

Pets Not Only a Joy, but a Comfort, Too

CatChannel Managing Editor Nikki Batalis blogs about how cats and dogs help pick us up when we're feeling down.

By Nikki Batalis

Posted: June 29, 2009, 3 a.m. EDT

A few weeks ago, my husband and I took our dog, Buddy, for a walk, like we do just about every evening. Only on this particular night, I stepped in a hole, fracturing my ankle and tearing ligaments.

Buddy has been my faithful companion throughout my injury. I am now hobbling around with crutches and a boot, and am waiting for the slow healing process to speed up a little. My husband and kids are taking good care of me, because I can't even get a glass of water or a cup of coffee for myself.

But the one companion who hasn't left my side throughout the whole ordeal is our rescue dog, Buddy. When I fell, he stood over me and guarded me. And now, he follows me around the house, planting himself at my side, keeping his big, brown watchful eyes fixed on me at all times. Buddy, a Shepherd-Chow mix, has always been my "baby," but now he seems more like a therapist, providing me with doggie kisses, snuggles and unflagging concern.

Hey Jude was always able to sense when I needed some TLC. I am also reminded of my late, great rescue cat, Hey Jude, who my husband and I adopted right after we got married. A big, handsome tuxedo cat, Hey Jude was one of the best cats I ever knew — playful, funny, tons of personality. But he also was able to sense when I was ill or down, and would snuggle next to me for hours on end, or jump into a paper grocery sack and play. It was hard to be down for long when he was around.

I have always loved the pets in my life, but this injury has made me even more appreciative of the comfort and joy they give, as well as the precious, unconditional love.