



Arms of Love Support Journal

Lap of Love 

Pet Loss Support Group



Dear Friend,

If you're reading this, then you clearly have a shattered heart. Maybe it's from a recent loss, or maybe it's from a loss that has had some time pass. Whatever it is, it's an honor to walk this healing journey with you.

We have made it our life mission to be a partner to pet lovers just like you, to assist in creating an experience in the final walk with a precious love. To heal. To share. To show up unabashedly, to give you permission to mourn a lost love. To honor a life shared, and to share in the messiness of grief together.

We are here with you as fellow pet lovers, as people who have been on this path before, and as a group to provide you the support and care you need. We're here to do this together, and we're here to give you permission to have your solitude in the journey of this "Arms of Love Support Journal."

Warmly,

Dr. Dani McVety

Founder, Lap of Love Veterinary Hospice

Lap of Love 

Pet Loss Support Group



Dear Pet Lover,

I'd welcome you here, but I can assure you this is probably the last place you want to be. This place that serves as a reminder a bright and shining light has been taken away from your world. For that, please know how sorry I am.

Please know you have a very caring group of people to walk with you in your journey. Not to tell you how you should feel, or how you shouldn't feel, but to walk with you and allow you the space to take this grief journey in the way that's right for YOU.

Some days are going to be minute by minute. Others you'll find you can go hour by hour. You'll face your year of firsts: the first time you won't have that special spirit by your side. However, wherever you are and whatever your emotions are during all of this, please know that's exactly where you should be.

Be kind to yourself. Allow yourself the time to do your mourning work. And, always know where you are is exactly where you should be.

A Companion In Your Journey,
Coleen Ellis
Founder, Two Hearts Pet Loss Center

Lap of Love

Pet Loss Support Group



***Grief:** the word “grief” is the simple shorthand we use for what is actually a highly complex mixture of thoughts and feelings. Grief is everything we think and feel inside after someone we love dies or leaves or something we are attached to goes away. In other words, grief is the instinctive human response to loss.

Grief is natural and necessary. Our culture tends to deny, diminish, and judge the pain of grief, but the truth is that grief is not something to be afraid of, hide from, or think of as “bad” or “weak.” It is not an illness or mental-health problem. If you are grieving, rest assured that what you are experiencing is not only normal, it is the very thing that will help you heal.

***Mourning:** mourning means to express your grief outside of yourself. Mourning is crying, talking to other people about the death, sharing stories, putting together photo albums, journaling, and other actions. Mourning is essential because it's through mourning that you begin to heal.

Sympathy: feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune.

Empathy: the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

***Companion:** when broken down into its original Latin roots, means com for “with” and pan for “bread.” Someone you would share a meal with. A friend. An equal.

*CenterForLoss.com

March

The luck of the Irish is symbolic with March and St. Patrick's Day. For this month, let's focus on how lucky we are to share a relationship with our beloved pet, and knowing how lucky they were to share time with us.

Week 1: What would your pet say as to why they were lucky to have you in their life?

Week 2: What does it mean to you to be a pet parent?

Week 3: Take some time... if you could only say 5 words as to why you were lucky to have your pet in your life, what would those 5 words be?

Week 4: Take some time this week to spoil yourself in a small way in honor of your pet. For instance, treat yourself to a coffee and place the name under your pet's name.

April is the beginning of spring and rebirth.

Week 1: As you anticipate those ways you would like to have the freshness of spring with you, even as you honor the loss of your beloved pet, what are those emotions that you would like to have released to allow you to begin this rebirth? There are no wrong answers, just an exhaustive list of your true emotions and feelings in your grief journey.

Week 2: Take the emotions from the previous week and release them. Burn them in a fireplace, set them free with a balloon...

Week 3: For this spring time week, do a bubble release in honor of your pet. Read the following:

Today I symbolically release your beautiful spirit, to a place where there's no sadness only happiness, asking you to watch over me in a much larger way.

Today I symbolically release your beautiful body, to be in a place where all is well. To run free, to be as you were, in a place where there's no age and no sickness.

Today while I symbolically release you and your spirit, know I will always hold your love and your presence close to my heart. I will cherish the time we had. I promise to remember the lessons you taught me, the memories we shared, and to honor your presence as the gift it was.

Today I give my heart permission to grieve and to mourn for you. This chapter in life we shared will always have your name on it, held tightly as a part of my life story.

And, today, I thank you. I thank you for your unconditional love, your forgiveness, and the memories. As with these bubbles that we symbolically release, life is fragile. These bubbles are not meant to be held forever but represent the same beautiful yet brief time we too shared together. Rest in peace, my beloved, as I symbolically honor you in this bubble release.

Continued on page 2

Week 4: Be kind to yourself. Dose your grief, and know that just breathing can be the work you do this week. Be mindful of where you are, and when you feel your shoulders tighten, you find your mouth is clenched, you find you're holding your breath and you didn't even realize it. Breathe. That's the mourning work for this week. Just breathe.

