

## Calming Signals

### **Calming Signals:**

Dogs use calming signals in the following ways.

- To prevent things from happening
- To avoid threats from people and dogs
- To calm down nervousness, fear, noise, and unpleasant things
- To make others involved feel safer
- To make friends with other dogs and people

Your dog is communicating with you and other dogs using calming signals. Learn what your dog is communicating by observing and understanding these calming signals. Communicate with your dog by using calming signals. Some calming signals are listed below.

**Yawning:** Dogs use this when they are getting tense.

**Tongue Flicking:** Dogs use this during tense situations.

**Scratching:** Dogs use this to diffuse potential conflict. Dogs also use this when they are conflicted.

**Turning Away and Curving:** Dogs will turn their eyes, head, or entire body away from problems. Dogs may Show submission as well.

**Sniffing:** Dogs will do excessive sniffing when they are not sure what is going on. Sniffing can also be used as a stalling tactic.

**Blinking or Averting Eyes:** Dogs that approach other dogs may look away from each other or use exaggerated eye blinking. A person can gain a dog's confidence more quickly by avoiding direct eye contact and approaching a dog at an angle rather than head on.

**Splitting:** A dog may come between two dogs to end an interaction.

**Shaking:** A dog may shake, like shaking water off their fur, when they change activities. Examples are after a nap, when done playing, or after an interaction with another dog.

*Portions of the text above are from the book, "On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals" by Turid Rugaas*