

# IDEAS FOR IMPROVING SENSITIVITY TO, AND IMPACT OF STRESSORS

## Concepts

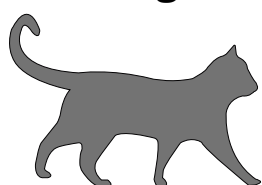
- **Consistency:** the same way every time
  - Creates predictability
  - Over time replaces uncertainty with familiarity and stability
- **Predictability:** knowing what to expect
  - Over time eliminates guessing, uncertainty, anxiety
- **Agency:** sense of control over actions and experiences
  - The option of whether or not to participate in or experience something
- **Clear communication:** occurs when a sender conveys and a receiver understands the same message
  - Reduces guessing, mental fatigue, frustration, confusion, etc.
- **Choice:** Freedom to select from multiple options

## Examples

- **Consistency and predictability**
  - With routines (ex: light/dark, activity/rest, sleep/wake, meals, etc.)
  - By allowing agency during touch, handling, pick-up
  - During training (ex: technique, location, verbiage, mechanics, etc.)
  - You do it the same each time
  - All involved humans also do it the same way
- **Agency:**
  - During handling and touch (ex: cooperative care/consent)
  - Playing pattern games is good practice
  - Removing punishment/aversives
  - During play, exercise, etc.
- **Clear communication**
  - During training: Reward-based rather than aversive-based training reduces misunderstandings
  - With pattern games
  - Allowing agency
  - Consistency > predictability > communication clarity
- **Choice**
  - Multiple toy/chew types/styles available
  - Activity options

### Exs Specific to Cats

- When being picked up
- Multiple litter boxes
- Multiple food/water stations
- Multiple rest spots at various heights



### Exs Specific to Dogs

- Freedom to sniff, explore on walks
- Freedom to choose direction on walks
- Reduce or eliminate non-functional “leave-it”, “wait”, and “stay” cues

