

THERE IS SOMEONE IN YOUR CORNER

530-899-0220
#MFC40331

Self-Care Tips

- Be patient
- Acknowledge your grief
- Pray/Meditate
- Eat Right
- Get plenty of rest
- Ask for help
- Share your story
- Join a support group
- Accept comfort from others
- Journal thoughts and feelings
- Talk to your children to help them with their grief
- Do not let anyone rush you through the grieving process



HEALING FROM THE LOSS OF YOUR COMPANION

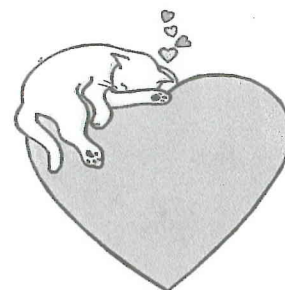
As a psychotherapist, my job is to help people heal. One of the most challenging times of our lives is losing a loved one, including our loving companions. I lost my beloved Beau, a beautiful golden retriever-shepherd mix, over 20 years ago and his picture still hangs on my wall. I realized then that no matter what people were telling me, he was not just a dog that could be easily replaced! He was my best-friend and I needed to take the time to grieve. I would like to take this time to share the emotional process that is common among most people in dealing with grief and loss, including when we lose a pet.

The interesting thing about the grief process is that it is just that—a process. It has no linear timeline. Grief is over when it's over and expressed whenever it feels like it.

Just remember to be kind to yourself during this time and allow yourself to grieve.

Research shows that there are 5 stages to grief and loss.

1. **Denial:** In this stage, we are shocked of the news and we say we cannot believe it. Or, we say to ourselves, "She seemed happy and playful yesterday." This stage also allows us to accomplish the task at hand of deciding the next steps.
2. **Anger:** During this stage, one feels angry about the loss. We may be angry at ourselves, family members, friends, the vet, and/or God. We may find ourselves easily agitated and irritable.
3. **Bargaining:** At this time, we might be promising to change our behavior if our loved one can be saved from dying. We tell ourselves,



"Maybe if we do things differently, our trusted friend will live."

4. **Depression:** This is when our grief overwhelms us. We cry uncontrollably, have difficulty focusing and concentrating, and feel despair. Sleeping and eating habits can change.
5. **Acceptance:** Finally, we can fondly remember our loved ones and appreciate the time we had.

About Florence Soares-Dabalos

Florence Soares-Dabalos, MS, is a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist, specializing in women's issues, grief and loss, and life transitions. Her private practice is located in Chico.

She takes a Humanistic and Strengths-based approach in

working with clients. Building trusting relationships is of the utmost concern in her approach.

As a pet parent of two dogs, Florence understands the power of pets in relationship to their owners.

If you are in need of working through your grief and loss, Florence will be happy to help by either scheduling an appointment or referring you to another therapist or group.

Florence may be reached at 530-899-0220 or www.lifeskills4today.net