

CESAR MILLAN TELEPHONE CONSULTATION

3/30/2005

by Judy Huston

Judy's comments: When I saw Cesar on National Geographic, I was in awe. After viewing as many episodes as I could, I contacted the Dog Psychology Center and began working with Cesar's Executive Assistant, Gayle Thompson, to see what the chances were that he would come to Michigan. Gayle confirmed an early 2005 date for us and Cesar and his wife, Ilusion, arrived in Michigan on April 15. We had 307 people at our seminar.

I continued to watch episodes and work with my four dogs. Kyra, my White Shepherd, was my inspiration to learn more and I was eager to use Cesar's formula. We also have two rescued dogs, one is a dog-aggressive nine year old 90 pound Malamute, and the other is a soft 35 pound 12 year old Golden mix. The fourth dog is a 15 pound seven year old Sheltie with a Jekyll and Hyde personality.

I wanted to go as far as I could with Cesar's Success Formula before his seminar so I had two telephone consultations with him. One shortly after we set up the seminar and the second one a couple of weeks before our Michigan seminar.

I learned a lot and made major improvements with all four dogs and with my ability to be a stronger pack leader.

Cesar gave me permission to tape our consultation. Later I got permission to post it here on "My Versatile Shepherds" website. The following is a transcript of that consultation:

Judy: My first question is about puppies. My son and some friends recently got puppies and I know the same rules probably apply of exercise, discipline, and then affection.

Cesar: Yes ma'am.

Judy: Do you expect a puppy to walk at your side or do you start that later on?

Cesar: That's what they do right away. They follow the mom. It is already in their way of being.

Judy: They literally should be on a leash walking at the person's side, even as a puppy?

Cesar: Not on a leash, they can do it without the leash. But, if you don't trust them (to stay with you) then let them drag the leash. So if they take the wrong direction, you would correct them and keep going so they will easily get into the

state of mind of “traveling.” Once the dog is two months old, the mother moves with them and this is how she teaches them the world. You can see this with ducks more often, right? They are not in front of the mom, the mother is out in front and the young form a line behind her. With the dog world, it is the same thing. If the mother moves, they move and that's how they learn to follow.

Judy: Okay, that's good, I see it.

Cesar: In the human world, a lot of times we're not sure (of ourselves) so we're not going to project a “sure energy.” This is why they are not going to be so trusting in us. You see, they need to follow energy, not just a body, (but) energy. So when you project or provide a calm and assertive energy, they gravitate to it. See mother is calm/assertive and not emotionally excited.

Judy: You don't take them for as long a walk do you?

Cesar: Yes, you can.

Judy: You don't worry about growing bones? (Here I clarified my belief that as a puppy's bones are growing, we need to be careful not to make them over-use them or get too tired.)

Cesar: No. You don't want to traumatize the mind (by not exercising/walking the dog). If the mind is not comfortable, I mean, they become stronger, they become wiser, they become relaxed from the walk. The thing is you don't have to do the whole walk for an hour. You can do it for twenty minutes, rest, walk, rest, walk. Even when you rest, there are rules and boundaries and limitations during the rest time, they can't just get up and explore. You see what I'm saying? The time to rest is the time to rest and regain energy and then continue the walk. The whole point is for you allow them to go to the outside world and then come back home. The home is like the den. They don't spend 24 hours in the den after they are two months old. They spend more time in the outside world and then they go back to the den. But, when they live with humans they live in the den most of the time. So the reason there is so much instability living with us is that we don't provide the primal side because we're concerned about other things. A lot of dogs develop instability already in the first month. They are already going nuts.

Judy: Yes they are.

Cesar: They are not stable any more because the nature of the dog is to move forward within the pack not to live behind walls within the pack.

Judy: Another question about these puppies: my son got one and two friends each got one. We were walking along Lake Michigan on Sunday – all three nine-week old puppies. The smallest one isn't around the other two as often. It attacks the two bigger pups. Maybe it got bullied in the litter?

Cesar: Could be. The thing is when you see something like that you act like the mom. If mom doesn't agree with the behavior she will go and bite the puppy to snap them out of it. Did you see where I corrected the Chihuahua – two fingers! Quick. When I see the puppy getting physical or dominant that is when I do the physical touch on the neck because that snaps them out of it. (When people panic it is (also) a physical touch that will snap them out of it.

Judy: Like a redirect!

Cesar: It is the best thing you can do at that moment. If you do “don't, stop it, la la la Oh my god,” it only encourages the puppy in that kind of activity. The physical touch doesn't come from a frustrated or angry state of mind. It is just using good communication. The thing to know is that the mother will not stop the puppies from doing that with each other. The mother will allow that behavior. In the human world, we don't like that stuff.

Judy: Yes, I understand.

Cesar: In their world, being the dominant one allows them to have more food and to mate and run the show. So, the mother will not block them from behaving that way. But if the mother was doing the human thing, she would go and use her mouth to bite them to stop. Just like when she is weaning and the puppy keeps feeding, she will warn them by changing her energy. If they don't pick up on the energy and leave her alone, she will bite them. They use a physical touch to make things happen. The puppies don't have a problem with this, but when a human touches with frustration and anger that it is the wrong way of touching. They are not going to create submission with that energy. They are going to create fear and maybe they will fight back to you or just ignore you. There are four options:

Fight – Flight – Avoidance -- Submission

The goal is to create submissive state of mind dogs just like homeless people create a calm and submissive state of mind in their dogs. These people have a calm, submissive state of mind, see what I'm saying and this is why their dogs behave so well, they live in that state of mind. The dog that lives in an excited state of mind or a dominant state of mind, or a fearful state of mind, and when they live with professional people the dog develops instability. When they live with homeless people they develop stability. Amazing. Huh? One has money and the other has no money (Cesar laughs).

JUDY'S DOGS – SITUATION ON TICKET MAILING DAY

Judy: Okay, the next section is about my own dogs.

A few days ago, all of the volunteers came over to mail tickets for your seminar. My idea was to try with them the idea of what I want with Kyra, the White Shepherd, which is to walk out (where there are guests) without her acting wild, but just be able to be calm with people. I already know I can bring her out on a leash, have her sit a few times, treat her, focus her on me, and then release her, but ideally, I'd like her to come out calmly on her own. I didn't know exactly what would happen but I said, "Okay, nobody look at her" just like I've seen you do on various episodes with people coming into your pack, just let her come out and I'm going to ask her to go to her crate. So, I opened the door and she came out, but there was an approximately 13-year old boy there. I guess, kids just being kids, he didn't listen to my request and not only did he look at her, but he made a noise as he jumped back away from her which, of course, triggered her. She did a bark and jump by him twice and then went into her crate. I "think" if he hadn't done that it would have worked fine. But, I can't control what people are going to do or not do.

Cesar: First, you would have to be quiet and provide that for her, then she learns to trust humans. Eventually, once you repeat that exercise a couple of times then you can start creating some other behaviors because by that time her mind is already conditioned to the calm side of humans.

Judy: Doing it that way is a good way to be conditioning her?

Cesar: Yes, we need humans who are willing to help us. Absolutely, there is no other way. We all have to be on the same frequency or she won't trust (the boy wasn't on the same frequency).

Judy: Yes, that is what happened with the young boy, he did the opposite thing.

Cesar: Remember, if the mind becomes nervous, anxious, fearful, insecure, the mind can bite.

Judy: Right, I understand that.

Cesar: So, if earlier the mind was fine until somebody (the boy) creates the reaction (from Kyra) then because he created the reaction, she addressed herself to him and then by him maintaining eye contact, it intensified the behavior. If he had gone into "ignoring" mode, the dog would not pick up anything else.

Judy: So the fact that she eventually ignored him and went to the crate on her own was quite good?

Cesar: Yeah. The mind didn't stay in attack mode. The mind just released the fear or whatever the state of mind she had when she went into the crate, but whatever she went in with, she just "poof" let it go. The bad thing is that it

becomes a cycle. This is how she learns to do the exercises. She barks and then goes to the kennel. We don't want any mistakes. Remember, we're working with something that doesn't rationalize. Dogs do not rationalize. It is all a reaction. Everything they do is a reaction. They learn to do it that way – that's how the brain learns. It would be nice if you could have addressed her right then in front of the kid and sent her into total and calm submission right in front of him and in this way you would be telling her that that behavior is completely unwanted by pack leader. I mean the good thing is she went to her crate, but she didn't learn the lesson not to do it.

Judy: No she didn't.

Cesar: Yes, so once the dog goes and addresses things herself by starting to bark, the handler has to come in and make the dog go into a submissive state of mind right in front of the person she was barking at. This is how the brain will learn not to do it to that person any more. It doesn't mean she won't try it with the others, but not that person (because she was corrected for it). This is why we need repetition.

Judy: The day you come here after the seminar that's what I want to do after everyone is inside. I want to open the door and let her come in.

Cesar: Okay.

Judy: In the meantime I will be working with her a lot to get her better each time.

Cesar: How's the walk coming?

Judy: The walk is getting really good. In fact last Saturday, I took her herding and in order to get to the working pen, we had to go through another pen with ewes and lambs that required us to go through two gates. I really had to take a deep breath and relax before walking through, but she did great.

Cesar: Good.

Judy: And, my friend who is going to be here for the lesson with her German shepherd was right behind me and her dog walked through as well and was quiet. And this dog (Shayna) is usually vocal. We're not quite sure whether it was because it was Shayna's first time with the sheep and some insecurity came through, since she tends to be insecure, or what. In other words, we don't know whether we're going to have "quiet" this Saturday or not.

Cesar: Every time you change the environment, it is an advantage for the handler.

Judy: It is an advantage?

Cesar: Yes, you take advantage of the mind's insecurity with the new place. This makes them naturally more submissive.

Judy: So the next week, we expect the same behavior because we got it once already?

Cesar: Yes, because that's what the brain did. The moment the brain starts to give you a different state of mind, this is when you move in from a disciplined point of view. You snap them out of and get them back to calm submission and keep the mind in that calm submissive state. Eventually, the smell of the place triggers the mind.

Judy: I see. Here's what happened later. Shayna went into work the sheep, and of course, Kyra was outside watching. She was not exactly like a maniac, but she was jumping all over the place and I got her to lie down, she'd get up, I'd tell her to lie down. She was kind of vocal, not really bad, but she certainly was not like anything resembling calm and I wondered in that situation what to do. I thought it was probably one where you would have made the dog lie down and stay there until she was calm?

Cesar: Before I send them to a sitting position or a laying down position, I snap them out of it first "before" I put them in those positions. I would not try to send them to those positions while the mind is still excited. See it? Sending them to a down position intensifies submission. But if you make them lay down while the mind is still protesting that means the mind is not agreeing with the behavior.

Judy: I am getting "non-agreement."

Cesar: So your dominance is not making sense to her. That is why she is not giving you calm submission. There is something that you are doing or some energy that you are expressing or the timing of what you are doing that is not creating a clear understanding to her of what you are trying to achieve.

They live in the moment. Once you share good energy and good timing and know when to block (her behavior) the mind gets it. It's not that they want to question the human and are saying normally I won't do this for you, but if your energy, your timing, and your psychology is right on it, you'll get it (the behavior I'm looking for)!

Judy: Okay, I understand, I can't wait to try again because I think the main difference will be my energy. I still have that tendency to hold my breath because I don't know what she is going to do.

Cesar: That's not good.

Judy: Yes, and she knows that.

Cesar: You have to know what is going to happen. (It comes from you.) Even if it doesn't happen the way pack leader wanted it to happen, you still have to think the right way. You can't just say, "I don't know what is going to happen because this just telegraphs insecurity." It is the energy you are being – that is who you are being. Imagine Oprah doing her show and coming on the stage with that energy (insecure), it (a good show) won't happen. You do your training with that energy, and it won't happen. She (Oprah) is very calm and authoritative the whole time and that's how you need to be too.

SHY SHELTYE

Judy: I brought her out with all of the people. She is afraid of children. I knew that I needed to not let her loose because what she would do is run away and bark so I put her on her mat with a leash and she just eventually laid down and went to sleep in the presence of everyone, including the boy. Would you say this was the right thing to do to help build her confidence in a group?

Cesar: Once the animal can go into flight, he is going to go into a different state of mind.

Fight –Flight – Avoidance – Submission You put a leash on, the animal cannot "flee" any more. Immediately the mind has to go into a different state of mind to deal with the situation. Some dogs would go into a fight move, others into an avoidance mode, and others into submission. If she goes into submission mode, that is the right thing to do. She surrendered to what you asked of her.

Every time you see a homeless person with a dog and the person goes into a Seven Eleven, or wherever he goes, you see the dog outside and the dog is in a calm submissive state. So, every time we achieve that state of mind with our dogs, we are on the right track.

ZEUS – DOG MALE DOG AGGRESSIVE

Judy: Okay, I totally blew this one. Zeus is our Malamute, a calm gentle giant most of the time. Shayna (my friend's GSD) was in Kyra's crate downstairs. My husband said, "Can Zeus come down now?" And I said, yes, but I didn't have a leash ready to put on him. (I really don't know what I expected and surely that is part of the problem.) He came down and they saw each other and for about 10 seconds they had hackles up and were reacting to each other. I had him lie down and then I removed him. What I'm asking is would it have been right to bring him in "on the leash" and maybe with her not in the crate?

Cesar: No, I think the leash is the right thing to do because it gives you some type of control but you have to be able to do it with her in the crate, out of the

crate, and many different ways. The mind gets conditioned regardless of whether in or out of the crate – she has to learn what it is we want from her. I always put a dog, the one who is going to make the first reaction, on a leash.

Judy: So in this case that was Zeus (except I didn't tell him that Shayna probably would have reacted almost as quickly – in fact she did).

Cesar: The other dog is controlled by you controlling the reaction of the aggressor dog. When he is on the leash, the leash is him.

Judy: The other thing though Cesar now that I think about it both of these dogs can be aggressive. The term for Shayna might be fear aggressive? She goes off at most dogs that go by her so she was probably not the best one to do an exercise with for Zeus.

Cesar: Two negative energies in one room makes it really hard to produce a positive energy without a lot of knowledge because you have to block them. You called her fear/aggressive, I would call her fear/dominant and then aggressive.

Judy: Fear/dominant because she made a move?

Cesar: Yes. If you remove dominance, you are only maintaining fear and that would make her run away. It is the dominance that makes the aggression. You are not just dealing with a fearful dog, you are dealing with a dominant dog as well. So the mind is fearful and dominant because when the mind is fearful, the mind will run away and not move forward. So, if you block the dominance, you will not see the aggression. You only get to see the fear. You still have to block the mind from experiencing the fear until the mind is in a calm submissive state. In this way everybody is on the same frequency. It sounds like you have different frequencies in your environment. Plus, your frequency is sometimes nervous, anxious or whatever and is not going to create a calm submissive state of mind among each other.

Judy: Okay, and when you meet Cathy, the owner of Shayna, she also has energy that is not calm. She is trying really hard but she knows that she has been the cause of a lot of Shayna's issues just like me with Kyra.

Cesar: Is she doing yoga or meditation for herself?

Judy: No, I don't think so, but I'm trying to steer her in that direction.

Cesar: Dog psychology can definitely help because the only way you can keep a dog balanced is from your own calm assertive state. You see it? The homeless people do it all the time. They are a good example of it, they just walk and the dogs follow them. Pit Bulls, German Shepherds, Akitas, it doesn't matter, they can walk them off the leash.

Judy: Yes, that is amazing.

Cesar: The homeless people are dog trainers, they can walk their dogs off the leash.

Judy: On Sunday, we were walking on the beach by Lake Michigan and all of a sudden her leash is in my hands because the collar broke loose and she started heading down the beach. I became calm assertive bent down and said “Ky come” and she turned right back to me and I put the leash right back on her.

Cesar: That's right.

Judy: For a second there I could see the miles of beach, people, dogs. My old behavior (Cesar is laughing) would have meant a field day for her. She would have been gone.

MORE ABOUT SHAYNA

Judy: Another question about Shayna. When she was a puppy, she used to run on our property with Kyra, then she became this dog that would go off at dogs and some people and even though they walk side by side (we're between them), how do we know whether or not it is safe to let them run and play together again?

Cesar: That is something I'm going to have to see for myself, it is a visual thing.

Judy: Okay great, Cathy and I will both learn that way.

GENERAL

Judy: When you talk about an aggressive dog , dominant dog, confident, and alpha, what are the differences and distinctions?

Cesar: The dominant dog is a confident dog. Dominance is a courageous dog. I mean the thing is that not every dominant dog comes from a state of being balanced. Most of the dogs I work with show anxiety, nervousness, fear, insecurity, frustration.

Judy: So the balance is what makes them confident?

Cesar: Excuse me?

Judy: The balance is what would make us call them a confident dominant dog – because they are balanced?

Cesar: The balanced dominant dog they just don't want to hurt anybody. They

just want to create balance with each other. They don't bring each other down. They don't get into destructive behavior. You don't hear the sounds that mean "wrong behavior" (he goes aaghhh). You don't hear that. Their communication is a lighter sound, more like a heavy sigh or something, not that yucky sound. There is a big difference when Mother Nature is doing dominance from a natural way versus from a frustrated way. Most of the dogs in America are frustrated because humans don't provide exercise, discipline, affection every day.

They provide affection, exercise, discipline, or affection, exercise, and no discipline, or affection, affection, affection. Those are my clients. My clients begin with affection.

Judy: True.

Cesar: Dogs are going to immediately develop instability because affection is energy. They need to release energy to receive more energy. So they are dealing with the emotions of the humans they are living with and then eventually the humans' issues become the dog's issues.

Judy: I see.

Cesar: Yeah, We have to do something with all that energy. Just like what we do to our children that's how they learn about stability and instability. If the parents aren't stable, the kids are more likely to become unstable. That's what happens to our dogs.

Judy: True. So is it ever appropriate for a dog to be aggressive? There must be appropriate situations?

Cesar: The dog can defend himself. Aggression and defense are not the same thing. Aggression is a state of mind that doesn't know when to stop. Defending yourself is okay. Look at Holyfield and Tyson: Tyson became aggressive not dominant. Do you see the difference? What Tyson did – aggression – is blind and unreasoning behavior.

Our dogs don't rationalize, but they don't want to kill each other. They just dominate each other, they need each other. When they live with humans that's when they develop issues. When they live among each other, they don't have issues.

They do exercise, discipline, and affection.

Judy: So if a strange dog comes and attacks your dog you expect them to defend themselves and it is not considered aggression.

Cesar: No, they are just defending.

Judy: What about the dog that makes direct eye contact at your dog? This is the only time I really ever see an issue with Kyra. She is a pretty confident dominant dog and I think, pretty balanced, but there are certain times that a dog will make that eye contact with her and that's when she does the bark and lunge. When a dog is making eye contact like that they are challenging?

Cesar: Yeah.

Judy: She is saying back, "Don't do that?"

Cesar: She is saying "I'll take your challenge."

Judy: That's what she is saying?

Cesar: And, when they take the challenge, this is when they become more dominant and more powerful.

Judy: So my thing to do is make sure I redirect her before she can answer the challenge?

Cesar: That's right so she doesn't imprint that image she is carrying on. If we allow our dogs to carry on and have that state of mind in the human world, they are going to pick it up and act on it. (Like they will be going around looking for it.) Like Eminem, 50 cents and all those guys. They are in that state of mind and they will create fights. If they have a state of mind like Will Smith's mind, there is no fight. See it? M&M is Brad Pitt and Will Smith is 50 cent. Do you see it. Eminem and Brad Pitt they can both be wealthy but one shows more balance than the other.

Judy: Right.

Cesar: One is more aggressive than the other. Eminem carries the image of being aggressive. The other guys carry a more dominant and balanced way of being.

YOUR PACK

When you are not present, is there a dog or dogs that control the behavior of the other dogs when you are not there?

Cesar: No, only humans.

I believe that when you have a place like ours where you are providing rehabilitation for dogs, you have to provide 24 hour a day human being because the human is the dominant one. Seventy-five per cent of my clientele are

unsound dogs and I can't leave one of those guys in charge because they can go back and destroy the whole pack. They are not balanced when they come here so we will never give them a powerful job. They all have the same thing. They are all followers. This way they don't have to deal for position because they all have the same position. When we feed the pack, there are 30-40 dogs eating all at the same time. We don't feed excited minds, dominant minds, anxious minds, you know. We feed the calm submissive. Today the Pit Bull was calm submissive so he ate first and he became the role model and then the rest of the pack can eat when they are quiet. We nurture that state of mind. Why? Because if we don't it becomes too powerful.

Judy: Do all the dogs in the pack have a separate place to sleep?

Cesar: Only the rescue/rehabilitation dogs. The other dogs sleep in a big large room. So we have about 15 dogs sleeping in the same room. Most of the dogs we work with are from rescue organizations. There are very few privately owned dogs from people.

Judy: Vocalizing: German shepherd dogs tend to be kind of noisy naturally. My friend's dog, Shayna, tends to be vocal when you let her out of the crate, car, going in some place, coming out of a place, and sometimes starting out on a walk. Cathy has just been ignoring her.

Cesar: No that is not going to help. Are we going to see that dog?

Judy: Yes.

Cesar: Well, then we'll deal with it then. We're dealing with a lot of excitement. It is not normal. I understand German Shepherds being a little vocal and stuff, but not like that, it is in excess.

Judy: The last thing back to Kyra. The weather has changed and all of us Michigan people will be taking our dogs out for their PowerWalks because we don't have ice and snow any more. I took her to the door and she demonstrated the old excited vibrating low whine behavior that shows she can hardly stand it. I had her lie down, and sit, but she didn't really stop. My question is should I really wait until she is totally calm and not doing any of that?

Cesar: How long has she been behind walls without being able to run?

Judy: A long time – I mean she was herding last weekend, but there is no running and playing with the risk of the thin ice on the pond and the deep snow.

Cesar: When they have been behind walls for more than a day, you have to get rid of the excess energy.

Judy: Okay, good, that makes sense to me. She is a high-level energy dog.

Cesar: High-level energy dog is not a problem. See it just means she can do more things with you for longer periods of time. And, when you keep this high-energy dog behind walls it becomes yiiiiiii.

Judy: Laughing, yes that is what it was.

Cesar: So, the best thing is just let her burn off some steam and then they learn to do that every day and it is just when you have her behind walls too much, there is too much excess that it is a problem. Let her out every day and you eventually won't have to deal with this any more. Discharge her energy every day.

Judy: So once she starts going out every day again and if she shows that level of excitement when I know she has had a chance to discharge it, then I can ask her to be calmer and quieter before I open the door?

Cesar: Yes, absolutely, then you correct her. You don't correct when the mind has been captive for more than two days. You know what I mean. It makes sense the mind has to burn off steam. Put a back pack on her and go for a walk.

Judy: When you are here I hope you can give Zeus an evaluation too. I just want to know whether I should even try to ever let him run and play with any dogs besides his pack.

Cesar: I want to see him one-on-one to see where he is. (Judy's comment: Cesar was able to show me that Zeus, while dog aggressive is submissive to me and fairly easy to manage.)