

SEVENTH SENSE

Do your animals seem to know things you don't? Their intuitive abilities are just one of many ways they can connect with us.

BY FAYE PIETROKOWSKY

Bert is a nurse. Twice a month, he takes his cat Felice to the hospital to visit dying patients. When Bert brings out the cat carrier, Felice gets in and sits quietly during the short drive to the hospital. Once there, Bert lets her out of her carrier, and for the next 90 minutes she walks in and out of rooms visiting patients.

Bert believes that Felice knows where she's needed because she spends more time with those who are most ill, sometimes jumping up on the bed with them. She has been known to sit directly on or near the spot where a patient is experiencing discomfort. When a patient dies and is no longer there, Felice seems to know and doesn't go back into the room.

Most of us have great respect and awe for the intelligence animals show in their understanding and knowledge of people and other animals. As an animal communicator, I work every year with hundreds of people and their companions. These people inquire about everything from behaviors, attitudes and habits to diet, travel, illness, and missing and deceased animals. While we express our concerns verbally or in writing, animals send words and thoughts using their own complex transmittal system. In fact, animal intelligence seems to go beyond time and space, and they frequently rely on gut instincts to guide them through life.

No one really knows how animals can sense and know things we can't, but if you talk to enough animal lovers



Maggie is a highly intuitive therapy cat. Here she shares a peaceful moment with nursing home resident, Hazel Wagman.

you'll hear at least a few *Ripley's Believe It Or Not* stories. After awhile, the shock wears off and "amazing" begins to sound routine, but the respect never disappears.

HOMING RADAR

Some of my clients have shared "amazing" stories about changes in their animals' behavior while they are away on a trip. Many animals know when their beloved humans are coming home long before anyone else in the house even hears a car in the driveway. Pet sitters report that on the day their humans are due to return home, some animals become more active and engaged and may even wait by the door or sit in a windowsill.

Rick and Chris lived with their cat, Shane. Rick always arrived home at night before Chris, and sat on the living room sofa to read the newspaper until Chris arrived. One night, Rick heard a bus drive by. Shane jumped down from the sofa and went over to the front door. Soon, Chris walked in. The next evening, Rick

observed Shane from the corner of his eye while reading the newspaper. He heard three buses go by before Shane jumped off the sofa and walked over to the door, to be greeted by Chris just a few minutes later. How did Shane know which bus Chris was on?

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH

Animals also seem to know when people are sick, dying or have died. For 29 years, Bill and Sandy owned a dog and cat motel. Clients left their dogs and cats at the motel not only while they traveled or had house guests, but also when they were hospitalized. "Sometimes the animals paced, barked or meowed about the same time their humans died," Sandy said. "They seemed to know."

Like Felice, animals can also provide a lot of comfort and loving companionship to ill or dying individuals, and their families.



Another of Maggie's nursing home friends is Glendonna Davenport.

● Ann felt alone. Her husband Bob was dying of cancer and her daughter Heather had taken their poodle Sophie with her when she moved 3,000 miles away to college. Ann needed a companion, and went to the local Humane Society where she met and fell in love with Sally, a three-year-old basset hound. Sally took an immediate liking to Ann, and they went home together. Ann believes her new friend knew about her difficulties, because as soon as they arrived home,

Sally went right into the kitchen and greeted Bob. Later, whenever Bob had bad days and was bedridden, Sally was right there beside him on the bed.

● Cheryl was receiving chemotherapy treatments. Her cat Cleo seemed to know when Cheryl was feeling sick afterwards, and would sit on or next to her stomach. "Sometimes she would comfort me by wrapping herself around my neck like a shawl," says Cheryl.

● Suki's old German shepherd Cherokee had been sick for a long time with arthritis and cancer. Suki had a hard

time letting go of her companion of eleven years, who had been a great comfort to her during many difficult times. The day arrived when Cherokee could not stand up and Suki knew it was time. She took him to the vet who put him to sleep. The next day, to Suki's astonishment, her African parrot Alex said: "Cherokee, where is Cherokee?" and began singing *Over The Rainbow*.

These are just a few of many stories I've heard from clients about the ways their animals intuitively understand, connect and commune with them. In fact, dogs, cats and other animals often seem more loyal, loving and understanding than a lot of people! We may not know how they do it, but isn't comforting to realize they can? 

IS YOUR COMPANION "PSYCHIC"?



Some animals seem more sensitive than others, but they all have some degree of intuitive ability. You just need to be observant and watch for the signs.

- Next time someone in your household goes away, especially if he or she is especially bonded with the animal in question, watch the animal's behavior in the days, hours or minutes leading up to the family member's return. He may seem to suddenly "perk up" or show other signs of excitement or anticipation, such as sitting at a door or window, or becoming more playful and alert.
- When you or someone in the family isn't feeling well, does your dog or cat show special interest in you by following you around or snuggling up beside you on the bed or sofa?