



Service dog work and tasks

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Things to take home

- There are infinite service dog work and tasks
- Terminology is not standard
- Owner-trainers can train any type of work or task





The infinite work/tasks

- Most common work or task for psychiatric service dogs is pressure therapy





The infinite work/tasks

- Alerts and responses are also commonly used to warn a handler of an impending issue, or to help them through the issue
 - Anxiety attacks
 - Mood swings
 - Flashbacks
 - Seizures
 - Blood sugar issues
 - Heart conditions/rate





The infinite work/tasks

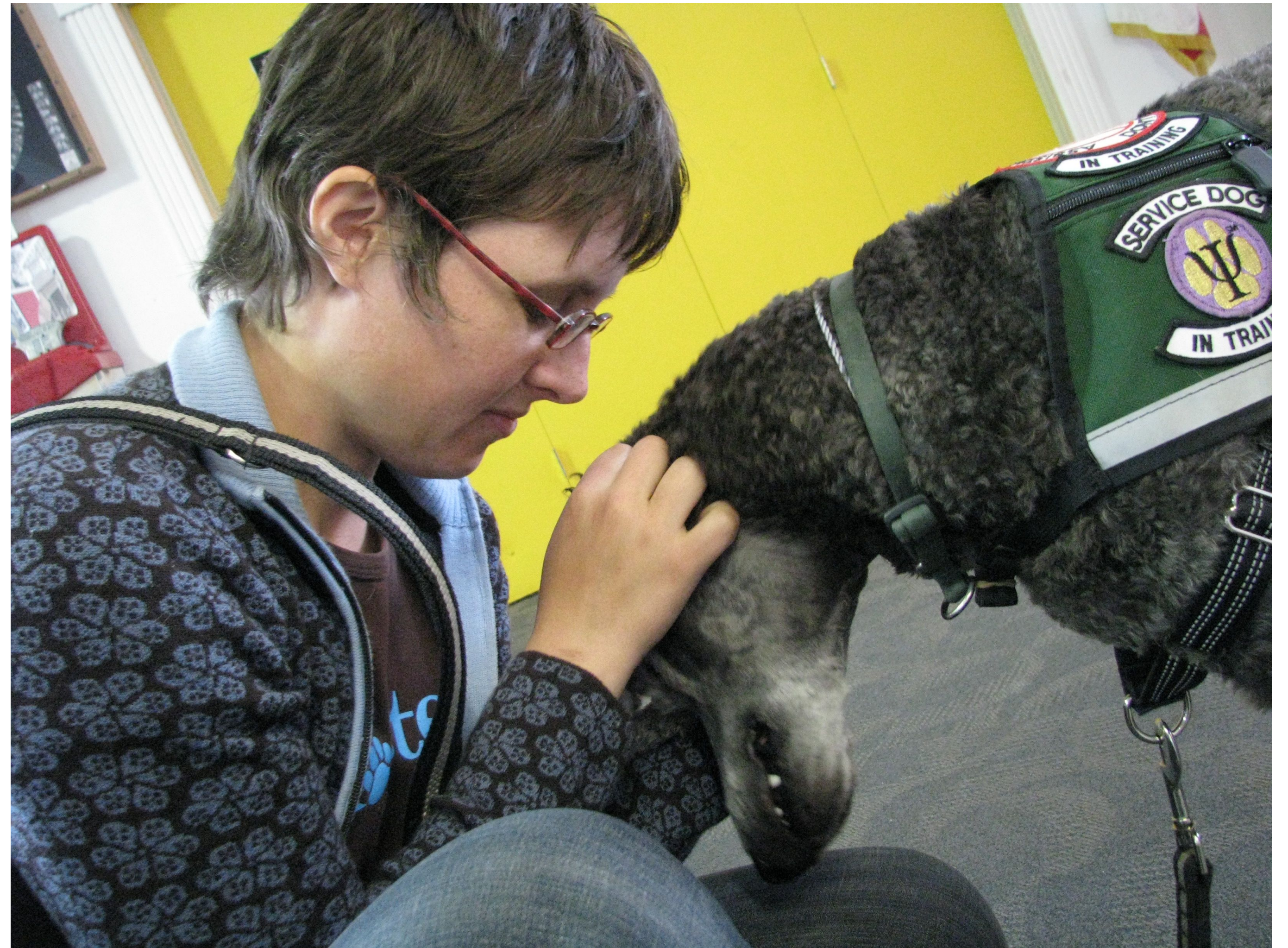


- Hallucination discernment allows the handler to perceive which of the things they are seeing are real, and which are not



The infinite work/tasks

- Grounding keeps a handler present in space and time





The infinite work/tasks



- Tactile stimulation is often used to interrupt behaviors, ground the handler, remind of routines, do alerts, and respond to medical conditions



The infinite work/tasks

- Section summary
 - Any list you might find of work/tasks is incomplete
 - The most important factors are that the person has a limitation due to their disability, and that the dog is trained to do something to help
 - Since every person is affected uniquely by their disability, every dog can work differently
 - Two people with the same diagnosis might use different work or tasks



Non-standard terminology

- Even among programs, they use different terms for the same action
- With owner-trainers, the names of work and tasks become even more varied
- People who speak English as a second language, or who have disabilities that affect their cognition or ability to communicate in written English might use terms that seem “off” or “strange” to native English speakers (e.g. “touch me when I feel sad”)
- Preconceived ideas or emotional reactions can get in the way



Non-standard terminology

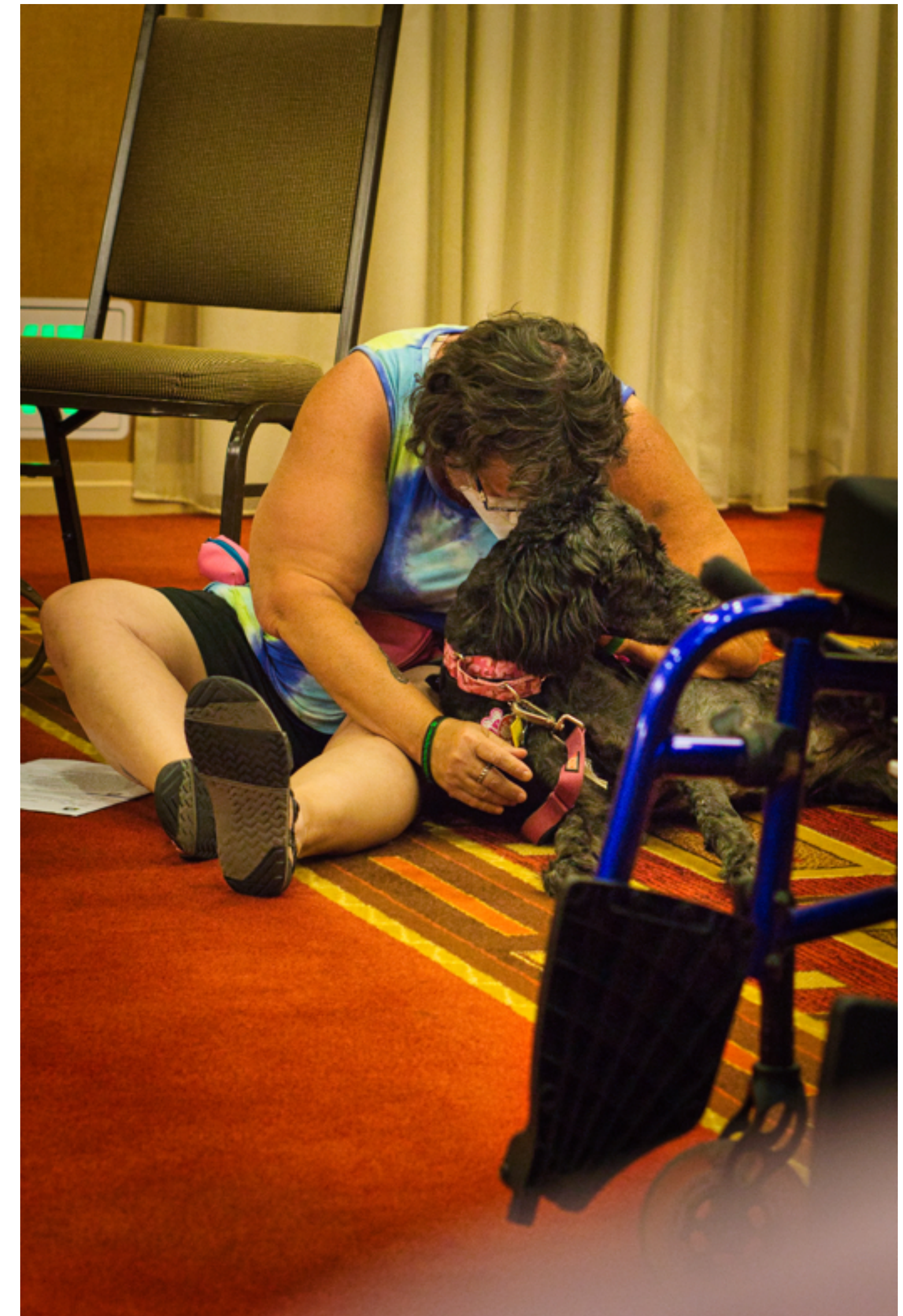
- Pressure therapy has many names
 - Hugs
 - Deep pressure therapy
 - Lying on parts of the body





Non-standard terminology

- Tactile stimulation is called many things
 - Licking
 - Kisses
 - Pawing
 - Nudging
 - Bumping
 - Paws-up





Non-standard terminology



- Pressure therapy and tactile stimulation are just two examples
- Always give people a chance to explain what they mean, as there are no standardized terms
- Two yellow flags by themselves: “emotional support” or “comfort”; get clarification



Can train anything

- Many people think there are some things only programs can do
- In fact, owner-trainers can train anything a program can!





Can train anything

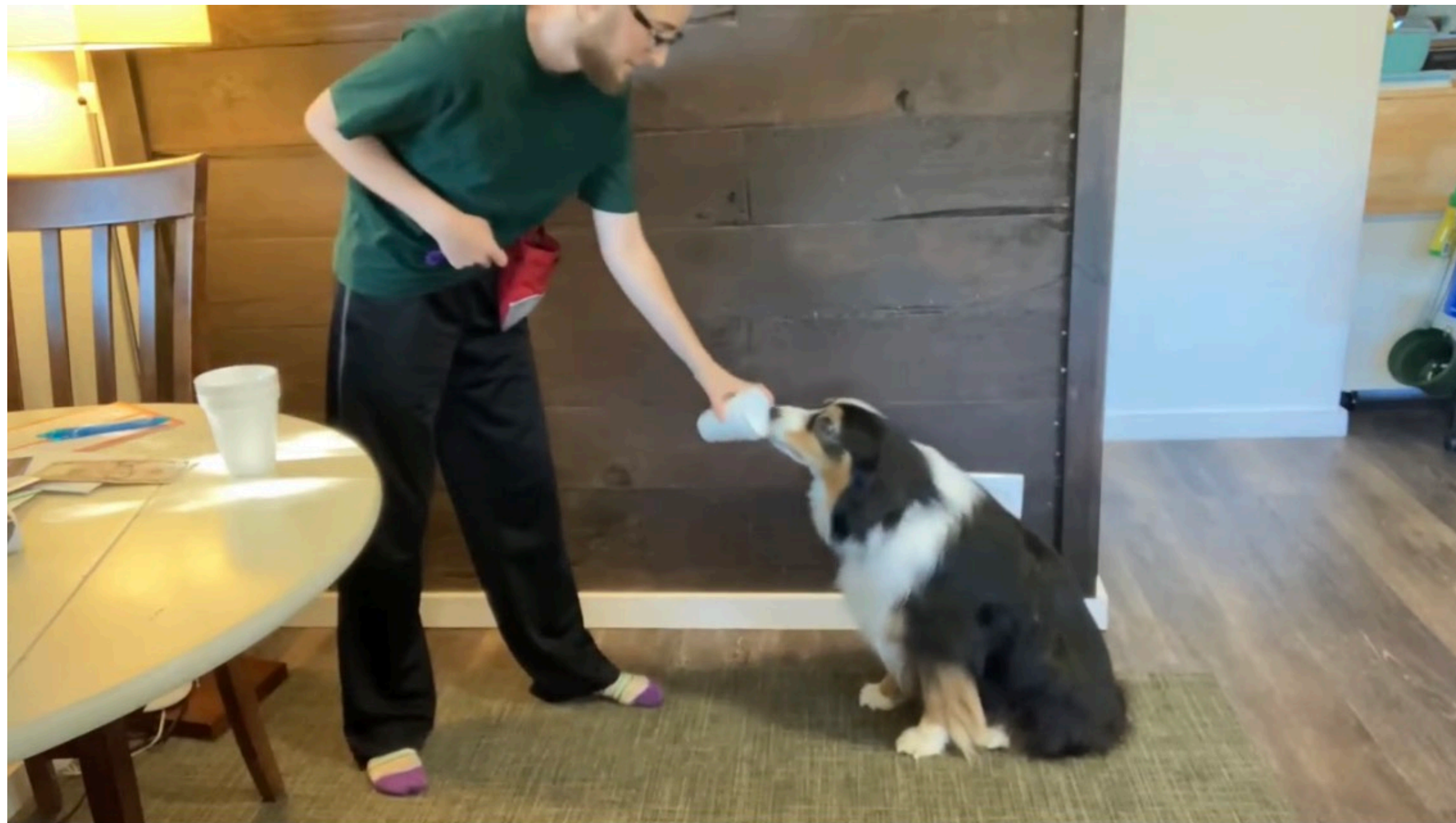
- Guide dogs can be trained by using a cane, using familiar routes, during times of the day where the person has more vision, or with the assistance of a friend, family member, or pet dog trainer





Can train anything

- Allergen detection dogs can be trained using protective equipment like surgical gloves, respirators, ziptop baggies, and baby food jars





Can train anything

- Alert and response dogs can be trained by: faking the episode, training during an episode, or enlisting the help of friends, family, or a pet dog trainer





Can train anything

- People might have pet dogs that they want to train, or obtain dogs from breeders or the shelter
- They may have varying levels of support from others in the service dog community, and so have varying knowledge of “standard” terms and techniques
- Owner-training is often better than program training for customization of the dog, avoiding scam programs, and for cost effectiveness



Conclusion

- There is such a wide variety of things a service dog can do, what those things are called, and how to train them that the possibilities are infinite
- If something doesn't make sense, ask them to describe what it looks like to someone else when their dog is working/doing tasks
- The point is access, not maximum barriers—err on the side of disability rights



Questions?

