

# A Simple Introduction to Otherkin and Therianthropes

Version 2.4.7 by Orion Scribner (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

This short piece of writing is for anyone to start learning about us therianthropes and otherkin. The piece uses only common words and simple sentences. Readers can put it into other languages more easily.<sup>1</sup> The statistics come from surveys that had a sample size greater than one hundred people. The endnotes and references give the origins of all the information.

Some real people are therianthropes and otherkin. We say that we are something other than human. For example, one of us who says, “I am a wolf.” The most common sorts of creatures for us to be are wolves, elves, and dragons. This is always an important part of who we are.<sup>2</sup> These are not characters we invented for play in a game.<sup>3</sup> It is not something we do simply for amusement.<sup>4</sup> It is a real part of us. It is an experience that we have without trying.<sup>5</sup> It is also an identity, because it is what we are.<sup>6</sup>

Most of us sometimes have thoughts and feelings that are more similar to our animal side.<sup>7</sup> Some of us have thoughts and feelings that we are part animal all the time.<sup>8</sup> 78% of us have instincts that most people do not have.<sup>9</sup> For example, the desire to use body language similar to what our sort of creature uses. We choose what we do with our instincts. We are responsible for what we do, the same as anyone else. Instincts are not an excuse for doing bad things.<sup>10</sup> We know that our bodies never change form. No one can change their body into an animal form. No one has magic powers that go against the laws of physics.<sup>11</sup>

We each make our own discovery of how and why we are therianthropes or otherkin. Nobody is able to do that for someone else. Only you can know who you are.<sup>12</sup> Many of us knew that we were other than human before we had heard of anybody else who did.<sup>13</sup>

Here is how our communities started. In 1990, a group made the word “otherkin” for themselves. It comes from the words “other kinds.”<sup>14</sup> In 1994, another community took up the word “therianthrope” for themselves. It means “animal person.”<sup>15</sup> The two communities came to have knowledge of each other later, in about 1996.<sup>16</sup> The oldest similar groups have put out writings since 1973.<sup>17</sup>

Usually, therianthropes are animals, whereas otherkin are creatures from mythology. This is not a rule. Many therianthropes are creatures from mythology.<sup>18</sup> 33.4% of otherkin say they are beings from fiction.<sup>19</sup>

What do we look like? Other people only know that we are otherkin or therianthropes if we say that we are. We are women, men, and others.<sup>20</sup> We are young and old.<sup>21</sup> We come from many nations and ethnic groups.<sup>22</sup> We know that we look human. All living people in the world who look human are members of the only living species of human.<sup>23</sup> We have complicated

opinions about using the words “human” or “not human” for ourselves.<sup>24</sup> Fewer than 4% of us have unusual sorts of body modifications.<sup>25</sup> What we own or wear does not make us therianthropes and otherkin. We enjoy getting things that look like our sort of creature, though.<sup>26</sup>

Many of us see our experiences as therianthropes and otherkin as spiritual. Many of us say our spirits are of a different sort of creature.<sup>27</sup> However, some of us believe that our spirits are the same as anyone’s.<sup>28</sup> Some of us do not believe in spirits.<sup>29</sup> 44% of us say we were a different sort of creature in a past life.<sup>30</sup> However, some of us have no memories of past lives, or do not believe in past lives.<sup>31</sup> Some of us prefer explanations that come from psychology instead of spirituality.<sup>32</sup>

Therianthropes and otherkin are not a religion.<sup>33</sup> We have whichever religion we each desire. Many of us are members of Christianity, Judaism, Paganism, Buddhism, or other religions.<sup>34</sup> Some of us have no religion.<sup>35</sup> There are no leaders of the therianthrope or otherkin communities.<sup>36</sup>

We go about our lives in the same ways as other people do.<sup>37</sup> Our experiences as otherkin and therianthropes give us ideas for important choices we make in our lives. For example, in our education and the work we do for a living.<sup>38</sup> We find people who love us for who we are.<sup>39</sup> Therianthropes and otherkin are neither better nor worse than other people.<sup>40</sup>

Mental health professionals say that being a therianthrope or otherkin is not a mental illness.<sup>41</sup> Many of us have normal mental health.<sup>42</sup> The same as in any group of people, some of us have mental illnesses or disabilities.<sup>43</sup> Neither good nor bad health is necessary for us to be otherkin or therianthropes.

In short, otherkin and therianthropes are real people for whom being other than human is always a part of who they are. Our communities have been in existence for tens of years. Many sorts of people are therianthropes and otherkin. Each of us has our own ideas of how and why we are this way. Some of our explanations for this come from spirituality or psychology. We are not a religion, an illness, a look, or a game.

**About the writer:** I am Orion Scribner, a dragon otherkin. More than ten years ago, I wrote a history book about the otherkin and therianthrope communities.

How to use this piece in your references:

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# Endnotes

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- 1 This piece of writing is in Simple English. It is not obedient to all the rules of Basic English. All the words in here are common enough to be in a small dictionary. Other than the words “therianthropes” and “otherkin,” anyway.
  - 2 These are simpler words for part of the best definition of “therianthropes.” Sonne wrote it in “Terms and definitions.” It is also true about otherkin.
  - 3 These say it is not an invented character: Baker-Whitelaw, Golden Spirit, Jakkal (“Therianthropy...”), Lupa (pp. 27, 108-109).
  - 4 See Katmandu and Tiernan.
  - 5 Mokele first gave a definition of “therianthropes” saying it is an experience. This is also true of otherkin.
  - 6 See Citrakayah and Baxil.
  - 7 See Baker-Whitelaw and Jakkal (“Therianthropy...”).
  - 8 See Sonne.
  - 9 These statistics come from a survey by Shepard (“Abnormal instincts”). Therianthropes, otherkin, and similar sorts of people took the survey.
  - 10 See Jakkal (“Introduction...”), Katmandu, and Lupa (p. 234, 249-250). A survey by Shepard has proof (“Abnormal instincts,” pp. 24-25).
  - 11 See Clegg (p. 404) and Golden Spirit.
  - 12 Most introductions to otherkin and therianthropes say this. About otherkin, see the Crisses, Golden Spirit, and Tiernan. About therianthropes, see Jakkal (“Introduction...”) and Katmandu. See also Lupa (pp. 243-245).
  - 13 For more information about this part of self discovery, see Baker-Whitelaw, Katmandu, Kusani, and Tiernan.
  - 14 For more, read my history book, *Otherkin Timeline*. For information about the origin of this word, see Arethinn.
  - 15 See the book by House of Chimeras.
  - 16 From House of Chimeras (pp. 14, 27).
  - 17 For more information about earlier groups, see my *Otherkin Timeline*.
  - 18 For proof from community history that therianthropes are not only animals, see Daski.
  - 19 The statistic comes from a survey by Shepard (“2021 Nonhumanity...”, raw data).
  - 20 Some surveys find that more of us are women than men. All surveys find some others who are not simply men or women.
  - 21 Usually, surveys find most of us in our teens and twenties. For one example, we see this in survey results by Clegg (p. 407-408). Year after year, this happens in our surveys. Older people have been in our communities for many years. Younger people have a greater tendency to take the surveys.
  - 22 As Proctor says, surveys find that we live “on all continents ... except Antarctica” (pp. 72-73). For statistics on which ethnic groups are common among us, see Dinocanid.

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- 23 For an explanation of how scientists know this, see Gould (pp. 322-322). Understanding this fact is important for stopping racism and false science. See Gould (pp. 24-25, 113-145).
- 24 About those complicated feelings, see the writings by Ilrak, Kin Speak, and Proctor (pp. 8, 108, 361).
- 25 The statistic come from a survey by Shepard (“2021 Nonhumanity...,” p. 12).
- 26 See Baker-Whitelaw.
- 27 Nearly all introductions to therianthropes and otherkin talk about how we have the belief that our spirits are not human. For example, see the Crisses, Jakkal (“Therianthropy...”), and Lupa (p. 27).
- 28 See the writings about this by a therianthrope named Kusani, and an otherkin named Tiernan.
- 29 See Citrakayah.
- 30 The statistic comes from Lupa’s survey of otherkin, therianthropes, and similar people (p. 287). Nearly all introductions to therianthropes or otherkin say that many have the belief that they were other than human in a past life. See Akhila, Baxil, the Crisses, Golden Spirit, and Lupa (pp. 57-66).
- 31 See the Crisses and Kefira.
- 32 See Akhila (“Different...”) and Lupa (pp. 80-86).
- 33 One of the few things that our communities are in agreement about is that we are not a religion. See Golden Spirit, Lupa (p. 30), and Proctor (pp. 94-95).
- 34 About how we each have religions as we desire, see Lupa (pp. 30-31, 211-214). About otherkin who say this, see Baxil and Golden Spirit. About therianthropes who say this, see Citrakayah.
- 35 See Kefira.
- 36 See Baxil and Proctor (p. 94).
- 37 See Akhila, Baker-Whitelaw, Golden Spirit, Ilrak, and Lupa (p. 37).
- 38 See Lupa (p. 240).
- 39 See the Polyrythms.
- 40 Therianthropes say this. For example, see the writings by Akhila and Katmandu. Otherkin say this, too. See Baker-Whitelaw, Baxil, and Golden Spirit.
- 41 For examples of mental health professionals giving us this advice, see Baker-Whitelaw and Lupa (pp. 86, 261-262).
- 42 See Akhila, Baxil, and Lupa (pp. 85-86).
- 43 See Akhila and Lupa (p. 259).

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