

Info shared by Pitbull SA.

Manjaro APBT kennel.

South Africa.

My Website www.pitbullsa.co.za

My E mail "manjaro@pitbullsa.co.za"

My Facebook "Gawie Manjaro"

My Facebook page "Manjaro Kennel"

My mobile +27827838280.

Zello.com "VoIP" – ask for info.

Manage anxiety hostility.

Anxiety / fear is surprisingly common in all dogs, and it can occur for a variety of reasons.

Sometimes a past trauma or bad experience is to blame, other times it's a lack of proper socialization during the formative early months.

Sometimes, no logical reason for anxiety is known and an individual dog's genetic makeup and inbuilt born character just gives them a nervous disposition.

Some dogs become terrified of strange objects, certain types of people, loud or strange noises or sounds, other animals, unfamiliar places, the dark, or cars and trucks – then mostly dogs not exposed to such before or regularly.

Even with reassurance, they are unable to rationalize what or why they're afraid of.

Sometimes, this can develop into a serious, life-threatening issue, for example extreme fear of thunderstorms, a car backfiring and gunshots causing a dog bolting from home – jumping, excessive barking and injuring themselves over the fence, wall or with the chain – even relating to destructive behaviour.

Socialization and exposure is extremely important especially between the ages of 12 and 20 weeks when a young puppy's mind is so impressionable.

It's vital that the dog have many positive and varied experiences with all sorts of sights, sounds and places and an opportunity to meet lots of different people animals and pets, sounds and scenarios.

Some socialization is also important outside the dog's environment before age 12 weeks but care should be taken to avoid contact with strange dogs or faeces that could carry contagious diseases to which he doesn't yet have immunity.

In extreme situations, anxiety can lead to long-term stress, which may result in diarrhoea and vomiting, compulsive self-licking or destructive chewing and other behavioural problems.

An allocated crate or safe "place" or demarcated kennel can be a useful tool for fearful dogs (except those who are afraid of confined spaces).

It offers a safe place for the dog to hide or escape to, when the dog become anxious.

Crate or safe place training should be approached carefully and slowly with dogs who have an anxious disposition, so as to gradually build up their confidence to go in and stay there – even with the door closed.

Feeding inside the crate, or offering a juicy marrow bone in there, can help the dog to form positive associations with the crate.

It's also important that a nervous dog have the opportunity to exercise and play regularly in a safe place where they can't come to any harm.

This will provide an outlet for their nervous energy.

There are a number of really helpful complementary therapies that can work wonders in helping to alleviate fear and anxiety.

Here are a few recommendations.

Herbs some might be available from your holistic vet.

Chamomile is a very helpful and well-known herb for easing anxiety. It also helps to soothe a tense tummy and alleviates mild GI upset, which may be linked to nervousness.

Oatstraw is a nutritive and nervous system tonic.

Oat contains a number of constituents including flavonoids and alkaloids which help to provide a balance between lethargy and nervousness.

It can have a calming effect on nervous animals but helps to stimulate the nervous system in those who are debilitated.

Passionflower is a mild sedative, pain reliever and anti-spasmodic. It is calmative and often used for insomnia in people.

Valerian is a well-known, safe, gentle and natural sedative, which is useful for nervous anxiety.

It also has mild pain-relieving properties and is anti-spasmodic, helping the patient to relax during physical pain and alleviate intestinal spasm or tummy upset caused by anxiety.

Some herbalists use it for epilepsy, to help reduce the incidence of seizures.

Please note that Valerian **is not** related to Valium in any way.

Skullcap is in the mint family. It's a nervine herb which is commonly used for jittery anxiety and nervous tension, excitability, restlessness and hypersensitivity.

St John's Wort is another popular herbal remedy for anxiety and stress, since it relieves troublesome symptoms without sedation.

Nutrition.

B-complex vitamins are very helpful for stress.

Vitamin B12 and Folic acid are especially helpful.

Phenylalanine – amino acid - is also used for anxiety; it helps to form a state of natural relaxation and has a positive effect on mood and behaviour.

In Traditional Chinese medicine, fear may stem from weakness of the kidney or heart.

Barley and Oats nourish these organs and the nervous system.

Adding 1 teaspoon to ½ cup of these thoroughly cooked grains to the diet may help calm an anxious dog.

Flower Essences: some might be available from your holistic vet.

Honeysuckle is useful for more straightforward cases of separation anxiety.

Gorse is useful for despair and grief, especially when an owner has passed away.

Rock rose helps to calm terror that manifests as trembling, cowering and panting as though the world might end.

Mimulus helps with fears of everyday life – strange places, the dark, and strangers or crowds for example.

Larch helps to cultivate bravery and courage along with emotional security.

Walnut helps to build up a sense of security and emotional independence.

Chestnut Bud can help as a preventive for a young dog, so that it can learn from his experiences and process new information to assist him in becoming an emotionally stable young dog.

You can add 3 drops of any or all of these flower essences to your dog's water bowl. Some people also apply flower essence to their dog's paws or ears.

Homeopathy:

Arsenicum album is very useful for fear and anxiety that are caused by a deep-seated insecurity – those pets who are constant worriers.

Aconite is especially good for animals who bite when they are frightened, especially when going to the veterinarian.

Use 1-3 pellets (depending upon the animals size) 30 minutes before a vet visit to calm the animal.

Gelsemium is good for the animal who becomes weak, shaking with fear in the rear legs. Use 1 dose.

Training.

If your dog or has developed anxiety or fear about something, gradual de-sensitization is a good approach to help him resolve his issues.

For example, if the dog is petrified of crowds, start off by introducing him to a very small group of people, maybe as few as two and give the dog lots of praise and treats in exchange for approaching them and saying hello.

Once the dog accepts the small group, try to have other people join in the same session, or take the dog somewhere where it'll meet a few more people next time.

Again, lots of praise and treats are vital as the dog shows willingness to interact.

Try to ignore fearful behaviour and don't pick the dog up if it's afraid! You could also try walking on the opposite side of the street to a school as children are arriving or leaving, so the dog can observe a crowd from a distance.

For anxiety and or fear of loud noises like fireworks, you could utilize the crate, offer something like a marrow bone to keep the dog occupied and perhaps turn on the TV or play some music to help drown out the noise.

Make sure your dog is secure and unable to clamber out a window and come to harm.

Anxiety, fear or aggression of strange objects can be overcome with a similar approach.

Drop treats in a trail leading up to the scary item so that the dog can approach slowly and get rewarded along the way.

Don't force the dog to approach but gently coax it along.

If you sit close to the item the dog may be more likely to approach.

Once the dog gets really close, you can give an extra special treat and lots of praise so that the dog starts to form a positive association with the object of its anxiety or fear.

With many dogs, a rather loud, overly-cheerful sing-song voice or voices can trigger fear, anxiety or aggression.

Close contact and reassurance can and will calm them down.

Too much owner's protection could be also the cause of anxiety and reinforced by owner attention.

Love your dog, but teach them how easy it is for them to be alone too.....a dog needs this just as much!

It builds confidence and a confident dog is NEVER an anxious dog.