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## Contentment:

Deciding to be happy  
with what you have



# Donkey

**Ancient relatives of modern donkeys wandered the arid lands of Africa.** Their long ears helped them hear each other across large spaces, and probably helped keep them cool. Their herd habits make them sociable animals today.

Domesticated by humans 5,000 years ago, donkeys have a reputation for being stubborn. Actually, they are just highly intelligent and very cautious. When facing a potential threat, a horse flees first and asks questions later, but a donkey freezes in place. It digs in to ponder the situation. People who live and work with donkeys must develop patience!

Smaller than their horse cousins, donkeys have worked as pack and draft animals throughout history. A donkey can pull more weight than a horse of the same size. More than 40 million

working donkeys help support 250 million people around the world, often in difficult, dangerous environments such as coal mines.

In the U.S., donkeys have a variety of jobs. Some are ridden or pull carts, others help guard sheep or goats from predators such as coyotes, and some are just wonderful companions. In the Grand Canyon, mules take tourists down winding narrow paths.

What's the difference between a donkey and a mule? A male donkey (called a jack) bred to a female horse (mare) produces a mule. A male horse (stallion) bred to a female donkey (jennet or jenny) produces a hinny, though these offspring are often called mules too. Mules have donkeys to thank for their all-terrain agility and common sense!

**Smart and hardy, donkeys help humans all over the world with difficult jobs.**