



SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH THE PROCESS OF BEHAVIOURAL EUTHANASIA

With

Sue Alexander CPDT-KSA, CBCC-KA, CDBC



WHO AM I



- Sue Alexander, CPDT-KSA, CBCC-KA, CDBC
 - Canadian
 - Outdoorsman
 - Dog Trainer
 - Equestrian Athlete
 - Founder and Owner of Losing Lulu



WHAT IS BEHAVIOURAL EUTHANASIA

- When an animal has a severe behaviour problem, the decision may be made to euthanize.
- We are going to look at why this may be the most humane and compassionate alternative some of the time





COMMON BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS



- Aggression
 - Dog to human, dog to dog, dog to other pets
- Severe separation anxiety
- Severe generalized anxiety
- Profound fear
- Entrenched Compulsions



ONE WELFARE

- Traditionally we would consider the welfare of the animal
- One Welfare includes the wellbeing of those around the animal in question
 - Human family
 - Other pets
 - The community
 - Others?





START FROM THE START

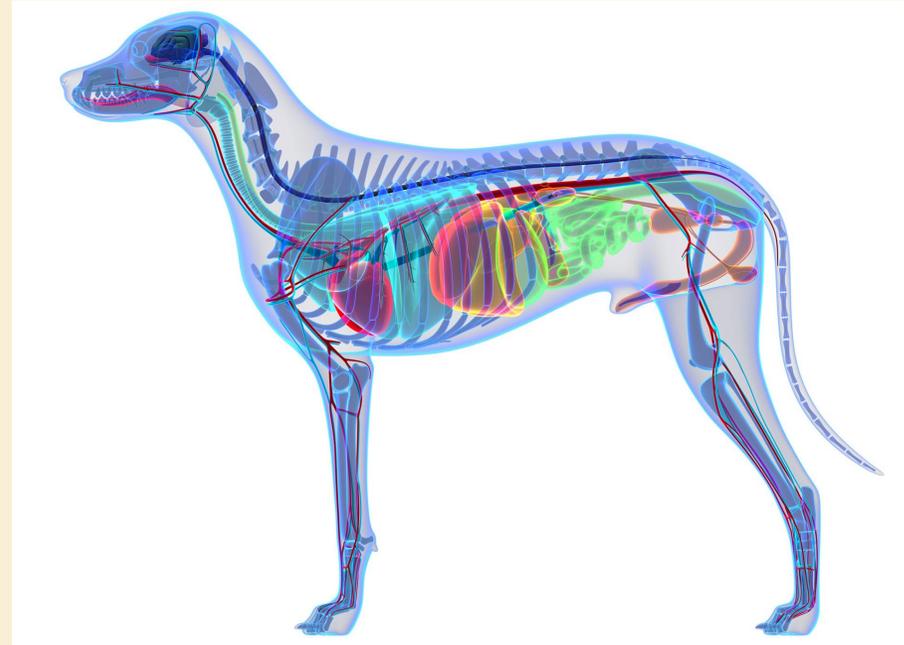


- The Human Connection
 - Someone had to notice that there was a problem
 - Most of the time, help is not sought until the problem impacts a person
 - Often people need help to see the problem
- The Left Side of the Dog



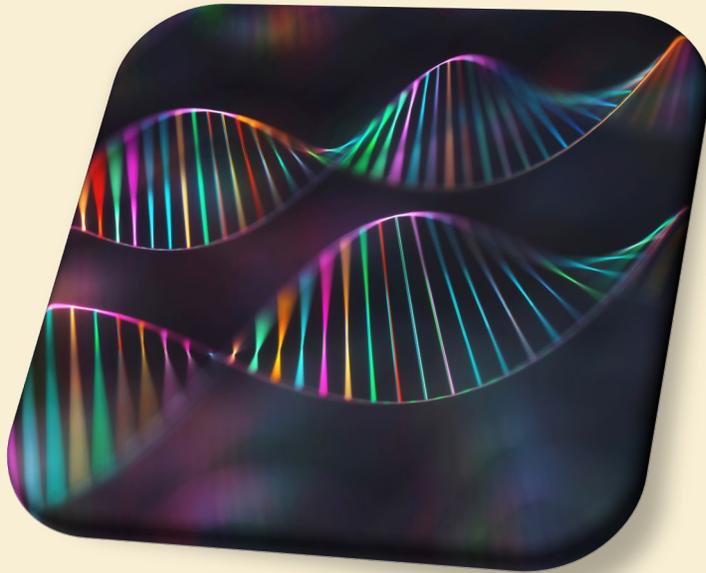
HELPING OTHERS SEE THE LEFT SIDE OF THE DOG

- The Left Side of the Dog refers to what most people don't see.
 - Signs of aggression
 - Signs of anxiety
 - Signs of problems with welfare
- Dog Body Language is a special skill





EVERYONE WANTS TO KNOW WHY?



- Three Factors
 - Genetics
 - Experience
 - The Current Environment



HOW DO BEHAVIOUR CONSULTANTS MAKE THE DECISION?

One of the most challenging aspects of the job!

The Four Factors

1. Welfare of the individual animal
2. Welfare of the family
3. Safety in the home
4. Safety in the community

Each aspect must be taken into consideration





WHAT ARE THE FIVE OPTIONS?

- Management (live with the issue)
- Refer for Veterinary Care
- Training
- Rehome
 - Sanctuary
 - Transport
 - Behavioural Euthanasia





OWNED AND UNOWNED DOGS



- Owned dogs have someone committed to the welfare of the dog
 - A decision maker
- Unowned dogs do not have an individual who is committed to the welfare of the dog
 - Hopefully decisions are made based on established criteria



OUTSOURCING EUTHANASIA



- When the shelter or rescue places the animal instead of euthanizing
 - Risky
 - Liability to your organization



BEHAVIOURAL EUTHANASIA IN THE SHELTER

- It is important to have a written SOP
 - What are your hard lines?
 - When can you stop putting resources into a behaviour case?
 - How is that communicated to staff and supporters?





DEATH IS NOT A WELFARE DECISION

- But life is!
- Can we provide a reasonable chance of good welfare for the animals in our care?





WHEN THE DECISION HAS BEEN MADE

- Usually a vet will be involved
 - This should confirm to those around the dog that the decision is the right one
- There will be people who will be suffering and who will need our care and compassion
- Safety is paramount during this time-this means safety for everyone including the dog





TO GO OR NOT TO GO?



- Every family will have their own traditions and their own needs
 - I offer to attend; some families accept, and some do not
- In the shelter
 - Some staff wish to know ahead of time
 - Some staff wish not to know
 - Some staff wish to be there
 - Some don't



AFTER THE DOG HAS PASSED

- After care of the body is important to most people
 - Cremation can usually be arranged through the vet
 - Burial can be a little more complex
- Some folks want to memorialize their pet
- Many people may need ongoing support
 - Counselling
 - Losing Lulu





CREATE CARING COMMUNITIES

- #keepitkind
- Losinglulu.com
- Losing Lulu
 - Online support group on Facebook
 - Founded in 2018





QUESTIONS?

