

**Sometimes It's Just NOT Positive
Training Curve "Flat Lined"
Our Goals vs. Our Reality
In a Slump
Training Plateaus
Not Connecting With our Dog
"Life" Gets in the Way – You know, our Real Lives
Handler Issues
Dog Issues**

Pick any of the above for the title of this column. In this age of "positive" dog training, it is not considered "politically correct" to use negative training with our dogs; nor is it politically correct to speak any negative statements about others, ourselves, our dogs, etc. regarding training methods, goals, issues, etc. Everything is "focus on the positive", ignore the negative.

For example, in Agility runs the "positive" response after a failed run should be to "re-play" that run in your mind, but in your imagination you are performing the course beautifully and your dog is wonderful and perfect as well. The reasoning for that is so that in the future you will go into the ring with positive thoughts and great runs to reinforce your mental attitude and therefore the outcome.

Well, someone forgot to tell the dog, or forgot to tell the weather man, or forgot to tell your knees, or forgot to tell the judge J Sh*t happens and all the positive thoughts in the world won't fix it.

Over the last few days I've heard about Conformation people traveling hundreds of miles to finish a dog – it didn't happen; a wonderfully talented trainer and Obedience dog working *so hard* for that coveted OTCH– slow in coming; dogs that haven't Q' in a year; a well trained dog who inexplicitly jumped out of the ring over the 4 ft. high fencing – no Q there; and I'm fighting tons of struggles in Agility with my Mini, Connor - perfect start line stay one run, broken the next, clingy in one run, working well ahead in the next – sooooo frustrating. (Ok, one of the above IS funny –you can pick J)

Yup, sometimes it's hard to stay positive; in fact this morning I don't like that word at all! I'm struggling, frustrated, and perplexed.

My stubborn solution, or should I say, *resolution*, is to dig in, pull myself up by my bootstraps and figure it out. In other words – just keep trying.

After all, the bottom line is – I **love** my dogs.

.....and, yes, thank you - I would like some cheese with this "whine".

Lynn Baitinger