

There's an old common phrase that goes "Dogs are a man's best friend." In fact, dogs are the oldest domestic animal and have been living with humans for approximately 10,000 years (Messent and Serpel, 1981). Most pet owners know that these animals are not just mere pets but they consider them as part of their families as well. Pet relationships do not only go one way instead it is a two-way relationship wherein pet owners are not the only one who gives love and care for the animals but they also receive the same love and affection from their animals. According to Cusack (1988), animals are a man's confidant where there is no risk of betrayal.

There is something about human-dog relationships that made me curious about how most people that I know treat their pets as someone who is part of their family and that is why I interviewed one of my cousins through google meet. My cousin and his dog have been inseparable for almost a decade. He had his dog as a puppy when he was just fifteen years old and they have been together ever since. When I asked about what he felt about finally having a dog, he told me that he felt happy but at the same time he felt a great responsibility because taking care of a dog is not an easy task because obviously dogs cannot talk and at the same time dogs need someone to take care of them. My cousin also shared about a certain time in their lives wherein they experienced having nothing left but they still made sure that their dog is well taken care of, sacrificed a lot just to keep their dog well-fed, and whenever his dog feels under the weather, he makes sure that he takes his dog to the veterinarian. He emphasized that he is willing to do everything for his dog and he would not mind being left with so little for himself.

My cousin also shared that his dog is his ultimate confidant because whenever he feels down he knows his dog is always with him and his dog even knows when he feels down. They have gone on a lot of adventures and journeys

together wherein they have created memories just for them, they have also gone through ups and downs in their life and these struggles have never affected their bond with each other but instead, it made it stronger. He has also shared a lot of his secrets since when he was just a teenager up to now that he is an adult and no single person knows about his secrets. He trusts his dog as much as how his dog trusts him and for him, that means the world to him.

One thing that I realized during our interview is that maybe the reason why dogs do not have the ability to speak is that they are given the ability to love unconditionally. Even though we get angry with them, give them less attention, or even forget to feed them, they still show us unconditional love and that is something every person should learn from dogs. As a person who also owns a dog, I have realized that dogs do not just give unconditional love but also give us the opportunity to learn, appreciate being childlike and playful, and most importantly, how to be patient with others. Dogs and their humans have an unbreakable bond that nothing and no one can ever break and maybe true love can also exist within human and pet relationships.

References:

Messent, P. R., & Serpell, J. A. (1981). *A historical and biological view of the pet-owner bond*.

Cusack, O. (2014). *Pets and mental health*. Routledge.

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(A screenshot from my end)



(A screenshot from his phone)