

Unlocking Independence: Supporting the Transition to Guide Dog Travel

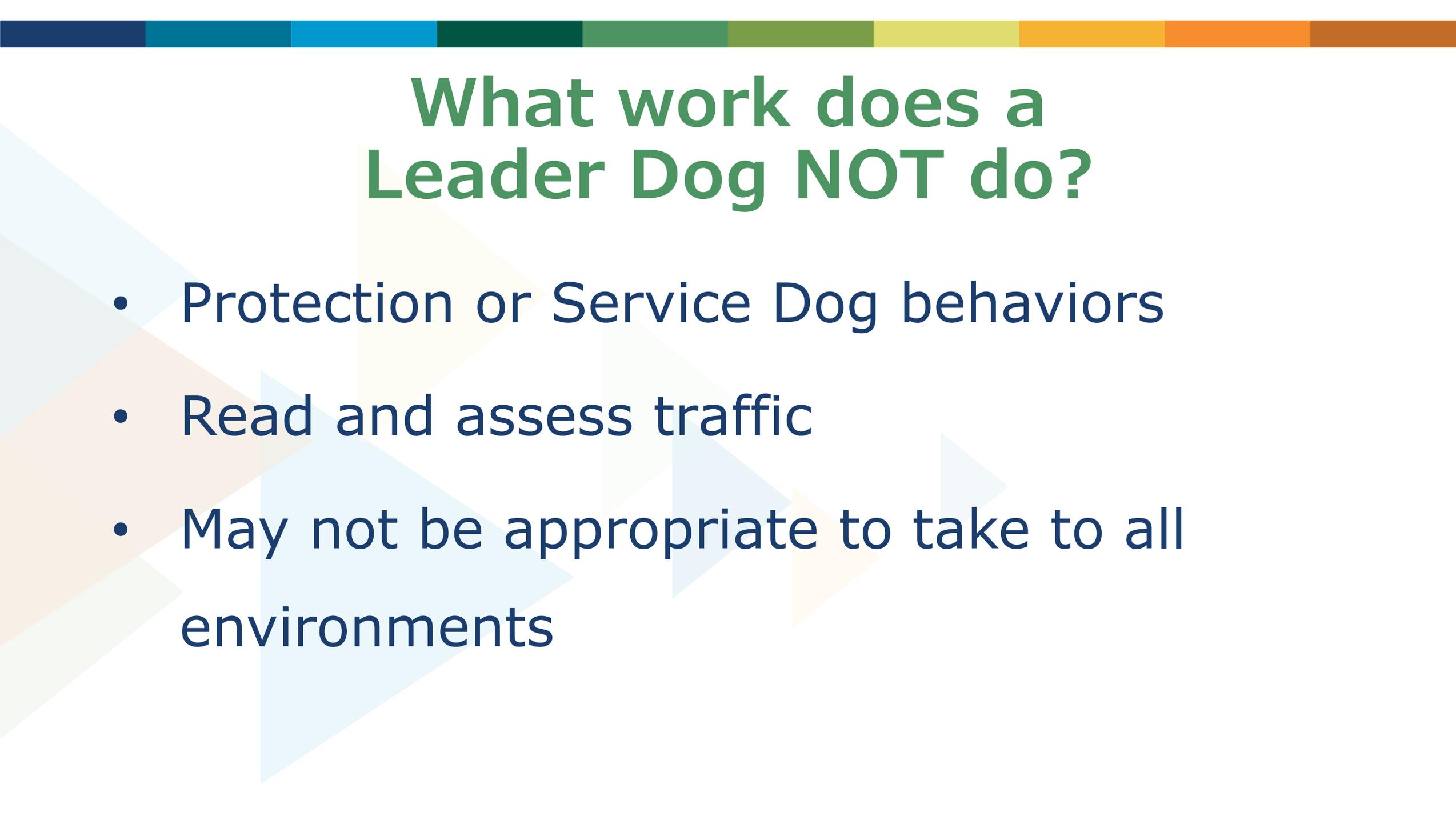


Leader Dogs for the Blind Mission

Our mission is empowering people who are blind or low vision with lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel.

What work does a Leader Dog do?

- Straight line travel
- Obstacles and changes in elevation
 - Overhead obstacles
 - Partial/full obstacles
- Patterning – “Find the”



What work does a Leader Dog NOT do?

- Protection or Service Dog behaviors
- Read and assess traffic
- May not be appropriate to take to all environments

Dog Lifestyle Impact

- Pros:
 - Companionship
 - Social interaction
 - Navigates around obstacles
 - Faster paced
 - Traffic safety

Dog Lifestyle Impact (2)

- Cons:
 - Care and Costs
 - Unwanted social interactions
 - Limitations
 - Long term commitment
 - Retirement/Passing

Required Skills and Standards

- IGDF Standards- International Guide Dog Federation
- Standards for:
 - Client selection
 - Guide dog team instruction
 - Care and training of dogs
 - Canine Centers, training facility, transportation



IGDF Client Standards

- Motivation for long term work
- Physical ability
- Functional orientation
- Sufficient work

IGDF Client Standards (2)

- Vision loss
- Independent street crossings
- Positive home environment
- Financial capabilities

Assessment

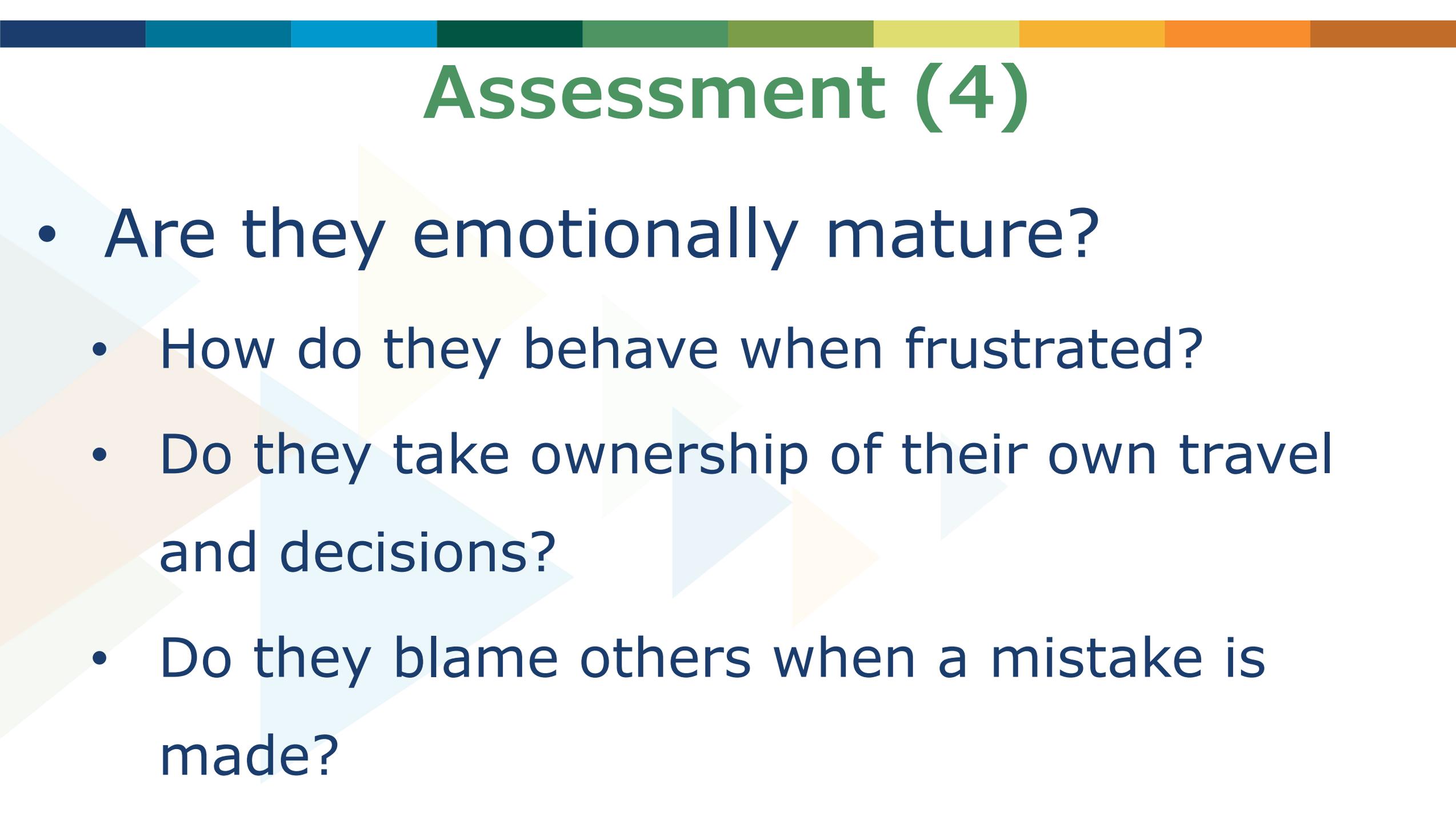
- Are they an independent cane traveler?
 - Do they have destinations?
 - Do they need someone with them to travel?
 - Is their travel environment familiar to them?
 - Do they know where they are, want to go, and how to get there?
 - Are their resources and strategies working for them?

Assessment (2)

- Can they accurately analyze intersections and traffic patterns?
 - Can they identify the shape and traffic control at different intersections?
 - Can they accurately identify how vehicles are moving in relationship to their body?
 - Do they assess the risk of each street crossing?
 - Can they execute a low-risk crossing independently?

Assessment (3)

- Are they a good problem solver?
 - Time/Distance/Rate
 - Self-advocacy



Assessment (4)

- Are they emotionally mature?
 - How do they behave when frustrated?
 - Do they take ownership of their own travel and decisions?
 - Do they blame others when a mistake is made?

Assessment (5)

- Do they have independent daily living skills?
 - Can they handle being away from home for class?
 - Can they take care of themselves?
 - Do they have the time and physical ability to care for a dogs daily needs?

Assessment (6)

- Why do they want a guide dog?
 - Is their support network supportive of this goal?
 - Do they plan to stay in their home environment for at least a year?

Client Scenario

A client can use their cane skills and cross streets independently, but they do veer up some driveways along their route. They notice when they veer and can problem solve to get back on track.

- Would their veering disqualify them from a dog guide?

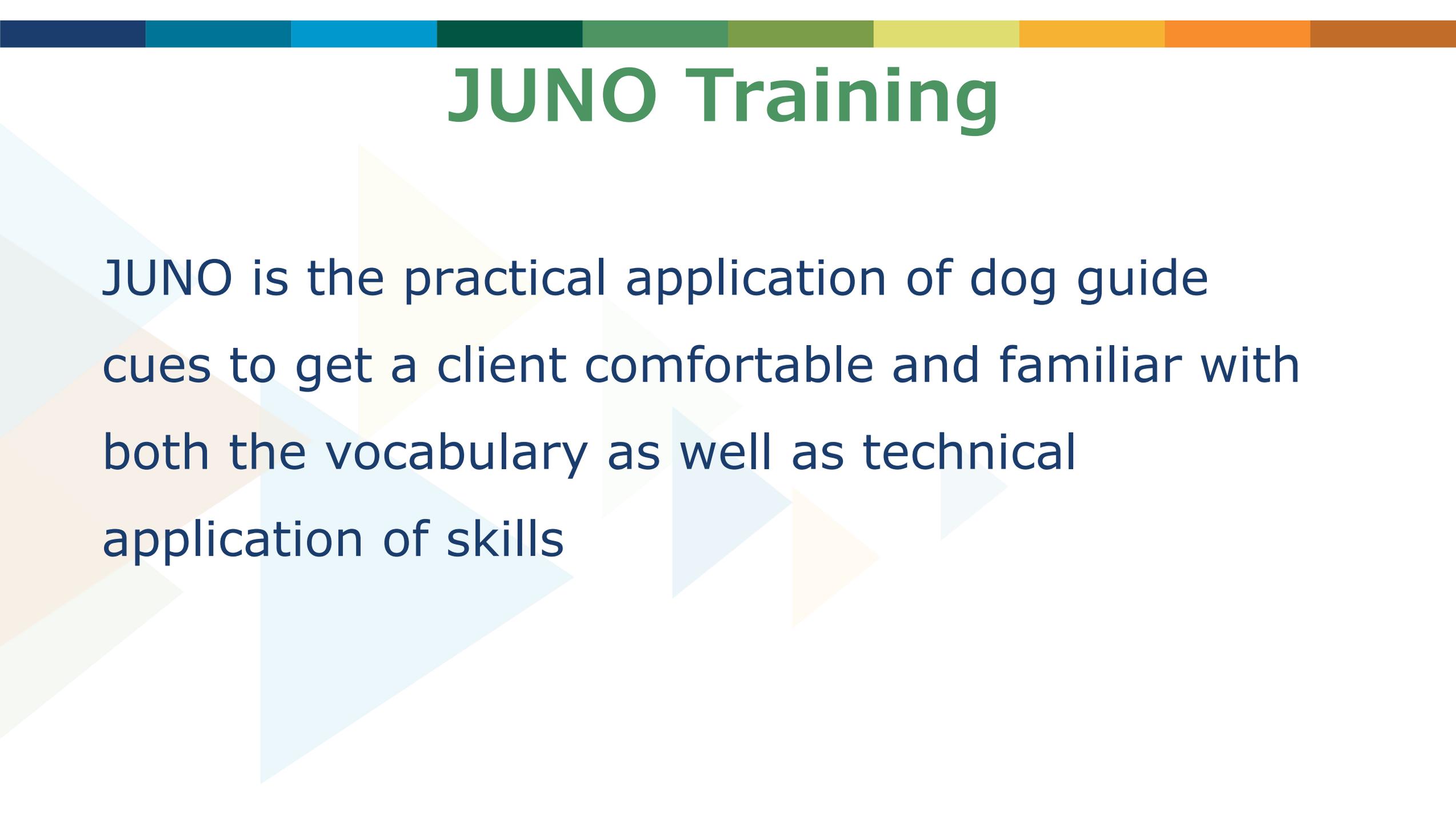
Client Scenario (2)

A client lives in a very rural area and can independently travel on their 5 acres on their property but need to be driven door to door for all other errands or travel with some assistance.

- Would their travel habits disqualify them from a dog guide?

Resources: O&M Specialist

- Time/Distance/Rate
- Auditory skills
- Adverse weather
- Human Guide or JUNO
- Develop routes



JUNO Training

JUNO is the practical application of dog guide cues to get a client comfortable and familiar with both the vocabulary as well as technical application of skills

JUNO Training (2)

Benefits of JUNO training

- Assess client's information retention
- Evaluate client's ability to travel with less tactile information
- Grasp a pace the client likes to walk without that tactile information
- Reinforce that a guide dog is not a GPS and white cane skills are essential

JUNO Training (3)

- Forward- Dog will maintain this motion until they are asked to find something, or there is an obstacle in the way blocking forward motion.
- Left/Right
- Find the curb- Dog will slow their pace and stop at the up or down curb
- Steady (in a calm stern tone)- slows the dog down
- Lets go (in a happy excited tone)- speeds the dog up

LeaderDog.org

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