

## **Learning to Relax (in the face of excitement)**

This is a very calm exercise. Do NOT use your clicker or reward marker. Instead, in a very soft voice, say: Good dog and put a treat between your dog's feet. Use lower value treats such as kibble. We don't want your dog to be too excited. We are looking for relaxation.

Do all of part 1 before moving to part two. It may take several days or more for your dog to be able to do Part 1 tasks. Start with just part of the list (for example the first 10) on the first day. Build up until your dog can go through all of the Part 1 tasks easily (this takes about 4 minutes). Then move to Part 2. Take your time. Aim for success.

Example: Have your dog down. Count 5 seconds. Quietly say, "Good Dog" and put a treat between your dog's feet. Remind your dog to stay down, count 10 seconds, etc.

### **Part 1: Dog's Task**

- Down for 5 seconds
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 1 step back and return
- Down while you take 2 steps back and return
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 1 step to the right and return
- Down while you take 1 step to the left and return
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 2 steps back and return
- Down while you take 2 steps to the right and return
- Down for 15 seconds
- Down while you take 2 steps to the left and return
- Down while you clap your hands softly once
- Down while you take 3 steps back and return
- Down while you count out loud to 10
- Down while you clap your hands softly once
- Down while you count out loud to 20
- Down while you take 3 steps to the right and return
- Down while you clap your hands softly twice
- Down for 3 seconds
- Down for 5 seconds
- Down while you take 1 step back and return
- Down for 3 seconds
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down for 5 seconds
- Down for 3 seconds

## Part 2: Dog's Task

- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 1 step back and return
- Down while you take 3 steps back and return
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 3 steps to the right and return
- Down while you take 3 steps to the left and return
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 3 steps to the right and clap your hands
- Down while you take 3 steps to the left and clap your hands
- Down for 5 seconds
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you walk one fourth of the way around the dog to the right
- Down while you take 4 steps back
- Down while you walk one fourth of the way around the dog to the left
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you take 5 steps back from the dog, clapping your hands, and return
- Down while you walk halfway around the dog to the right and return
- Down while you walk halfway around the dog to the left and return
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you jog quietly in place for 3 seconds
- Down while you jog quietly in place for 5 seconds
- Down while you jog quietly in place for 10 seconds
- Down for 10 seconds
- Down while you jog one fourth of the way around the dog to the right and return
- Down while you jog one fourth of the way around the dog to the left and return
- Down for 5 seconds Down for 10 seconds

This is excerpted from the 2014 Relaxation Protocol by Dr. Karen Overall. These are the first two sets of tasks (out of 15 total). Working through this protocol teaches your dog the physical skill set of being calm when there are exciting things going on around him/her.