

Published based on [Dog Obedience Training Problems: The Hidden Causes](#)

Dog Obedience Training Problems: The Hidden Causes

[Dog Obedience Training](#)

Last week a client, Clare, called me in a panic to tell me about a dogfight. Normally her two young dogs are best friends, but last week there was a big-time dogfight.

Because she was worried that this might repeat itself, Clare asked for my help. She insisted that she had no idea what could have caused the fight.

Clare was convinced that the issue "came out of nowhere!"

But when it comes to [dog obedience training](#), in reality there were definite reasons why her dogs lost control, and dog behavior signs that indicated the dogs were getting edgy with each other. (As just one example, one of her dogs had started growling when the other dog entered the room.)

Before I share the rest of the story, I'd like you to go and download this [free dog obedience training audio course](#) that I've put together for you. This audio course alone can solve some of the most common dog obedience issues most people are faced with, but I'm also going to throw in 16 dog training videos, 5 dog training manuals, and a lot more free stuff to help you out. I really hope you'll go do that right now.

Back to the story.

When I spoke to Clare I reminded her that she happened to be in the middle of a major renovation of her house. No matter how well the project goes, whenever there are strangers in your house doing construction, it creates chaos.

Unfortunately for Clare things were not going smoothly during the remodeling. Although Clare was someone who would normally be quite relaxed at home, now she was anxious and tense and would have heated arguments with her contractor. But what's even worse is that this had been going on for weeks!

Why Did Clare's Dogs Act Out?

Clare said, "But my dogs like each other! They play together and sleep together."

The plain truth is... dogs do not live in a vacuum. Dogs can definitely sense what's going on in their environment and what you may be thinking, feeling, or experiencing. Clare's dogs:

1. Watched Clare (who is usually calm) verbally confront a subcontractor many times,
2. Felt her unhappiness, anxiety, and anger,
3. Lived in remodeling chaos,
4. Missed dog classes, and
5. Wasn't getting enough exercise. (Because it had been so hot for the past few weeks, Clare neglected to take them on their usual walks and simply let them run in her backyard instead.)

Any of those reasons alone probably would not have triggered a fight, but when stacked on top of each other, the increasing level of stress broke down the relationship between two formerly friendly dogs.

Will this Now be a Permanent Shift in the Dogs' Relationship?

No. The remodeling project is finished now. There's now, once again, peace in the house. The dog lessons and

the regular walks have resumed. It will take a little time, but things between the two dogs will go smoothly again.

Really Understand the Emotional Messages Your Dog is Getting From You?

If you want to see how your emotions affect your dogs try this exercise from my book, *Catch Your Dog Doing Something Right*.

Have your dog come with you into a room. Shut the door. Take a seat on the floor. Do not talk, move, or gesture but think angry and unhappy thoughts for the first minute.

Now try adding some words, movement, or sounds to give your feelings a "physical" presence.

However, do not direct them at the dog! For the next 30 seconds, allow yourself to experience the emotions pouring out.

- * Does the dog exhibit feelings of being anxious, does he approach you, avoid you, or ignore you?
- * Does the dog's reaction change? Notice whether or not your dog has a stronger reaction once you add feelings, sound and body language?

Now shift your thinking and start focusing on happy and exciting thoughts for 60 seconds. Now try adding some words, movement, or sounds to give your feelings a "physical" presence. However, do not direct them at the dog! During the next 30 seconds use a happy voice... feel the emotion pouring out.

- * Does the dog exhibit feelings of being anxious, does he approach you, avoid you, or ignore you?
- * Can you see your dog's reaction differ? Notice whether or not your dog has a stronger reaction once you add feelings, sound and body language?

If you want to see what effect your voice and your attitude has on your dog, this really simple exercise will show you. When you are stressed or upset due to a bad day at work, a fight with a neighbor or son, or an accident where you trip and hit your shin against the table, your dog feels it. Dogs pick up on tension and absorb it.

There are certain signs of dominant behaviors that demand quick action, such as one dog putting his chin on another dog's shoulders, snarling or growling if another dog enters the room, guarding a toy or a food bowl, or ears or a tail that is very erect. Search out the reasons behind this assertion of dominance and bring the relationships back into balance with training, food changes, regular exercise, increasing your presence as leader of the pack, and calling a professional when you just can't figure it out.

Also, be sure to go and download the free [dog obedience training](#) audio course (and the videos and workbooks) I mentioned above. These tools have helped many thousands of dog owners understand why their dogs act the way they do, and I'm sure they'll do the same for you!

You can also find this article published on [Dog Obedience Training Problems: The Hidden Causes](#), and on the tag pages [dog obedience training](#), [dog training](#), [train a puppy](#), [train your dog](#).