

Open Your Class with This Tomorrow

Animal Madness: How Anxious Dogs, Compulsive Parrots, and Elephants in Recovery Help Us Understand Ourselves

Option 2

Laurel Braitman, author of *Animal Madness* stated, "It was as if my own dog's crisis had given me canine-tinted goggles that gave the world an anxiously doggish perspective. I still noted dogs doing dog things, but I was beginning to regard them as individuals with their own emotional weather systems..." Examples are all around us! Use your naturalistic observational skills around animals, visit the zoo, or ask fellow pet owners about their experiences with their pets and abnormal behaviors. Share these examples as a class. Encourage students to share their personal experiences with animals who appear to display human emotions.

Directions: Dr. Panksepp a well known researcher who examined the phenomenon of laughter in rats believes that "other animals have many special abilities that humans do not have and that this may extend to emotional states." Rats have superior olfactory lives, eagles have amazing eyesight, and dolphins can sense with sonar. "These abilities may translate into more and different feelings associated with their various sensory or cognitive experiences." He believes rabbits have a better capacity for fear and cats for aggression and anger. Hold a classroom discussion on whether animals may experience emotions in a different and perhaps better way?

