

# THERIANO!



... A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THERIAN THERAPY! ...

# What are

**Therians are defined as someone who identify themselves as a non-human animal, usually psychologically or spiritually.**

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"Not aligning with the human vessel or individuality, you feel more like the lower class species than the upper class."  
*Neo, Philadelphia*

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"Being a therian is living as much of my life as possible through the lens of my relationships and interactions through the lens of my personality, part of my gender, and a large part of my identity. I know myself as a therian."  
*knows*

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"Therianthropy is very akin to transness for me, and when I am treated as such by others. Other than not having a tail, paws, and a snout. I feel that I am a therian."  
*Ava, Bay Area*

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"Therianthropy isn't simply about being an animal, it's about how society routinely dehumanizes parts of yourself and how you meet your needs. When we first acknowledged and met our needs, we found an abundance of self-love."  
*abundance of self-love*

# therians?

ifies as a non-human animal in some way,  
But what does that really mean?

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idualism that humans are expected to have.  
at humans have termed 'animals'."

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as i can in ways that a dog would. i view a lot  
he lens of this. being a dog is part of my  
part of my social life. almost everyone i know  
me as a beagle, and many treat me as such."

*Moxie, Bay Area*

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ne. I feel right when I am perceived as a dog,  
n the other hand, I sometimes feel sad about  
that I truly am more dog than human."

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an animal, it is about living in a world that  
removes your ability to tend to your animal  
net those needs, we found ourselves in an  
ve and care that never existed to us before."

*TOOB, Bay Area*

# Related Communities

Not the same, but huge overlap!

- **Alterhuman** - Those who do not identify with humanity in some way. This includes therians, but also other identities.
- **Otherkin** - Those with specific non-human identities, often mythological or fictitious.
- **Furries** - A fandom community based on an interest in anthropomorphic animals. This interest may or may not be a deeper part of one's identity.
- **Puppygirls, catboys, etc.** - Those with a connection to a certain animal, often through behavior or presentation, but *not necessarily* involving a rejection of humanity.
- **Petplayers** - Those who roleplay petlike or otherwise animalistic traits or dynamics during sex/ intimacy.

# Therian terminology

- **[animal]-mode** - A state in which one acts more similarly to one's theretype.
- **[animal]-space** - A headspace in which one's thoughts becomes similar to one's theretype.
- **Gear** - Acessories that express one's therianthropy, such as tails, ears, paws, masks, fursuits, etc.
- **Quadrobics** - The practiced skill of animalistic movement on all fours.
- **Shifting** - Some aspect of one's identity becoming more similar to one's theriotype for a period.
- **Species Dysphoria/Euphoria** - A feeling of pain/joy caused by mis/alignment between one's presentation or interactions and those of one's theriotype.
- **Theriotype/Kintype** - The specific nonhuman identity held by a therian/otherkin.

# Why does therianth

“Being a therian is joyous. I’ve found it has helped me with things such as stimming, making little noises, and making friends. I see it as a rejection of norms about how we can be.”

*Ava, Bay Area*

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“Therianthropy feels right to me at least in part because I’m also a misanthropist but given my lived experience with having pretty far left politics, it’s hard to work with.”

“If it looks like a dog, barks like a dog, bites like a dog, it’s probably a dog. I’m most at peace with chewing.”

*Neo, Philadelphia*

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“I think I identify with the term mostly because it’s a way to describe myself, but I don’t think I experience therianthropy. It’s kinda just this vague all-encompassing feeling that something is wrong. It feels honestly like, ‘something is wrong.’”

# Thropy feel right?

helped me find pride in neurodivergent traits, many aspects of my personality. In a way I see act.”

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part because humanity doesn't. I don't identify as trans because of my experience being out as trans for 8 years now, and I want to embrace the species I was born into.”

*Moxie, Bay Area*

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es like a dog, exists in packs like a dog.. it's like playing with toys in my mouth or running in a field.”

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use it's the closest thing to what I experience. I like most other therians tbh. I think for me the feeling of my body and my experience being so super similar to how being trans felt at first.”

*Paige, Berlin*

## How do you express

“Being therian has affected the way i present myself. how i move and act and play. its affected the type of affection i give others.”

*Moxie, Bay Area*

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“i started preferring it/its pronouns way way way to the point where now, it's (heh) my most preferred.”

“Variously. sometimes i will wear dog ears or have something around my neck. but not in a way that is meant to be a costume.”

*Neo, Philadelphia*

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“With or without a face mask, we know that our growls, our paws bounce in light joviality. Physicality is a crucial aspect of our animal nature.”

# ...ss being therian?

...t myself in many ways. from how i dress to  
...e type of affection i like to receive, its

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...y more after i began identifying as a therian!  
...preferred pronoun. it feels like less pressure  
...being called 'it,' somehow."

*Laika, Bay Area*

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...or a tail, ill bark pretty often, always gotta  
...a domesticated way"

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...t we are creatures. For our maw barks and  
...as we trot, and our head tilts in curiosity.  
...ness, we love to jump in excitement, tackle,  
...nuzzle, lick, and sniff our friends!"

*TOOB, Bay Area*

# AM I A THERIAN?

As with a  
out whet  
apply to  
ponder a

- **Do I feel that I am or want to be an animal?**  
This question is the most important one. Do you just want to be one! If the thought of being an animal is a part of you deep down really is some animal, then this scenario: putting aside the connections and if you could press a button to become an animal, would you?
- **Do I feel a disconnection or distance from humans?**  
For therians, the feeling that you aren't human can be due to trauma, neurodivergence, social ostracism, or even disdain for human behaviors can make a person feel like a therian. Therians may feel so distant from people that they feel like they are an animal.
- **Do I feel more comfortable acting as/pretending to be an animal?**  
Observation and experimentation are key to being a therian with it! What animalistic traits or urges do you have? Do you behave like a certain animal? Does making an animal associated with it bring you joy? What animal do you want to be? Do you notice a longing for the animal's body? Do you notice a longing for the animal's body if they were already there? If another person was an animal, or talked about your body using animal terms, would you be comfortable with that?

any non-normative identity, it can be hard to figure out whether you are therian or not. Not all of these questions apply to all therians, but thinking about them can help you understand and explore your identity. It may be useful to journal!

### **Animal?**

• If you want to be a certain critter, you can't. Does an animal just feel right, or if you feel that a certain animal, you may be a therian. Consider this: what opportunities would you lose, if you were that animal, would you?

### **Separation from humans and humanity?**

• People like those around you can be intense. Fear, isolation, dehumanization, DPDR, or even a sense of being alone. Can anyone feel separate from others. However, a sense of isolation that they're apart from it entirely.

### **Presenting as/being treated as an animal?**

• This is a good one for answering this one. Have some fun with it. What do you have? How does it feel when you hear that animal's sounds, or wearing gear that makes you feel like biting stuff or rolling around? Do you feel phantom sensations as if someone referred to you as they would that animal, would that feel nice?

# Debunking Stereotypes

- **Therians are mentally ill**  
Many therians are generally mentally well and happy, especially when permitted to express their identity.
- **Therians are zoophiles**  
People's perception of identity is tied up in sexuality (eg Blanchard's typology), but being something is not the same as wanting to fuck it.
- **Therians always act like animals**  
Most therians still interact with the world at large primarily as humans. While this may not be our preference, many of us can and have to do it. In general we are not inclined to bark at random people.
- **Therians all do X thing**  
There is no one thing all therians do. Not all therians express their therianthropy with gear, not all therians make animal sounds, and not all therians use it/its pronouns.

# Therian Struggles

"Most of my struggles with being therian have been internal, since i usually keep my therian identity to myself. i'm afraid that if i tell people, they'll be like "haha oh so you're playing pretend! :)" or "ewww you want to actually be an animal????". The fact that therian transition is physically impossible and unattainable sometimes rips me to shreds, especially when I can vividly feel my extended body. Knowing that i'll never have fur or a tail or ears or wings or a halo or claws makes me want to cry sometimes, and being unable to admit it to anyone hurts even more."

*Paige, Berlin*

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"Dysphoria and discrimination from parents and the psychiatric system. I'm not broken, just different (in this respect). I'll still be myself through it all. I will always be me."

*Serah, Los Angeles*

# Experiences w

“Being around other therians feels like sharing a language. Knowing that you're speaking it, it's just that sense of connection between yourself and other therians melting away.”

*Venari, Bay Area*

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“Being in community with other therians has been a huge part of my life. Connections from the girl who initially “puppy” me to all the amazing packmates. Not to mention all the amazing events in the bay that have brought us together in the past. It's a whole room full of love and support.”

“In SF, Mox and a couple other therians have been a huge part of my life. Puppypilled. Nowhere in the world has a community like this. Community is about playing with other pups, trading kandi with a girl, and being pet, trading kandi with a girl.”

*Ava, Bay Area*

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“The (few) other therians have been a mixed bag. People\* in general are a mixed bag. Honestly, the community that I've found in the bay is a whole room full of love and support.”

# With Community

...ring a language with someone before even  
...natural. you can almost feel the boundaries  
... upon feeling that kinship.”

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...s allowed me to form incredibly meaningful  
...ypilled" me, to my girlfriend, my Owner, and  
...ng people ive met through the various events  
...he same room. i'll never forget the sounds of  
...illed with creatures howling along with me.”

*Moxie, Bay Area*

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...used to throw this sex party/rave called  
...felt as much like home. For me, therian  
...s, hearing a howl echo from 50 other maws,  
...girl in fox ears. It's about being truly seen.”

...xed bag for me, but i think that's because  
...i think the biggest issue for me is the lack of  
...at i've been able to find, especially in berlin.

*Paige, Berlin*

# About me and Credits

My name is Ava, and I'm a dog therian living in the Bay Area for school. I've wanted to write this zine for a while, as I never connected with the resources about therians floating around—a lot of it doesn't seem to align with the experiences of the therians I know. Everyone I spoke to is trans, and this zine is a product of that community.



Thank you to Laika, Moxie, Neo, Paige, Serah, TOOB, and Venari for responding to my questions.

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