

First off, Fae are not therians, though they are, of course, Otherkin (so I may be of little use there). You'll probably want to check out resources that are more directly pertinent to fae for your house member who is faerie. A caution... lots of the stuff I see online, about various kinds of Otherkin, (yes, sometimes including therians), is more on the order of wish-fulfillment fantasy than anything useful or practical. In other words, you need to wade through a lot of horse-puckey to find anything useful.

The biggest thing about becoming a healthy, happy, mature therian is going through a very personal process of self-exploration. 90% of what you need to know is best learned on one's own. However, weres who come into their "awareness" in a vacuum may end up jumping to all sorts of weird conclusions, adopting ideas that better belong in role-playing games, or may get confused by all the junk in media about weres. It is kind of important for them to interact with other weres at some point, if at all possible. Problem is, there's rarely more than a couple weres in any one place.

The first thing a therian needs to know is, "This is not the movies". Therians don't change shape. They have perfectly human bodies and human genes (as near as we can tell <grin>). While a therian may have different feelings and perceptions from "normal" people, they don't get super strength, or any ability that is beyond the range of possibility for the human spectrum. Many weres claim to be empaths, and often, are very empathetic people.

Lots of weres have feelings and urges from their animal side. This does not necessarily mean anything physical is different about them, but they still feel them. For instance, some weres who are carnivore-types will feel a desire for lots of meat in their diets. This is more psychological and aesthetic than anything else, I feel. They still have a human digestive system, after all. But they may not be happy if they don't satisfy that animal-spirited part of themselves.

Being a therian largely manifests as a mental or spiritual thing. It is sometimes likened to transgenderism, except that instead of being born the wrong gender, they are born the wrong species. There may or may not be neurological difference in the brains of therians. Brains form differently in some ways according to one's experiences and feelings.

Often, when therians/weres are younger (the terms mean the same thing by the way), they go through a time where they have to suppress the animal parts of their nature to be "normal". Sometimes, they spend many years trying to act "normal" or having parents or society inflict

"normalcy" on them. But the inner animal never really goes away. If it is not satisfied, and that part of themselves is not allowed to express or be part of their personality, it can lead to deep feelings of depression, neurosis, or unhappiness.

Often, what happens, is that eventually (like with anything else people suppress), the parts that they don't allow to come to the fore decide they need to manifest anyway. Some people go through involuntary mental shifts (as opposed to voluntary ones). A mental shift, of course, is where the person takes on the mental state of their animal side (partially or wholly), while in their human body. Usually, this triggers a lot of self-exploration, and the person gets a chance to come to terms with themselves and accept themselves... and once that happens, the shifts are no longer involuntary. The person can choose when to have a mental shift.

The big thing to remember is that one wants to include all of one's self into one's personality. There is a tendency to separate all the "normal" or "human" parts into one identity, and stuff all the "weird" stuff, like therianthropy into another. It is important to always remember that we are one person, with many parts and traits, and not treat the animal self as something separate or external.

I often hear, especially from younger folks, things like "My wolf made me do this" or "My lion side did that". what they need to do is remind themselves that it is really "I did this because I wanted to because I have a wolf nature". (or lion, or whatever).

Often, weres who are coming to terms with themselves go through a phase where they want to have some way to affirm and express their animal side, and will go to great lengths to "prove" that it is real... they'll look for physical signs they can point to, like that their eyes change color, or they think their teeth are pointier. I think this is because they want to be able to validate that their very real feelings and experiences are real, in some way they can show to others. Usually, they grow out of that and end up feeling a little silly.

Therianthropy is real and valid. That doesn't mean physical, outward evidence will be obvious or necessary.

A therian must look inside to find answers about themselves. They should work at not jumping to conclusions, or trying to fill in the blanks with fantasy or drama. They need to be able to look inside, regardless of hopes, fears, expectations, or what they read in books about animals or "werecreatures". Often, the idea we form in our heads about an animal is very different from the reality. Humans do

anthropomorphize. Most of what we'll see written about animals comes through human filters.

Therians should not use their therianthropy as an excuse for things... some therians, going through the turmoil of early self-discovery can get into a bad habit of blaming dysfunctional behavior on their wereness. Sometimes, you will have urges that make you want to do silly things, or may have powerful feelings that get a little out of control, until you get a handle on yourself. And sometimes, you gotta give in to your urges a little to keep from stifling. But one must choose how they will act, think and be, and not get into the habit of using therianthropy as an excuse rather than a causative.

Most therians seem to go through a confused, "silly kid" phase, but they also seem to be very good about tossing that aside in favor of self-awareness. The weres who have survived to this point, I suppose, had to get good at understanding self... because their self is different from the people around them, but they still have to be around them.

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> I tried going through your site, and was particularly interested in
> your terminology however, it is all by the letter and does not have a
> complete list unless I click on each letter of the alphabet.

There is an option to view all terms at once (there is an "All" link on the Encyclopedia pages).

[http://www.werelist.com/modules.php?
name=Encyclopedia&op=terms&eid=6<r=All](http://www.werelist.com/modules.php?name=Encyclopedia&op=terms&eid=6<r=All)

There is also a therian Wiki that someone recently started. Anyone can contribute to this Wiki, so that means you'll find some good stuff, but there's always the risk that someone who is a real twit will post something there too:

<http://wikitherian.werehost.org/>

I recommend the pages at <http://www.shifters.org/> and <http://www.therianthropy.org> also. They've been providing links and essays and such for just ages.

If you want a real "one-stop-shop" for essays and writings about many aspects of therianthropy, there's a huge resource compiled of links to lots of things people have written over the years at:

<http://www.snowspine.com/therian/>

There's a section aimed specifically at "newbies", there which may prove useful.