

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saying Goodbye: Coping with the Loss of a Pet

NAPPS Offers Tips for Pet Parents in Mourning

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J.—November 13, 2012 – Anyone who has experienced the unconditional love and companionship of an animal understands that the relationship and bond is as strong as any other. For many, pets are considered equal members of the family, so when it's time to say goodbye to a pet—regardless of whether the loss is expected or sudden—it's an extremely difficult process. The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS), a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals, is offering advice to help pet parents cope and understand the grieving process when dealing with the loss of a pet.

Mourning a pet's death can be an overwhelming and emotional experience; Saying goodbye to a four legged companion is often like losing a member of the family, so it is normal to mourn the loss of a beloved pet, just as you would mourn the loss of a human.

“Grieving is a process and for each person, the amount of time it takes can vary,” said John D’Ariano, president of NAPPS. “When a pet dies, it can be difficult to accept the sudden change and the reality that the pet will no longer be around.”

When coping with the loss of a pet, NAPPS offers these tips:

- Acknowledge your grief. Allow yourself to experience the emotions of losing a pet instead of ignoring your feelings.
- Join a support group. It's important to understand that you are not alone and that there are many others who have dealt with the loss of a pet. Participating in support group discussions can help ease the pain and provide an outlet for expressing your emotions.
- With this sudden change, it's easy to forget about keeping yourself healthy. Be sure to maintain your normal exercising, eating and sleeping schedule.
- Prepare a memorial by planting a tree or compiling a photo album to celebrate the life of your pet.
- Donate your pet's toys and supplies to a local animal shelter.
- Continue interacting with other resident pets, they are aware of the change and are experiencing various emotions as well. Provide comfort by playing and exercising with pets. Even offering your lap as a place to nap will give reassurance and peace of mind to a confused pet pal.

Losing a pet may also be a child's first encounter with death. Parents can use this as an opportunity to discuss the cycle of life with their children. Include children in the plans of creating a memorial for your pet. Create a scrapbook, picture album or collage in your pet's honor. This will help children say goodbye and allow them opportunities to ask questions.

NAPPS encourages families who are dealing with the recent death of a beloved pet to take the time to grieve the loss and remember the furry family member as a loving, loyal companion. It's important not to replace your pet too quickly, it's best to wait a few months before welcoming a new animal into your home.

When you decide it's the right time for your family to expand and welcome a new pet into your home, consider animal adoption. Visit your local animal shelter and spend time getting to know one of the many pets looking for a forever home.

About NAPPS: NAPPS is the only national nonprofit trade association dedicated to serving the needs of professional pet sitters. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as "the most respected authority in professional pet sitting." It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS' free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, and a nationwide referral service,. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS' nationwide "Pet Sitter Locator" at www.petsitters.org. For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](https://twitter.com/TheNAPPS) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at facebook.com/TheNAPPS.

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