

HUNTING DOGS - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DIALOGUE

Many sportsmen take excellent care of their dogs, and treat them like family. Some, however, treat their dogs as tools - often not giving them names, not providing adequate healthcare, nor a living space that allows the dogs to thrive.

Here are some ideas we gathered for having that conversation with a sportsman who may be open to change.

Building a Relationship

Creating a bond with your dog strengthens their mental toughness, and helps them to gain trust with you. Instilling fear weakens your bond, and therefore weakens obedience as well.

- Gun Association: <https://bit.ly/3d0NKKu>

Going for Walks

Going for walks with your dog is of course great exercise for both person and pup. Walking together also strengthens your bond - meaning better communication when hunting.

- The Hunting Dog: <https://bit.ly/2IALvzo>

Exploring

Getting out and exploring with your dog - even if it's not hunting season, can improve bonding as well. It also keeps your dogs in shape year-round. Chaining and small runs don't allow the dog to flex their hunting skills in the way they need to to train.

- The Hunting Dog: <https://bit.ly/2W4ZXaY>

- Gun Dog Magazine: <https://bit.ly/2wO7ctj>

Spay and Neuter

Simply put, spaying and neutering can prevent unwanted litters. Most areas have free or low-cost spay/neuter. There are misconceptions surrounding neutering hunting dogs - neutering does not effect the performance of the dog - training and a strong bond do.

- Valhalla Hunt Club: <https://bit.ly/2vPLhBX>

Again, there are many sportsmen who treat their hunting dogs with immense love and care. We trust that these hunters will continue advocating for the fair treatment of these dogs.

Ideas for Making Change

1. Build a relationship with local hunters who take pride in how they care for their dogs - and want to see other sportsmen improve their bond to their dogs. Host a gathering for local hunters to share best hunting practices + chat
2. Find a dog trainer who has knowledge on training for hunting - team up to hold a free class for local hunters
3. Remain open-minded, be open to having conversations - and listen!

