

### CHAPTER THREE WHAT MAKES A DOG A DOG?



*Shiloh modeled a down and stay command to all these other dogs and they followed his lead.*

Each and every dog (or puppy), has certain character traits unique to its specific breed or mixed-breed makeup. This will, in some way, manifest itself in each and every canine's conduct! Hunt dogs want to hunt! Guard dogs want to guard! Herding dogs want to herd! You get the picture! Knowing things characteristic about your dog's breeding will give you necessary information about what your dog's instinctive desires will be and how that will be manifested in your dog's conduct! Whether your canine is a pedigreed pooch or a blended-breed, it will be extremely beneficial to your furry friend if you know some basic things about your own dog or puppy! Is it a herding canine, a sporting dog, or a hunting pooch? What does this dog naturally like to do? Does this dog hunt – is a good question to ask and a good question to answer! Regardless of your canine's specific breed traits or mixed-breed makeup, knowing your own dog's basic nature is going to help you know how to better train and relate to your own dog or puppy!

For example, a German Shepherd Dog is a herding dog! It is instinctual for a GSD to control the movement of almost everything, including human movement! Starting from puppyhood, a German Shepherd {GSD} instinctively loves to herd! When a GSD runs toward a human being and that person backs up away from the puppy, then that GSD is being confirmed

that it is in control of the backward motion of that person. When the GSD pup weaves from side to side and controls the direction of the human's motion to the left and then to the right then the pup is herding that human as though they were a sheep! I tell people who own a GSD that unless they SHEPHERD their German Shepherd, then their GSD will SHEPHERD them like a sheep!

Two other things basically reveal the kind of dog or puppy that a person has to work with in an engaging training method that will properly suit the canine that they possess. Besides the canine's breed or mixed-breed makeup, the second thing to know about the dog is whether or not it has a high or low PREY DRIVE or PLAY DRIVE! Does the canine have an eager desire to chase another animal, would it rather chase a running rabbit than stand still to eat a cooked rabbit that was just set in front of it? Does the dog or pup love the game of fetch more than laying down to just chew on a bone? These are indications of a canine with HIGH PREY or PLAY DRIVE and these canines are harder to train than dogs or pups with a LOW PREY or PLAY DRIVE! This is because sights, sounds and smells so easily distract a canine with HIGH PREY or PLAY DRIVE! But, the canines with HIGH PREY or PLAY DRIVE make for the better WORKING DOG, because they will be highly motivated to receive a food or toy reward for obeying a human's command or doing a job in a team effort with their human handler!

Dogs used for Search and Rescue work, Police Dogs, and Military Dogs trained for specific work, must have HIGH PREY or PLAY DRIVE to perform their tasks!

The third thing which a dog owner and/or trainer needs to learn about each individual dog or pup is the nature of its temperament! Is the canine which you own or are training SOFT, MEDIUM or HARD in its temperament? If you are working with a canine with a HARD temperament and speak commands to it with a timid or soft-toned voice level, then that HARD TEMPERAMENT canine will just blow you off and ignore you because you do not sound like a strong authority figure to it!

Does the canine you are training have a MEDIUM TEMPERAMENT? If you relate to it with a tone of voice while posturing your own body next to it as though you are the canine's life-coach, then that will help that dog or pup to feel your support. You must encourage this kind of canine to obey your commands and to rightly respond to your corrections without thinking you are too firm or not friendly enough for that MEDIUM TEMPERAMENT dog or pup to relate to you! Does the dog or pup you are engaged with have a SOFT TEMPERAMENT? If you raise the volume of your voice, talk sternly, or lean over the dog or pup with an intimidating posture, then you will quickly shut down that SOFT TEMPERAMENT canine and it will think that you are mad at it and possibly feel like you will hurt it! Now, do not talk BABY TALK to your puppy or dog! Canines that hear high pitched and mumbling voices think that their human is in distress and that makes the canine distressed too.

Each individual canine must be rightly related to by its human handler and discovering a dog or puppy's kind of temperament is essential to training and socializing each dog according to its SOFT, MEDIUM or HARD temperament! There is no one temperament better than the other. Your canine is born with its own wonderfully unique temperament. Discover what it is and rightly relate to your furry K9 friend! Dog trainers who ignore this issue will ruin your canine companion.

When I selected my German Shepherd Dog, Shiloh, out from among his seven siblings, I saw right away that he was the dominant dog of the pack! I could tell he had been bred from a working line of pedigree parents, he already displayed HIGH PREY and PLAY DRIVE, and he had a noticeable HARD TEMPERAMENT! Just what I wanted in a dog to train as a K9 SEARCH AND RESCUE companion. To look back at the day I brought Shiloh to his new forever home with me is a great memory. I was blessed with many many more wonderful memories added to my life throughout Shiloh's lifetime as he spent every day at my side as a working partner! Shiloh inspired me to start my dog training business which has his name on it –

SHILOH K9 OBEDIENCE TRAINING & BOARDING CENTER, LLC.



*Shiloh at seven weeks old –  
Can't you see him dreaming about what he would be and do when he becomes all grown up?*