



Animals: Their Psycho-Symbolic Meaning, Introduction

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This is a “dictionary” of the meanings of close encounters of any kind with animals. The information was derived from about 30 major symbol sources, including those devoted to animals alone. The information contained in this “dictionary” represents the cumulative human experience with each animal and its associated characteristics throughout history and in all cultures.

The “dictionary” is intended to assist you in interpreting what the implications are of significant contacts with animals in your life, ranging from recurrent events, to notable single occurrences, to dreams. The “meanings” of the animals consists of three types of information.

The *first* is positive characteristics associated with a given animal showing up in your life. These start the information for each animal, commencing with the most spiritual aspects of the animal.

The *second* kind of information has to do with “**SHADOW**” aspects of the positive characteristics of the animals. These examine what happens when the positive characteristic has been suppressed, prevented in its manifestation or distorted for one reason or another. It results in the characteristics becoming negative in their manifestation.

For example:

AFGHAN HOUND

“Grandeur.” They are an elegant and refined individual who operates on the grand scale. They come from a similar family system.

SHADOW

“Grandiosity.” They are rather inflated in their self-image, and in their sense of importance, they have a pronounced propensity to conceitedness. It is a compensation for an underlying sense of worthlessness generated by emotionally neglectful parenting.

What happens is that a *potent positive* quality of the person is deeply alarming to the family and other people around the person during infancy and childhood. This leads to these people making it crystal clear that the positive potency must be shoved into the subconscious, into the “SHADOW” section, where all “undesirables” are stored.

This then leads the potency to become encrusted with negativity and distortions from the unconscious. This transforms the overt form of the potency into its mirror opposite. So, for instance, Love becomes hate, Power becomes rage, etc.

This produces a kind of “Mr. Hyde” (as in “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”) configuration in the subconscious that constantly pushes for expression. It also puts out energy from its distorted form that attracts people who are that type, called “shadow figures.”

The healing of the SHADOW takes the form of releasing the positive potency into full manifestation in your life. Not the form of combating the “Mr. Hyde” version of itself. If this is done, “Mr. Hyde” shrinks down to nothing.

But as long as the positive potency is trapped in “jail,” it is a significant force in the person’s life and functioning. It is to this that the “SHADOW” section refers in the characteristics that make up the expression of the qualities symbolized by the animal in question. If the literature contains information on this shadow aspect of the positive characteristic(s) of the person, it will be presented immediately after each positive characteristic of a given animal. This may be a bit confusing at first, but it is the only way to cover all of the information associated with each animal.

The *third* type of information given will cover the *negative* characteristics associated with the animal’s significance in an individual’s life that occur when more primitive aspects of the consciousness of one’s soul assert themselves and/or when really destructive, distorting or derailing formative and manifestation-preventing events occur in a person’s life. These *negative* qualities bring up the last of the listings for each animal (unless we had to move the definition due to the flow of the pages).

There is a wide variety of ways in which animals come into your life in what could be characterized as significant presentations. For instance, there is what can be called the “life theme,” where the animal is forever coming up in your experience. In other words, “Every time I look around, there it is, that hairy hound!”

In this manifestation of the animal’s significance to you, the animal is constantly showing up in your process as dreams, symbolic appearances, encounters and/or practical realities in whatever form of manifestation - positive, “shadow” or negative - that reflects who you are.

Your reaction to their constant appearance in your life can also vary all over the map. You can have a passion or a magnificent obsession about them; you can hate the things; you can be addicted to or dependent upon them; you can have a phobic/avoidant/fearful reaction to them; or you can be utterly baffled as to why they keep coming up for you.

The common element is that they are always there, and you have a strong reaction to them or to the fact that they are always showing up to you. The meanings that the animal has for you will depend to some extent on what your reaction to them is, of course. But one thing is clear. The fact that they are a continuously present influence in your life is very meaningful.

Their appearance, in this manner, means that your instinctive center is telling you about your relationship with that animal, or with what the animal means for you, perhaps in past lifetimes as well as now.

It is also sharing with you as to what aspects of yourself are up for consideration at this time. This occurs through the archetypic implications of the animal that reside in our subconscious.

Archetypes are human collective consciousness representations of universal human experiences throughout our history. We have such archetypes for all manner of things, but the ones with animals are especially potent and profound for us.

In many cases, this is a matter of your “Totem animal(s)” making an appearance. Your “totems” are helping spirits or devas who have been assigned to you, who have in effect “volunteered” to help you.

Or, conversely, they show up when you have requested, at the soul level, that they assist you at this time or throughout your life. The symbolic and universal meanings that these have is very useful information in understanding what they are doing for you.

The second way that animals can significantly come to you is in the form of “long time companions.” That is, they are in your intimate life as a household fixture, such as a pet or a responsibility. They become extremely important to you emotionally and pragmatically.

These can be a choice that you made as a soul or as a personality. These “long time companions” can have been given to you, you may have been asked to take them on, or they may have just showed up on your doorstep.

Again, your reaction to them can vary widely. But it is highly probable that part of the meaning of the animal’s being in your life will vary too, depending on which way they came into your life, at least to some extent.

One special case of this type of manner in which an animal can come to your attention is what could be characterized as a “functional situation,” such as a police officer and his horse, or a farmer and his cow, or a night watchwoman and her guard dog.

What usually happens here is that the situation shifts from strictly a function in your life to one of some form of relationship with the animal, and then all the parameters applying to “long time companion” patterns of meaning for you will then begin to apply here as well.

A very important distinction to make with regard to “long time companion” type contacts with an animal is that they can take basically two forms. One is what could be characterized as a “mundane” type of relationship, in which the animal involved is simply an individual member of its species who has become important to you as a relationship figure of some sort.

In this case, the significance of its presence in your life has to do with what this particular animal symbolizes for you, and the events that transpire with the animal and the meaning of its being there with you, as you experience it.

But there is a very different manner in which this “long term companion” kind of thing can happen. This is where the entity inside the animal is something more than just the deva or group soul associated with that animal and its individual biological self.

In other words, there is an individual entity of some kind, an individual soul if you will, who has come to be with you in this manner with a specific purpose. The entity involved can be a human soul taking a “side step” into this animal form in order to come and be with you for whatever purpose in that soul’s evolutionary growth transmigration and in your soul evolution.

Or, it can be a member of another ensouled species doing a “side step” into this animal form. For instance, it could be an extra-terrestrial, an inter-dimensional, such as an elf or a fairy, or an intra-terrestrial being from Shambala or from under Mt. Shasta, or a co-terrestrial fellow ensouled species (such as a whale, a dolphin, a discus fish, a sasquatch or a shamanic upper or lower world entity) or it can even be an angelic or other Cosmic being.

In any case, they have come to assist you in some important way, and they have taken this means of doing so because their mission requires it in order for them to be successful with you. In other words, such individuals could be characterized as a little help from your friends out there.

This type of “long term companion” will usually have some very specific purpose in mind, such as protecting you through a dangerous and difficult period of your life, or to bring a particular kind of energy to you, or to express their love for you, or to pay a Cosmic debt to you, or to take on your pain or death for you, or whatever.

One thing that all such situations have in common is that you KNOW that there is something special and different about this animal and its role in your life. As they say, “This isn’t what it appears to be at all!”

Needless to say, in this type of situation, the purely symbolic meaning associated with the animal is of only secondary, trivial, or even irrelevant in its importance for understanding the meaning of their being in your life in this manner. The important thing here is that it is an individual soul who has embodied in this animal, and who has come to be with you.

Here you have to rely on your knowledge of the role the individual in their animal form has played for you, their effect on you, and what they have done for you in order to get the full significance of the situation, the soul being involved, and the meaning of that soul's coming to you in this form and manner.

One final comment about this type of relationship with an animal concerns the "sequential soul" situation. What happens here is that the animal has come into your life to accomplish some purpose of the nature indicated above.

But either something goes awry and the mission isn't working, or they are interrupted in the process by death, or they complete one part of their mission by utilizing their termination in that embodiment as a teaching or other intervention process.

In all three cases, the companion dies, leaving your bereaved and unfinished in your process. In such circumstances, they will almost always quickly return in the form of another animal of the same species, or even as another type of animal who ends up as your pet or other significant relationship figure.

In this type of event, it is usually possible to detect the continuity of the soul by looking at the left eye of pictures of both animals. There will usually be a clear identity-sameness there.

The third way that significant contact with an animal can happen is what could be called a *visitation*. Here the animal appears to you - in a dream, in a meditation, in a reverie, or in real life.

What makes it special is that the appearance is loaded with meaning, in the context and/or the content of the encounter. It is known as a "numinous moment" that is loaded with sacred or Cosmic energy and significance.

In this situation, it is very clear that the animal involved is a vehicle for some other-worldly being on a mission to you. In some such situations, they literally communicate, usually telepathically.

The Being involved in this situation exists in another dimension, and they are a God/Goddess (Cosmic administrator of various universal functions), or they are the deva for the animal (the species soul), or they are an individual being from another dimension.

A special case is when you find yourself on, or you put yourself on, a shamanic journey into the upper world or into the underworld, and you encounter an entity from that realm while on the journey into that other dimension.

In all of these "visitation" type of situations, the symbolic meaning is only part of the significance of what transpires. The rest of it resides in the content of the event itself, in the context of what is happening in your life, and in its impact on your life.

Finally, there is the *intervention* purpose of the animal's entering your life (of which the "visitation" is a special case). These are what could be described as "stranger to stranger contacts."

You're going along, minding your own business, when *voila!*, they show up for a brief encounter that nevertheless takes on some special meaning by the way it happens, as a function of the reaction or experience you have, and/or in the form of subsequent developments and events in your life.

Such things as seeing a raven flying overhead three times, or having them circle around you, or seeing them do unusual things, like approach you. There is no luminosity experience, but there is the feeling that something very unusual and significant is happening.

An important aspect of this type of situation is the nature of the contact. The closer, the longer, the more frequent, the more unusual, and the more tame or intentional the contact, the more important, significant and profoundly meaningful the message that is being conveyed.

These are messages to you in which the individual animal(s) involved are being used by the Universe, via felt attraction to you in them, and by Cosmically infused criteria to the animal as to what you and your behavior feels like to the individual animal involved.

In other words, the vibrations created by what you are devoting your psychic or soul energy to at the time, or in what you are concentrating on, is what is going on here at the pragmatic operational level, in the sense of the process of its pulling the animal to your experience and process.

However, it should be noted that the Universe is the One Who makes the move in this event, by programming the individual animal to react the way they do. The Universe wants to convey something to you about what is happening in your life. Here the general symbolic meaning of the animal is a very important component of the message being transmitted to you.

A special case of this type of experience is “insect invasions” or “animal crackers” that show up again and again in much the same manner as “life theme” types of appearances, except they only do so for a short period of time, and they do it in extraordinarily large numbers or frequencies of appearance that are often inexplicable or “impossible” in nature.

What happens for instance is that you encounter tons of flies, mosquitoes, mice or cats. This rather peculiar phenomenon usually occurs when you are going about making significant changes in who you are, or when you are engaged in a systematic self-undermining pattern that needs terminating because it has completed its purpose for you.

Both of these situations result in energy emanations arising from you out of the various emotional, mental, psychological and spiritual states associated with the processes involved.

It is notable that these emanations from you apparently attract (or even create) the animals who appear. They can seemingly violate physical reality in doing so, such as showing up in a sealed house day after day.

These “inundations” seem to reflect what you think you deserve in your life, and they result in the repeated appearance of these animals as messages to the effect of, “Is this REALLY what you want in your life?”

In the case of where this happens as a function of a change process for you, their appearance in this way means that your deeply ingrained programs to continue in the patterns of the past are being set off, almost like “ghosts of Christmases past” to haunt you, and to “rub your nose” in what you are doing, what it is doing to you and what it means for you. The symbolic meanings of the animals are crucial in understanding what is going on inside you at these times.

Another special case in which this intervention/visitation type of appearance of an animal in your life can occur is when you kill an animal, either accidentally, such as with your car, or intentionally for some purpose (as in hunting, fishing, necessary removal, mercy killing, ritual sacrifice or whatever).

Here, the animal gave its life to serve your needs at the time. In these cases, the symbolic significance of the animal is crucial in understanding the meaning of the encounter for you.

When the death of the animal occurs unintentionally, however, it is of special importance, as it means that there is something about your life process and/or situation that needs particularly conscious attention at present. In such cases, the symbolic meaning of the animal is of extremely important significance.

Still another message type of encounter is the *reminder*. Here the animal appears to you to reactivate and reinforce your commitment to and/or awareness of your Cosmic purpose or of other significant matters. They appear to you when you are tending to drift afield, or when you are becoming self-defeating or self-destructive, or when you are losing sight of your mission or nature.

Finally, there is the situation in which this message type of appearance of animals in your experience represents aspects of your self-manifestation. Another meaning that the attention-arresting appearance of the animal may well have is, drawing your attention to some aspect of your functioning that is of significance at this time. One situation in particular where this happens is when you are engaged in a pattern that is now imperative that you remove.

In general, animal symbols are intensely impactful and significant entries into your life when they occur in a manner that calls your attention to them. Their appearance should be taken as a meaningful event that needs exploration as to what it means via symbol books, meditation, oracle consultations, this “dictionary,” etc.

They are messages from the Cosmos that should be heeded. They are guidelines for working on your self-development and for enhancing the qualities in yourself described by the animals in this “dictionary” and by other sources that you need to evolve further