

**August 2020 Non Fiction Book Club**  
***Mama's Last Hug:***  
***Animal Emotions and What They Tell Us About Ourselves***  
**by Frans de Waal**

*Mama's Last Hug* challenges the somewhat narcissistic point of view some human beings have regarding their supposed singular ownership over emotions and emotionality. Please discuss.

Why, Frans de Waal questions, should animals be denied their inner-selves. What does it mean to have an inner-self? Do you believe animals have an inner-self?

Why should those organisms with whom we share so much of our genetic information be regarded as so alien in their ability to experience the world around them?

Was Mama aware of her impending death? Maybe. Maybe not. But even the most hardened cynic would have to admit that there was, at a bare minimum, recognition on her part and more likely warmth that we as humans like to assign solely to ourselves. Please discuss.

Why do so many scientists still refuse to acknowledge that beings other than humans are capable of complex emotions? Is it that it would complicate experimentation on them? Or that it might make eating them extremely problematic?

As de Waal himself concludes, "The question has never been whether animals have emotions, but how science could have overlooked them for so long." The time has come, he maintains, to rectify this misperception. Please discuss.