

Welcome to our 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!

Lessons Learned About Mental Training

I am taking an online mental training course with OneMind Dogs. During this class, I have learned a lot about myself and about how I train and compete with my dogs. A few noteworthy lessons that I've learned are how I can build upon my previously held beliefs about my dogs' abilities, how I can accomplish goals by dividing them into smaller ones, and how I can focus my energy on a more positive attitude by not complaining.

Build Upon Previously Held Beliefs

How you use previously held beliefs about yourself and your dog's abilities can drive you to become a better handler. For example, if I believe that my Aussie, Hart, can't be a fast agility dog because he's not a Border Collie, then I have two choices – find ways to improve his speed (helpful) or make excuses for not running him to his full potential (harmful).



I chose the helpful option, to believe that he can win classes with clean runs by increasing his speed. To do this, I focused on setting the fastest lines for him and keeping him moving by doing more blind crosses instead of rear crosses. After a few trials, I surprised myself with the number of blue ribbons we earned.

Accomplish Goals by Setting Smaller Ones

Some examples of difficult agility goals include earning titles, making it to a national competition, or trying out for the world team. Some handlers may feel like these tasks are unachievable, but by changing your perspective and dividing each goal into smaller and achievable ones, you and your dog just might be more successful.

My example has nothing to do with agility. Three years ago, I started running for exercise. The first time out, I could barely run to the next block (about a tenth of a mile) before I was out of breath. I struggled like that for three miles. I convinced myself that there was absolutely no way I could ever run even one mile without taking a lot of walking breaks. Fast forward to today and I am training for my first marathon in early December.

Two mantras that I follow are:

- A mile is a mile no matter what speed you go, and
- One mile at a time until you're done.

So how does this translate to agility? By understanding that a Q is a Q no matter how long it takes you and your dog to earn it. Also, you can only earn one Q at a time, so focus on that Q and, in time, those Qs will add up to impressive achievements.

Instead of focusing on how long major goals are taking (or wondering whether they can even be achieved), focus on the present and what you can do today with your dog.

Focus on the Positive

The last significant lesson I've gained from the mental training course is how a negative perspective affects how I run my dogs. As a homework assignment, we weren't allowed to complain about anything for a week.

I won't lie. It really took a lot of energy to make sure I was doing this homework.

The idea behind this exercise is that complaining doesn't fix anything. If I complain that Clever missed her A-frame contact in a run that was otherwise perfect, it still doesn't earn me a qualifying score. All that I accomplished was focusing on the one negative aspect of that run and ignoring all the positive. Instead of complaining, I can focus on what I am going to do to improve her contact behavior.

So, when you are at a trial or class, consider focusing your energy on the positive aspects and how you can fix the negative without complaining. This empowers you to find ways to improve whatever it was that went wrong.

Agility training and competition has many proud moments as well as times of stress and pressure. As the handler, it's up to me to decide which predominates when I train and compete. When I go to trials or classes, it's important that I am in the best frame of mind and that I control my emotions and how I react to things that occur. The mental aspect is also a big part of being the best handler possible for each of them.

[Class Schedule](#)

The next 4-week session starts the week of December 17. Class dates may be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances. Unless otherwise stated, classes are \$75 for each 4-week session or \$25 for each drop-in.

- **Advanced Agility:** Tuesdays 8:00-9:30 a.m. and Wednesdays 7:45-9:15 p.m.
- **Intermediate Agility:** Tuesdays 6:00-7:30 p.m., Wednesdays 6:00-7:30 p.m., Thursdays 6:00-7:30 p.m. & 7:45-9:15 p.m.
- **OneMind Dogs Inspired Handling:** Thursdays 8:00-9:30 a.m.
- **OneMind Dogs Foundation:** Tuesdays 7:45-9:00 p.m. (\$136/8-week session, no drop-ins)

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

Important Note – Upcoming Holidays

There will be **no classes or lessons** December 24 through December 31. Also, there will be **no morning classes or lessons** on January 8 or January 9.

Accomplishments & Brags

This is YOUR section of the newsletter – where our students can share accomplishments with their dogs, including titles, placements, training breakthroughs, etc. Please [send us an email](#) so we can celebrate your achievements with all our students!

Congratulations to the following:

- Lauren Gomez's Dancer earned 13 out of 15 Qs at the NorAust CPE trial.
- Ellen Kurland's Encore earned his Canine Good Citizen with AKC and also his Novice Trick Dog, Intermediate Trick Dog, Advanced Trick Dog, and Expert Trick Dog titles with Do More With Your Dog.
- Diane Gailit's Skylar had a busy month of CPE trials. At the Sonlight trial, she earned six Qs, all with 1st placements. At Pasco Paws, she earned seven out of ten Qs, with four 1st placements, three 2nd placements, and two 3rd placements. At the NorAust trial, she earned nine out of ten Qs, with eight 1st placements and one 2nd placement.
- Maren Baldwin's CleverGirl earned a perfect weekend at the Pasco Paws CPE trial, earning six Qs out of six runs, all with 1st placements.
- Helen Yettaw showed all three of her Papillons at the TDAA trial in Palm Bay. Angel earned five Qs, all with 1st placements, and her Teacup Games 2 title. Both Buddy and Ty earned three Qs and earned one 1st placement.

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- Vicki Drerup's HiJinks earned his BCAT in AKC Fast CAT. He's currently the 17th fastest Golden Retriever in the sport.
- Ellen Kurland's Magic earned 12 out of 14 Qs at the NorAust CPE trial.
- Lisa Schmeling's Neo (handled by Lisa's husband) earned his Novice Containers title (with a 2nd place and a time of 8.45 seconds), his Novice Interior title, and his first Novice Buried Q in AKC Scent Work.
- Heidi Pitts's Molly had a perfect day with five out of five Qs at the NorAust CPE trial.
- Sally Treat's Ty earned 11 out of 12 Qs at the NorAust CPE trial.
- MaryAnn Campbell's Duncan earned his Novice Agility Preferred title in AKC.
- At his two most recent AKC agility trials, Elaine Rinicker's Jaxs had six total perfect days in a row and earned 180 PACH points.

Do you have an article suggestion for our newsletter? Please [send us your suggestion](#) and we might include it in a future newsletter.