

Empowerment and moving forward

It's ok to ask for help

When I first started social paws, I had so many questions. There were things I had not yet experienced and whilst courses are great, sometimes you can't replicate a real-life experience. So that's where asking others who have been there really can help. Their real-life experiences, how they tackle different situations. I mean how can we even imagine something we've not experienced before, plus this is something a textbook can't exactly teach: real life experiences. I got in touch with many local pet pros, some virtually online. I loved having mentors who could discuss their real-life experiences. They were able to talk me through my first home visit ensuring safety was the main priority!

Getting the most out of asking for help

You may feel as though asking for help reveals your phoniness. You deeply fear being exposed as inexperienced or unknowledgeable. But on the contrary, asking questions opens doors and gives us more knowledge. How empowering is that!

Quick fire tips:

- There's no shame in asking for help when you need it, no shame at all. If you don't know how to do something, ask a trusted professional. But be mindful who you ask, how you phrase the question and be mindful of their time.
- Lean on a smaller network for more personal questions, only some individuals will really understand you based on your connection/friendship.
- It can be hard to 'read' comments on social media as we can't hear the tone of voice or see facial expressions. Often professionals are trying to help but just need more information and as above can't read the whole situation through just one post.
- If you can't figure out how to solve a problem, seek advice from a supportive professional via pm or post in a more closed/confidential or members group.
- Try to stay away from general questions and where possible explain the situation in full.
- Mentoring or volunteering can be a great way to discover that you are an expert. When you share what you know it not only benefits others, but also helps you heal your fraudulent feelings, leading to having imposter syndrome. Imagine that you become the mentor!
- Or finally, getting a mentor for yourself. I really found this streamlined my confidence and gave me a soundboard.