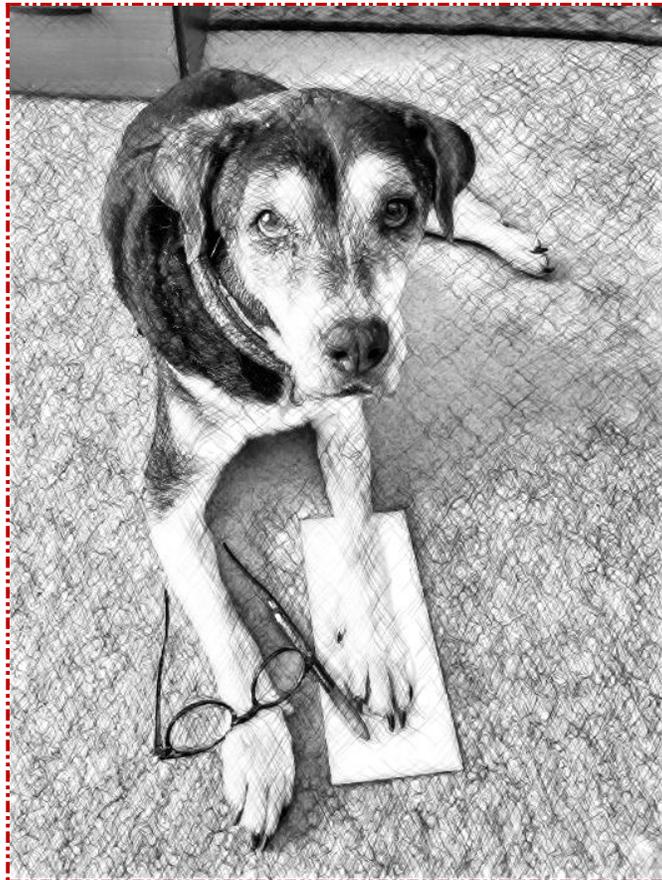


# Therapeutic Writing by Animals

in Animal Assisted Play Therapy®, Play Therapy,  
Psychotherapy, and Education



**A 2-session webinar featuring Kirrie, therapeutic writing author  
with her typist, Risë VanFleet, PhD, RPT-S, CDBC, CAEBC-I**

My name is Kirrie. I have written dozens of therapeutic letters and quite a few booklets during my career in Animal Assisted Play Therapy®. It appears they have been quite helpful! There are times when animals cannot be directly involved in your therapeutic work or other times when clients need a little extra assistance in coping with the challenges they face. This is where therapeutic writing from the point of view of us animals can be very helpful. Read on to learn more about my upcoming webinar to teach you (and your animals) how to do this type of intervention!

## Description

Many people, and children and young people in particular, are drawn to animals. Sometimes they can relate to animals more readily than they can to adults, parents, teachers, or therapists/counselors. Often, animals' lives bear similarities to human lives, such as life within families, surviving trauma, living in foster homes and being adopted, living with illness or infirmity, adapting to new circumstances, learning new skills, and growing old. Bibliotherapy, in which therapists or educators use books written for a specific audience on a relevant topic to augment the therapeutic or educational process, can be very useful. There are many books on a wide range of topics written for all ages. Even so, sometimes the need for age-appropriate materials arises quickly, or there simply is nothing written on a particular topic, or a more personal touch is needed. In those cases, therapeutic writing can fill an important role.

Therapeutic writing takes many forms. It can be a letter "written" by a known therapy animal, a story or booklet "authored" by a client's animal, or a blog created by an unknown animal living in a similar situation as the client. Therapeutic letters can help students get past a roadblock or encourage mental health clients to cope with a trauma or loss. The options are limitless.

This webinar will be conducted in a workshop-style manner and is designed to give psychotherapists, play and expressive therapists, counselors, psychologists, and teachers the guidelines and skills for writing therapeutic materials to help their students and clients meet their goals or overcome challenges. A variety of methods will be covered including storytelling skills, shared storytelling, tailor-made booklets, encouraging messages, educational tools, support through tough situations, and more. Skills include the use of humor and playfulness, writing from the point of view of the animals, bringing the writing to life, simple illustration options, finding inspiration, writing at different developmental levels, and ways of involving clients more actively in the process.

The webinar is divided into two meetings. The first day takes 3 hours during which these many topics are covered. An hour-long assignment given at the end of the first day is completed by participants on their own. The second meeting lasts for 2 hours during which participants will share their assignments, receive feedback, and final information and tips are provided.



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## Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to...

1. Describe at least 2 potential benefits of therapeutic writing by animals.
2. Give 1 reason for using the animal's voice for therapeutic writing.
3. List at least 5 forms that therapeutic writing can take.
4. Explain 1 benefit of the use of humor or playfulness.
5. Describe ways in which therapeutic writing can be infused with playfulness and play therapy principles.
6. Identify at least 2 ways to illustrate therapeutic writing in a simple, inexpensive manner.
7. Explain the dual role of empathy in writing therapeutic letters or stories.
8. Discuss how therapeutic writing by animals fits in with bibliotherapy.
9. Identify at least 3 elements of this process that reflect play therapy principles and methods.
10. Describe how this process incorporates the unique features of the animal who is "writing."
11. Describe how to incorporate the client's goals and needs into the writing to ensure it is helpful.
12. Identify at least 3 situations that might call for therapeutic writing.

## Schedule

Times are given in Eastern Daylight Savings Time in the U.S. and Canada (the time zone of New York City). Google "time zone conversion" to see the times in your location. In general, subtract 3 hours for Pacific Time North America; add 5 hours for the UK times, and add 6 hours for much of Europe. Far eastern countries' times are likely to be early the following day. We will make this available by recording for those for whom these times are inconvenient.



**20 May 2021 (Thursday) – 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

**25 May 2021 (Tuesday) – 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

## Who Should Attend

This webinar is designed for play therapists, psychologists, social workers, counselors, psychiatrists, family therapists, school counselors, and other experienced mental health, medical, allied health, and education professionals. The webinar is relevant to a wide range of clinical, developmental, and educational problems for clients or students throughout the lifespan. Participants do not need to be working with animals.

## Continuing Education Information

The Family Enhancement & Play Therapy Center is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The FEAPT Center maintains responsibility for this program and its contents. The Family Enhancement & Play Therapy Center is an NBCC-Approved Continuing Education Provider (5732) and may offer NBCC-approved clock hours for events that meet NBCC requirements. The FEAPT Center solely is responsible for all aspects of the program. It is also an Association for Play Therapy (APT) Approved Provider 95-014. This program has been approved by a number of state social work boards (please contact us for this info as some states have unique restrictions). **6 hours total continuing education credits/clock hours** will be awarded to participants who attend the *entire* webinar and complete the necessary assignments and assessments (there is a separate fee for this, available at the time you register). CE recipients must attend the entire webinar as partial credit cannot be given. No exceptions can be made to this policy. Please contact [rise@risevanfleet.com](mailto:rise@risevanfleet.com) with any questions.

## Fees and Cancellation Policy

This webinar is sold as a complete 2-part package with continuing education fees paid separately based on whether or not you need them. (Please be sure to sign up for the CE fees at the time you register, however, as they will not be available afterward.). The fees are listed below:



- Fee:** \$35 USD (for the workshop/webinar)
- CE Fee:** \$25 USD (optional. Includes all Continuing Education processing, access to CE assessments. CE document provided within 3 weeks of webinar)
- Cancellation:** Because this is a webinar including recorded elements, registration fees cannot be refunded. Please contact Dr. Risë VanFleet at [rise@risevanfleet.com](mailto:rise@risevanfleet.com) if you have a conflict with one of the dates. In the very unlikely event that this webinar is cancelled entirely by the sponsors, a full refund will be given.

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## Special Needs

We are committed to making workshops accessible to everyone. Please contact us as early in the process as possible if you have special needs. This webinar will be conducted entirely online via the Zoom platform.

## Presenter/s



**Kirrie** is a well-known therapeutic writing expert who will share samples of her work used for different situations. **Risë VanFleet, PhD, RPT-S, CDBC, CAEBC-I**, also known as Kirrie's typist, is a Licensed Psychologist in Pennsylvania, Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor, Certified Dog Behavior Consultant, and Certified Animal Ethology and Behavior Consultant-Instructor. She is a Co-Founder of the field of Animal Assisted Play Therapy® and its training arm, the International Institute for AAPT®. She is also the President of the Family Enhancement & Play Therapy Center, Inc. in Boiling Springs Pennsylvania, a child, family, and lifespan development center that specializes in training mental health, allied health, and education professionals in play therapy, Filial Therapy, and AAPT. She has over 45 years of experience in community, educational, medical, and private practice settings and is the author of 12 books and manuals and dozens of articles and chapters, and recipient of 16 national professional, training, writing, and photography awards. She is coauthor of the Maxwell Award-winning books, *Animal Assisted Play Therapy* and *Play Therapy with Kids & Canines*, and author of *Child-Centered Play Therapy* and *Filial Therapy: Strengthening Parent-Child Relationships Through Play*. Her book, *The Human Half of Dog Training*, was named one of the top four dog training books of that year. She currently lives with her husband and 4 adopted dogs: 17 year old Kirrie who serves as her muse, and Katie, Murrie, and Josie Patches who provide the entertainment.

*If you have any questions about the webinar, please contact Risë VanFleet at [rise@risevanfleet.com](mailto:rise@risevanfleet.com)!*

**Register at <https://risevanfleet.com/shop/product-category/onlinecourses/>**