



Passing Paws

SUPPORT BEYOND THE SERVICE

The Effect of Loss
on Families

Accepting Loss

Losing a beloved pet is one of the most painful experiences we can expect to endure in our lifetime. Pets bring us years of unconditional love, joy and happiness and their loss is almost unbearable. The bond that you have created together is unique to every person and every pet. Nobody really understands the special connection that you shared and their loss leaves an emptiness behind that cannot be filled.

The Grief is Real

Anybody who has ever given their heart to a pet will tell you that losing them is like losing a special friend, family member or even a child. There are still stigmas associated with this type of thinking, but they are gradually being eroded as more pet owners share their grief and bring the conversation out into the open.

At Passing Paws we understand that pet loss can be an overwhelming and sometimes lonely experience. In this brochure, we share some advice for coping with the passing of a much-loved pet, and for helping you and your family to find understanding, acceptance and eventual healing.



It's Not Just a Pet

Previous generations considered pets differently in terms of their role within the family. Dogs slept outside in kennels and cats roamed the neighbourhood. People mourned the loss of their pets, though social norms dictated that any outward signs of grief were minimised or even dismissed. "It's just a dog", they'd say, "Time to move on."

Thankfully people are more compassionate about pet loss these days than they were 20 or 30 years ago. Even so, there is still an expectation that we will put on a brave face, continue to smile, show up for work every day and just 'get over it.'

Regardless of whether you are grieving for a dog, a cat, a bird, a horse or a fish, the pain is real. Feelings of guilt, shame and embarrassment are common amongst those of us who break down or let our grief show publicly. Nobody wants to be judged or ridiculed and so we often suppress our feelings and carry on. Sadly this can prolong the grief process which can lead to long-term depression, anxiety and loss of enjoyment in our lives.

It's important that we share our feelings in an open, supportive and empathetic environment. At Passing Paws we have gathered information and resources from many years of supporting grieving pet families, and it is our privilege to be able to share them with you.

Please know that you are not alone.



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