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**A list of 47 of the calming or stress signals that humans can observe in any dog. I've probably split them imperfectly into these two columns, because many times dogs will be presenting more than one signal at a time, but, it's a place to start:**

**Calming**

head turning away  
eyes turning away  
yawning  
sniffing  
drooling  
lip licking  
raising a paw (as if to "shake")  
grass eating  
marking  
water drinking  
pooping  
avoidance  
slow reluctant behaviors  
hackles raised  
arcing (or curving)  
laying down  
frantically wagging tail  
play bow  
splitting  
sitting  
blinking

**Stress**

panting  
growling  
spinning/circling  
stopped or frozen (in an awkward position)  
howling  
short attention span  
biting the leash  
poop eating  
whining  
barking  
aggression  
hyper behavior  
complete body turns away from you (can also be calming)  
hackles raised  
body shaking (as if they are cold)  
scratching  
shaking (as if they were shaking off water)  
blinking of the eyes  
sneezing  
sweaty paws  
raised temperature (ears can get hot)  
chewing  
diarrhea  
"stress" shedding and dandruff  
digging  
loss of appetite (won't take treats)

*For instance, when dogs approach each other and wish to avoid fights, they will arc around each other rather than approach head on. This can calm the other dog and avoid a potential conflict. In addition, there are also what I call "personal stress signals." These are different for every dog:*

The set of their ears and tail, any creases on their face, the look and shape of their eyes and pupils, foaming at the mouth (different than drooling), tightness of their mouth when taking food, suppleness or tightness of their bodies, puffing out of cheeks with short but explosive breaths, and the shape of their nose and muzzle often changes when they are feeling stressed.

I look at it this way: most dogs will communicate in whispers to start - small signals - a tiny lip lick, small head duck or head turn, a blink. If those are ignored or punished, they will have no choice but to “talk” louder by using more obvious signals - full sniffing, full body turns, huge yawns. If those are ignored or punished, they will start “yelling” and use even more blatantly (to them) obvious signals - frantic tail wagging, hackles up, low growl, showing teeth, stiffening of their body, staring. If those are ignored or punished, you may be leaving them no choice but to go further into conflict resolution with biting - into “poker face” mode and they will just simply bite with “no warning.” The moral? Listen to and respect the whispers!

Take a good look at these photos and see how many signals from the above list you can see!



