



PRINTABLE WORKBOOK

Dr Karen Overall's 15-Day Protocol for Relaxation

Dog's name _____

Start date _____

How to use this workbook

- Complete one day at a time in a quiet, familiar place.
- Reward calm, comfortable participation after every successful task.
- Repeat or simplify a day whenever your dog needs more practice.
- Watch the whole dog: soft muscles, easy breathing and comfortable recovery matter.
- Stop on an easy success before your dog becomes tired, worried or frustrated.

This is a guide, not a race

A numbered day is a set of exercises, not a deadline. Move forward only while your dog remains comfortable, interested in rewards and able to recover easily.

Day 1

Short duration, small steps, gentle claps and counting

Keep the first session close and easy. Mix short settling periods with very small movements.

☐ Settle comfortably for 5 seconds, then 10 seconds.

☐ Take 1 step back and return; later try 2 and 3 steps.

☐ Take 1 or 2 steps to the right and return.

☐ Take 1 or 2 steps to the left and return.

☐ Clap softly once; later clap softly twice.

☐ Count aloud to 10, then to 20, while your dog settles.

☐ Finish with easy 3-, 5-, and 10-second settles.

Notes and observations

Day 2

Wider movement and quiet jogging

Increase movement gradually while returning often to brief, easy duration.

- ☐ Settle for 5 to 10 seconds between movement exercises.
- ☐ Take 3 steps right and left, then return.
- ☐ Take 3 steps sideways while clapping softly.
- ☐ Walk one-quarter of the way around your dog in each direction.
- ☐ Walk halfway around your dog in each direction.
- ☐ Jog quietly in place for 3, 5, and then 10 seconds.
- ☐ Jog one-quarter of the way around in each direction and return.

Notes and observations

Day 3

More distance, movement and sound

Work toward longer distances while keeping the dog comfortable with your movement.

- ☐ Settle for 10, 15, and 20 seconds.
- ☐ Walk 10 steps left and right, returning calmly each time.
- ☐ Walk halfway around while clapping softly.
- ☐ Jog 10 steps to the right and left and return.
- ☐ Jog in place for 10 seconds, then up to 20 seconds.
- ☐ Jog 5 steps backward or sideways and return.
- ☐ Add short 5- and 10-second settles while clapping.

Notes and observations

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Day 4

Circling, quicker movement and approaching an entrance

Introduce larger arcs around the dog and the first calm approach toward a doorway.

- ☐ Jog 5 steps backward and return.
- ☐ Jog halfway around your dog in each direction.
- ☐ Move three-quarters of the way around in each direction.
- ☐ Walk all the way around your dog and return.
- ☐ Move quickly backward 10 steps, then 15 steps.
- ☐ Walk about 20 steps toward an entrance and return.
- ☐ Repeat an easy settle between the more active tasks.

Notes and observations

Day 5

Doorway approach and touching the doorknob

Make entrances ordinary by approaching and returning before leaving the room.

- ☐ Walk quickly 15 steps right and left and return.
- ☐ Walk about 20 steps toward the entrance and return.
- ☐ Repeat the entrance approach while clapping softly.
- ☐ Walk around your dog while clapping softly.
- ☐ Touch the doorknob or nearby wall and return.
- ☐ Move briefly into the entranceway and return.
- ☐ Finish with 5-, 10-, and 15-second easy settles.

Notes and observations

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Day 6

Opening the door and brief out-of-sight moments

Introduce the idea that you can pass through an entrance and come back calmly.

- ☐ Walk around your dog, with and without soft clapping.
- ☐ Touch the doorknob or wall and return.
- ☐ Open the door or step into the entranceway for 5 seconds.
- ☐ Repeat for up to 10 seconds and return.
- ☐ Go through the doorway and immediately return.
- ☐ Disappear from view for 5 seconds and return.
- ☐ Use calm 10-, 20-, and 30-second settles between challenges.

Notes and observations

Day 7

Longer doorway and out-of-sight practice

Build on doorway work without making your absence feel sudden or difficult.

☐ Walk around the dog, then go through the doorway and return.

☐ Go through the entrance while clapping softly and return.

☐ Disappear from view for 5 seconds.

☐ Disappear for 10 seconds, then for 15 seconds.

☐ Jog in place for 10 seconds.

☐ Jog three-quarters of the way around in each direction.

☐ Return to short 5-, 10-, and 15-second settles.

Notes and observations

Day 8

Chair movement and absences up to 30 seconds

Add ordinary sitting and standing while continuing calm out-of-sight practice.

- ☐ Jog and clap softly for about 15 seconds.
- ☐ Back up 15 steps and return.
- ☐ Circle your dog and return.
- ☐ Disappear for 20, 25, and then 30 seconds.
- ☐ Sit in a chair about 5 feet from your dog for 5 seconds.
- ☐ Briefly leave, sit in the chair, and return.
- ☐ End with a quiet 5- or 10-second settle.

Notes and observations

Day 9

Everyday body movement and mild surprises

Pair familiar settling with harmless actions that may look unusual to a dog.

- ☐ Turn around while your dog settles for 10 seconds.
- ☐ Walk, jog, and gently clap while circling your dog.
- ☐ Repeat brief 10- to 25-second out-of-sight moments.
- ☐ Sit in a nearby chair, leave briefly, and return.
- ☐ Bend down and touch your toes.
- ☐ Stretch your arms, then add one gentle jump.
- ☐ Build to several toe touches or three gentle jumps only if comfortable.

Notes and observations

Day 10

Knocking sounds and repeated brief absences

Introduce quiet knocking only after ordinary doorway practice is easy.

- ☐ Clap softly, touch your toes, and sit in a chair during short settles.
- ☐ Walk quickly 15 steps right and left and return.
- ☐ Walk toward the entrance and return.
- ☐ Disappear for 5, 10, and 15 seconds.
- ☐ Leave for 5 seconds, knock softly on the wall, and return.
- ☐ Repeat with a slightly quicker but still gentle knock.
- ☐ Finish with an easy 5- or 10-second settle.

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Day 11

Doorbell sounds and calm returns

Add the doorbell gradually, keeping the sound and absence manageable.

- ☐ Practise soft knocking after a brief disappearance.
- ☐ Ring the doorbell and return immediately.
- ☐ Ring, wait 2 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Ring, wait 5 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Ring, wait up to 10 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Mix in walking, jogging, circling, and soft clapping.
- ☐ Use easy 10-, 20-, and 30-second settles between repetitions.

Notes and observations

Day 12

Humming, door sounds and saying hello

Combine familiar sounds and absences with a simple greeting routine.

- ☐ Hum softly during a 20-second settle.
- ☐ Disappear for 20 to 25 seconds and return.
- ☐ Sit in a nearby chair, then briefly leave and return.
- ☐ Knock softly after leaving the room.
- ☐ Ring the doorbell and return immediately, then after 2 seconds.
- ☐ Leave, say "hello," and return.
- ☐ Leave, say "hello," wait 3 seconds, and return.

Notes and observations

Day 13

Combining greetings, sounds and movement

Combine familiar elements while keeping the order varied and the dog relaxed.

- ☐ Hum, then hum while clapping softly during short settles.
- ☐ Repeat 20- to 25-second out-of-sight moments.
- ☐ Practise soft knocks and brief doorbell sounds.
- ☐ Leave, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Knock or ring, say "hello," wait 5 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Jog around your dog or jog in place while humming.
- ☐ Finish with a calm, familiar duration exercise.

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Day 14

A longer pretend visitor routine

Practise a more realistic arrival sequence without bringing in an actual visitor yet.

- ☐ Clap and hum softly during a brief settle.
- ☐ Run gently around your dog, then return to calm movement.
- ☐ Walk back and forth to the door.
- ☐ Leave, knock or ring, and return.
- ☐ Leave, ring, wait 2 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Leave, say "hello," wait 5 to 10 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Combine the knock or bell, greeting, and a 10-second wait.

Notes and observations

Day 15

Full greeting practice and calm conversation

Bring the learned elements together in a controlled imaginary-visitor routine.

- ☐ Clap and hum softly during a 15-second settle.
- ☐ Leave, knock or ring, say "hello," talk for 10 seconds, and return.
- ☐ Leave, greet and invite an imaginary visitor in; wait 5 seconds.
- ☐ Repeat the imaginary invitation with a 10-second wait.
- ☐ Leave and talk for 3, 5, and then 10 seconds.
- ☐ Walk back and forth to the door or gently run around your dog.
- ☐ Sit in a chair for 10, 15, and up to 30 seconds.

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