

A MODERN VIEW AT THE PROBLEM OF THE DOGS' AGGRESSION

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The article presents an analysis of modern domestic and foreign literary sources on the issue of aggressive dog behavior and unmotivated aggression, which today does not lose its relevance among dog owners, specialists involved in animal education and training, zoopsychologists, and also veterinarians. Demonstrated the importance of aggression for the survival of a species, as well as the negative consequences of aggressive behavior. Based on literary sources, the most effective approaches to solving the problem of aggressive behavior in dogs were analyzed, which include both understanding natural characteristics and ensuring animal welfare, reducing the effects of stress factors, using pharmacological agents, gonadectomy, types of training, and socialization.

Keywords: *aggression, dogs, phobias, stress, unmotivated aggression.*

FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Deviant relationships between humans and dogs are one of the most current problems of our time. Types of such deviant relationships include animal cruelty; the desire to physically destroy dogs (dog hunting); dog bites and attacks on their owners and strangers; failure to provide the animal with veterinary care, which leads to suffering and premature death of the animal; unmotivated dog aggression; pathological dog phobias; irresponsible behavior of the owners (uncontrolled reproduction of animals and their subsequent abandonment); uncontrolled behavior of animals that is unpleasant for the owners (damage to furniture, shoes, clothes), etc. From the above, it is clear that a significant place in the list belongs to the question of dogs' aggression, because this type of deviant behavior can pose a threat to human health [4].

Literary sources indicate that often unmotivated aggression occurs among stray dogs, most of which are concentrated in places where they are potentially fed by people (market places, yards, traffic intersections). Most scientists distinguish such types of aggression as territorial, food, social, and sexual. Almost all types of aggression are based on fear: when attempting physical violence, the threat of "not being able to hold" the territory, or losing offspring [5]. However, aggressive behavior is inherent in both domestic and stray animals. Aggression is especially common in pack dogs [14].

According to experts and scientists, one of the most common behavioral disorders in dogs that prompts their owners to seek professional veterinary help is aggression towards people and other animals [16, 23]. In addition, an analysis of literary sources proves that often unmotivated aggression in dogs becomes the reason for euthanasia of animals. The dog owner is certainly responsible for aggression in dogs. But sometimes an animal's uncontrolled behavior occurs, which poses a threat to the lives of others and requires the use of extreme measures [12].

Diagnosis, prevention and treatment of behavioral disorders in dogs is an important part of the work of a veterinarian. It has also been proven that the use of pharmacological agents increases the effectiveness of behavioral therapy methods aimed at changing the parameters of the external environment and the owner's attitude towards animals [11].

To date, the question of dogs' aggression hasn't been fully studied. Factors such as disease, hormonal balance, and diet can be linked to adverse aggressive behavior in dogs [19]. Effectively managing aggressive dog behavior is a complex and controversial issue [22].

So, based on the above, we can conclude that the problem of aggressive behavior in dogs and its correction is extremely relevant both for animal owners and for people involved in training, educating, and treating animals.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of the work was to analyze modern literary sources (domestic and foreign) on the problem of aggressive behavior in dogs, methods of its prevention and correction.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to study the current state of the problem of aggressive behavior in dogs, both domestic and foreign literary sources were reviewed (24 sources in total).

During the study of problem, the main research methods were analytical, statistical and comparative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the most important characteristics of a dog is its behavior. If the animal's behavior does not meet the requirements of the owner and the human community, then it is problematic for such a dog to survive. The behavior of modern animals is influenced by the behavioral responses and mannerisms of their ancestors. Most dog trainers consider character as the most important characteristics of a breed. Behavior is determined by both genetic determinants and many other factors. Behavior is a subject not only of genetics, but also of sociology, ecology, embryology, and other fields of knowledge. It depends on hereditary and acquired traits, as well as on interaction with the environment [1]. The psyche of a domestic dog is formed under the influence of a person, whose demands in many ways contradict the species' laws of behavior. The optimization of the relationship between a person and an animal is influenced by: the owner's level of tolerance, namely his perception that the needs and motives of the dog's behavior may not coincide with the needs and motives of the human's behavior; the owner's ability to understand the dog's emotions, i.e. the level of development of its emotional intelligence; the motivation for acquiring the animal [4, 6].

According to a number of scientists, lifestyle and biology determine the nature of the behavior and psyche of animals (unlike humans, who, thanks to general labor activity, have acquired far-reaching independence from biological factors and whose mental activity is determined by the social conditions of life). In this regard, such training methods as taste-encouraging, mechanical, contrastive and operant are distinguished [17].

Literary sources demonstrate that the needs of a dog are accompanied by the experience of strong emotions: hunger, thirst, sexual desire, fear, anger, malice, and a friendly attitude towards a person (owner) [20].

The influence of feeding and housing conditions on the behavior of dogs is proven by the results of observations of dogs in shelters. Contact with people had a particularly positive effect on dogs' behavior. Scientists prove that aggressive behavior in dogs in shelters can be prevented by reducing the effects of stress factors on the animals [24].

According to scientists, understanding the natural behavior of canines and the peculiarities of their species-specific communication is the basis for comfortable, conflict-free social coexistence between humans and dogs, minimizing various types of aggression, stress and conflict states, and also makes it possible to use dogs in modern development, training and rehabilitation programs for children and adults [2, 3].

Aggression is one of the survival models in nature of predators. Aggression in dogs is a hereditary factor. It is important to understand that in some circumstances aggression is an adequate response to the situation that has arisen. The biological significance of aggressive behavior is to preserve and sustain the life of the organism by fighting to satisfy the dog's needs. However, aggression should never be directed towards the owner [15].

Some authors believe that in some dogs, compulsive behavior is an extreme reaction that occurs as a result of a lack of physical and mental stimulation, high anxiety, lack of exercise, excitement, or insufficient attention to them. In their opinion, aggressive behavior and anxiety in dogs can be minimized by using mental exercises [16].

Aggressive behavior should normally be directed at another individual who is nearby, and this behavior is usually triggered by stimuli inherent to the other individual, which may be visual, auditory, or olfactory. Various studies indicate that the development of aggressiveness has a genetic basis, and the hormones also have a significant influence. The surrounding environment can also influence the severity of aggression. Aggression can cause the harm to another individual and is often associated with establishing a certain hierarchical status, gaining access to a certain object or the right to a certain territory [5].

A number of literary sources prove that the behavior of dogs, including aggressive manifestations, is significantly influenced by the conditions in which the animals are kept. The health of animals, as well as their behavior, depends on temperature, humidity, precipitation, the presence of sunlight, and other

factors. In winter, dogs can suffer from the cold, and in summer from overheating. Additionally, the presence of insects and other pests can cause illness and discomfort in animals. The influence of climate on dog behavior is also an important factor. For example, high humidity and heat can cause stress in animals, which can lead to aggressive behavior. Dog health and behavior can also be affected by climate disasters such as floods, storms, tornadoes, etc. Environmental conditions affect the dog and cause the animal to respond in certain ways. These responses are controlled by the nervous system, which has the ability to perceive environmental influences in the form of certain stimuli and respond to them with appropriate reactions from individual organs, groups of organs, and the organism as a whole. The biological meaning of these reactions is to adapt the dog's body to these environmental conditions, to put it in a favorable position in relation to these conditions [21].

The problem of aggressive animal behavior is becoming particularly relevant for owners of fighting breed dogs. For them, basic training is mandatory, regardless of the goal. You need to start training as soon as the puppy gets to the owner. A dog cannot be allowed to feel like a leader over a person. If a dog ever feels like he can ignore or avoid commands, he will continue to respond to them depending on his mood. Fighting dog breeds are very strong and active, so special attention should be paid to ensuring that the dog is fully under control while walking through the streets, clearly follows the commands "next to me", "come to me", "way", etc., and can be safely left alone in an unfamiliar place, waiting for the owner. From an early age, fighting breed dogs should be trained to punish unmotivated aggression. A dog should develop only a positive attitude towards people from an early age. You should not allow strangers to pet the puppy, call it to you, offer it food, etc [9].

Often, the cause of aggression in dogs is phobias, which are a condition in which the animal becomes uncontrollable. When suddenly frightened, the dog does not obey commands, sometimes does not react to the owner at all, and also behaves strangely. Veterinary experts prove the effectiveness of using fluoxetine in dogs to correct aggressive behavior caused by phobias. It should be noted that fluoxetine and its active metabolite are eliminated relatively slowly, especially in cases of long-term use of the drug, which leads to accumulation and delay in reaching steady state, even when a fixed dose is used [23]. Other scientists show the effectiveness of amitriptyline for compulsive stereotypic behavior in dogs, one of which is aggression towards people and other animals [13].

An effective method of preventing aggression in dogs is gonadectomy. However, it is known that gonadectomy is associated with the development of a variety of serious forms of cancer, including hemangiosarcoma, mast cell carcinoma, carcinoma of the prostate, osteosarcoma and lymphoma/lymphosarcoma, as well as development of these types of cancer in older adults [7].

It should be noted that living with an animal that has serious behavioral problems causes stress for the animal's owner. Family members, such as children and the elderly, who do not have supervision over the pet may be at risk of injury [8, 16].

It has been practically proven that it is possible to correct or avoid the occurrence of unwanted aggressive behavior in dogs by correctly reading the body language of dogs, understanding their basic needs, adapting their diet to training, detecting diseases early, implementing proper socialization, and understanding that aggression is a natural part of the dog's ethogram [18, 19].

The main proviso for preventing aggressive behavior in dogs, including unmotivated aggression, is extensive socialization of animals. In addition, during the course of exhibitions, the highly social, good-natured and caring dog will demonstrate the best aspects of its breed and anatomy. The first three months of an animal's life are the most important (primary socialization, during which the owner forms the animal's basic worldview) in the process of broad socialization. Lack of primary socialization causes many fears, phobias, conflicts and problems in the future. In addition, the lack of primary socialization cannot be fully compensated. When a dog is being prepared for a show career or other "professional" activities, it must successfully complete all stages of regular and specialized secondary socialization, as well as receive ongoing training to maintain its skills [10].

Thus, preventing aggressive behavior in dogs is more effective and efficient than correcting it. Therefore, in the first months of a puppy's life, it is necessary to apply a comprehensive approach to shaping the desired behavior of the dog, which consists of observing the conditions of feeding, keeping, socializing the animal, training the animal and providing it with physical activity that corresponds to the characteristics of the breed, as well as preventing rough treatment of the dog.

CONCLUSION

Aggressive behavior in dogs is a natural phenomenon that helps the species survive. However, if animals are socialized, unmotivated aggression can become a real problem that is easier to prevent than to fix. In order to prevent aggression in dogs, it is necessary to take into account the characteristics of the breed, its purpose, and also to understand that the most common underlying cause of aggressive behavior is a feeling of fear, stress, and phobia. The main and most effective method of preventing aggressive behavior in dogs is socialization of the animal from an early age, training the animal, physical activity, as well as compliance with the conditions of detention and feeding. As for overcoming an existing problem, in practice, gonadectomy and the use of pharmacotherapy for a long period are most often used.

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СУЧАСНИЙ ПОГЛЯД НА ПРОБЛЕМУ АГРЕСІЇ У СОБАК

О. Півень

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У статті представлено аналіз сучасних вітчизняних та закордонних літературних джерел стосовно питання агресивної поведінки собак та немотивованої агресії, яке на сьогоднішній день не втрачає актуальності серед власників собак, фахівців, що займаються навчанням та дресурою тварин, зоопсихологів, а також ветеринарних лікарів. Продемонстровано значення агресії для виживання виду, а також негативні наслідки агресивної поведінки. На основі літературних джерел проаналізовано найдієвіші підходи до вирішення проблеми агресивної поведінки собак, які включають як розуміння природних особливостей, так і забезпечення добробуту тварин, зниження дії стресових чинників, застосування фармакологічних засобів, гонадектомію, різновиди дресури, соціалізацію.

Ключові слова: агресія, собаки, фобії, стрес, немотивована агресія.