

WATCH-ME: This is an attention exercise. Its purpose is to slowly create a visual bond between you and your dog. It's eye contact! When a dog is focusing on his owner, it's difficult for him to be distracted. This command is the foundation of ALL future training.

Part of your continued maintenance, as the "alpha" figure is to make and keep eye contact with your dog. **This does NOT mean to stare menacingly @ your dog; that will only elicit submissive behavior or provoke anger.** Keep a neutral and pleasant expression on your face. Believe me, your dog knows a happy face versus a mad one.

This exercise **MUST** be worked on slowly. **DON'T RUSH IT.** First get your dog to watch you for 2 seconds for the first week, then gradually increase the time and distance you are from your dog. You will be working on this command throughout the 8 weeks; your dog's maximum time focusing on you without distractions by graduation should be 20 seconds or so.

STEP 1: Use food (or a toy) to lure and direct your dog's attention to your eyes. If you want to achieve success, do this and all training in an undistracted area. For the first day or two, start off @ your dog's level and squat down, then over time, slowly stand up straight. You will want to give the command: "Buddy, Watch-me" and simultaneously draw an imaginary line from his nose directly in between your eyes. The instant that your dog looks at the treat and you, immediately praise him and quickly bring the treat to his mouth and give it to him. Your timing is critical, so only hold the treat for a moment and then reward him with it. It's very important that you only say the

command one time and do not repeat it. The imaginary line is a way of directing your dog to look specifically at you. (Well, in the beginning, he really is looking at the treat. Eventually, you will remove the treat and use your hand signal and voice to get his attention). In some cases, you may have to direct your dog's chin gently to look at you. The "watch-me" command requires that you use a treat each and every time for the first 4 weeks of training.

STEP 2: By week 4 you may begin to **slowly, gradually and RANDOMLY**, remove the treat. Be sure to continue with your hand signal and verbal command. This will serve as a reminder to your dog as to where he needs to look when he hears and sees the signals.

TIP: Reward for even the smallest improvement!

WHAT IF...? If your dog is not looking at you, there are several possible reasons why:

- You are working too fast.
- You are working in a distracting area.
- You don't have food that is motivating enough, so switch.
- You are not praising your dog for looking at you fast enough.

WHAT DO I DO? The above will surely help, but also start from step 1 when your dog is getting a bit distracted. Remember to demonstrate and teach your dog what you want him to do. **Like all training it requires time & tons of patience!**