

Paws for Thought

Animal communicators say they can tell what your pet is trying to say
by *Janice Mahwinny, LIFE WRITER, as featured in The Toronto Star on July 30, 2001*

Zoë, a 13-year-old tortoiseshell cat who had always been the soul of propriety at home, suddenly took to peeing repeatedly on the living room carpet, in the same spot every time.

"I was very frustrated and annoyed," says Tammy Neilson, a Toronto career coach. "I took her to three vets, including a naturopathic vet, and no one could see what was causing the problem."

At one of the vet's offices Neilson picked up a flyer about Lynn McKenzie, whose job is communicating telepathically with animals.

Neilson says she was skeptical but getting desperate, so she decided to give it a try.

After Neilson and the cat had a one-hour session with McKenzie, the carpet was safe.

"Lynn did some energy work with her and gave me some balancing techniques to use, with crystals and essential oils. I've done that. Zoë hasn't urinated on the carpet since that day."

McKenzie told Neilson that Zoë, who used to have the run of the house, was disconcerted when the downstairs was turned into an apartment and tenants moved in. Peeing on the living room carpet over the new apartment had been her way of expressing and dealing with these feelings. It made sense to Neilson, who thought back and realized that Zoë's problem behaviour had started at about that same time.

There are at least two people in the Toronto area making a living as animal communicators: McKenzie and Rochelle Gai Rodney. Both were trained by Penelope Smith, a California woman who has been studying and working in the field of telepathic animal communications for 30 years. Her books on the subject have been translated into six languages.

Smith has developed animal communication techniques and taught them to hundreds of others. Her Web site includes a directory of 82 professional communicators. Dogs, cats and horses are the animals communicators most commonly work with, but they have recorded working with birds, reptiles, all kinds of farm animals and a wide range of other species.

"I've never worked with an iguana," muses McKenzie thoughtfully, trying to sum up the range of her practice. "I'd be willing to, but no one has brought an iguana to me."

Smith writes that animals have different priorities than humans, and they often communicate in images or impressions rather than in words.

Cambridge-trained biochemist Rupert Sheldrake, author of the book *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home*, worked with professional associates in conducting random telephone

surveys to 1,200 households in two locations in England and two in California. Callers asked whether anyone in the household had ever noticed an animal becoming agitated before a family member arrives home. Affirmative answers ranged from 45 per cent in Santa Cruz to 61 per cent in Los Angeles.

Sheldrake concludes some animals have telepathic knowledge of their owners' movements and intentions at a distance. His book includes much anecdotal material supporting this view, and results of experiments he did with his research assistant and her dog.

More dogs than cats show special behaviour anticipating their owners' arrival, he found, and some dog breeds appear more likely to have this telepathic link with their owners than others. In Sheldrake's survey, 65 per cent of small household dogs such as Pekingese and King Charles cavalier spaniels and non-sporting dogs such as poodles showed such behaviours, compared to only 38 per cent of Labrador retrievers or German shepherds.

There are historic roots to all this: St. Francis of Assisi was said to be able to communicate with animals, and there's a similar tradition in some tribal shamanism and among some yogis in India. It's still a hot topic in North America today in movies *Cat And Dogs* and *Dr. Dolittle*.

Lisa Goobie of Mississauga had never thought much about animal communication until her 6-year-old beagle/hound mix Kalvyn was in big trouble last March.

Last summer, Kalvyn had a herniated disk in two spots in her spine. She was paralyzed, in severe pain and on steroids and anti-inflammatories. After \$2,000 surgery and a long agonizing period of recuperation that was difficult for Kalvyn and the whole family, she was walking again in the fall.

Last February, the problem recurred. Kalvyn was paralyzed in her back legs and shaking with pain.

"It was awful to see her going through this," says Goobie. "I took her back to the University of Guelph and they wanted to take her right in for surgery and also do a spinal tap. I looked at my dog and somehow I heard her say: No. She didn't want to go through that again."

She took the dog home and called Rodney, whose name she got from a *Learning Annex* publication, and also called a naturopath who recommended a gentle massage-type therapy.

"Rochelle came the next day," says Goobie. "She confirmed that Kalvyn didn't want the surgery, and said she thought she could heal herself. Rochelle did some energy work with her. We also gave Kalvyn some herbal remedies to help her kidneys.

"A week and a half after Rochelle's energy work, Kalvyn was running around, and she's been fine ever since. It was just an amazing experience. My background is in psychology and I'm definitely a doubter. I'm a logical person and I need proof. But I've come to believe there's a whole other realm out there."

Animal communication is such an elusive thing to pin down that even communicators themselves who often have striking results from their work with animals, sometimes feel doubts.

Smith has written about this, and drawn up a code of ethics for people working in this field. She says she has seen well-meaning individuals unwittingly mix their communications abilities with their own agendas or emotional shortcomings. The code of ethics includes: "We realize that telepathic communication can be clouded or overlaid by our own unfulfilled emotions, critical judgments, or lack of love for self or others."

Rodney says such inner questions are one of the most difficult aspects of this line of work.

"The biggest challenge is self-doubt, and people telling you you're nuts," she says. "The animals do tell me whatever they can. I use my own intuition to fill in the blanks. Sometimes I get information the animal gives me that is not correct, but it is the animal's impressions."

Both McKenzie and Rodney say they began working with people, and moved from there into work with animals. Both say they consider that they are working with both animals and humans now, and that the relationship between the two is of primary importance.

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The two have animals they say help them in their work: McKenzie's 8-year-old golden retriever Jiggs and Rodney's 2-year-old Siamese cat Moose.

Both women felt some stirrings toward this field of work since childhood.

McKenzie says she was always adopting animals and bringing them home as a child, to her mother's dismay. She kept cats, dogs, fish, mice, a hamster and over the years she has successively owned four horses.

"I used to show horses and the connection with the horse really helps in the show ring," she says.

She trained and worked as a spiritually oriented psychotherapist, and also took courses in body alignment techniques and kinesiology. She has travelled all over North America to study in these fields over the past 10 years, including her work in California with Smith.

When Jiggs was a puppy and ill with colitis, on and off for eight months, McKenzie says conventional veterinary medicine wasn't helping him, so she tried some of the techniques of energy work she had been using with people.

"Animals don't have the same resistances that people do," she says. "He was completely receptive to the energy work. That is what ended up healing him."

By energy work, she means working with the invisible energy field around the body.

"I use communications skills to see what needs to be worked with, then I do energy work in that area," she explains, adding that she knows some people are skeptical. "Some people are uncomfortable with it because they don't understand it."

She says she believes her talents lie particularly in healing and working with behaviour problems and with helping show animals improve performance.

"Animals are living in such an unnatural environment," she observes. "They take on so much of our stuff, and they get very stressed."

McKenzie charges \$100 an hour, and also teaches a \$170 two-day workshop as an introduction to animal communications two or three times a year.

"I didn't set out thinking I'd do this, but I really feel it is my calling," she says.

Rodney spent 17 years working in Osgoode Hall for the attorney-general's ministry as a secretary for the court. She has been doing animal communication for five years, the past three years professionally.

In childhood, she was aware of her intuitive abilities, but didn't know what they meant and sometimes found them frightening. "When I was a little kid I was scared because I felt I was being watched - I felt I wasn't alone. My mom said I was hypersensitive. I see energy as shapes and colours."

When she communicates with animals, the information comes in a great rush, she notes.

"It all comes through like information being downloaded on computer," she says. "There are pictures, thoughts, words and feelings all at once."

She says she helps solve problems with animals' health and behaviour, and often works with people around issues of pets' death and dying, or euthanasia.

People often feel guilty when they have to make decisions about pets' euthanasia, she says, but animals invariably trust the people's judgment on this issue and are content with the decisions. "Animals are always okay with death and dying," she suggests.

Her specialty, she believes, is getting information about past lives of both animals and people, and seeing what bearing these have on current situations.

Rodney says she is careful to say what she gets from the animal, rather than telling the person what he hopes the animal will communicate.

"It's simple," she says. "I don't communicate what people want to hear. I communicate what is. Some people have been angry because they get locked into a particular expectation and I can't go there."

Rodney has taken courses in reiki, therapeutic touch and reflexology, but she says she is more comfortable working with intuition than with structure.

She offers a course each month, and says she gets from seven to 20 people per class. She charges \$150 plus tax per hour to work with individual animals and people, and will do half-hour sessions on occasion.

"It's a new way of looking at the world," Rodney says of the concept of communicating with animals.

"If you keep thinking 'This is just a dog' or 'This is just a chicken,' you'll miss it."

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About Lynn McKenzie



Lynn McKenzie is an internationally-acclaimed leader in animal communication, psychic and energy mastery. She is a highly sought-after speaker, whose passion lies in awakening others to their Divine Gifts, Power, and Mission. Teaching others to attune and awaken to the teachings and wonder that all sentient beings wish to share is another of her true passions.

With over 31,000 clients spanning more than 52 countries, Lynn's signature programs include Animal Energy®, Clairvoyance Mastery™, Psychic Development Mentoring™, Money Manifestation Acceleration, Healing and Understanding Your Animal Companions Through the Chakras™ and The Chakra Healing, Clearing and Attunement Intensive™. Her client list includes leaders and celebrities in the intuitive, coaching and business worlds.

As seen on



In keeping with her goal to awaken others to the Divine wisdom the animals wish to share, and the psychic, intuitive and healing gifts they bring to humanity, Lynn is available for and encourages TV and radio appearances, speaking engagements and writing assignments.

To book Lynn

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