

Dog Doodle

KAREN ROMANO YOUNG, 2010

In some cases, the social support offered by an animal is greater than the support another human could offer.



The University of Warwick's **June McNicholas**, a psychologist and animal behavior specialist



Basically, 2 different species with complementary skills teamed up together, something that had never happened before and has really never happened since.

People could not have become who we are today if we hadn't co-evolved with



Animals in Translation

Colorado State University's **Temple Grandin** is a Ph.D. in animal science who became interested in the human-animal relationship when she realized that her autism helped her understand animals in a unique way. She says that when early humans began to adopt orphaned wolf pups, things worked out best with the most submissive, sweet, doggy pups. As a result, dogs are genetically wolf puppies. Now they are a species apart, specially attuned to living with human beings.

Good news for dogs and the people who **LOVE** them: **Owning a dog is good for your health.** So is being visited by a dog. So is walking a dog, petting a dog, reading to a dog.

PEOPLE WITH DOGS...

TINA have lower blood pressure, less hypertension, fewer allergies, less asthma, lower cholesterol, fewer serious medical problems and minor ailments.

YOGI have more social interactions, more conversations, and more friends, which also helps reduce stress.

ROSIE have higher levels of serotonin and dopamine, nerve transmitters that give people pleasant, calm feelings.

TROOPER get more exercise and fresh air, leading to healthy heart and lungs, plus bigger muscles, less flab.

Here are some things that are good for dogs:

Adoption. Dogs need loving homes.

Training. Obedience helps dogs keep their homes!

Exercise. **WALKIES!**

Good food and water. **V**et visits.

Not being tied up outside.

Socialization with other animals and all sorts of people.



This is my dog, BEANS. He's a good boy.

Children with difficulty reading improve their reading skills by reading to dogs.

Service dogs working in emergency rooms lower stress levels for patients and hospital staff.

Boys aged 5 to 9 are most likely to be bitten by dogs, partly due to lack of understanding of dogs or misinterpreting the dogs' moods.

Kids with dogs seem to have stronger immune systems than kids without pets.

Dogs have more health benefits than cats.

Autistic kids with service dogs had an 80% drop in their level of cortisol, a stress indicator.

Children with dogs have better school attendance and are less likely to get sick.

70% of dog owners expect that their dog will rescue them if they are in trouble.

40% of dogs are allowed on the couch.

ALL THIS HAPPENED AT LEAST 15,000 YEARS AGO. Penn State anthropologist Pat Shipman says that relationships with dogs may be the reason one group of homo sapiens evolved into **Modern Man**.

Dogs changed. How did people change?

Dogs, like other domesticated animals (animals that live with people) became less fearful. Dogs are the champions of the animal kingdom at observing people. They are the only animals that understand what pointing means - and that's just one example.

RESEARCH SCIENTIST Paul Taton says dogs and people changed each other's brains. Dogs took over the sniffing and guarding responsibilities (that part of human brains shrank). People took over the planning for food, shelter, etc. (and that part of dogs' brains shrank.)

Temple thinks dogs make us more human - they make us more social. They even raise the level of hormones in us that make us good parents and good friends. She said (Animals in Translation):

I don't think anyone has researched this yet, but I expect we'll find that dogs make humans into nicer people.

She told National Public Radio that dogs need an hour of exercise a day.

- 30** minutes walking.
- 15** minutes playing.
- 15** minutes learning new tricks.

