

GUIDELINES FOR GROUP SESSIONS

Dog Talk & TheraPet, LLC

What is Socialization Preceding Level 1?

We invite puppies from about 12 to 16 weeks (with Veterinarian approval) to puppy socials that precede Level 1 classes. Puppies are allowed to explore and navigate their way in dog-to-dog interactions with supervision. While engaging in socialization, pups learn essential communication skills (Calming Signals®). Careful human intervention teaches the leadership role. It begins the foundation for a trusting relationship. Socializing sessions (anywhere) should be supervised, short and safe and *with awareness*.

What do I Bring to Class?

- Ⓢ For safety, all dogs must enter the Sanctuary on leash. No flexi-leads please. There are two fenced areas for dogs to relieve themselves & socialize. Please ask others if it is okay.
- Ⓢ **10/5 Safety Rule:** At 10-feet be aware. At 5 feet meet and greet those already in the Sanctuary.
- Ⓢ Bring yourself, your dog & family members (*if you choose*).
- Ⓢ Children must be supervised in class. Children under 12 should be supervised anywhere with dogs. An adult must accompany teenagers under 16.
- Ⓢ Initial vaccinations & rabies are required and in collaboration with your Veterinarian.
- Ⓢ Bring your dog's healthy treats or kibble, mats and/or a blanket (if you like), a favorite toy or two, an open-mind & a good sense of humor.
- Ⓢ Don't feed your dog too much before class ... save it for "watch-me's" and food lure training.
- Ⓢ Your pup and/or dog will naturally be excited and/or a bit stressed. You may be too. Take a moment before coming in to de-pee, de-poo and de-stress – de-compress before class and after play sessions (in the fenced training area).
- Ⓢ Clean-up apparatus is available. Please clean-up after your dog.

How do I Prepare Myself and My Dog(s) for a New Learning Experience?

Training puppies (*and older dogs*) can be a positive life changing experience! It's about developing a relationship with a different species and learning together. Pups learn quickly in the first 6-months. Visualize the adult dog. Then, teach & shape the behaviors you desire using **positive-life rewards** (healthy treats, kibble, scratch, play, sniff or walk). **What are the top 3-things your dog absolutely loves?**

Here's some other helpful tips you can integrate into your lifestyle on a daily basis and prepare you for the journey to class:

- Ⓢ **B r e a t h e ~ e x h a l e ~ l e t – I t – g o.** Walk your dog for some healthy exercise and energy balancing. Emotions travel like a conduit from you, down the leash and to your dog, so try to relax.
- Ⓢ Set an intention for your training practice allowing for flexibility. Throw judgment aside for a while and develop a beginner's mind. Set some realistic intentions & expectations.
- Ⓢ No free lunch! **The mantra** is "you do something for me and I'll do something for you (sit, "OKAY", here's your dinner). Dogs need boundaries and a leader they can count on. It's less confusing and gives their life meaning. Dogs learn faster when they think & do!
- Ⓢ Train with the same qualities that you expect and enjoy when learning something new yourself: patience, compassion and understanding.
- Ⓢ Catch your dog in the act of doing something right! Focus on and reward positive behaviors **pronto! Timing is everything.**
- Ⓢ "Bone-up" on your life management skills, while integrating a dog(s) into your family.
- Ⓢ Learn to quiet your mind, be present, observe & listen. It makes it easier to find solutions.

We are hoping to motivate you to develop a relationship with your dog that is trusting, respectable, reliable and inspires confidence in a broad range of circumstances. Be mindful that dogs live in the here and now! We can learn from that. **Have fun & Enjoy the Journey!**