



# COPING WITH PET LOSS

**A Gentle Guide**

# YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN THIS

*Losing a beloved pet is one of the hardest experiences we can face.*

*They are more than just animals - they are companions, confidants, and family.*

*This guide is here to support you in your grief with kindness, understanding, and gentle encouragement. There's no "right" way to grieve - only your way.*

# COMMON REACTIONS TO PET LOSS

*Everyone grieves differently, but here are some feelings and responses you may experience:*

**Sadness, crying, or emotional numbness**

**Guilt or second-guessing decisions**

**Loneliness, especially at home**

**Disrupted sleep or appetite**

**Physical symptoms like fatigue, chest heaviness, or tension**

**Longing to hear or see your pet again**

*These responses are completely normal. The bond you shared was real - and so is the grief that follows.*

*"Grief is the price we pay for love." - Queen Elizabeth II*



# THE STAGES OF GRIEF

*Grief doesn't follow a straight line, but many people experience some or all of these stages at different times:*

## DENIAL

An individual may feel initial feelings of shock, disbelief, numbness, and difficulty accepting the reality of the loss or change.

## ANGER

As reality sets in, feelings may turn to anger, frustration or helplessness. Individuals may feel a sense of injustice and blame themselves or others.

## BARGAINING

In an effort to regain control of the situation, an individual may attempt to negotiate with a higher power or others, and try to undo the loss.

## DEPRESSION

Feelings of sadness, despair, emptiness and loneliness may set in as the individual comes to terms with reality.

## ACCEPTANCE

An individual begins to accept the loss and finds a way to move forward, making plans for the future and finding a new purpose in life.



*These stages may repeat or appear in a different order. Every grief journey is unique*

# MAKING ROOM FOR GRIEF

*Give yourself permission to feel. Here are some gentle ways to hold space for your grief:*



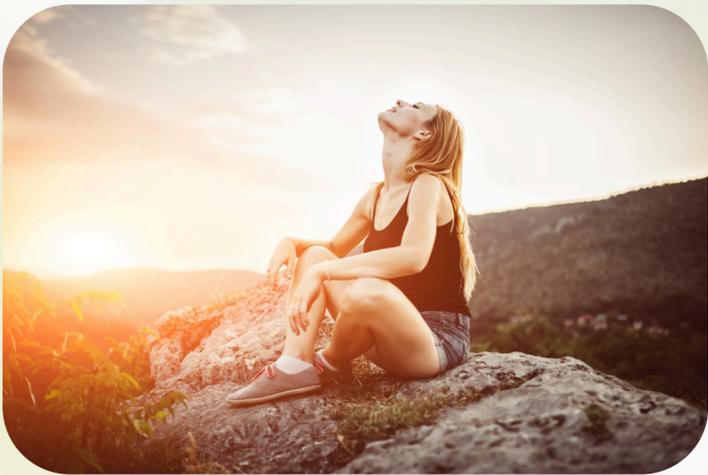
-  *Set aside quiet moments each day to reflect or simply breathe*
-  *Light a candle or place a photo of your pet somewhere meaningful*
-  *Journal your thoughts or write a letter to your pet*
-  *Talk to someone who understands - a friend, family member, or support specialist*



*Grieving is not about "moving on" but learning how to carry the love forward.*

# GROUNDING YOURSELF DURING GRIEF

*When emotions feel overwhelming, these activities can help bring calm and presence:*



*Take slow, deep breaths - in through the nose, out through the mouth*

*Go for a mindful walk and notice what you see, hear, and smell*



*Engage in something creative - draw, paint, or make a memory page*



*Place your hand on your heart and say, "It's okay to feel this."*

**IT'S OKAY  
NOT TO  
FEEL OKAY!**

**Try This:**

**Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 6. Repeat 3 times.**

# YOUR LOVE WAS REAL. SO IS YOUR GRIEF

*If someone tells you  
"it was just a pet,"  
know this: they didn't know your story.  
The bond you shared  
was real, unique, and deeply meaningful.*

*You are allowed to grieve deeply. You are  
allowed to miss them fiercely. And you  
are allowed to  
heal in your own time.*

*You are not alone.*

*With love and understanding,  
Michelle*

*Rainbow Moments UK  
[www.rainbowmoments.uk](http://www.rainbowmoments.uk)*

