RETRIEVING GAMES

Game Day 4 - IYC Progression

You and your dog have successfully mastered the foundations of IYC. Now it is time to advance this game to the next level. In this progression, we will transition the treats to the floor. This shift in the learning environment challenges your dog but achieving success in this setting will aid in generalising their newfound self-control to various environments.

As usual, start your training session with an engaging game.

What you'll need:

- Your dog
- Treats – low and high value
- A distraction-free room
- Your mobile phone on a tripod to video your session
- A timer – make sure to keep sessions short

Step-by-Step guide:

1. Begin the session with a refresher of the foundational IYC game to reiterate the criteria for your dog.
2. Progress by placing treats on the floor and covering them with your hand in a "spider-hand" position.
3. Initially, your dog may attempt to snatch the treat. Maintain silence and allow them to make their choice.
4. Wait until they move away from your hand. Lift your hand and see their choice.
    a. If they move towards the treat – cover them up again.
    b. If they remain in position – say "cook", retrieve a treat, and delivery it to your dog's mouth ONLY if they remain in position. If they reach forward, put the treat back and cover the cookies again.
5. Once your dog confidently offers different positions in this game, and you can mark ("cook") the behaviour before delivering the treat, test them further by using higher value treats. This increases the distraction level, making it more challenging for your dog to offer their great self-control.

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6. Take it a step further and play this game while you're watching TV, just lounging together on the floor. You can progress by placing the cookie on their paw, on both paws, or even on top of their head. Ignore the cookie to get the cookie.
7. When they are showing great self-control, tap your finger in front of the cookie and say "get it" in a playful tone. This cue signals to your dog that they can now eat the treat.

Advancing Further and introducing "Get it" cue

Incorporate this game into formal training sessions to progress a "build-in-stay" concept (more on this in our Hot Zone game later in the course), where your dog learns to maintain a stationary position despite the presence of a tempting reward. Have your dog in a sit, praise them and walk towards them to feed the treat. Do they break position to "speed up" that reinforcement process? If yes, reposition them and try again.
The reward is either coming to them or you give them permission to get their reward.

Advancing this game further, you will have the food on the floor and your dog is moving. Up until now, your dog was in a stationary position, which is much easier for them to control.

Step-by-step guide:

1. Walk around with your dog and let them watch you dropping a treat on the floor.
2. If they dive for it to steal the treat, be quick (try not to startle your dog though) to cover the treat with your foot to control their access to it. Pick up the treat and try again.
3. When they show great self-control, say "get it" for them to eat the food.
4. Have your dog on their bed, walk away a few steps and place a low value treat close to you. Call your dog to you. Can they ignore the treat on the ground and drive to you?
    a. If yes, praise them lavishly and reward with a high value treat then send them with "get it" to the treat on the ground.

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b. If they attempt to drive towards the food on the ground, be quick to step onto the treat and pick it up. Gently take your dog by the collar and lead them back to their bed to try again. This time place the treat a little further away from you but close enough so that you can cover it if needed.

Checklist:

1. Have you recorded and reviewed your session?
2. Is your dog engaged?
3. How is your dog's T.E.M.P throughout all the stages?
4. Does your dog understand the Location Specific Marker?

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