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心灵鸡汤

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Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul

With Stories BY:
Barbara Bush
James Herriot
Jimmy Stewart
Betty White
Art Linkletter
Gilda Radner
Bettie Youngs
And Many More



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Mark Victor Hansen
Marty Becker, D.V.M.
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**Stories About
Pets as Teachers, Healers,
Heroes and Friends**

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This book is dedicated with love to:
the millions of devoted and caring pet lovers of the
world, and to *all* the animals who share the earth
with us, especially the world's pets, who show us
what it means to love fully and unconditionally.

**We also dedicate this book to all veterinarians and their
team members, whose big hearts and dedicated,
compassionate service make us proud beyond
measure to honor and support them.**

**To our hero, James Herriot, the Yorkshire veterinarian
who has touched the lives of millions of people and
forever changed the way we view the special connection
between mankind and the rest of the animal kingdom.**

May his star always shine brightly!

**And finally, to God, from whom all blessings flow,
whose loving hand daily manifests itself
through our pets—who are our angels,
friends, teachers and healers.**



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To Marty's beloved wife, Teresa, and his precious children, Mikkell and Lex, without whose abundant love, laughter and vitality this book would not have been possible, nor worth the journey. To Virginia Becker and the late Bob Becker, who taught



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Marty to love, honor and serve all of God's creatures, visibly and fully. To Valdie, Jim and Rockey Burkholder, whose goodness, serenity and support have allowed Marty to marinate in a hometown oasis of beauty, simplicity and goodness.

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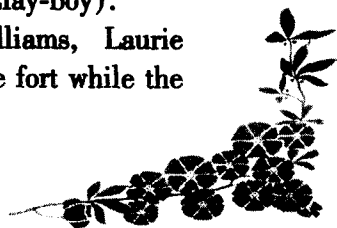
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The people who wholeheartedly supported our efforts to get word out about submitting stories for our book. We want to thank *Dog Fancy*, *Veterinary Economics*, and *PetLife* magazines. Special thanks to Lucille Devieu from the *Orange County Register*, who knows how important pets are to the elderly and featured a request for submissions in her syndicated column.

Thanks to all of the people who agreed to dedicate a few weeks to evaluating, commenting upon and improving the stories





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you see in this book. We could never have created such a high-quality book without them. The panel of readers included: Fred C. Angelis, Virginia Becker, Elizabeth Brown, Patty Burlingame, Valdie Burkholder, Diana Chapman, Joanne Cle-venger, Robin Downing, D. V. M., Lisa Drucker, Pam Finger, Mary Gagnon, Sally Gavre, Karyn Gavzer, Suzanne Giraudeau, Nancy Richard Guilford, Elinor Hall, Allison Janse, Rita M. Kline, Robin Kotok, Hale and Dolores Kuhlman, Roger Kuhn, D. V. M., Nancy Leahy, M. B. Leininger, D. V. M., Wendy S. Myers, Holly Moore, Judy Palma, Ann Reeves, Karen Robert, Maida Rogerson, Marci Shimoff, Annie Slawik, Laura May Story, C. V. T., Carolyn Teale, Anne Tremblay, Susan B. Tyler, Hilda Villaverde, Elizabeth Walker, Celeste Wallace, Patricia Wallis, Dottie Walters, Wendy Warburton, Luree Welch, Diana and Ted Wentworth, Terry Wilson and Rachel Zurer.

All the people at our publisher, Health Communications, Inc. —especially Peter Vegso and Gary Seidler—for believing in this book from the moment it was proposed, and for getting it into the hands of millions of readers.

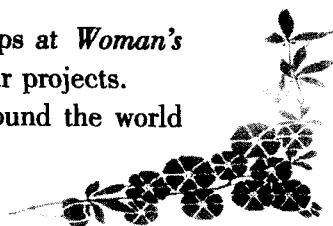
Christine Belleris, Matthew Diener, Allison Janse and Lisa Drucker, our editors at Health Communications, and Randee Goldsmith, our *Chicken Soup for the Soul* product manager. They were always there to support us and give us words of encouragement along the way.

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Anna Kanson at *Guideposts* and Taryn Phillips at *Woman's World*. Thanks for your continued support on all our projects.

All of Marty's veterinary colleagues from around the world





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who have helped shine energizing light on the sanctity and precious nature of the family-pet bond: R. K. Anderson, Scott Campbell, Rich Ford, Ray Glick, Bob Kibble, Mary Beth Leininger, Brad Swift, Chuck Wayner, James Wight and James Wilson to name a few.

We want to give special recognition to the father of the human-animal bond, Leo Bustad, who gave Marty and many others a guiding light to follow in their careers as they pursued what mattered most.

Other, nonveterinary colleagues who have inspired us or touched our lives in some special way that contributed directly and significantly to the success of this book and the causes it promotes: Ron Butler, Ben Coe, Don Dooley, Bill Mason, Clay and Mary Mathile, Susan Morgenthaler, Jana Murphy, Anne Sellaro, Gina Spadafori, Becky TurnerChapman and many more.

We also wish to thank the more than 3,000 people who took the time to submit stories, poems and other pieces for consideration. While all of the stories we received were special, sadly, the book could only be so long and most could not be included.

Because of the enormity of this project, we may have left out names of some people who helped us along the way. If so, we are sorry. Please know that we really do appreciate all of you.

We are truly grateful for the many hands and hearts that have made this book possible.

We love and appreciate you all!



INTRODUCTION

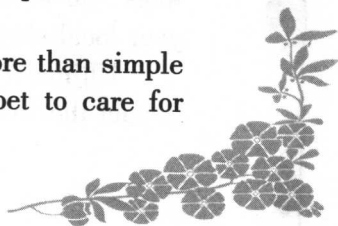
We are delighted to share with you a special gift: *Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul*. These stories were selected to give you a deeper, richer appreciation of the entire animal kingdom, as well as of the pets who share our lives.

Each of the thousands of stories we received for possible inclusion in our book was a gift. The selection process was difficult, but the stories that were chosen for *Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul* all vividly illustrate how a loving, interdependent relationship with a pet is life-enhancing.

We were touched by the many stories illustrating the tremendous love that flows so abundantly between pets and their owners. In return for our care, precious pets provide unconditional love, seemingly limitless affection and "to-die-for" loyalty. They love us, believe in us, and greet us with unbridled enthusiasm all the time, no matter what.

While reading all these stories, we noticed that some definite themes emerged. The first and strongest: pets today are a part of the family! Most pet owners consider their animal companions to be family members, while many even regard their pets as children. The family-pet bond is truly a powerful one!

It also became clear that pets offer people more than simple companionship. For some individuals, having a pet to care for





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actually gives meaning to life: a reason to get up in the morning, a reason to want to come home at night. Pets satisfy our timeless and tangible requirement as humans to love and be loved—and to need and be needed.

Many stories we received reflected the positive influence pets have on their owners. Pets draw us out of ourselves and bring out the kindest impulses of humanity. They connect us to nature and the rest of the animal kingdom, making us more conscious of the mysteries of God inherent in all things. Because of our pets, a deeper part of ourselves is unlocked—a part more compassionate, less arrogant, not as hurried; a part of us that is more willing to share our lives fully with other beings. When that happens, we know a truer, fuller, simpler meaning of happiness.

There were also many stories about a pet's power to comfort and even heal. Our pets keep us from getting sick as often, and if we do become sick, we recover faster.

Taken together, the evidence is overwhelming: pets are good for our hearts, bodies and souls.

After reading these stories, you may find yourself basking in the warm memories of a beloved pet. We also hope to give you a new perspective on animal companions that you will put into action—loving them unconditionally and valuing the simple gifts they bring to your life. If you don't have a pet, perhaps these stories will inspire you to enrich your life by going to your local animal shelter and adopting an animal who needs your love and will return it a thousandfold. Or, if you aren't in a position to adopt an animal, you can make life a little brighter for your fellow creatures by volunteering your time—even as little as an hour a week—to walk, feed, groom or just love the homeless animals at your local shelter.

Ultimately, it is our deepest prayer that this book will positively impact the lives of millions of pets and people around the world.

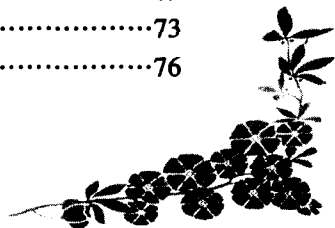


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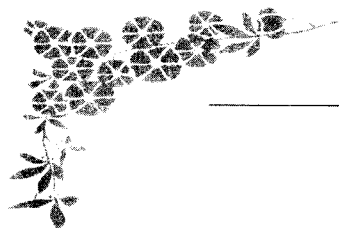
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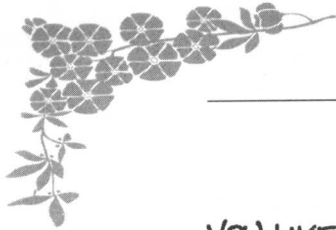
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ON LOVE

*Love is God's creation, the whole
and every grain of sand in it.
Love every leaf, every ray of God's light.
Love the animals, love the plants,
love everything. If you love everything,
you will perceive the divine mystery in things.
Once you perceive it, you will begin to
comprehend it better every day. And you
will come at last to love the whole world
with an all-embracing love.*

Fyodor Dostoyevsky





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