

ALTERNATIVE, CONJUNCTIVE, COMPLEMENTARY, IS THAT FREE?

By Tawni McBee PDTI

There is a lot of confusion about what constitutes holistic care. When is a modality (a method of treatment) holistic? What does it mean to be alternative? What does conjunctive mean? And complementary, is that FREE? So let's get some definitions out of the way, first thing.

Holistic medicine, according to Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary, is "comprehensive and total care of a patient. The needs of the patient in all areas, such as physical, emotional, social, and economic, are considered and cared for." The philosophy states that "in nature, entities such as individuals and other complete organisms function as complete units that cannot be reduced to the sum of their parts".

Alternative, in a definition paraphrased from Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary, is one of the courses that could be chosen, implying a *choice*. One of the definitions implies that the choices are mutually exclusive, so that if one is chosen the other must be rejected. So, perhaps, when applying this to caring for a living creature, this could easily be misunderstood.

Conjunctive. Now there's an oddly unusual word. It means simply to join or connect. Perhaps a better word to use for healing arts would be *adjunctive*, an even more unfamiliar term to some. *Adjunctive*, again from Webster's, is "something added to another thing but not essentially a part of it, joined or associated".

Complementary is a word that can be very confusing due to many meanings & confusion with spelling. Complementary means completion or enhancing. In healing practices, the word is used to mean that the modality works well with other treatments, either being benign or assisting the current treatment. Complimentary refers to flattery or something given out of respect. Usually complementary modalities are not free!

In an attempt to be honest and open with our clients, we prefer the words *adjunctive* and *holistic*.

Treatment of the whole dog, his or her environment, physical well-being, disposition and behavior is very important to us. Therefore, we consider ourselves holistic dog trainers. We want the dog to be a member of your family, not just a decoration, a noise-making security

device, or a toy. To that end, we want to make sure all aspects of the dog's life fit into your family's life and everyone is "on the same page". Our evaluations cover the dog's behavior and how it affects your family life, the dog's food, sleeping arrangements, day to day accommodations, any problems you may be having, and the physical condition of the dog. If we feel your dog needs Veterinary care, we will suggest that you see your Vet prior to beginning any formal training. We are a part of your dog care team, not an opposing team. You will be told if we feel physical conditions are a problem for your dog and may be causing some of the behavior you are seeing. A customized program will be set up for you that may include training, behavior modification, scheduling, food counseling, our unique body care techniques or other modalities based on our evaluation of your dog. We will expect the entire family and anyone caring for the dog to follow the program. Our methods are adjunctive because we work closely with Veterinarians, groomers and other members of your dog care team to help balance your family life as it involves your dog.