



Pawsitive Animal Assisted
Counselling, Consulting and Training



Positive Partnerships in Education Settings

March 10, 2022

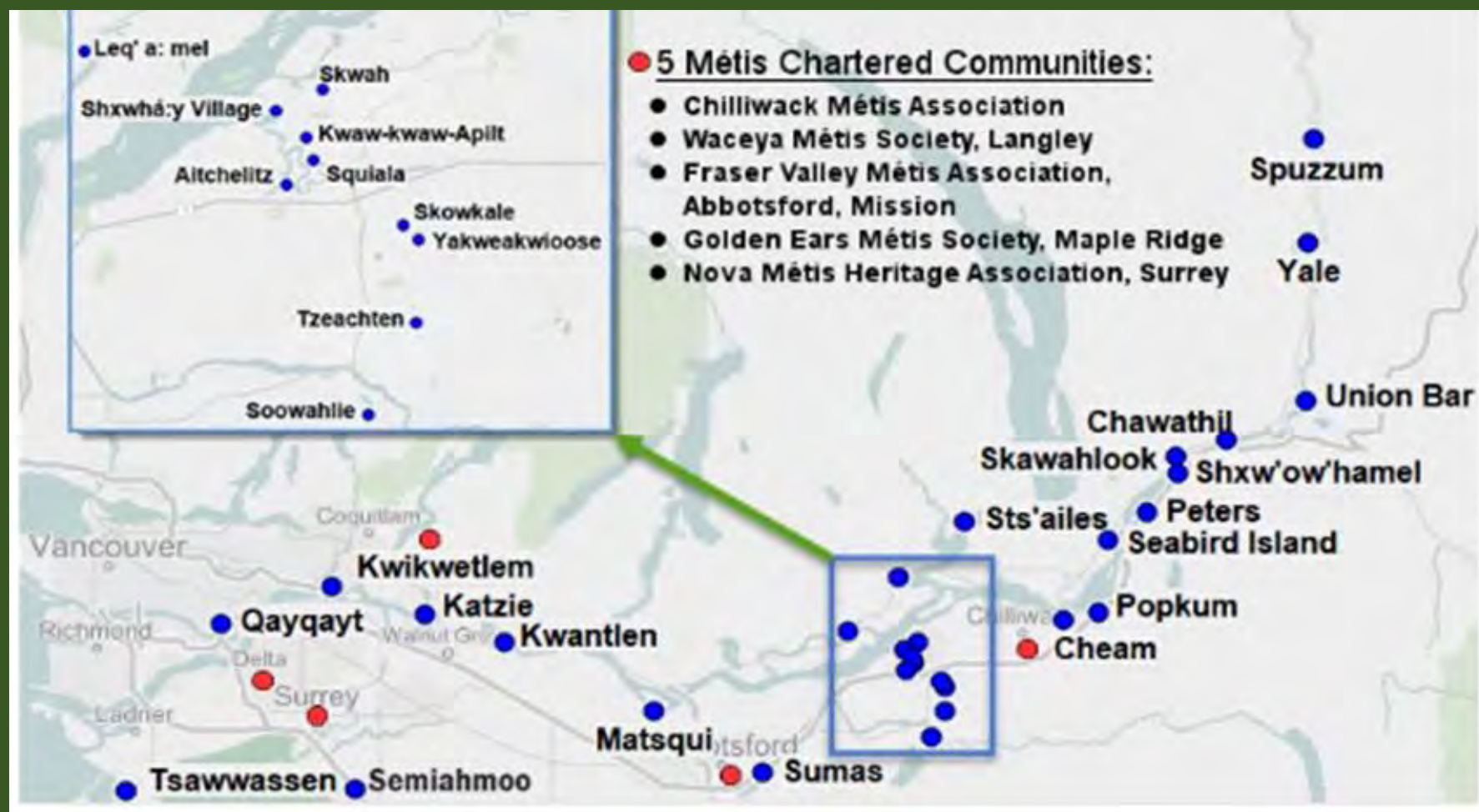
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Canine Partners: Kona, Nalu, Frank, Maggie, Cesar



<https://youtu.be/Jholcb8Gz0M>



We are grateful to Coast Salish and Nlaka'pamux Peoples for permitting us to gather on their unceded, traditional territories. We want to thank Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers past, present and emerging for stewarding these lands and for contributing Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies towards more holistic healing and wellness. This includes honouring the gifts that canines brought to humans before colonization and now in its reclamation.



**Through the dog's
eyes ...**

Canine Scale

1



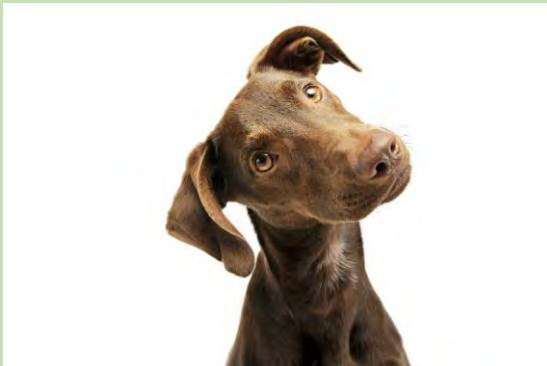
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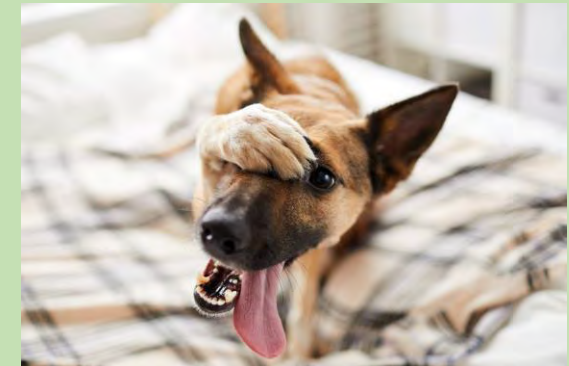
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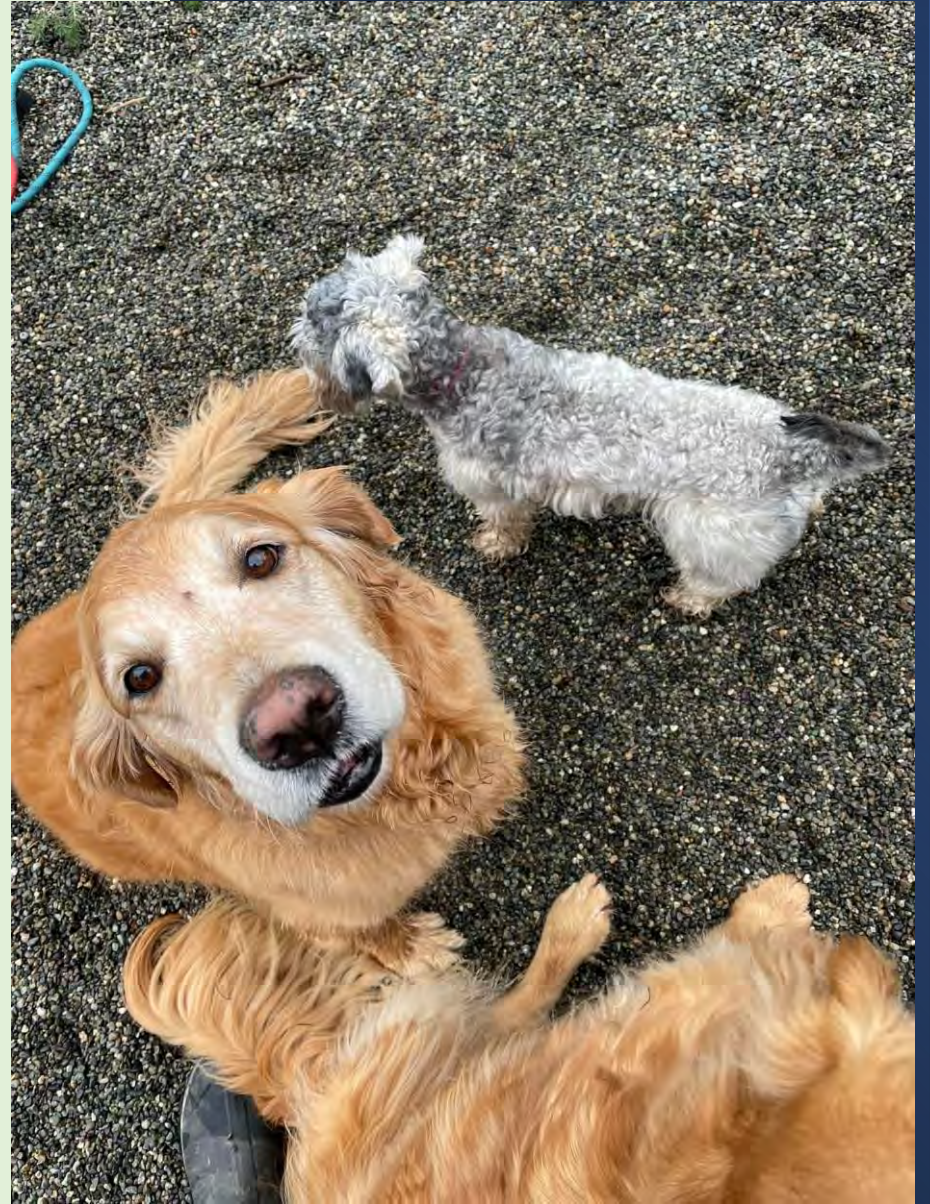
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Our Hopes Together Today

By participating in this webinar, it is intended that you will be able:

- Recall the evolution of canine-human bond and our deepening awareness of canines as sentient beings;
- List specific and diverse ways that human-canine partnerships have benefitted post secondary education;
- Describe ethical and safety considerations when partnering with canines in post secondary education settings; and,
- Identify how you can support canine-human partnerships that promote mutual benefit.





Introducing Our Canine Partners – Kona and Nalu

Kona – 8.5 Years Young

Resume: 6 Years of Helping Work

Preferences: Children and active group games

Nalu – 3.5 Years Young

Resume: 2.5 years of helping work

Strengths: Meditation, staying calm and present through emotional intensity

Introducing Our Canine Partners

Frank - 14 yrs

Maggie – 10.5 yrs

Cesar – 11 yrs





How can Canine Partnerships Support Education Outcomes in Post Secondary Settings?

- For Students?
- For Teachers?
- For Administration and Support Staff?
- For Dogs?
- For Dog Owners?

Canine-Human Bond



History of the Canine–Human Bond

References

Thalmann, Olaf; Perri, Angela R. (2018). "Paleogenomic Inferences of Dog Domestication". In Lindqvist, C.; Rajora, O. (eds.). *Paleogenomics*. Population Genomics. Springer, Cham. pp. 273–306.

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Zeder MA (2012). "The domestication of animals". *Journal of Anthropological Research*. **68** (2): 161–190.

- Dogs, a member of the wolf-like canids, were first animal after humans to be domesticated over 15,000 years ago (predates agriculture)
- **Human-centric views** of domestication believe that humans took wild animals (ungulates) and bred them to be 'domestic' to benefit humans (improve food or materials for human consumption). This is known as a **commensal pathway** where one species gains benefit of those from another species who neither benefit nor harmed.

History of the Canine–Human Bond

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Thalmann, Olaf; Perri, Angela R. (2018). "Paleogenomic Inferences of Dog Domestication". In Lindqvist, C.; Rajora, O. (eds.). *Paleogenomics*. Population Genomics. Springer, Cham. pp. 273–306.

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- **Alternate views** regard dogs as evolving with humans – both learning how to socialize with each other. This is known as **parallel evolution**, and there is emerging evidence of this:
 - Suite of 311 genes from humans and dogs show overlapping loci in patterns for digestion and neurological processes
 - Both dogs and humans adapted to environments with their genomes showing parallel evolution e.g. dogs and humans suffer from similar health issues such as diabetes, cancers, heart diseases, anxiety, depression
 - Dogs have evolved specialized skills for reading human social and communicative behaviours
 - Maternal bonding e.g., extended eye contact increases oxytocin levels in both dogs and its owners

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- The word 'puppy' is believed to have been adopted from the French *poupee* or doll
- Folk stories are populated with dogs e.g., Africans spoke of Rukuba, the dog who brought us fire
- Today, dogs are the most abundant terrestrial carnivore- 900 million worldwide with U.S.A, the leading country with 80 million
- The average Canadian spends \$4,000 year on food, toys, medical care
- In this summer's heat wave, many people would not leave their homes to go to cooling shelters because of their pets- so shelters had to adapt to support pets as well.

History of the Dog-Human Bond



When considering your ethical guiding your canine-human partnerships, it's helpful to understand the three models influencing the dog-human bond

Model 1 – Scala Natura aka *Great Chain of Being*; Aristotle, 2,000 years ago

- God on top, then animals based skeletons, then organics like plants the nonorganic such as rocks

Model 2 – Speciesism; Singer, 1970s

- Treating members of one species as morally more important than members of other species.

Model 3 – Science of Sentients; Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness, 2021

- humans not unique in possessing conscious states (see handout)
- Humans not unique in being aware of feelings and sensations

Dogs can:

- Dream esp. when active during day
- **More advanced cognitive processes**- learn words, do math e.g. triangulate, infer, use deductive reasoning- **video coming**
- Can learn socialization
- Highly developed motor skills
- Extremely highly develop olfactory skills (can smell up to 20km away depending on scent and wind)
- Feel and express emotions
- **Morally reason** – demonstrate altruistic behaviours (more cooperative than competitive) – **video coming**
- Self aware- can recognize their own smells



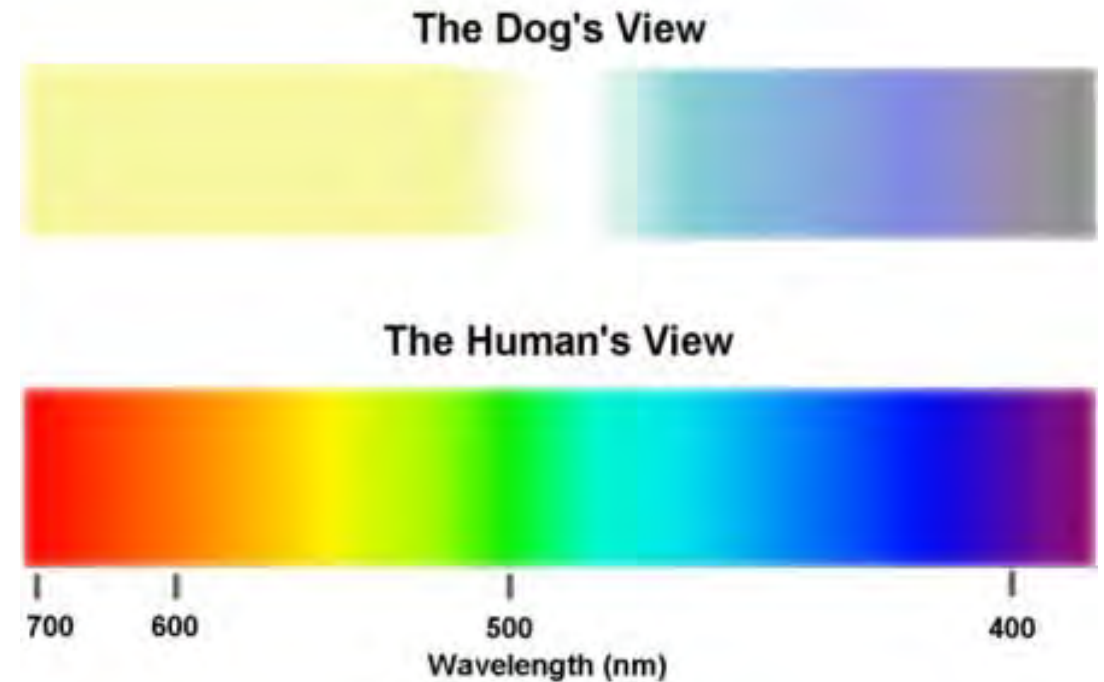


Human View

Dog View

<https://youtu.be/6xlQimfoG6k>

Dogs, see more colours than black and white



Scientist, Jay Neitz found dogs only have two 'cones' compared to humans who have three. Thus, dogs can see blue and yellow light but not red and green. Photo: Reuters Retrieved March 9, 2022

Fairness with Frans de Waal

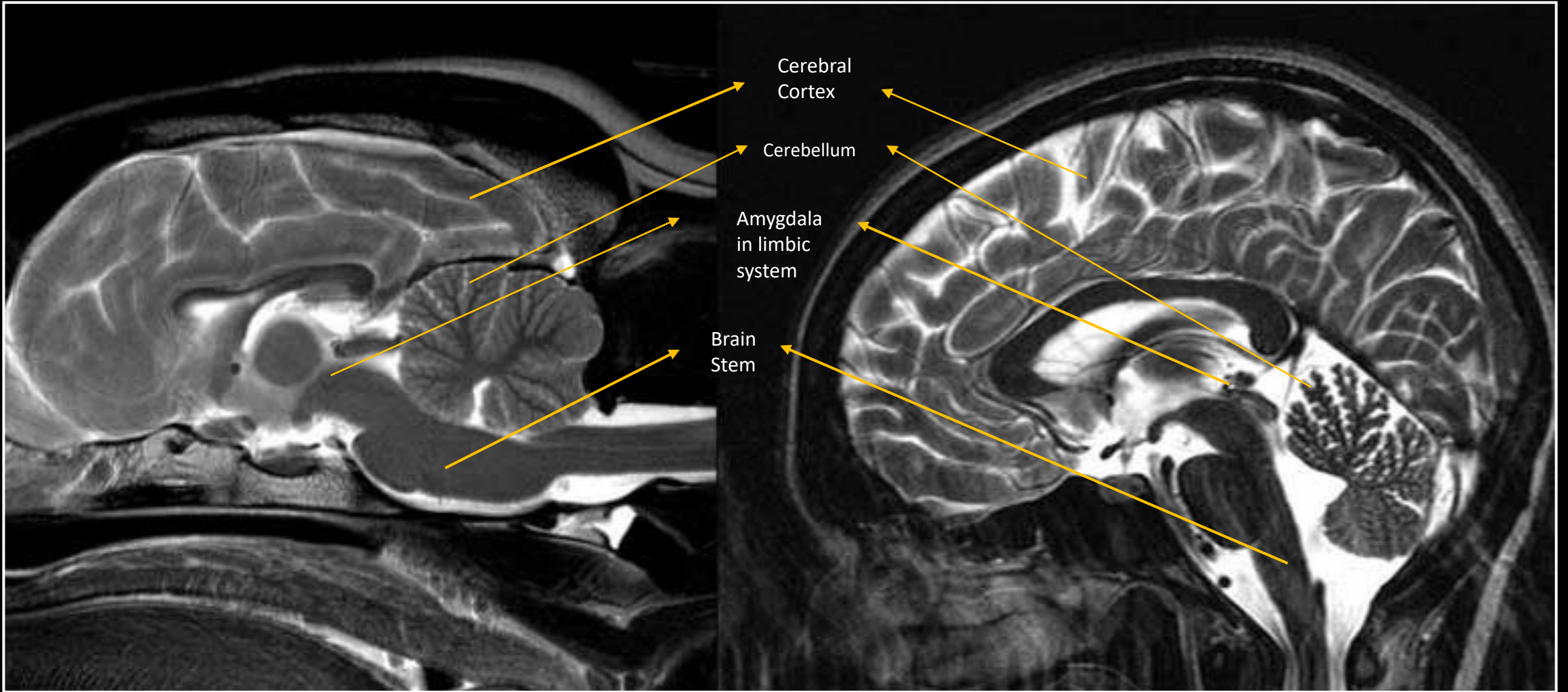


<https://youtu.be/ZcMHN1nIckM>

Replicated Experiment with Dogs



<https://youtu.be/6qTiGICxrIA>



Dog Brain

Human Brain



<https://youtu.be/omaHv5sxiFI>

Key Considerations for the Dog-Human Bond

Ecological Relevance

- Studying animals i.e., dogs in a way that account for their sensory and motor skills e.g. mirror test for dogs
- “We can’t expect species to respond to stimuli or in ways that they aren’t capable of or that come naturally.” (Bekoff, M & Pierce, J. 2019, p.12)

Anthropomorphism- anthropodenialism

- Human-centric view of dogs whereby we attribute human reactions and feelings to dogs e.g. believing dogs like to be hugged like humans
- Well intentioned and can be harmful as it doesn't respect nor value the animal's own nature. Media are champions of anthropomorphism and promote many myths
- Anthropodenialism is the opposite- that humans forget that they are animals

Isomorphic

- Homologous animals have the same causes, symptoms and treatment options as would humans for the same situation, issue and even disease.
- Isomorphic animals share the same symptoms and treatments only e.g. dogs anxiety may be caused by a different source than humans but show up with the same symptoms of hyperarousal and can be treated the same through habituation



Decolonizing the Canine-Human Bond

Colonization involves one group taking control of the lands, resources, languages, cultures, and relationships of another group. In Canada and the US, European settlers arrived, claimed the land from Indigenous People, and systematically tried to extinguish Indigenous ways of knowing with more European ways of being and believing. This included **Anthropocentrism** or the belief that human beings are the central or most important entity in the universe, and andro-centric- focused on white men being superior.

Colonization has had a devastating effect on interspecies relationships including the human-canine bond

Ego



Colonized Worldview

Nature



Decolonized Worldview

Decolonizing the Canine-Human Bond

- Colonization dismantled and reassembled the human-canine relationship within a matrix of **Eurocentric anthropocentric** – androcentric power
- Animals, including canines became objects to manipulate and control i.e., to tame or destroy to make way for ‘civilization’ as defined by the human-white-male superiority (Belcourt et al, 2015)
- Traditionally, Indigenous peoples positioned animals as equitable partners in interconnected human and more-than human networks, animated with spirit and the ability to act and communicate. (Field, 2022)



Decolonizing the Canine-Human Bond

Indigenous View of the Canine-Human Bond

The Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation have a saying, heshook-ish tsawalk, that expresses an understanding that “everything is one”, i.e., one network of relationships. No being is “useless” or expendable within such an understanding; everything has its role within the dynamic balance that maintains the world and makes living possible.



Decolonizing the Canine-Human Bond

Canine as Teacher

The survival of the Ojibwe self relies on the development of helpful relationships with more than humans including dogs. Because canines are attributed the power of agency and action by the Ojibwe People, positive relationships with them are understood to be necessary in order to receive the favours and gifts required to successfully navigate the dangers of life.

The Ojibwe word for canines means “our grandfathers”. They are regarded as being wiser, and that we would do well to learn to observe and listen to dogs.

Bond-Based Partnerships

From Jennifer Arnold:

- Single predictor of success for canine assisted work is the **bond** between the dog and their person
- The “MEs”, the “THEEs”, the “WEs”
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) defines the human animal bond as such. Canines do not have a recognized union
 - The bond should be mutually beneficial
 - The bond should always remains a work in progress
 - The health and well-being of both species impacts the bond between the two.

(Arnold, Jennifer, 2016. Love is All You Need, pp 23-26)



Four Key Relationship Dynamics

Specific to dog – how do they respond to environment, likes, dislikes, fearful, when they have had enough

#1 - Dog's relationship to their world

1

#2 -Owner's response to dog

2

Owner's physical and emotional response to dog's communication via their behaviour

More fluid dynamic between owner and dog; Can you understand what dog is communicating to you in the situation?

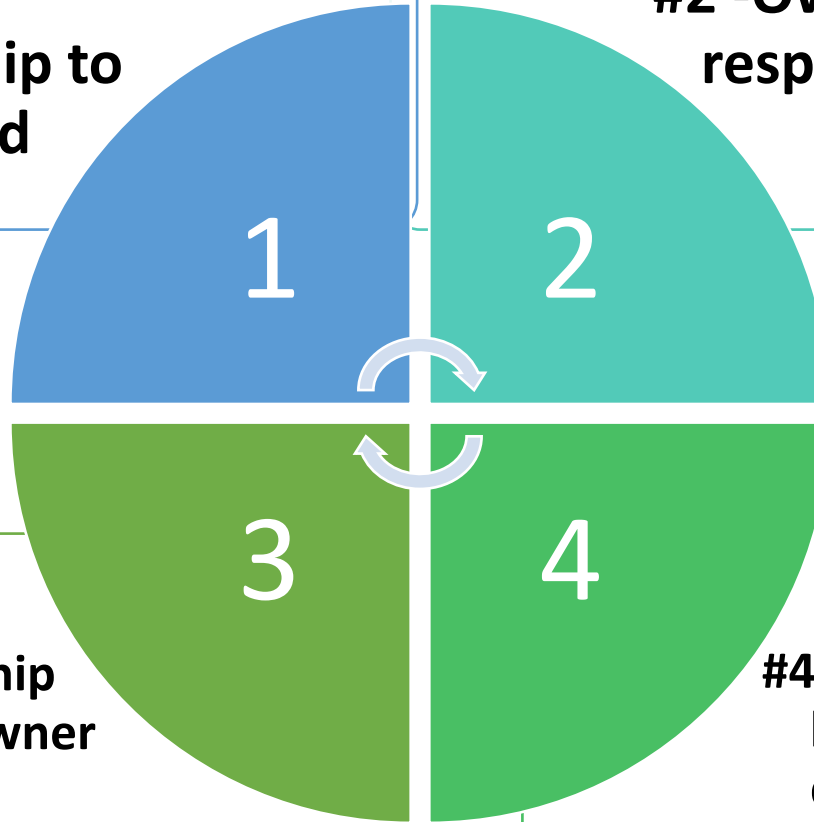
#3 -Relationship between owner and dog

3

#4 -Relationship between owner, dog and third party

4

Most fluid dynamic and as the owner, are you aware of everyone's needs? Do you narrate what your dog is communicating?



Think this picture is cute?

Look closely.



You CAN prevent dog bites.

Learn more at www.DoggingtonPost.com

Fostering a Deeper Relationship Between You and Your Dog

Goal is Mutual Benefit in the Canine Partnership

1. **Umvelt** – ‘a subjective universe’ always curious to understand how is this for you? A dog answers via body language
2. **Acceptance and respect** – accepting whole dog, being empathetic, setting ego aside and willing to say ‘no’ on dog’s behalf.
3. **Trust** – safe environments create trust; are you observing and recognizing what dog is communicating. You can lost trust but not advocating for dog, operating from shame or putting unnecessary burdens and pressure on dog
4. **Support** – dogs need play to loosen up/discharge; mental and physical stimulation; engage in natural dog behaviours

Canine-Human Partnerships in Post Secondary Settings



Examples of Evidence for Canine Assisted Education

and Link Back to Chat Box

Social Emotional: Promotes a positive mood and provides significant anti-stress effects on the body. In fact, the simple act of petting a dog has the effect of lowering blood pressure and heart rate. Pet therapy also lowers stress hormones, like cortisol, and increases oxytocin. [Psychosocial and Psychophysiological Effects of Human-Animal Interactions: The Possible Role of Oxytocin \(nih.gov\)](#)

Social Connectedness: Interacting with a therapy dog has a “social catalyst” effect, which leads to “increased stimulation of social behavior.” These relationships build trust and trustworthiness in students and help them develop a greater capacity for empathy. [EJ1173578.pdf \(ed.gov\)](#)

Motivation: Presence of therapy dogs improved student concentration and motivation to read and write [The Effects of Animal Assisted Therapy on Students \(sjfc.edu\)](#)

Note- more research being published daily as this field expands. Check out <https://habri.org/>

Different Dog Work Classifications

These are not trained for a specific task and instead assessed for service suitability and individual workplace policies. (currently not regulated in BC and Canada)

- Emotional Support Dogs
- Therapy Dogs (often confused with service dogs but different)
- Companion Dogs
- Facility Dogs
- Pet Visitation Dogs

Service Dogs: Trained to perform specific task and are regulated in Canada and in BC specifically by by the [Guide Dog and Service Dog Act \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/employment/employment_standards/guide_dog_service_dog_act)

- Medical Alert
- Search and Rescue
- Law Enforcement – Police Dogs
- Military Trained Dogs
- Hearing Dogs
- Seizure Alert Dogs
- Physical Assistance Dogs
- Diabetic Alert Dogs
- Arson Dogs
- Protection Dogs
- Severe Allergy Dogs
- Autism Assistance Dogs
- Psychiatric Assistance Dogs
- Medical Assistance Dogs
- Visual Assistance Dogs
- PTSD Dogs
- Detection Dogs



**Your Ethical
Compass**

10 Freedoms Dogs Need

The Original Five (1965)

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from pain.
3. Freedom from discomfort
4. Freedom from fear and distress
5. Freedom from avoidable or treatable illness and disability

These were developed in 1965 by the UK's Farm Animal Welfare Council, and now widely adopted across the globe

Five More Added (2016)

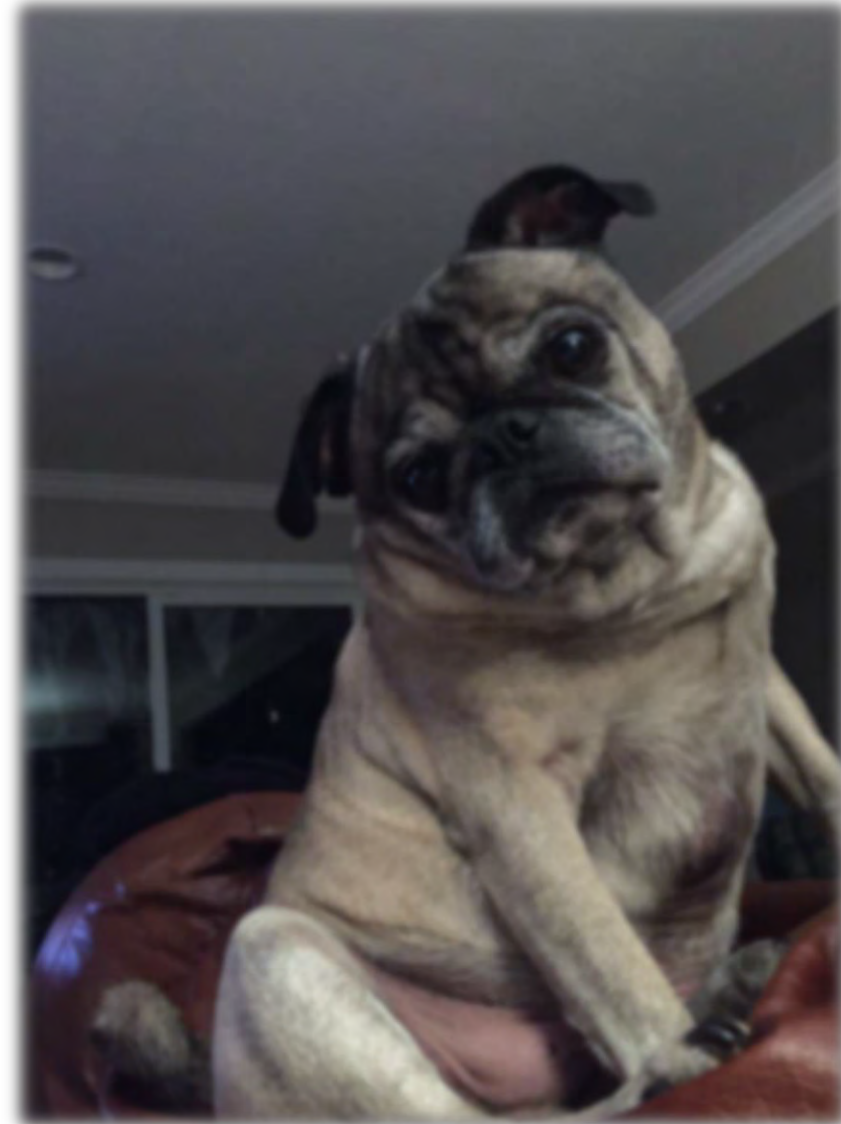
6. **Freedom to be themselves.**
7. **Freedom to express normal behaviours.**
8. **Freedom to exercise choice and control**
9. **Freedom to frolic and have fun**
10. **Freedom to have privacy and 'safe zones'.**

These were developed for animal welfare discussions and go beyond safety and aversive experiences

Canine Bill of Rights

All Canines have the right to...

- Compassion and respect from humans
- Pain and force free education
- Equal membership in the human-canine bond
- Basic needs understood and provided
- Love and care from a family
- Freedom from breed-based judgments and restrictions
- Ongoing medical and wellness care
- Daily exercise and enrichment
- Learn what is expected of them
- Freedom from fear and pain for the financial benefit of humans



Pathway to Partnering with Dogs in Education Settings

- Usually volunteer model – volunteer from non-profit agency provides canine assisted support services within education setting.
- Currently four major purposes of canine partnerships in schools that has compelling evidence to support effective outcomes
 1. Social-Emotional Interventions and Support e.g. co-regulation, depression, anxiety, social connectedness, etc.
 2. Literacy e.g. reading, writing, reading, comprehension, focusing
 3. Special Events e.g. health fair, book fair, trade shows, orientation, festivals
 4. Crisis response e.g. sudden death or other trauma, school closures, COVID



Pathway to Partnering with Dogs in Education Settings

Suggested Steps

Pre-planning

- Canine Assisted Intervention (CAI) knowledge and skills development
- Mission and goals for CAI in education setting
- Site Assessment
- Securing Resources

Planning

- Research and recruit CAI Team
- Agreements and permissions (policies, insurance, etc)
- CAI Planning Meeting
- Student, Teacher and/or Counsellor Meeting
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Implement

- Document
- Monitor and evaluate



Key Considerations for your Ethical Compass

For You, as a Practitioner / Canine Partner	For your Service / Canine Partnership Workplace
How do you view dogs, your dog(s)? The canine-human bond, your bond?	How does your service view dogs? The Canine-Human Bond?
Do you hold a worldview that have shaped your view about canine assisted interventions for children, youth and families?	Does your service have policies and practices that support the ethical and safe inclusion of canine assisted interventions?
What training and support do you and your canine need? What needs to be in place to ensure safety and promote mutual benefit?	Is there funding, resources and organizational approval for canine assisted interventions
Are you committed and will advocate for your canine's well being both at work and outside work? Will you commit to on-going assessments by a third party and be open to objective feedback?	Is the service aware of the canine's needs separate from the student, staff, etc. Does the service have enough of an understanding of its role in ensuring canine welfare during service?
How will you assess strengths, challenges in your canine assisted interventions?	How will the service evaluate outcomes and use findings to continuously improve practices?

A black, white, and tan dog, possibly a Border Collie, is standing on a paved surface, looking directly at the camera with its mouth open and tongue out, appearing happy. The dog has a white face with black markings around its eyes and ears, and tan markings on its legs. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

Current Ethical Challenges

- Zoonotic concerns e.g., allergies, diseases
- Cultural and religious beliefs about animals including canines
- Anthropocentrism
- Speciesism and breed stereotypes
- Lack of evidence based on lack of research to build evidence base
- Lack of interest
- View that canine interventions will compete for limited funding dollars for services
- Lack of regulation and standards for canine partnerships outside guide and service dogs roles

Future of Canine Assisted Practices

- Field of CAI is dynamic and gaining popularity
 1. Strong desire by public to spend time with dogs
 2. Biophilia Hypothesis (Wilson, 1984) that in a technology driven world, we are drawn to life and life-like organisms
 3. Social media promotion of dogs as therapeutic partners (research gap)
 4. Low costs intervention that is more cost effective than other counselling
 5. Intrinsic and extrinsic gratification received by volunteer and employed partners (low staff turnover)
- Research has not caught up to practice
- Regulations not caught up to practice, and thus need ethical frameworks and ethical decision making tools based in mutual benefit
- language is important e.g., calling your dog a “service dog” or “therapy dog”



Pawsitive Animal Assisted
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“Of all the gifts that animals can offer, perhaps, the greatest is the opportunity to delve deep inside ourselves. Without judgment or timetables, with patience and amazing capacity for forgiveness, animals are ideal guides through our inner landscapes. In moments of glorious agreements as well as moments of frustrated disconnection, our relationships with dogs serves us well, gently nudging us to a greater understanding of the dynamics of two beings in willing partnership and to new insights into who we are ... a life lived in relationship with animals has the power to make us both fully human and more fully humane.”

- Suzanne Clothier, page 12 in *Bones would Rain from the Sky*

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