

THE HUMAN AND ANIMAL BOND:

ANOTHER KIND OF SERVICE

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We speak of humanity standing in the middle. Above us is, we feel, a group of beings drawing us further upward on our individual and collective paths of evolution. Below us are those life forms which may not yet have developed a consciousness capable of perceiving a path of evolution. Those three kingdoms referred to as Animal, Plant and Mineral live within their own instinctual and complex paradigms of being.

But here we are, standing right in between these two groupings of life – those above and those below. *Half way home*, those greater beings above us might say. But there is work to be done along the way.

In the book Alice Bailey book *The Animal Kingdom: A Spiritual Perspective*, we're given a bit more insight into humanity's intended path of service when it comes to the animal kingdom. By virtue of us being a bit further along life's evolutionary pathway, it is our deepening magnetism which will need to have a profound impact on the just emerging souls of creatures.

Four animals in particular are mentioned as having developed awareness to a point that they are capable of being touched, and so changed, on a soul level. Those four animals are the horse, the dog, the elephant and the cat. Historically, each of these animals has had significant interaction with the human race. Used for centuries in both war and peace, they are ready to settle more deeply into their role as companions.

Esoteric Psychology 1 states that the effect (and purpose) of a relationship between man and animal is to provide a step forward for the animal. How does this happen? It seems that as an animal is taken deeper and deeper into the realm of the human, that creature begins to take on a layer of selfhood. Referred to as the process of individualization, the experience moves the animal away from the basic instinctual mode of living, to a broader experience of living. There is a tiny spreading out of awareness which is enabled by being in contact with the radiatory influence of the human being. This radiatory influence has the power to reach life, draw life to itself, and then hold that life in trust.

For the animals which are in this sphere of influence, there are behavioral markers which give a good indication of how the bond is progressing. One behavior to watch for is "the response of the instinctive nature of the animal to the mental atmosphere of the human being." Another is "the outgoing love and interest of the people to which the animal is attached." These two things can tell us quite a lot about how things are progressing. So if we see the animal respond to an emotional expression by its human owner – perhaps coming to sit nearby in times of sadness, or refusing to leave the owners presence if danger is sensed - we know there is inner growth, beyond instinct, taking place. If we see the human take a deep interest in the animal, perhaps speaking with a tone of voice reserved for loved human friends, we know this deeper bond is being forged and old walls within the animal mind are coming down.

It is said that specific animals are connected to specific Rays – just as humans are. Dogs are associated with the 2nd Ray, which is, appropriately, the Ray of Love and Wisdom and the quality of magnetism. Elephants are connected to the 1st Ray, that of Will or Power. Cats are connected to the 3rd Ray, that of Active Intelligence manifesting in adaptability. And for the horse it is the 6th Ray of Devotion manifesting through Intellect.

If you take the Ray of the animal and then blend it with the Ray of the particular person with whom the animal shares its life, there can be an enhancement and strengthening of the animal soul quality. And in Esoteric Psychology we're told that "If, as a human being, we are aware of our Ray type, we can identify the group of forms and of lives with which we are linked, to which we must render service, and by which we can be served."

Perhaps this understanding of Rays and of qualities gives new insight into the reasons we are drawn to particular animals. It's a kindred spirit thing - an intuitive sensing of a shared esoteric skin.

Something to also keep in mind when considering the human to animal relationship is this: the group of humans referred to as the New Group of World Servers is said to stand between Hierarchy and the Human Race. This group is made of men and women who take a bit more responsibility for their fellow human beings, simply because they choose to. We can think of our group of animals – the horse, the dog, the cat and the elephant as being, for the rest of the animal kingdom, what the NGWS is for humanity - a grouping of lives which pull their fellow life-forms a bit further down the evolutionary road. Because of their meaningful interaction with humans, they are a step ahead of what we may think of as wild, though still existing within their instinctual worlds. As they continue to evolve they will magnetically pull their kingdom, upward.

This being so, our service to them is to approach with intelligent love, and to gently guide them on.

I suggest this approach. Look your animal in the eye – fully present – and tell them you're grateful that they're here. Take your time. Hold your gaze steady to theirs. The eye contact alone will open gates in their minds. The bond you already have will be strengthened ten-fold.

If you are one of those people who is graced with having such an animal in your life, you are fulfilling a call to service from the higher realms. Whether it's a horse, a dog, a cat or for a very few, an elephant, can we try to see these creatures as they truly are: not just loved companions, but a brave and curious lifeform, drawn to us for guidance.

From where we stand between heaven and earth our connection with the animals is a shared and ongoing journey decided by the atoms of both our beings. It is a sharing of our human life energy as it radiates outward, further and further, to eventually encompass the whole of the planet, down to the simplest stone and the tiniest seed.

Shri Krishna said "All things want to live." As we move through our days with one or the other of these animals in our care, we might do well to remember that these members of the animal kingdom **want** to live. They carry the same unconsciousness desire to live that we do. In them it is a small knowing, but a genuine desire none the less, born of a shared fire in the cell. In telling them of our gratitude we are raising their existence upward. In telling them of our gratitude we are raising ourselves, as well.

