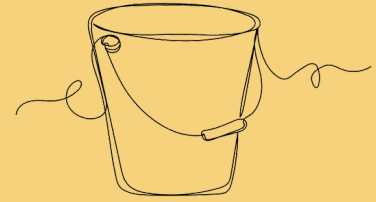


the stress

# BUCKET

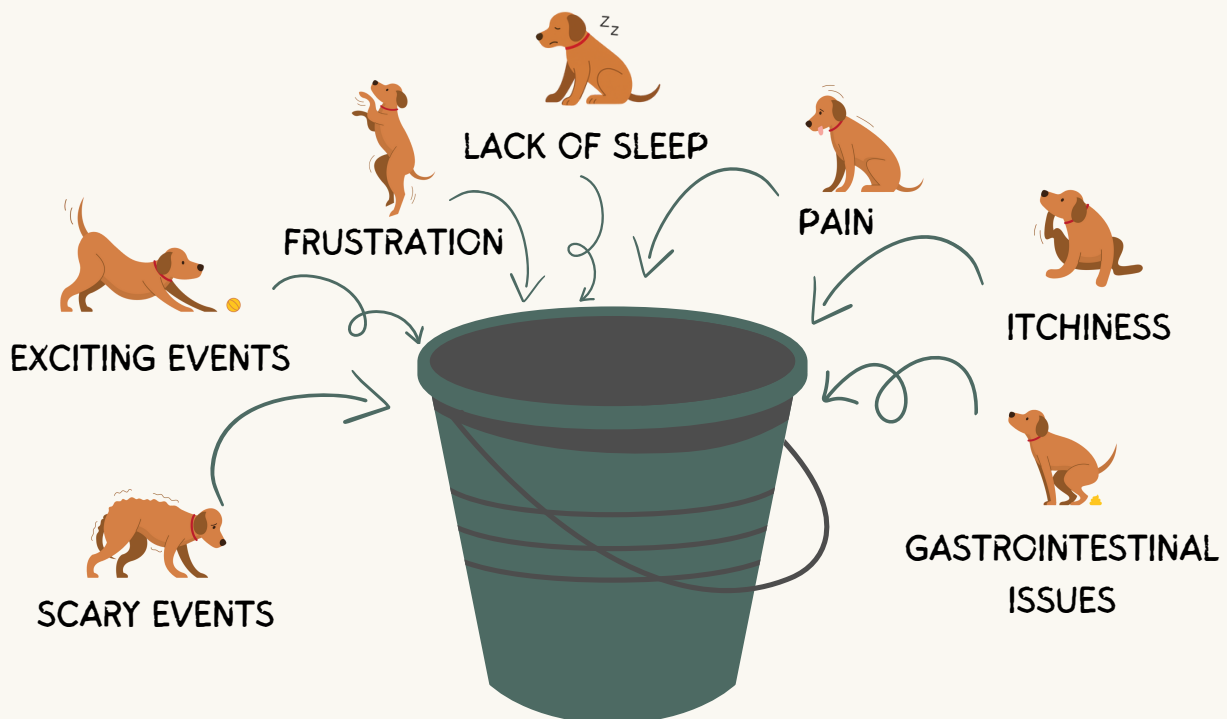


## UNDERSTANDING YOUR DOG'S EMOTIONAL OVERFLOW







The stress bucket is such an important concept and influences everything I do with dogs. It's a simple way to picture how stress, excitement, and emotion build up and spill over.






Every dog has a bucket – some are huge and take a lot to fill, while others are tiny thimbles that overflow quickly. Some buckets empty fast, others take longer to drain and return to calm. But when too much stress or arousal builds up, the bucket overflows and boom – you see overreactions, frustration, barking, or behaviours you'd rather not see.

## WHAT FILLS THEIR BUCKET?



Life can be pretty bucket-filling for all of us, and it's no different for our dogs. Every minute of every day, things are happening – good and bad – that top it up:

-  Household sights and sounds (TV and household appliances)
-  Children running, playing and making noise
-  Strange smells and noises
-  Vet visits or trips in the car
-  Daily household chaos (chores, day-to-day life events)
-  Exciting, fast games and play that encourage excitement UP!

-  Keys jingling to indicate you're leaving, or a car ride is coming
-  Going for walks or going to training classes
-  Other dogs in the house - or outside the house
-  Cats or other animals in the house
-  Hearing sounds outside of the house such as vehicles, neighbours and nearby dogs as well as power tools and machinery and loud construction work

## THE FOUR COMPONENTS OF THE BUCKET



### Size of the bucket

*How quickly does it fill?*



### Hole in the bucket

*How fast does it empty?*



### Natural state of the bucket

*Some dogs have a full bucket as a baseline; others are empty*



### What pays into the bucket?

*Both positive/exciting & negative/frustrating and/or frightening events*

Remember, you also have a bucket as well as sharing a household one. Ever noticed how your dog seems to 'act up' when you are having a stressful day? Your buckets influence each other.

## HELPING YOUR DOG'S BUCKET EMPTY

You can't stop the bucket from filling, but you can manage how quickly it fills and how easily it empties. Over the coming weeks, I'll show you how to use games and enrichment to:

- Prevent unnecessary "payments" into the bucket,
- Grow your dog's bucket capacity, and
- Help them recover more quickly from stressful or exciting events.

Recognising your dog's bucket level day-to-day helps you know when to rest, when to train, and when to take a bucket holiday.

When their bucket stays comfortably low, your dog can cope better, recover faster, and move through life calmer, happier, and more resilient.