

# How Pets Make Us Human

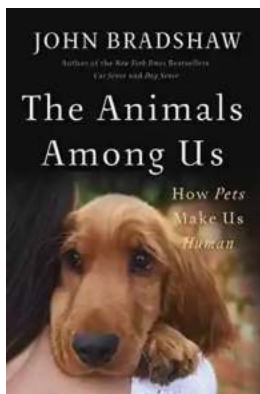


Pets have been an integral part of human society for thousands of years. From faithful canine companions to independent feline friends, our furry (or scaly) friends bring joy, companionship, and a unique connection that goes beyond our human relationships. In this article, we will explore the ways in which pets make us more human, touching upon the emotional, physical, and psychological benefits they provide.

## **The Bond between Humans and Pets**

The bond between humans and pets transcends mere ownership. It is a bond built on trust, love, and mutual understanding. Many studies have shown that having a pet in our lives can improve our mental and physical health. Pets

provide us with unconditional love, companionship, and a sense of purpose. Their presence can reduce stress, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness. For some individuals, pets even serve as therapy animals, assisting in healing emotional wounds and aiding in recovery from trauma.



## The Animals Among Us: How Pets Make Us

**Human** by John Bradshaw (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 45230 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 385 pages



### Pets as Social Facilitators

Pets act as social facilitators, often becoming the ice-breakers in social interactions. Walking our dogs in the park, for example, opens up opportunities to meet fellow dog owners and engage in conversations. Pets provide a topic of common interest and help to bring people closer together. Whether it's sharing stories about our pet's antics or seeking advice on pet care, these interactions strengthen our social connections and foster a sense of belonging.

### The Therapeutic Power of Pets

When it comes to therapy, pets have proven to be instrumental in improving the mental well-being of individuals facing various challenges. Animal-assisted therapy has been widely used to help reduce anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms. The mere act of stroking a cat or dog can release feel-good hormones

like oxytocin and decrease the production of stress hormones such as cortisol. Moreover, pets provide a source of unconditional love and acceptance, which can be highly beneficial for those struggling with self-esteem issues or other psychological problems.

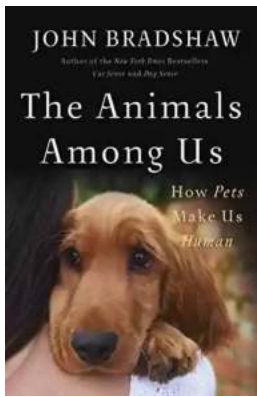
## **The Health Benefits of Pet Ownership**

It's not just our mental well-being that improves with pet ownership; our physical health also reaps the rewards. Research has shown that having pets can lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease, and boost our overall immune system. The act of walking a dog, for example, promotes physical activity, which in turn improves cardiovascular health. Additionally, studies have found that children growing up with pets have a lower risk of developing allergies and asthma.

## **Pets Teach Us Responsibility**

Bringing a pet into our lives comes with great responsibility. They rely on us for their well-being and survival. The act of caring for another living being teaches us important life skills, such as empathy, patience, consistency, and selflessness. Pets remind us of the importance of routine, providing us with a sense of purpose and structure in our daily lives. Whether it's feeding them, grooming them, or taking them to the vet, these acts of responsibility contribute to our personal growth and development as compassionate individuals.

In summary, pets have a profound impact on our lives. They bring us joy, companionship, and a sense of fulfillment. From being our loyal companions to serving as therapy animals, pets make us more human, enhancing both our physical and mental well-being. So, if you don't have a pet yet, consider getting one and experience the unique bond that will undoubtedly make you feel more connected to your inner self, as well as to the world around you.



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A leading anthrozoologist and the bestselling author of *Dog Sense* and *Cat Sense* explains why we are so drawn to pets.

Historically, we relied on our pets to herd livestock, guard homes, and catch pests. But most of us don't need animals to do these things anymore. Pets have never been less necessary. And yet, pet ownership has never been more common than it is today: half of American households contain a cat, a dog, or both. Why are pets still around?

In *The Animals Among Us*, John Bradshaw, one of the world's leading authorities on the relationship between humans and animals, argues that pet ownership is actually an intrinsic part of human nature. He explains how our empathy with animals evolved into a desire for pets, why we still welcome them into our families, and why we mourn them so deeply when they die.

Drawing on the latest research in biology and psychology, as well as fields as diverse as robotics and musicology, *The Animals Among Us* is a surprising and affectionate history of humanity's best friends.



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