

Training Tip Tuesday – I Choose You in Real Life

Here at REACH, we are plagued by some awfully foolish wildlife. There are dogs of various shapes and sizes around all the time; yet the woodland critters insist on hanging out in the yard and along the fence. This gives us plenty of opportunity to practice the I choose You game in real life!

If you recall; we started inside; with very few distractions. We tossed something just out of the dog's reach, and rewarded him handsomely for choosing to look away from the item and at us instead! (If you've never done this exercise; start with the basic level. There's another video from a while back; you can find it in the training tip archive on my website)

By practicing this exercise (a lot!) we have a dog that knows when he chooses to look back at us, good things happen. So, today when I saw a fat ol' groundhog snuffling along the fence line – I used it for a training opportunity. In the video, you'll see Kod choose to make eye contact with me on several occasions. And just to show it's not some leash magic; I remove his leash half way through (and got a great demonstration of impulse control!)

The I Choose You game is one of my all time favorites; and it has some huge behavioral implications. When your dog learns that choosing you is ALWAYS the best choice; your relationship moves to a whole new level. So – start practicing! If you're new at it, start in a quiet corner of the house. If you've heard me preach it before – start upping the ante and using it in real life situations! Neighborhood dog? Perfect distraction! Children playing? Absolutely! Anything that catches your dog's attention; wait it out and reward him for looking back at you!

<https://youtu.be/rfabMgctgNc>