

Am I Ready to Love Again?

After a pet dies, many people question when to get another pet. There is no right or wrong answer to that question. Everyone grieves in their own way and needs to be given time to mourn the loss of their pet. For some people that might be days or weeks and for others, it might be longer. The stronger the relationship with the pet, the deeper the feeling of loss.

The following suggestions may be helpful in determining if you and your family are ready to open your heart to a new pet.

1. Stop by the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area and take a look around. When you are visiting the shelter, are you feeling mostly hopeful and happy? Or are you mostly sad? If the latter is true, you may need some more time.
2. Take your time in selecting the pet. Don't let anyone pressure you into making a decision.
3. Don't think that the new pet is going to replace your previous pet. The personality will not be the same just as no two people are the same. Don't compare your new pet to your previous pet.
4. Choose a pet that fits your lifestyle.
5. Involve all members of your family when selecting a pet. Make sure that everyone has had a chance to grieve.
6. Consider the needs of your surviving pets. It may take time for your current pet to adjust to the new one. You may want to consider a new pet before the loss of your previous one. In some cases, a young and active pet can revitalize an older animal.
7. If your pet died of a contagious illness, make certain that your home is cleaned well before you bring in a new pet. Don't forget to clean toys, bedding and rugs also.

The most important thing to remember is that you need to give yourself time to mourn. If an insensitive person tells you that you are being silly to grieve over "just an animal", look them straight in the eye and say "not to me". Give yourself time to work through the pain and when the time is right, you will be able to open your heart to a new, well-chosen special friend.

A Dog's Last Will and Testament

(Author unknown)

Before humans die, they write their last Will & Testament, and give their home and all they have to those they leave behind. If, with my paws, I could do the same, this is what I'd ask....

To a poor and lonely stray I'd give:

My happy home.

My bowl, cozy bed, soft pillows and all my toys.

The lap which I loved so much.

The hand that stroked my fur and the sweet voice which spoke my name.

I'd will to the sad scared shelter dog the place I had in my human's heart, of which there seemed no bounds.

So when I die please do not say, "I will never have a pet again, for the loss and pain is more than I can stand." Instead go find an unloved dog; one whose life has held no joy or hope and give MY place to him.

This is the only thing I can give...the love I left behind.