HUNTING GAMES – GROWING TOGETHER

🎾 Game 32 - Let's Dance

This is another fast and fun game to create focus for you.

🎾 Why This Game Matters

The quick changes in direction in "Let's Dance" teaches your dog to readjust and focus back to you.
It is a great game to bring arousal level up and increase motivation for dog's that are a bit worried about their environment.

🎾 What You'll Need

- Your dog
- High-value tug toy or high-value treats
- Phone on tripod

🎾 Step-by-Step-Guide

1. Set Up

This game is best played outside in an area where you can dash off.

Start off with a fun arousing run session or tug game to connect with each other.

2. Build the Behaviour

- Start off with your dog in front of you
- Bounce to one side, reward your dog
    - either with a short game of tug or
    - toss a treat to the side and say "search".
- Increase the number of bounces between rewards.
- Once your dog is engaged, move left to right from foot to foot. Your dog will naturally follow you while you bounce on the spot.

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3. Add a Layer

- Pretend as if you were going to run off in one direction and then in the other but you remain in one spot.
- Get your dog to bounce with you from side to side, then surprise them by dashing off.
- Your dog will chase you, when they catch up, give a high reward in RZ.
- Repeat

4. Raise Criteria

- Add distraction of level 6 – 8.
- Watch where your dog's focus goes
    - if they can't focus on you but look at the distraction, move a bit further away from the distraction.

🎾 Troubleshooting

My dog is jumping at me and nips.

Freeze and put your reward out of sight. As soon as you see your dog settles, bring the reward out again and play with a little less motion. Build up to fast bounces.

If your dog is too interested in their reward, revisit IYC.

My dog is too interested in the distractor.

Move further away and with each success bounce your way closer to the distraction. Ping pong as long as your dog is no longer interested in the distractor and will happily play with you.

My dog leaves to check out the distractor.

Gently go over and take your dog back, further away from the distraction and try again.

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My dog is not interested in bouncing with me.

Take your time at this step and make it a really happy play. Goof around, play a few chase games, then transition into the bounces. Start small and grow.

🎾 Daily Use

Let's dance shifts your dog's arousal level and teaches them to move with you but also keep an eye on you for what's coming next.
The energy in this game should look like this: back and forth, back and forth – chase and reward! Mix up how often you bounce and the direction you dash off.

Great to utilise the high arousal in future games or in highly distraction areas where your dog needs a reminder that the fun happens with you!

🎾 Checklist

1. Did you review your session?
2. Did your dog show hesitation in moving with you?
3. Did your dog chase after you?
4. Could you dog focus on you with the distraction?

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