

The 5 stages of grieving

Guilt

"Could I have done things differently?"

You may wonder what you did wrong. And most often, none of what happened is your fault.

Depression

"Life will never be the same without my pet. I am devastated!"

This is OK for a while, but if it lasts too long or you wonder how you can survive without your pet, you may need help.

Acceptance

"I will always remember the good times."

This is the end of the tunnel. Death is part of life. You can now look at pictures of your pet. Your sadness is now tempered by memories of the good times. Life has meaning again.

Two locations

Support groups meet twice a month from 6:30 to 8 pm. For more information, contact:

In the West Allentown area:
Maureen Beilman
Licensed Professional Counselor
610-437-6660

In the Bethlehem area:
Joanne Krug, DA
Psychologist
610-865-0110

Donations are welcome

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Wings



A Pet Grief Support Group
In the Lehigh Valley

Get together...

Get informed...

Get better...

Why a support group?

Veterinarians of the Lehigh Valley Veterinary Medical Association (www.ValleyVets.org) support the human-animal bond through all its stages. We are aware that our clients may need help through the most difficult time of their relationship with their pets.

The goal is to meet with other pet lovers who are going through similar difficult times, in a safe, casual, non-judgmental and confidential setting.

Join us to share your experiences, your feelings and your questions. Groups are kept small for better interactions. They are facilitated by trained, practicing professionals.

For more information about the dates and the locations of the meetings, please contact the group leaders.

Are you experiencing...

- Loss of appetite
- Lack of energy
- Excessive sleeping
- Lack of interest in anything
- Difficulty focusing
- Difficulty doing your job
- Extreme sadness
- Depression
- Anger
- Guilt
- Pain

Join us if...

- You are affected by any of these signs
- You recently lost your pet
- You feel sad around the anniversary of a pet's loss
- Your pet has a terminal disease
- You are considering euthanizing your pet

Topics for discussion...

- Facing a terminal illness
- Anticipating loss
- What is normal grief?
- When is it OK to get a new pet?
- What is "moving on?"
- Other topics suggested by the group

The 5 stages of grieving

We often go through 5 perfectly normal stages of grieving. There are variations. They can occur in a different order, and different stages can blend together.

Here is a brief description .

Denial

"I just can't believe it."

Denial helps us ignore reality and put off the pain. Then we must snap out of this feeling, and face reality. "Life must go on." We must take care of ourselves, our families and other pets, and go back to work.

Anger

"It is not fair. I am mad, angry, confused."

First, we may be angry at ourselves. We feel that we have failed our pet. Then anger can turn to others: a spouse, a child, the vet. Anger can even be directed at the pet, -for leaving us alone.