



"OUCH"... & "BYE", BABY SHARK



"Although some puppy bites may be quite painful, they seldom cause serious harm. However, occasional painful puppy bites plus your appropriate feedback are absolutely essential for your puppy to develop reliable bite-inhibition and a soft mouth. Moreover, it is essential that your maturing pup receives repeated feedback regarding the force of its bites before it develops jaws strong enough to cause real damage."

- Dr. Ian Dunbar

Q: My puppy bites me all the time. What should I do?

A: Please know that this is normal. Review your wellness & prevention strategies. This means being **pro-active** so we're less likely to be in a "reactive" state. Channeling puppy energy into games like food puzzles and training (*esp the Gotcha Game*) can help puppies to be less likely to treat you like their chew toy. Calmly crossing your arms can get a puppy to stop chewing on you in *some* instances, but it is also common for biting to get worse before it gets better. Focus on their bite **FORCE** before **FREQUENCY**. This allows us to teach puppies while they are young with weak jaws (but needle sharp teeth) that they need not use force.

When jaw pressure increases, loudly exclaim "OUCH!" (*in a low pitch*) & **freeze**. We want to interrupt the nibbling behavior, but not scare or intimidate.

Responses of the puppy may include:

A) Puppy stops biting and pulls back looking a bit alarmed. This is the response we want as it means they heard our feedback. Thank them and reengage when they are calm or move on to another activity. A common mistake is pulling away too quickly. Your fast movement can instigate a game of chase. Remain completely still, moving only your mouth (and disapproving facial expression) when you "OUCH!"

B) Puppy continues treating you like their chew toy / someone you'd prefer not to be around... say "BYE" & **ESCAPE** to where they cannot reach you. Tethering their leash to something sturdy can help you to have a faster get-away. Please never leave a puppy on a tether unsupervised. When the puppy is calm, reengage with a "Go Find It" treat scatter when you reenter their space. Move on to another activity or repeat as needed.



Access to you is a huge reward to your puppy. We are teaching them that they lose us when they play bite us too hard. They will learn to play more gently in order to keep us in the game!