

## OVERCOMING YOUR GRIEF

Losing a pet can be as traumatic as losing a family member, because in many cases that's what they are. It's natural to have feelings of sadness and it takes time to overcome them. So don't feel embarrassed or ashamed by what you're experiencing. It's all part of the grieving process everyone goes through.



### WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE 4 STAGES OF GRIEF<sup>1</sup>

1

#### SHOCK & DENIAL

Defined by a feeling of numbness, which can last for a few hours to several weeks.

2

#### SEARCHING & YEARNING

Where pet owners acutely miss their pet. Associated feelings include longing, sadness, anger, relief, guilt and irritability.

3

#### DISORGANIZATION

Pet owners begin to live life without their pet and may appear scattered and distracted.

4

#### REORGANIZATION

Regular eating and sleeping habits return and relationships with a new pet can be formed.

### PET LOSS RESOURCES

While dealing with grief is a very personal process—one that everyone handles differently—that doesn't mean you have to mourn alone. Use these resources while coping with the passing of your pet. They'll help you find support, share stories and more.

#### SUPPORT HOTLINES

- \* University of California-Davis Center for Companion Animal Health  
800-565-1526
- \* Washington State College of Veterinary Medicine  
866-266-8635
- \* University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine  
877-394-2273
- \* Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University  
508-839-7966
- \* College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University  
607-253-3932

#### WEBSITES

- \* University of California-Davis Center for Companion Animal Health  
[www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ccah/petloss.cfm](http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ccah/petloss.cfm)
- \* Washington State College of Veterinary Medicine  
[www.vetmed.wsu.edu/PLHL/](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/PLHL/)
- \* University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine  
[www.cvm.uiuc.edu/CARE](http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/CARE)
- \* Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University  
[www.tufts.edu/vet/petloss](http://www.tufts.edu/vet/petloss)
- \* Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine  
[www.vet.cornell.edu/Org/PetLoss/Resources](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/Org/PetLoss/Resources)

#### BOOKS

- \* *Coping With The Loss of A Pet*, by Christina M. Lemieux, Ph.D.
- \* *When Only Love Remains: The Pain Of Pet Loss*, by Emily Margaret Stuparyk
- \* *Living Through Personal Crisis*, by Ann Kaiser Stearns
- \* *Oh, Where Has My Pet Gone?*, by Sally Sibbett
- \* *A Final Act Of Caring: Ending The Life Of An Animal Friend*, by Mary and Herb Montgomery
- \* *Good-Bye My Friend*, by Mary and Herb Montgomery
- \* *A Special Place for Charlie: A Child's Companion Through Pet Loss*, by Debby Morehead

#### PET CEMETERIES

- \* International Association Of Pet Cemeteries & Crematories  
[www.iaopc.com](http://www.iaopc.com)
- \* The Virtual Pet Cemetery  
[www.virtualpetcemetery.org](http://www.virtualpetcemetery.org)

#### ORGANIZATIONS

- \* Association for Pet Loss & Bereavement  
[www.aplb.org](http://www.aplb.org)
- \* Humane Society Of The U.S.  
[www.hsus.org/pets/pet\\_care/coping\\_with\\_the\\_death\\_of\\_your\\_pet](http://www.hsus.org/pets/pet_care/coping_with_the_death_of_your_pet)



<sup>1</sup> [www.vet.cornell.edu/Org/PetLoss/Resources/Stages.htm](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/Org/PetLoss/Resources/Stages.htm). Accessed February 2009.