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**COURTEOUS CANINE, Inc.**  
Dog School and Doggie Gym!

## Help for the Reactive Dog: The Look Cue

The concept here is to help your dog understand that glancing at the scary object, person or animal is going to earn her MONEY. Money in dog society is good food, play time with a toy or anything else your dog says she really likes. If every time you looked at something you feared a person gave you \$100 dollars you would not mind the process of looking at what you feared.

Scientifically a scary person, object or being is called an aversive stimulus. Aversive means something the dog is afraid of and wants to avoid. Most aggression is fear-based meaning the dog desires to create distance between herself and the feared "it". Stimulus means anything the dog can perceive.

To teach your dog to glance at the aversive stimulus, the handler looks at the stimulus the dog fears. This usually prompts the dog to glance at the fearful stimulus. The moment the dog does glance, CLICK and reinforce. The startle response of the click prompts the dog to look at you and AWAY from the fearful stimulus. This is ideal because we only want a glance we don't want the dog to stare at the aversive stimulus this will likely cause the dog to bark, lunge, growl or stare all of which we do not want.

Repeat this game until you are certain the dog will look at the feared stimulus when you do. At that point add the cue "look."

Now use the cue to ask the dog to look at the fearful stimulus and continue to repeat this game. Click and reinforce every single time the dog glances at the aversive stimulus. Next, start asking the dog to look at other fearful stimuli. If there isn't one then move around the area to give the dog different perspectives of the aversive stimulus.

Gradually extend the period of time from a glance to a few seconds of looking. You can do this by repeatedly cueing "look." This will prompt the dog to hold the head turn and observation of the feared stimulus.

Ideal training avoids failures. To set your dog up for success allow for enough distances from the fearful stimulus so your dog does NOT stare, bark, lunge or growl. If you get any staring, barking, lunging or growling, wait until the dog calms then move the dog away and do not move as close as you were to the fearful stimulus when the failure occurred. Build on SUCCESS!!!