

Genes linked to 'human seeking behavior' in dogs tied to bipolar disorder, autism in man

They like to be close to us, make eye contact and communicate with us – unusual behaviour between two different species – and it looks like some of those behaviours are written in their DNA.

A study led by Per Jensen at Linköping University in Sweden and published in [Scientific Reports](#) linked human interaction to dog genes.

Interestingly, the identified genes have also previously been linked to social disorders in human beings, including autism and bipolar disorder. This suggests our canine companions could shed some light on diversity within our own species.

The researchers believe these genetic tendencies probably developed through strong selection during our domestication of dogs, which has been going on for at least 15,000 years.

The team says the finding adds to a previous bank of research suggesting dogs as a good model for human psychology and behaviour.

“Dogs may be highly valuable for mapping behaviours and behavioural disorders specific to both the dog as a species and to particular breeds, as well as human psychological disorders such as anxiety, OCD and autism.”

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Dogs reach out to humans – it's in their genes