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The bond people form with animals is truly fascinating. I think animals have a lot more to offer to us as humans than we think. Whether it is learning from them or simply having a companion. Many people have dogs, cats, birds, or fish. Pets are very common whether it is because people simply want to have one or there is a deeper meaning to it. Personally, I have experienced the amazing connection with pets that many people do.

I have two dogs, Coco and Shea. I have had Coco since I was about ten years old and I love him so much. Throughout middle school and high school, I spent a lot of time with him so I miss my dog very much at school. He is a cocker spaniel, with brown curly, fluffy hair. He is so soft and cuddly, I always called him my teddy bear. My favorite thing about going home every few weekends is seeing my dogs. Shea is my other puppy, she is only a few months old. I got her as a graduation present right when my previous dog, Pops, passed away. Pops was the dog I grew up with so I was very sad about that. When a pet you own dies it really shows how much your relationship with them is like a close family member. Shea is a rescue from Puerto Rico, nobody knows what kind of dog she is but she is honestly so crazy it makes me laugh. I have had a couple other pets throughout my life, some fish and two bunnies. I was always that child begging their parents to get more.

I think my connection with animals is really important to me. I spent all of my childhood and growing up with different pets, so I learned to appreciate them just like people. This love for animals I have also connects with the fact that I am vegan. It took me a lot of time to realize that if I love my dogs and bunnies so much and would never think about eating them, why would I eat other animals? So, I have spent the last few years following that lifestyle and continuing to

be really interested in animals. A lot of people do not realize how much of a role their pet may play in their lives.

Pets can provide a lot of support and care for humans. We see this through the increasing implementation of emotional support animals. My high school, for example, would have a couple days a month where they brought in puppies for a mental health break. This truly had an effect on students, and I could even feel it myself. It was just like when I would have a bad day and could just lay with my dog. I also think animals (dogs specifically) can sense pain or discomfort, both emotionally and physically, and try to soothe you. Some people think of pets as just an animal laying around your house, but it can truly be much more than that.