



Animal Friends

Practicum experience

What is Animal Friends

Animal Friends is a non-profit companion animal resource center serving the needs of pets and people for more than 70 years.

Our progressive programs have been nationally recognized and include humane rescue, shelter and adoption services for homeless pets, humane education, pet behavior classes, pet therapy, wellness programs and more. In addition, Animal Friends is leading the way toward ending pet overpopulation in western Pennsylvania through comprehensive, community-wide spay/neuter programming.

Animal Friends is thinking outside the cage!



Animal Friend's Goal



- Reduce the number of unwanted animals through aggressive spay/neuter programs.
- Provide for the well-being of companion animals in need, while adhering to our no-kill tradition and find each a lifelong, loving home.
- Offer affordable wellness services and resources to pets and owners in need, targeting underserved communities, to support whole-life care.
- Promote the animal-human bond through outreach, education and therapeutic programming.
- And, act as an advocate on behalf of animals in crisis and as an enforcer of their rights and protection through education, investigation and legislative efforts.

President/CEO of Animal Friends

➤ David Swisher

- He actually adopted this chocolate lab from animal friends
- Wanted to change how people view an animal shelter
 - Wanted to change the look, the feel, and the smell
 - Now it is part of the community



My Supervisor

► Meet Ashley

- Her office is always cluttered and a mess
- She is super friendly and helpful
- She does the volunteer orientation and is in charge of every volunteer
- Usually responds to emails within a day or two
- If she doesn't have the answer, she will find it for you or find someone who would know the answer



Orientation



- Orientation is a required two hour process
- You learn about animal friend's goals and how you can be a part of it
- Informs you of the different areas you can volunteer with
 - Medical, cats, dogs, bunnies, research, storage, clean-up, office work, and more
- It is up to the you to decide where you want to be and go through the training to do it
 - I chose cats

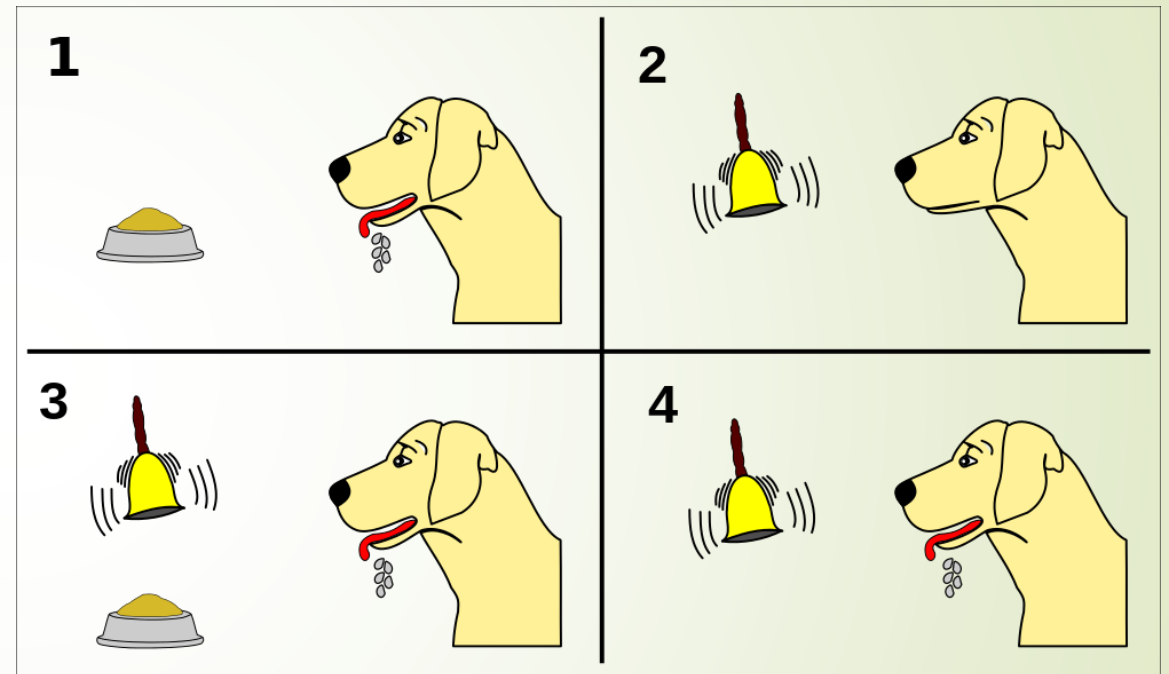
Training for Cats

- ▶ The training process takes part in two different segments.
 - ▶ Learning how to interact with the animals and read their body language (they gave us these pictures to get an idea of their language)
 - ▶ Then interacting with them in a group setting
 - ▶ At a different date, we get a trainer to certify us.
 - ▶ To do this, we have to demonstrate everything we learned and be able to answer any question they ask us
 - ▶ We then interact with the animal on our own while they watch
 - ▶ If all goes well then you get certified to work with them.



Classical Conditioning

- ▶ Classical conditioning is the process of associating a stimuli with something positive or pleasurable.
- ▶ At animal friends, we use treats for the animals (and catnip for the cats)
- ▶ When we go to socialize with a cat, we give them a treat so they associate the pleasure of treats with people. So when a person walks in, they will eventually come to the front of the cage and hope to get attention in hopes of the treat.
- ▶ This process was developed by Ivan Pavlov.



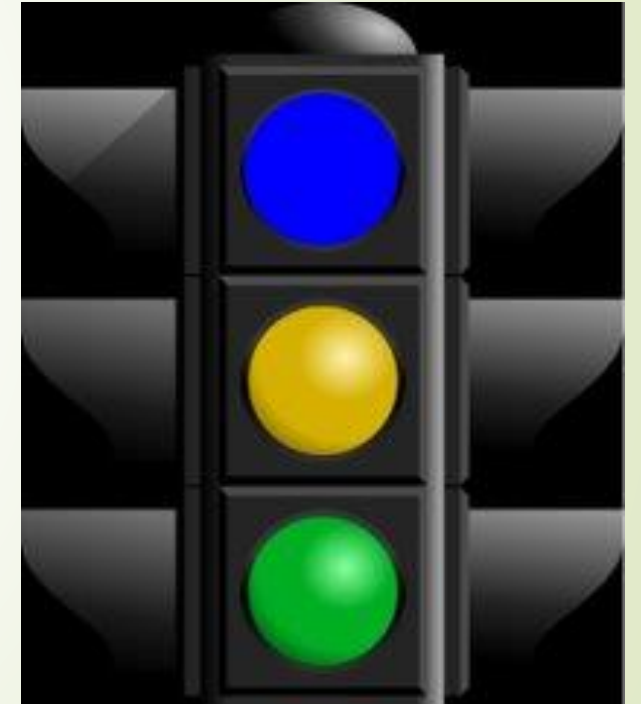
Reward Training

Positive reinforcement through treats or affection are how to properly train an animal. Animal friends strongly reinforces the importance of only using positive reinforcement



Animal Color Leveling

- ▶ The coloring system is a bit odd. The easiest way to remember it is to think of a traffic light. Green means go, yellow means slow, and red means stop. At animal friends just switch red to blue and you have a good understanding of the color levels for the animals.
- ▶ Green are the friendly animals that like people and want affection or to play. Yellow animals are more scared and may possibly attack, but it is usually them trying to warn you to leave them alone. Then there is blue animals, these will attack for no reason.



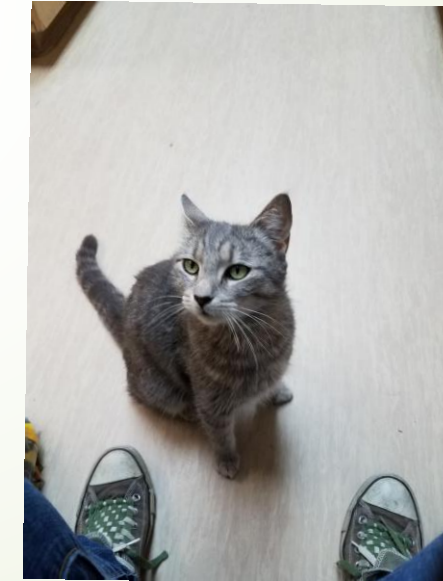
The woman who determines the cat's level

- ▶ This is Lil Abernathy
- ▶ She evaluates what colors the cats are
- ▶ If you have any questions on the whereabouts of a cat, she usually knows the answer.
 - ▶ If she doesn't then assume the cat is with medical in the back.
- ▶ She also is the woman who will get the cats ready when someone wants to see them or adopt them



Starting slow

- ▶ Aka friendly cats
 - ▶ Hawke (top left) was one of the first cats I socialized with. He walked right onto my lap and started purring.
 - ▶ Violet (top right) was always crying to be let out, she would try to make you think she hasn't been out all day, but everyone loved her and gave her attention
 - ▶ Lunar (bottom left) was an 8 month old kitten, she was gorgeous, friendly, and playful. I wanted to take her home, but she was adopted within a day
 - ▶ King Midus (bottom right) has been at animal friends for a few years because he has a spraying issue, but he is super nice and loves to go to the playroom and sit at the top of the cat tower



Shy/Scared Cats

- Meet Emma (top)
 - She refused to leave her cage and barely socialized
 - Within a week I had her crawling all over me and even being possessive over me to the point that she would meow and throw litter if I was paying attention to another cat near her cage
- Meet Kona (bottom)
 - This sweetheart would not leave her cage and would hide in her cubby anytime people were near her cage
 - After a day of spending time with her and holding her food to her cubby, she started to trust me and would come out more (turns out she was a social eater)
 - The next day she even let me hold her, but she was too scared on the ground so she just stayed on my lap purring



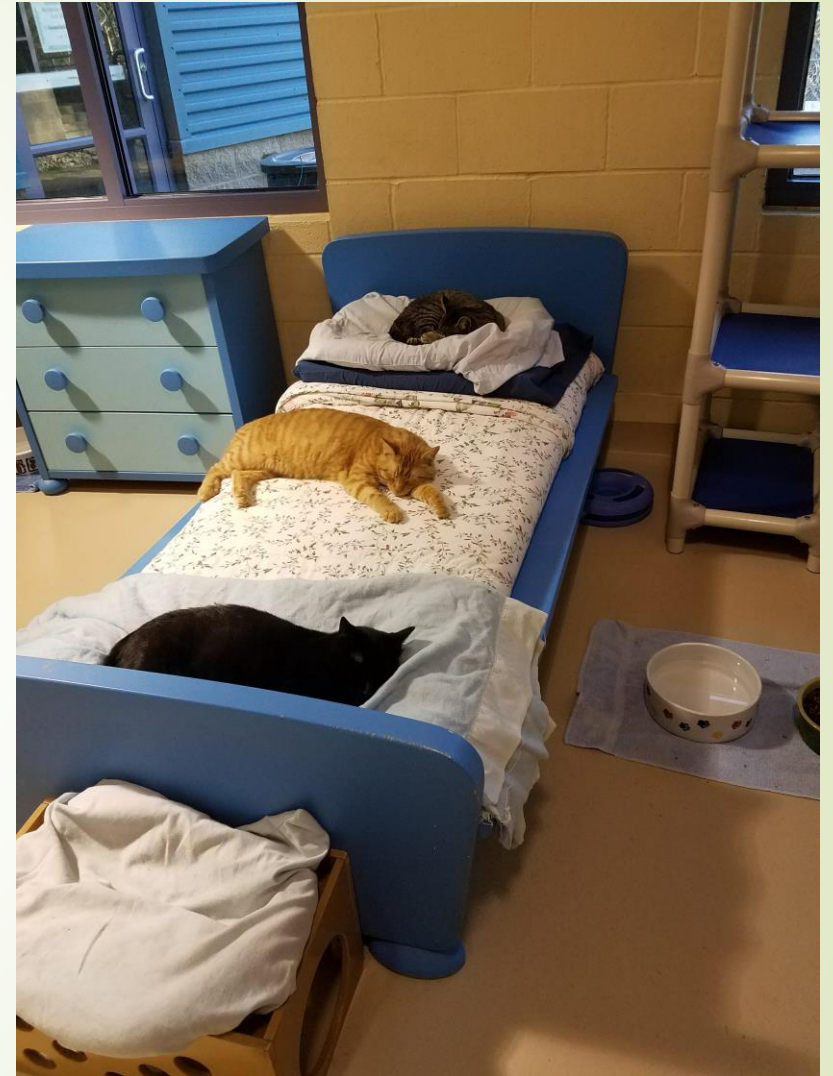
Giving the troubled kitties love

- ▶ These cats either do not like people or just refuse to leave their cage
 - ▶ Due to this a lot of people avoid them, but they still need affection
 - ▶ I refer to these cats as the unspoken yellows
 - ▶ They may hiss, growl, or attack
- ▶ Meet Lilac (grumpy and normal picture)
 - ▶ She has been around since September
 - ▶ She will hiss and swat at you if you pet her the wrong way or too much
 - ▶ I learned a few techniques so I can give her attention: let her come to my hand, when she rubs against it pet her for about five second, then pull away and repeat the process. This ensures that she still wants that affection.



Kitty Heaven

- Room filled with eight cats that will all love on you and play
 - Super friendly cats that like other cats
 - Super playful
 - Very lovey and affectionate



Thank you

The End