

When your much loved pet dies, it is possible for you to experience a variety of emotions ranging from disbelief, anger and anguish to a sense of sheer hopelessness.

When faced with death, you need to express your feelings as much as possible, and allow yourself time to grieve.

- **Disbelief**

Your first reaction may be one of disbelief - particularly if the death was sudden. One of the worst moments can be returning home to a house full of reminders; the food bowl half full, an empty basket. You may find yourself searching for your pet, looking in familiar places, and willing him to appear.

You may be experiencing

intense pain

unhappiness

loneliness

depression. Sometimes coupled with physical symptoms like sleeplessness, headaches and loss of appetite.

- **Anger**

You may feel anger toward other animals just for being alive.

Or anger towards the vet who treated your animal.

Or toward people who you feel were particularly responsible.

- **Guilt**

You may feel guilty - continually thinking 'If only.....I'd done this or that'.

You might experience periods of extreme anxiety and uncontrollable crying.

All these feelings are natural and normal, so try to release your emotions by crying, talking, or even writing about your pet.

Gradually as you accept the reality of your pet's death, you will begin to readjust to daily life.

You may wish to dispose of all reminders of your pet such as collars, bowls and toys, but sometimes it may be better to put them away until you are able to look at them again - they may be a great comfort later on.

The final stages of grieving occurs when most of the pain has subsided, and you are able to remember your pet with love and affection, and recall shared times.

This may take weeks, or several months, but be assured that having given yourself sufficient time to grieve for your lost companion, the grief will eventually dissolve.