



CAT SOCIALIZATION STEP-BY-STEP

Socialization is the most effective way to reduce stress and improve welfare in all cats, especially fearful, aggressive, or shut-down cats. Meaningful socialization begins by removing the cat from their primary kennel, regardless of how they're behaving inside it, and bringing them into a quiet enrichment room for one-on-one support. Waiting for a cat to approach people on their own only prolongs stress, so early, guided intervention is critical. Follow the flow chart to safely and humanely work with cats with challenging behavior.

1

PREPARE SECURE ENRICHMENT ROOM

A SECURE ROOM HAS DOORS THAT CAN BE CLOSED COMPLETELY, MINIMAL CRAWL SPACES/FURNITURE FOR THE CAT TO GET ON TOP OF, UNDER, OR INSIDE OF. NOISES IN AND AROUND THE ROOM SHOULD BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM

2

GATHER SUPPLIES- CAT CARRIER, TREATS, TOYS, TOWELS, ETC.

BE SURE YOU HAVE SUPPLIES NEEDED TO ENRICH AND ENGAGE WITH THE CAT LIKE TOYS AND TREATS, BUT ALSO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED IN CASE THE CAT GETS LOOSE OR ESCAPES, LIKE TOWELS, CAT GLOVES, CARRIERS, OR A CAT NABBER/NET

3

FROM OUTSIDE THE KENNEL, ASSESS F-A-S LEVEL (0-5)

ALWAYS ASSESS A CAT FROM A DISTANCE BEFORE INTERACTING WITH THEM. USE THE FEAR-FREE SPECTRUM OF FEAR CHART TO RATE THEIR FAS LEVEL TO HELP YOU DETERMINE HOW TO APPROACH AND HANDLE THE CAT

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 0-1

HAVE A TRANSPORT CARRIER OPEN AND READY NEARBY TO PLACE CAT IN ONCE YOU'VE PICKED THEM UP. SLOWLY APPROACH THE KENNEL AND QUIETLY OPEN THE DOOR. OFFER THE BACK OF YOUR HAND AND LET THEM COME TO YOU TO BE GREETED. OFFER PETS IF RECEPTIVE. THEN, CAREFULLY PICK THEM UP, USING A TOWEL IF NEEDED, AND PLACE THEM INTO THE CARRIER. SECURE CARRIER FOR TRANSPORT.

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 2-3

HAVE A TRANSPORT CARRIER OPEN AND READY NEARBY TO PLACE CAT IN ONCE YOU'VE PICKED THEM UP. SLOWLY APPROACH THE KENNEL AND QUIETLY OPEN THE DOOR. OFFER THE BACK OF YOUR HAND FOR GREETING. OFFER GENTLE PETS IF RECEPTIVE. USING THE SUPERMAN TOWEL WRAP, CAREFULLY RESTRAIN THE CAT AND PLACE THEM IN CARRIER FOR TRANSPORT.

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 4-5

CAREFULLY PLACE AN OPEN FERAL BOX OR CARRIER INSIDE THE KENNEL SO THE CAT MAY ENTER ON THEIR OWN. ONCE CAT IS IN THE CONTAINER, CAREFULLY SECURE THEM INSIDE. COVER BOX/CARRIER WITH A TOWEL AND CAREFULLY REMOVE FROM KENNEL FOR TRANSPORT.

4

TRANSPORT TO ENRICHMENT ROOM

WITH ONE HAND ON THE HANDLE AND THE OTHER SUPPORTING THE BOTTOM, CARRY THE CAT IN THE CARRIER SLOWLY AND STEADILY TO YOUR SECURE ROOM, KEEPING IT LEVEL AND AVOIDING BUMPS OR SUDDEN MOVEMENTS.

5

REASSESS FAS AND BEGIN SOCIALIZATION

ONCE IN YOUR SECURE ROOM, ALLOW THEM TO SIT QUIETLY IN THEIR CARRIER FOR A COUPLE MINUTES. AT THIS TIME, REASSESS THEIR FAS LEVEL

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 0-1

OPEN THE CARRIER AND LET THEM COME OUT ON THEIR OWN. OFFER YOUR HAND TO GREET THEM. BEGIN GENTLE PETTING. ALLOW THEM TO EXPLORE IF THIER NOT SCARED. OFFER PETS, TREATS, AND TOYS ONLY AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS THE CAT PREFERS

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 2-3

SLOWLY OPEN THE CARRIER. IF THEY SEEM CURIOUS AND WANT TO EXPLORE ON THEIR OWN, LET THEM. IF THEY SEEM TOO TIMID OR SCARED WHEN EXPLORING, USE THE SUPERMAN TOWEL WRAP TO RESTRAIN THEM AND PLACE THEM NEXT TO YOU WHILE KEEPING AHOLD OF THEM. BEGIN GENTLING TECHNIQUES AND SPEAKING SOFTLY TO THEM. OFFER TREATS IF THEY SEEM INTERESTED. LOOSEN THE TOWEL WRAP GRADUALLY AS THEY BEING TO RELAX. CONTINUE OFFERING PETS, TOYS, AND TREATS IF THEY'RE INTERESTED.

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 4 (FROZEN IN FEAR BUT NOT AGGRESSIVE)

THESE CATS ARE EXTREMELY SCARED AND TIMID, BUT TYPICALLY DO NOT ACT OUT AGRESSIVELY EVEN WHEN HANDLED. THESE CATS WILL BOLT TO ESCAPE IF GIVEN THE CHANCE. UNCOVER THEIR BOX AND ALLOW THEM TO SIT QUIETLY FOR 5-10MINS. THEY LIKELY WILL NOT RELAX UNTIL YOU START WORKING WITH THEM. BEFORE OPEING THEIR CARRIER, DOUBLE CHECK THAT YOUR ROOM IS SECURE. CAREFULLY AND SLOWLY OPEN THE CARRIER. USE THE SUPERMAN TOWEL WRAP TO RESTRAIN AND REMOVE THEM. BE SURE YOU HAVE A SECURE HOLD ON THEM AT ALL TIMES. SIT THEM NEXT TO YOUR AND BEGIN THE BUNDLE AND BOND METHOD. LOOSEN THE TOWEL AS THEY RELAX

FOR CATS FAS LEVEL 5 (AGGRESSIVE)

MOST CATS THAT ARE AGGRESSIVE IN THEIR KENNEL WILL RELAX ONCE IN A QUIET ROOM. UNCOVER THEIR BOX AND ALLOW THEM TO SIT QUIETLY FOR 10 MINS. SPEAK SOFTLY TO THEM AND OFFER TREATS THROUGH THE VENT HOLES. ONCE A LOWER FAS IS ACHIEVED, PROCEED AS DIRECTED ABOVE. IF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIORS CONTINUE (HISSING, GROWLING, SWATTING, SPITTING, FLAT EARS), BRING THE CAT BACK TO THEIR KENNEL AND TRY AGAIN LATER (NO SOONER THAN 2 HOURS) OR ANOTHER DAY.

SOCIALIZATION SESSIONS SHOULD LAST 15-20 MINUTES MINIMUM ASSUMING THINGS GO WELL. ONLY WORK WITHIN YOUR PHYSICAL ABILITIES AND PERSONAL COMFORT LEVEL. IF YOU FEEL UNSURE, UNSAFE, OR NOT FULLY CONFIDENT HANDLING A PARTICULAR CAT, PAUSE AND DO NOT PROCEED. YOUR SAFETY AND THE CAT'S WELLBEING BOTH DEPEND ON KNOWING YOUR LIMITS.

