



Tellington TTouch® Southern Africa

Issue 3, April 2016

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Website of the month
Book of the month

TTouch South Africa

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Eugenie's Letter

Hello TTouch Friends,

What an absolutely stunning training we have just had for Companion Animals with Robyn Hood! I wish it were easy to explain what is happening in the TTouch world with new swivel leads and new TTouch harnesses, but suffice it to say that Robyn is seriously transforming dog training for the average pet owner that just wants their dog to be able to walk nicely on lead. In this first picture, you'll see the new harness and leash with a swivel handle making it easy to lead this exuberant Great Dane puppy.



**"Some people talk to animals. Not many listen though.
That's the problem."**

A.A. Milne, Winnie-the-Pooh

Actually I believe that it is in the way this work has developed that is making it easier and easier for people to be successful with dogs. So a very special thanks to Robyn Hood and her never ending quest to make life easier for both human and animals!



Robyn & Linda
work with one of
the Huskies, Cara.



Anina & Shilo take
Scooby for a walk
with assistant
Tersia in the
background.



Wilmi and Jean
working in butterfly
configuration with
Joshua.

I have just returned from the Horse training and on only the second day people were amazed at how their horses were changing behaviours. The TTouch work really never ceases to amaze me! You would think by now I'd be used to it, but it is fresh and wonderful each time we hear a great story.

And super Congratulations to Lindy Dekker who has been made a Practitioner III for Companion Animals. Lindy is an Instructor for horses and in fact runs the horse side of the Training Program. She is truly our most experienced TTouch person in South Africa.



Robyn Hood giving
Prac III certificate
to Lindy Dekker

If you haven't yet joined our FACEBOOK page, do yourself a favour and join TTouch Southern Africa to keep up with what people are doing and learning in our part of the world.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/www.ttouch.co.za/>

Watch this space & flyers for info on workshops happening in both Durban and Gordon's Bay in June: Durban for cats and for dogs; in the Cape for dogs and horses.

Keeping TTouching your animals!

Warmest regards,
Eugénie

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A TTACT Session with Robyn Hood

by Nancy Horenburg - Prac 1

The day dawned fresh and clear on the 1st of April. The blue sky welcoming the 20 or so participants who were coming to experience a Tellington TTouch 5 day session. Some were new to the experience, some were on their 2nd, 3rd or 4th session already. But all were ready to experience the knowledge of Robyn Hood, Linda Tellington-Jones's sister. As most of you are already aware of, Linda was the one who created/discovered/intuited the Tellington TTouch animal method. It is hard to imagine a world without Ttouch, with its respect towards working with animals and allowing them the space to grow, to release tension and stress, to become aware of how they can make better choices to live a healthier and happier life and to awaken to their potential. All this of course does not only work with animals, the people also experience so much tension release and new understanding; into their animals behaviour, and into their own behaviour and habits as well.

This TTACT session (Tellington TTouch Animal Companion Training) did indeed bring awareness to a lot of people about many things.

The snippets and pictures are just a taste of

what a TTACT session is like. I will not disclose too much, as that would take the fun out of experiencing a workshop yourself! :-)

Observation

It is about observing what they can do, getting the information to use, and doing something about that.

Learning to observe an animal is one of the crucial elements of TTouch. You use all your senses, touch being one of them. Use your hands, on a cooperative animal, to sense any tension, heat, cold, coat textures, etc. Put the information in your mind, without labelling anything. Just observe objectively. You are gathering information, not making an opinion.



Anina 'observing' with her hands on Mojo.

When you are working with an animal, give lots of moments between the TTouches, or the groundwork, or whatever other tools you are using.

Space between things is actually as or more important than the things being learnt. You need space to process; you cannot process whilst getting more information.



Space can mean talking to the instructor while your animal is left to process.



Let me think about that...

The animal cannot move his feet to come with me when he is in opposition.
It is the give which allows the dog to come.



Wilmi learning about the gentleness that actually allows her to move in balance in the labyrinth. What she has experienced will be used when she leads her own dog.

Client Day

The students with more experience got to work with clients as part of their training. As most people say, it is actually harder to work with the people than with the dogs. It is an experience of learning to meet the people where they are at, just like with the animals we work with.





Hmmm...

*What could these 4 Assistants be up to...?
Wilmi (on the right) is trying to find out.*

Don't be attached to an outcome that you think should happen. You never can predict how, or when, something will change or get better.



Learning how to lead with two points of contact on a harness.

Is what I am doing the most useful thing or is it just what I am doing?

Violence begins where knowledge ends.
Abraham Lincoln



Learning about harnesses and how to fit them.

What is the animal learning from this experience/information/tool/exercise...?

There are two ways of training:

- Rewarding the behaviour you do want.
- Punishing the behaviour you do not want.



Beeline over the Open Triangle Labyrinth.



Dang, these assistants are up to no good...



The swivel hook that changed everything. You should have seen the previous attempts of trying to walk a spinning dog whilst untangling the rope and not entangling ourselves. Urrgg...



Luna and the Butterfly way of leading. Those are different surfaces you see on the left.



Actually... this is what we REALLY do at TTACT!! :-)

Help the animal be the best that they can be without 'stopping' them from doing what they are doing.

5 questions to ask yourself when you are working with an animal:

- Is the animal in the best physical balance it can be?
- Is it as comfortable as it can be in its body?
 - Does the animal have self control?
 - Am I communicating clearly with it?
 - Am I building a relationship of trust?



The more we practice any behaviour, the better we get at it.

It is not about being right, it is about what we can do to help the animal.

Testimonials from the participants of TTACT session

1st to 5th April 2016 with Robyn Hood

I started my Ttouch journey with a 3 day training session in October 2014 with Edie Jane Eaton. I have completed 3 full training sessions since and am completely hooked to this amazing work. I will hopefully soon qualify as a practitioner to share this work and help as many people and animals as possible.

What amazes me most is the how the slowest, most gentle touch can make the biggest difference in a unbalanced animal. Being a rushed person brought up in the Military, I have learned to slow myself down, to breathe and concentrate on my movement and not on the animal.

I am looking forward to the next training session, breathing in as much as I can.

Anita Landman

This was the first TTouch workshop I have ever attended (I did the 3 day).

In 2006 I completed a year-long Reiki Master course which totally changed my life. I don't think a day has gone by since then that I have not used something I learned about myself and my place in this world during that year. I feel exactly the same about the TTouch workshop I just attended.

My understanding of the animals and people in my space has increased substantially due to what I learnt during those 3 days. I can already see a difference in my own animals and in myself through using TTouch. That this knowledge was shared in such a giving way by all the tutors and facilitators concerned, makes it even more special. It is wonderful to have encountered such knowledgeable people who are so willing to share their experiences and teachings with open hearts and no egos. I will definitely be attending more workshops.

Joanne Dedekind

I am new to TTouch. The weekend opened up a new world with lots of excitement and emotions. Loved every moment of it. Everyone from the instructors, the trainers, other members on training made me and my Bassets feel so welcome. Thank you everyone for this lovely experience. You opened up a new chapter in my journey to be the best "mother" I can be to my doggies (and cat) :-). I am forever grateful and looking forward to broaden my knowledge with the TTouch community.

Carmona Vorster

I have now attended 4 and a half TTACT training sessions and continue to be amazed by this wonderful work. I am so grateful to have found a gentle way of working with companion animals that strengthens the bond between us instead of insisting that we must dominate them. Robyn is such a fantastic teacher and has so much to share. Her lessons on loose leash walking with the new swivel handle were really great and will make such a difference to me and all those walking dogs at Dogtown SA (Barking Mad), and of course my own dogs. A HUGE thank you to Robyn and Eugenie for bringing TTouch to South Africa.

Hedda Rheeder

I'm a 'newbie' and I'm so excited about what I learnt on the TTouch course. As a vet nurse I feel I'm now able to change so many of the hospital patients' experience of visiting the stressful vet environment for the better. It really is awesome to know that a gentle touch and just a few minutes can benefit an animal in a BIG way - both mentally as well as physically! I've already seen a difference in the few days I've been back at work. I can't wait to extend this knowledge on the next course!

Shayna Basson

A conversation with Robyn Hood

by Nancy Horenburg - Prac 1

I took the opportunity to ask Robyn some questions about her TTouch life, from how it all started with her to how it influences her everyday life.

Nancy: Could you explain in your own words how TTouch came into your life.

Robyn: I was born.

(Lots of laughter..)

Well, it's true. Since Linda is my sister I was born into it, right. And I had the opportunity as a child. Linda is the oldest of 6 children, and I am the second youngest, so she left home when I was 3 and she got married when she was 17. So when I was about 9, I started to go to one of her ranches in California, she had a school, and I would go there every summer, and so that was kind of the relationship that I had with Linda. We obviously kept in touch, and then in 1981, she was at Nacimiento and doing this kind of work. Oh, I know, I started going to Equitana with her first and saw some of the things that she was doing. And then I went down there (to Nacimiento), I was pregnant at the time, and ended up taking over the newsletters. So I ended up being involved, I got Linda to come up and do some clinics and then I just basically went from there. We started with the horses first, and then when we started in the early 90's to work with dogs, then I was at those first trainings and we just integrated that. But the reality is, I was born.

Nancy: In your own words, explaining to someone who has not yet experienced it, what is TTouch.

Robyn: So TTouch is, it's a gentle respectful way of working with animals to help them make better choices. This is the simplest way that I actually explain it to people, and then from there it depends on where their interest is or what questions come up for them. So, or you can say that it is a gentle respectful method of bodywork and gentle groundwork. But to me it is about helping, just help dogs make better choices. It can be a matter of reducing stress so that they can do that. I think that is the simplest way for people to describe it.

Nancy: When I explain to some people what TTouch is, some of them say, "Well, do you train the dog....?"

Robyn: Well, what I say to people is, if you help the dogs reduce any concerns they have, if it helps them reduce stress, it helps them make better choices, so it can help you in training, it can help in your relationship, it can actually help in their whole wellbeing if you can reduce any concerns they have. It is that whole thing "if you feel better, you act better." That's as simple as that.

Nancy: In TTouch, what are you most passionate about? What is it that catches you the most?

Robyn: I would say that for me it is about helping people see their animals in a different way. And giving them another way to relate to them and also to treat them. We all do the best we can with the knowledge that we have. But a lot of people aren't happy with what they have been told to do. My aim is to really help animals, but you have to help people find a way to help their animals.

Nancy: If you had to pick only three tools or 3 aspects of TTouch, what do you think they would be?

Robyn: So this is what I would say, I would use groundwork, TTouches, and use the tools! You can't say that there is any one tool. The problem with saying that these are the things I'll be using is that you actually have to look at the animal. So, it is initially finding out what the animal says is ok.

Nancy: And for some animals it is only the TTouches in that moment.

Robyn: Ah, maybe, but I found actually that with horses, and I would say with dogs as well, that the groundwork is so important. Because if animals don't feel safe, you have to allow them to move. If they stay still, there are a lot of animals that are touch defensive, and for them the only way they have been touched is in a way that was a little bit rough and abrupt, because I'll often say to people the way I see them handle their dog, and we see it a lot with big dogs, people do it without even thinking, is this hard slapping. So I always say to people with horses, 'we hit them when we are happy and we hit them when we are mad'. It is kind of the same with their dogs. "Oh, you are such a good dog, (hard slaps on her thigh)," they

have to learn that that is actually a positive. That is what I think. I see it with foals all the time, if you approach a foal that way, they'll run away. Cause you hit them.

Nancy: Can you give a TTouch success story? Because it is nice for people to have the whole story to see how Ttouch can affect an animal.

Robyn: One of them was the dog I talked about the other day.

(Here is the story: A highlight of the Cape Town Training was one of the dogs we worked with from the nearby shelter. Wendy, a participant who works at the shelter brought Optel, to the venue for an hour or so. She chose Optel, a dog who was on the PTS list for that day, she had come into the shelter with knife wounds below one eye, the wounds were treated but she was very shut down and unresponsive to the staff in spite of their efforts. Like many dogs who are shy, the first day she had to be carried to the car and then into the venue. On the first afternoon a couple of participants did short periods of TTouch and then enticed her to move a bit, following some treats on the ground. A body wrap was put on for a couple of minutes and then removed. For the most part Optel just sat still and did not engage much with the participants but displayed a few glimmers of interest. She was returned to the shelter that afternoon.



Optel/ Brittany - first time that we worked with her.
She was very shut down & withdrawn.

The next morning we were all surprised when

Wendy came into the venue with Optel walking happily on a leash. When Wendy went to shelter that morning Optel was sitting at the door of her run wagging her tail, very excited to see Wendy.



Day 2: She greeted Wendy with a wagging tail & came along on the leash quite happily.



Brittany in her adoptive home.

The best news is that one of the clinic participants adopted her, renamed her Britney, and she is now happily living in her new home.)

That was one of the stories that was so unexpected and so, you know, it was fantastic. And you see I did not really work on that dog.

The stories that for me are the most useful are the ones where we have taught something to someone, and they have gone out and made the change in the dog. Because it does not matter if I can do, it does not matter if you can do it, it does not matter, it is only if we can share it with other people and have them actually find the success. I love the small successes, like a cat or dog at the vet that is not

eating and they are not doing well and someone goes in and they do a little bit of earwork, a little bit of mouth work and then they start to be able to eat and drink again. So those small stories for me are really useful.

Or, a dog a couple of weeks ago at a workshop. It was a little Corgi, who was very reactive to any movement of the other dogs, and so we did some TTouch with her and she was a sweet little dog, She was on a collar, we got her off the collar, onto the harness with the sliding leash. That woman, I just showed her a little bit because we had a small area in which to work, and she sent me back Facebook message. Normally, like dogs coming toward her, people coming towards her, dogs across the street, she would just go barking like crazy. She went on a walk, she had like three situations, a dog walking towards her where she normally would have been quite reactive, she just looked and didn't react. The dog across the street having a big bark, she did nothing. That is what we want to do, we want to help people have better relationships with their animals. That is the most important thing.

Nancy: Now if you take TTouch out of the context of animals, has it influenced you in your life in any other way that is not related with animals?

Robyn: Yes, I would say that it's, I am going to be honest, it is easiest to be how I want to be with animals. In terms of other things, if I get stuck in a situation, of remembering to just think about how I would deal with it. Say that it is a person or situation, think as if they were an animal that I was working with, say a cat or

a dog, what would I do differently. How would I approach it in terms of helping them cope or helping them. If it is a situation where you can't get what you want, of being able to find a way of framing it so that it is more like from a Ttouch perspective as far as meeting them where they are at, changing the context of what it is that you are doing. So, of course, if you come across a child that's hurt, or whatever, is just applying the touches to the situation or a little bit of earwork to a baby that is crying, and things like that.

Nancy: If there is someone who is not really sure about doing TTouch, what would you say to them.

(She smiles, ... nothing!)

Robyn: You know, even if people did nothing else, and I think there is one of the sayings that Linda has which is 'Change your mind, Change your animal'. I think that if we can change our labelled perceptions of animals or people, that that is the only way that we can actually see them in a different way and allow them to grow, if you will, or just for us to see them in a different way. Because most of the time the problem is with us, it's not the animals, it is how we perceive what they are doing, and so on.

Or, if they are reading the newsletter and they are seeing something, like one of the touches that is in there or one little thing, just try it. Try it and see what happens, and I think that is part of the beauty of Ttouch for me. You know we often talk about intention and the thing I find best is, you don't have to believe it will work and you can actually be pretty sure it is not going to work, and it can still work. That

to me is the best part about this. Because people will often get into this thing of, oh, but you have to get into this Zen like feeling and you really have to believe that it going to work, and you don't! It just works. And I've had people leading them through touches with other people and at the end, someone was working on them, and they go, "I was so sure that this wasn't going to make a difference," and then they go, "oh my arm is more relaxed," or whatever it is.

Just try it!

And slow it down. Slow down what you are doing so that you can actually start to see what's really happening and maybe even see what is behind the behaviour rather than just looking at the behaviour. And I guess that is actually one of the things that if I had to do only one thing it would be that... If I could do two things, it would be observe, and slow everything down, in terms of making contact with the dog; go way slower just to see how they are in terms of contact. Those would be sort of two of the main things that I would do, so that we could really allow dogs to speak to us, or cats, or horses, or whatever it happens to be.

It is that whole thing, we tend to only listen when they shout and we don't listen when they are polite and they whisper, because we can't hear them.

Website of the month

<https://thesciencedog.wordpress.com/>

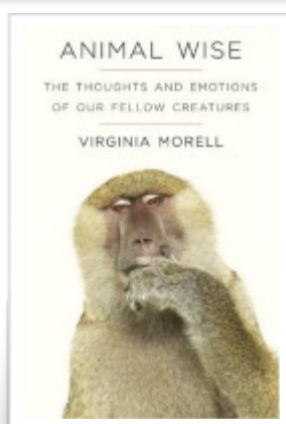
The Science Dog

By Linda P. Case

Hello and Welcome to "The Science Dog"! Let me introduce myself.

My name is Linda Case and I am a science writer who specializes in topics about canine health, nutrition, behavior and training. My academic training is in animal sciences, specifically in canine/feline nutrition and companion animal behavior and training. I have a B.S. in Animal Science from Cornell University and an M.S. in Canine/Feline Nutrition earned at the University of Illinois.

Book of the month



Animal Wise:

How We Know Animals Think and Feel

by Virginia Morell

and wolves. A prolific contributor to National Geographic among other publications, Morell shows that individuality, self-awareness and feeling are far more widespread in the animal kingdom -- and among the scientific community -- than many believe. Combining scientific rigour and storytelling verve, Animal Wise brings the world of nature brilliantly to life in a nuanced, moving and original appreciation of the human-animal bond.

Biography

I am an author of science and natural history books, and a prolific contributor to Science, National Geographic, Smithsonian, and other publications. I love writing about the natural world, and how scientists are exploring it. In my newest book, ANIMAL WISE, I explore the once-forbidden land of animal minds with scientists courageous enough to tackle the questions: What and how do animals think? In my book, you'll read about my trips to meet researchers who've discovered that ants teach, parrots converse, rats laugh, and cheetahs can die from heartbreak.

Bits and Pieces



Tellington TTouch® Bodywork for Dogs: Inchworm

Here Senior TTouch Instructor Robyn Hood, demonstrates how to do the "Inch Worm" along a dogs topline. This slow, mindful, technique is very gentle and is very effective in relieving tension and sensitivity along the back and around the hips. Always go lighter and slower than you think you should and watch how your dog responds. Remember to pause and breathe intermittently so you do not become mindless or incessant in your movement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oT8TQ6YdKsQ>