



## Fundamentals of Dog Training & Behavior Course Online Lesson Descriptions

### Course Modules:

1. **Introduction to Positive Training**
2. **Understanding Your Dog**
3. **Training Your Dog**
4. **Sneak Peek at VSA's Dog Trainer Course**

### Lesson Descriptions

<b>Introduction to Positive Training</b>	
<b>Orientation</b>	
Getting Started	Victoria Stilwell
This orientation lesson provides a quick overview of the Fundamentals course, including tips for getting the most out of your learning experience.	
<b>The Power of Positive Training</b>	
The Positive Difference	Victoria Stilwell
Learn about the VSA definition of 'positive training' and how it is shaped by Victoria's Four Pillars of Positive Training. Contrast positive training with traditional aversive/compulsion training in terms of its effectiveness and place in the dog training world. Explore the danger and fallout of punishment-based training and look at the concepts of dominance and so-called 'pack theory.'	
Changing Behavior Positively	Victoria Stilwell
Understand how to apply the Four Pillars of Positive Training and how to use positive reinforcement. Become familiar with VSA's dog training plan and start working toward solving any dog behavior problem.	
<b>Understanding Your Dog</b>	
<b>How Dogs Think &amp; Feel</b>	
The Thinking Dog	Victoria Stilwell
Learn how dogs think and about the different types of intelligence. Deepen your knowledge of how the brain works and how we can make learning easier for dogs. Play cognition games with your dog to uncover your dog's cognitive style.	
The 5 Canine Senses	Victoria Stilwell
Explore how dogs use their senses to perceive the world. Understand how emotions are closely linked to senses, and how we can use canine senses to help make training easier.	

The Feeling Dog	Alynn Lecznar
Do dogs have feelings? What about emotions? Learn about the role emotions play in behavior and how they might relate to problem behaviors in dogs.	
<b>Learning to Speak Dog</b>	
How Dogs Communicate	Victoria Stilwell
Do dogs speak English? What is their “natural” language? Understand how and why dogs communicate, and learn about the different ways in which dogs communicate with people and with each other.	
Dog Body Language	Victoria Stilwell
Understanding dog body language is an essential skill when interacting with dogs. In this lesson you will learn how dogs use body language to communicate, how to consider the “whole picture”, and how to determine your dog’s inner state and level of comfort in the situation.	
Reading Your Dog	Victoria Stilwell
Hone your observation skills so that you can accurately read your dog’s body language. Practice applying your newfound dog body language knowledge and become familiar with interpreting what your dog is saying and feeling.	
<b>Keys to Successful Training</b>	
Setting Up For Success	Victoria Stilwell
Develop an understanding of what your dog needs and wants from you, and the potentially unrealistic expectations that you might have for your dog. Learn how to change the environment to set you and your dog up for success.	
Bonding with Your Dog	Victoria Stilwell
What does the latest research tell us about the human animal bond? How can bonding help solve behavior problems and what happens if this bond is damaged?	
The Power of Choice	Victoria Stilwell
Should your dog make choices? What is “choice” and how does it apply to your dog? Learn how choice can impact motivation and learning and how you can use this concept for training advantage.	
<b>Training Your Dog</b>	
<b>Dog Training Foundations</b>	
How Dogs Learn	Lisa & Brad Waggoner, Alynn Lecznar
Discover how consequences can drive behavior and why learning is important when training your dog. Learn how to incorporate these consequences into your dog training plan.	
Dog Training Skills	Lisa & Brad Waggoner
The keys to your training success – mechanical skills! In this lesson you will learn how to determine your goal to clarify the solution, prepare for training, the 3 steps to training, add a cue, and you’ll have the opportunity to practice your new skills.	
Strengthening Your Training	Lisa & Brad Waggoner
Putting together your dog training skills and real world problems, this lesson will help you apply your new mechanical skills with the insight of how to implement this training to solve behavior problems. Learn to train despite distance, distraction, and duration, and what to do if your dog does not respond.	
Training Example: Sit	Victoria Stilwell
You may be able to get your dog to sit for a treat, but how can you use this behavior to help ease the frustration of your dog’s problem behaviors? Understand how to train your dog to sit and how to use this solution in your every day life.	

Training Example: Loose Leash Walking	Victoria Stilwell
Does your dog pull on leash? What does pulling on leash say about you and your dog? Learn about the importance of loose leash walking and how to achieve this behavior to make walks a pleasure for all.	
<b>Solving Behavior Problems</b>	
Making a Plan	Alynn Lecznar
Before training, it's important to organize by making a plan. Learn how to identify the problem and bring everything together to make a custom training plan to help solve almost any problem behavior.	
Problem-Solving Example: Jumping on People	Victoria Stilwell
Put your knowledge and skills to the test and solve a common behavior problem: jumping on people. Many people complain about their dog's jumping, practice solving problems by making a plan and working with your dog at home.	
Problem-Solving Example: Pulling on Leash	Victoria Stilwell
Try your hand at another common behavior problem: pulling on leash. Like with any behavior issue, identify the problem, set the goal, and make a plan for immediate and long term solutions. Work your way to loose leash walking bliss and help make walks more enjoyable with your dog.	
<b>Sneak Peek at VSA's Dog Trainer Course</b>	
<b>VSA Courses</b>	
Preview of VSA Courses	Victoria Stilwell
Interested in making the leap and taking VSA's full Dog Trainer Course? Victoria walks you through an overview of both the in-person and the online versions of VSA's flagship Dog Trainer Course, including curriculum details, differences between the two programs, and inspiration to help you follow your dreams of working with dogs as a career.	
Introduction to Marketing & Branding	J. Nichole Smith
Scared of marketing? You're not alone. In this bonus lesson, VSA's marketing and branding specialist J. Nichole Smith pulls back the curtain on some of what's covered in VSA's Dog Trainer Course business marketing, branding and management curriculum. But more importantly, Nichole shares her unique approach to being able not just to tolerate the concept of marketing, but actually embrace and succeed at it.	
Introduction to Helping People	Dr. Paula Bloom
Another bonus lesson featuring VSA faculty member and (human) clinical psychologist Dr. Paula Bloom and her inspiring explanation of why the human element of dog training is so crucial for those working in the pet industry.	