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GERMAN SHEPHERD
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**PARENTS, TRAINERS, CHILDREN AND DOGS IN MODERN
SOCIETY TODAY**

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When I was young and still green, I had to learn some things the hard way, but it gave me a better understanding in dogs in the area of what needs to be done and what can realistically be done vs. what I would like to be done. But I never closed my mind to possibilities as a way may be discovered in the future, nor did I ever close my mind to methods that I have personally seen effective no matter what certain people or organization's say. No matter what it is, I feel no method works with everybody as well as I believe no method works on every dog for the most part. As soon as we totally buy into what is said by activist groups the "whatever works" mentality really goes away and we become robots that are easily influenced by political pressure.

In our minds we may know the right thing to do, and we even tell others the right thing to do, but what is truly right and what is truly wrong? It all boils down to perception and what we have individually learned from the sources we learned from, and who they learned from etc... I have seen this in other trainers as well as John Q Public. When it comes to our dog or a dog that we get too emotionally involved with, we tend to change our tune a little, and our perception of reality or even what we have learned gets a little clouded. As the heart will always argue with your mind, It is human nature, at the very least to those with a conscience. Those activist groups pray on human nature to a fault. A good leader of yesterday is sometimes seen as cold, heartless even barbaric with some of their actions or decisions. But are they really? Are they truly crazy or are they doing what they feel they need to do to accomplish their goals while keeping order and respect for their authority intact? Often what needs to be done is not met with

unanimous approval as there will always be another point of view. The sad reality of these points of views from radicals is they do not apply to everyone or everything as I have not encountered a method that is right for every child or a method that is right for every dog for the most part. Regardless, as long as the method has shown success it should be kept for consideration unless a more effective method can replace it entirely. By entirely I mean the method will work for ALL that fall in the category the method was intended for. So far I have not seen it. What I do see are lots of points of views that preach it is for all; the reality is that it is not. The real sad story of the radical/emotional points of views these days are the ones it does not work with, that it should of, in the perfect world of utopia that was boasted about. Those cases of failure are often discarded and politically swept under the rug. Some of those failures are even hypocritically fixed behind closed doors just to instill a false view of success by the public. More hypocrisy exists today than I have ever seen. I have spoken to a lot of trainers over my years and when it comes to certain situations I hear more and more of them say "yeah, I still do that but don't tell no one, we want more of an all positive image and can't afford to let people know". When I started hearing this, I found myself shaking my head and truly pondering what this world is coming to?

A play in words can change a person's point of view tremendously. As an example, the way some people view respect and what needs to be done to earn respect in society has been twisted and warped over the years to a fault that shows in not only the children that are being raised but also in the dogs that are being raised/trained today. The thing that is real sad is a dog gets put down for it and a child ends up in juvenile detention for not having respect and suffering the lack of leadership they need. The question of "Why is this happening" is met with more excuses than you can shake a stick at instead of the truth. My favorite excuse is "We are not doing enough for the child/dog to earn their respect because you need to give respect to get respect". A true leader demands respect and proves they are worthy of that respect at the same time, and respects others that follow them that have earned it. By thinking that you need to constantly give respect to get respect goes against the grain of animal instinct. If you keep giving the respect without them earning it, you are inadvertently putting them in a position of leadership over you. From what I have seen, the end result is that they may like you but they will not respect you when it comes right down to it. This is the same with dogs (in my opinion). Now, with that said there are variables in what needs to be done to get the respect. Not everyone needs an Iron fist approach. There are children and dogs that 99.9% of the time will not challenge you. A stern talking or body language is all that is needed to put them back in line and that is a great method for them and one I also use, but for others, a well-timed spanking/leash correction is the only thing that will send a clear enough

message that you do not tolerate the behavior and demand respect to comply with your rules.

The word respect got twisted with the word fear and the word fear overshadowed the true definition of respect over the years from what I have seen. It is overshadowed by statements from advocacy groups like "you want your child/dog to live in fear of you?" or "your child/dog does not respect you your child/dog is scared of you". Those statements are the biggest line of humanitarian bleeding heart propaganda I have ever heard, unless of course they are truly abusing and acting without true productive purpose tailored for the individual child or dog that is dictated by those children or dogs. What I mean by that is the level of correction is ALWAYS dictated by the child or dog it should NEVER be dictated by you or anyone else for that matter. Look what happened when the Department of Children and Families jumped on the political talking head bandwagon and decided to tell the public what you can and cannot do with YOUR children. I see the same thing coming down the road with the Karen Pryor disciples. Lord help us true Professionals in the canine field! Lord help the dogs that suffer for the ignorance as well!

The 0 tolerance attitude does not work for everything. (In my opinion) It stops the small percentage of true abuse but it enables the rest that need the firmer discipline and confuses/limits the ones in position of direct authority that can ultimately make the difference in a child or dog's life. I am not saying beat every child or prong the heck out of every dog for every little thing that IS abuse (in my opinion), what I am saying is demand just enough respect and adjust accordingly to make your point without question, and the respect will follow. Dogs that are conditioned properly over time require minimal to no corrections. Dogs that had been conditioned poorly or are just plain stubborn or hard requires more, sometimes to an extreme that lifts an eyebrow or two but then again the fact of the matter is the alternative is also met with disapproval from someone somewhere; let's face it no one can make everyone happy. All we can do is what we feel is right personally and professionally and what we personally know will give us the results we are looking for.

On the flip side of earning respect, I do not believe in focusing on "respect" when teaching new things unless it is select unwanted pack behavior that can be corrected with positive punishment with the right timing, and the right timing with the reward on the back end for compliance. In my opinion, this can range from a stern verbal command to a sledge hammer (not literally but you get my point) pending on what is needed for the dog/child to respond and for you to get your point across without question and less likelihood of future challenge. As difficult as it may be, you must keep emotion out of it when doing it, for

a lot of people this IS easier said than done. There is a reason a select number of people are “Professionals” in their field similar to Professional Athletes. The answer is: As much as someone may want to be a “Professional” not everyone can be a “Professional” in their field of choice, simply because most are not physically and mentally suited for the profession. I see a lot of people that call themselves “Professional Dog Trainers” that have come out of the woodwork. I have even seen them congregate together in professional dog training associations. Sadly, it appears that only 10% of the “Professional Dog Trainers” out there these days are in fact truly “Professionals”. The rest may not be real dog training professionals but they appear to be a real “Professional” at pushing an agenda originating from all positive activist groups, slowly seeping their poisonous philosophy into many parts of society including Professional Dog Training.

Teaching new, unlearned, wanted behaviors can be 100% positive as we want the dog or child to be extremely motivated to learn. I want my dogs to love training (as they all do). I also want my dogs to think I am fair and fun. I do not want my dogs to think I am a tyrant, nor do I want them to think I am weak. This is a balancing act people often find easier said than done especially when you add emotion and misconceptions, then add a poorly conditioned dog that pushes the envelope of your comfort zone. When the emotions and misconceptions come into play it is you that lives in fear as you are afraid to do what needs to be done. This (in my opinion) is because of the bleeding heart propaganda you bought into that brainwashed you to believe is a cure-all, and/or you have not been exposed to the techniques used to deal with it without killing it (Over the top dominant and/or aggressive dogs). The real sadness in society is the ones that need someone they can respect and cannot find it; they ultimately pay the price for not getting what they truly need. This is provoked by groups and laws put in place to protect children and animals for the most part, although their heart may be in the right place they refuse to recognize the negative repercussions of their actions in society when they have a 0 tolerance approach. The poorly conditioned/stubborn kids end up in jail/juvenile detention and the dogs end up in a shelter or worse.... get put down.

Call me a crazy old military brat but there are techniques used by the military and others that may seem barbaric to the humanitarians but they work, and have a much better success rate than other methods, and when other methods have failed, when used properly, it is a tough love form of mercy, it is not abuse or barbaric. It is a last ditch effort at a productive life for them. That sure beats death or Jail in my book any day of the week.

True balance comes from the ability to identify how much or how little is needed for each individual dog as each dog IS different. As a

professional trainer, the more tools/techniques you have in your tool box, the better equipped you are to handle the vast variety of situations that are out there and the more dogs you will be able to help. The more you close your mind to possibilities that are not the norm, or a modern way of thinking, the more you will encounter dogs that are "un-trainable" or "too aggressive to bother" from your personal experience or lack of and point of view. The question you should ask yourself is how versatile of a trainer are you personally willing to be? All positive? All negative (Or whatever new term or spin Karen Pryor wants to put on it) A mix? Equipment/Collars? No equipment/collars? To what extent? This is up to you and it is your choice when training a dog. If you are a conformist that fears the backlash of modern society today, so be it. If you have an open mind good for you! Whatever you are personally and professionally comfortable with is your purgative, but you also need to accept that if you are not willing to go there, there are professionals that will or make the attempt and it is not wrong for them to attempt foreign methods in your mind if they have had success with it in areas others including yourself have failed. If you want to only deal with nice dogs that are for some reason 100% compliant and are easy to train that is your prerogative. Those that dare to go beyond that, it is their professional prerogative and they do not deserve to be attacked. Especially if they can handle dogs you would not go near in your dizziest daydreams. Above all, train dogs to the level of competency and real life performance you could not produce yourself.

Nobody including the government should tell you how to raise your kids in a way that enables your kids to rule over you. This also applies to weak minded "let's all hold hands" groups that have the same mentality about your dogs or children. What is really the sad truth in all of this? I see it more and more every day. By the time they get in front of a good leader or a good professional trainer, it may be too late.

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