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## THE ORIGINAL DOG WHISPERER – UNLEASHED

A new DVD by Paul Owens offers genteel pet-training advice.

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Some years ago, after adopting my dog, Sheba, I needed a dog trainer. Not knowing any better, I enlisted a tightly wound "expert" with an enthusiasm for the choke collar. The third lesson – when he told me that "a little humiliation is good for a dog" – was our last.

I wish I'd known then about Paul Owens. A cheerful bear of a man with a sunny, Zen-like attitude, Owens specializes in "compassionate, nonviolent" dog training. He relies on treats, play, and affection as rewards and never so much as raises his voice.

Owens released a first set of DVDs called "The Dog Whisperer: Beginning and Intermediate Training" in 2004 and now has followed up with Volume 2, "The Dog Whisperer: Solving Common Behavior Problems," on which he demonstrates gentle means of persuading dogs to drop behaviors such as digging, begging, and excessive barking. (Owens calls himself the original "dog whisperer" because he wrote a book with that title before Cesar Millan became famous with a TV show of the same name.)

Punitive training methods do work, acknowledges Owens. But 30 years of experience with dogs have convinced him that they are utterly unnecessary.

Watching Owens leaves me with only one question: How soon can I enroll Sheba? – Marjorie Kehe