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Tips for Coping with the Loss of a Pet

Allow Yourself to Grieve

Grieving is your mind and body's natural way to help you heal from your loss. Allow yourself to cry to express your loss; it will make you feel better faster. Talking to others or writing your thoughts and feelings on paper also helps people to express their losses and to heal. Grieving is natural and very healthy.

Accept Help from Others

Help and support from others will ease the pain that you are feeling. People and pets have an amazing capacity to heal each other. Take their help, it will make you and them feel better. Sometimes it is normal for other people in your household to feel numb after a losing a pet, so they may not know to offer you help; ask them for their help because it will help them to reconnect with people. It will make you and them feel better. Help other people when you have the strength to do so, it will make you feel better.

Set Up a Memorial to Honor Your Loss

Memorials honor your pets and help you to remember them in a healthy way. Some people memorialize pets by using photographs or doing things like dedicating a special tree in their honor. Make a memorial that feels right for you and honors your pet. Memorials really help.

Set Up a Safe, Quiet, and Warm Place for You to Heal

Create a sanctuary like place for yourself while you heal. The place should be quiet and comfortable so that you can reflect and grieve in a place where you feel safe. Use calming and healing items there such as candles, religious items, heirlooms, and other items that will give peace and strength. When you heal you will know when the time is right to return this space back to its regular purpose.

Trust Yourself that You Will Heal

Never give up hope. Healing is within every single person. You will discover strengths in yourself that you never knew you had. Just take it one day at a time and you will get there. Healing will take time and effort, but it always happens.

Assess If You Can Cope With This on Your Own

Think of an imaginary stress meter with a scale from 1 to 10. Think of a score of 1 equaling no stress at all and a 10 equaling the most stress that you could ever imagine. Be honest and rate your stress level. If you scored a 1, 2, or 3 you are doing well and can probably handle the stress on your own. If you score a 4, 5, or 6 you would benefit from talking with a friend or family member who really cares about you. If you score a 7, 8, 9, or 10 you are in crisis and should seek help from a counselor immediately. You will be surprised as to how quickly you can lower your stress level if you ask someone to help you.

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