

Companion Animals for Mental Health



"Pets offer an unconditional love that can be very helpful to people with depression," says Ian Cook, MD, a psychiatrist and director of the Depression Research and Clinic Program at UCLA." (<http://www.webmd.com/depression/features/pets-depression#1>)

= = = = =

For people with anxiety disorders or even those who just get anxious a lot, there's often no way around it, but there are some ways to manage it. Everyone has their own coping mechanisms that work for them (and not every method works for every person), but sometimes, having a pet can help to curb anxiety. (<https://www.thedodo.com/pets-help-anxiety-1223901348.html>) The article goes on to delineate that pets like to cuddle. They will "listen" to you without giving advice. They offer an excellent distraction. Having a pet around helps deal with aloneness. Playing with a pet can help you clear your mind. They never judge you. A pet is often a non-threatening way into social interaction. They always love you – unconditionally.

"Although they may present no outward signs of a disability, those who struggle with mental health concerns such as anxiety, depression, and phobias experience legitimate debilitation.

Emotional Support Animals have proven effective in mitigating many symptoms of mental health disorders.

Emotional Support Animals are not required to perform a specific task, thus making them different from service animals.,

" Kristy R. Becraft, MS, LMHC, Healing Through Animals from letter to the editor published in Dog Fancy magazine, August 2012.

12 Ways Your Pet Can Improve Your Mental Health!

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/danielle-hark/pet-ownership-health_b_3187960.html

The Truth About Cats and Dogs: Pets Are Good for Mental Health of 'Everyday People'

<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2011/07/cats-dogs.aspx>