

Bowen Final Thoughts

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When I first came across this therapy, I thought I'd be learning a parlour trick. Some fancy little move to help maybe calm dogs and give them a sense of peace around me. I never imagined it would open up a new world and a new career path for me.

Sitting in our first class, I felt out of place. The people around me had working knowledge of anatomy, how bowen worked and wanted to use this as a stepping stone in their work. I loved animals. I had let the animal specialty industry be a huge part of my life for 15 years and this was going to be another notch in my belt. I had never imagined that today, this therapy would become my purpose.

My first at home client was a family friend. They had had a road block in being able to care for their senior pet. The feeling of giving them hope is one I will not forget. This therapy - so whole and so gentle offered their pet a chance to live longer and to live with more freedom of movement. When I met the family, I was taken to the basement where their cat spent all of her time. She had obvious difficulty walking, her coat was in terrible condition and the overall feeling in that room was sadness. I was left to do my thing. I set up all my gear. I took photos, videos and extensive notes. I was halfway through my session when the father of the house came into the basement and asked me to explain what I was doing. He wanted to see what kind of weird therapy his wife and gotten them into. He was not comfortable with me and his mistrust set me up to doubt myself and to doubt my ability to assist.

I remember feeling unconfident. My hands would shake as I started to work through steps 1-14. The worry of not hitting the exact areas would have me landmarking over and over. A year later it feels like a dance. I close my eyes and just focus on the movement of my hands, really focussing on the signs of unbalance in the body.

The last client I worked with was in a foster home of a rescue program. This beautiful young dog had been injured as a pup and walked with a limp in the front leg. Her life had barely started and she was already working to stay mobile. Our first session went as smoothly as possible for a dog that was less than a year. Lots of wiggling and licking and not so much sitting still, but we worked our way through. This was not something to be rushed, and we were going to take the time and make sure we created the best treatment plan for her front leg. We decided on a 4 day schedule since it was possible she could be adopted at any time. When I showed up for session 2, the family said they couldn't believe the difference. I stayed outside so we could do a walk and visual assessment, and by the time we hit the end of the driveway I had tears in my eyes and goosebumps down my arms. The hopping was

minimal, and she was putting weight on her leg. One session. I had done that. That was my moment. This is what my path was meant to be.

Every case feels so personal, and so unique. One dog I would have to follow from room to room as he barked at me as if I was an intruder. Another literally leaned on me from support due to a back leg amputation. The first time I tried to casually work on a friend's dog, her energy lit up like a firecracker after move 1, and I wasn't able to work on her for the rest of the day. My in-laws dog will literally come up and put his back end against my leg so I can work through his back.

The one uniting element is what reminds me that the therapy is working. I didn't realize it until recently, but I get a text or a phone call, with a picture or a plea to come back often. There had been a sense of peace that lingered when I left. Their pet would sleep when I left. There would be time for the body to rest and restore. This is what gives me confidence to continue. Their pet can't tell me if they feel better, but they can show me.

I have been working with rescue groups to provide therapy for animals with movement issues and with anxiety concerns. This is where I want my business to grow. I am currently attending pet shows and festivals to talk with families about using Bowen to help support the body and increase the wellbeing of their pets.

I have appreciated the format of the program. It has allowed me to work at a pace that I am comfortable with instead of pressuring everyone I know into letting me use their pets as guinea pigs. I was able to connect with each case study and really work through learning the correct touch and how to properly landmark even the most uncooperative animals. I am thankful that I did not need a technical background to be able to learn this. I felt like I was given all the tools, and given plenty of guidance in being able to locate references if I needed them. I did feel frustrated with our class, not because of the course, but because of the students. The topic was pulled off course or became too technical and it made me feel like I was wasting the valuable time we had with our instructor. **that is probably specific to our group, and maybe had we not all gotten along so well, it wouldn't have felt like we needed to bond over bowen**

I appreciate how patient you were with walking through steps, ensuring that every move was understood and the purpose of each move on the bigger scale. Thank you for starting this program. It has touched so many lives. I'm excited that so many more want to join this journey. Part of me also wants to tell no one so we can have this superpower all to ourselves, but since we can't be everywhere, I guess we can share it.