

## You & Me Fear-Free



*This is the path to fear-free veterinary and grooming visits*

### Class Overview:

- This is a six-week course. **Pets do not attend the first class.**
- In addition to the weekly class, each pet/pet guardian team will be scheduled for two fifteen-minute, one-on-one sessions with the trainers to review individual progress. These sessions are conducted immediately before or after class.
- Please read the Attendee Restrictions section at the end of this document for information on who can come to class.

### Specific Topics Covered in Class:

- **Fear Free experiences begin BEFORE your pet leaves home:**
  - Teaching your pet to love their carrier/crate/car restraint device
  - Making the car ride a safe and fun experience
- **Recognizing and Managing Signs of Fear and Anxiety in Your Pet**
- **Positively Conditioning Your Pet to Tools and Products that minimize the need for restraint during procedures:**
  - Conditioning to muzzles and head collars (Halti and Gentle Leader)
  - Towel wraps, body wraps and other clever mechanisms designed to control an animal's head or body AND relieve anxiety.
  - Using food, toys and touch to happily distract your pet during exams.
- **Dogs will learn skills that will allow them to willingly participate in an exam by moving their own bodies upon request. This increases pet compliance and reduces the need for restraint.**
  - Sit, lie down, take a nap (roll over on side)
  - Up and off (used to get on and off scales, and into the car, tub/shower)

- Left and Right- offering a specific paw for blood draw or nail trims
- **Overcoming Fear, Anxiety and Aggression Toward:**
  - Handling and Purposeful Touch
  - Nail Trims
  - Injections
  - Thermometers and Stethoscopes
  - Scales
  - Brushing & Bathing
  - Gentle Restraint

### **Pet Guardians Will Learn:**

- To overcome your own anxiety of veterinary/grooming visits.
- To talk openly to your groomer or veterinarian about your pet's fear or anxiety.
- To positively recondition your pet to make veterinary and grooming visits fun again.
- Provide medications to pets in a non-threatening way.
- How to make every step of a veterinary or grooming visit positive for your pet.

### **Pet Guardian Obligations:**

- In addition to coming to class, pet guardians must be willing to practice fear-free techniques with their pet for 15-20 minutes, five days a week.
- A minimum of one practice visit to your veterinarian's office is recommended. Pets do not have to be examined, they only have to go into the reception area, say hello to staff and eat some treats. AWESOME!

### **Attendee Restrictions:**

- The lessons taught in this class require concentration, special handling and extra space to work in. As such, class attendance is limited to the dog's primary, adult handler and one additional adult guest such as a spouse or partner. We apologize but children are not able to attend this class.
- Not all dogs are comfortable in a group class. If your dog hides or trembles or is reactive (barking, growling, lunging or attempts to bite) when confronted with strangers, food or other dogs, a classroom setting is not suitable for them and may make increase their anxiety. The Fear-Free, in-home program is best for those animals who feel safest and most comfortable at home.



*The Fear-Free Program for our feline friends is available as an in-home training program.*