

RECOVERY Assistance Dogs



Finding Ways to Mental Health

RECOVERY Assistance Dogs,
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Charity Number: 1125395

RECOVERY is a charity for Wellbeing that spreads the word about how people can recover from Mental Health needs with the healing of memories through Creative Therapies.

RECOVERY Assistance Dogs for Mental Health assist Survivors and help them to find Wellbeing. We campaign against compulsion and for freedom of choice.

Name of Survivor:

Support Worker:

Name of Dog:

DOB of Dog:

Type of Dog:

Date of Level 1:

Date of Level 2:

Date of Level 3 & Graduation:

RECOVERY Assistance DOGS HELP INDIVIDUALS TO REGAIN INDEPENDENCE AND WELLBEING – Please help us to assess the training that will most help in your recovery.

We train dogs to 3 Levels and the first level takes a minimum of 6 months. In total training each RECOVERY Dog takes a minimum of 1.5 years to graduate but RAD has no maximum. Puppies cannot take the PAW Test until they are a year old.

Level 1 BASIC ACCESS TRAINING

Dogs are trained to be well behaved with access to all Supermarkets, shops, malls, theatres, buses and aeroplanes wearing a RECOVERY Dog Coat.

Any Comments about the Access Training.

Level 2 SKILLED ASSISTANCE The RECOVERY Dogs are trained to support Survivors' particular symptoms. They should be trained in a minimum of 3 Tasks:

Panic attacks – alerting the Handler to avoid the attacks and helping them to stay calm and focused to shorten the attack if they do have one. Train dog to recognize that Survivor is going to have an attack he is trained to come up and stare and put his head in your lap or tap with paw or nose. The dog helps with stability and positivity. Training the RAD Dog to find the exit if in a shop or department Store and felt panicky so that client needs to leave quickly. Some extra training so that the dog can help in the street to find the way home (using the cue 'Exit Home') or find the car/Bus Station ('Exit Car').

Blocking – The dog is trained to protect the Handler by lying or standing between their owner and other people. This can be at the front, the sides or the back of the Handler. We train the dog to do this by using a lure (a treat) to move them to the correct position. Eventually the dog will do this without prompting. This is done to protect the client from anxiety or fear of crowds or individuals standing too close.

Mobility – Training the dog to walk so close that it enables the Handler to stay upright when dizzy from medication or other problems. Picking up dropped items.

Waking and Sleeping– Helping the Handler to wake up and get up in the mornings. Train the dog to remove the duvet or bark and jump up and down next to the Survivor. Train the dog to help Survivor to sleep by cuddling and comforting them.

Protection from fear – Doing a room search and turning on lights, alerting the Handler to any threat (like someone approaching the house) or reassurance that there is no threat.

Safety in the Street – Protecting the Handler from walking into a dangerous situation with traffic or crowds. Guiding the Handler home. Dog trained to stop Survivor from walking into the road and to focus on the Survivor to get them out of difficult situations.

Agrophobia – being protective in crowds by training to circle around the Survivor or have two dogs walking either side or helping to get out of the house or back to the house. Making the Survivor feel safe and protected.

Anxiety – trained to bark on command (for protection or to alert someone for help) and to cuddle or distract the Handler. The dog encouraged to step in when the Survivor is crying so her mind set has to change. The Survivor begins to feel much more stable than they used to. The dog can be trained specifically to jump into client's arms for comfort and safety.

Social Inclusion – a way of meeting people. The dog is trained to enable the Handler to talk calmly and without anxiety to other people. Also we train the dog so that it will only approach people that it has been allowed to approach. Dog is trained so that he is he does not go up to them or respond to others. This is quite important because sometimes the dog is off the lead. Also if the client does not want Social Inclusion or the dog to be petted by other people the dog can be trained to stand behind the client or away from people. Client can be shown how to train dog to touch them for reassurance/Social Inclusion so that when other people approach the dog turns away from them to the client.

Memory problems – trained to remind medication. This is by retrieving a pack with the medication in and using an alarm or phone as a stimulus. The dog can be trained to touch until the Survivor takes the medication. The use of a phone alarm at the appropriate time can be included in the training. Also the dog can be trained to find lost objects (e.g. phone or keys).

Modelling good behaviour - The dog is trained to stay calm in challenging and extreme situations when the handler is upset. The dog comes up and puts his face in the Survivors and interacts between them.

Disassociation – Helping Survivor to cope with feelings of not being able to cope because of problems with staying focused on what they are doing at present moment. Training the dog to nudge or tap with the use of a timer. MEB – This is a Mutually Exclusive Behaviour that helps the Survivor and the dog to stay calm in challenging situations.

Level 3 INDIVIDUAL EMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE

The RECOVERY Dogs encourage the Survivor to be centred and stable by:

Creating a still and peaceful atmosphere.

Reminding Survivors to do quiet time or Centering Therapy

Encouraging rest for the Survivor (The dogs encourage rest by not chatting endlessly as human support can do).

RECOVERY WILL BE IN TOUCH IN _____ TO DO A LEVEL 3 Meeting. Please get in touch before then if you need any further help.

After you have completed all the Levels your dog can graduate. The Graduation Ceremony is held yearly usually in October or November at the RAD Annual Gathering (AGM).

YEARLY UPDATE

To continue as a RAD Dog, we have to do an Update every year.

All AD Organisations have an Assessment procedure to check the behaviour of the Dog/Client Team when training & once it is graduated. This includes:

- Dog welfare and health
- 3 Training tasks relating specifically to the work of a Assistance dog
- Obedience, both on and off lead
- Public access behaviour
- Sustained improvement to quality of life of client.