

# Contributions of animals in the clinic: a study in analytical psychology

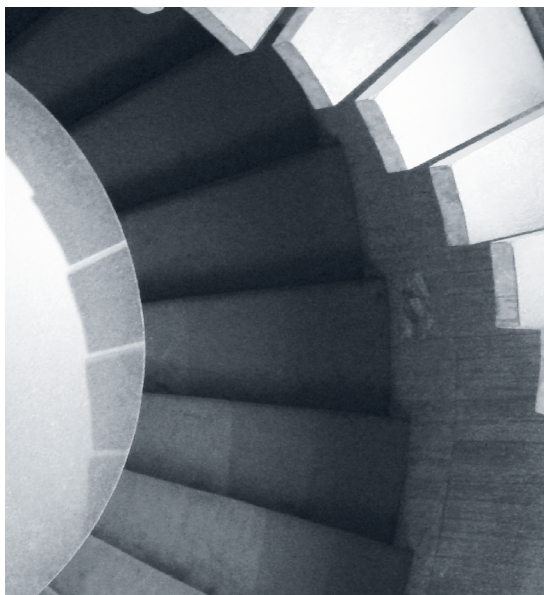
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## Abstract

The present work seeks to understand the presence of animals in clinical practices as collaborators in the psychotherapeutic process of patients. The bibliographical survey indicated that animals help to establish the bond between patient and psychologist, especially in the case of children. In order to achieve the proposed objective, semi-directed interviews were conducted with five psychologists who work in private practice with the presence of animals, online or in person, from the perspective of analytical psychology. The interviews were analyzed based on the same approach and the results obtained showed that the presence of animals promotes: changes in the therapeutic

space, bonding relationship between patient and therapist and creation of emotional support during the sessions, both for psychologists and patients. Thus, the research concluded that animals can be valuable tools to be used in the therapeutic setting. ■

**Keywords**  
animals;  
analytical  
psychology;  
clinical  
psychology.



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### Introduction

In a footnote in the 1989 introduction, written by William McGuire, in the book *Seminars on Analytical Psychology*, the presence of an animal, Joggi, during Jung's therapeutic sessions becomes evident. The dog, which "[...] had his place in the consulting room" (JUNG, 2014, p. 26), consequently accompanied him in his sessions. Despite this, in Jung's texts, it is not possible to find references to the importance of the animal in the therapeutic setting, even if other information confirms the presence of the animal, such as records of letters that were published after his death (JUNG, 2018) and information collected in his biography, written by Hannah (2022), which exposes:

[...] When he came to call me in the waiting room, he held his pipe in his hand and was accompanied by his large, gray schnauzer dog, who was evidently accustomed to drawing his own conclusions about the people who came to see his master (p. 266, author's emphasis).

Nise da Silveira was the first researcher to introduce domestic animals in the psychotherapeutic field in Brazil, during the 1950s, (PEREIRA et al., 2007) so as to report this experience with her patients at the Pedro II Psychiatric Hospital. The author highlights some "[...] examples taken from the voluminous dossier of the occupational therapy section on the affective relationship of schizophrenics with animals" (SILVEIRA, 2019, p. 87), such as the case of Carlos, who had expressive difficulties in verbal communication, pronouncing incomprehensible words and neologisms. Silveira (2019) explains that, from the relationship between Carlos and his dogs, it was possible to attribute meanings to the patient's

incomprehensible words, for example, "no-nai", used to refer to the dog with the meaning of "brave".

Silveira (2019) specifies that Carlos was responsible for taking care of the dogs' basic needs, offering them food, bathing and brushing until one of them was killed by poisoning, a fact that caused the regression of his condition, making him inaccessible to the occupational therapy sector team. After two years, the author states that he approached and bonded with Sertanejo, another dog that participated in the activities, which was crucial for significant changes in his relationship with the world, so that he was able to communicate through grammatically structured sentences when referring to animals and collaborate with the monitors of the sector. According to Silveira (2019):

It seems to me that the way in which the relationship between man (sick or not) and the animal takes place deserves close observation. This relationship reflects the problem between the man who strives to establish himself in the human condition, and the animal that exists within himself. It is a difficult relationship, one of struggle, sacrifice, confrontation, friendship, usually developed in a complex web of projections and identifications (p. 93).

It is possible to understand that, for Silveira (2019), the animal served as a bridge to the outside world, since her patients, diagnosed with schizophrenia, had difficulties establishing social bonds with other people.

According to Jung (2000), projection is an unconscious and spontaneous phenomenon, in which there is a directing of individual and collective issues towards some object, person

or animal, whose characteristics may represent important aspects to be integrated into one's own consciousness. Since the recognition of projections contributed to the individuation process, the presence of animals in the clinical context could allow some interpretations and analyses in the face of the materials projected by the analyzed onto the animals.

### **The phenomenon of the domestication of the dog**

As for the origins of animals domesticated by humans, Larson et al. (2012) explain that the dog was the first, but it is not known exactly when this process began. The authors came to genetically analyze 1,375 dogs of 35 breeds and 19 wolves; by comparing the results, they concluded that the ancestral breeds of domestic dogs did not derive from regions where their oldest archaeological records were found, in addition to three of the analyzed breeds coming from regions beyond the territory of *Canis lupus*, ancestor of domestic dogs.

According to Larson et al. (2012), the results presented by the study allowed the conclusion that the domestication process is visible for more than 15,000 years, but the presence of these animals in the continents of Africa and South America began 1,400 years ago, from the movements made by humans. The authors also state that new technologies and constant genetic studies are needed, as they can reveal complex stories about the phenomenon of domestication.

Galiberti et al. (2011, apud SAVALI, ALBUQUERQUE, 2017) identified that the oldest dog fossil found worldwide is about 31,700 years old, referring to a process prior to actual domestication, protodomestication. The most accepted theory defines that this process started with the creation of a new ecological niche by the human being, with the generation of garbage, which started to guarantee food for these animals and, as a consequence, they acquired the function of hygiene and protection against intruders, due to their acute hearing and smell

(COPPINGER; COPPINGER, 2001, apud SAVALI, ALBUQUERQUE, 2017).

Through the advancement and modernization of technologies, it is possible to see that there is no longer a biological reason for the human being to have animals in his home, since today the presence of this animal is more related to company and affection, as described by Oliveira (2006). The author adds that there is a growing and consumerist phenomenon regarding animal products and, in many cases, they are treated as family members, even receiving a name and surname.

### **Animals as symbols in myths, fairy tales and other cultural manifestations**

According to Von Franz (2020), fairy tales are characterized as an archaic mode of expression, pure and close to the elements of the collective unconscious. The author identifies the frequent presence of animal characters in these productions, which have a projective character of the instinctive sphere of their readers and listeners.

Bachmann (2016) explains that both the dog and the cat are important symbols for humanity. When discussing dogs, the author exposes their influence on language, for example, in the use of phrases such as "stupid dog", "put your tail between your legs", "dog that barks doesn't bite", as well as in myths, such as the figure of Anubis, in Egyptian mythology, the god responsible for embalming rites and holder of the necessary knowledge for the afterlife. Bachmann (2016) also highlights this phenomenon as representative of man's instinctivity, which can bring a new, implicit and unknown worldview about certain situations.

Regarding cats, Bachmann (2016) exposes that they are popular in domestic environments, characterizing them by their sensitivity and instinctive security. The author resumes that their first records as pets were found in Ancient Egypt, and they were venerated in the form of the goddess Bastet, known for being the Eye of Horus, protector and watcher of the world of the dead.

In addition to the fact that the dog and the cat represent animal instinctivity, Bachmann (2016) gives the two the characteristic of psychopomp, defined by Balieiro et. al (2015) as “[...] a word of Greek origin, which arises from the junction of psyché (soul) and pompós (guide), indicating someone or something that has the function of guiding” (p. 296) to unknown realms, which can be alluded to the unconscious realm of the psyche.

Concerning the symbolic attributions of culture on the image of the dog, Bachmann (2016) explains that it was taken into battles with the aim of treating the soldiers’ wounds with its saliva, promoting cicatrization, thus being related to healing. Ramos et. al (2005) also associate this potential with the figure of the common ancestor of the dog, the wolf: “[...] the assimilation of the aggressive force, represented by the figure of the wolf, mobilizes the archetype of the healer in its combative and energetic aspect” (p. 159). In this sense, Von Franz (2020) states that the dog was the companion of Aesculapius, Greek god of healing, as well as capable of healing by eating grass.

Regarding the ancestor of the dog, Ramos et. al (2005) identify that the wolf has several representations in culture, which are sometimes opposite. The authors indicate this contradiction in the tale of Little Red Riding Hood, presenting the wolf as a devouring character, in contrast to the story of Romulus and Remus, fed by Lupa, a protective mother wolf, who ensured the survival of the two children who would have founded Rome. Ramos et. al (2005) find links between wolves and rituals of witchcraft, death and rebirth, healing, among others, which resemble the processes of alchemy that can be conceived as symbols of the process of psychotherapy. Von Franz (2020) has also identified this dual nature of the dog in fairy tales, given that it is often a friend and guide, but also the one who brings illness and bad news.

The cat appears in tales and myths with meanings similar to those of the dog, but there

are aspects to highlight, such as its proximity to humans due to its deification by Egyptian culture thousands of years ago (VON FRANZ, 2003). The author states that Bastet, the Egyptian feline goddess, presented status in the hierarchy of the gods, as she was considered the warrior who fought against Apophis, a giant snake that would swallow the Sun and cause the apocalypse. In contrast, Von Franz (2003) shows that, since the Middle Ages, the cat has been seen as closely related to witchcraft, creating an ambivalence regarding its meanings and, consequently, the symbols associated with it. In many cultures, the cat came to be regarded as a symbol of demonic powers or the form taken by witches to curse people.

Regarding such ambivalent aspects, Bachmann (2016) identifies that the cat is associated with the goddess Aphrodite in Greek mythology, bringing its meaning closer to aspects of the feminine and healing. On the other hand, Von Franz (2003) states that, during the Middle Ages, the feminine was repressed by Christianity, leading to persecution of women who did not conform to the standard imposed by religion and, consequently, of cats. Furthermore, Von Franz (2003) attributes mercurial qualities to the cat, since it is constantly represented as the guardian of the tree of life, mediator of conflicts, guide of the soul, which allows it to allude to a psychopomp, just like the dog.

### **Animals as co-therapists in the psychotherapeutic office**

With regard to the use of animals as co-therapists in a psychotherapeutic office, there are no records of this practice in Jung’s texts, however, the author reflected on animals as objects of patients’ projections, so that they could be targets of their transference (JUNG, 1998). In this sense, other authors sought to describe this phenomenon in their texts.

Brousselle (2018) reports his clinical experience with his cat, stating that the cat had settled in his office and the analyst did not know what

to do with the patients he would see. He then explains that it would be an illusion to imagine that the analyst would have control over his setting, since the patient could recognize any transgression in this environment, such as the presence of an animal.

The author illustrates his point using the case of a 42-year-old woman, diagnosed with severe depression, whose main complaint was the difficulty to trust men. One day, she began to stroke the cat and attributed the male gender to it, while saying that all men were bad and only animals were good, thus, Brousselle (2018) was surprised by the patient's confusion about the sex of the animal, which was a crucial factor for the analysis.

In the aforementioned session, the patient began to remember the cats of her childhood – “[...] *cette époque où la frontière entre l’animal et l’humain est floue*”<sup>1</sup> (BROUSSELLE, 2018) –, which leads the author to realize that the patient unconsciously attributed similarities between the cat and himself, as an analyst, which could derive from the phenomenon of transference.

Jungian analyst Renard (2020) begins her text by stating that although Freud and Marie Louise Von-Franz reported the presence of their pets in their practices, they did not note their role in the sessions.

Renard (2020) reports that she worked with a guide dog, Phèdre, for seven years, which is not in line with the traditional analytical setting. During the very first call, she warned her patients that she was visually impaired and attended with the presence of her dog, in order to check if the person had allergies, phobias or any issue. The author identifies that the dog was part of the transference even if her patients were oblivious to its presence, an aspect she reflected on after the animal's death.

The author analyzes that her dog played the role of transitional object<sup>2</sup> for some patients and each of them focused on different aspects – maternal tenderness, aggressiveness, bodily presence, sexuality, among others – which were also manifested in their dreams, so as to be conceived as expressions of their psyches.

Imber-Black (2009) discussed his experience with animal co-therapists in family therapy, highlighting the case of a family that only found comfort for the situation they faced in the presence of an animal. According to the author, the happy memories experienced by a family constantly refer to pets, so he argues that studies on the relationship between families and their animals are necessary.

Abrams (2009) explains that she uses her animals as co-therapists in therapeutic settings, stating that she has learned to understand their body languages during the sessions. According to the author, based on the dogs' behavior, it is possible to understand if her patients are more depressed or anxious, which helps her to conduct the session and perceive details that would be lost without their presence. In addition, Abrams (2009) explains that the presence of her dogs in her office was crucial to identify cases of sexual violence against children, exemplifying the case of a girl who wanted to tell a secret to the dog and from there, taking it on her lap, told the therapist that she was suffering sexual abuse. The author identifies the presence of dogs as a bridge between her and her patients, stating that the girl probably felt safe to share the situation she was experiencing due to the presence of the dog.

Schneider and Harley (2006) evaluated the effects of the presence of dogs in the clinical context and their influence on the perception of psychotherapists. The authors identify that the success of therapy is directly related to the bond established between patient and therapist, and the presence of animals would facilitate the cre-

<sup>1</sup> “[...] that epoch when the boundary between the animal and the human is blurred. (our translation)

<sup>2</sup> Winnicott (1975).

ation of this bond. To prove the hypothesis, the researchers conducted research with the participation of 85 people from the University of Toronto, aged between 18 and 52 years.

Participants were asked to watch four videos of two psychologists - a man and a woman - and then fill in a questionnaire about their impressions of them. The videos presented were: a) male psychotherapist alone; b) male psychotherapist accompanied by a dog; c) female psychotherapist alone; d) female psychotherapist accompanied by a dog. The videos were filmed in the respective offices of each psychotherapist, whose dogs were those that appeared in the broadcast recordings.

The results presented by the research signaled that the presence of animals positively influenced the participants' evaluation of psychotherapists, by conferring characteristics such as affection and trust, but not competence. Finally, the authors explain that the results are encouraging regarding the use of animals in clinical practice, especially with the intention of improving the bond established between therapist and patient.

## Method

The research that this article is about was carried out as a graduate thesis in psychology, from the perspective of analytical psychology and is of qualitative character, seeking to understand the use of animals in the clinical context. The ethical protocols of this research are in accordance with CNS Resolution 466/12 and were approved by *Plataforma Brasil*, under number 53185321.1.0000.5482.

Regarding the theoretical foundation and bibliographical review, research was carried out on the Complete Works of Carl Gustav Jung, on post-Jungian productions and on indexed article platforms in Portuguese, English, Spanish and French, which contributed to the studies and facilitated the analysis of the data obtained in the interviews.

Data collection was carried out through semi-directed interviews with five participants, psychologists who worked with animals in their offices, using the approach of analytical psychology. These meetings lasted from 22 to 40 minutes and were conducted online through the Microsoft Teams platform, ensuring confidentiality and the use of the Free and Informed Consent Form.

Data analysis was performed based on the transcription of the recorded audios of the interviews, based on the contents that emerged from the participants' responses. Subsequently, comparisons were made between the responses of the interviewees and analysis from the perspective of analytical psychology.

## Results

### Profile of the people interviewed

The five people interviewed identify with the female gender, are aged between 25 and 59 years and work professionally in the municipalities of São Paulo and Guarujá in the state of São Paulo. The interviewees have a degree in psychology, have completed postgraduate courses in analytical psychology and have been working in the clinical area for between 2 and 7 years. During the period of the SARS-COV-2 pandemic, they worked online and only one returned to the in-person modality.

### Pets in psychotherapeutic care

Participants mainly reported the presence of their own domestic animals during the care of their patients, especially dogs and cats. There was also a report of the presence of animals other than the therapists, such as in one clinic, where cats were fed and ended up entering the room during therapy, in addition to the noise of neighbors' dogs.

In view of the situation of social isolation due to the SARS-COV-2 virus pandemic, during the research period, it is possible to understand that the animals presented themselves

spontaneously in online therapy, due to the fact that their guardians – therapist and patient – were in their environments, thus, it was possible to observe the relationship between the patients and the pets. The in-person session with the animals, reported by one of the participants, also seems to have occurred spontaneously, although the therapist used their presence in order to facilitate clinical care.

Another important aspect to be highlighted is that the animals of the psychotherapists, in the online context, were closer to them, while in the in-person sessions, the possibility of interaction of the patients with the animals seems to have been greater.

#### **Psychotherapist and animal relationship in the process of therapy**

The interviewees said they felt more comfortable with the presence of their animals, and in some reports there was concern about how it would be if they returned to in-person sessions. One of the participants also pointed out that touching her dog helped to keep her less “unstructured” (sic), as if it were a source of support. Another relevant factor was the feeling of not feeling alone in the presence of their animals, in contrast to the aforementioned loneliness of the psychologist in clinical work.

Abrams (2009) reports that, during her care with the presence of her animals, she identified that they approached her in an attempt to calm her emotions, contributing to the reflection that animals, especially dogs, can identify human behaviors. This statement is in line with that written by Savali and Albuquerque (2017) about the dog having a high level of sociability, a factor that gives it a wide repertoire on human behaviors and contributes to greater communication between species.

In addition, the participants identified that the presence of the animal facilitates bonding, a word that three of the participants used directly during the interviews and two cited it in-

directly. This fact seems to be in line with what has been produced so far on the use of animals in offices, since it facilitates the creation of a therapeutic bond between the patient and the psychologist (ABRAMS, 2009; BROUSSELLE, 2018; IMBER-BLACK, 2019; RENARD, 2020). Abrams (2009) even exposes that she identifies success in clinical care from the bond she establishes with her dogs.

#### **Online and in-person care**

It is necessary to highlight the difference between the in-person and online care model, since most psychologists reported that they worked with a headset and, during the interviews, considered that their animals perceived their behavior more than the patients themselves, which would occur differently in the in-person context.

Also, the participant who returned to in-person care expressed that there was greater interaction between patients and animals in this modality.

#### **Animal and patient relationship in the psychotherapeutic process**

The participants reported that the patients like the animals and often end up showing their own animals, and in some cases they become the content of the therapy session.

Among the emblematic cases reported by the interviewees, one of the experiences was a psychologist who had been seeing a patient for more than five years and realized that she had something to talk about, but could not. In one of the meetings, the patient asked to talk to the therapist’s dog and told her that she was sexually abused when she was younger. According to the participant, this was a decisive moment for the therapeutic process and if it were not for the presence of the animal, such information would take a long time to be expressed.

Abrams (2009) observed a similar case, in which a child she assisted even asked to tell her animal a secret, namely, she had been a victim

of sexual abuse. The author identified that the child transferred to her the trust she placed in the animal so that she could tell and elaborate the trauma during the sessions. As reported by the interviewee, Abrams (2009) states that she believes that without the presence of the dog, the child might not tell her or it would take a long time for her to talk about this fact.

According to the interviewees' reports, the use of animals in children's clinical care seems to be something that deserves to be highlighted, as it promotes the expression of memories of their animals and helps to build a bond. In addition, animals represent archetypal content in fairy tales, which are better understood by young children (VON FRANZ, 2020), who establish proximity to such characters, possibly because children's biological development occurs in parallel with psychic development, so the younger the child, the closer they are to the collective unconscious (FORDHAM, 2002).

According to all interviewees, the presence of animals contributed positively to patients bringing important aspects of themselves to be worked on in therapy.

### **Animals as symbols**

The presence of animals as symbols in the clinical context was identified mainly through dreams, synchronicities and projections of patients' aspects in relation to their real pets. Some of these examples were explained during the interviews, such as patients' dreams about their own animals and the choice to adopt a pet at an important stage of life. According to the psychologists, these facts proved relevant to the therapeutic process, as they reflected aspects they were working on when they emerged.

The presence of animals in fairy tales, myths, fantasies, among others, is contemplated in the bibliography, as exposed by Bachmann (2016), when reporting that the cat and the dog, analyzed as symbols in these cultural productions, have the characteristic of psychopomp, that is, of characters who perform

the function of messenger and guide between different worlds (BALIEIRO et al., 2015), which is also performed by psychotherapists, when considering their role in promoting communication between psychic spheres. Therefore, it is believed that it is not random that dogs and cats have appeared throughout the sessions conducted by the participants and have been perceptible to them.

### **Qualifications in healthcare courses**

None of the participants made comments about taking courses in the healthcare area that qualified the work with animals in clinical practice. Throughout the interviews, it was possible to understand that this practice arose spontaneously, for example, based on the context of the pandemic that made people work in their own homes or cats that entered the clinic through a window.

Another important point exposed by one of the interviewees refers to the need for the animal to have specific training to be able to assist as a counselor. Abrams (2009) identifies the need for the animals used during the sessions to receive specific animal behavior training so that both the animal and the psychologist can learn to communicate better and respect their limits.

### **Animals as co-therapists**

When asked about how they understood the role of co-therapists, without directly relating to animals, most participants correlated them to this role in the therapeutic context, and one of them cited Nise da Silveira's experiences with animals in the psychiatric hospital.

In this sense, the participants indicated that the presence of animals is beneficial for both them and the patients, so that animals can be considered co-therapists in clinical care. This conclusion was also observed in the articles by Abrams (2009), Brousselle (2018), Chouinard (2021), Cirulli et al. (2011), Conrath and Ouazani (2021), Imber-Black (2019), Renard (2020), Silveira (2019) and Silveira (1998).



## Analysis

In view of the meanings attributed to the dog and the cat, it can be considered that these are targets of projection by the individuals who interact with them, either directly or through their expressions in story plots and myths.

Moreover, animals also seem to carry symbolic value, being endowed with numinosity. It is important to emphasize that the symbol is defined by Jung (1998) as “[...] a concept, a figure or a name that may be known to us in itself, but whose content, use or utility are specific or strange, indicating a hidden, obscure and unknown meaning” (§ 416). Thus, according to the author, symbols are formed spontaneously, from the so-called transcendent function, which aims to bring to consciousness the material immersed in the unconscious. Jung (1998) also points out that symbols are inexhaustible materials in meaning, and can manifest themselves individually, as in dreams and fantasies, or in collective productions of humanity, through the arts, myths, tales, among others.

The symbol can emerge from any relationship that the subject has with the world and causes him a ravishment, thus, the relationship between humans and animals can be considered symbolic, since it is permeated by affection and intense mobilization. Thus, the presence of animals in fairy tales, dreams, myths, folklores and others is marked by the need of man to characterize and signify psychic contents, through projections of human behaviors in animals, referring to characteristics observed, over time, by humanity. Although this meaning may differ between cultures, it is possible to create a parallel and understand that the animal seems to carry symbolic value for the human being.

Regarding the interviews, the results obtained are similar to those found in scientific publications, especially about the presence of animals altering the therapeutic space and the bond-

ing relationship between patient and therapist, as well as allowing greater emotional support during the sessions, both to psychologists and patients. These dimensions were found throughout the participants' discourse, so it is possible to understand that animals can be used in psychotherapeutic care as co-therapists, considering the benefits they present to the therapeutic process and the strengthening of the bond between the patient and the therapist.

With regard to archetypal materials, animals were significantly present throughout the therapeutic care, especially through dreams and projections. In this sense, the use of the tools of analytical psychology to understand the emerging symbols in the course of the sessions is of fundamental importance to contribute to the psychic development of the patients, which was illustrated through the cases that the participants presented and the direction that the sessions took after the respective symbolic analysis. It is recommended that new studies be carried out based on symbolic analyzes about animals and their representations in cultural productions, in order to complement the material already produced on the subject.

It is important to emphasize that, as the literature shows, the participants' reports indicate that children are more receptive to care with animals. Thus, further research should be conducted in order to better understand this relationship.

Although it has not been addressed in the study, the difference between in-person and online care is clear, a fact that was constant during the interviews, but no academic work has been found so far that correlates this difference and care with animals in the therapeutic context.

It was also found that the production of materials on the subject of this article is scarce, especially in Brazil, although Nise da Silveira was one of the pioneers of the practice and study of the use of animals in a therapeutic context, during the 50s. Thus, it was necessary to conduct research in other languages such as English,

French and Spanish, so that it was possible to base the research satisfactorily.

### **Conclusion**

This research therefore sought to contribute to the existing material in order to understand the object of study, exposing the authentic and spontaneous experiences of the psychotherapist participants. From these accounts, it was possible to deduce that the animal can be used as co-therapists in the therapeutic context, emphasizing that new studies should be elab-

orated so that the topic can be expanded and further developed.

In this sense, it is worth mentioning that there are already psychologists who use animals in clinical practice, but there is no systematization of these experiences and production of relevant scientific material to support such practice, denoting again the need to further explore the subject. ■

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## Resumo

### *Contribuições de animais na clínica: um estudo em psicologia analítica*

*O presente trabalho busca compreender a presença de animais em consultório clínico como colaboradores do processo psicoterapêutico dos pacientes. O levantamento bibliográfico realizado indicou que os animais auxiliam o estabelecimento do vínculo entre paciente e psicólogo, especialmente no caso de crianças. A fim de atingir o objetivo proposto, realizaram-se entrevistas semidirigidas com cinco psicólogas que atendem em consultório particular com a presença de animais, de forma online ou*

*presencial, sob a perspectiva da psicologia analítica. As entrevistas foram analisadas a partir desta abordagem e os resultados obtidos demonstraram que a presença de animais promove: alterações do espaço terapêutico, relação de vínculo entre paciente e terapeuta e criação de suporte emocional durante as sessões, tanto aos psicólogos quanto aos pacientes. Dessa forma, a pesquisa concluiu que animais podem ser ferramentas valiosas a serem utilizadas no setting terapêutico. ■*

**Palavras-chave:** animais, psicologia analítica, psicologia clínica.

## Resumen

### *Contribuciones de animales en la clínica: un estudio en psicología analítica*

*El presente trabajo busca comprender la presencia de animales en el consultorio clínico como colaboradores del proceso psicoterapéutico de los pacientes. El estudio bibliográfico realizado indicó que los animales ayudan al establecimiento del vínculo entre paciente y psicólogo, especialmente en el caso de niños. Con el fin de alcanzar el objetivo propuesto, se realizaron entrevistas semidirigidas con cinco psicólogas que atienden en consulta privada con la presencia de animales, de forma online o presencial, desde la perspectiva de la psicología analítica. Las entrevistas fueron analizadas desde este enfoque y los resultados obtenidos mostraron que la presencia de animales promueve: cambios en el espacio terapéutico, rela-*

*ción vincular entre paciente y terapeuta y creación de apoyo emocional durante las sesiones, tanto para los psicólogos como para los pacientes. De esta forma, la investigación concluyó que los animales pueden ser herramientas valiosas para ser utilizadas en el ámbito terapéutico. Las entrevistas fueron analizadas a partir de este abordaje y los resultados obtenidos demostraron que la presencia de animales promueve: alteraciones en el espacio terapéutico, relación de vínculo entre paciente y terapeuta y creación de soporte emocional durante las sesiones, tanto a los psicólogos como a los pacientes. De esta forma, la investigación concluyó que los animales pueden ser herramientas valiosas a ser utilizadas en el setting terapéutico. ■*

**Palabras clave:** animales, psicología analítica, psicología clínica.

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