

Student Details**Name:** Lisa Frost**Date:** 03/11/2021**Date Range:** Sept – Oct 2021**Email:** lmfrost42@aol.com**Phone:** +44 7624480511**Cast Study #:** 1**Animal Details****Name:** Ted**Age:** 2 Yrs**Breed:** Labrador**Sex:** Male**Guardian's Name:**

Anne-Marie

Location: Ramsey, IoM**Background / History:**

Ted is a 2 year old, male, black Labrador. He was referred to me by another dog trainer and was described as dog and people reactive. He had been working with her for 6 months and was in her Pet class and she said he had made enormous progress with her. However, he was still showing some stress signs and had developed a lot of dandruff and had a strip of raised fur along the whole of his spine. The trainer thought that me and TTouch might be able to help him.

Reason for Client Session:

Include the owner's description of their animal, what areas of their animal's behaviour /health they wanted to address, when the behaviour started, etc.

When I met with Ted's Guardian, Anne-Marie, she explained the amount of training work she had done with Ted and how far he had come with his reactivity. She was concerned about the changes in fur pattern and his constant business, she explained that he rarely seemed to settle. The coat pattern had become very noticeable about 2 months before, but she didn't think anything changed at that time.

Initial Observations / Impressions:

Remember to include body language, coat changes, responses to stimulus, movement, posture, interactions with owner, response to you, your own impression of the animal etc.

I met Ted at the training centre, as this was neutral ground and somewhere that he was used to and felt comfortable.

We let him have a sniff about and do his own thing for a little while, he mostly ignored me but did check in with his Guardian quite regularly.

Whilst he was walking around I noticed that he was very head down most of the time. He liked to sniff, but didn't even tend to lift his head between sniffs. His shoulders had a hunched appearance whilst he was doing this and

when I asked his Guardian to call him over his head still stayed quite far down. His back legs looked well balanced in comparison. When he was standing, with his head down, which seemed like his natural pose, his top line was slightly dropped in the middle.

The strip of fur that I had been told about was very obvious and ran from his neck to his tail and over his shoulders, it didn't run over his hips. His skin along the strip appeared very dry and there was obvious dandruff evident.

To me, Ted seemed quite anxious and the front of his body looked tense. He seemed anxious to investigate everything and keep his head down, rather than looking up to explore his surroundings.

How did you start the session and why?

If you were not able to make contact with the animal, how did you support the owner/animal and what did you observe by watching the owner and the animal? How do you think this benefited their learning and understanding?

I began the session with saying 'Hello' to Ted, despite being described as people reactive, he seemed OK with my presence, he had been working on this for some time with the other trainer, who was also present, so I think this helped.

Anne-Marie gave Ted a Lickimat near to me and I just sat on the floor and let Ted come to me when he was ready, which he did.

I explained to Anne-Marie about the tension I was seeing with Ted's shoulders and neck and his constant head down. She said that he would rarely keep his head up, even on walks or at home. She had had a vet check with him recently, they had checked the area of the fur change and hadn't found any medical issues.

Once Ted had finished his Lickimat he came and investigated me and I was able to touch him without him moving away or showing obvious stress.

What further observations did you make?

If you could make contact with the animal, how did you progress and what was the response to contact, temperature of skin, muscle tone, etc.?

I began with just stroking and doing some Noah's March touches with the back of my hand and slightly to the right of the fur strip down Ted's spine. There were no obvious changes in temperature and when I did, gently touch the spine, his temperature was the same; I didn't feel any hot or cold spots.

He allowed me to continue to make contact with him for a few minutes, before going back to Anne-Marie to check in, then came back to see me- this continued throughout the session, so I worked with him for a few minutes at a time between check-ins.

When he did allow me to touch his spine and shoulders, there was obvious muscle tension there. His neck seemed very tense, even as if it was so rigid he wasn't able to lift his head easily.

How did you continue with the session and why?

Include Touches, equipment, and groundwork (if appropriate) and your reasons for using the specific techniques.

Remember to include the animal's responses at all times, any further observations you made as the session progressed and whether you felt that any techniques were of particular benefit or not.

Include when and why you gave the animal a break, and how you interacted with the client and/or animal during the break.

Once Ted was happy with me touching him, I put a quarter wrap on him, as I thought this would help with his body awareness. I had checked with Ann-Marie and he was happy having a harness of coat put on and he didn't have any negative reaction to me putting the wrap on.

Next we placed Ted's Lickimat up at head height so that he didn't have to bend his neck down and I continued with the touches. I continued with the Noah's march and then progressed to Llama touches; beginning with slides and moving to circles.

I mostly did the touches around the fur strip along the spine, Ted didn't have any adverse reactions to this and wasn't showing any obvious calming signals, every now and again he would just move away to check-in with Anne-Marie and then seemed happy to come back to me for more touches. I used Llama's to get him used to the sensation and added in some Zebra touches; mainly to connect over the fur strip and also to help keep him calm.

I gave him a little break after this and we let him have a good sniff about with some Freework; putting treats at head height. During this time I encouraged the others not to directly look at Ted and just to let him do his own thing.

When we resumed the touches I moved to doing some Inch worm on his shoulders and then some Turtle touches on the shoulders and below, I could feel the tension in these areas, even though I was only using a light pressure. I also did some leg lifts on his front legs, although he didn't seem too keen on these and pulled his legs away a few times, mainly on the right leg. So, I went back to the Zebras and Turtles, which he sat quietly for.

After a while Ted lay down next to me, so I did some Ear work with him, partly to leave his body alone for a while and partly for some calming time. I did some little Raccoon touches around the base of his ears and then some ear strokes. His body visibly relaxed during this time.

The session was quite short, only about 30 minutes, but I did do quite a lot of work with Ted in that time, especially around his neck and shoulders.

What changes did you observe at the end of the session?

By the end of the session, there was a visible difference to Ted's head and neck position and the fur pattern had also visibly changed. When he was standing. Ted's topline was also slightly straighter. Ted was quite tired, but wasn't showing the stress signals he had shown at the beginning of the session.

The below photos show the difference in head / neck position and coat change, from the beginning (on the left) to the end (on the right):



The fur strip on his spin area definitely looked flatter and he was looking up at the World with raised ears. The dandruff was more evident at the end, but I think that was more to do with me touching the skin and bringing it to the surface.

How did you review/ wrap-up the session for the owner?

At the end of the session, I went through all the touches I had done with Ted and explained them all to Anne-Marie. I also explained that Ted maybe very tired after the session.

I took the wrap off Ted and spent some time just fussing him and gave him a few treats. We also did a little bit of Freework, to allow him to 'shake it off' and process what we had done.

What 'home work' did you leave for your client to practice between sessions and why?

I showed Anne-Maire how to do the Noahs' March, Zebra and Turtle touches and what speed and pressure to use. I also showed her how to do some ear strokes with Ted. I asked her to do a couple of minutes each day of the Zebra, with the Noah's March along the spine and the Turtles on the shoulders.

I encouraged her to do some ear work with Ted when they are relaxing.

She had been doing some Freework with Ted, but had been putting treats and sniff items at ground level, so I asked her to put items at different heights; to encourage Ted to move his head up and about whilst he's relaxed.

What changes did the client observe at the end of the session?

Anne-Marie noticed definite physical changes with Ted at the end of the session. She could see the difference in his coat pattern, especially around his shoulders and she felt that he was considerably more relaxed .

She did give a quick brush and his fur looked to be sitting a lot flatter.

Ted's Trainer , who stayed for the session also commented that Ted was much calmer and wasn't showing some the calming signals and stress reactions that she had seen with him.

Anne-Marie and Debbie, the Trainer did a short training session with Ted, at the end of the TTouch session and both said he was much more engaged with them than was normal.

Personal Learning

How was the experience for you and what did you learn?

I found that I did have a preconceived idea about Ted, as I had been told by his trainer that he was people and dog reactive, so I may have been a little concerned about this as I didn't want to upset him. However, once I was in the situation I cleared those ideas away and worked with the dog in front of me. I learn't the value of removing expectations for a session.

I was glad we arranged to meet on neutral ground, in the training centre where he has fun and with his trainer present, as I think that helped his confidence around me.

Working with Ted was a good experience for me, as he didn't show many calming signals, but did make it obvious when he wanted a break and to check-in with Anne-Marie. He also gave very good feedback on how he felt about each of the touches and definitely needed time to process everything that we did together.

What might you have done differently and why?

If I was to do the first session again, I would have included some leash work and groundwork, as I would have like to have seen Ted walking to check how balanced he was on the leash.

I think I was a little hesitant to begin the body work, but this was more from what I have been told, rather than what I was seeing. So, I would have trusted my instincts more.

Subsequent Sessions

If you were unable to work with the animal for further sessions, please amend this form and write down what you would have planned for a session and why.

What observations has the owner noted since the first session?

Anne-Marie was very excited about the follow up session with Ted. She had noticed a definite improvement in his coat and the spinal stripe had mostly disappeared. He was much more head up and his reactivity had also decreased. He was much more relaxed in the home and his Trainer said that he was much calmer in the Pet Class sessions.

Ann-Marie had been doing the TTouches, although she wasn't sure she had been doing them correctly and Ted was enjoying the time they were spending together. She had also been doing the Freework with items at different heights which Ted was also enjoying.

What observations did you make at the start of session two and how did they compare with your first observations?

When I saw Ted again, there was a definite difference in his body posture. His head and ears were up and he didn't have the hunched over look he had before. His topline was also a lot straighter.



Rather than taking himself off to sniff Ted came straight over to say 'hello' to me and was happy to engage with . At the first meeting, he had seemed far more interested in the floor than me.

How did you start the second session?

I started the second session with some freework for Ted, so that I could talk to Anne-Marie and then we did some basic groundwork, just so I could get an idea of how Ted walked and to look at his balance.

How did you progress with the second session?

List ground work, TTouches and equipment used, the animal's response etc and why you chose the specific techniques.

Include further observations, how you reviewed the second session for the owner, what plans you might have made for further sessions (or the details of how you progressed if you worked with the animal again), and details of your own personal learning etc.

We did some groundwork, just a labyrinth and some obstacles from around the Training Centre. Ted is normally walked on a harness, although it has 2 points of contact, Anne-Marie generally only uses the back clip. I asked her to use a 2 point leash, during the groundwork, as Ted seemed to lean forward at the shoulders whilst walking. However, this wasn't the full head down we had seen at the first session. There was an improvement in his walking and Anne-Marie was keen to try using two points of contact in the real World.

I then did some more TTouches with Ted and ran through the techniques with Anne-Marie; as she was sure she was doing them wrong (she wasn't).

Ted seemed happy throughout the session and welcomed being touched this time.

I was happy to have done the groundwork and would do that in the first session next time. I also felt that I needed to spend a bit more time talking to Anne-Marie in the second session, as she had been quite worried about Ted and I think I should have spent more time with her in the first session, but I had been more focused on Ted.

Anne-Marie was going to continue with the TTouches she had learnt and we agreed to have a catch up in a month. Ted would continue with Pet Class during this time and working on his reactive behaviour with his Trainer.

When we caught up, a month later, Ted was doing really well. His coat looked great and the dandruff had gone, there was no defined fur pattern down his spine anymore and his head was up. His topline wasn't completely straight, but no longer had the dip in the middle.

Anne-Marie said that he was still actively seeking out the TTouches and was loving his ear work time in the evenings. She also felt that their bond had deepened, which was lovely to hear.

Any additional comments / information:

I was very pleased with how the sessions with Ted went and they definitely really helped him. They also helped me to gain more confidence and it was great to share the experience with Ted's trainer and show her how much help TTouch can be (she is a convert and has a list of clients she would like to send to me now).