

IMPROVING YOUR PET'S STRESS RESPONSE

See accompanying handout that illustrates a pet's stress response.

Impactful Factors

- 🎵 **Consistency** = the same way every time creates predictability
- 🎵 **Predictability** = knowing what to expect over time, reduces guessing, uncertainty, anxiety
 - Exs: routines & schedules (light/dark, activity/rest, sleep/wake, meals, order of events, etc.)
 - While handling (touching, picking up, leashing, putting into crate, etc.)
 - During training (technique, duration, skills, expectations, location, verbiage, mechanics, etc.)
- 🎵 **Agency** = sense of control over one's own life; option to participate in or experience something
 - Exs: allow pet make decisions. (Not interested in training/playing now? Try again later. Sniff the pee until done.)
 - Freedom to select from multiple options (ex: litter boxes, toys, water stations, treat flavor)
 - Let dog decide the next turn on a walk

Additional Contributors

- 🎵 Physical comfort (On-going pain, skin & digestive issues can significantly impact your pet's behavior)
- 🎵 Adequate rest (quality sleep, "down" or quiet time, personal space) especially after:
 - Physical exertion (hikes, hot weather, daycare, dog park)
 - Emotional exertion (big events like vet or groom appointments, travel)
 - Anything that agitates *your* pet (baths, guests, walks, people walking past the windows, carriages, thunder,
- 🎵 Dietary improvements, supplements
- 🎵 Clear communication reduces guessing, mental fatigue, frustration, confusion, etc.

