

Elena Pezzini, PhD

HEART RESCUE

Virtually everything you need to learn in life, you can learn from your pet.

As a psychologist and certified life and business coach, I have worked with Oscar-winning celebrities, Olympic athletes, bestselling authors, world-renowned speakers, Fortune 100 company's CEOs and entrepreneurs at every level of success, from startup to those running hundreds-of-million-dollar companies. Ninety-nine percent of the time, clients come to me because they want to make more money or want more time off or both. Discovering that they can achieve this by listening to and caring for an animal usually comes as a surprise.

It is the simplest ideas and the easiest paths that often seem hard to believe. And yet they are the surest way to success and fulfillment. Everything relates to everything, and so, everything is a reflection and extension of yourself. Money—having it or not having it—is a result of the thoughts and beliefs you hold inside of you, consciously or not. Animals are mirrors, reflecting to you your anxieties, fears, frustrations, concerns, joys and so on. Have you noticed that, when you are anxious, the animals around you are anxious? When you are calm, your animals are calm. Animals soak up the essence of who you are—your thoughts, beliefs, struggles and desires—and show you the truth of who you are in

this very moment. I have noticed it, too. Humans are, by definition, animals. Now, if animals don't stress about money, why should we humans stress? Animals stay in the present moment and never stress about money, knowing and trusting they will always be okay.

I invite you to pay attention to the animals in your life. Are your pets happy? Playful? Do they follow their training? Or do they seem nervous or scared? Do they make messes in the house and generally cause trouble? Or, if you do not have pets, how do animals react to you when you encounter them? Are they over-

Animals see the real you.

excited, or calm and loving? In my opinion, how animals behave around you and relate to you gives you clues as to how you perceive yourself and how you are perceived by the world.

I have witnessed that, beyond the mirror, animals remind you who you *really* are, the person you are yearning to reconnect with, the person who, like so many abandoned animals on this earth, needs to be rescued. Animals see the real you, the child with eyes full of hope and a pure and positive heart. Our pets have kept their innocence. They know what matters most in life: unconditional love, healthy food, clean drinking water, plenty of exercise, restful sleep, constant companionship and abundant play. They remind you that this is the true, balanced path toward living a fulfilling life.

I am an immigrant. I came to the United States from Italy and made it on my own. It wasn't easy. Because I was so far from my family, my pets became my family. When I felt discouraged, my pets kept me balanced and helped me stay on track. I'm highly grateful for them.

Over the years, I have become more and more interested in how animals help us heal, help us grow, help us live happy and balanced lives. I began to study the human-animal bond and wrote my PhD dissertation on the subject, while helping my clients create the lives they desired. Today, I apply my knowledge about the healing and

transformational power of animals to the work I already do with humans.

There are about eight main life areas—money, career, relationships, health, education, environment, play and charity—and your pets will help you succeed in all of them. Recall that I believe animals act as a mirror, and that they remind you of the child within you, the time when you made heart-centered choices. These benefits alone would be enough to motivate most people to pay special attention to their pets and all that pets can teach humans. And yet there is much more that animals have to give us.

Taking time to love, feed or exercise your pet, or with your pet, enables you to focus on one thing and one thing only: your relationship with your pet. When I am walking my dog, or just sitting with my cat and dog and giving them my attention, this is one of the few times I'm able to stop my mind from racing and feel pure bliss. When my clients are stressed, I always tell them

Pets love unconditionally.

to do some sort of art, or movement such as yoga or dance, or meditation with their pets.

Your pet also is fully one with you and does not leave you unattended or out of sight. I always smile when I am inside a store and have left my pet momentarily tied outside or in the car (with open windows) and I peek outside and I see those two eyes completely, one hundred percent hyper-focused on me. The world could come to an end and those eyes would still be on their human. The power of focus!

It is scientifically proven that animals aid in reducing and often eliminating stress. Pet owners live longer and are generally happier than non-pet-owners. In this way, animals help you improve all life areas. When you slow down and stay focused on one aspect of your life, then you are better able to make real and lasting positive change. Have you ever been able to remain sad when you look into an animal's eyes?

People who care for pets tend to be more grateful. They learn this from their pets. Animals have always shown people gratitude for feeding them, for saving them, for paying attention to them. They never hold back affection and constantly show appreciation. Can we say the same about our own actions, or about the humans

***What if you loved yourself as
your pet loves you?***

in our lives? I can't always say so. Gratitude is a key to success in all areas. And yet we often forget to express our thanks for the simple pleasures, such as for being alive.

Pets love unconditionally. They don't hold grudges. They love everyone—poor or rich. They don't care about material possessions. They live for their owner's affection. When I am with my pets, I feel nothing but unconditional love. I feel it from my animals to me, and I feel it toward my animals. In human relationships, unconditional love is hard to come by. Many people place conditions on love. They withhold love when they don't feel safe, or if they feel someone has not earned their devotion, or as punishment. Worse, they do it to *themselves*.

My pets taught me unconditional love and unconditional commitment. I had never experienced it before. Growing up in the countryside in the Lake Region of Northern Italy, I have fostered or adopted the animals nobody wanted. Born after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, some of them were deformed. Although they didn't look like the ideal pets I had always dreamed of—the purebred, perfectly designed pets so many people want—inevitably, they won my heart and taught me the meaning of true love. In this way, they become ideal and perfect to me.

This is my life lesson: How many times do we want the perfect career, the perfect partner? And we wait and wait and don't take action. We let life slip away waiting for the illusion of perfection. From my pets I have learned that, if there is such a thing as perfection, it is in the journey. With all the surprises and

unexpected turns, as long as we go for it and don't hold back, life will reward us beautifully for our courage and for taking action. That has been my beautiful experience.

What if you loved all humans as your pet loves you? What if you loved yourself as your pet loves you? How would your life be different if you loved without condition?

Again, animals remind us what is important: play, being present, love. Animals don't think about the future. They don't worry about tomorrow. They are happy for no reason! In our pursuit of success and money, we lose sight of the simple things and stop living. Most Western societies measure success with money. I am an international person with two passports, Italian and American. I have seen, met and befriended hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world. In my experience, some of the happiest and healthiest people are not the richest. I have met some unhealthy and lonely monetarily rich people. The happiest and healthiest people in my life take time to smell the roses, accept what is and continue loving themselves and other beings, no matter what! They are balanced, and I believe in balance.

At the start of this chapter, I said that ninety-nine percent of my clients come to me because they want to make more money. They come to me in a state of blaming anything and everyone except themselves. With coaching, they realize that they are solely responsible for their financial results and all their other life results and that when the other areas of their life are out of in balance, it prevents them from making more money. As they start working on themselves and open up to nature, to animals, to the child within them, they begin to know themselves better and make better decisions—decisions from the heart, from a loving place instead of from a place of darkness.

Again, how we relate to one thing is how we relate to everything. People who can't relate well to the most innocent creatures on Earth ought to look inside themselves and ask why. Why are they impatient? Why do they discriminate? Why are they angry? If

people can't convey love, tranquility and peace to an animal, they certainly can't offer it to other humans.

In my life, the best lessons have come from nature. I have seen animals win the hearts of fearful people, negative people, and transform them for the better. Animals provide valuable lessons—for free! When you rescue a pet without a home or family—through foster or adoption—you rescue your own heart, you rescue yourself. Some animals can be vegetarian, which makes it very affordable to provide for them. Mine are! If you don't have a pet, or can't foster or rescue one for some reason, please visit and volunteer at an animal sanctuary. Spend time with animals and in nature. Why not let animals teach you what you need to learn? Then be ready to fall in love with all other beings and watch miracles happen!

Elena Pezzini, PhD, is the founder and CEO of You Have Got the Power, Inc. and and You Got The Power, a 501c3 nonprofit, both coaching, consulting and mentoring organizations dedicated to empowering people and their animals to make the Earth a better place. At the core of the companies' vision is a commitment to make this world a better and better place to live in for ourselves and the many generations to come: homes for all people and animals, education, financial literacy, human rights for everyone in the world; and a clean, ecological, sustainable, organic and healthy Earth for all of us!

Guiding clients on five continents, Elena and her team use positive psychology, coaching, hypnosis, emotional freedom techniques, masterminding, mentoring, consulting and neuro-linguistic programming to help them achieve their wildest dreams and fullest potentials in life by facing and breaking through their fears. In her webinars, Elena shares the insight, tools and strategies she uses to help clients achieve remarkable results, often collaborating with popular coaches such as Lisa Nichols from The Secret; renowned Internet marketer, Peng Joon; speaker Les Brown; bestselling authors Robert Kyosaki, Mark Victor Hansen, Jack Canfield and Dr. John Gray; various celebrities and NFL players.

A native of Italy, Elena moved to the United States to pursue her PhD in industrial organizational psychology. She has worked as a coach and consultant for a number of Fortune 100 companies, including Procter & Gamble, Ernst & Young, Showtime, General Electric, Sprint, Prudential, Bank of America and Charles Schwab.

Elena is also certified in life, financial, leadership and Navigator Franchise coaching. She is a Senior Coach with her corporation, with her nonprofit and other world-leading companies in personal and professional education. Elena is a regular contributor to Business Heroine Magazine. She is a member of the International Coaching Federation, the American Society of Training Development and the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology. Connect with her and her team at www.YouHaveGotThePower.com.

