The Journey of Grieving and Healing:

Lessons Learned From Leading a Companion Animal Bereavement Support Group

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The questions most frequently asked with points for discussion

“Is my grief normal?”

- Å *People grieve differently*
- Å *It is about the relationship*
- Å *Not everyone understands*
- Å *You are not crazy*

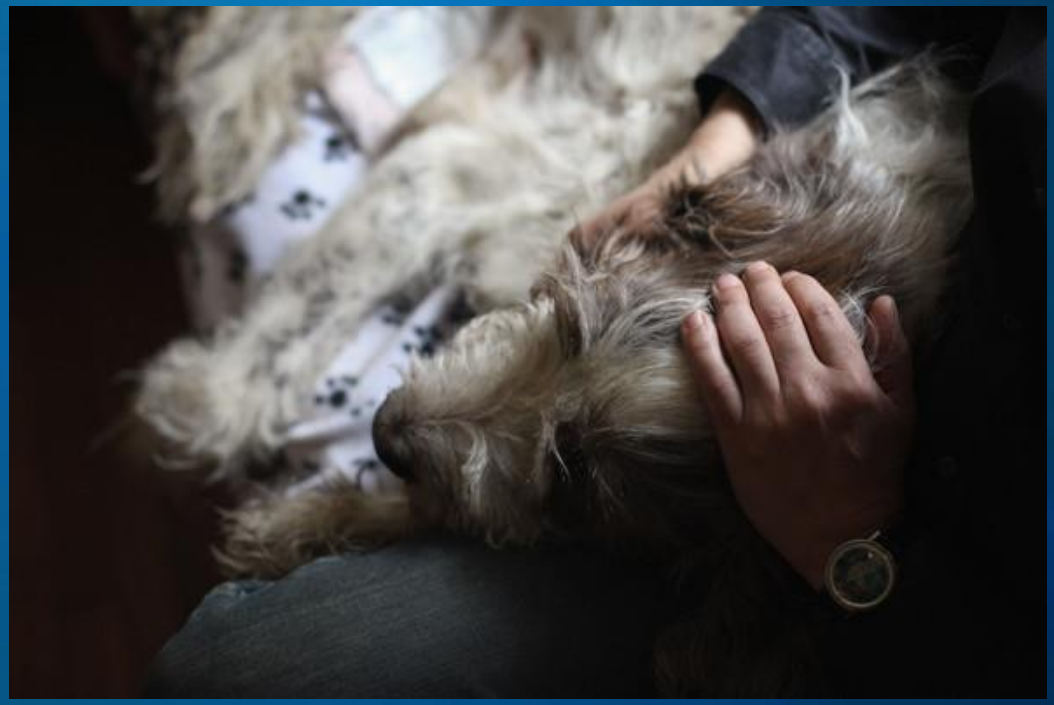
"How do I get through this?"

- *Your emotions are valid*
- *The process ebbs and flows*
- *There are physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral symptoms of grieving*

- Å *Share you feelings with caution*
- Å *Take care of yourself*
- Å *Change your routine*
- Å *Be in nature*

- *Choose carefully those who you share your feelings with*
- *We don't grieve well in our society*
- *It's hard to be in someone's pain*
- *Some mean well but what they say can be hurtful*
- *You can ignore or confront*

“What about guilt about euthanasia?”



- *Guilt is one of the more difficult emotions to work with*
- *You didn't kill your companion, the disease/accident did*
- *Quality of life is key*

“When should I get another pet?”

- *It’s a very personal and individual decision*
- *You know when you know*
- *You are not betraying your beloved companion that died*
- *You cannot replace the pet that has died*

Participants are looking for validation, support, compassion and comfort.

Thank you

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