

[Dog Talk Training and Wellness Sanctuary, LLC](#)

Maureen Ross, MA, NCC, CPDT-KA, RYT
Awareness Centered Training – ACT
Canine Coach / Behavior Counseling



Barking a Song!

What is a professional canine coach?

A professional coach is a trusted partner who can help you discover what keeps you (and your dog) from reaching your fullest potential. A coaching relationship provides a supportive and non-judgmental space to help you discuss your concerns, in a relaxed environment. With dogs in mind, sessions may include discussions about family, friends and the environment. A coach will help you strategize and acquire the tools you need to achieve your goals. A coach will assist you in taking steps to identify and reframe thoughts and behaviors. A coach encourages an open mind for change, awareness, education and opportunities to change negative habits or patterns (human and dog), acquire new skills, and take action to achieve your maximum potential, reduce stress and develop a respectful relationship and empowering future.

What types of people / dogs have a coach?

People seek coaches for professional and personal goals. Dog parents seek professional coaching to resolve behavior issues, achieve training goals or seek a more enjoyable relationship with their dog. Coaches will briefly review history, but focus on how you and your dog can achieve realistic goals. Coaches work with you, in support, as a team. Working with a coach is not limited to any type of person, dog or behavior, but is best for those who are eager to take initiative and make a commitment to change, primarily for the health and well being of themselves and their dogs (families).

How will coaching help?

The results will vary depending on what brings you in, commitment and practice. In addition to basic training, which all dogs deserve to become happy, healthy and confident adult dogs, coaching can help you make life with your dog more gratifying and help in managing work, schedules and family life, with the dog in mind, more effectively. Sensory overload plays a big part in our lives. Learning how a dog deals with conflict and stress, and how you can relieve this with simple techniques, is an added benefit. A coach will help you empower yourself, resolve negative thinking and re-shape behaviors to improve overall well being. You CAN live a more balanced life with dogs, family, career and life in general.

How do I know if I am ready for coaching?

Excellent question! In general if you can affirmatively answer the questions below, you are ready to begin. Be honest and share with me areas that you may need encouragement.

- *Do I have a strong desire to change my dog's behavior, and mine, in relationship?*
- *Is this behavior affecting my or my dog's (family's) well being?*
- *Do I have some idea of my coaching goals, what I would like to change?*
- *Can I identify benefits to achieving these goals?*
- *Am I open to new ways of thinking and behaving?*
- *Can I be honest with myself, others and my dog?*
- *Am I open to feedback, listening, even when it is mixed or negative?*
- *Can I be patient when I know the payoff is worth it or am I looking for quick results?*
- *Do I have time - or can I make time - in my schedule for coaching?*
- *Can I typically follow through on commitments and assignments?*

What happens in a coaching session?

Each session is tailored to the client and dog (team). Focus is on individual needs. In the beginning, we will discuss what you are committed to accomplishing and what behaviors are of concern. We will work together, with your dog, and perhaps family members (others) to create a plan to achieve your goals. I will give you assignments that need to be

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practiced. We will work together to recognize obstacles, explore alternative perspectives and celebrate successes. With the conclusion of each session, we will revisit your goals, your dog's improvement (or not), and evaluate the next steps that are needed to achieve results.

Do I really need a coach? Can't I just do it by myself?

Has doing it yourself been working for you? If you are reading this, my sense is that you may be ready to reach out for help. Oftentimes, people try to achieve their greatest potential in relationships and careers (this includes dogs), but are not aware of what is standing in their way. They know the buzz words of positive training, dominance, alpha, house-training and many choices in equipment, but not how to and apply them effectively. Dog training, rehabilitation or behavior change requires experience, time, commitment and guidance. A coach can offer an unbiased and objective perspective, skills, and help you recognize your and your dog's patterns - and habits that may be holding you back.

Most people are reluctant, at first, to work with a coach. They may be fearful or lacking in confidence, like some dogs. Fear can paralyze and discourage us. An experienced coach provides the opportunity to learn, without judgment, engages in a team effort, and encourages you to challenge yourself and your dog.

How is coaching different from therapy or behavior counseling?

While the coaching I provide can be therapeutic, and will help modify or teach new behaviors, it is not designed to resolve your personal or psychological issues. Coaching is combined with awareness, education and behavior change with the dog in mind. While emotional issues may arise, the primary focus is to help you identify your goals, develop practical habits and skills, and achieve them with your dog. We briefly explore the past to help create a better present and future. The benefits trickle over into all areas of living, so you can enjoy the journey.

What is your cancellation policy?

I require a 24 hour notice to cancel or re-schedule sessions. Please be sure to contact me if you will not be able to make your scheduled appointment in order to avoid being charged for the session.

How long do people generally work with a coach?

To experience the effectiveness of a professional canine coaching program, I suggest clients make an initial three to six month commitment. At the end of the three months, we will evaluate progress and discuss options for continued coaching. You may need fewer sessions depending on how quickly you achieve your goals. Tune-ups are welcome and encouraged in the future.

Is coaching confidential?

Coaching is a confidential process. Your personal information will be protected and not shared with others. Our discussions / sessions are not privileged for legal purposes, as is with therapists, attorneys or clergy.