



MODULE 1 - Diagnose the Problem

Identify what function the behavior serves - from the viewpoint of your dog (escape, avoidance, or self-reinforcement). Pinpoint your dog's triggers - other dogs or animals? People? Cars, trucks, other noises? Recognize whether your own responses may be contributing to, or reinforcing, the behavior.

MODULE 2 - Management: Prevent Rehearsals

Understand how frequent rehearsals strengthen reactivity. Learn management strategies to set your dog up for success. Ensure that routines inside the home help your dog learn impulse control in situations they find very stimulating.

MODULE 3 - Build Alternative Behavioral Responses

Spend plenty of time on this step. Build new behavioral responses and HABITUATE it. You must override old habits with new new habits. Teach focus-on-handler patterns (verbal cues, leash yielding, "let's go", "get it", and "come"). Habituate new behaviors until they become the dog's default response. Avoid superstitious associations (the trigger makes bad things happen).

MODULE 4 - Introduce Non-Triggering Distractions

Introduce NON triggering distractions - something that interests the dog, but has a positive association for your dog, to strengthen new behaviors. Practice calling your dog away from the distractions (leash pops, "let's go", or "come", "get it").

MODULE 5 - Controlled Trigger Setups

Expose your dog to low-intensity triggers, keeping exposure under threshold. Read body language, and be aware of their fuse. Be ready to redirect early, BEFORE they react, and reward compliance. Observe if your dog begins to anticipate the redirect. If so, take a little time before turning away and reward, reward, reward to build positive associations. Do repetitions moving away from and returning to the trigger.

MODULE 6 - Introduce a Conditioned Interrupter

Learn how to apply a conditioned interrupter (e.g., "Out/No") BEFORE your dog loses it, which allows for a softer punisher. Practice calm turn-aways, then reward when they follow you. Stay in the area, with just enough movement to allow a reset. Stay in the area, with just enough movement away to allow a reset, then repeat.

MODULE 7 - Facing Uncontrolled Triggers

Safely manage unexpected encounters. Use distance, brief exposures, pre-emptive redirects, and exit strategies. Don't over-correct, but don't rely only on redirect/reinforcement either. If the trigger is too intense (such as too many triggers, or too close), interrupt, redirect, get out of dodge. Then return to the area after the triggers are gone.

MODULE 8 - Facing Uncontrolled Triggers

Safely manage unexpected encounters. Use distance, brief exposures, pre-emptive redirects, and exit strategies. Don't over-correct, but don't rely only on redirect/reinforcement either. If the trigger is too intense (such as too many triggers, or too close), interrupt, redirect, get out of dodge. Then return to the area after the triggers are gone.

