out and then go oh that's cool; I've added something else to my repertoire.

Interviewer: Well Howard, thank you so much; we've really enjoyed this conversation and again I'm looking forward to your book.

Howard Weinstein: Thank you, Connie.

Interviewer: All right; take care.

You've been listening to *Dog Training Tips* from Expert Trainer and Behavioral Consultant, Howard Weinstein. For more information about any of his work please go to www.puppypawspress.com.

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[End Dog Training]