SERENITY COUNSELING GROUP'S

Moments of Serenity

October 2026

Animal Assisted Therapy

Animal-assisted therapy incorporates trained animals into the therapeutic process to support emotional and mental well-being. Their presence can help create a calm, welcoming environment and may reduce stress and anxiety, encourage emotional regulation, and help clients feel more comfortable engaging in therapy.

Interacting with an animal can also provide opportunities to practice mindfulness, build trust, and stay grounded during difficult conversations. Animal-assisted therapy may be especially helpful for individuals experiencing anxiety, depression, trauma, grief, or stress. While animals don't replace traditional therapy, they can be a comforting and meaningful addition to the healing process.

Mindfulness Minute

Pause With Your Pet:

Take one quiet minute with your pet. Notice the warmth of their body, the texture of their fur, and the rhythm of their breathing.

Take a few slow, deep breaths and allow yourself to simply be present. Let your pet be a gentle reminder to slow down and enjoy the moment you're in.

Self-Care

- Spend a few minutes outside with your pet and leave your phone behind.
- Turn your daily walk into a mindfulness walk by noticing the sights, sounds, and sensations around you.
- Take a quiet break together. Petting, brushing, or simply sitting beside your pet can create a natural opportunity to slow down.
- End the day with a gratitude moment. While spending time with your pet, think of three things from the day that brought you comfort, joy, or connection.

Did You Know?

- 35% reduction in anxiety was reported among anxious emergency-department patients after just 15 minutes with a certified therapy dog and handler, compared with usual care.
- 46% of children who interacted with a therapy dog during an emergency-department visit experienced a clinically meaningful decrease in anxiety, compared with 23% receiving standard care alone
- Animal-assisted therapy is linked to lower anxiety, depression, and stress. A meta-analysis of 35 randomized controlled trials involving 2,391 adults found significant improvements in all three areas.
- Stress hormones may decrease. A systematic review found that cortisol levels decreased in 64.3% of studies examining cortisol during animal-assisted interventions.

Company Highlight

Sunny, Canine Good Citizen



Sunny is Serenity's resident therapy dog! When she's not napping or happily bouncing around the hallways, you can find her offering comfort and companionship to clients during their sessions. Sunny has completed extensive training and evaluations, earning her Canine Good Citizen, Advanced CGC, and Urban CGC titles. She is also currently certified through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs. Whether she's providing a calming presence or simply bringing a smile to someone's day, Sunny is a pretty special part of the Serenity team.