

Dog Therapy

Can change your life

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“ ANIMALS ARE SUCH AGREEABLE
FRIENDS. THEY ASK NO QUESTIONS,
THEY PASS NO CRITICISMS. ”

- George Elliot



What is Pet Therapy

- Animal-assisted therapy (AAT), also known as companion animal visits and pet visitation therapy, is a scheduled encounter with a certified therapy team for the purpose of supporting or improving peoples' social, emotional, physical, or cognitive functioning. It is a person-centered therapy that can improve health and wellbeing.
- Therapy dogs are not service dogs. Service dogs are guide dogs or signal dogs who are trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability.

Therapy Dogs



Service Dogs



Pet Therapy History and Origins

- Pet therapy can be traced back to the 9th century when people born with physical disabilities worked with farm animals to maximize their physical and emotional wellbeing.
- The potential of animal therapy in health care was first recognized by the nurse Florence Nightingale in the late 1800s. She found that pets could aid in the long-term care of the sick, the chronically ill and those who did not respond well to treatment. She also documented that therapy pets reduced anxiety and sped up recovery in hospital patients.



- During the 1930s, Sigmund Freud routinely used his favorite therapy dog, Jofi, to help decrease tension in his patients.
- Pet therapy was used by the American Red Cross in military convalescent care after World War II.
- In 1989, the Delta Society, a well-known animal education group now named Pet Partners, developed a certification program to ensure animals are proficient in providing therapy. Pet Partners offers services at many healthcare facilities, including nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and hospitals.



Courtesy Bill Wynne

Sigmund Freud & Jofi



Dog Therapy is used with:

Veterans



UNC Students



Prisoners

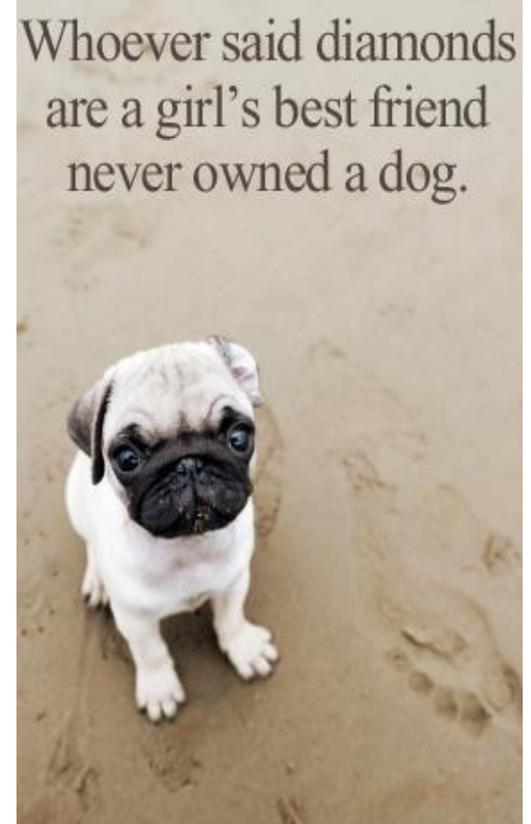


(Blessing of the Hounds-First Graduating Class)

Pet Therapy Benefits

- **Connection and Companionship**
- **Proven physical health benefits.**
- **Movement, Exercise and Activity.**
- **Decrease in depression and loneliness.**
- **Calming and Relaxing.**

Whoever said diamonds
are a girl's best friend
never owned a dog.



Dogs improve mood and health

- Dogs are acutely attuned to humans, our behavior, and emotions. Dogs understand words we use, but they're even better at interpreting our tone of voice, body language, and gestures. Therapy dogs are trained to look into your eyes to gauge your emotional state and try to understand what you're thinking and feeling.
- Recent studies have begun to scientifically explore the benefits of the human-animal bond. The American Heart Association has linked therapy dogs with a reduced risk for heart disease and greater longevity.

Dogs improve mood and health, cont'd

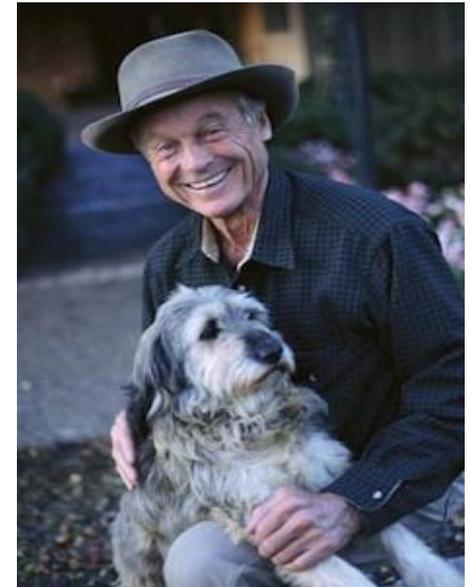
- One study found that people with borderline hypertension who interacted with therapy dogs lowered their blood pressure significantly within five months.**
- Multiple studies show a significant decline in depression with people who routinely meet with therapy dogs.**
- Elevates levels of serotonin and dopamine, which calm and relax.**
- Lowers triglyceride and cholesterol levels which are indicators of heart disease.**

Dogs improve mood and health, cont'd

- Heart attack patients who visit with therapy dogs survive longer than those without.**
- People over age 65 make 30 percent fewer visits to their doctors.**
- Dogs fulfill the basic human need to touch. Even hardened criminals in prison have shown long-term changes in their behavior after interacting with dogs. Touching a loving animal can rapidly calm and soothe us when we're stressed or anxious.**

How Dog Therapy helps people with Parkinson's Disease

- Regular Exercise.
- Decrease in depression and anxiety.
- Lessens social isolation
- Service dogs trained to help with mobility: freezing, gait, and falls prevention.



Animals have long been considered therapeutic companions and have proven beneficial to the mental, physical and social well-being of humans.



Pet Partners

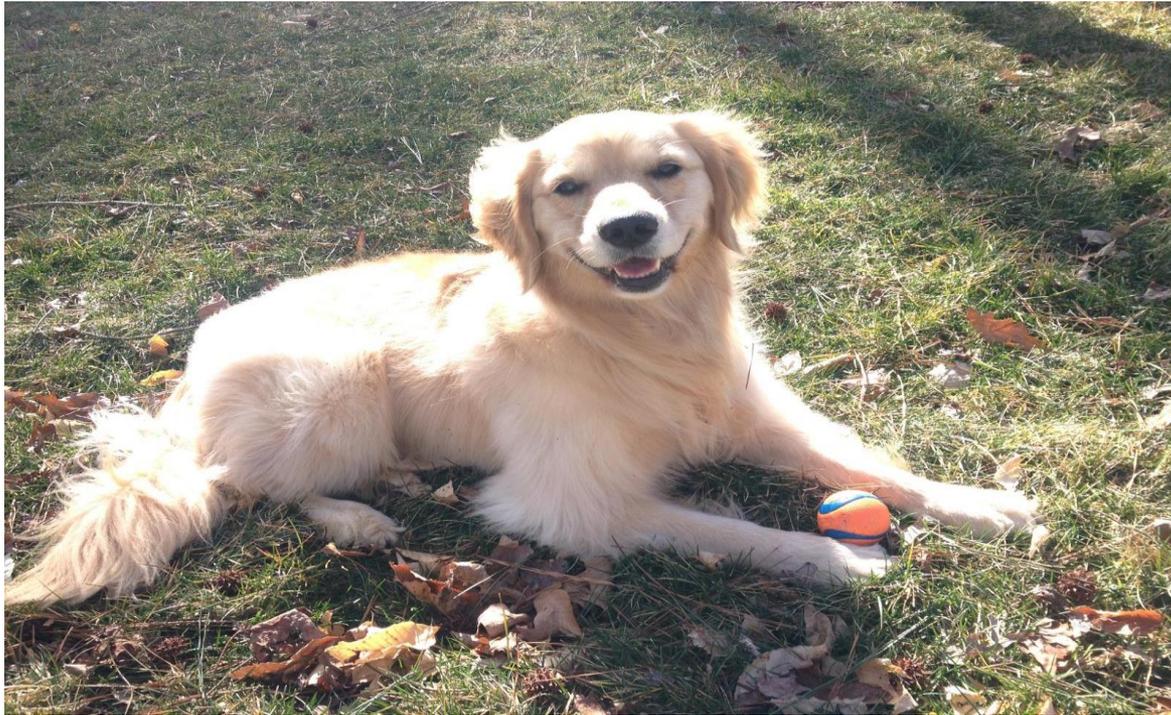
- Pet Partners is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting animal-assisted therapy, activities and education.
- 94% of their therapy teams are dogs.
- Pet Partners requires successful completion of a comprehensive education program for all volunteers before the animal is assessed for suitability.
- Focus on safety elements: infection control, patient confidentiality.
- Pet Partners Therapy requires all animals to pass a skills and aptitude evaluation every two years to remain registered as a therapy animal.

Angela and Annah

Angela Walter, M.S., C.G.C.

Pet Partners Registered Therapy Dog Handler

#95576



Resources

- Video: <https://youtu.be/5QuBKceQgfk>
- Home visit Pet Therapy Teams:
 - Annah/Angela; Gloria/Bear; Abby/Tonks
 - Home visits can be arranged between Pet Therapy Team and client
 - Pet Therapy teams usually visit for about 1 to 1.5 hours
 - For contact information to set up visits, email jshurer@neurology.unc.edu
- Articles of Interest:
 - <http://www.mtparkinsons.org/site2.o/articlesDetail.php?Paws-for-Parkinson-s-125><http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/parkinsons-disease/basics/alternative-medicine/con-20028488>
 - <http://www.joydogs.org/testimonials.php>
 - <https://www.michaeljfox.org/foundation/news-detail.php?service-dogs-parkinsons-disease>
 - <https://nwpcfcommunity.wordpress.com/2013/07/28/how-can-service-dogs-help-parkinsons/>
- Pet Partners: <https://petpartners.org>
 - Pet Partners is the nation's largest and most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams providing Animal-Assisted Interactions.