

CHRISTIE & CO

FROM DREAM TO MAINSTREAM

Press Release

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Xena and The Em-Pet-Thetic Training Methodology

Expert dog trainer, Dr. Susan Dalton's unique program effectively retrains dogs using trust and positive reinforcement.

SANTA BARBARA, CA (December, 2016) – A well-trained dog is a happier dog. In fact, according to the American Dog Trainers Network, a reliable dog will have fewer restrictions imposed by its owner, allowing it to have more freedom to enjoy¹. So what makes good training? For certified dog trainer Dr. Susan Dalton, it is a strong initial bond which is the basis for good training. She adds that when dogs exhibit undesirable behaviors it is much easier to address them if the dog trusts its owner and/or trainer. Based upon this philosophy, Dr. Dalton developed her research-based “Em-Pet-Thetic®” training methodology which centers around forming a strong, mutual bond of trust and friendship between the dog and its owner. To enhance the effectiveness of her training philosophy, Dr. Dalton also created *Dr. Dalton's Premium Treats*, a healthy dog treat that encourages good behavior and supports effective training.

Unlike the well-known Alpha Dog training method which seeks to improve obedience by establishing the owner as the master or “pack leader”, Dr. Dalton's Em-Pet-Thetic Training philosophy focuses on building and strengthening the trusting bond that makes the dog feel secure and understood by its owner. There are three key steps to the methodology: 1) **Building Trust:** described as “a crucial part” by Dr. Dalton. Building trust requires the trainer to spend time in the beginning to understand the dog's unique personality and problems to ensure the dog develops a sufficient bond to feel safe enough to let go of old behaviors and try new ones. 2) **Desensitization:** this involves slow and controlled exposure to the sources of the problems allowing the dog to decrease its emotional triggers, and 3) **Making it Fun:** which always improves the learning process.

Having trained many dogs over her 8-year career, Dr. Dalton believes that in most cases training a dog also involves training the owners. She recounts one case with a young German Shepard named Xena.

Xena was raised from a puppy by a very loving and caring couple, Andie and Connie. As she grew older, however, they began noticing that she tended to avoid strangers and other dogs. As she got bigger this fear began to manifest itself in more aggressive behaviors. Xena would bark and lunge at other people and dogs that got too close. In one instance, she pulled so hard that she broke Andie's shoulder! Friends and other trainers would frequently offer bad advice saying that Xena was untrainable and might have to be put down. But Andie and Connie disagreed with that conclusion and finally sought the expertise of Dr. Dalton to address Xena's seemingly vicious behavior. Using her unique “Em-Pet-Thetic” training methodology and her premium dog

¹ <https://inch.com/~dogs/whytrain.html>



treats, Dr. Dalton was able to identify Xena's problems and effectively retrain her.

When Dr. Dalton first met Xena she quickly recognized her increasingly aggressive behavior, which to Andie and Connie looked like normal canine excitement. After identifying the misunderstanding, Dr. Dalton explained how the Em-Pet-Thetic training methodology was as much a dog training program as it was an owner education opportunity.

Step 1: Building Trust. Because of her anxiety with strangers, Xena did not warm up to Dr. Dalton easily. Dr. Dalton would spend many hours, often just sitting down to allow Xena to become comfortable with her. Eventually, the bond was established. Dr. Dalton was then able to begin the real training.

Step 2: Desensitization. With trust building and the source of the anxiety identified, Dr. Dalton understood that reinforcing good behavior with treats while slowly exposing Xena to strangers and other dogs would gradually break down her anxiety. Dr. Dalton slowly exposed Xena to other owners and would reward her for good behavior every time the distance between them and the strangers would decrease. In this way, Xena became desensitized to the problem stimulus.

Step 3: Making It Fun. As Xena gained confidence around new people and dogs, she began to associate their presence with rewards. As she became reliably calm around these stressors, Dr. Dalton began taking her to large dog parks where Xena could control her experiences by choosing to interact or withdraw from other people and dogs. If she became afraid she would simply stand behind Dr. Dalton allowing her to provide safety as needed. As she became more comfortable she began tentatively to interact and then play with other dogs. At this stage, her new behaviors really paid off as she learned to add joy to her life through play.

In the second and third steps of her Em-Pet-Thetic methodology, Dr. Dalton employs the frequent use of her very own *Dr. Dalton's Premium Treats*. There is a good reason for this. Treats are an effective way of reinforcing good behavior and should, therefore, be used generously. But if treats contain unhealthy additives like salt, sugar, and preservatives, owners become more reluctant to give their dogs adequate treats. *Dr. Dalton's Premium Treats* are made from just one ingredient, meat. Unlike many treats on the market, these contain no added chemicals or preservatives to enhance the flavor or shelf life of the product. *Dr. Dalton's Premium Treats* are made from meat, which dogs love. After training, *Dr. Dalton's Premium Treats* often become a healthy addition to a dog's diet.

About Dr. Susan Dalton and Dr. Daltons Premium Treats

Dr. Susan Dalton grew up surrounded by animals of all kinds - dogs, cats, chickens, snakes, and even salt water fish. After receiving her Ph.D., she worked with troubled adolescents and served as both a university professor and researcher. Dr. Dalton began training dogs after adopting Cassie, a 10-week old Border Collie who had been rescued from under a car. Cassie was traumatized; fearful and aggressive. When Dr. Dalton consulted various "experts" on how to best rehabilitate Cassie, all of the trainers she spoke with labeled the pup unworkable - a hopeless case.

Drawing upon her decades of experience in behavior modification, Dr. Dalton began reading everything she could about dog training, and personally developed a highly effective program based on positive reinforcement. Using this philosophy, she founded the California School for Dogs Inc. in 2009. Since then, Dr. Dalton has trained hundreds of dogs - specializing in frightened, aggressive and traumatized animals.



With healthy treats a cornerstone of her training program, Dr. Dalton wasn't satisfied with the dog treat options available to her. She started making her own treats in 2012, using clean and simple ingredients like chicken, beef, and pork. It was her clients who convinced her to make her treats available for purchase. Since then, Dr. Dalton has mastered the creation of a dog treat that is both healthy and *doggy-delicious*.

All of Dr. Dalton's Premium Pet treats are sourced, produced, and packaged in the USA. They can be purchased at www.DrDaltons.com and come in three varieties – Simply Beef, Simply Chicken and Meat Medley (made from beef, chicken, and pork).

For more information about Dr. Dalton's Premium Treats, or to interview Dr. Susan Dalton, please contact Gillian Christie at Gillian@Christieand.co or call 805-969-3744. Visit www.DrDaltons.com.

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