



Beyond Training... Lies Connection

# 10 Steps to Instantly Connect with Your Dog

— Improve understanding, trust, and behavior... immediately —



Here's how to Start:

**First**, I'll help you honestly evaluate the quality of your relationship with your dog. You'll look at where you are now and where you want to go.

**Next**, and most importantly, you'll learn some simple but key actions you can take today to improve your relationship with your dog, no matter where you are currently.

Ready? Let's go!

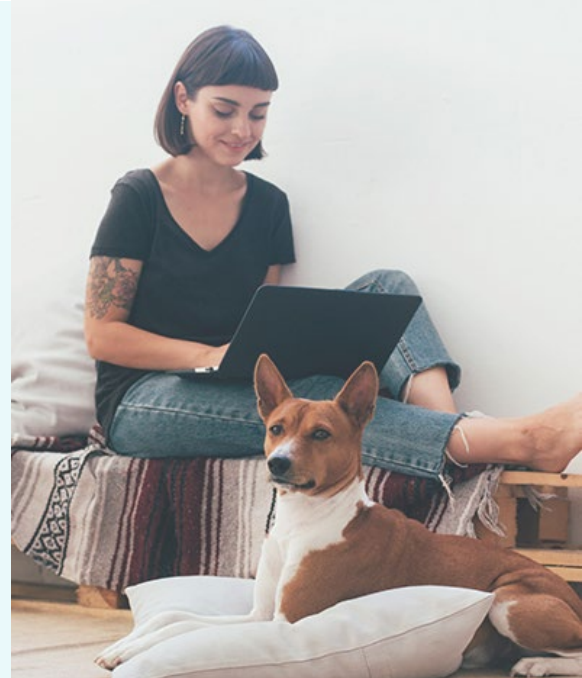
# Let's Take A Relationship Snapshot.

To start, let's quickly assess your current "relationship status". Does any of this describe you?

- ☐ Your dog would rather chase a squirrel, visit the neighbor, bark at other dogs... any one of a million other things, rather than pay attention to you.
- ☐ Your dog doesn't come when called, and you suspect if given the option, she'd high-tail it at the first opportunity.
- ☐ You wonder if your dog thinks he's the alpha.
- ☐ You feel guilty because the rules and structures you have in place to "train" your dog aren't fun and you don't like them.
- ☐ You love your dog, but if we're being perfectly honest, you have to admit she's kinda hyper and annoying.
- ☐ You really, really want to do more cool stuff with your dog, but you are afraid he'll be out of control.
- ☐ You simply don't know what to do when things with your dog don't go the way you want.
- ☐ You long to connect more deeply, but you often wonder what your dog is thinking and just want to know why she is doing what she is doing.

If you answered yes to at least one of those statements, there is room to strengthen your connection with your dog. If you answered yes to several... there is a definite disconnect between you and your dog.

**The good news is, this guide will help!**

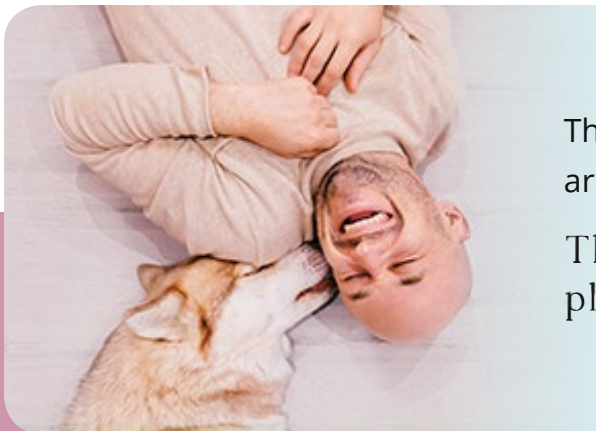


# Disconnection isn't Permanent

Lack of connection has serious consequences. You may feel locked in a constant battle for your dog's attention. You may be embarrassed by bad behavior when you go out in public. You may feel like you've been letting your dog down, because you secretly suspect that you're the problem. Maybe you're just tired of feeling out of sync, even though you love your dog.

Or -- worst of all -- you may be dealing with behavior that is genuinely scary, and you're afraid of where things are headed, for your family and for your dog.

You might even be wondering if you should be in this relationship at all, or if it's time to "break up" with your furry family member.



This is **not** what our relationships with dogs are about, and not how you should feel.

Thankfully, you're in the perfect place to make proactive changes.

# Clarity is the First Step

If you are feeling a little hopeless by this point, take heart. We need to know where your connection is weak before we can find out what needs to improve. Dealing with a damaged relationship may be a challenge, but the benefits you'll receive for fixing it are immeasurable.

Now, let's answer some different questions. Take your time -- your relationship is worth it.

## What does YOUR perfect relationship look like?



### Question #1:

Imagine being able to take your dog with you to do all sorts of cool things -- travel, hike, go eat at a sidewalk cafe, walk downtown, go to friends' houses, whatever you want -- without worrying about your dog's behavior causing problems or just generally making it more trouble than it's worth.

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***What would you LOVE to do with your dog?***



### Question #2:

Think about all those beautiful stories about humans and dogs: Lassie, Rin Tin Tin, Old Yeller, Benji, Beethoven, Marley. Dogs are our friends and confidants. They are our loyal partners in hard and dangerous work. They love us without boundaries or conditions.

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***What part of the bond between human and canine is it that appeals to you most? What do you deeply, truly want to have in your relationship with your dog?***



### Question #3:

Now let's get more practical and think about the day-to-day. You share a house with your dog, 24/7. It's like a marriage in a lot of ways. Forget about what you "should" want. Let's take an honest look at what you *do* want.

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***What does living with your dog look like, in an ideal situation? How would you interact, spend time together? What would daily life be like?***

# Evolved to be a Perfect Match

Current research suggests that humans did not domesticate dogs. Rather, it shows that what most likely happened is that dogs and humans actually co-evolved through mutual benefit. In other words, dogs and human societies shaped and were shaped by each other.

Sound crazy? Stay with me -- it actually makes a lot of sense. Without dogs, for example, we might not have developed agriculture because we would not have had their help to herd and watch the flocks. We might not have settled down and stored goods without them by our sides as guardians and protectors. Even our social structure -- and dogs' social structure as well -- may be a product of this kind of co-evolution.



Dogs are not simply wolves that we have tamed and bred to be easier to manage.

Dogs are a unique phenomenon in the animal kingdom. They are the only animals that can reliably read many of our nonverbal communication signals (like pointing, for instance) without training. And they are the only animals that actively try to problem-solve in partnership with us. Wolves don't do that stuff.



# Dogs and humans are meant to work together.

**So what does this mean in real life, and why am I telling you all this now?**

Well, for one thing, if you've been training your dog according to dog training philosophies that treat your dog like a mini-wolf, you've been barking up the wrong tree! *It won't work because it's not what dogs are* -- and that's aside from the fact that most of the old theories about wolf society itself have been debunked in the past few years.

This is powerful information for you. It points down a pathway that can completely revolutionize the way you live with your dog. In a nutshell, what it means is that dogs and people have a fundamental connection that is embedded in our genes. We are meant to live in an active, bonded partnership. We both crave it, and *our dogs are motivated to work with us to achieve it*.

In other words...you don't have to *fight* with your dog to create a peaceful partnership. When we work with our dogs in a way that recognizes them as the utterly unique creatures they are, honors our mutual history, and leverages the deep, intrinsic connection our two species share...then we are able to create a soul-deep relationship.

**So how do you cultivate such a powerful, magical bond? You're about to learn.**

# 10 Steps to Instantly Connect

*Here's what you can do TODAY, to forge a peaceful partnership.*

Ready to step up to the challenge of building a new type of relationship with your four-legged best friend? Start here.

## 1 Don't manhandle your dog.

Most people don't even realize how much they do this. They use the leash to drag their dog where they want him to go. Sometimes they yank on it for punishment. On a walk, both dog and human are in a constant state of tension, with the dog dragging forward on the leash. The person grabs their dog by the collar and pulls on him when they need him in a certain place. They push him down into a sit. They use their legs to bump their dog out of the way. They physically restrain him when their dog tries to do something.

***The leash, and other forms of physical control, are a crutch.*** If you're relying on a tight leash to maintain control, your dog has an easy excuse to not bother listening to you. As long as there's tension on the leash, he knows where you are and what you're doing. If the leash is loose or not connected, he has to actually pay attention to know what's going on.

The same truths apply to the other forms of physical coercion. Let's look at it from another angle: would you use this much physical force with your husband/wife or child? What would you think if you saw someone else doing this with a human family member? Physical coercion does not build a bond. It's annoying and it removes your dog's ability to think for himself, make choices, and have responsibility for his own behavior. This kind of handling is unempowering for both of you and actually tends to increase the very behaviors it's generally used to control.

***It takes two to pull.*** Your dog doesn't pull on the leash -- you both do. Don't just walk along fighting with your dog. Stop yourself, get your mind in order, and then request attention. Ask your dog to work with you. Give your dog a choice whenever possible. Ask him for his cooperation. Remember, dogs want to cooperate with us. If they can't do that, there's always a reason. Figure out what that is and address that.

Here's a hint: the problem often is more an issue of your dog's emotional state/needs than "obedience."

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## 2 Stop yelling at your dog.

And stop repeating yourself endlessly. Try communicating to your dog in a quiet voice and simply waiting for her to respond. Give her space to choose to connect. Yelling and nagging doesn't even work very well with humans. It won't work any better with your dog.

***If your dog is not listening to you, there are only two possible reasons.*** Either you don't have her attention, or she is experiencing an emotional need in the moment that must be addressed. Making this change is simple. Just stop doing it. It isn't working anyway. If your dog ignores you, find another way to get her attention that actually works. Be creative, be fun, be interesting, and your dog ►

will listen to you. Also, calm, clear requests given in a quiet tone of voice are very effective -- once you have your dog's attention. ATTENTION and TRUST are the keys.

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### 3 Stop training your dog.

Now I'm really getting crazy, right? But there is a logic behind this. Many, many people train their dogs. They drill obedience commands; they practice sit-down-stay routines. They've been to a thousand pet dog training classes, or sent their dogs away to training camp. And yet -- they still don't have the reliable good behavior they want. They still struggle to live with their dog in the day-to-day real world. That is because ***"training" and building a relationship are not the same thing.***

You interact with your dog hundreds, maybe even thousands of times per day. And your dog is learning from each and every interaction. ***Every single interaction you have with your dog builds or damages your relationship.*** Trying to think about how to handle yourself in those interactions may seem overwhelming in the beginning

because it requires you to learn a lot. But once you have the knowledge and create some new habits, interacting with your dog in a way that strengthens your relationship becomes second nature, automatic. And once that happens, building a fantastic relationship (and enjoying the good behavior that is the bonus side effect) becomes your natural way of being.

Then, there's no more need for formal training sessions, unless there is a specific reason. For now, just start paying attention to those million and one tiny interactions. Ask yourself -- ***is this building the kind of relationship I want with my dog? Or damaging it?*** Adjust as needed. Actively commit to forging a deeper, better relationship and start developing the habit of mindfulness.

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### 4 Learn "dog" as a second language.

Talk to your dog. And more importantly, listen! I often tell my clients: stop thinking of your dog as a "dog". Think about your dog as a foreign exchange student who comes from a very different culture than you, and who doesn't speak English very well. It's your job to make him

feel welcome and accepted here.

***Dogs have a complex communication system and they're constantly talking with us.*** They share with us what they think, feel, and desire. When we can understand what they're saying, then it suddenly becomes much easier to know how we should respond to them.

And lucky for us, dogs are absolute masters at speaking Human. All we have to do is learn to listen to them, and then learn to communicate clearly ourselves. Our dogs are trying their best to understand us already, and they're good at it.

Take the time to learn some basics of canine communication, and even more importantly, take the time to listen to your dog. We co-evolved, remember? A lot of this we can understand intuitively if we can stop telling ourselves stories about what things mean and just open-mindedly pay attention to what our dogs are saying to us all the time.

Drop your assumptions and ***just observe your dog.*** Pay attention to details. Posture, muscular tension, eye contact, ear and tail position, head height, mouth shape and tension, breathing -- all of these things communicate, constantly. What is your dog saying?

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# 5

## Give your dog what she wants.

How many times have you heard things like this: You must make your dog work for what she wants. You must require your dog to respect you. You must not allow your dog to go through doorways first. You must never allow your dog to put her paw on you because it's a sign of dominance. You must never allow your dog to be higher than you.

**Here's the truth:** As I write this, I'm sitting on the couch. It's raining outside. One of my dogs is curled up in a ball on my right side. Her head is resting on my arm. My other dog is laying on top of a pile of throw pillows on my other side. Her paw is on my knee. I'm eating a snack, and every once in a while they ask for a bite, which I hand them. And I won't even mention where they'll sleep tonight. (Here's a clue: it's not on the floor.)

Uh-oh. I clearly have a dominance problem, right? Both of my dogs probably think they're the alpha. No way they're going to walk politely on loose leads, come when I call, or generally behave themselves like civilized creatures.

Except that they do. That is our daily life. And guess what? I'm

enjoying this quiet moment on the couch immensely. They aren't being demanding, pushy, or irritating. They're being sweet, companionable, and utterly adorable. Their presence is calming to me, and it makes me happy. It makes them happy too. That's called bonding.

***Controlling resources purely for the sake of controlling resources is called being a jerk.***

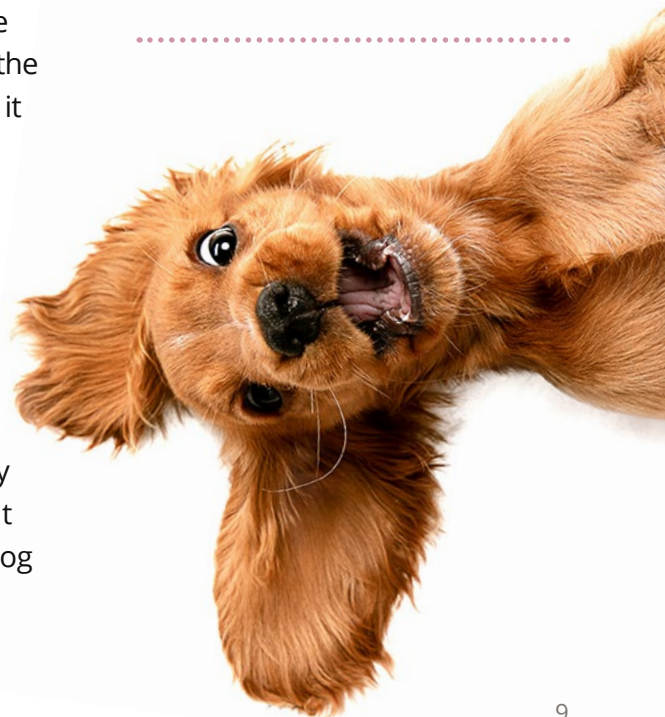
Now, this is not to say that you can't use resources to motivate good behavior. I always ask my dogs for calm behavior -- but that's the key. I ***always*** ask my dogs for calm behavior (unless we're playing, obviously). It goes back to making every interaction count. My dogs pretty much do whatever they want most of the time. But each interaction is defined by mutual respect. I respect them and I ask that they respect me. We respect each other. Then, when my dog wants a good full-on snuggle before we roll out of bed in the morning, we can both enjoy it fully, with zero guilt.

***Giving your dog what she wants can strengthen your bond, because you become the source of good stuff.***

The catch is that those interactions must be high-quality and characterized by consistent mutual respect. It doesn't mean letting your dog behave like a spoiled child.

Require respectful, reasonable behavior. Ask for it in a clear way. Require it consistently, all the time. Then, give your dog what she wants, when it's safe and reasonable and okay with you to do so.

Here's another tip. ***Pay attention to what your dog wants.*** Every dog is an individual. If you are offering something your dog doesn't care about, it won't build your relationship. I have some friends who enjoy watching violent action movies. I hate violence on TV. So we bond over the many things we both enjoy, not action movies. One of my dogs loves to snuggle. The other one really prefers her own space, but has some quirky little games that she plays. I snuggle with the one who loves it, and play quirky weird little games with the one who enjoys that. My relationship with each dog is different.



# 6

## Stop complaining about your dog.

For all of my clients who work with me personally, this is a first requirement. This is another thing you can just stop doing, right now. Why does this matter? Because it creates nothing good, and it destroys your relationship.

**Where you place your energy, results follow.** This isn't just true about building a good relationship with your dog, it's true about any relationship. In fact, it's true in most areas of your life. If you are constantly placing your energy and focus on what your dog is doing that is annoying or bad or frustrating, you're going to get more of exactly that. Complaining and listing your dog's sins accomplishes one thing and one thing only: it strengthens your perception that your dog is a "bad" dog, and it increases your frustration in the situation.

Eventually, you'll get to the place where you totally lose awareness of the million sweet or cute or funny or cool things about your dog. You'll just see an annoying burden. And you can't base any sort of quality relationship on that.

**The truth is, in most cases, you have the relationship you**

**deserve.** See also: It takes two to tango. Our dogs deserve total respect as independent entities apart from us -- but that doesn't change the fact that we're requiring them to live in a human society according to human rules. It's our responsibility to prepare them for that adequately. If you have failed to do that -- even if you failed through lack of knowledge -- that is not your dog's fault. This is not to say you should feel guilty; that's neither accurate nor helpful. The point is that you should not blame your dog.

And **if you've done everything right and your dog is still struggling**, then your dog is trying to tell you that something is deeply wrong, and for that, you should feel compassion.

Here's why this matters so much: **your real attitude is obvious to your dog** through your facial expressions, tone of voice, breathing, body tension, and posture. You are always communicating to your dog, all the time. Your dog knows how you feel about him. Make sure your thoughts, attitudes, and emotions reflect the kind of relationship you want.

Find things to appreciate and love about your dog, regardless of how frayed your relationship has gotten. Both of those activities require the

same amount of energy as complaining, and will actually help you mend the damage in your relationship. Look for the good, look for the opportunity, and act on that. It's so much more useful than focusing on the bad.

# 7

## Build mutual respect.

First, **abandon all ideas about "being the alpha", being in charge, or controlling your dog.** This guide is all about creating a willing partnership that comes from the heart.

Here are some easy ways you can start making that shift right now:

- ✔ **Ask, don't command.** Dictators command. Friends and partners request. Dogs want to please us. It's not necessary to order them to do so.
- ✔ **Say please and thank you.** Use good manners when you're talking with your dog. Treat them the way you would a human friend. They may not understand every word, but they understand your attitude.
- ✔ **Respect your dog's preferences.** This is similar to giving your dog what he wants, but takes it a step farther. ▶

When you ask your dog to do something, consider if it's what he prefers or not. And if it's not, maybe give a thought to whether it's really necessary that he does it, or if there might be another way to reach your end goal.

✔ **Honor your dog's emotional needs.** This includes a need for quiet, space, and some degree of control over their own physical body and the things that belong to them.

Finally, **ask for respectful behavior from your dog in return.** Communicate your needs clearly so he can easily comply. It's okay for you to ask for what you want in this relationship, too. Relationships are all about compromise. You give some; your dog gives some. But you must be clear on what you want. This is harder than it sounds. Before you ask your dog for anything, take a moment to really figure out exactly what you're asking for.

**Focus on what you want her TO do, not what you want him to NOT do.** It's much easier to get your dog to DO something than to NOT do something. If she's doing something you don't like, ask for something else instead.

Often, one problem is that the human in the relationship doesn't know what they want. We can be really fuzzy about

stuff -- changing our minds, caving in sometimes when our dog is particularly cute, and suddenly enforcing all sorts of strict rules when we've had a bad day at work and we're tired. This doesn't work well in any relationship -- human or canine. Relationships thrive on respect, clarity and consistency. And so knowing your limits and desires, and then respecting your dog's limits and desires, is a kind of dance.

## 8 Foster calm behavior.

Always encourage calm behavior. The exception is when you're playing and getting worked up for the fun of it. But even then, it's healthy if your dog can switch on and off.

**Most dogs spend a large portion of their lives over-excited, over-stimulated, and in sensory overload.** A dog in that state can't pay attention, can't behave well, and is inevitably going to be hyper and annoying. People tend to think that this is what a happy dog who's having fun looks like. **But the truth is, dogs in this state are not really happy.** The dog is hyped up. Imagine that you just downed half a dozen Red Bulls and you're bouncing off the walls and can't

concentrate or settle down. Now imagine yourself drinking your coffee and reading a book on the porch on a peaceful summer Saturday. Which scenario makes you happier? It's the same with your dog.

**A dog that is calm is a dog that is well-behaved and attentive,** with or without training. You build this state of natural, default calm by staying calm and focused in your interactions with your dog, having clarity, and then calmly and consistently asking for (and rewarding) calm behavior.



## 9 Build attention.

**Attention is the KEY** to getting good behavior from your dog. If you don't have your dog's attention, you can't ask him to do anything. (Well, you can ask him, but he won't listen... because he didn't hear you.) This is because when our brains shift into focus mode, ►

they automatically tune out other sensory input. We can actually measure this on brain scans. It's a physical fact, not a figure of speech.

This is a good thing -- it allows us to devote the maximum amount of brainpower to what we're doing. In the case of your dog, however, ***if he doesn't have a well-formed habit of giving you attention, you won't be able to get it when you need it.***

First, ***subtly acknowledge interactions.*** If your dog freely gives you his attention, don't brush it off just because you're busy concentrating on something else. That's one-sided. You don't have to stop everything you're doing and go play fetch. But you can smile, return eye contact, give a quiet "Hi" or "good boy". If you don't pay attention when your dog requests it, it's not fair to expect them to pay attention when you request it. (And dogs are all about fair. If you don't believe me, take two dogs and give one of them a treat and the other one nothing. See how they respond).

Second, ***don't nag your dog.*** Don't give unnecessary commands or ask for attention when you don't actually need it. Dogs get annoyed by this just like we do. Imagine someone constantly tapping your shoulder, saying your name. And then when you

finally turn around and say, "WHAT??" -- they're like, "Oh, nothing." That person would probably not last long on your favorite people list. Ask for attention when you really need it, and reward attention when it is given. Be worthy of your dog's attention. It's the greatest gift they can give you.

## 10 Have fun together.

Think about it: on a value scale of 1-10, where does your dog rate walks? Trips to PetSmart? Games of tug or fetch? Think about the things you do that you and your dog truly enjoy doing together.

***Dogs tend to bond through activities.*** They'll naturally grow closer to the person who they do cool stuff with. Relationships don't happen by magic. Relationships grow through shared experience.



## And, my final tip: Always be connected.

It's easy to zone out and forget to really connect to your dog. Make time, make space, and give your attention. This is a habit you'll need to build. But if you don't do that for her, it's not fair or realistic to ask her to do that for you when she's distracted by something really awesome... like, say, a squirrel.

Connection flows from you to your dog.

***Connection is powerful -- it can transform your life, and your dog's life, too.***



## And there you have it —

Ten simple, foundational things you can implement today -- without drilling obedience or “dominating” your best friend. These steps can help improve your relationship with your dog, immediately.

**If you apply what you have learned, you will see a shift in your relationship with your dog. But this is just the beginning of the journey. So much more is possible.**

If you're ready to venture deeper, there is a roadmap.



### **I-CARE is for you if you want...**

- ✓ to have a deep bond and a fantastic relationship with your pup.
- ✓ to cultivate good behavior without doing a lot of training.
- ✓ your dog to be empowered to make their own good decisions.
- ✓ all of this to happen naturally and intuitively - so that you know you can rely on your dog in any situation.

And, if your dog is facing more severe challenges, I-CARE will give them the best chance possible to overcome that and to live a full and happy life.

**Working with Horizon Dog Training, you'll learn to tell your dog, "I-CARE."**

Ready for More?

# Learn the psychological fundamentals to having a naturally well-behaved dog.

- ⊗ NO more having your dog barking at everything that moves, jumping all over guests, and completely ignoring you!
- ⊗ NO training, or dominating your sweet best friend
- ⊗ NO extra time required - you can do all of this in your daily interactions!



## In this FREE workshop, you'll learn how to:

- ▶ Understand your dog more deeply, so you form an unbreakable bond
- ▶ Cultivate great behavior WITHOUT frustrating training
- ▶ Empower your dog to make their OWN good decisions, by building trust with one another

**Ready to completely transform your relationship with your best friend?**

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*I learned that psychology is psychology. It doesn't matter if it's a dog or a human. I learned so much about Portia. I feel like I actually understand her now, and our bond has gotten so much deeper. This is empowering me to really help her, the way she needs me to." - Monica H.*