

# A Philosophy for Agility Success

Whether your goal is competition or to just have fun with your dog, the following thoughts will help you succeed in achieving your goals. Durango Agility Dogs believes strongly in positive motivational training and in having fun.

- ❖ **Maintain a positive attitude.** You help shape your dog's attitude with the attitude that you project. A happy dog is an enthusiastic worker
- ❖ **Have Fun.** Lighten up. If you aren't having fun, your dog isn't having fun. Class isn't a competition between students. I guarantee you your dog isn't comparing himself to all the other dogs in the class.
- ❖ **Dogs are "only human."** Dogs make mistakes and have bad days just like us. If your dog makes a mistake, don't be quick to blame or correct him. How can you become a better trainer to help your dog learn?
- ❖ **Agility is a team sport.** You and your dog must work together. You are the captain. There is no "I" in team.
- ❖ **Every dog is different.** What works for one dog may not work for another. Figure out what really motivates your dog and use it to your advantage.
- ❖ **Set realistic goals.** Success builds confidence in both you and your dog. Set yourselves up to succeed not fail. Don't get frustrated if your dog learns more slowly than others.
- ❖ **There are no shortcuts.** You didn't memorize the Gettysburg Address in kindergarten. Likewise, your dog will learn things in a proper sequence. Don't rush it! Remember to build good basic agility skills. Shortcuts will haunt you in the long run.
- ❖ **Just be cause they do it doesn't mean they know it!** Don't get upset if your dog gets sudden agility amnesia. They aren't disobeying you, they are still learning.
- ❖ **Introduce one challenge at a time.** You will achieve greater success if you train one thing at a time. For example, if you haven't taught your dog to wait at a start line, don't work on that and a set of obstacles at the same time.
- ❖ **Keep agility stress free.** Following the above guidelines will help you create a stress free learning environment for your dog. Remember a dog that is stressed will shut down. This sport is about having fun.