



Episode 17: Taking Credit For Your Accomplishments

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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This is the agility challenge podcast with Daisy peel. You're listening to Episode 17. Welcome to the agility challenge podcast. I'm your host, Daisy peel. Join me as I talk about everything related to the mental side of the sport of dog agility. If you've ever felt overwhelmed by negative self talk, or lack of confidence, or if your dog training to do list seems so long that you don't even know where to get started, then this podcast is for you. For more podcast episodes, training, content and coaching from me, head to [www dot the agility challenge.com](http://www.thetheagilitychallenge.com) where members get access to monthly training and handling challenges, in addition to league play, and a whole lot more. Let's dive in with today's episode.

Hello there, and welcome to episode 17 of the podcast. Today, I'm going to talk about something that pretty much all of us have experienced at some point, whether it's something we overheard somebody else say, or something we said. And I'm going to talk about why this might be an unhealthy behavior for us to be engaging in.

So I want you to think back to the last time you were at a competition. Maybe it was just last weekend. Maybe it was yesterday, maybe even today. And somebody came up to you and gave you a compliment. They told you what a good run you had, or They complimented you on a great part of your run maybe. What was your initial reaction? For a lot of people, this is how it goes. Hey, that was a great



run you had? Oh, well, I was just lucky. I almost never have good runs. Or maybe. Hey, congratulations for winning that run. Oh, well. Nobody else ran clean. We're really not good enough to win. We didn't really deserve that first place. They were better competitors than us for sure. Or, hey, that was some really good handling out there. Oh, well. I just have a really good dog. He really does everything out there. Or something like, wow, I just love watching you run your dog. Oh, well, that run we had it just wasn't that good. I'm sorry that you had to see that wide turn. Sometimes the things that we say or that we overhear or even worse, something like, Hey, that was a great run you had, oh, well, I'm such an idiot, my dog probably wishes he had a better handler.

These my friends are examples of a kind of self talk called self deprecation.

Now self deprecation can come from a lot of places. Culturally, a lot of us women in particular, are taught from a young age not to act conceited. We're taught not to brag, we're taught not to show off. And we're taught to be agreeable and not offensive to others. This type of talk, this self deprecation can be a way to appear more likeable. And while this type of self talk can help us accomplish all of those things, it can also promote self sabotage, which is I'm guessing not a goal for most of us, especially you if you're listening to this podcast.

So in this episode, I want to dig into self deprecation a little bit. And how the way that we receive compliments can really be kind of hard on our self image. One of the top ways that we tear ourselves down out loud and in front of other people, rather than just in our heads, the way a lot of us tend to do is how we respond to compliments.



A lot of us don't even think too much about this. And when we respond to a compliment with a Yeah, well, or Yeah, but type of response. When we work to minimize or rebut the compliment. We're either doing it because we really don't believe we're good enough, or that we deserve the compliment. Or we're trying to avoid looking overconfident or egotistical or arrogant. The problem is, although we may want to avoid looking arrogant, rebutting a compliment, or negating it with our response ends up with us saying things about our own accomplishments that we would never say about a friend's accomplishments.

Imagine for a minute, we'll do a little exercise here. Imagine for a minute that you and a friend are standing around at a show. And a third person walks up and tells you what a great run you had. And then your friend says out loud, oh, she just got lucky. She hardly ever runs clean.

Or imagine that that person walks up and says to you, congratulations on winning that

around, and your friend says, Oh, well, nobody else ran clean, she's not really good enough to win, she didn't really deserve that first place, there were a lot of better competitors than her. Or here's one more. You and your friend are chatting. And this third person walks up and says to you, hey, that was some really good handling out there. And then your friend says, Oh, well, she just has a really good dog. Her dog really does everything out there. It's not her handling. Can you imagine? I mean, first of all, what kind of friend is that, with friends like that? Who needs enemies? You know, that's pretty rough, you'd probably feel pretty small and undercut after an exchange, like one of those exchanges, you might have a lot of questions about your abilities, and you'd probably feel pretty shaken. And yet, this is the crazy thing, we have no problem saying those things about ourselves in response to a compliment. We do it all the time. We do it without thinking, and we can do it fast. Those words, just roll off our tongues and



out of our mouths so fast. So why do we do this? Why do we cringe when we receive a compliment? Why do we feel awkward? Why do we feel the need to instantly offer a rebuttal as though the person giving us the compliment is just wrong, or doesn't know what they're talking about?

Well, the first reason that we have trouble taking a compliment is typically low self esteem. If you think you're flawed, or not good enough, or not deserving, then you're going to have trouble understanding why somebody else would say something kind about you. And unfortunately, if you do have low self esteem, receiving a compliment, won't really help you feel better about yourself, because you can't believe it anyways. And what's even worse, getting a compliment from a good friend, or your partner can damage that relationship, because you get that praise from that good friend or from your partner. And then you have to decide is my friend or partner lying to me, because of course, you don't really believe what they're saying about you that good and complementary thing.

Then another reason, second reason that we tend to have trouble receiving compliments is that they don't line up with the way that we see ourselves. So if somebody tells you, man, you're an amazing handler, you just always know where to be for your dog. And you just don't see yourself as a competent handler. Hearing that compliment is going to create some confusion in your brain, you're going to have to figure out if you lack insight about yourself, or if that other person just lacks good judgment. And this is one of the reasons when people give us compliments, we tend to respond with a rebuttal or a justification. Like we really can't trust the person giving the compliment to have given it based on any sort of objective reality, we have to educate them about how really, we're not that good. And they're wrong to have even thought so like what, but we do this all the time. And we do it to help alleviate some of the anxiety that can bubble up when we hear somebody describing us in a way that we wouldn't describe ourselves.



Now, the third reason that we tend to have trouble taking a compliment is that we can be uncomfortable with big expectations. And this goes right back to the heart of how uncomfortable it can be to learn to grow, to operate out of our comfort zone, or to go for a goal that's going to require awkwardness, growth, and all of that stuff.

So if you're not comfortable being uncomfortable, or if you don't believe that you're worthy, or good enough, it's going to be more comfortable to set the bar really low.

And then, if your sense of self worth is really low, it's going to be easier to set that bar low. And then if you exceed expectations, you'll be pleasantly surprised.

A compliment that might imply that you're expected to do really well is not going to go over well either, because it's going to tend to put you under a lot of pressure. So here's an example. If your friend says you're totally going to nail this course, you can totally get there for that blind cross, it's going to put you under a lot of pressure. You might feel anxious, or even terrified because now the bar has been set really high. And when you think that people hold you in high regard or think highly of your abilities, you're going to experience potentially, a lot of self doubt and anxiety. And then you'll start to think it's only a matter of time before you fail and disappoint those people who have high expectations for you. So when they give you that compliment, man, you're totally going to nail this course you can totally get there for that blind cross. Your instinct may be to

argue the compliment or offer a rebuttal or minimize that compliment.



Finally, it can be hard to know how to react when you're showered with praise and you want to appear humble. If somebody tells you you're talented or the best ever

Simply saying thank you might make you feel like a jerk as though if you agree with the person praising you, it's like, yeah, I know, thank you for finally noticing. And bragging isn't an attractive behavior, we tend to like people more who are humble. So accepting compliments can feel like a superiority complex instead of just a graceful acknowledgment. And that's why we tend to deflect compliments. Rather than just say, thank you, we tend to do one, or maybe all of these three things. One, we give a return compliment. So somebody says, we're a great handler, and we immediately say, No, you're a great handler,

or two, we minimize our achievement. So we're told we did a great job. And we say, Oh, it was nothing as though anybody could have done what we just did. Or three, we attribute our success to somebody else. Something like it was all my dog, or I couldn't do it without my instructor, something like that.

So while men and women can struggle with receiving compliments, both men and women, women tend to have more trouble. And we tend to more often deflect those compliments. So I went looking and one study that I found said women accept compliments. And this means just to thank you, no qualifications, no minimization, nothing, just a thank you. Women accept compliments only about 40% of the time. And that number gets even lower when women are complimented by other women, which is totally crazy. And remember,

accepting a compliment in the context of this particular study was just a thank you. No qualification. So when it's women being complimented by other women, they we because I'm a woman, tend to be able



to accept those compliments only about 20% of the time. It's like we think if we say thank you, we think we're saying in an egotistical way, yeah, I know how great I am. Or we think we're doing the other person a favor by deflecting the compliment. But really, when we diminish a compliment someone has given us or argue, rebut a compliment someone has given us or, you know, one of those things. Here's what we're doing to that other person. First, we're telling that person giving us the compliment, that we don't value their input enough to take it seriously, because now we're not actually that good, too. And this is even bigger, we're selling ourselves short. When we deflect those compliments, we're being that really crummy friend, in the example I gave at the beginning of this episode, that really crummy friend who cuts us down and says awful things about us out loud in front of other people. And three, when you minimize or argue or deflect those compliments you miss out on really being able to relish the kind words of another person because you're too busy defending yourself from a compliment.

It's crazy, and yet we all do it, I do it. Pretty much all of us have done it for one reason or another at one time or another.

So how should we then accept a compliment? Well, even if you feel awkward, accepting a compliment, your behavior doesn't have to be awkward. The best response to a compliment is to just show gratitude. Seriously, just try saying thank you. A very simple thank you is almost always appropriate. Resist the urge to criticize yourself. If there's somebody you should share the limelight with and give credit to you should do that. But don't undercut yourself. If your instructor deserves credit, then you should give them that credit by all means, but remember, you did the work.

Now, you know how you've probably heard that the best way to feel confident is to act confident, you know, to fake it till you make it well, this is totally an example of that. Responding to a compliment in a



way that makes it seem like you're comfortable in your own skin can help you actually be more comfortable with yourself. Now, this might feel awkward at first, but over time, it will get easier, you'll feel more comfortable just saying thank you saying it with gratitude. And the compliments will feel less cringe worthy.

You'll also give off a vibe that says I'm comfortable enough in my own skin. But I can handle nice things being said about me.

You might also when you say thank you or after you say thank you acknowledge the hard work that it took to get whatever accomplishment you're being complimented on. So in addition to saying thank you, it won't hurt to also add I've really worked hard on my foot speed. I'm glad you noticed how I got to that front cross, or maybe something like that. You know, thank you. I've worked really hard on my dogs motivation and drive. I'm glad you enjoyed watching our run. And again, it's totally fine to give gratitude for those who helped you with that hard work. But you know,

when all else fails, or if you don't have time to talk because you got a dog on leash with you or you've just you've got somewhere to go

I'll just say thank you. And take a moment to feel how amazing it is that somebody else took the time to express their appreciation for your run, or your win, or your attempt at part of a course or whatever.

It might feel uncomfortable to do this. But even in this context, lean in. Learning to accept compliments is a skill. And it's one that takes practice and you know, me, purposeful practice. I'm all about purposeful practice. So try it. The next time somebody compliments you. Even it feels even if it feels



awkward, even if you don't believe them, just say thank you. No deflecting, no, minimizing no rebuttals, just thank you.

I often say thank you, I appreciate that. Now, if you guys know me at all, you know, I'm a huge Ted lasso fan. It's a TV show. It's amazing. If you didn't already know that I'm a huge Ted lasso fan. Now, you know. And I just love that phrase that Ted lasso says all through all three seasons of that show where he says, I appreciate you, what a great way to express gratitude. Even if my self esteem may not let me believe a compliment, I can still thank the person giving the compliment and appreciate them for giving me that bit of their time. appreciate them for taking time out of their day to make the effort to give me a compliment, to say a kind word. So yeah, thank you, I appreciate you saying that is not only a great way to express some gratitude to whoever's giving you a compliment. But it's also a way to help you really relish the fact that somebody gave you a compliment.

Now, over time, your ability to do this can help you see yourself a bit differently, to see and believe that you actually do deserve that compliment that you're worthy and competent.

Now, of course, I don't believe that we should be basing our self worth on what other people say to us. But I absolutely believe that we should do all that we can to be careful what we say to ourselves about ourselves. And if we're saying out loud, in rebuttal to a compliment that Nah, that's not true, what you're saying about me is a lie or a distortion, then really, we're just being that crummy friend to ourselves and cutting down our self worth. And we just, we just do not need to be doing that at all.

So you know me, and if you've been listening to this podcast for more than a few episodes, you know that I'm big on doing what I call thought ups and on this thing called the thought model. Now the



thought model is where a neutral circumstance can trigger thoughts, which lead to feelings, which lead to actions that you take or don't take, because inaction is also an action.

And then those actions lead to results, which serve as evidence for your thoughts. So I'm going to challenge you to do this after you listen to this episode. The next time you're given a compliment, say thank you, with gratitude, whether you believe the compliment or not. And then when you Next, get the chance, do a thought dump about that compliment. So the neutral event that happened, somebody came up and gave you a compliment. And then what were your thoughts about that compliment about the person giving you that compliment? And after that, what were the feelings that your thoughts about that compliment triggered?

Now, if you just given into your feelings, what would you have done? Instead of saying thank you? And how would those actions you would have normally taken those things you would have normally said, lead to results that validated your thoughts.

One thing that tends to happen, if we constantly argue compliments, we constantly rebut compliments is that people stopped giving them to us. And then when people stopped bothering to give us compliments, because every time they give us a compliment, we argue with them about it. They just they stopped giving us compliments entirely. And then we really start to believe our little internal dialogue, we really start to believe our self doubts because shoot, clearly we're no good. Nobody ever bothers to tell us we're good. See, it's true or no good. So again, well, we can't base our self worth on what other people do or don't tell us. We sure can set up a vicious cycle if we just constantly think that compliments are lies that we don't want to or deserve to hear.



All right. Well, I want to let all of you know that I appreciate all of you listening to this podcast. As always, I'd love to hear your thoughts and experiences on this topic. So reach out and let me know what you thought about this episode. You listening to this podcast is a compliment for me. And for that I thank you and I appreciate you taking time out of your day to choose to listen.

I hope the rest of your week is a good one. And that after listening to this episode, you'll be on the lookout for that next compliment

That's all for now. Bye bye.

If you enjoyed today's podcast and you've got somebody in mind who you're pretty sure could benefit from discussing the things we talked about today, head to the webpage for today's episode, podcast dot the agility challenge.com, forward slash 17. And scroll to the bottom, you'll see a section that says Share the love that has some instructions and links for how to subscribe to and share this podcast and also how to leave a rating and review in Apple podcasts. I'm a pretty tech savvy person, but even for me it was a little tricky, so I've included a how to link for you at the bottom of the page. So go ahead and head on over to podcast dot the agility challenge.com forward slash 17. subscribe to the podcast, leave a review and share it with a friend. Also, you can leave a comment below the episode and let me know your thoughts about what we discussed today. I'd love to hear from you, and maybe discuss your thoughts on a future episode.