How I became...a cat person
Yes, I was totally a dog person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Cats</th>
<th>Dogs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>30,677</td>
<td>8,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>7,937</td>
<td>1,895</td>
</tr>
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Wait, what…
Cats can do and learn really cool things too!
How cats learn

- **Associative learning**
  - **Classical Conditioning**
    - Classical conditioning is always occurring and involves things in the environment predicting that something else is about to happen. A common example of classical conditioning having taken place is demonstrated in the cat that on hearing the door of the kitchen cupboard that contains the cat food opening, comes running through to the kitchen meowing, purring, rubbing at the owner and possibly circling.

- **Operant Conditioning**
  - Operant conditioning involves consequences to a behavior influencing what behavior happens next. This is what we use if we want more or less of certain behaviors from the cat. There are four different types of consequences. For example: "Your cat is sat in front of you while you are feeding him treats. He suddenly jumps up onto your lap."
    - **Consequence 1:** Something good is presented (eg you give the cat another food treat)
    - **Consequence 2:** Something good can end or be taken away (eg you stop feeding the cat treats)
    - **Consequence 3:** Something bad can start or be presented (eg you stand up and walk away)
    - **Consequence 4:** Something bad can end or be taken away (eg being on your lap means he is off the cold floor)

- **Observational learning**
  - Observational learning involves learning from another individual. Both kittens and adult cats have been shown to be able to learn to perform a task by simply watching an experienced cat complete the task. Cats who live together and get along well are often considered to 'teach' one another particular behaviors, for example to exit the house through a cat flap. Whether the 'observer' cat actually learns the behavior directly from 'demonstrator' cat or whether the 'demonstrator' cat simply draws the 'observer' cat's attention to the cat flap through its actions is still debatable.
  - Regardless of the true mechanism in place, such learning is most common during kittenhood where much observational learning occurs in the kitten from watching his mother. Studies have shown kittens are quicker at learning a task if it is their mother they watch doing the task rather than another unknown cat.
Why are we talking about stress?

- Bond
- Trust
- Health
- Cohabitating
- Confidence

What does stress look like?

- [Image]

Let's talk about this one!
Because it wasn't fun for the cat either!
Food / Treat
- Cat nip
- Pheromone spray
- Towel / Blanket
- Hiding place
- Gentle touch

Reward
You can't 'make' a cat do something; you can only make them 'want' to do it!

Training basics
1. Wait for behavior
2. Reward behavior
3. Repeat

*Don't introduce the cue until the behavior is consistent.
- Touch – Learn to touch a designated thing
- Place – Learn a specific place to go
**Carrier training**

- Keep things positive
- Leave carrier out, make it a comfortable den
- Practice in and out regularly – make it a game
- Feed in the carrier
- Use “Touch” with a target stick – clicker training
- Pheromone spray / cat nip
- Stay calm! Do not ‘shush’
- Clean – remove BAD pheromones
- Don’t go to fast! This can take months if your cat is fearful.

**Can you withhold food?**

- Food maybe what you need to carrier train your cat. But what if the cat isn’t hungry. Check with your vet first, but withholding a meal may make your kitty more excited about this new learning experience.
  - The same goes for teaching your cat anything!

**Let us talk about carriers!**

- Hard carriers need to be inspected
  - Discard if damaged
  - Some require zip-ties
- Soft carriers need to be inspected
  - Discard if damaged
  - Always have clips to hold zippers together
Transporting

- A great cat vet
- Uses gentle control
- Has ‘soft’ hands
- Uses towel wrap instead of scuffing

The vet!

Emergency Wrap
Younger cats don’t need much grooming unless they are long-haired cats. Older cats often need more grooming:

- So, start early!
- Get cats accustomed to brushes
  - Step 1 – Brush
  - Step 2 – Treat
  - Repeat!

Don’t do too much at once – make it a daily routine.
Nail trims
- Again, start early
- Keep stress level to a minimum
- One paw/nail at a time
- Towel wrap if needed - No scruffing
- When is it time to sedate!? 

Body language
- Tail – up, down, curled in
- Ears – Forward, back, airplane
- Eyes – Dilated vs. Constricted
- Placement of paws
- Soft vs. Tense

Video
Do you need to make changes?

- Keep in mind that getting your cat used to being handled in a particular way takes time.
- Always keep in mind that cats are sensitive to stress and they remember through association.
- Adjust the plan if you need to!

Thank You!

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