

THE SORRY Hack

MR. ROGERS "Big Idea"

WHEN to use it

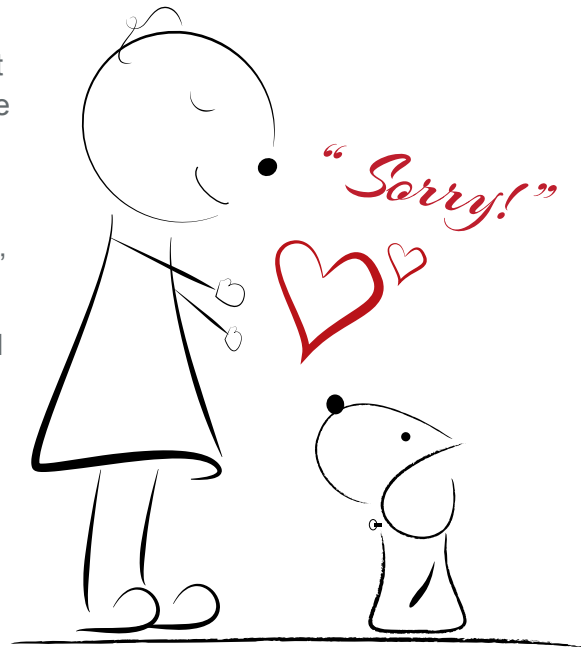
Whenever those accidents happen!

There's no getting around the fact that no matter how hard we try to make sure life is going smoothly for our dogs, there will be times when they get hurt, frightened or upset by events that are uncontrollable or inevitable. Saying "sorry" to our dogs when these events occur, however, is as magical for them (and our relationships with them) as it is for us humans!

Step on a toe? Clip a quick? Make a scary noise? Say "Sorry!"

HOW it works

Dogs are a social species (G) just like we humans are, and just because they don't use language exactly the same as we do, we all know they can LEARN words and phrases (Go Mr. Rogers Hack!). But The "Sorry" Hack is about so much more. Keeping relationships stable and secure in social animal groups (E) requires many ritualized signals to communicate/clarify intentions, resolve conflict,



foster forgiveness, and affirm the security of bonds. Dogs "apologize" differently than we do (by licking faces/mouths, for example) (G), but they benefit from this social signalling after "injuries" just as much as we do. Every time we say we're "sorry", we build trust, secure attachment and drop cash money in the relationship bank account!

HOW to use it

In any of the following example circumstances

(and any others that warrant it) say "I'm Sorry!" in a sweet, soft, whimpering voice as you crouch down to attend to them and offer to pet/comfort them as you talk to them about what happened. Your body language, facial expression, tone of voice, and attention to/gesturing towards whatever caused the "injury" all help to show your dog that you are on their team.

♡ You accidentally drop something and it makes a loud noise - **"I'm SORRY I startled you."**

♡ You step on your dog's toes...or tail...or whatever - **"I'm SORRY I hurt you baby"**

♡ You have to take your dog to the vet even though he's scared - **"I'm SORRY we have to go."**

♡ A loud crack of thunder shakes the house AND your dog - **"I'm SORRY that scared you."**

♡ You are brushing your dog when you accidentally pull his hair and he yelps - **"Oops, I'm SORRY!"**

♡ Your dog has an accident involving or conflict with another person or animal companion, and you want to communicate that the offense or injury was unintentional/foster reconciliation - **"He says he's SORRY!"**

