



UNLOCKING RESILIENCY

October 2022

16 weeks October 24th, 2022 – February 23rd, 2023

****NO CLASS THE WEEK OF 11/21 AND 12/26****

Lecture (all students): Mondays at 12 pm ET

Lectures will also be recorded for those who cannot attend live

Discussion (full students): Thursdays at 12 pm ET

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Course description

How do we develop emotional well-being and resilience in our animals? This is the core question. Isn't this what we all want to know and do?

We spend so much time focusing on behavior issues and decreased welfare. These issues are critically important. However, this course takes a different approach and focuses on all the pieces you need to foster happier, more resilient dogs (or other animals). In the first part of the course, we lay the groundwork—the key concepts, or building blocks, that you must understand to place the rest of the course in context. We then spend time discussing the definitions and components of welfare and well-being. From there, we move onto a conversation about stress and the impacts of stress. Next, we cover emotion and cognition and how they relate to behavior, stress, and well-being. Finally, we conclude the first part of the course with a discussion of individual differences. Why are some animals able to go through horrible experiences and come through more or less healthy and happy? Why do others fall to pieces?

Once we've covered those basic foundations, we'll move onto the second part of the course which is all about promoting well-being and helping animals cope with stress. First, we'll talk about assessing well-being and how to manage and reduce stress. Then we talk about building stress resiliency—both as a preventative measure and in animals that are already struggling to cope. We'll wrap up the course by talking about applying the human mental health framework to other animals and cover what research and treatment of mental health disorders in humans (such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD) can teach us about preventing and resolving behavior issues in our animals.

Unlocking Resiliency is wholistic, it's grounded in the latest research, and it explains the WHY, not just the "how to". Why do the techniques we use work? Why do other approaches not work well? Where are we failing to care for the emotional health of our animals and how can we change this?

Course structure

The most effective learning occurs when students are not only provided with the facts, but also have ample opportunity to use that information in concrete ways, engage in challenging activities, interact with others, and receive frequent feedback on their progress.

Therefore, this course will be taught using an approach that encourages collaboration and active learning. The course is divided into lecture and discussion sessions.

- All students
 - Weekly live lectures that run about 60 minutes
 - Lectures will also be recorded for those who cannot attend live.
 - *Full students will need to view the lectures before attending discussion.
 - Lectures cover the course material and allow for questions as well as some brief interactive activities. This will give you a solid foundation in the course material.
 - Quizzes to assess your understanding of the lecture material
 - Auditors - expect to spend about 90 minutes a week on course material
- Full students. In addition to the lectures, full students will:
 - Attend weekly one-hour live discussions – this is where the magic really happens!
 - Take a deep dive into the week’s content—participate in exercises to master, analyze, interpret, and apply the material from the lecture, all under Dr. Spaulding’s guidance.
 - Take advantage of a team-based learning format where you are presented with a real-life challenge, then given an opportunity to discuss the challenge in small groups and agree on an answer. We will then discuss the answer as a group and Dr. Spaulding will provide additional information on applications and connections to other concepts.
 - The discussion sections are designed to create deep, transformative, and lasting learning related to applying the course material directly to training and behavior.
 - Discussions are not recorded.
 - Complete assignments
 - Assignments are designed to assess your ability to apply the material to your work or life with animals. As of 8/13/22, the course is still under development. There will either be fewer, longer assignments at the end of each unit, or shorter, more frequent assignments each week. Possibly a combination of both. The syllabus will be updated as the course design is finalized.
 - Spend about 3 to 5 hours a week on course work (that includes watching/attending the lectures and discussions).
 - Earn a Certificate of Completion upon successful graduation

Dr. Spaulding's teaching approach

First of all, I'll just own it. I really am a geek. As in, I get super excited about science stuff and dog behavior and new ideas. And I love sharing it all. Really love it. So, you should probably expect a bit of enthusiasm.

Secondly, I have high standards. I think our field could use a much deeper dive into the knowledge behind our craft. So you should expect to encounter much deeper material with me, and to study it at a higher level. Essentially, I take a college approach rather than a conference one.

Thirdly, though, my standards for myself are just as high. If I'm going to ask you to do the work, you should know I'll be working my tail off to make sure you're successful. You'll find me prepared, full of creative ideas to help you really "get it" and be able to use it, and always ready to offer extra help or support. Because I'm also really friendly and always happy to chat science and dogs.

Course content and objectives

It's all in one place.

Everything is connected. It's difficult to truly understand how the many different aspects of behavior fit together without spending a lot of time with the material. That's why this course exists – to take all the different pieces of information related to stress and resiliency and put them all into one cohesive, in-depth narrative. This one course will cover everything you need to know about the impacts of stress and how we can cultivate the development of resilience in our animals. I am SO excited to teach this course – and I know you'll love it too!

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Communicate why managing stress is absolutely fundamental to promoting well-being in animals.
- Detail the impacts of stress on learning and behavior and incorporate this information into training and behavior plans/programs.
- Explain how an understanding of emotion and cognition can help you evaluate and predict behavior and construct effective training and behavior plans.
- Identify which animals are most at risk for behavior issues and decreased quality of life and use this information to make choices about interventions.
- List the factors that contribute to resilience and improved stress coping in animals and integrate this information into new and existing training and behavior plans and programs.
- Think critically about the use of behavioral labels and constructs and use them effectively, intentionally, and accurately.
- Interpret and appropriately apply human and rodent research on mental and emotional health to the animals we live and work with in order to enhance their emotional well-being and facilitate the prevention and resolution of behavior issues.
- Evaluate information and programs for their potential impact on stress, resilience, and well-being.
- Analyze behavior from a multi-dimensional perspective by considering the interaction among many different systems and processes in the body as well as environmental influences.

Schedule

Week #	Week of:	Topics
		UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION
1	10/24	What is this course all about?
2	10/31	What do animals need to be okay? How does biology influence behavior?
		UNIT 2: STRESS
3	11/7	How does stress impact health, the brain, and early development?
4	11/14	How does stress set the stage for all aspects of behavior?
-	11/21	AMERICAN THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
5	11/28	How does stress enhance fear? How is behavior driven by emotion?
		UNIT 3: EMOTION AND COGNITION
6	12/5	What might the animal mind look like? Why are “mental” and “physical” health impossible to separate?
7	12/12	How do “big feelings” drive behavior?
8	12/19	How do animals regulate their emotions and make decisions?
-	12/26	CHRISTMAS WEEK – NO CLASS
		UNIT 4: RESILIENCE AND WELL-BEING
9	1/2	Why are some individuals more resilient than others? (Part 1)
10	1/9	Why are some individuals more resilient than others? (Part 2)
11	1/16	How can we foster the development of resilience? (Part 1)
12	1/23	How can we foster the development of resilience? (Part 2)
		UNIT 5: EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
13	1/30	Can we apply the human mental health model to other animals?
14	2/6	Should we use labels? Do animals experience depression, fear/anxiety, or ADHD?
15	2/13	How are animals impacted by trauma?
16	2/20	What drives aggression? Where do we go from here?

Required materials

All students: Computer, high speed internet access, and speakers

Full students: Microphone, access to Google docs and the ability to access it while on zoom calls (Google Docs is free. If you need help with this, please contact me). The use of a desktop computer is strongly recommended.



Homework

Details on the homework will be provided after course registration. There will be weekly assignments as well as unit assignments and a few in class assignments.

CEUs

Auditors:

- IAABC – pending as of 8/16/22
- CCPDT – pending as of 8/16/22
- CEUs will require watching the lectures and completing quizzes.

Full students:

- IAABC – pending as of 8/16/22
- CCPDT – pending as of 8/16/22
- CEUs will require watching the lectures, completing quizzes, attending 75% or more of the discussion sections and completing assignments.

Refunds

Refunds, minus a \$10 processing fee, will be granted if requested up to 2 days before the start of class. After that, 50% refunds will be granted up until the start date of the course. Refunds are not available after the start of class.

Refunds will not be granted if you are unable to attend class and therefore unable to complete the required work. Excused absences will be granted in case of emergencies and illness (with proper documentation).