



Purr Therapy: What Timmy & Marina Taught Me About Life, Love and Loss

Kathy McCoy PhD

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Cats aren't a typical choice for animal-assisted psychotherapy, but Timmy and Marina are anything but typical.

Research has found that petting a cat can lower blood pressure and a cat's purr is thought to help heal body tissues and bones. But not just any cat can be a therapy cat, after all, such animals need to be friendly with strangers and willing to be touched, petted and held by unfamiliar people. They have to be tolerant of loud voices and angry shouting, emotional distress, and sudden movements. It's a tall order for any animal, but a particular challenge for a cat.

In *Purr Therapy*, psychotherapist and cat lover Dr. Kathleen McCoy shows how two very special cats rose to this challenge, how they helped wounded souls to heal and how they taught even her lessons in mindfulness, joyful living, and compassion. She also shows readers how animal-assisted psychotherapy works and gives them an intimate and moving inside look at how Timmy and Marina worked with patients, how their double role as animal companions and cotherapists changed lives, and how, after their untimely deaths, the grief shared by those who knew and loved them led to even more growth and healing.

It's no surprise that there is a tidal wave of cat fanciers growing: even the internet prefers cats. No dog site has reached the proportions of the most popular cat sites—case in point: the mega-star Grumpy Cat who has over 2 ½ million followers! More than an internet trend, this very active market is exploding through cat video contests and festivals that are claiming the passions of millions who will benefit from—and love—*Purr Therapy*.

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