

Separation related problems on dogs: *Reviewing and presenting new approaches*



BACKGROUND

20 -40 % of cases attended in
reference behaviour services

Wright and Nesselrode, 1987

Horwitz, 2000

Voith and Borchelt, 1996

14-17 % of cases attended by
general practitioners

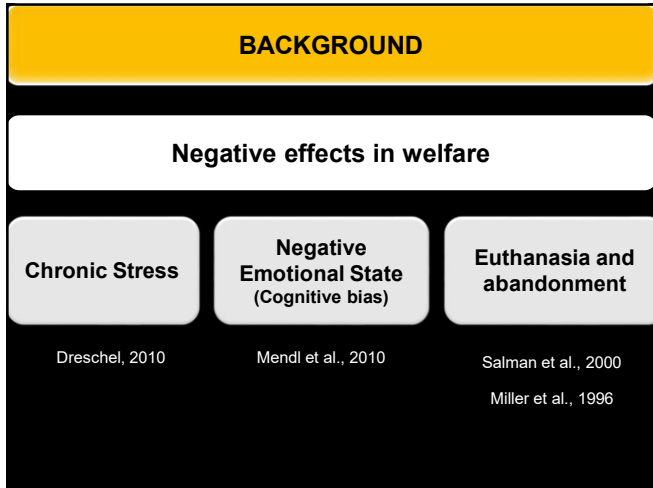
Lilly Market Research, 2006

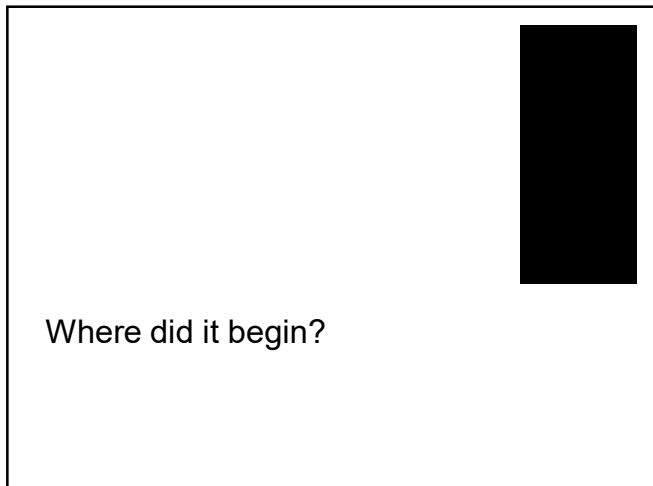
BACKGROUND

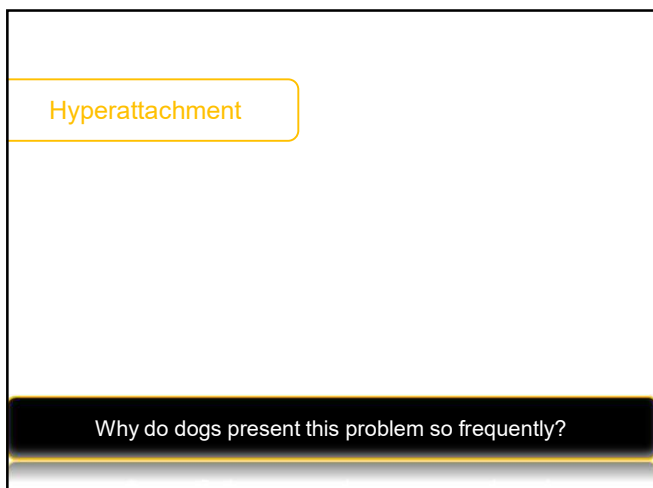
Economical problem

Frustration

Problems with
neighbours







BACKGROUND

Primary Hyperattachment (puppies)

The mother's attachment
moves now into the owner

Secondary Hyperattachment (adults)

Associated with changes in
routine or in dog's
environment

Appleby and Pluijmakers, 2003. Separation Anxiety in dogs: the function of homeostasis in its development and treatment. Vet Clin North Am Small Anim Pract., 33: 321-344.

GRIEF

Owners occasionally
report consistent
signs of grief. Like:
social avoidance,
increase of sleeping,
agitation, seeking
behaviours, appetite
lost, reactivity and
also separation related
symptoms
(Horwitz et al, 2008)

Dogs with and without SA looks in the same way for contact with the owner

Many dogs without SA shows hyperattachment

Parthasarathy V and Crowell-Davis SL. Relationship between attachment to owners and separation Anxiety in pet dogs (Canis lupus familiaris). J Vet Behav, 2006, 1: 109-120.

Hyperattachment??

Not hyperattachment??

Why do dogs present this problem so frequently?

Conditioned fear

Aversive stimuli/event while dog was alone at home

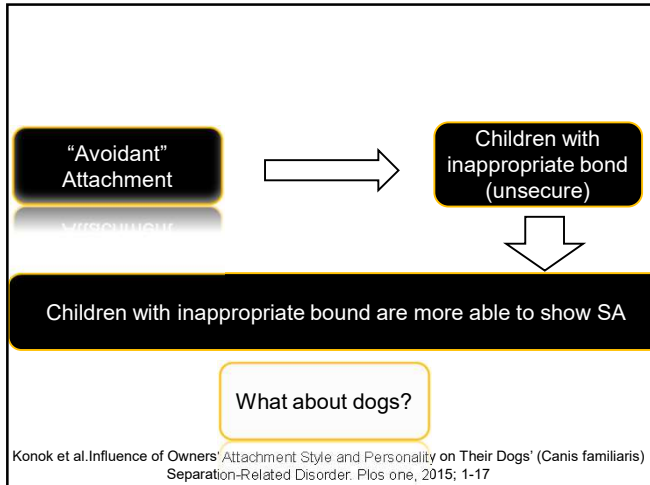
Appleby and Pluijmakers, 2003. Separation Anxiety in dogs: the function of homeostasis in its development and treatment. Vet Clin North Am Small Anim Pract., 33: 321-344.

Hyperattachment

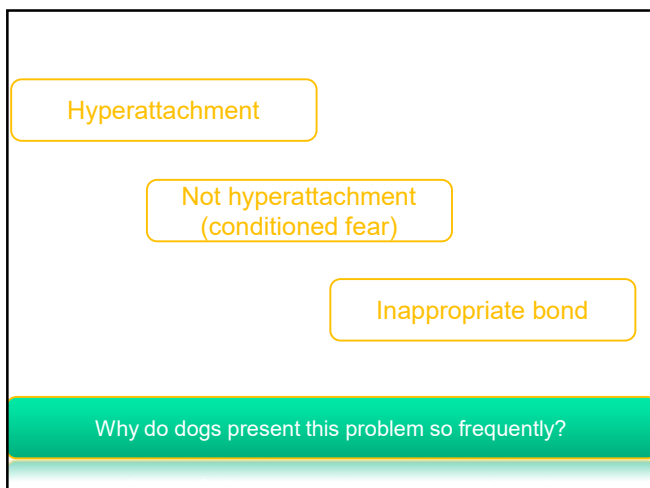
Not hyperattachment (conditioned fear)

Inappropriate bond

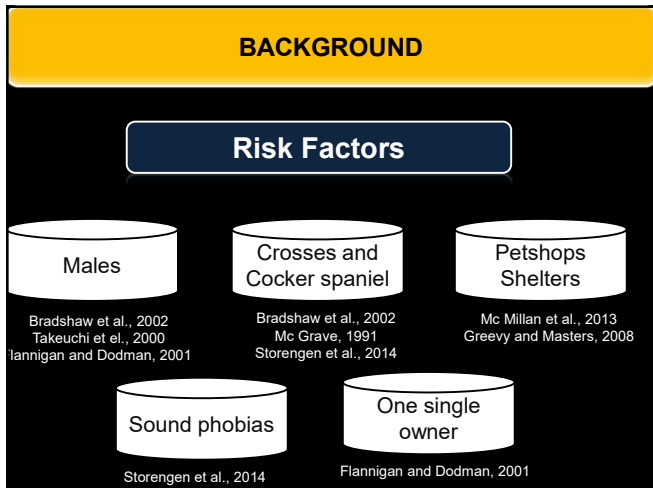
Why do dogs present this problem so frequently?

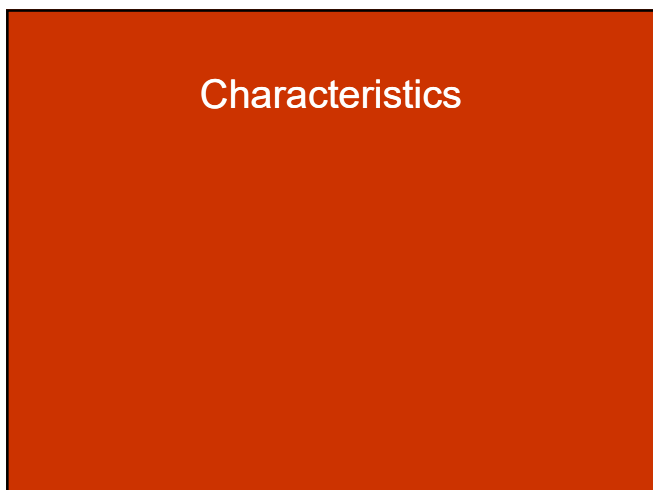


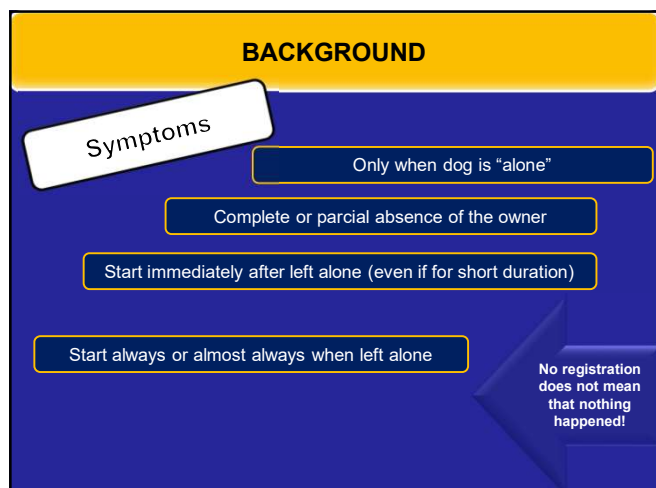


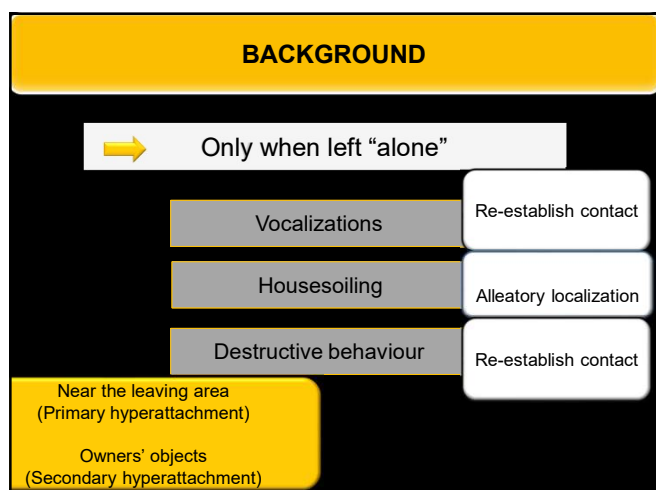


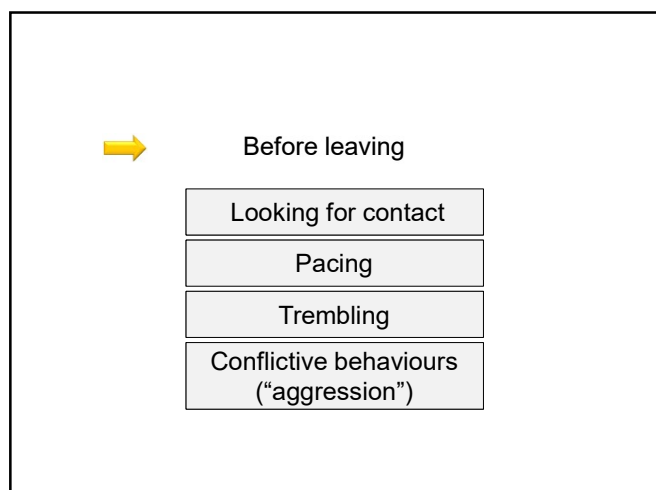


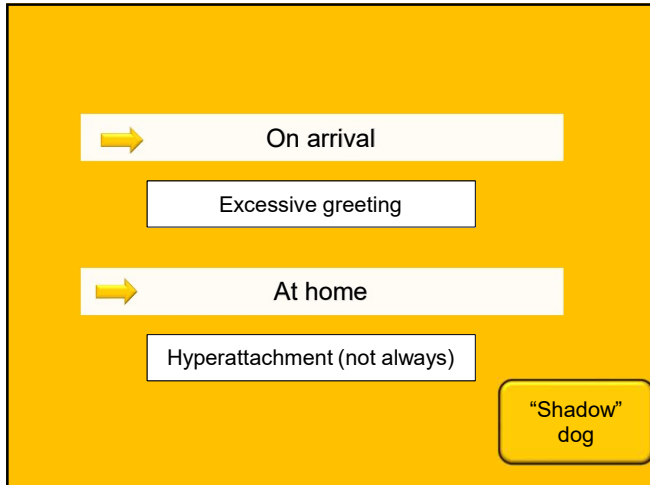


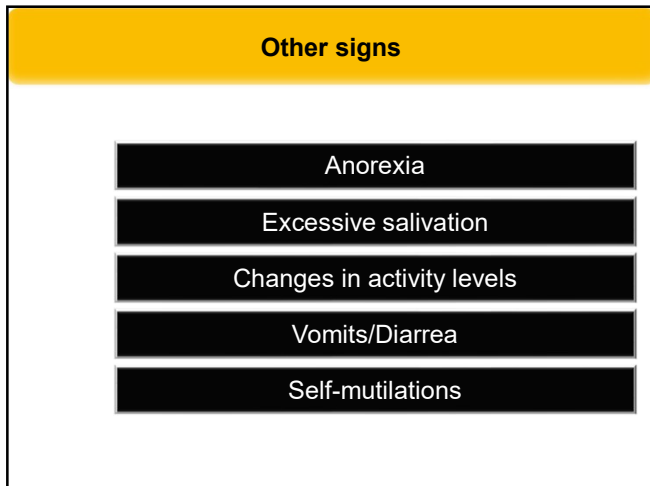


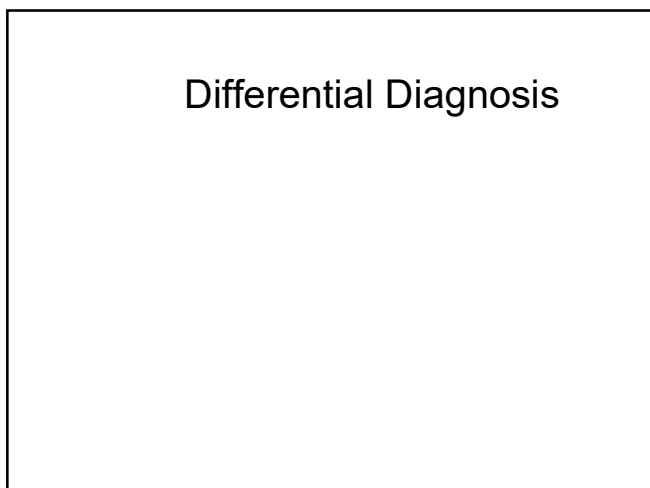












The main types of separation problems and the emotional motivation behind

- Panic (grief)
- Fear/Anxiety
- Desire (seeking)
- Frustration
- Play

Separation Anxiety or Problems related with separation?

Anxiety

Fear

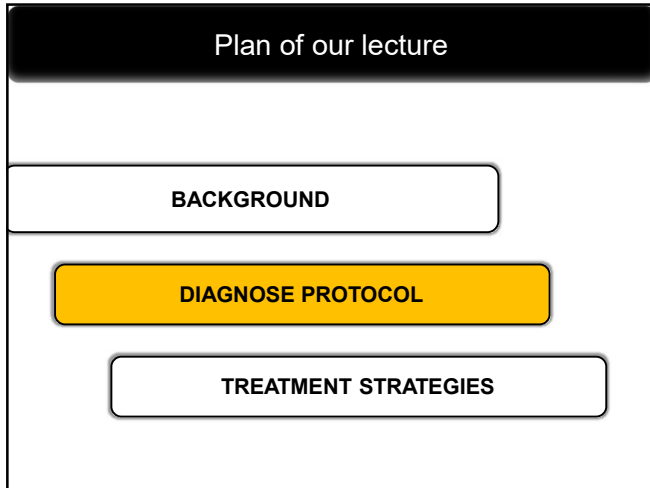
Learning problems

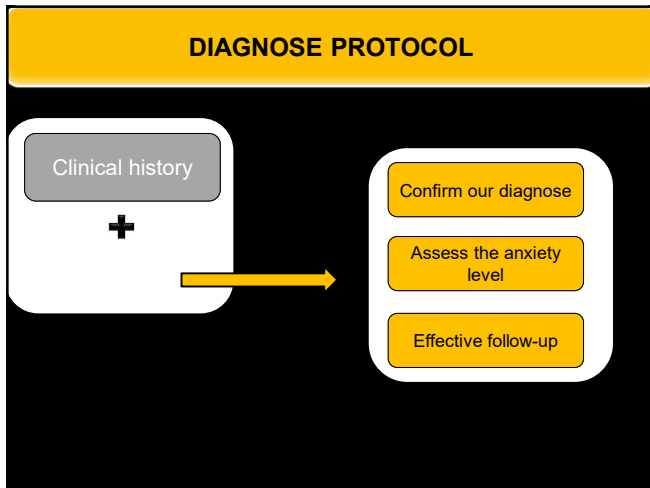
Lack of stimulation

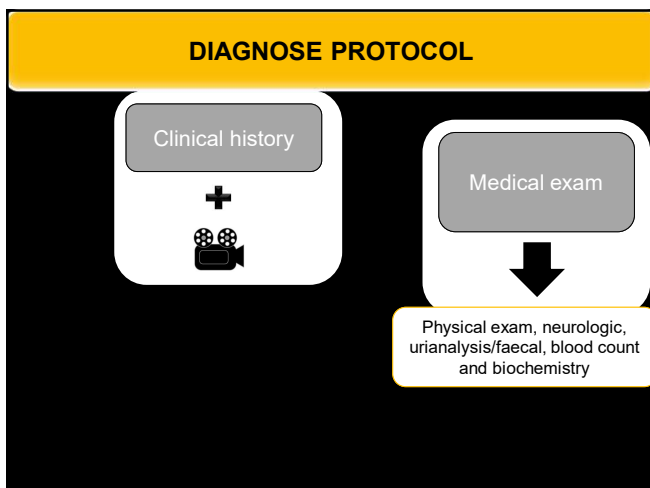
...

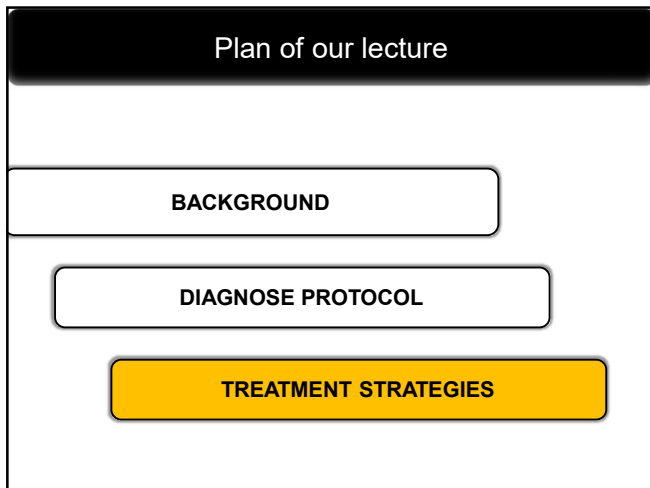
Problems related with the use of SA in all situations

- Inadequate protocol of behavioural (emotional) modification
- Incorrect perspective and expectations
(impact in dog and owner's life)





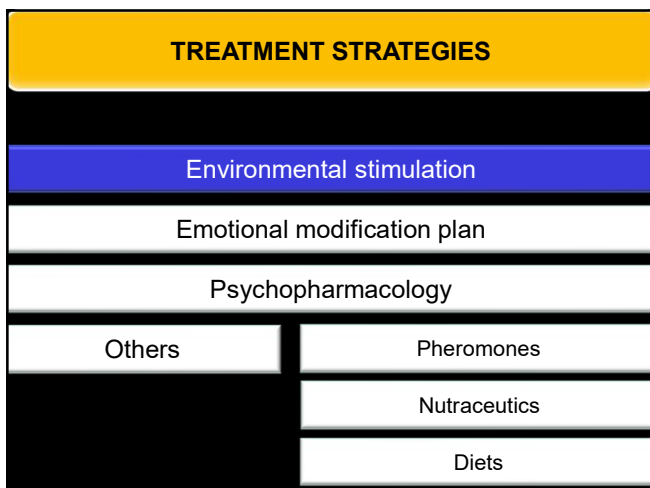




TREATMENT

What is the goal?

Modify the perception and the emotional state of the dog in order to feel secure when left alone.



Environmental stimulation

Increase stimulation
(play, walks, etc)



Exercise increases endorphine production

Exercise increases serotonin levels

Promoting positive emotional states

Physical and cognitive stimulation

- Games
- Walking
- Social interaction

TREATMENT STRATEGIES

Environmental stimulation

Emotional modification plan

Psychopharmacology

Others

Pheromones

Nutraceuticals

Diets

Individual program to see differences!

Coach + lots of work and dedication

WHAT DOES NOT WORK?!?!

- Let the TV or radio turned-on
- Neutering (decrease self-confidence)
- Any type of positive punishment, namely shock and/or citronella collars
- Adopting a new dog or another animal

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN (behavioural modification plan)

Consistent handling

Establish predictable departures

Differentiate from "false" departures

"False" departures only when in secure zone

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN

Consistent handling
+
Not reinforcing behaviours (?)

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN
(behavioural modification plan)

Consistent handling

Establish predictable departures

Differentiate from “false” departures

“False” departures only when in secure zone

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN

Owner departure

X



Anxiety



EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN

Desensitization to
departure?? Signed!!!

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN

Owner departure



EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN (behavioural modification plan)

Consistent handling

Establish predictable departures

Differentiate from "false" departures

"False" departures only when in secure zone

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN

Owner "real"
departure



Owner "false"
departure
(predictability)



EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN

Different from crate training or
keeping the animal in a place
where he cannot destroy!

EMOTIONAL MODIFICATION PLAN**LAST STEP**

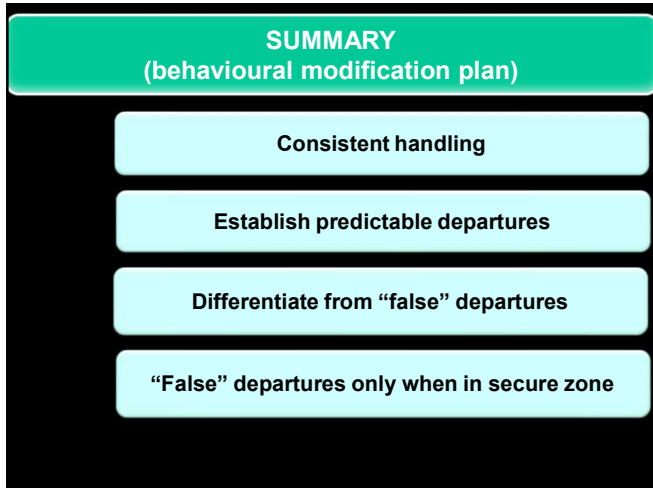
Owner departure

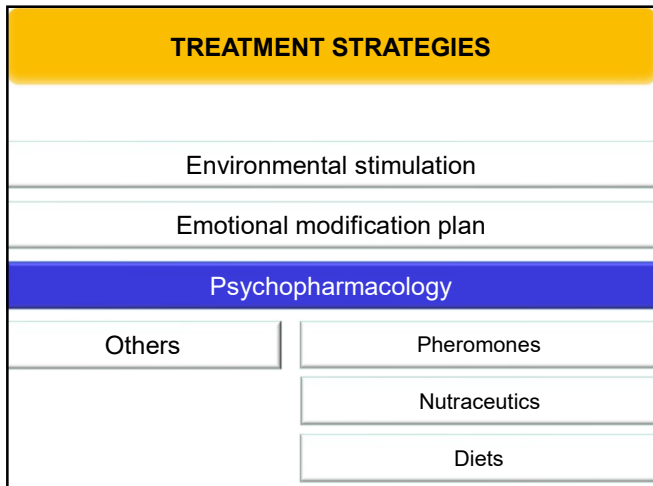


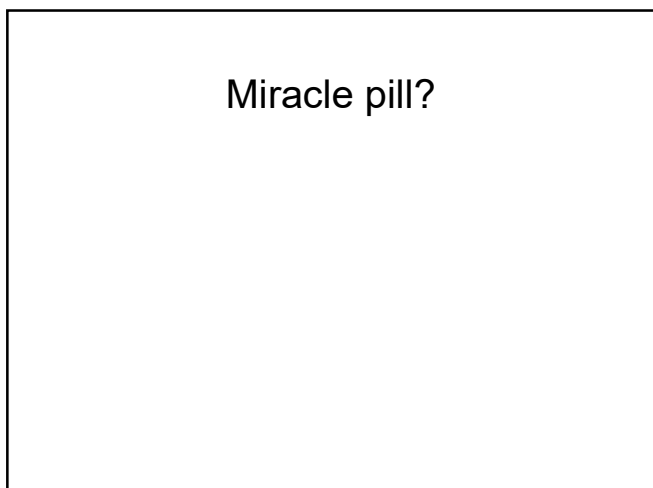
Finishing the exercises of "false" departures

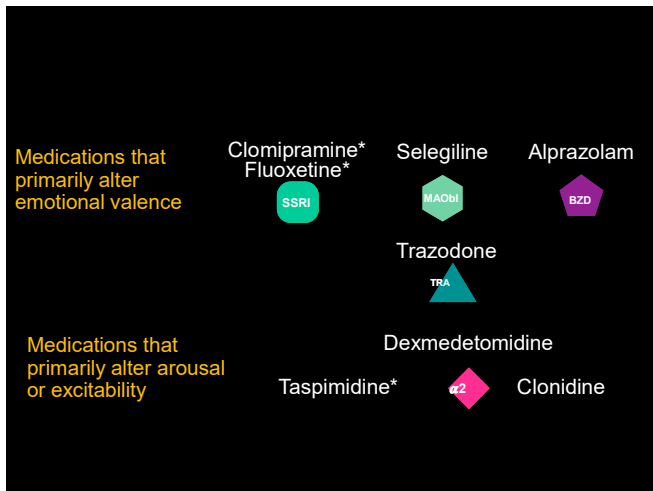
The secure cue will replace the cue of "real" departures

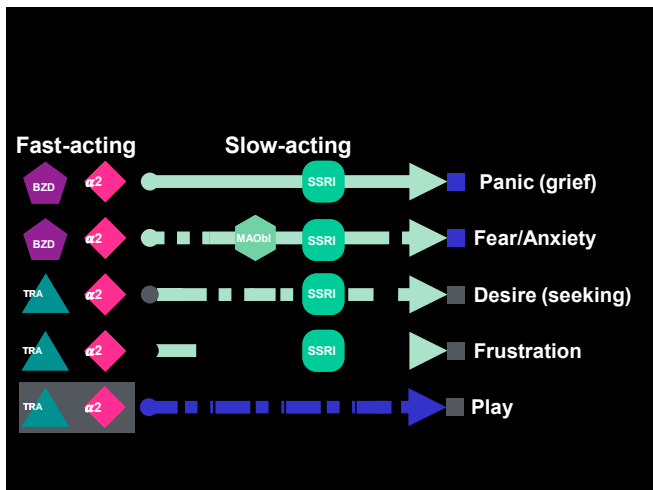
Leave the dog in the safe area or with free access to it

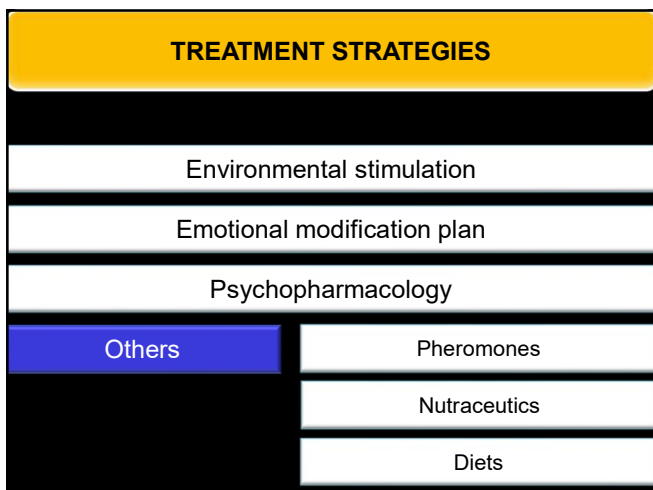












Aitäh!

**Thank you
very much
for your
interest!**

