

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Common Questions

What to know before your initial consultation

1. What happens during the initial consultation?

The initial consultation is a one-hour Zoom call and the starting point for every program. Before the call, you complete a detailed intake form so we arrive prepared. On the call, you walk me through your situation: your dog, your household, what's working and what isn't, and I ask the questions that help me understand the full picture.

You leave with a clear recommendation: which program fits your dog's needs, what the structure looks like, and what the next step is. A written follow-up confirms everything discussed.

The consultation is \$99 and that amount is applied in full toward whichever program you book.

2. How is your approach different from other trainers?

Most training focuses on what a dog does. My work starts with why.

Behavior comes from somewhere: an emotional state, a physical condition, a household dynamic, a history. Before anything else, I look at the full picture: the dog, the environment they live in, and the people they live with. That holds whether we are working together in sessions or your dog is staying with me for the Retreat.

The goal is a dog that moves through the world with confidence and calm because their needs have been met, not just managed.

3. What training methods do you use?

Positive, force-free communication is the standard. This is what dogs understand best, and it is the foundation of every program, with puppies, without exception.

If you have strong feelings about specific tools or methods, that conversation belongs at the consultation.

4. Do you work with puppies?

Yes, and the earlier the better. Work can begin before the puppy comes home: setting up the environment, the routine, and the household for a strong start from day one. From eight weeks onward, the focus is on building the conditions for a confident, well-adjusted dog.

Puppy work is heavily owner-focused. The puppy is learning constantly, and what shapes that learning is the consistency of the environment you create. Sessions are built around giving you the understanding to be effective in every interaction, not just the ones we work on together.

5. What is the Behavioral Retreat?

For many clients, the Retreat is the turning point, the moment things actually shift. Your dog lives and works with me in a real home environment for an immersive, uninterrupted period of change. Not a kennel. Not a facility. Daily life is the curriculum: real-world outings, structured routines, consistent handling from morning to night. Your dog is known individually and worked with deliberately throughout their stay.

The results are different from weekly sessions because the conditions are different. There is no reset between appointments, no gap where old patterns reassert themselves. Progress builds continuously.

Daily videos keep you close to the process. You see the work as it happens.

The minimum stay is two weeks. Some dogs benefit from more. Timeline is determined by what the dog needs, not by scheduling convenience.

A one-hour transfer session is included at the end of every stay: what changed, why, and how to keep it. Your follow-through after the Retreat is what determines whether the results hold.

All dogs must meet health requirements prior to enrollment: current vaccinations or titer results (a blood test confirming sufficient immunity without revaccination), active parasite prevention, and a clean fecal test within the last six months. Females in season cannot be admitted. Intact males are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The consultation is where we assess fit, discuss your dog's situation, and confirm timing.

6. How long does it take to see results?

It depends on the dog and the situation. Some clients see a shift within the first session. Most notice meaningful changes within the first two to three weeks of work. For the Behavioral Retreat, the immersive structure accelerates progress: shifts that might take weeks in a session-based program can emerge within days.

How quickly results hold depends on the consistency of the environment the dog returns to. Every program concludes with a clear plan: what to maintain, what to watch for, and why.

7. Can you help my dog get along with other pets in the home?

Yes. Cat-dog and multi-dog dynamics are situations I work with regularly. Most inter-pet tension is readable once you understand what each animal is actually communicating: the problem is rarely what it looks like on the surface.

A few things worth knowing: I work with your dog. If there are cats in the home, I understand feline behavior and factor it into the work, but the scope does not extend to training them. If you have multiple dogs, each is assessed and worked with individually under a separate program.

The goal is not that everyone becomes best friends. It is that they can share a space without conflict.

8. Can you work with rescue dogs or dogs with unknown backgrounds?

Yes. Dogs with no known history are among the most common cases I work with, and an unknown past is rarely the obstacle people expect it to be. What matters is understanding the dog in front of you: their current emotional

state, their responses, their thresholds, not the history that led them there.

I foster dogs personally and work with rescue groups and both Los Angeles city and county shelters. That experience informs how I approach dogs who have had difficult starts, inconsistent handling, or no foundation at all.

9. Are there cases you don't take?

Yes. Being clear about this upfront saves everyone time.

I do not work with dogs with a documented bite history involving children in the home. The management protocols required to keep everyone safe are demanding, and the risk if anyone slips, even once, is too great. This is distinct from puppy nipping and mouthing toward children, which is normal developmental behavior and well within scope.

I do not offer service dog certification, protection dog training, or boundary training to replace a fence. Regardless of the program, I do not take cases where the owner is not prepared to do their part. No program produces lasting results without follow-through at home.

If you are unsure whether your situation falls within scope, the intake form is the right place to start.

10. Where do you offer your services?

Private sessions are conducted in your home and neighborhood: this is intentional. Behavior doesn't live in a training facility, and the work needs to happen where the dog actually does. In-person sessions are available in the South Bay, Westside, and Mid-City.

Virtual sessions are available to clients anywhere.

The Behavioral Retreat takes place in a home environment in the South Bay. Clients travel to me from across California and occasionally further.

If you're unsure whether your location is a fit for in-person work, mention it in the intake form.
