

Transcript for Pawsitive Partnerships in Education Settings
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MARIKA SANDRELLI:

So it's so good, so good to be with you. My name is Marika, and I'm joined here with Kirsten, and we're going to introduce ourselves, I think, before we get started. Just a couple of things to help us arrive in a good way or land in a good way. We do have some dogs here with us. They'll pop their head up and down. We encourage you, they're kind of resting now, we are encouraging you to share your screen or if you can or have your dogs join you, if it's safe and works for you. The other thing I want to say is that we're not here... how we position ourselves, we're not here to tell you... there's a great saying that Rumi poet said, 'Out beyond the ideas of right doing and wrongdoing, there's a field, I'll meet you there'. So Kirsten and I aren't here to correct you or say you're doing things right or wrong with your dogs or, you know, this is the best way and somehow, if you do it this way, you're going to get automatically get amazing results. That's not why we're here. We're here to share our experiences, what we've been learning from our many years of doing this work and to learn from you as well.

And so I just wanted to put that out there so we can create a safe space for engagement. There's a small group of us here, so I hope we will have room for engagement and to bring your experiences into the room. So the chat box is there as well, and we encourage you to put things into the chat box as well. So just to help us get started, I'm going to initiate... I'm going to just check with Paul and Abigail, did we... Let me just stop for a second. I just want to make sure I'm going to share the sound. That's really important because I'm going to invite you into a quick breathing exercise and you're going to have to hear the person speaking. So you're going to hear a mere voice. This is a completely voluntary. You can just take the next two minutes for yourself right now. Two minute short meditation. You might hear dogs barking right now because I could hear them in the background. And this is just a sense for us to land gently into this space. So here we gonna start.

NARRATOR:

Allow yourself to be still for a moment and start breathing deeply in through the nose and out through the mouth. Don't worry about how loud your breathing is or if anyone can hear it. And there's no need to try and ignore any noise or distractions going on around you or to try too hard to clear your mind. Imagine yourself as a rock in the middle of a stream. All the noise and commotion that may or may not be going on around you, just washes over you without having any effect. Focus on your breath. Think about how anything that has negatively affected your day up until this point, and with each out breath, you are simply going to imagine any unnecessary stress these events are causing you to feel, just ease away. Breathe in and observe how you feel. Breathe out and feel it easing from your mind. Now still breathing deeply, take a moment to visualize how you want the rest of the day to go. Imagine achieving any goals and successes at the end of the day and how that will make you feel. Create a mental picture of what that looks like and take a moment to play that out in your mind.

Whenever you're ready. Bring the exercise to a close and open your eyes.

MARIKA SANDRELLI:

Thanks, everyone. It's amazing as soon as we hear that voice that everything gets still how all the dogs just kind of decompress. I remember when I started doing a kind of a yoga class or a mindfulness based class, and I used to close the door and kick the dogs out, and my instructor said,

just leave them in the room with you and eventually they'll join you in that space. And it's so true. In fact, now in the morning, we do it at the same time, all the dogs line up and lay down knowing we're going to start with a meditation. So it's quite wonderful how that gets joined out. I'm really, again, happy to join you, I'm Marika Sandrelli, and you saw a bit of our bio and Kirsten is going to be talking shortly, but I wanted to recognize that, you know, Chris and I are joining from the unceded traditional ancestral territories of Coast Salish and Nlaka'pamux people, known by its colonial name of amissionB.C.. And I really want to share our gratitude not only for stewarding the land, but also for sharing their worldviews, their ontologies and epistemologies that really contribute to holistic wellness and healing and also really contribute to the gifts that canines bring us before colonization.

We're going to learn more about how the effects of colonization really affected, how we view animals, how we view canines and now its reclamation. And we owe a lot to indigenous elders and knowledge keepers past, present and future. So I'm going to turn it over to Kirsten right now to share a little bit more about her experience with this indigenous worldview, about that we are the land of the land is us, so I'll turn it over to you.

KIRSTEN HARGREAVES:

Sure. Thanks, Marika. My name is Kirsten Hargreaves. And just to help us understand where I'm coming from. I'm involved in Canine helping work in three main areas as a canine assisted counselor, primarily with children and youth in the foster care system based in Abbotsford, B.C. and the majority of children that I work with have experienced some pretty significant life events. So the concept of traumatic experience and pairing that with canines in a good way has been the focus of my counseling work. I also work for the city of Mission and do some canine assisted work in the area of canine assisted community healing and community development, and pairing canines in places like homeless shelters, community mediations with a whole variety of interdisciplinary partners, and how we do that in a good way. And the third area I'm involved in is as a post-secondary instructor at UFV, we we teach introduction to ethical canine assisted practice at UFV, as well as an equine course as well. So I have three areas of practice that I am incredibly passionate about, and the most important thing for me is how we're moving forward and all of that work in a good way.

Marika mentioned that we're not here today to be prescriptive. We're not here to share right way of moving forward in this work. It's a very disjointed landscape right now in BC, and that's of grave concern to me, to both Marika and I, I think I can fairly say. So much so that I've chosen to move forward and doctor at work in taking a really in-depth look at the ethical framework around how we engage canines across a variety of landscapes in BC because it's disjointed. We have the whole continuum right now, as some of you have already spoken to you of that work being done in a positive way and then a way that often leaves us with questions around the canine welfare and suitability for the work. So we eat, sleep, breathe, less work and are very happy to be here today with you and to hear your concerns and questions and support you in moving forward in your work. So this slide that's up right now is a slide of my two helpers. And you might notice today that our language might be a bit different in how we talk about the work as well from your language.

And again, that's OK. Both Marika and I are trained in something called the Canine Assisted Integration Specialist certification that comes out of the University of Denver. So we're very interested in multiple environments, not zoning in on just one aspect. The far left there is a picture of Nalu, my three and a half year old golden retriever, staring out at the ocean in Campbell River. And I adore this picture. For me, it captures the ability of dogs to be reflective to think deeply. We now know we have a lot of new canine science that backs up some really incredible aspects about canine intelligence. One of those being that, yes, dogs do think deeply and we often talk about them living in the present, and they absolutely do, but there's more to it than that. And so now to me is

really reflecting that in that picture, it was a beautiful moment. In the middle we have Nalu in a park in Maple Ridge and Golden Ears Park, and he loves to run through trees and in between trees and just be let loose to rip around the forest.

So I love that photo of him peering through the tree and on the far right is at Rolley lake in the Warneke area, with some fresh hoar frost on the ground going through the sand. And the title of this slide is, 'Through the dog's eyes', and I find it quite a fascinating thought to think about what do dogs see? When we think about how low they are to the ground, how are they perceiving their world through their vision, through their smell? We have loads of canine science that can teach us all about the concrete aspects of those things, but I'm more interested in how they're perceiving the world, how are they interacting with us as humans and the natural environment. And some of those teachings certainly are not just my interest. They do come from our indigenous communities and partners in understanding something that's often called, the knowing, doing and being that our teachers and our learnings come from not just our human world, but what is often called them more than human world, so that we absolutely can look to our natural settings, to nature, to animals, to canines as teachers for learning, and it is a practice and something that I do.

And the more I do it, it's like a black hole, the more you just get more and more interested in it. So I think I'm mostly happy today that we're really inviting you into this dialogue to help us steward a good way, an ethical way of moving forward that respects canines as a being that absolutely can be a mentor and a teacher in this work, that when we think about helping work with dogs, it's not just the hierarchy, we often think about as human and handler as often spoken about, we tend to not use the language around handler, I like to use the language around canine partner because it's very much a partnership. It's a partnership between the human and the canine, between that dynamic in any particular environment that they're in at that time. So that's the framework of how we're coming to you today and really want to acknowledge that as much as the science and the work is blooming right now, we really need to acknowledge that a lot of this teaching and framework comes from our indigenous peoples.

Sorry, about my mouse, it must get dizzy there. I was playing with my mouse and it probably will look (INAUDIBLE).

KIRSTEN:

The pictures got shaky.

MARIKA:

Everything was shaky. So I guess Abigail, we might be. Here's what's called a canine scale, and you'll see expressions from different canines. And we're going to ask you, of course, going to be launched and we're going to ask you which expression of canine best reflects how you're feeling right now. And you could just do the call. We're all in the same squares. Awesome, interesting. This is great. It's never happened before. Awesome. Well, this is great. We've got one, two, three and seven. Of course, if there was an eight, we'd probably offer somebody an opportunity to meet with us. Yeah. Are you OK? Are you OK? Yes. And I thank you so much. There's the final poll now that we can end. So this is something you can use too in your meetings or education settings. Like we tried different polls. I've got a tree poll, I've got a cat poll, all kinds of things that you can use.

SPEAKER:

It's fun for kids.

MARIKA SANDRELLI:

Yeah. Kids love it. Alright. So I'll turn over to you, Kristen, if you want to walk through what we're hoping to do together.

KIRSTEN HARGREAVES:

Sure. And Marika mentioned the invitation to bring your dog, cat, whatever is around you to today. So of course, if you would like animals on your lap while you're participating today, that's really encouraged. You're welcome to do that. We'd like to drop the formality curtain and be really real and comfortable with each other. We have little now you're poking its head up right now. So as you mentioned, dogs might, might come and go. So just to really quickly review our learning objectives and then I'm sure we're keen to jump in. Please do use the chat box when possible. We'll try and monitor it the best we can and with questions and comments and do some summary at the ending. Our theme for today are to really introduce and talk about that there has been an incredible evolution of what we are now calling the canine human bond in the world and the research you're likely seeing it kind of boom around you. And we've already heard a lot of interest in how do I get my H.R department or my supervisor to allow dogs in the work setting?

So it's big right now. Part of that is also has I mentioned briefly deepening our awareness and understanding of the canine as a sentient being, and we'll talk a little bit about what that means. Listing some really specific and diverse ways that the canine human partnerships have benefited and can continue to benefit a variety of education settings. The post-secondary setting is the area Marika and I are doing the most working at the moment. The ethical and safety considerations when partnering with canines, there are many and ours are very much couched in canine animal welfare approach to the work, and we'll talk about that. And what are the canine rights in doing this work? They absolutely have them. And what does that look like? And then how can you again help us see doing this work in moving forward in a good way and support ethical practice that promote something we call mutual benefit? And we'll talk a fair bit about what that is as well.

MARIKA SANDRELLI:

So there you are.

KIRSTEN HARGREAVES:

Yes, so me? These are my two helpers and mine, I call helping dogs. I again steer away from terminology around therapy dogs. They're definitely not service dogs, but everyone has a really different conceptualization of what each of those things means. So me, let's just call them helping dogs. They come to all those environments. I spoke about Kona's eight and a half. She's been working for six years. Her natural preference right from day one, was children. Children are her favorite and active group games. She loves to play, hide and go, seek and tag in a field with kids when she is able to do that every weekend. Nalu, although he's also a golden retriever, is a completely different personality. He's three and a half. He's been working for two and a half years and he can tolerate kids. He does not have the natural inclination towards kids. He does a lot of mediation, conflict resolution, community based work and really maintains an anchor in environments of high emotional intensity, here's Nalu.

MARIKA SANDRELLI:

So these are my three and you'll see them right now. So Frank is 14 years old. He's retired, so he's a border collie, and he worked for 10 years in Fraser Health, and he was the first helping dog at a men's substance use treatment center. And he worked there for a while and helped, a trailblazer helped create some of the policies in Fraser Health for pet visitation and canine support, and he's now retiring and enjoying chasing balls in the yard. He's out there right now. Maggie is 10 and a half

years old in the middle. It's interesting, we went through all the assessment and we got to know her. She's a rescue. She came from a really difficult first few years, was quite abused and it took a while for her to gain trust and to come into our world. And she's wonderful. And we started seeing recognizing that there could be some potential to do some helping. And so she only can do it when she's outside. She has a real fear of any floor that's slippery. She doesn't feel comfortable so she can do work outside.

But it's quite interesting that what I've learned from Maggie and mostly youth and adults doesn't do as well with children. But you know, one of the hardest things is to recognize that dogs like people were not cut out for everything. And we have to really listen to what the dog is communicating to us and really protect them. A lot of people want Maggie. There's a lot of facilities that beg me to bring Maggie, and I have to say, no, I have to be her voice and say it's not going to work inside. She does not do well inside. If we can do something outside and it's a small group of people where she doesn't get overwhelmed, then we're more than happy and I usually do outside visit but that's one of the things that we're learning. Cesar, who's 11, does not do any kind of helping work outside of the home. He just keeps the border collies kind of alert. He does not have the temperament. He just does not, he's not interested. He's just not interested. And again, he's a rescue. So I just wanted to show all three.

Frank is so... he wants to work. It brings him joy, mutual benefit. He is so adaptive and everything. Maggie a little bit, Cesar no, but they're all my dogs and they all help in their own unique way. So we're going to give you an opportunity right now, just in small groups of four, and maybe we can look at about just maybe six minutes, Paula, if that's OK. We're going to invite you and some of you already shared with us.

SPEAKER:

About just what you think or what you know a canine partnership. How can that support your work in an education setting? And what are some of the benefits that you anticipate just from your experience or your interests? And then we'll come back and talk about it. And feel free to put some stuff in the chat box. So, we're just going to give you about six minutes. And I'm gonna invite Paula to help us go into groups. Welcome back. And just again please feel free to share some stuff that you heard in your groups in the chat box. Or feel free to unmute and share anything that you heard that you'd like to bring into the space.

ANNA:

Yeah I was just mentioning in my little group here. That I'm very fortunate to get to see Nalu and Kona on a semi-regular basis. And it is true they are very different dogs. They both come into the same youth center. And their focus is completely different. Nalu comes in and he's very calm. And he will go and just sit beside of a kid. That you know it's almost like he senses that they don't want to really interact that much. But also you know they wouldn't mind putting you know running their fingers through his golden locks. And then there's Kona who does not recognize her age. And she livens up the party when it comes to this space. And it's great to see because Nalu even for myself. He recognizes when I need a moment too. And he comes and he sits on my lap. And he puts his body back onto the top of my legs if I'm standing up. And it's just it really gives you a moment to ground yourself. Without feeling it with words or you know trying to analyze what's going on with you. Just a moment of peace and grounding and OK yeah we're good.

SPEAKER:

Nice. So, you might hear some snorting in the background is my pug below he likes to snort. Thank you Anna. Yeah there is cultural differences about different how world views around. Not just world

views around animals and canines. But also just animal welfare for a variety of reasons. And we're going to talk a little bit about how the history of the human bond. And just how as humans you know we've really... There's a lot of impact on how our world view is about who we are in the more than human world. So, we're going to talk a little bit about that. But there is cultural differences that have to be considered for sure. Yeah appreciate it great OK, again invite conversation throughout the next hour that we're together. And I'm going to talk a little bit. I'm going to go into now talking a little bit about the history of the bonds. And sorry my mouse is kind of going crazy here. Just a little yeah and you're getting winked at right now if you can see it. The history of the bond. And because I think we really need to understand how did we get to this place right now?

Like how did we get here? And to really understand the canine human bond. Is to me one of the essential first steps. If you are interested in partnering with canines in your education or workplace. Is to have a really solid understanding knowledge skills about the history of the bond. Canine communication like your team needs to know this. And then develop your own ethical compass around it. So, mention here that you know dogs were one of the first animals after humans to be domesticated. And that was like 15,000 years ago. So, right after the Ice Age pretty much right? And there's really two pathways that informed kind of how we looked at that bond. Or how we looked at the domestication of dogs. The one kind of framework is that humans tamed wild animals and we did it to benefit us. They became objects that we use to meet our needs. And that's what we call the commensal pathway. So, one species gains a benefit from another species who doesn't get any benefits. There isn't this mutual benefit.

We tame dogs. They're here to comfort us. They're here to provide companionship. Some of them provide food. They provide herding. They work protection. It's really we benefit from another species. So, that's one worldview. Another worldview, which is probably a bit more there's more evidence for this. Is that it's a parallel evolution. As the domestication of dogs there was a parallel domestication of us as human beings. Is that there was we both learned how to live and socialize and be with each other. And there's so much evidence about this right now. The fact that we have 311 genes. That have overlapping loci high in the patterns of how we function. Including digestion and neurological processes. So, some of you may know that maybe when you're under a lot of stress you may not want to eat. There are a lot of dogs under a lot of stress that don't eat. You know there are similarities. We have this co-evolution happening. This idea about similar as we're all adopting through evolution to our environments.

There was a co-evolution of genomes where all of a sudden we're experiencing from our environment different health issues. Diabetes dogs get diabetes humans do. Cancers, anxiety, depression, separation anxiety. All kinds of things that are happening. Dogs are learning from us. What we're communicating they're learning how to be with us. And we're doing the same on how to socialize. Dogs we're very ethnocentric. So, because dogs don't speak English or they don't communicate the same way as humans. They communicate through body language through vocalization. Different language doesn't mean that it's any less. In fact you're gonna learn that there highly evolved. And we're gonna learn more about that. The problem is that we haven't had the decipher code to figure out what it is. And we're finally starting to do that now. They're highly sentient and the depths of their consciousness. We're learning far outweighs even our ability to be able to measure and understand it. There's an ancient brain there that I think we're just slowly starting to understand.

So, I see someone's hand Krista.

KRISTA:

Yeah, I just wondered with your comment in the sort of first sub bullet around similarities in genetics for digestion. Does that sort of is it too far an extrapolation to then say OK, well maybe this raw food diet trend. Isn't as relevant for dogs as we believe it to be. Because there's so many similarities in digestion for genes for human and dog. Is that too far of like an assumption to make?

SPEAKER:

Yeah it might be. I think it's more about we're learning more and more. The whole dog food and the whole industrial of dog food industry is exploding. We're learning more and more right now. I think it's more about really learning from your dog just like humans right? Like what does your dog need? You know there's a lot yeah there's a lot more to it. It's kind of what your dog needs. You know right now there's animal rights movements and then there's animal welfare movements. They're a little different. There's so many considerations Krista. But I think you know whether you choose a raw food diet or not. I would probably research and learn from you know what's best for my dog right?

KRISTA:

Yeah OK.

SPEAKER:

And important important to note that some not all. But some of the assessment and evaluation frameworks that exist for helping dogs. Don't allow canines to be on a raw food diet when working with other people. Because of the increased risk of transferring salmonella. Yeah.

KRISTA:

OK, good to know thank you.

SPEAKER:

Yeah thanks Krista. And the same thing about the maternal bonding is that are you guys seeing my banner right here? Slowly put that in. Extended eye contact you know increases oxytocin in humans and in dogs right? So, it's a parallel process. So, we've got way more evidence about domestication as being a parallel process. It's not that all of a sudden we domesticated dogs to be such great partners and helpers and all the stuff. We it's a parallel evolution right? There's and it has to work toward mutual benefits. And I think that I want to add just a few things here is that. In the last three years, more dogs were adopted or bought in the world than in the previous 20 years. I just got that stat this morning. And so that really says something about the popularity of animals. But also just yeah the popularity the love. Just all I think of the extra consideration that we have. To ensure that they're not treated as something disposable. Which I know everybody here wouldn't think that. Again they're the most abundant terrestrial carnivore.

You know right now there's over 100 million or a thousand million I guess it's a billion right now. And another thing too is like during this summer's heat dome. I work in Fraser Health and we had a lot of seniors and people with mental health issues. That wouldn't leave their apartment. They probably would have died in their apartment. Some did and they wouldn't leave without their pets right? So, and a lot of shelters wouldn't take pets. So, it opened up a whole new need where we quickly started you know lobbied with BC Housing and different shelters. To start looking at making space for pets for shelters. And again you know more and more people are starting to do that consideration. I've been working with a few organizations in BC. Kind of shelters for women and children fleeing domestic violence. And building places now that have pets and policies around that. And so things are changing right now around that bond. Another thing to really consider around the whole evolution of the bond.

Is really this kind of world view that we have. Not just kind of how the domestication as a parallel process. But there's really three models. And the third model is revolutionizing how we partner with canines. The first model which is the oldest 2,000 years ago. Was this thing you might have seen in the great chain of being. It's kind of like some kind of God is on top, then humans, then you know animals, then plants. And that in that situation, it's this idea that no matter what humans are superior to dogs. And losing a lot of favor recently. And but that's been around for a long time. Model two is what we call speciesism. It's pretty predominant right now. This is kind of the model that a lot of our policies and our practices reflect. And I think it's kind of like that one species is morally more important than the other. And we still live with this. So, if there's any kind of crisis like a flood or a war. We take care of the humans first and then we might think about the animals or the dogs after.

And we've experienced this. You know when we had the flooding recently. You know worked with the Humane Society is to get the animals. But you know we had to really advocate for that. To make sure with the animals are taken care of too right? And so I think this is going to be changing. And the reason we're changing and it's the science of sentiments. And you're going to get a copy of the Cambridge Declaration of Consciousness which is revolutionizing the world. And this came out recently. But it was a big declaration that came out. And it means that humans were not unique and having a consciousness states different states. That we have a conscience even dogs do. We're going to learn more about it. I have some videos you'll see it. And that we're not the only animal. Humans are animals that have feelings, that can express empathy, that have sensations, that have moral behavior, that have a sense of fairness. And yes thank you Annie yeah. About some laws about Hurricane Katrina yeah. But you know it's very you know right now that the declaration in Cambridge.

The Netherlands right now is that if a pet passes or a pet is ill. You have medical leave automatically. It doesn't have to be a child it can be a pet right? You know this is how things are changing right now in the world. So, it's a great time. About time though I would say. So, that really you know if we really believe there's a parallel process in domestication. And that we believe in that third model of the science of sentience. Which the science is pointing at and all I'll share some with you. That's really going to affect how we develop a program in our education institutions, where dogs will be partners. So, dogs dream they have. Dogs can triangulate, they can do math, they can learn words. I'll show you a video coming up. Dogs can learn socialization just like us. Develop motor skills. They can smell 20 kilometers away in a stadium of 100,000 people. And if you gave them a scent that for an owner they can find that scent. It's amazing what they can do. They can morally reason you're gonna see that about fairness.

And they can recognize their own smells and they're so self-aware. Somebody asked me if dogs we always could ask if dogs can see color. And yes they can. They can see beyond black and white. This is the dog's view. Is kind of here's the human view and here's the dogs view. They can see some color. Really if you're looking at trying to so your dogs are bored. And you want to give them something stimulating, I would stay away from the reds and oranges. Because they can't really see those colors. And if you're using color for training aids. I probably would avoid the reds and oranges too. If color is part of the training. But they see color not to the same extent as we do. But you know it's amazing I have the border collies. They always go for the blue and purple all the time. You know they always because they can see blue and purple. And it kind of makes them it brings variety into their life. So, I want to share with you about sentience. So, I don't know if you've seen this video before and you can show on your hands.

It's about the Capuchin monkeys around fairness. Has anyone seen this before? So, you've seen it. So, this is one Frans de Waal is amazing. There's a couple of people that we would recommend Richard Lube some authors. But this is he did an experiment about. A lot of people think that animals don't have this moral behavior. And here's this one video about fairness. And so we're going to show you first the monkeys. And then we're going to show you the dogs. Because it was replicated with dogs. And do dogs have a sense of fairness? So, here we go.

FRANS DE WAAL:

So, final experiment that I want to mention to you is our fairness study. And so this became a very famous study and there's now many more. Because after we did this about 10 years ago it became very well known. And we did that originally which capuchin monkeys. And I'm gonna show you the first experiment that we did. It has now been done with dogs and with birds and with chimpanzees. But with Sarah Brosnan we started out with capuchin monkeys. So, what we did is we put two capuchin monkey side by side. Again these animals they live in a group they know each other. And we take them out of the group put them in a test chamber. And there's a very simple task that they need to do. And if you give both of them cucumber for the task the two monkeys side by side. They're perfectly willing to do this 25 five times in a row. So, cucumber even though it's really only water in my opinion. But cucumber is perfectly fine for them. Now, if you give the partner grapes. The food preferences of my capuchin monkeys correspond exactly with the prices in the supermarket.

And so if you give them grapes as a far better food. Then you create inequity between them. So, that's the experiment we did. Recently we videotaped it with new monkeys who had never done the task. Thinking that maybe it would have a stronger reaction and that turned out to be right. The one on the left is a monkey who gets cucumber. One on the right is the one who gets grapes. The one who gets cucumber note that the first piece of cucumber is perfectly fine. The first piece she eats. Then she see the other one getting grape and you will see what happens. So, she gives a rock to us that's the task. And we give her a piece of cucumber and she eats it. The other one needs to give a rock to us. And that's what she does. And she gets a grape. And she eats it the other one sees that. She gives a rock to us now gets again cucumber. She tests the rock now against the wall. She needs to give it to us and she gets cucumber again. This is basically the Waal Street protests that you see here.

MARIKA:

That's quite amazing that dogs have this sense of fairness. Well, are monkeys do it first was done with the monkeys, but now we've got it, we've got actually got it with dogs. We'll see what happens with the dogs. No. Clayton said it's so sad. He. He said sit and be filled with it in Sochi, she said she didn't want to send any more too difficult to apply anymore and. It's so sad to watch. It's like, I'm done, I'm not participating anymore. This really gives us this, compelling evidence that dogs do have morale at this moral behavior because this sense of fairness. So here's a dog's brain, the temporal lobe and human brain. And you can see, first of all, the dog's brain is about the size of a tangerine, and the human brain is like a grapefruit. It's a little bit bigger, but still the same four areas the same four lobes like you've got stuff around speech, recognition of language, controlling the unconscious and automatic responses.

And here's a pet scan. We can now do pet scan safely and ethically with animals, so you can see the dog brain in the human brain and you can see the cerebellum right now is probably the biggest part of the brain in the dog. And that really controls the voluntary movement. It's the most developed. It's about movement agility, the limbic system you can see again as part of the brain cell, the the whole dog brain here is the limbic system and the human brain. And even dogs the amygdala. It

shouldn't surprise me because I think when dogs get really sad or when dogs miss their owners, they may not eat. They may be lethargic. It's because the limbic system is really thirst and hunger are really connected to the limbic system, just like humans. And the same thing with the cerebral cortex, like dogs have a cerebral cortex. Here it is. It may not have as many pathways as the human, but still they have a cerebral cortex and they can be afraid, they can be anxious, they can learn. I think it's, you know, really important that we have this sense that we reflect our policies and practices that reflect this intelligence.

For the sake of tanks, I know we have about a half an hour and thank you for. I know I was lying to you about giving the puppy a cookie. It's so hard to watch. Yeah, the age of empathy. Love it. Yes. Yes, yes, Natalia. And yes, with the Ukraine, it's really encouraging. I'm heavily involved with the Humane Society of Canada. And, you know, we're really the amount of mobilization right now for the shelters. And I don't believe in I'm against captive animals in zoos. But anyways, we got them out and we got there's so much shelter relief there right now, so it's encouraging. We'll send you the slides once we're ready. But there's a great video. I won't show it right now for the sake of time. It's a boat chaser. I don't know if you know about Chaser and this dog that can differentiate between toys. When you get the slides, please watch it. I see. Tell you what he wants. It's amazing. This dog can differentiate between toys. It's wonderful. Because we do want to give us a little bit of time to talk about like, how do you get started?

What do you do? I just will talk a little bit about it. You can see the slides. The one I want to talk about the most is about anthropomorphism. And this is where we attribute human reactions and feelings to dogs. Because we like to be hugged, we think dogs like to be hugged and that's not necessarily true. We have to be careful. I think it's not about, you know, treating your dog. Communicating love, joy, happiness, bonding is encouraged. It's so encourage, I'm not saying don't do that and that how your dog's reacting with joy and love. That's wonderful. I think it's more about attributing the fact that because humans will like something, dogs will like it automatically. That's what we're talking about here is to really we we need to learn how a dog communicates. That's essential if you're going to get involved in canine partnerships. You really need to know what, how that dog's communicating with you. Like, what is it telling you, right? And then you go from there. I think that's what I'm focused on right now, and we'll just keep going.

Again about decolonizing, and I just want to mention that before colonization. Indigenous people around the world. Their relationship with canines and all animals was mutual benefit. This there was there's so much evidence, and I'll share with you a little bit about like right now, this is kind of the colonized view that somehow we're superior and this is the decolonised view right now. But this idea about indigenous people worked hand-in-hand with canines, and there's an incredible amount of evidence. I'll give you two quick stories. This is from the island and and the new challenge was First Nation, and there's so much evidence in their history about how one with animals and that if you are not in a mutually benefit relationship with animals, you're out of balance and that people are in pain, that there's pain and and, so you always work toward that balance. Another great example is from the Ojibwe. In fact, the word for canines means our grandfathers and Ojibwe, and what they do is that they look to the canines whenever they need to successfully navigate a change or any danger is that they spend time with canines and canines will point the way.

There's an incredible honour of evidence that a lot of this kind of superior humans are being superior. That great chain of being is a colonized agent. And here's just some pictures. Some historic pictures of the role of dogs like dogs were revered. They talk about the wild dogs in the front picture here. They were really taken care of and they were shaved and they made blankets. But the dogs were not harmed. They were they were revered. They were part of the family. There's also some

horrible pictures I won't show them to you. When the colonizers came and slaughtered thousands of dogs and to a point where indigenous children and families couldn't handle the pain and also ended their lives. You know, this is part of our history that the act of colonization really interrupted the potential of the human bond, and we're going through a reclamation now. I'm going to sort of decrease in as we move into like, how do we do this work in education settings? Sure. And in our current era of truth and reconciliation, you can see how big just from what we've presented today, and this is only a small piece of the much broader canine pie.

We could spend pretty much, probably a whole day on each of these slides going into a lot more detail, and we'll we'll suggest some opportunities for you to learn more at the end of today if that's something you're interested in. You may have guessed by now, it might becoming quite apparent that, but the canine-human mind for us is the most important thing. At the center of the work is really what we what we're suggesting, how we practice and really what we're promoting today. What does that mean and how do you do it? When we often talk in therapeutic environments, but the single biggest predictor within a therapeutic alliance between a helper and a helpee is the Therapeutic Alliance, the ability to develop a safe, trusting relationship. And there's some similarities, interestingly, to bond-based partnerships with canines that the most greatest single predictor of success is the bond between the canine and the person. And this slide is suggesting looking at that through three categories the MEs, the THEEs and the WEs.

And the easiest way to understand it is that the MEs America presented the various ways throughout history of looking at the hierarchy of humans and animals. And is that human over animal as a human with animal? How do we look at that in our own world view? This is something we're encouraging you to start to think about today. The MEs I like to think of as a little bit of our bias and as someone who works frequently with canines, I'm constantly asking myself, Is there a therapeutic rationale for me bringing a canine into the space that I'm planning on bringing that canine into you today? I would love to spend all day, every day with my dogs, but for me is the ideal work environment. Just because they're helping dogs doesn't mean that they are suitable(DOG BARKS). Now, to agreed? That they are not suitable for every environment and even for the environments they've been assessed in. They're going to show up differently every day, just like us. And so I'm constantly assessing, how did they sleep that night before?

Have they eaten breakfast? How are they showing up that day before we're going into an environment economy? All this golden, who's almost nine, gets some chronic ear infections? Is she currently experiencing an ear infection or any kind of pain? I believe that's not OK, then to be bringing her into a setting just like us being asked to show up in our workplaces with a migraine or something that's causing us pain. I'm constantly assessing those things in the background just because they're appropriate for the work doesn't mean it's OK every day or in every environment. I look at my bias in wanting to be with them and needing to objectively remove that. That's the MEs. How do we take ourselves out of it and focus on the dog? The THEEs, the folks who utilize and believe dogs are there for our benefit. They have an instrumental purpose. They're hunting dogs, their dogs used for protection, their guard dogs that has its time and place for many people. But we are going to promote more of the WEs at the end of these three columns, which is that we work towards having our relationship with our dog that's based in mutual trust, mutual benefit and that we're constantly looking at how do we create that trust in safety?

It doesn't end at the end of basic obedience. And I think when we think about dogs right now helping dogs, we're often looking at it from. They've been evaluated. They perceive this piece of paper off. I go to do the work and bring them into my environment. And what we're suggesting is that's one piece of the pie, but that that work doesn't end and that how you show up in that

relationship is the most important indicator in developing that trust with your dog. And I'll give some examples as we go. Another way to look at it is these four key relationship dynamics in the top left. We look at how dogs respond to environments and again, when we go through assessment and evaluation protocols, every agency is different in how they approach doing that between a canine and a person. Many of them assess environments and many don't. When a dog receives a certification to be a helping dog in some environment for many, that is not assessing the dog across environments. Are we looking at the emotional intensity of being in a counseling room versus a hospital, which is very overly stimulating a classroom that can also be very overly stimulating with a lot of stressed-out kids in distress coming from different places?

We're not often looking at those environments as needing specific evaluations for each piece? That's a concern I have, and that's starting to enter the broader the broader evaluation world around canines, their likes and dislikes. When I first mentioned and introduced content and now I talked about canines natural preference being children. She's shown that from day one. And so that's who I would like to pair her with to honor her natural, her natural choices, how she shows up best. Not everyone that's working with canines is doing that. Again, how do we move beyond what just might be this kind of boxed credential and evaluation process to really tapping into what is there? What are their natural abilities and preferences and personality and temperament? The whole holistic picture is not always assessed in those moments, so that's a piece of this fear and when they've had enough. A good example is this week Kona, now looking to a community meeting, and one of the things I'm constantly attuned to them in is when they are no longer wanting to be in that space or when they've had enough.

Kona came to me and gave me a hard stare and looked me right in the eyes. In about 30 minutes after being in a community space, which I know means I'm done, I need to leave. And so I stopped the meeting I was facilitating and use that as an opportunity to say I'm hearing from Kona, corners telling me right now she needs a break. Would everyone be OK just to take two minutes while take Kona outside and stretch and smell the grass in the fresh air and just kind of re reregulate and come back in? And we did that and she was fine. And so that constant ability to advocate for Kona's voice because she doesn't have words, I need to know what her stress signals are and what the canine. How do canine communicate their stress? That's really important for us to know in any environment that they're in. The more I honor what my dogs are telling me in the moment and I'm able to fulfill those needs, the deeper our bond and trust is going to grow in any environment. That's when the second when we look at the owner's physical and emotional response and so an example I just gave us around attunement if I chose not to do that and instead thought, Nope, I'm not listening to you right now, you have to be present, you have to obey.

I'm in the process of facilitating this meeting, that could potentially damage our bond. And by repeatedly doing that, she might start to kind of check out. And I'm sure many of you may have seen in different environments, dogs that disassociate they check out when they're not listening to you and they're not hurt, they become more robotic. I have seen those across many environments over the last decade, and again, it's one of the reasons I'm really concerned about this work going forward in a good way. They're not robots and they don't have a union. They're not like us. They don't have to have a group backing them. When we think about the number of hours they can work for day or two? That's going to differ between dogs and between environments. Kona is telling me now her age, she can handle about four hours of working with kids, and then she starts to check out. I need to honor that, and I need to schedule my my days working as a counselor around her needs of her age and stage. The third one there, the relationship between dog and owner again, really

understanding what are those species specific stigmas around starting to feel distress and what are we doing about it?

And the fourth one, the relationship between the dog, the owner and the third party, the environment, I am often translating on behalf of the dogs. I understand they don't speak, but I'm often using it as a learning opportunity. Especially in environments with kids and with people who have experienced humans as not being safe. What a beautiful way to be able to take those moments and say, Right now I'm feeling like Kona and I, we are experiencing some, some distress. Have you ever felt like, you know, you've reached your, your boundary or your maximum? I talk a lot about boundaries with the dog. With Canines, so that through that, then the relationship between myself, whomever I'm working with and the dog, I'm promoting that I'm going to respect the safety and the trust, and that starts to build a deeper bond between whoever I am working with. And they start to see, Oh, this lady is really attuned to really check them to her dogs, and maybe then I can learn to trust her a little bit more.

I mentioned that the clientele I tend to work with my population in counseling is absolutely kids who have their rights violated, often repeatedly. We really look at how to rebuild that attachment? How to rebuild positive orientation to other human beings when that hasn't always been their experiences? We can do that in education settings, counseling settings, any setting around boundaries and respect.

MARIKA: Frank just joined us, the senior.

KIRSTEN: This is that this is a great, a great example, and we have many more where we often think and someone mentioned social media I noticed in the chat bar a few times. Social media right now is full of videos that folks think are cute. And when we look at it a little differently and a little more closer, we recognize it's not so cute. It's that humans inability to recognize that that dog in the moment is perhaps frozen, perhaps stressed, perhaps dissociated. They have many of the same responses we do when we're overwhelmed in situations this dog tells us with the wide eyes or we call it moon eye in canine language.

Ears are pulled back. His brows are starting to tighten, his jaw is starting to get a little more tense and his posture stiffening. He's not OK with that situation. Even our orientation to how we are viewing, people and animals, but certainly kids and animals, because they tend to squeeze in, they tend to be a little overly animated in their in their experience of the dog. What do we do then? This thing is this mutual benefit thing.

KIRSTEN:

I like the German concept of Umwelt, which is really looking at it as a subjective way of being a subjective universe, really encouraging that constant curiosity. It's a really exciting place to be in when you get to the point of starting to develop that bond. It then becomes a lifelong process so that curiosity year round, What is this species we call a dog? How is this bond developing? How do we just continue to grow trust and safety between each other? Is the concept of Umwelt. And of course, there's canine science around that we can learn like, how to read canine body language, how to read stress signals, all of those tangible pieces about acceptance and respect. And that's where I have some challenges with some of the evaluation models out there right now with canines because the canine is just one piece of the working relationship. But if we're not educating the human around how to do those things, that's the dynamic then that I'm seeing sometimes is creating harm. So how do we create policy and standards that skill up both the canine and the human and look at

that dynamic across specific environments so that we're respecting the dog's choice and the animal welfare in the work?

Accepting the whole dog, and that was just one example from Conor. So there might be days that they're not feeling it. They don't want to show up. And I really believe that needs to be respected. And again, great lesson for kids. I know you were really excited to see Conor and (UNKNOWN) today. Unfortunately, they just seemed like they needed a day of rest today, day off today. Have you ever felt like that? And all of those parallels, but you can bring in with kids. It might be disappointing and you might be getting paid to do it. I have someone that does the work, but that's where we really need to push for the ethical focus in the work. But trust absolutely is the more we're listening to them and the more we're answering them when they have a need. The deeper the trust will grow and the support. So again, we could spend a whole lot more time on that. Dogs absorb stress and tension very similarly to humans, and they need to release that at the end of any day in any working environment.

So how do we know our dog well enough to know what their preferred forms of release are? It's very different for my two, (UNKNOWN) needs to chew really deeply at the back of his jaws. And I buy really specific toys and chews to allow him to do that when we come back from a setting. Conor needs to run, she needs to swim, she needs to play. They need to get that tension and stress out of their body just like we're encouraged to do when we come home at the end of a stressful day so that we're again providing space for that need to be met and they can come back to a better place of regulation for the next day.

MARIKA:

So now we're going to get in, and I'm just going to mention in the chatbox here, thank you for that. Yeah. Dogs aren't fit for every setting. I think sometimes people think that there is mindfulness activity equivalent for dogs. Yeah, there are some incredible. My one dog really joins me in, as soon as I start meditating in the morning, they all join me with it. I think it's learning more about kind of what your dog is communicating to you, what needs, and then trying out different things like Christine just said, like every dog's different. You have to kind of learn. The best thing is to learn the patterns of communication like we can send you documents like even like we journal when our dogs are communicating to us so we can see the patterns and we know our dogs really well. So we can send you those resources for sure. I'm not going to go through the literature, the jury's in, there's a lot of benefits to canine partnerships in education settings. We'll send you a literature review.

The four categories are around coregulation, anything to do with social, emotional positive mood, anti-stress, social connectedness, social catalyst. Literacy, reading, writing, huge research now, especially around, there's a reading program that people are doing for people coming in and reading to dogs in shelters. There's a huge study and then also about concentration, focusing, and motivation to learn. Incredible amount of research happening and a lot of evidence. We're just going to get a little bit in our last bit about just the regulations and what guides the work in education settings for the partnership. So right now in Canada and in BC, we do not have any legislation that governs the ethical practices, the safety, and wellness of canines of the third party, or the owner of Volunteer for Therapy Dogs. They're often confused with service dogs. There's a whole debate about even using the word therapy dog, like what constitutes a therapy dog or a therapy dog service. Kirtsen, I don't use that language for a reason.

Emotional support dogs, companion facility dogs, pet visitation. The only legislation we have in BC and in Canada is the. And here's the guide around service dogs or guide dogs. All of these dogs here, they all fall under that act. But the rest really comes from your workplace policies. And if that

doesn't exist or insufficient, then you need to come up with your own practice guidelines. OK. And so here's the big things that we're trying to say that maybe you want to consider. There's 10 freedoms for a dog. There was five. Everyone focuses on the five, but the five more were added that we're saying, please consider. So yeah, freedom from thirst, hunger, pain, discomfort, fear, distress, avoidable disability. Wonderful. But the freedom to be themselves to express normal behaviors, exercise choice and control, have fun, and have safe zones. Like does the dog have a place in your facility where nobody else goes? It's their space that they can retreat to. Nobody touches them. Nobody goes near them.

It's their place. That's their safe zone. And then there's the Dog Bill of Rights that we look at here's all of the things like even the exit entrance signs like, how far does a dog have to walk to go relieve itself, right? Like all kinds of things, things are so important to consider. Here's our (UNKNOWN) mission right now to bring in legislation 'cause we've seen a lot of, unfortunately, canines being harmed with great intentions, don't get me wrong, but we see dogs that are severely distressed in a lot of settings. But again, here's the Bill of Rights. We will send these slides to be distributed. So how do you get started? What I would suggest and what we suggest is that right now it's usually a volunteer model, and I think Annie, you talked about it is when the volunteer leaves, the leaves the program leaves and that's usually what happens. And there's four major purposes in the schools right now in post-secondary, either canine partnerships are used for interventions and support for co-regulation, and people are going through exams or depression, anxiety school counselors, their literacy programs for reading, writing comprehension.

They come at special events for fairs, trade shows, or festivals. And dogs are used if there's any kind of trauma at the school and they come in as a crisis response. Those are kind of the four main areas. So right now, here's kind of the suggested pathway. We have samples of different policies that if people are interested, we can send. We can also assist in helping people come up with policies and guidelines. But I think there's some preplanning. You're already here today, so you're trying to get as much knowledge and skills about canines and the canine-human bond and how canines communicate and all that stuff. I think that's essential. What is your goal for having a canine-assisted intervention or partnership? What are you looking to achieve by that? Like Kirtsten said. What's the purpose? Do a site assessment? Where's the access? Does the dog have an area of rest pit? Are there smells? Is it highly stimulating? Like all kinds of things, we can send you lists of what to look for and then the resources.

Hey Ceasar. And then get into the planning like look for your volunteer, your team of who you want to bring in. Then you set up your agreements and get your permissions, whether it's developing a policy or practice guideline, looking at insurance, all kinds of things. Kind of plan what you're going to do. How are you going to do with scheduling? Maybe educate the students and the other staff about what's going to happen and put up an evaluation plan and then you document. It looks like a lot, but I've worked in settings right now where within a week or two, we got through most of it and people went through some education. And now they've got a canine coming in twice a week for co-regulation with students during exam time. And it's working out really well and mutual benefit is always guiding that service. So it can happen. Yeah. Unfortunately, these are the things we need because we don't have any kind of policy or regulation that governs this. And we'll go through these. These are just questions.

But again, these are the ethical challenges. Like, people mentioned allergies and diseases like the cultural beliefs someone mentioned about in Syria, some people only want certain breeds. We have a pit bull who does pet visitation with children, who's like the best suited dog, but people are afraid of them. Right? It's really hard. Again, yeah, the lack of standards is another big one. It's really

important, some of the things that I think we need to think about, language is really important. Calling a dog a service dog when it's not a service dog is we really discourage that. It's unethical. Some people do that because they want the benefits of it. Even the word therapy dog, I think, is controversial. But these are some things that are on the horizon right now. So I'm just thinking for the last few minutes and we will send out the slides and we've got a few handouts that we have around dog communication and some of the evidence. But I just want to stop sharing 'cause we kind of threw a lot at you at the end and see if there's any questions or comments when I try to stop sharing my screen.

Just opening it up right now for all of you. How are you guys all feeling? It's really worth it. It's really worth it. I guess, that it sounds like a lot, 'cause we're throwing a lot in an hour and a half. But some things can happen fairly quickly. We've worked with some groups where things went quickly.

KIRSTEN:

And I hope you'll think of us as an interconnected family now. We're here to help you develop and design what you're wanting to do.

MARIKA:

Yeah. Anna?

ANNA:

So one of the things you said sort of at the beginning of the presentation was there were ways that we might be able to assist you with your research. And I'm really interested in hearing more about that. And the other thing is just to follow up on what you just mentioned. Is there a way that we can all get connected? Could we all sign on to as like a list of interested parties with our email addresses that could be circulated?

MARIKA:

We'd love that. We're just starting to advocate more. Kirsten and I met up. We did our work with canines that we're joining up because the popularity is wonderful, it's a great opportunity. But we want to do it in a good way, right? And we want to meet other people who want to do it in a good way. And it is about mutual benefits, right? So I'd love to stay connected, whoever is interested to join kind of our pack and kind of work towards this model and then advocate. Yeah. So absolutely. When the sides come, there'll be an email address. Please feel free to contact us and we could set up meetings we can we could do all kinds of things. Yeah.

ANNIE:

So I've been interested in this sort of research for quite some time. What I see here are real gaps in the sense that, well, there are a lot of individualistic studies around essentially case studies. A dog went here or a dog did this or we study dogs in a situation. And part of it is that it's not really considered legitimate research by funding agencies. And many academics, of course, have to be driven by funding. And so I think one of the contributions you might make is to start to encourage research around what dogs do, not on a one by one by one basis, but looking at broader. So this year, my big research project for the summer, which I just got ethics clearance to do, is to look at social capital within dog parks. I've seen a number of, you know, there may be 20 studies out there over the last 20 years about people in a dog park and looking at the social dynamics, and there's some speculation around dogs, creating social capital and broader cultural benefits to it, which people have been using to go to the city councils and say this is why dog parks should actually happen.

But as an academic, I'm aware that case study after study after study doesn't work. So the summer I'm going to be launching surveys in 40 dog parks across Canada to see if I can document social capital and contrast it with people who leash walk their dogs primarily. But to do it across different provinces, different types of communities, therefore different types of off-leash opportunities as a way of doing a broader documentation of this particular phenomenon. And so when it comes to therapy programs or pet visitation or dogs in jails or any of these sort of canine human facilitated assistance, again, you see one-off studies. This dog or this dog and one jail or these dogs in a couple of classrooms in one school. And I think what you need to do is a bit of a meta-analysis, which happens a lot in health work as you know, but hasn't happened in these sorts of social studies to determine those kind of cross studies, but also to start to move forward to looking at not one-off case studies, but studies that incorporate multiple schools, multiple post-secondary opportunities, multiple therapy dogs, (INAUDIBLE) call them pet facilitation to demonstrate something broader than a one-off case study, which is what we got right now.

MARIKA:

I love what you're saying. There's so much there. There are institutes that are doing that. So HABRI will study the list, HABRI in the states, they have sample sizes of seven and 800 and they've been able to replicate the findings in numerous studies. So it's happening now. It's a bit slower than I think you and I both want. Dr. Colleen Del in Canada, she's one of the leading researchers with canines. She's doing larger sample studies now, too. So, Merica, our Kirsten's doing her PhD and research and I do the Humane Society of Canada, and Humane Society are doing a lot of big samples, big databases. But Annie, I think you're right. I think we have to not take our foot off the gas here and to really replicate and validate the findings. I'm with you 100%. Anything we can do to help you with your studies and even ethics approval, we need to really advocate. A lot of ethics boards just really struggle with this. And I know the Humane Society is really working on coming up with ethical standards to review our research with canines and more social settings.

So we're all in. But we'll send you the list. The HABRI is an amazing institute. We both went to the University of Denver because we couldn't find anything here, and they had the Animal Humane Institute there. That's where we went to do the good work. Yeah.

ANNIE:

UW Medicine does quite a lot with Trish McConnell.

MARIKA:

Yeah, Trish McConnell. Wonderful. So it sounds like we've got our email in there, our email addresses, and thank you, everyone. If people want to stay connected and we'll make sure you get the slides and some handouts. But I really, you know, Anna and everyone like if we want to develop some kind of, I don't know, community of practicing advocates that want to keep this going, then we're more than happy to join you and get something going so we can do this in a good way.

KIRSTEN:

And if you're looking for a deeper foundation, we teach a course at UFB that will be happening again in September. It's over two weekends from nine to five on Saturday and Sunday. I think there's enough interest right now to offer something community-based. However, we're hearing over the last few months, so that's another avenue to and a big piece of the work for us is not to create such barriers. It's already becoming very privileged work, animal-assisted work, sometimes with some pretty high costs attached to it. So that's not the orientation we come from. It's to make it accessible for all. So happy for you to email us and we can put you on a list around upcoming education

opportunities and workshops and some of those things 'cause we really need to grow the good army, but are advocating for our canine friends.

MARIKA:

And just like another quick thing this summer, I know Chelsea knows about this, but we're going to be offering a mindful. I'm a mindful self-compassion educator but I have canine-assisted, mindful self-compassion. And so we're going to do it in person but we'll do it virtually. Again, we want to make it as exclusive or inclusive as possible. It's nice to be with kindred people, kindred advocates.