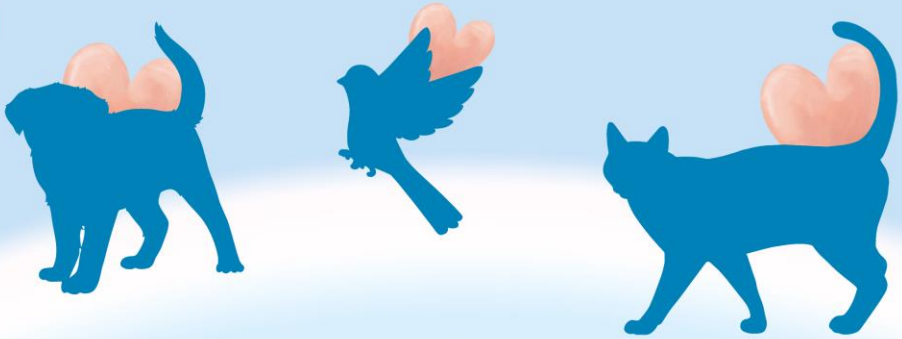
Ways of Dealing with Pet Bereavement



What is pet bereavement?

Experiencing the loss of someone close to you is called bereavement. We speak of pet bereavement when a person loses a companion animal that was important to them.

Pets are members of our families, and many people experience the loss of their pet the same way they experience the death of a close relative or friend.

Pet bereavement can come with many emotions, from grief and sadness to anger and upset. There is no right or wrong way of dealing with the loss of a beloved pet, and it’s different for everyone.

What happens when a beloved pet passes away?

When someone loses a much loved pet, they may find it difficult to come to terms with this loss. Their animal companion has been part of their daily life, so losing their pet can leave a big hole.

They may take some time to process this loss, but unfortunately, decisions about the pet's final resting place have to be made soon after. There are **various options**, including a burial at a pet cemetery or cremation.

A small funeral with everyone who knew the pet well can be a good way to say goodbye to the beloved animal.

How can I deal with losing my pet?

If your pet has passed away, know that everything you're feeling is valid. There is no right or wrong way to deal with this grief.

Some people like to hold a funeral for their pet. You can say a few words, or sing a song for your pet, if you like. You can also **write a letter** to your pet with all your favourite memories and lay it to rest with them.

Some people process their grief by speaking about it with others, so you can try talking to a friend or family member about your feelings. They may also share their feelings, so you can deal with the loss together.

Getting a new pet right after the other one passes may seem appealing, but it often doesn't help you process the bereavement. Think carefully about whether you're ready to welcome a new member to your family.

How can I remember my pet?

If you're worried about forgetting your pet, or just want to remember the great memories you made together, you can create a memorial for them in your home.

You could keep their favourite toy or collar next to a framed picture of you and your beloved pet.

Or you can create a collage with photos and drawings of your pet. You can hang it up wherever you like - in your own room, or in your pet's favourite spot.

Why not print pictures of your pet and collect them in a photo album? You can write a little note for each picture.

You can also watch a film or listen to music that reminds you of your pet.

Some of these suggestions may work for you, and others may not. It's entirely up to you to deal with your loss in a way that is right for you.

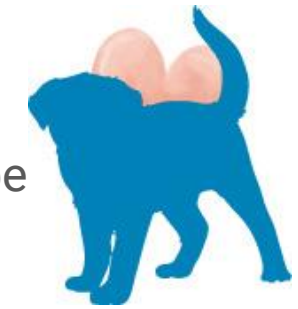
How can I help my friend deal with pet bereavement?

If your friend has lost their pet, the best thing you can do is be there for them. Remember that everyone deals with grief differently. Your friend might want to talk, they might like to spend time with you, or they may need some time to themselves.

You can ask your friend what they would prefer, and let them know you understand that they're going through a difficult time.

While your friend is grieving, you can show them kindness by supporting them in many ways. You could bake their favourite treat, or offer to watch their favourite film with them.

Even if your friend chooses to spend time by themselves, don't be discouraged. Your support can make all the difference for them.



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