

Figure-8 Walking

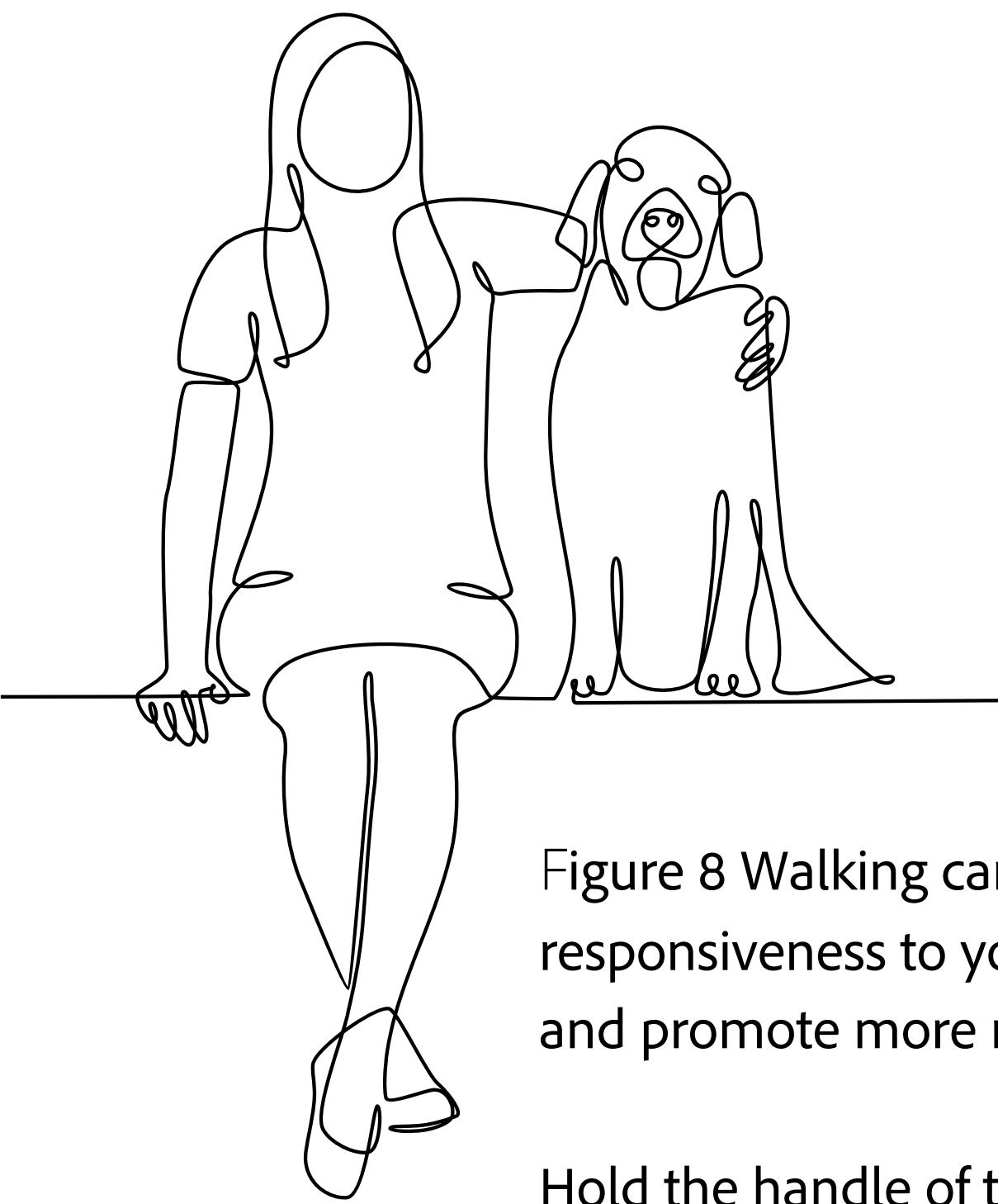


Figure 8 Walking can help your dog acclimate to a new environment and improve their focus and responsiveness to you. It can help desensitize your dog to predictors of arousing circumstances and promote more neutrality around people, dogs, etc.

Hold the handle of the leash in one hand. With your dog at your side, hold the the leash at your hip at a length that will be loose if the dog is in the correct position.

Begin to walk a pattern, like a figure 8. Walk at a steady pace with purpose and leadership. Your dog should follow your lead.

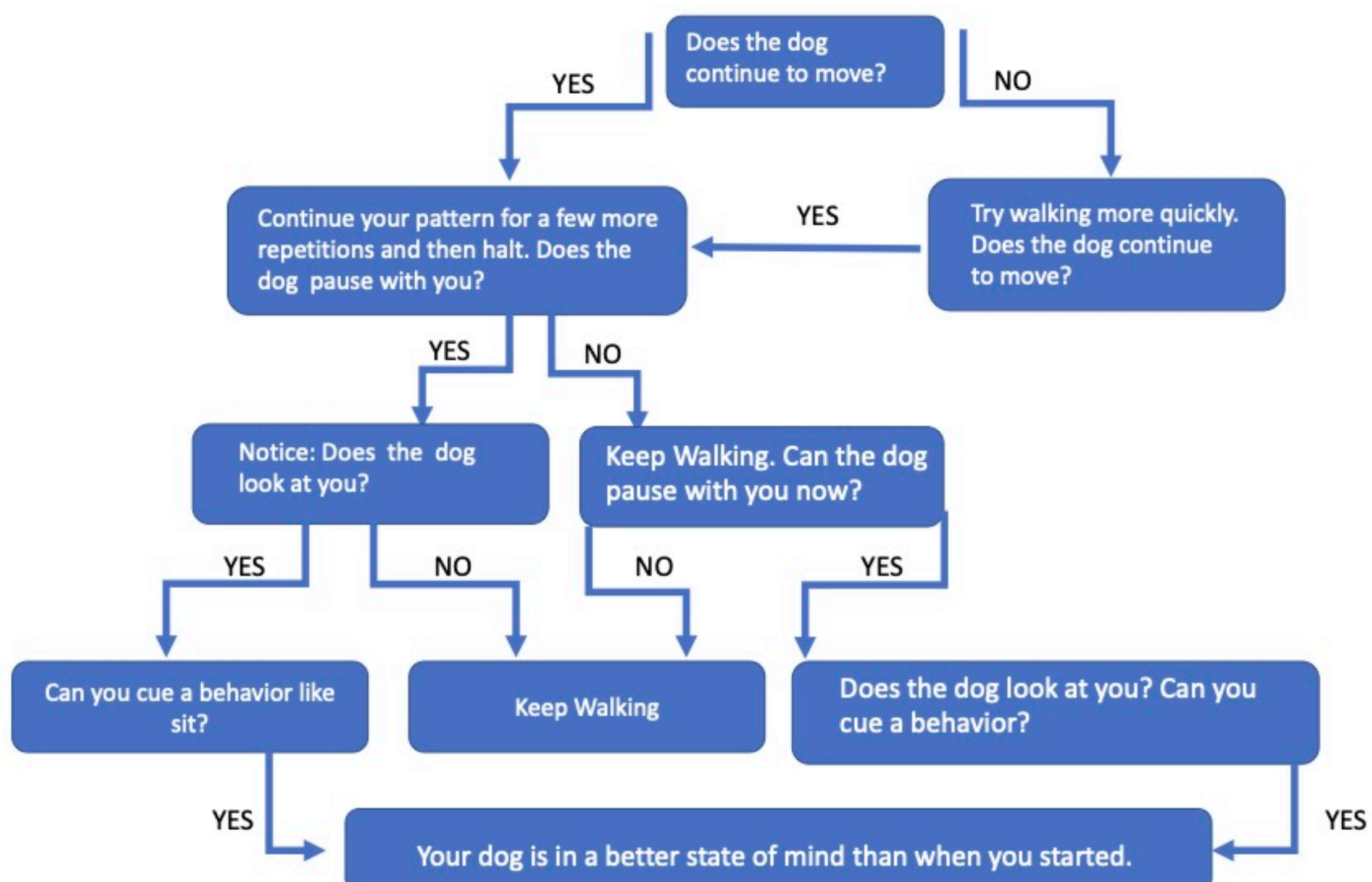
If you stop when your dog wants to sniff... Who is leading the walk?

If he wants to walk faster or slower and you match his pace...Who is leading the walk?

If he wants to explore outside your pattern... Who is leading the walk?

Figure 8 Walking is helpful to manage arousal and help your dog self regulate. The predictable pattern is repeated until your dog is walking fluidly at your side, not trying to pull you forward or to the side, bulking behind you, walking in a jerky or bouncy way.

To assess their focus and arousal, come to a calm halt and watch your dog. What do they do next?



Mild pace changes (speed up or down slightly) can help build in a dimmer switch for arousal.

Other patterns could be: zig zag, circles, ovals, serpentine, around objects