

ABOUT OVERWHEM

AN ANALOGY

Think of your pet like a vessel of water. Life experiences (like activity, weather, intense events, etc.) can “heat” up their water. When your pet reaches a point where they can’t take any more, their vessel may “boil over.” This is overwhelm

Behaviorally, overwhelm looks like

- Fight/aggression/reactivity/etc. (This commonly appears as forward or approach movement),
- Fear/avoidance/hiding (commonly retreating movement),
- Freeze/catatonia/shutdown (or lack of movement)
- Fidget/pacing/over-grooming (typically repetitive movement)



RESILIENCY & BASELINE

Some pets *SEEM* to go from very calm to overwhelm, like going from room temp to boiling in an instant. But, in reality, no pet is exists at 0 (which is like refrigerated water). Your pet’s calmest state, or baseline, is individual and dependent on a combination of three factors.

- **Genetics:** Some animals are born more resilient while others are born with more sensitivity.
- **Early life experiences:** Pets that had lots of appropriate and positive socialization at a very young age will be better equipped to adapt to stressors later life.
- **Environment:** A pet’s home, routine, family, experiences, exercise, diet and more all contribute to how sensitive to overwhelm your pet is.



Some pet baselines allow for more resiliency.



Pet with higher baselines are more sensitive or prone to overwhelm.