

Lyceum 119, November 13, 2025 – a forum to Think, Discuss, Share, and Learn from one another. Your input is welcomed - Iron sharpens iron.

Neighborhood “The 1826, in Connecticut, a farmer named Josiah Holbrook started a school for ‘the general diffusion of knowledge and raising the moral and intellectual taste’ of Americans. In those days, the opportunities for higher education were limited to those venerable old universities that had long served the upper crust. Holbrook’s vision was to make learning – practical, liberal, and humane – available to working people of all kinds. He named his school the Lyceum, after the garden where Aristotle once taught his students philosophy.... We need to go deeper than the superficial fights that characterize public life. We need to return to the first principles and meet each other there as human beings.”– Nathan Beacom, Plough Magazine, Autumn 2023, p. 9.

Dogs are our best friends – we are in good company for their name is God spelled backwards. I am sure cat lovers may feel offended. They are “in pectore.” Over the span of my lifetime, here are the names of our dogs who have been 10-to-12-year heart aches: Duffy, Pretzel 1, Pretel 2, Kirby, Willie, Dante, Sophie, and Rambeau. Below, the following reflections shared can be said, in varying degrees, of all God’s creatures.

The medieval spiritual writer, Meister Eckhart praises all God creatures. “Apprehend God in all things. Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God. If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature, even a caterpillar. I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature.”

-Roger J. Vanden Busch

Your dog needs to hear these eight words to feel loved, according to experts.

Dogs may not speak our language, but they understand our tone, rhythm, and emotional intent. Trainers and animal-behavior specialists agree that the words we use — and how we say them — can affect how secure and loved a dog feels. Communication is more than praise; it is about emotional cues that build trust and strengthen the human-canine bond.

1. “Wanna go outside?”
2. This phrase signals freedom and excitement. Dogs quickly learn it means adventure, helping them link your voice with fun, play, and joy.
2. “Good boy / good girl”

Praise strengthens trust and emotional safety. When said warmly, it reinforces desired behavior and affection at once.

3. “Wanna play?”

Playtime deepens your bond. This invitation shows that you value their energy, attention, and companionship.

4. “Dinner time”

Routine words around food build confidence. Feeding cues tell your dog they are cared for and can rely on you.

5. “Come here”

More than a command, this phrase fosters closeness. Spoken gently, it encourages trust and attention.

6. “It’s okay.”

Calming words during stress reassure your dog that everything is safe, helping to regulate their emotions.

7. “Wanna cuddle?”

Asking before touch gives your dog agency and respect, turning affection into a positive shared moment.

8. “I love you.”

Even if they do not grasp the words, dogs sense emotion through tone and posture, linking this phrase to pure affection.

What your dog remembers even if you do not notice.

1. How you arrive home.

Your dog recognizes the sound of keys or the doorbell before seeing you. These cues excite them and signal your arrival, creating anticipation and happiness.

2. The tone of your voice.

The way you call your dog, with unique tone and cadence, signals attention and affection. They remember these sounds and respond accordingly.

3. Daily feeding routine.

Mealtimes and rituals provide security. Your dog remembers when and how meals are served and looks forward to predictable patterns.

4. Where they sleep.

Their bed or resting spot is a refuge associated with comfort. Dogs remember its location and often return to it for safety and rest.

5. Favorite walking routes.

The paths you walk together become familiar landmarks. Dogs remember stops, scents, and favorite spots along these routes.

6. Affectionate gestures.

Petting, head scratches, or gentle pats are remembered as moments of care and love. Dogs associate these touches with positive feelings.

7. Command words.

Commands like “sit” or “come here” are linked to specific actions. Dogs remember these cues and follow them consistently over time.

8. Favorite toys.

Dogs recognize toys by shape or name. They recall which toys bring fun and comfort, often seeking them out to play.

9. Vet visits.

While sometimes stressful, dogs remember the clinic and the people who care for them. Familiarity helps them adjust to future visits.

10. Activity sounds.

Leashes jingling, treat bags, or the food can opening signal activities. Dogs remember these sounds and anticipate what comes next.

11. Emotional reactions.

Dogs perceive changes in your mood through voice and body language. They remember how these emotions affect interactions with them.

What do dogs do for their owners before they die because they do not want them to be sad.

1. They stay close to their owner.

In their final days, many dogs seek constant proximity to their humans, offering silent companionship and ensuring their presence brings peace and comfort.

2. They show sudden bursts of energy.

Some dogs experience brief moments of vitality shortly before passing, often used to sharing quality time and give their owner one last happy memory together.

3. They hide or seek isolation.

It is common for dogs to withdraw or hide when they sense their life is ending. They do this instinctively to shield their owners from witnessing their decline.

4. They gaze into their owner's eyes.

Prolonged, deep eye contact is a dog's way of expressing connection and reassurance, letting their owner know they are grateful and still emotionally present.

5. They give extra affection.

Many dogs increase their affectionate gestures, such as licking or nuzzling, offering their owners comfort and reminding them of the bond they shared.

6. They remain calm despite pain.

Dogs often hide their suffering, showing resilience and serenity to avoid alarming their owners, demonstrating their instinct to protect those they love.

7. They choose a peaceful moment to go.

Whenever possible, dogs often pass away during quiet moments or when their owners are nearby, as if timing their departure to minimize emotional shock.

8. They follow their owner more than usual.

In their final days, many dogs follow their owner everywhere, staying close to offer emotional support and seeking reassurance through constant presence.

9. They seek their favorite objects.

Some dogs look for their favorite toy, blanket, or resting spot, as these familiar items bring comfort to them and to their owner in difficult moments.

10. They look for quiet, familiar spaces.

Many dogs retreat to a calm, safe area in the home, choosing a peaceful place to rest, protecting their owners from witnessing distressing signs of weakness.

11. They try to comfort their owner when they cry.

Dogs can sense human sadness. Even when weak, they may respond to tears by nuzzling, licking, or resting their head near their owner's body for comfort.

12. They leave subtle signs of goodbye.

Whether it is a final cuddle, a lingering gaze, or quietly resting by their owner's side, dogs often say goodbye with small, tender gestures that reflect love.

Secret messages your dog wants you to remember after its death.

Dogs communicate love and loyalty in ways humans often overlook. From wagging tails to quiet nudges, every gesture carries meaning. Their presence leaves lasting emotional imprints that continue even after they pass away. Understanding these messages allows owners to honor their dogs and keep their memory alive.

The bond between a dog and its owner is built on trust, care, and companionship. Even when a dog dies, the lessons they taught and the love they shared remain. Reflecting on these messages can help pet owners process grief while celebrating the unique connection they had with their furry friends.

1. Love was in every moment.

Your dog expressed love through small gestures, like cuddles, nudges, and playful antics. These simple acts reveal a deep, constant affection that transcends time and memory.

2. Patience brings connection.

Dogs often teach patience by waiting for attention or adjusting to your routine. This lesson reminds you that care and understanding strengthen relationships in every area of life.

3. Joy comes from simple things.

A walk, a favorite toy, or a shared quiet moment showed that happiness is found in everyday experiences, and that gratitude enhances the bond between loved ones.

4. Trust is earned and cherished.

Your dog placed immense trust in you, relying on your protection and presence. Remembering this teaches that loyalty and confidence are precious gifts to be valued.

5. Independence is important.

Dogs appreciate their independence even within loving homes. They remind you that respect for personal space strengthens relationships rather than weakening them.

6. Forgiveness is essential.

Your dog quickly forgave mistakes, accidents, or neglect. Carrying this lesson encourages compassion and reminds you to let go of grudges in life.

7. Presence matters more than perfection.

Simply being with your dog, giving attention and care, mattered more than doing everything perfectly. This lesson applies to all relationships in life.

8. Curiosity enriches life.

Your dog explored the world with wonder and excitement. Remembering this encourages you to stay curious, embrace adventure, and notice life's small joys.

9. Grief is part of love.

Your dog's passing teaches that sorrow accompanies love. Experiencing grief validates the bond you shared and allows you to honor it fully.

10. Memories keep love alive.

Every shared sound, smell, and memory preserves your dog's spirit. Reflecting on these moments ensures their presence continues to enrich your life forever.

"But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you,

And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you.

Or speak to the earth and it shall inspire you.

And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you."

-Job 12:7-8.

"O God, I thank you for all the creatures you have made,

Perfect in their kind. Great animals like the elephant and
The rhinoceros, humorous animals like the camel and the monkey,
friendly ones like the dog and the cat, working ones like the horse and the ox,
timid ones like the squirrel and the rabbit, majestic ones like the lion and the tiger,
for birds with their songs.

O Lord give us such love for your creation, that love may cast out fear,
And all your creatures see in us, their priest and friend through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
-George Appleton.