

How to Cope with Losing a Pet

Without Forgetting Them

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Losing a pet is awful. You never want to forget them; but sometimes you wish that you could be happy, not that your pet has left a hole in your heart, but happy that they are in a better place.

It's okay to be sad, but you can also be happy!

Steps

- **Make a Tomb Stone that can go on the pet's grave site to remind you of your pet.** Home made stones are great as you can decorate it any way you like, either with memorabilia, or a drawing of your pet. You can even write a little eulogy or a poem on it.
- **Keep memories close to home by purchasing a locket or a photo frame that helps you remember your pet--maybe a frame with a cat on it, or a locket in the shape of a dog bone.** Put a really nice photo of your pet in it, and when you feel sad or lonely, look at it. Keep it under your pillow, or wear the locket all the time. That way you will always think of your pet when you touch it and your pet will always be with you.
- **Realize that other pets can help You will feel lousy and will probably believe nothing could ever replace "Annie" or "Rex" or even a "Gozy", and nothing *will* ever replace them.** But, someday something will be able to give the love that your pet gave you, and you will love that pet as much as "Annie" or "Gozy".
- **Don't completely forget them, still think back to times you have had with your pet but dont think about them constantly.** It's going to be okay.
- **Remember, if they were suffering, they're out of their pain now and extremely happy.** (I'm sure they haven't forgotten about you and who knows, they could be checking in on you often.)
- **Look into getting a new friend, though there is never a right or a wrong time to buy a new pet.** And often the best pet is a rescued one. Look at the RSPCA or animal shelter and help save an animal that was once loved. It won't seem like you're replacing your pet, (which you aren't) but you are, in fact, saving another animal. Wouldn't your pet want you to save another animal.
- **Try not to buy a pet that looks exactly the same as your departed friend.** If you do, you will be reminded of him or her every time you look at your new pet. Get one that is a similar colour or the same breed but a different colour, or buy a different gender of the same colour or go totally different and buy a fish if you lost cat. You can always have a laugh when you think of your cat and think, "Boy, Kat would have loved to eat my new fish Nemo."
- **Don't dwell on the past and what if's Sometimes we think, what if...** I took him to a different vet, what if...I rang the vet earlier or took him in the morning rather than the afternoon, what if...

never got him at all? Well, you wouldn't have had as good a friend! Remember the good times, "Apollo the cat loved chocolate milk" so when you drink chocolate milk, smile and remember him. If Annie the dog loved to chase the chickens, sit outside with the chickens and feed them. Try to get them to eat out of your hand and maybe even get another chicken.

- **CRY!** You will be doing this anyway, but crying allows you to release your emotions, rather than bottling them up and breaking down at a later time--even if you only cry for an hour or for a month. It doesn't matter. You may not even cry at first, and then months later, you will cry. Each person is different and expresses emotions differently. Don't stress if you don't feel sad and don't stress if you feel sad for a long time. Your heart is delicate and will take a long time to heal. It may be patched up, but it will mend in its own time. Even if you do not cry, the important thing is that you cared about your pet, and if you think you didn't care about your pet, then why are you reading this? Your pet is in a better place now, crying shows the bunch of love that you gave it. It will wait for you when your time has come.
- **Plant a tree in memory of your pet The best idea is to plant a plant in memory of your pet.** You can plant it on your pet's grave, or you can plant it near your window. Buy one that is hardy and one that reminds you of your pet. Don't buy a big tree for a mouse, and don't buy a geranium for a playful kitten. Get one that represents your pet.
- **Surround yourself with memories, and don't be afraid that you will remember your pet.** Cry and be happy that you had time to spend with your pet. Loving and losing is hard, but not loving and not losing is harder

Tips

- Don't forget your pet, but then, mix up your social life. Do fun stuff, and you won't forget about them forever, but you won't keep thinking about them.
- Make a shrine or have a box with your pet's playthings, like a collar, a ball or a feed dish with its name on it. Put these things in a box and decorate it with memorabilia.
- Don't try and forget, but don't try and remember. The mind will release memories when you're ready.
- Talk it out with your friends, and cry a little.
- Always carry a box of tissues. Crying yourself to sleep will help the heart heal.
- If you cremated your beloved pet, get a pet urn necklace and place some of their ashes in it. Wear it close to your heart always.
- **CRY YOUR EYES OUT!** It sounds weird, but it'll make you feel better.
- Talk about your pet and keep the memories vivid and fresh.
- Talking about your loss may make you cry but it helps.
- Write in your diary. Every night, write what you feel and what you remember. One day you will look back and read the memories, and the tears may come flooding back, but you will also remember the memories as though it was yesterday.
- Some people will not understand and some will. Don't get upset, explain.
- A single tear means you have loved and lost and still love but have remembered and not moved on but moved up.