

Certified SA Pro™ Behavior Consultant

Certification Standards

Competencies

Changing Emotions

- Understands why desensitization is the technique of choice for separation anxiety
- Is confident explaining to a client how desensitization works
- Is clear on the limitations of operant conditioning in separation anxiety work
- Understands the intersection of operant and classical conditioning in separation anxiety training
- Fully appreciates why food is unhelpful in training but can also explain to clients when food might be helpful
- Can fully explain to a client why suspending absences affects the chances of changing a dog's emotions

Using A Systematic Training Plan

- Can confidently explain to a client why we don't start with departure cues
- Understands where we slot departure cues into the order of training
- Is knowledgeable about the need for predictability in separation anxiety training as a stress-minimization technique
- Is able to construct a systematic training plan that gradually exposes the dog to the conditioned stimulus
- Understands how to keep a plan incremental, and to set appropriate increases in target duration
- Knows how to include warm-ups to an appropriate length and variability
- Understands how to apply push and drop rules to training progression
- Is clear on how to handle personal bests and variability and how these differ from regressions

Assessing Thresholds

- Is clear about thresholds and how they apply to separation anxiety training
- Is able to observe subtle signs of stress in a dog
- Guides owner on how to collect baseline body language for the dog outside of separation anxiety training
- Understands that the training must be conducted with the dog experiencing no fear: not mild fear, or moderate fear but no fear
- Knows how to collect observable data on the dog's body language
- Understands the difference between observable data and the subjective inferences made on the basis of that data

Applying Different Protocols

- Understands how training may differ for
 - Puppies
 - Senior Dogs
 - Multi-dog households or multi-species households
- Is able to apply the training to dogs who attached to only certain people
- Knows how to use the training for dogs who do differently well in different contexts such as time of day, day of week, when different people do the leaving
- Understands how to work with different family dynamics including families with children, roommates/housemates.

Understanding What Else Might Help Resolution

- Is able to articulate why it's important for the client to discuss medication with their veterinarian
- Can support client with the emotional side of the decision to put their dog on anxiety medications
- Knows the limit of their capacity as a trainer to comment and advise on medication and refers all such conversations to the veterinarian
- Clearly articulates the limitations of untested unproven alternative treatments and natural supplements
- Can quickly and easily myth-bust when clients ask about outdated methods and advice

Implementing Business Processes

- Has a clear picture of the structure of tasks within the business and gets help with admin tasks
- If using free calls, is strict with the length of those calls
- Knows how to be firm but fair on work that is out of scope
- Uses standard handouts so as not to start from scratch every time
- Has a clear process for generating and qualifying leads.
- Has clearly defined office hours
- Employs techniques to detach from a client's problem and understands why that is necessary: burnout fails everyone

Embracing Technology

- Has set up online booking and payments
- Uses a recognized video conferencing system and is able to record client sessions
- Has website copy clearly explaining the benefits to clients of signing up for a separation anxiety package
- Uses video analysis for the majority of clients
- Is comfortable uploading and sharing videos with clients and also basic editing when necessary
- Uses screen capture apps (such as Loom) to give feedback on client training sessions

Enabling Clients

- Understands the difference between compliance and engagement and uses an engagement module of interaction for client coaching
- Finds ways to make training as simple as possible for clients including focusing on the client's one thing and not overwhelming the client
- Documents client progress, sharing charts and training summaries with clients
- Finds multiple ways to R+ clients throughout the training process
- Shares client successes on social media

Requirements to Graduate as an SA Pro™ Behavior Consultant

- Be cleared in the plan-building assignment whereby the body language of different dogs must be assessed and plans written accordingly.
- Pass the online assessment multiple choice test with a score of 80% or higher.
- Carry out the assessed client practical. Be cleared on first submission or be cleared on subsequent oral test, or follow-up client session.
- Graduates will be eligible to use the designation “Certified SA Pro™ Behavior Consultant.” This can be shortened to “Cert. SA Pro™ Behavior Consultant”, “Cert. SAPBC” or “Certified SA Pro™”

Benefits of SA Pro™ Behavior Consultant Graduate Status

- Free listing on Find-the-Trainer Directory on Julie Naismith’s website.
- Lifetime access to all materials in the program including the regular updated and new content.
- 6 months free access to the Certified SA Pro™ Training App.
- Lifetime access to the Certified SA Pro™ Grad Group.
- Monthly group Zooms facilitated by Julie or other grads.