



## Pet Appreciation

Opening exercise: Complete the following grid below about a pet that you love. If you do not have a pet, you are still encouraged to participate by using a pet from your past. Another option would be to use an animal in nature that you admire and appreciate. It could be a local animal like squirrels, birds or deer or an animal from around the world like a tiger or panda. Any animal that makes you feel good you can think of will work for this discussion

If this activity is being done via telehealth and not in person, then the grid is not needed. Rather everyone should just get a pen and some paper and jot down some notes for each category as the counselor or group leader reads through the grid over telehealth:

### My Pet (or Favorite Animal) Profile:

Appearance	Behavior Patterns
Personality	Likes/Dislikes
I am drawn to, (I appreciate)	What this animal means to me personally on a deeper level

**Process:** Discuss your pet profile as a group. (If you did not use a pet, substitute pet with the word “animal”)

### **Some additional process questions:**

What does your pet do for you emotionally? (or thinking about your favorite animal?)

How do you connect with your pet on a special level? (If your animal is not a pet, what is special to you?)

What are some things your pet does that you really appreciate? (Or things your favorite animal does)

How can your pet bring you out of an emotionally challenging situation even if it is just for a little while?

What positive adjectives come to mind when you think of your pet (Loyal, loving, sweet, unique, beautiful, etc.)



**The following additional questions are pet specific and may not be able to be discussed by non-pet owners**

- One thing that my pet understands about me is
- One thing that I understand about my pet is
- One thing makes this pet special is
- One thing that I truly and deeply love about my pet is
- What do you do for your pet to make your pet feel special and loved?
- What does your pet give to you?
- How do you give back to your pet and how does that help you?

***If this activity is being done via telehealth, a great follow up activity is to do a Telehealth Pet Show:***

**Telehealth Pet Show** – Allow group members with pets an allotted amount of time to bring their pet on camera and talk a little about their relationship with that pet. For those without a pet, they can choose to bring a stuffed animal toy, a picture of an animal in their home, a picture from the internet or their phone, or a statue of an animal in their home of their choice instead of a live pet. Allow time for group members to ask questions. Process thoughts and feeling at the end of group.

