



Grief, Loss & Bereavement: Pet Loss

by award-winning author / stress-relief expert Susie Mantell

Sadly, some people cannot fully understand the depth of loss upon the passing of a beloved pet. For those who experience such a loss, it is no different than the death of a human loved one. In some cases, a pet may be one's dearest friend in the world, and the loss can be profound.

- ❖ You'll find many stress-relief tips on coping with loss, on my website and many find comfort in my own soothing stress-relief audiobook on CD, "*Your Present: A Half-Hour of Peace*," at www.relaxintuit.com. On the same website, there are many techniques for coping with the stress associated with depression, sleeplessness, anxiety, children's stress, etc. I hope those will be helpful, too.
- ❖ I also recommend an award-winning audiobook by a therapist named Deborah Antinori, entitled "*Journey Through Pet Loss*." A well-constructed website also offering support relating to bereavement of all kinds, including pets, is www.beyondindigo.com

In addition to the support of friends and family, and time looking through old photos, writing meditation is my personal favorite tool for depression or anxiety. You might really find comfort in the following exercise.

Writing Meditation

1. Set a timer for two minutes. Think of someone whose comfort and support you would welcome right now. (*They may be living or dead, real, fictitious, or a spiritual guide.*) Spend your two minutes writing as fast and furiously as you care to about everything you're feeling. Don't edit or check spelling. Just pour out onto paper, or your keyboard, whatever you're feeling.

2. Re-set the timer for another two more minutes. Now write a response *to* yourself regarding everything you've just said, from the person to whom you wrote, perhaps a religious figure that's meaningful for you. I sometimes write to my grandmother. She was very wise, and she's been gone a long time. By writing a response back from someone whose judgment we trust, whom we wish we could really talk to in that moment, we often find great comfort and amazing insights into whatever it is that is causing our stress. I've been doing this exercise for over thirty years. All I can tell you is that I've had some amazing revelations and found many of the answers to what's troubling me in this very simple writing exercise. I wish you the same.

With my heartfelt condolences and best wishes, Susie.

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