

SECTION FIVE

Building a +CER and How to CCDS

(REMINDER: WATCH EVERY LINK! This is the most important section.)

Part A: Positive Conditioned Emotional Response

1. What is a +CER and Why do I Care? Kim Pike

<https://kimpikespositivepaws.wordpress.com/2014/11/05/what-is-a-cer-and-why-do-i-care/>

2. How do I achieve a +CER? Canine Behavior Science

<http://www.caninebehaviorscience.com/class-card/>

3. How do I know if I have achieved a +CER?

CER to Dremeling- Eileen Anderson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--3dyc0lFFo>

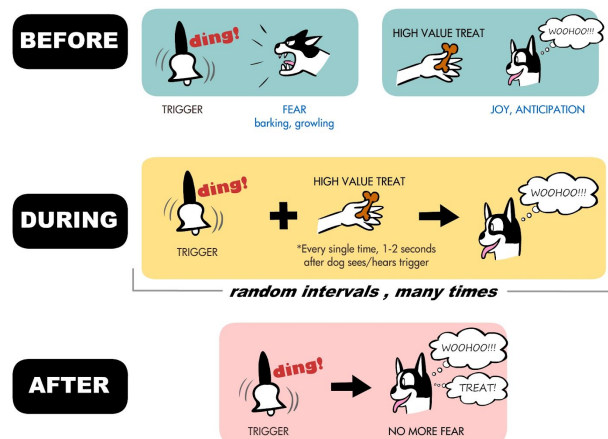
4. CER to Tools- Leah Drapeau

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/nail.maintenance.for.dogs/permalink/632675136877420/>

Part B: Counterconditioning and Desensitization (CCDS)

1. The Basics of Counterconditioning:

CLASSICAL COUNTER CONDITIONING






© 2013 Lili Chin doggedrawings.net *Lili*

*Index: 1 Learning The Jargon Pg 2. 2 Understanding Rules Pg 6. 3 Equipment Pg 7
4 Reading The Nail Pg 9. 5 +CER/CCDS Pg 10. 6 Trimming The Nail Pg 16.
7 Exhausted All Options Pg 20. 8 Success Stories Pg 21. 9 Recap Pg 22*







2. The Basics of Desensitization:

Considerations when using Systematic Desensitization with your dog

Your Goal: To confront your dog with the "scary" object/person/animal without eliciting fear or aggression.

 NO Aggression signals: Showing teeth Growling Snarling Barking Lunging forward Snapping	 NO Fear signals: Tail between legs Ears backwards or flat Hunched body posture Low to the ground Lip licking Yawning exaggeratedly Shaking Freezing Pulling to get away	 YES Relaxed or Alert signals: Relaxed tail (up or down) Relaxed or alert ears Relaxed body posture Overall calm
---	--	---

Variables to change to accomplish this: Change the following until your dog is no longer fearful. Increase difficulty only after many repetitions. Your pet should look calm at every step.

Distance Add distance		vs.	
Size Decrease size		vs.	
Loudness Muffle with layers		vs.	

Other variables: Pressure (brush or nail clipper), full vs. partial view.
BE CREATIVE!

© www.dog-training-excellence.com

3. Are You Really Performing Classical CounterConditioning?

"In dog training, we use **classical conditioning** to change the dog's physiological and emotional response to a stimulus. For example, if a dog is afraid of the sound of delivery trucks we can consistently feed the dog roast chicken after the sound. The dog's attitude towards delivery trucks will likely change. It will go from fear to, "Yay, chicken is coming!" The truck sound itself will come to trigger the body's preparation to ingest food and the happy feelings that can accompany that. The happy feelings and behaviors are why we do this. We aren't trying to teach the dog to want to eat delivery trucks. We are attaching a **positive conditioned emotional response** (CER+) to something that was formerly scary."

Read the entirety of Eileen Anderon's post on CCDS:

<http://eileenanddogs.com/2016/07/30/are-you-performing-classical-counter-conditioning/>

A written breakdown of criteria, and steps for CCDS to a Dremel:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/nail.maintenance.for.dogs/permalink/945276755617255/>

***If this list overwhelms you, BREATHE. Your dog only needs you to focus on the first 1-2 steps. CCDS is a marathon, not a sprint. You have lots of time. In fact, your dog would LOVE if you just did one step at a time, and didn't pressure or rush them at all! Take the first step, and do 20 repetitions, and then put the tool and food away. The next day, repeat. When you see a +CER, you can move to the next step. If you notice that your dog begins to shy away, or is displaying behaviors that are AT or OVER THRESHOLD, you need to slow down and add in a few baby steps.

For example: You decided to start at a step where you are conditioning the reach to touch the dog's paw. After a few repetitions, you notice the dog is pulling its paw away. Adjust as soon as you notice this, by only reaching part of the way to the paw for the remaining repetitions. By pulling his paw away, your dog said, "I'm not ready for that." By adjusting, you said, "Ok, no problem. We'll stay at this easier step until you're ready." By doing this, you broke the reach down from 1 large step, to 2 (or even 3) smaller steps, and built trust between you and the dog. This will happen many times as you go through the process, and the more you are able to adjust and respond to your dog in real time, or during the next session, the quicker your progress will be.

4. Video examples of CCDS:

Playing with Paws vs Paw Handling CCDS (video):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/nail.maintenance.for.dogs/permalink/1147199018758360/>

Handling CCDS (video):

https://m.facebook.com/groups/356060287872241?view=permalink&id=1270580433086884&ref=content_filter

Dremel CCDS (video in comments):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/nail.maintenance.for.dogs/permalink/945276755617255/>

Clippers CCDS (timelapse video and why Operant Conditioning (rewarding behavior) doesn't work for long term progress):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqII3pM9YH8>

CCDS Needing 2 Hands:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6Uzd_DdDx4

5. "But, my dog's nails are so long. They need to be trimmed now!" or "He does "fine" at the groomers!"

Take a look at this image of Systematic Desensitization for a Spider Phobia:

Behavior	Fear rating
Think about a spider.	10
Look at a photo of a spider.	25
Look at a real spider in a closed box.	50
Hold the box with the spider.	60
Let a spider crawl on your desk.	70
Let a spider crawl on your shoe.	80
Let a spider crawl on your pants leg.	90
Let a spider crawl on your sleeve.	95
Let a spider crawl on your bare arm.	100

Imagine that every few weeks, a person(s) holds you down, against your will, and forces you to have a spider placed on your bare arm, and it begins moving - maybe even toward your face. Because this is the scariest thing imaginable to you, you lose all trust in these people, and your fear of spiders likely gets significantly worse over time, maybe even eliciting outright aggression at the mere thought of a spider. You don't understand why this is something that needs to happen - all you can think is that you need to do whatever it takes to make it stop. Sometimes, an animal is so frightened, they completely freeze in shock, and this is called learned helplessness.

The fear of nail trims is very real to your dog, just as the fear of spiders is very real to this patient. During your CCDS process, it is imperative that you do not allow your dog to be forced to endure a step they are telling you they

are not ready for. If they are still on the first step, but you continuously ask them/force them to endure step 5, they are going to be over threshold, you will see unwanted behaviors, and your dog **will not** progress. Your dog is your teacher. They are telling you what step they need you to be on - and you may need to break down the steps you're doing even further! There is always a way to break down steps into tinier baby steps, just ask us. We're here to help!

If your dog is desperately in need of a trim (nails are curling into the paw pads, affecting gait or damaging people/items from getting caught on things), but definitely not ready to have nails be trimmed, then you can look into the options below. These options should be done rarely, and in the interim, you should be doing daily CCDS sessions. Each time your dog is made to endure a step he is not ready for, it destroys the trust you've built in the CCDS process.

Option 1: Build a scratchboard and allow your dog to file their own nails. Info in STEP 3: Choosing Equipment.

Option 2: Talk to your vet about a trim while under sedation. There are different levels of sedation - from something light to take the edge off to being knocked out completely. Your vet can give you more information about this, but the goal of this option is to trim the nails (ideally, using the ACL - never quicking the dog), without destroying the progress you've made by forcing them through a nail trim. (NOTE: Be mindful of the type of sedation your veterinarian is using: <http://fearfuldogs.com/acepromazine/>)

Option 3: Distracting with food during a trim - sometimes called a "management trim". **Distraction is NOT Counterconditioning**, but can help you get length off when it is absolutely necessary. This may work once in a while, but is not a long term solution. Watch this video about the difference in body language between distraction and CCDS. Distraction trims (or management trims) should only be done when absolutely necessary, otherwise, you should be doing proper CCDS sessions. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pasT9FTGHo>