



SA Pro 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 alternatives 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 Trainer

- 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 with an instructor.

Graduates will be eligible to use the designation "Certified SA Pro Trainer." This can be shortened to "Cert. SA Pro Trainer" or "Cert. SAPT".

Recertification Requirements

Every three years, on the anniversary of graduation certificants must supply evidence of:

- Three separation anxiety client cases in the prior 12 months. OR
- 10 CPD hours relating to separation or fear-based cases

Benefits of SA Pro Trainer Graduate Status

- Free listing on Find-the-Training 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 SA Pro Training App.
- Lifetime access to the SA Pro Grad Group.
- Monthly case discussions on Zoom with Julie.

SA Pro Behavior Consultant Standards

In addition to the requirement for the SA Pro Trainer certification:

- Must be an SA Pro Trainer in good standing.
- Have worked on cases covering at least 4 of the following sub-case type:
 - Multi-dog households
 - Senior dogs
 - Puppies
 - Noise sensitive dogs
 - Dogs with significant regressions
 - Cases taken over from another trainer and resolved
 - Cases involving multiple practitioners (i.e. vet or other non-SA trainer)
- Have 100 hours of client-facing separation anxiety work in total.
- Will have provided mentor support to another SA Pro Trainer on a case.

Applicants must submit:

- Video and written evidence of 4 sub-case types worked on (must be 4 different sub-types).
- Evidence of 100 hours of casework (any case type).
- References from one client.
- Reference from one SA Pro Trainer who the applicant mentored.
- One question to be used for the SA Pro Trainer online assessment.

Successful applicants will be eligible to use the designation “Certified SA Pro Behavior Consultant.” This can be shortened to “Cert. SA Pro Behavior Consultant” or “Cert. SAPBC”.

Note that applications to become an SA Pro Behavior Consultant will be open from September 1, 2021. The application fee is \$90.