

Happy New Year!

Welcome to our new Keegan's Magic student newsletter! Each month, we will share training tips, training philosophies, student achievements, general announcements, and other great information. We hope you enjoy!

How Much Training is Too Much?

I recently attended OneMind Dogs Foundation training where one-hour classes held once per week were adequate for beginner agility dogs. This seems very normal to me. My question arose when I started thinking about all the agility training my students and I do with our adult dogs each week. I have some students who only train for agility once per week during class, others who train during the week on their own between weekly classes, and still others who attend 2-3 classes per week with the same dog.



I usually have my adult agility dogs with me during the weekly classes that I instruct, but they don't train in agility every day, and some weeks, they don't even train every other day. I think I am fairly competitive, typically entering two agility trials each month, and my dogs do well some weekends and not so well on others. I've often wondered if there is any correlation between the amount of training we do and how well my dogs and I do at agility competitions. On the obvious side, it seems like there would be a direct relationship between the amount of training and success at competitions, but lately I'm not so convinced.

The OneMind Dogs Foundation training focuses on "dog natural" behaviors, meaning that the training is more for the handlers and just reinforces the dogs' natural tendencies. As a result, dogs don't need a lot of repetition to learn because they already know what to do. Only some of the training teaches the dogs things that aren't so natural, such as contacts or weaves.

Thinking about my adult dogs again, I have changed the amount and type of training I do with them. We usually spend one day doing coursework and the rest of the week troubleshooting individual obstacles or just playing and “being dogs”. I am a firm believer that our dogs are athletes and need cross training, just like human athletes. We spend time swimming, playing ball or disc, running for endurance and cardiac health, or training for other activities like Rally Obedience.

Each dog/handler agility team needs to make their own choices as to how much training is important versus excessive. I know when I have a great training session, I get excited and can't wait for the next class and I can only hope that my dog feels the same way I do. The moral of the story is this: no matter how much or little agility training you choose to do with your dog, make it fun and worthwhile. The amount of training you do doesn't necessarily equate to how successful you will be at the next trial.

Class Schedule

- **Advanced Agility:** Tuesdays 8:00-9:30 am and Wednesdays 8:00-9:30 pm (\$20/class)
- **OneMind Dogs Inspired Handling:** Thursdays 8:00-9:30 am (\$20/class)
- **Intermediate Agility:** Tuesdays and Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 pm (\$15/class)
- **Novice Agility:** Thursdays 6:30 pm and 7:30 pm (\$15/class)

Private lessons available on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Ring rentals are also available for students. Please contact Maren directly for scheduling and availability.

Accomplishments & Brags

This is YOUR section of the newsletter – where our students can share their accomplishments with their dogs, including titles, placements, breakthroughs, etc. Please send us an email at keegansmagic@gmail.com so that we can celebrate your achievements with all our students!

Congratulations to the following students:

- Sally Treat and Ty on their C-ATCH7 (CPE Agility Trial Champion #7)
- Monica Gobeli and Rocky on their RATChX (Barn Hunt Master Champion)
- Heidi Pitts and Molly on their C-ATCH (CPE Agility Trial Champion)
- Lisa Chavez and Ebony qualified for 2018 CPE Nationals
- Jan Casey and BT earned their Dock Senior and United Junior Jumper titles
- Jan Casey and Zoey moved up to Level 3 Standard class in CPE

Training Tip

When walking the course to plan your handling, remember to practice looking at where you expect your dog to be on course. Doing this throughout your walkthrough is a great reminder to watch and CONNECT with your dog when you are actually running!

Important Note

Dog Training Club of Tampa is also offering Intermediate and Advanced agility classes at our field on Monday nights from 7:00-8:30 pm throughout January and February. Please contact them directly at DTCTampa@yahoo.com for information.