

All Creatures Great and Small

Sanford Baran: Leading up to our time together this morning, Christina and I had a working title in mind, *All Creatures Great and Small*. Just so you know, this will not be about the delightful English television series of the same name. Season 2, by the way, just started airing on PBS last weekend, and it's been well worth the wait.

This morning the two of us are teaming up to honor and appreciate an aspect of creation that is quite magical, the kingdom of animals, which does of course include all manner of creatures great and small.

It's clear that animals contribute significantly to the well-being of the planet. If given half a chance, animals play a critical role in helping to maintain the delicate balance of environmental factors allowing the ecosystems that they inhabit to flourish and thrive.

But if you think about it, that's just a fraction of what they provide. In my mind their real contribution happens at a vibrational level. There is a quality of expression that is remarkably perceptive and one that carries an unmistakable nobility of presence. Here are beings that are at peace with themselves and the natural world around them. You don't hear of many conflicted giraffes or of wildebeests in therapy.

And in my experience, you can sense the difference when there are and when there are not animals around. It's something that is felt vibrationally and is quite noticeable.

It's heartbreaking to observe that down through history animals have suffered miserably at the hands of humankind. And these days animals now have to contend with the severe environmental damage imposed on them by misguided human function. But even as this threatens their survival, and at the very least impairs their ability to totally be their natural selves, they still steadfastly and unconditionally express a spirit that extends a true blessing throughout all corners of the earth. It's just part of who they are.

It is this fine quality of spirit, so present in the animal world, that we would like to acknowledge and spotlight this morning. And, of course, in honoring this quality of spirit in our animal friends, we very much honor the one spirit present everywhere throughout the whole.

In the process of preparing for this morning's consideration I had fun putting together a short video slide show—an appreciation for the kingdom of animals, these wonderful noble creatures great and small, and the spirit that they so beautifully bring into the earth. I'd love to share this with you now:

[Play the video](#)

(All Creatures Great and Small – An Appreciation)

Kudos to the many wildlife photographers around the globe whose extraordinary images featured in this presentation connect us in a very intimate and profound way to the lives and spirit of these marvelous creatures. I'm particularly struck by the radiance present in these creatures' eyes, so expressive—almost melting your heart, even when viewed as a photograph. And their body language is equally as expressive, like the two polar bears cuddling and taking a nap together. You can't help but feel a close affinity, a connection with these magnificent beings, even at a distance—the realization that we're in this together for the same purpose, to bless the earth and give expression to the one spirit everywhere.

I now would like to pass the baton over to Christina who, over the course of her life, has generated a whole lot of substance in her work with animals.

Christina Pivarnik: Thank you, Sanford. So lovely in all ways. What a joy to offer radiant stewardship for the earth. The natural world is vast, glorious, and exquisite. Part of this magnificent natural world includes the animal kingdom as Sanford has so beautifully portrayed.

We all have areas in our lives where there's been an affinity or specific interest in something. Pamela Gray mentioned this when she spoke a few months ago, expressing her love of working with children and young adults. My guess is we each experience something like this. I've had a deep love of animals for my entire life, especially horses and dogs. It's an aspect of what I'm here to do and part of my daily life. Some of you may feel the same. The animals in our lives offer an immense spirit of love.

As Sanford and I have been considering this realm of the natural world, he invited me to say a few words about my life with horses—there have been eleven of them and two live with me now.

I'd like to share an experience that illustrates the majesty of the equine world from a spiritual viewpoint. About 25 years ago, I was living in Hawaii. Polita, my Andalusian mare, had been with me for a year or so when I received an emergency call that her foreleg was swollen to the size of an elephant's leg. The vet thought she'd been stung by a centipede and expertly treated her. But her healing was slow. I could tell she was in pain and utterly miserable.

When it didn't seem like she was improving, I thought I'd try attunement. Radiation on her foreleg intensified the pain, so instead I reached my arms up and around her neck, with my

hands on her withers, and held her in a hug. She rested her head on my shoulder, much like the giraffe and the woman in Sanford's video. It felt like she melted into me.

We stood together like that for a while, in silence. And then I felt a surge, a whoosh of substance, a flood of love, of the heavenly essences we know so well in attunement. It was a powerful blending, a communion in spirit. We stood there, sharing the moment of new relationship and purity of heart. It was something I'd never experienced with an animal before.

Later, as I thought about it, I remembered Conrad O'Brien-french sharing stories with me about Uranda's work with horses in the early days of his ministry and how horses provided responsive spiritual substance for him. I held that close in my heart as I continued to work with Polita in attunement, and in such an unorthodox way!

As one might expect, she healed quickly. But the healing was secondary to the beauty of the experience of generating spiritual substance together. With a connection like that you can imagine how our riding and training progressed over time.

Through the years, I've continued to work in attunement with not only Polita, but my dogs as well. They provide a creative field to intensify substance during distance attunements. Here are the essences of heaven not only being experienced by us as angels on earth, but also complemented by, and even amplified through the animal kingdom. It's such a privilege to work with them on this level.

Horses are majestic, magnificent, regal creatures, but they can also be very playful. I thought I'd share a short video of Polita, who's lived with us for nearly 30 years, and her pasture mate Freddie, who's been part of the herd for 20 years (both longtime family members), as they show their joy in fresh fallen snow. My talented husband created this, and I love it. Hope you do, too!

[Play the video](#) (*Freddie and Polita*)

Horses let us touch into the purity of the heart realm and as such, there's an openness to let the substance of heaven increase. I'd like to share some research done by the Institute of Heart Math.

"Recent studies conducted have provided a clue to explain the two-way 'healing' that occurs when we're close to horses. ... They are likely to have what scientists have identified as a 'coherent' heart rate (or heart rate pattern) that explains why we can 'feel better' when we're

close to them. ... A coherent heart pattern is indicative of a system that can recover and adapt to stressful situations very efficiently. Many times, we just need to be in the presence of horses to feel a sense of well-being and peace. In fact, research shows that people experience many physiological benefits by interacting with horses, including lower blood pressure and heart rate, higher beta-endorphins, ... decreased stress levels, decreased feelings of anger, hostility, tension and anxiety; and greater feelings of empowerment, confidence, patience and self-efficacy.”

In other words, horses offer unconditional love and can encompass people in amazing ways, providing their own special form of therapy. There’s another video I’d like to share with you that beautifully portrays the healing and heart work horses can provide.

[Play the video](#) (*Stallion Making Hospital Rounds*)

This is such a deeply touching video showing the depth of love and encompassment of horses. But today’s focus isn’t meant to be only on horses—they’re simply an example—rather it’s about what can happen when we’re open to the current of love pouring through ALL life. Sometimes animals teach us things and mirror our emotions.

As we open our eyes and hearts to all that’s around us and embrace the magic that can occur in the blink of an eye—the spirit of love is certainly revealed through all creatures great and small.

Following Comments...

Sanford Baran: Individually and collectively we have responsibility to be stewards—to care for and tend this beautiful garden and all its creatures. Just as we admire this fine quality of spirit in the animal kingdom, it’s incumbent on us that we also express this fineness in our own living. What we do vibrationally matters, particularly as the animal kingdom comes under increased stress. We lovingly play our part knowing with full confidence that all is well, and that unconquerable life really does prevail.

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Sanford Baran: sanbar0805@comcast.net

Christina Pivarnik: christina@pivarnik.com

Introductory Music*Forest Path*

Damjan Karjacic & Robert Thies

Concluding Music*Baby Elephant Walk*

Henry Mancini