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SHAPING BEHAVIOR

Lessons from Dog & Dolphin Training
for more Humane and EFFECTIVE Training
in Our Parenting & Partnering

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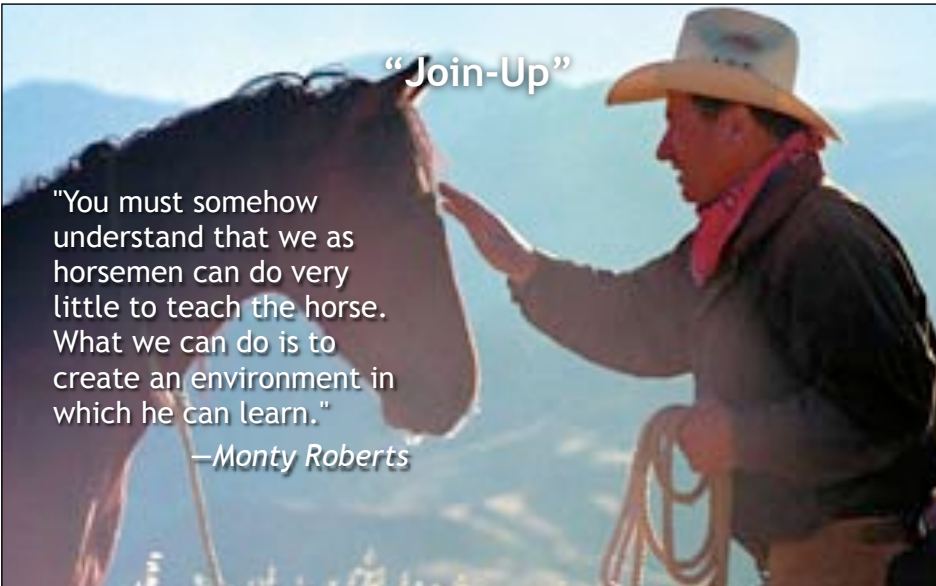
WHAT DO THESE SHARE IN COMMON WITH US?



- ▶ Highly social creatures
- ▶ Intelligent, quick learners
- ▶ Learning mechanism in the brain is identical to humans
- ▶ We train these animals MUCH MORE humanely, respectfully AND effectively than we do the humans we live with.

“Join-Up”

“You must somehow understand that we as horsemen can do very little to teach the horse. What we can do is to create an environment in which he can learn.”
—Monty Roberts





Behavior Mod 101

- Shaping behavior
 - Cp. to Dolphin, Dog, & Horse Training
- Approximations
- Micro-bursts
- Strategically ignore vs. “just ignore” = Extinguishing
- Training requires greater discipline of the trainer, not the subject



“Snap 1-2-3”

- Audio, Verbal, Visual Cues (stimuli)
- “Barking” is not being mean
 - Firm, direct
 - Removes anger, yelling and lecturing
- Clear “Alpha” reduces anxiety in the pack
- Social removal



“Magic Ratio”

5:1

20:1

63 ways to appreciate and motivate your family

Anyone who knows me knows this: I am big on appreciation. People thrive under a shower of appreciation: Spouses, kids, employees, you. We need that 5 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interactions but often lack it or take it for granted. These are just the first 21 out of 63 tips I will share in the next few articles. As you read check all the items you are willing to try and start implementing them.

Those of you who are familiar with my Building Strong Families program know how much I emphasize the importance and power of appreciation. The last article covered the first 21 ways to appreciate your family. These are the second set of 21 out of 63 ideas to encourage you to use appreciation for appreciation's sake as well as for its side benefit of motivating your family.

1. **Catch family members doing things right** and let them know specifically what you noticed.
2. **Motivation is intrinsic.** Ask family members to come up with ideas that would encourage them and help them feel appreciated and use those ideas.
3. **Notice and reward the unexpected.**
4. **Express thanks.** Never underestimate the value of a simple and personal thank you. Take it one step further and write a thank you note to a family member. Not only do they get appreciated in that moment, most people keep those notes and get to feel appreciated again later.
5. **Learn your family member's "hot buttons."** Learn what makes them tick, what makes them feel loved, what makes them feel special and appreciated and push those buttons like mad.
6. **Look 'em in the eye.** When communicating, be sure to make eye-to-eye contact. Do not look at the computer or the TV. Look at the person. With children, do not stand over them, get down to their level.
7. **"Bloom where you are planted."** Make where you live great. Stop thinking other families have it better. Celebrate what you have. Count your blessings and then share this accounting with your family. Let each family member know how many times they came up in your counting.
8. **Build in fun.** Build simple, spontaneous, little fun things into your daily activities. While running errands, take a kid with and make a little daddy-daughter, father-son, mother-daughter/son date out of it by simply taking an extra 15-minutes at the drive-in for a root-beer float.
9. **Touch them.** Our skin is well-designed to like and respond to appropriate and nurturing touching. Make physical contact when you speak to someone.
10. **Break the "rules."** There's a great management book called First Break All the Rules. If you find yourself saying, "That's just the way I am" or "That's how we've always done it" then you are likely running off of habit and pattern, not necessarily choice and intellect.

11. **Ask family members for positive feedback about your family.** Start talking your family up. Pretend you are the PR rep for your family. Let your family know how great they are, how proud you are of them, how much you lucked out by getting to have them in your life. Market this message. Sell it. Your family will buy it so long as you continue to sell it sincerely and consistently and frequently.
12. **Brag about your family members behind their back.** Praise them in front of others within ear-shot, but so it's not obvious that you're doing so they can over hear. Or talk them up with people who will pass it along to them.
13. **Celebrate the family “just because”** and for “no reason at all.” Go out to a nice dinner, plan a special day, bring home a cake, etc. When your spouse and kids ask what the occasion is just say, “You guys are the occasion. I lucked out getting you in my life and thought I ought to let you know.”
14. **Take a “Family Satisfaction Survey”** (just make up your own) from your family members and follow-up on the results.
15. **Make “resumes”** with each other for each member of the family, getting feedback and ideas about what each family member is good at, interested in, talented with, knowledgeable about, skilled with, etc. and write up on the computer and print out each and post for all to see. Show them what they have learned and accomplished, are learning and that they will continue to add to this throughout their lives.
16. **Celebrate vs. criticize mistakes.** Show your kids and your spouse you have faith in them that:
 1. They are smart enough to figure it out on their own;
 2. “The harder you fall the higher your bounce” (demonstrate with a Superball);
 3. That you are more concerned about them than their mistake;
 4. When we don't fear our mistakes we are free to make more mistakes and thus learn more;
 5. Success comes from mistakes, i.e., the Salesman's Creed: “Every ‘no’ is one ‘no’ closer to a ‘yes.’”
17. **Believe in your family members.** Be the one in their lives who never gives up on them.
18. **Ask your family to brainstorm 50 ideas** for rewarding good behavior, achievement, teamwork, etc in the family. Start to implement rewards from this list.
19. **Kid of the Week parking.** Mark a spot on the driveway, in the garage, on the patio, etc with chalk, tape, paint, rocks, etc. for their bike or scooter and hang a frame with their picture in it with “kid of the week” marked on it. Award a different kid each week.
20. **Give a Parent-Child Date** reward for kids.
21. **Give a Spa Day** reward for your spouse.
22. **Awards.** Pick up some old trophies at a thrift store and make new labels for them. Award family members for whatever you can think of. For example, “Best Improvement in Math,” “Greatest Provider Ever,” “Best Mom on the Planet,” “World's Most Fantastic Lawn-Mower.”

23. **Dates.** Reward your spouse and/or children by allowing them to pick and plan a date with you. For your kids, remind them it's their time with you and they're in charge. "Dad, can we...?" say "Can we? Well, that's up to you. It's your day. You're in charge." Of course, within reasonable limits as "Dad can we fly to Disneyland?" might not be realistic time-wise and financially.
24. **Say "Yes" more often.** My daughter asked, "Dad, can you walk with us to school on Walk to School Day?" Instead of, "I'm sorry, I'm really busy, I work that day" I thought, Why not? I can go in an hour later and work through lunch or stay an hour later. Big whoop—what's an extra hour here or there when we get to trade it for a good time and a nice memory with a child? "Of course, I can Sweetie" was my answer. What a great answer to be able to give a child and what a great answer to hear.
25. **"Need anything?"** On your way home from work call your spouse and ask if there's anything he or she needs that you can stop and pick up for them.
26. **Encourage initiative.** When the child shows interest or initiative encourage it as often as you can.

For example, one summer my son asked, "Dad, can we do a lemonade stand?" My first thoughts were that it's too hot, I've got too much to do, we don't have any lemonade, etc. All true, but all were excuses and reasons why we couldn't. My first thoughts betrayed me. Fortunately, I took my own advice and recognized that ineffective thinking and looked for reasons why we could.

Excuse: Yeah, it is a hot day.
Solution: Hot days are the best time for a lemonade stand.

Excuse: I don't have time? Solution: Of course, I do. I have all the time in the world to put first things first—and what's more important than supporting my kid? I can show him with my very important time just how very important he is.

Excuse: We don't have lemonade?
Solution: Well, I know where to buy it and the cups., etc.

Well, 45-minutes later, my son was up and running with his lemonade stand and I got back to work. The work was more enjoyable because I didn't have that nagging feeling that I had put off the more important work of tending to my family's relational needs. If you really can't take action then, then do show lots of interest in the idea and show that you're "bummed" that we can't do that great idea right now. Just because we can't do it doesn't mean we can't talk about how great it would be. Talking about it in such a manner encourages their initiative, creativity and imagination.

27. **Play games.** Games take time. Games are interactive. Family members spell love T-I-M-E.
28. **Reward your kids for reading.** The deal could be \$X or going out for ice cream for every X pages or books read.
29. **Ask.** Ask not only what family members did or learned during their day, also ask what they solved, figured out, were excited about, or were sad about.
30. **Contribute more than you complain.** Instead of just complaining or pointing out a problem bring at least three potential solutions for the problem as well. Also, bring along a few points of encouragement about the person.
31. **Reward “A-ha!”s.** When a family member figures out a tough problem, gains an insight, or has an epiphany, encourage and celebrate it with them. Talk through how good it feels to get through to the other side of a problem or struggle. As you share in their successes they will want to share more successes with you.
32. **Study your children and your spouse.** Your answers to your frustrations with them are likely staring you right in the face. Look for your answers from your family. Listen to them. Pay attention to them. Unlock complaints to find the solution to the problem.
33. **Remember special days and prepare for them.** Seem obvious? It's not to many. Count down birthdays with kids. Talk about your anniversary months ahead, with anticipation in your tone, planning what you both would like to do.
34. **Give them wings.** Help your family members (spouse and kids) identify their interests, strengths and talents. Encourage them to follow their dreams. Believe in them. Give them wings to fly.
35. **Ask family members for their opinions.** Be respectful and listen. Let them know that you value their input, feelings and ideas.
36. **Be patient with questions.** My inquisitive daughter asked, “Dad, do I ask too many questions?” as she was worried that she was being bothersome. I informed her that one can't ask too many questions and that smart, creative people ask as many questions as they can think of. It is the best way to learn.
37. **Ask your children what they want.** Listen to them even if you don't agree with them. Many of their ideas will be good to great. The ones that aren't help you understand them better and help them feel understood. People who feel understood feel appreciated.
38. **Call just because.** Call you spouse and kids at random times during your day. Tell them you just called because you were thinking about them.
39. **Catch them being good.** Find family members doing things right, different and/or better at home, school and work. Point it out to them. Tell them how great you think they are because of it.

40. **Develop family goals.** As a family discuss what is most important as a family. Decide what you want to accomplish big picture as a family: how you want to “be” together, how you want to treat each other. Also, decide what you want to do together as a family both short- and long-term. Set dates, assign tasks and establish rewards. Write them down and blow them up to poster size and post them for all to see. Have signing ceremony where each family member signs the poster and then celebrate with root beer floats. Working together on these goals increases family commitment, solidarity, identity, meaning and fun.
41. **Are you sacrificing for your family?** Yes, probably, of course. What I mean is are you truly sacrificing? Sacrifice comes from the word sacred. Are you complaining about your sacrifices or are you recognizing that you are giving up something good for something better? Are you giving your sacrifice willingly or are you sacrificing with a martyr or victim attitude? Make your sacrifices sacred by treating them so.
42. **Read to your kids.** Read what you like to them. Read what they like to them. Read, read, read. Share, talk about it, enjoy it. Reading takes time. Kids equate time with love. They’re right.
43. **Take an Interest Quiz.** Ask your children and/or spouse specifically what they like (even if you think you know) and take notes.
44. **Use the Interest Quiz.** Take your Interest Quiz findings with you when you go out in the world—to the office, store, library, nature, etc.—and bring something back—such as a magazine clipping, a trinket, a book, a cook rock or leaf, etc.—saying “I saw this, thought of you and thought you’d like it.”
45. **Take your family to lunch.** Ask them what’s working for them in the family and what isn’t. Don’t argue with them or “correct” them. Just listen. Ask them how you as a family can take the family to the next level. Take notes and take action to implement some of the ideas.
46. **Praise family members publicly** with lots of emotion.
47. **Criticize family members privately** with little emotion.
48. **Stop fighting reality.** Let go of your unrealistic expectations about your family members. This may mean educating yourself further about child and adolescent development or how men think and communicate compared to how women think and communicate. Rely more on accurate information about how things are instead of just personal opinion about how you think things and people “should” be. This one approach has done much to alter, improve and even save relationships.
49. **Form relationships with other families** and do things with them. This creates support and reinforcement for what each family is trying to accomplish instead of going it alone.
50. **Apologize.** If you’re wrong say so. And say so simply and sincerely without ifs, ands or buts. Remember, parents are the family executive managers and leaders. Those who are led really appreciate a leader who leads by example.

The GREAT Relationships Playbook — Jonathan D. Sherman, LMFT

51. **Change roles.** Let your child choose who they want to be for the day. Or let them be the parent for 15 minutes, an evening or a day. Have fun with it.
52. **Learn and sing silly songs** for your kids. Memorize a few jokes. Tell stories about your childhood. Taking time to share laughter and stories strengthens family bonds and tells our loved ones we are not only together, but that we enjoy our time together.
53. **Take a class together** at the library or through community education. It could be anything: pottery, painting, self-defense, whatever.
54. **Slip in a mini-date.** When on route to an errand sneak over to A&W and get a rootbeer float with your kid. No one will notice you're gone an extra 10-15 minutes and it can be your and your child's little secret or they can share the fun with your spouse and siblings. Either way it's a tasty memory-maker that makes kids feel special and appreciated.
55. **Do lunch.** Invite your spouse and/or child (ren) for a lunch date "just because."
56. **Market your family brand.** What does it mean to be a member of your family? Are you regularly and consistently "selling" yourself, or presenting your best self to your family? Clarify family identity and "market" that identity to your family just as advertisers market their brands to us.
57. **Be there.** Go there. Show up. Be there. Show support. Time is valuable and the gift of your time and presence tells people just how important they are in your life.
58. **Kids like the little things.** Bring back candy, pens, pads of paper, and other trinkets from conferences, trips, etc. and share them with your kids. They don't have to be expensive or fancy. Fun and silly or useful are nice. Mostly it shows that you are always in my thoughts even when I'm gone.
59. **Make yourself accountable for your appreciation.** Find a "Pact Pal" who will get in on the same appreciation kick you are doing and check in with each other to keep each on task as well as to have someone to share the fun of success with.
60. **Make a difference.** Complete this sentence: "I will make a difference in _____'s life today by doing or saying _____."
61. **Another awards idea.** Find a fun, odd, interesting, significant or silly object at a second-hand store or in your home and spray paint it gold and hold an awards ceremony for family members.
62. **Create the change.** Complete this sentence: "For things to change, I must personally change _____."
63. **Count to ten.** List ten things or ways I can and will show appreciation to a family member.

Now, review the ideas you checked and pick three to five you will do this week. Now pick one you will go do right now. Well, what are you reading this for? Go do it!



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Seminar & Workshop Evaluation

Date: _____ Topic: _____

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Please rate your overall experience of this presentation:

Horrid/Very Poor		Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good/Excellent	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The Good... What was brilliant, superb, exhilarating, life-altering, or opened the heavens for you? In short, what did you like about the presentation?

What's one thing that you plan on using and/or implementing into your life from this presentation?

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