

Understanding Your Cat's Fear

**SIGNS • CAUSES
IMPACTS • SOLUTIONS**





Hey, I'm Lauren & This is Nia!

I'm a positive reinforcement trainer, certified Cat Behavior Counselor, and the proud owner of Furratic Behavior. I've enjoyed working closely with cats for over a decade. During this time, I have helped cats and their humans:

- **Build *trust*** and an ***unbreakable bond*** through effective communication
- ***Transform their cats' behavior*** with positive reinforcement
- Create the **purrfect environment to help their cats thrive!**

No cat is "just a cat." They're family!

My four *extremely* loved little felines bring me so much joy every day. But I also know ***how hopeless it can feel when you're dealing with frustrating, and even scary, behavioral issues.***

That's why I firmly believe in using ethical and science-based methods to foster ***lasting behavior changes in cats.*** And I'm excited to share them with you!



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Empowering fearful cats is a topic that's very dear to my heart, and I'm so excited to support you and your cat throughout this process. The purpose of this guide is to help you identify and learn how to address your cat's fears.

Here are a few useful tips to help you get the most out of this experience:

1. **Use the Companion journal:** I highly recommend using the companion journal, "**Journey to Fearless**" alongside this guide. This journal will help you track your progress, identify stress triggers, and set achievable goals. It's like having a personal diary for your cat's courageous journey! **Find it here:** <https://furraticfelines.samcart.com/products/cat-confidence-crash-course>



2. **Apply the knowledge in practical ways:** This guide isn't just for reading—it's for action!

3. **Be patient and consistent:** Overcoming fear takes time. And celebrating every small step forward is so incredibly important for success and in motivating you to keep going.



4. **Seek professional help when needed:** If your cat's fear seems overwhelming or if you're facing challenges, don't hesitate to reach out to a professional, like me. We can provide personalized guidance and support based on your cat's unique needs.



Introduction



Introduction



We treasure those precious moments spent with our feline companions - the gentle purrs, the playful antics, and the comforting presence that enriches our life.



Cats are renowned for their independence, elegance, and enigmatic allure, but it's important to recognize that they too experience a vast range of emotions, just like us. Among these emotions, **fear is one that has a major impact on a cat's behavior and overall well-being.**

In my career as a Cat Behavior Consultant, *fearful behavior is the most common issue I see in my clients' cats.* Oftentimes, cat parents aren't even aware that their cats are experiencing fear, and if they are they usually **don't realize the significant impact it has on their behavior.**

When a cat is living their life in fear, many other behavior problems crop up as a result. You can think of the behavior problems as the symptoms of an underlying issue. *Recognizing and understanding this behavior is essential in helping our cats live happy and fulfilling lives.*



Why is Fear so Common in Cats?

Our housecats are descendants of solitary and territorial hunters. This means that they have retained their instinctual responses to perceived threats. After all, in the wild **as equal parts predator and prey, it's kill or be killed.**



Though our domesticated felines may live in a safe and loving home, and it may seem irrational to their humans, **they can (and certainly do) still experience fear when they perceive something as a threat.**

Many are in this state on a consistent basis.

Fear Is Useful...?

It's important to understand that fear is not inherently negative; **it serves as an essential survival mechanism** for cats in the wild. Fear alerts them to potential dangers and triggers the fight-or-flight response, enabling them to protect themselves from harm.



But here's the thing... **when an outdoor cat is in a survival situation**, once they're able to get away from the threat, the cat switches out of fight-or-flight and recovers. **They don't stay in a state of chronic stress and fear.**

On the other hand, *when our housecats perceive something as a threat, **they can't really get away from it.*** Even worse, the "**threat**" is usually present for a long time, or even permanently.



In these cases, **fear and stress become chronic, and can have seriously adverse effects on a cat's physical health and emotional well-being.**

This can also hinder the development of a strong bond between them and their human, or **even damage an already established bond.**



The Power of Positive Reinforcement

At Furratic Behavior, we firmly believe in the power of positive reinforcement training and the **profound impact it can have on a fearful cat's life.**



Instead of resorting to force or punishment, we promote the use of Least Invasive Minimally Aversive (LIMA) methods. **These compassionate, yet powerful techniques focus on rewarding desired behaviors, and setting you and your cat up for success!**



Throughout this guide, you will discover how to **build trust, strengthen your bond with your cat, and empower them to become their *most confident self.***

But remember! *Every cat is unique*, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to overcoming fear. It's so important to take the time to **observe and understand your cat's individual needs and preferences.**



Our goal is to empower you to be the best cat parent you can be! **Patience, empathy, observation and positive reinforcement** will be your greatest allies in assisting your cat on their journey to behaving more secure and confident.





SECTION ONE

Recognizing Fearful Behavior



Recognizing Fearful Behaviors In Your Cat



We want our feline companions to live their best lives and be emotionally stable. However, fear and stress are a natural part of life for all living beings, cats included.



Let's Talk About Labels...

If you're anything like me, you have this great desire to understand exactly how your cat is feeling, even though we can never know for sure what's going on in those tiny heads of theirs.



It's important to connect with our cats in this way, and to always strive to make their lives better. However, **there's a super common mistake I see cat parents make...** Any idea what that may be?

Labeling your cat as fearful. Yup, you heard me correctly.

While it's so important to recognize that your cat has emotional needs and that caring for these needs is a pivotal aspect of being a great cat parent, *using these emotions to create labels for our cats is a slippery slope.*



You see, when we say things like "Oh, my cat's just fearful. That's just how they are," **it's detrimental to their welfare.**

But how can that be, you might ask? Because **when we take a description of what's happening, and assign it to who the cat is we stop looking for a solution.**

Fear is a response. Stress is a response. They're not descriptions of who they are, rather what they're behavior tells us they're experiencing.

The bottom line is **a cat that is fearful or stressed is in need of our help**. But we all know cats are experts at playing hide and seek with their feelings, so how on earth do we help them?

So How Do We Help Them?

The first thing we do is learn **how to recognize fearful behavior**. The better we get at tuning into their subtle hints, the clearer our window gets into their inner world.

Observing the behavior your cat is putting out into the world is the **key to understanding what's going on with them**, and helping them gain confidence and a sense of safety.

The quicker we're able to spot signs of fear, ***the quicker we can swoop in and prevent (or improve) behavior issues, as well as the physical and mental repercussions.***

Plus, there are few things more rewarding than seeing your feline companion exuding *trust, happiness and confidence!*



Learn to Read Their Body Language

Now, onto the detective part; cats convey their feelings through body language, and vocalizations. When it comes to body language, it's so important to ***look at all of the pieces together as a whole, and consider the context.***

For example, dilated pupils could indicate fear and stress, or they could be because the light is low, or the cat could be getting ready to pounce on something in a playful/hunter way. Here are behaviors to look out for that give us pretty heavy clues that something is not sitting right with our cats:



Tense Body Posture: When cats feel fearful, they may adopt a defensive posture by crouching low to the ground, tucking their tail and legs close to their body, and pulling their ears to the side or back. This is a tense body posture.



Where's their weight?: If something or someone is close to them, they may shift their weight away from whatever it is. They'll appear to be leaning either backwards or to the side. They may also be leaning forwards, preparing to run away or even attack.

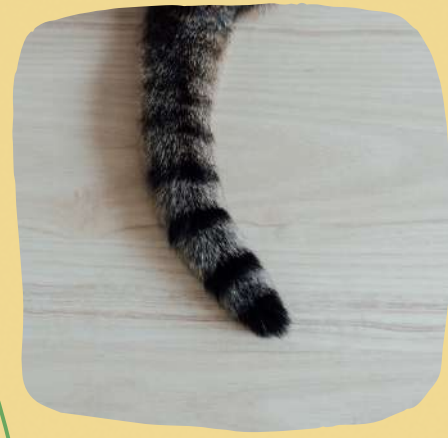


Fur: Their fur may stand on end, referred to as piloerection. This is an attempt to look bigger than they are, to scare off a threat.

Dilated Pupils: Enlarged pupils are a clear sign of arousal or fear in cats. If you notice your cat's eyes dilating, it's essential to assess the situation carefully and determine if it's stress or fear-related.



Tail: Their tail may be held low, tight against their body, tucked, or even bristled.



Whiskers: If a cat is tense/aroused, their whiskers will either be tight and pulled back, or they may even be completely spread out in more extreme cases.



Ears: A fearful or stressed cat's ears may turn to the side, flatten down, or even pin back.



Eyes: The shape of a cat's eye will change, based on their current state. It may be soft, wide and round, or hard.

Mouth: A tense or stressed cat's mouth may appear to be very taut



Paws/Legs: Look for toes that are spread out and flexed/tense.

Other Pieces to the Body Language Puzzle:
There's a lot to body language, and it takes practice to be able to read and understand a cat fully. To gain a more in-depth understanding of your cat's body language, check out my class,

[Feline Fluent: Cat Body Language 101](#)





Other Indicators of Stress & Fear

Excessive Hiding: While cats naturally seek out hiding spots, excessive or prolonged hiding may indicate that your cat perceives something as a threat and they feel unsafe.



Excessive Grooming: Over-grooming or obsessive grooming can be an indication of stress and fear in cats. Grooming soothes cats, and can be used as calming behavior when a cat is experiencing stress. Some cats even lick off their fur in certain areas (usually the belly or legs). When it's behavioral, this is referred to as psychogenic alopecia.

Aggression or Lashing Out: Fearful cats may respond defensively by displaying aggressive behavior, especially if they feel cornered or threatened.



Panting or Rapid Breathing: When a cat is feeling fearful or anxious, you may notice them panting or breathing rapidly, similar to how a dog pants when they're stressed.

Excessive Vocalization: Some cats become more vocal when they experience fear or stress. They may meow, cry, or vocalize in ways that are unusual for them. A fearful cat may also hiss, spit, or growl.

Trembling or Shivering: Fearful cats may exhibit physical signs of trembling or shivering, especially when confronted with a perceived threat or stressful situation.

Lack of Appetite: Fear and stress can lead to a loss of appetite in cats. If your cat suddenly stops eating or shows disinterest in their favorite treats, it could be a sign of underlying stress.

Evasive Behavior: Cats experiencing fear may avoid interactions with people or other pets in the household. They may become more reclusive and reluctant to engage in typical social activities.



Inappropriate Elimination: Stress and fear can often lead to litter box issues, such as urinating or defecating outside the litter box. This behavior can be both a sign of stress and an expression of discomfort.



Pacing or Restlessness: When feeling fearful, some cats may pace back and forth or appear restless, unable to settle down.

Excessive Startling: Many cats that experience a lot of fear become on-edge, and may startle easily at sudden noises or movements, showing heightened vigilance as they try to anticipate potential threats.

Recognizing these signs of fear in cats can help us respond appropriately to their needs. Providing a calm and reassuring environment and avoiding situations that trigger fear can go a long way in helping our feline companions feel secure and confident in their surroundings





SECTION TWO

How Fear Impacts Your Cat's Well-being



How Fear Impacts Your Cat's Well-being

Alrighty, now that we understand how to recognize fear in cats, let's talk about how fear and stress can impact our precious feline's overall well-being. Cats, just like us, are sensitive souls who are deeply affected by their emotional well-being. It's crucial to understand that fear and stress take a serious toll in all aspects of our cats' lives.



Mental Health



So what is the trajectory of a cat that's experiencing chronic stress and fear? First, it can have a profound impact on their mental well-being.

Imagine **constantly feeling tense, on edge, and stressed out.** (For most of us this isn't difficult!) Now imagine being **unable to do anything to change your situation or your surroundings...**

This sustained emotional state can lead to increased ***irritability, restlessness, and even depression*** in our beloved fur babies.

They may become **withdrawn, mistrustful of the world around them (including their people and other companion animals),** exhibit **changes in appetite,** or even **lose interest in their favorite activities.**

These days, we all know how important mental well-being is, and cats are no different.



Physical Health

But that's not all – chronic stress and fear can also wreak havoc on a cat's physical health.

The **immune system**, which plays a vital role in fighting off illnesses, can be **weakened** by the constant flood of stress hormones. This can make our little ones **more susceptible to various illnesses and infections**.



For instance, chronic stress has been linked to issues like **gastrointestinal disorders**, and even **skin conditions** in cats, and has a negative impact on health when it comes to *virtually all diseases and illnesses*.

Stress has also been linked to the development of **Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD)** and **cystitis in cats**, as stress can alter the pH balance of a cat's urine, making them more prone to urinary issues.



This can be particularly concerning for male cats, as stress-related urinary problems can result in **urinary blockages, which are life-threatening medical emergencies**.



Any of these ailments can cause discomfort, pain, and lead to additional stress, *turning into a vicious cycle!*

Behavioral Health

Now, let's talk about the behavioral impact. This may seem like an odd thing to include under well-being, but as we've already covered, behavior gives us *invaluable insight* into our cat's state and wellness.

Chronic stress and fear can significantly alter a cat's behavior. You may notice changes such as:

- Increased **aggression**
- **Destructive** tendencies (such as destructive scratching or tearing stuff up)
- **Excessive grooming** leading to skin issues or bald patches
- Inappropriate **elimination outside the litter box**
- **Urine marking** (spraying).



These behaviors are often manifestations of a cat's underlying stress and fear levels, and can put a strain on both your relationship and their overall quality of life.

Relationships

PEOPLE: When our felines experience fear or stress, it can create a disconnect between them and the people they share their home with.

They may **withdraw, become distant**, lash out, or display behaviors that are **difficult for us to interpret**.

This can make it challenging for us to understand their needs, leading to a *breakdown in communication and further perpetuation of fear*.



OTHER CATS & ANIMALS: Additionally, fear can impact the harmonious coexistence between cats and other animals in the home. Cats, being incredibly territorial creatures, may feel particularly threatened or defensive when they're experiencing fear or stress.



This can result in **inter-animal aggression, inconsistent litter box usage, running away** and **hiding** (which often stimulates the predatory response in other cats) and other behavioral issues that strain the relationships between companion animals.



Almost every inter-cat aggression case I've worked involves at least one cat that's struggling with fear and low confidence!



TERRITORY: Fear and stress can even disrupt a cat's relationship with the territory, itself. Whether it's their familiar indoor spaces or their outdoor environment, **chronic stress can lead to fearful reactions and avoidance of once-beloved areas.**

This **adds to their anxiety** and prevents them from fully enjoying and feeling secure in their surroundings. Again, another vicious cycle!

If you're feeling a little worried at this point, I totally get it.... Considering all the possible repercussions of something that we tend to think about very little can be a scary thing. But don't worry!



By addressing and managing their stress and fear, we can help them regain their inner balance and well-being.

In the next section we'll talk about how you can identify the cause(s) of their fearful behavior. Doing so gives us the power to make such incredible positive changes in our cats lives.



SECTION THREE

Identifying Common Causes of fear



Identifying Common Causes of Fear

Understanding the diverse causes of fear in cats is vital to providing them with the care and support they need to lead happy and stress-free lives. Let's explore some common factors that can trigger fear in our feline companions.

STEP 1: Considering Their Past

In order to gain a better understanding of our cat's fear, we're going to take a look at both the past and the present. **Don't worry if you don't know much (or even anything) about your cat's past.** *While looking at their past can certainly help us understand why they're responding the way they are, it's not essential, you can still help them.*

Socialization



Early socialization during the first 2-7 weeks in a kitten's life is *crucial* in shaping their ability to cope with various things and adapt to new situations. **Inadequate or limited socialization can leave cats more susceptible to experiencing fear and stress in a variety of situations later in life.**

Learning History



A cat's past experiences play a significant role in shaping their responses to certain situations, even past kittenhood. **If a cat has experienced trauma or negative encounters** in the past, these memories *can influence their fear reactions in similar circumstances.*



STEP 2: Observing the Present

The antecedent environment plays a very important role in shaping a cat's emotional responses, and consequently their behaviors.

The term "**antecedent environment**" can sound a little intimidating, but it just **refers to whatever is happening around the cat at a given time**. The antecedent is just what happens *before* a behavior.



In plain terms, *something happens... and the cat responds!*

This could include:

- **Physical surroundings**
- **Social interactions**
- **Exposure to different things**



Changes in ***routine***, the ***presence of people or animals, objects, loud noises, movements***, or even ***subtle shifts in human emotions*** can all act as antecedents that trigger fear in cats.



Understanding and identifying these factors is *essential* in getting to the root cause of a cat's fears. It's also crucial when it comes to **choosing the right strategies, so you can create an environment that fosters confidence and security.**

So, let's go over some of the common antecedents that influence a cat's fear and stress response...

A Lack of Choice & Control



Cats, like all animals, thrive when they have a sense of control over their environment and what's happening to them.



Lack of choice and control can **induce fear and stress in cats, as they may feel vulnerable and unable to escape possible threats.**



Control is what's referred to in the behavior world as **a primary reinforcer.**

This just means that **cats (like us) are much more likely to choose a behavior that gives them control in the current situation, even if it may not be a healthy behavior.**

Actually, trainers and behaviors experts have found that **animals are MUCH more likely to do the things they typically don't want to do** (such as nail trims and blood draws) **if we provide them with an actual choice and some control in the matter, rather than using force.** Even with dangerous wild animals!

Pretty mind-blowing, right?! I think so.

For example, have you ever noticed that your cat likes to cuddle or be pet or interact with people on *their terms*? But if you push them to interact when they're not in the mood they'll *run away, cry, bite, hiss, or even scratch?*

This is the perfect example of cats choosing behaviors that provide them with a choice when it comes to what happens to them.



It's something most of us haven't considered, but it's **pivotal when it comes to empowering our cats to be their most confident selves.**

You & Other People

Your energy, body language, tone, stress, fear, tension, the way you approach them...

Everything you're bringing to the table, your cat is picking up on. It's easy to think that cats are just cats, and don't understand, but think back to the section on body language.



Cats are actually *much* more adept at picking up subtle cues than we are. Be conscious of your own state!



The Territory



I could write an entire book about territory, alone, and I'll talk a bit more about it in the next section of this guide. **You can also learn everything you need to know about territory in my course, [Foundations for Fearless Felines](#).**

So, here are the basics; **In the wild, a cat's *survival* depends on claiming and defending their territory.**

It's not just a mere place to live, but a *vital lifeline for our felines that provides them with the resources necessary to survive.*

Within their territory, cats find **safety, security**, and a comforting sense of **belonging and confidence**. *The importance of territory cannot be overstated!*

The familiarity, along with **appropriate set up, of their territory grants them the courage to embrace their true nature without feeling threatened or uncertain.**



Cats are both prey and predator, so *uncertainty means the possibility of being dinner for someone else.*
That's definitely not how we want our cats to feel in their own home!

Specific Stimuli & Environmental Factors



Now, I want to differentiate between territory and environment.

For the purposes of this guide, **we'll define territory as the physical place that a cat lives and has access to.**



Environment, on the other hand, will refer to **what's going on in the cat's territory at a given time.**

Fear and stress has everything to do with what's happening in the environment.

Something happens, something is there, someone does something, something does something (even if it's just being there) **and the cat responds.**

When stress and fear become chronic, cats may just stay in a reactive state. This is when they appear stressed or fearful most of the time, or even all of the time.

If this sounds like you're cat, don't delay. This cat is the most susceptible to developing physical illnesses and behavioral problems.



Start implementing a plan to reduce and transform their fear as soon as possible.

Understanding where your cat is at and what's influencing their behavior is essential when it comes to transforming their fear into confidence.

We need to be able to meet our cats where they're at in order to raise them up!





SECTION FOUR

Reducing & Transforming Fear



Reducing & Transforming fear



Now, for the section you're really here for! Let's talk about how to start reducing, and even transforming your cat's fear into a sense of safety and confidence. **Keep in mind that in order to change your cat's fearful behaviors and stress levels, you need to be able to: #1 Properly recognize it #2 Identify the factors that cause your cat to respond with fear and stress behaviors.** If you're already there, and you're like "Okay Lauren, I'm ready already, God!" then let's do this!

What You Should NOT Do

What you don't do can often be equally as important as what you do. Let's first look at what not to do.

NEVER REPRIMAND OR SCOLD: If I had a quarter for every time a cat parent yells at their cat to stop doing something... I won't go off on a tangent here, but especially if your cat is prone to fear, don't use reprimands, and do not scold them.



It'll only heightened their fear levels.



oftentimes the argument I hear is "They know to stop doing it when I yell." And I will just give you some food for though here, they know to stop when you're around, and they know the reprimand comes from you, not whatever they're doing.

They associate it with **you**. Positive reinforcement teaches them what **to do, instead**, and this is such a *game-changing concept*. But either way, you're cat displays fear-based behaviors? Just don't do it.

FLOODING: Flooding refers to an exposure therapy technique. It involves **forcing your cat to experience whatever causes them stress or fear, with no escape, in the hopes that they'll stop responding fearfully. DO NOT EVER DO THIS.** And if you're working with a behaviorist who suggests this technique, question their knowledge and ethics.



NEVER, EVER PUNISH: Okay, so the same concept applies here. *Punishment increases fear.*



I so often hear other cat experts say "cats don't understand punishment..."



I'm sorry, but this is nonsense, every living being understands punishment, it's one way we learn (I'm calling on the behavior-analysis definition of the word punishment here).



But is it necessary? *The answer is a resounding no!*

Do you want your cat's **fear level to increase?** Do you want to **break your bond of trust with your cat?** I know you don't, so ***no punishments***, my friend.

There are better and more effective ways, and you're in luck, because I know what they are and I want to share them with you.



DO NOT USE AVERSIVES: What are aversives, you might be wondering? A spray bottle is an aversive, a shock collar is an aversive (not that you'd be using a shock collar on a cat, I hope).



Aversives are things that we use to get our cats to do or stop doing something.

Aversives are just that, aversive, meaning that **the cat doesn't like it**. Just like punishment and scolding, *aversives create stress and fear responses*. Leave the spray bottles for cleaning, do not use them to communicate with your cat.

What TO do



Alrighty, now you know what not to do. Let's look at what *to* do. Many of the things listed here go hand-in-hand and aren't necessarily exclusive from one another.

MANAGE FEAR THROUGH MANAGING THE ANTECEDENT ENVIRONMENT: The first thing you can do is reduce the likelihood that your cat will experience fear or stress.

Identify the stressors and eliminate or reduce what you can.

Careful not to make yourself crazy, though! While this is a great and important step, we all know the reality is you're not going to be able to eliminate every single thing that may cause your cat some level of uncertainty.



ENRICH THEIR LIFE: *Enrichment is so important, yet so overlooked.* Most indoor cats are bored out of their minds, and even become depressed.



Give your cat things to do that encourage natural behaviors.

Simulated hunting experiences with interactive toys, **watching prey out the windows**, **chewing and tearing stuff apart** (my cat Doja is particularly fond of this activity) **running, climbing, jumping, scratching, marking, digging in the litter, foraging and working for food, eating grass, playing in leaves or paper...**

There are *countless* ways to enrich your cat's life.

If they're not interested, ***why are they not interested?***

Is it a **health issue?** Are they **overweight?** Do they show signs of **depression?**
It's time cat parents take responsibility and accept that, like dogs, cats have their own requirements as a species to be happy, healthy and fear-free.



BUILD THEIR CONFIDENCE: Confidence plays a key roll when it comes to fear. If a cat is confident, they're not afraid (Obviously, Lauren!)

Confidence comes from nurturing their natural instincts and behaviors.



- Cats gain confidence through:
- **Play and simulated hunting**
 - **Scratching and marking**
 - **Smelling their scent on socially significant items, people, and pets**
 - **The litter box**
 - **Their environment**
 - **Having an established routine**
 - **Positive reinforcement training** and using **specific games** is an amazing way to build a cat's confidence as well!

IMPROVE & OPTIMIZE THEIR TERRITORY: In the section "Identifying Common Causes of Fear" we established that territory plays a massive role in a cat's sense of safety.

Optimizing their territory can really go a long way to help decrease their fear level.



- A cat's territory should include:
- **Varied vertical spaces** where they can explore
 - Appropriate **hiding spots** (under the bed or sofa is not an appropriate hiding spot)
 - A **variety of scratchers**
 - **Multiple litter boxes** that are uncovered and big enough for them to turn around in
 - **Perches, resting place, and beds**
 - **Water away from their food bowl**



There are so many way to optimize their territory, even without spending much!



CHANGE THEIR EMOTIONAL STATE USING DESENSITIZATION AND COUNTER-CONDITIONING:

Let's talk about one of the most effective strategies for helping our fearful felines!

Desensitization and counter-conditioning are the keys to the kingdom when it comes to changing your cat's emotional state, *but it's important to use these techniques together, and in the correct way, or they won't be effective.*

This approach involves **very gradually exposing your cat to the stimulus that has caused them to respond fearfully in the past, while providing high value positive reinforcement like their absolute *favorite treats or toy to change their association from negative to positive.***



However, it's **crucial to work at a pace that's *comfortable* for your cat and to work BELOW THEIR FEAR LEVEL.** They should **NOT be showing *any* fear during this training!**

It's also ***imperative that our cats have escape routes in these situations, and are empowered to choose to stay or leave.*** We also **never lure them towards the object/person/cat. (whatever it is they're working with.)**



BUILD TRUST IN RELATIONSHIPS: Building trust in relationships with cats is a journey that requires patience and understanding.

When it comes to cats and humans, trust is nurtured through:

- **Gentle interactions**
- **Respecting their personal space**
- **Learning to read their body language**
- **Finding their reinforcers and using them**
- **Offering positive experiences like playtime and tasty treats**
- **Training**
- **Playing games**

Every action you take should reek of **love and respect!**
Not just the overwhelming desire to pet them.



As for cats and other animals, **slow introductions, supervised interactions, and positive associations are key.**



Gradually *exposing them to each other's scents* and *creating positive experiences* can help foster *trust* and eventually pave the way for beautiful friendships.

PROVIDE CHOICE & CONTROL: I introduced this concept in the section "Identifying Common Causes of Fear."



Providing cats with choices in their life is so empowering! One main way to do this is to **offer them options in daily life and in their territory.**

Litter box options, enrichment, play and feeding options. Don't force them to interact or receive cuddles. And my favorite way is through positive reinforcement training, games, and cooperative care!

OBSERVE & ADJUST YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR: *Last but not least, look at yourself! Create awareness around what you're bringing to the table.*



If your cat responds to you in a way you don't like or that catches you off guard, **don't just blame it on them. Ask yourself "What did I do to get that kind of reaction, and what can I do better next time?"**



Even to this day, I'm always asking myself this question, because there is always room for improvement. **Perfection is just a myth, it's all based on perception, so don't get caught in the trap.**



CONGRATS ON TAKING ACTION AND
LEARNING HOW TO HELP YOUR CAT 🥰

THE WORLD NEEDS MORE CAT
PARENTS LIKE YOU!

Bonus Kitty Loot!

Ever wonder what toys your cat will *actually like*? Or what *scratching post* they're least likely to ignore? **Check out my favorite cat toys, and other hand-picked products:**

CHECK OUT MY
FAVORITE CAT STUFF!



Improving your cat's life
doesn't stop with this guide!



Cat Confidence Crash Course

ferreticbehavior.com

Unleash your **cat's true potential**, *conquer fears*, and create an **unbreakable bond** with "*Cat Confidence Crash Course*" - my mini-course that gives you the tools to help your cat step out from under the bed, and into their confidence!

I WANT TO
EMPOWER MY CAT



Questions?



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