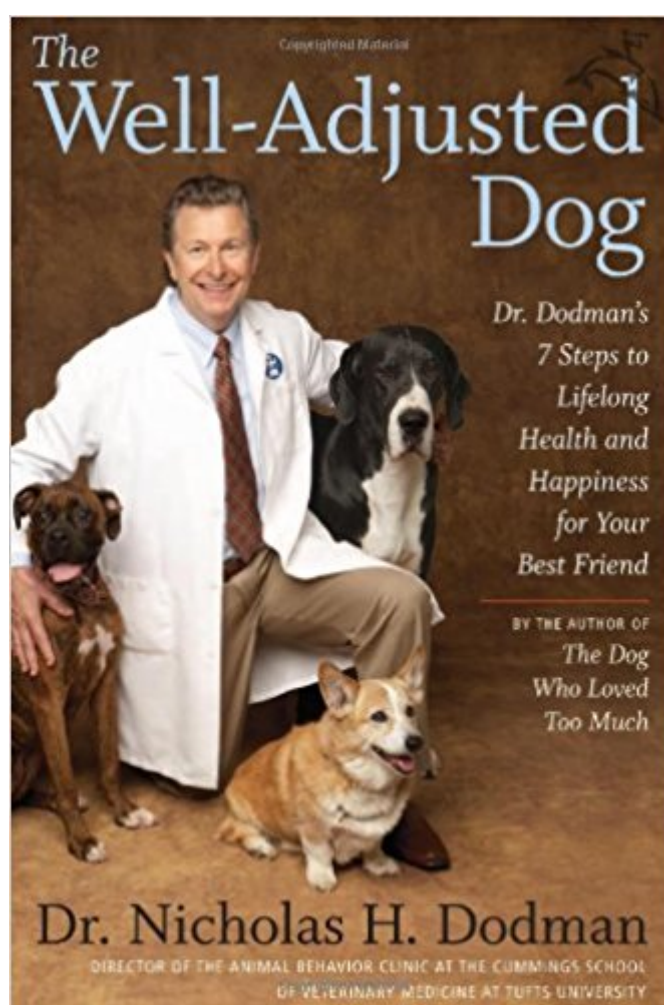


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# The Well-Adjusted Dog: Dr. Dodman's Seven Steps To Lifelong Health And Happiness For Your Best Friend



## Synopsis

One of the greatest myths in dog ownership is that once a puppy is housetrained and has graduated from a puppy training class, an owner's work is done. In fact, that work is just beginning. Forty-two percent of dog owners in this country report problems managing their dogs' behavior. Our nation's pounds and shelters are teeming with dogs who have been given up for just this reason. But it doesn't have to be this way. As Dr. Dodman points out, almost every dog problem can either be treated or, better yet, prevented. Every dog has the potential to be happy and well adjusted. In *The Well-Adjusted Dog*, Dr. Dodman shows you how, offering what he calls "continuing education" for dogs and their owners. A comprehensive, seven-step approach takes on the whole dog's health, behavior, and environment and lays the groundwork for the proper care and training of your best friend, for life. You will discover:

- how much exercise your dog really needs (and why)
- how diet can affect behavior
- how to communicate clearly with your dog and understand dog body language
- how to lead your dog, not dominate him
- how to prevent or deal with fearful conditions
- how to optimize your dog's environment
- how to address medical problems that might underlie unwanted behavior

In this essential new book, Dr. Dodman draws on some twenty-five years of clinical experience to bring together the art and science of dog ownership. His approach is based on the latest research as well as a unique understanding of the whole dog. It's also proven to work, and to work long term. Only in *The Well-Adjusted Dog* will you truly find what every good dog owner should know.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dogs, like humans, need a well-rounded life for happiness and health, says author and animal behaviorist Dodman (*The Dog Who Loved Too Much, Dogs Behaving Badly*) in his latest. Many of his seven steps-enough exercise, the right diet, proper corrective measures-will be familiar, but Dodman's clear delivery and insight make this a worthwhile cover-to-cover read. A strong advocate for positive reinforcement (nixing measures like choke chains and shock collars), Dodman's techniques may strike some as coddling, but his supporting arguments and anecdotes are strong and sensible. The latter half covers topics like conflict resolution and unwanted behaviors (anxiety around strangers, compulsive tail chasing), giving dog lovers multiple suggestions for each problem point-with the notable exception of storm phobia, a multifaceted fear-generating experience that's almost impossible to defuse (though the new static electricity-blocking Storm Defender cape offers promise). Dodson refrains from sweeping pronouncements, frequently pausing to explain that different breeds have different needs, enabling readers to fine-tune their regimens. While this handbook isn't the be-all end-all (and of course doesn't replace regular trips to the vet), it's thorough and informative enough to benefit any dog owner. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

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I just finished reading this book and of the four other Dodman books I've read this may be my least favorite. As my review title says, a lot of the information is repeated from other of his books. And I've found a few contradictions, in "Good Old Dog" he says not to change a dog's food if everything is fine and in this book he says to switch things up to make mealtime more interesting for our pets. I also don't understand why the chapter on how to pick out an adopted dog is at the BACK of the book?! I will say however, that if your dog is suffering with any ailment that suggest he may need behavior-modification drugs, there is an extensive chapter describing the drugs, their uses and alternatives.

When dogs are behaving badly or inappropriately, their people often don't know where to turn, or what to do. Sometimes, an animal communicator can help to assuage a conflict, ease an anxiety, or curb a bad habit by discovering exactly why the dog is doing what he's doing, from his perspective, and that "direct from the source" input can often be extremely helpful in restoring a sense of normalcy. But for the chronic offenders, it can be useful to consult an animal behaviorist, and Dr. Nicholas Dodman, Director of the Animal Behavior Clinic at Tufts University's Cummings School, is one of the best. One of the most important contributions of his new book, "The Well-Adjusted Dog," is that it dispels prevalent myths and misconceptions about what works and doesn't work to curtail unwanted or destructive behavior patterns. Dr. Dodman's philosophy is simple and straightforward: "Your job as a dog owner is to try to understand your dog's life from his point of view, and to lead and protect, not to dominate, punish, and force a dog into submission. . . Real leaders do not dominate; they listen, think, and often defer. Real leaders do not intimidate; they instill confidence. . . "The human-companion animal bond is not forged through the metal of the choke chain or prong collar but rather through mutual trust and respect." Even compassionate, well-intentioned, and experienced canine caretakers may be astonished to learn that some of their assumptions about what their dog requires for nutrition, exercise and training are just plain wrong. For example, the amount of exercise a dog really needs may really blow your mind. Let's just say that a stroll around the block twice a day isn't enough. When it comes to dogs who display territorial aggression, Dr. Dodman's pioneering research has been able to prove that there is a direct correlation between the amount of protein in a dog's diet and his tendency to lash out. In his controlled study, there was a demonstrable reduction in aggressive behavior when dogs were fed a low-protein (17%) diet: "Territorial aggression was significantly reduced on the lower-protein diets. The decrease in aggression was almost linear when plotted against protein level--less protein equaled less aggression and the finding was statistically significant. A subset of territorially aggressive dogs

motivated by fear or anxiety responded particularly well."There are excellent chapters on "The Fearful Dog" ("The first rule of desensitization is not to expose the dog to whatever he fears"), "Environmental Enrichment" ("The worst-case scenario for a dog is to be raised alone and live alone"), and "Healing Potions" (When pharmacological intervention becomes the last resort). You may disagree with some of Dr. Dodman's prescriptions (he's skeptical about the efficacy of Rescue Remedy, for example), but all in all, *The Well-Adjusted Dog* is a practical, compelling set of recommendations for anyone who puts a premium on her dog's well-being, and I'm glad it's part of my library.

Recommends a "natural lamb based" 18% protein diet, (which doesn't exist) for aggressive dogs. Since that's barely enough protein to sustain life, it's not surprising that the aggression decreases. He bases this recommendation on anecdotes and a scientific study funded by a dog food company that uses corn, preservatives, and dyes in their foods. Some of his leadership methods are good, some not so good. He recommends starving a dog, if he doesn't immediately comply to a command.

A very insightful book that has provided me with so much guidance and information that will be so valuable to me when I get my new puppy in 3 years and to assist me with the current dogs I have. The detail is great leaving me with no questions. I use the book as a reference guide daily to inform others of the proper treatment and care for their pets. Thanks so much for writing.

Having gone to a NESAC school, I just trust a Tufts prof! Easy to read and digest. I have found myself quoting bits in conversation here and there. I even educated the people at doggie daycare as to why they find that the gentle leader calms the dogs they care for.

Excellent book to read and for future reference. Anybody that has territorial aggression - even on a small scale - should read the chapter on "Nutrition" right away. I reduced my dogs protein content to 18% and they are doing sO much better with people. It also cleared up their running eyes and tear stains (Maltese) And, stopped my one from chewing his paws obsessively. Thank you Doctor for all your efforts in improving our furry friends lives.

Great training tips for all owners- inexperienced or experienced. Written so anyone can understand the material.

Great resource! Book really helped me with all aspects of living with dogs. I really liked the nutrition information. Who knew that dog food varied so much!

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