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WHEN A LOVING PET DIES – How Soon Should You Adopt Again? – Part Two



If we were to take a trip together back in time to a place several hundreds of years ago, when an animal was not a pet per se but had a specific purpose, we would find that dogs were there for protection and cats were for keeping the home free of mice and rodents.

Fast forwarding to today's era, we come to realise just how much things have changed. Animals have become domesticated and are now sleeping in our beds, joining us on family vacations and much more. Why do you think that is so? I wonder if because our civilisation and intellect have vastly advanced, we've come to realise that animals are not just here for a manual purpose or a "job", they are here to help us in many other ways. We now know that they are sentient beings and there is a level of understanding that they have that is beyond what was recognised back in time.

In the last issue of Canine Zone magazine, we joined together in identifying the love from a dog being deeply unique and we covered just how much animals are a part of our lives. The proof that dogs are here to

love, be loved, heal and much more became clear and we covered some questions that were helpful in determining when the best time to invite and adopt a new dog into your home would be. If you missed this article, please refer to the April/May issue of Canine Zone.

ONE STEP FURTHER

As we come together for **Part Two** in walking this journey together, I invite you to join me in taking this one step further so we can fully determine when the best time is for you. If you are reading this right now, your situation is personal and unique to you and some feelings that you might be experiencing may form the question of if you bring a new furry family member into your home, will you be dishonouring your dog that has passed away and that you miss so dearly?

This is a common question to ask and it brings me deep feelings from the heart as I too have asked myself this question on many occasions. I would like to remind you that you are not alone and that support is available. Let's look at this question in more detail and continue this

If you bring a new furry family member into your home, will you be dishonouring your dog that has passed away?



journey together.

IF I GET ANOTHER DOG, AM I DISHONOURING MY PET THAT HAS DIED?

This is a question that I get asked a lot in the work that I do helping others heal from the death of their pet. Before we move any further, I want to share with you that this question is a good one to ask and if you are feeling this, you now have the opportunity to break through an important aspect of your healing journey. I invite you to keep going with finding out your answer.

After writing my first book, *The Power of Pets – 7 Effective Tools To Heal From Pet Loss*, many questions have come forth when working with clients, such as “If I get another dog, I feel like I am not respecting my dog that has died and I feel guilty. Am I making the right decision?”.

It takes me back to a time when I too was feeling like I was dishonouring my sweet Bart’s memory when wanting to bring in another animal so soon after his death. In this instance, Bart was a cat; however, I’m sure you understand, whether a dog, cat or otherwise, it’s the essence of the bond that is important. You see, my identity when I was together with Bart gave me the feeling that I was both accepted and loved. He

showed me that I didn’t need others in my life that would judge me and that he accepted me unconditionally. His gifts he shared gave me a feeling like I had an identify that kept me safe. At that time in my life I was at a crossroads in my relationships, friendships and career. I was feeling afraid and unconfident and it was Bart who was there to give me the comfort I needed as I made very important life decisions. One day, Bart became sick and I found out that he’d developed leukemia, a fast-growing disease, and by the time it was discovered, it was too late for treatment.

My choices were euthanasia or to send him two hours from where I lived for further testing, which would only maybe have given him a few more weeks of life. I could not let my little boy go through this, especially with the discomfort he was experiencing, and I chose to help end his suffering. Bart passed away peacefully but my heart screamed out in agony.

Coming home to an empty house, where everything seemed so dark and heavy, brought me much sadness and despair. I remember waking up the next morning expecting to see him there, and when I saw that he wasn’t, the pressure inside my heart boiled up like an explosion

of tears and sadness.

I wanted those feelings back that Bart brought to my life and I tried moving forward for several weeks. Each week, the feelings did not dissipate and yet remained. I knew I needed help. I sought counselling, which was very helpful, but the void with Bart’s absence remained. I yearned to love another animal and it was so strong, it was ripping at my heartstrings.

I decided it was time to invite another furry companion into my life and when I did, the heaviness lifted and I was able to love again. This time, Barney entered my life, a tan-and-white-coloured companion that showed love in his own way.

ACCEPTANCE

Barney and Bart were certainly two different peas in a pod. They were not anywhere similar to each other. I remember Bart’s cuddles, his purrs and his eyes that communicated so much to me. With Barney, he was more aloof, came to me when it was on his terms and didn’t like a lot of cuddles, only loving pats and rubs from head to tail... but just a few before he clearly told me that was enough. Identifying these differences between both Bart and Barney brought me to realise that I was





okay with this. As I wasn't replacing Barney into my life to bring Bart back, I had accepted that my time with Bart had passed and that I was able to give Barney a life of love and care and keep in mind the specific needs he required with his unique personality. So, in this instance, it worked out nicely and I was able to love again, as Barney could be loved and in a home where he was adopted into unconditionally.

It became very strong to me that I was honouring Bart by giving Barney a new home. I was able to honour him because, in some deep way, I felt that it was Bart's guidance that led me to love another, reminding me that his memories and love would always be with me and that it was then time to move to the next phase of my growth in this lifetime. To this day, I hold gratitude to my sweet black-and-white boy, Bartholomew J. Mew (or Bart, as I called him for short).

YOUR PET WANTS YOU TO BE HAPPY

If you are currently tossing the question around of whether or not you would be dishonouring your dog if you were to invite a new furry friend into your home, I invite you to ask yourself: "What would <insert your dog's name here> want me to do?" Would he/she want me to help another dog in need and be happy or would he/she want me to stay sad and stagnant? I'm sure you can agree with me that coming from a dog's love, their answer always is for your happiness.

This article contains many messages. If there was one that stood out the most in which I could share from my heart to yours, it would be this – you are not dishonouring your dog by inviting a new one into your home. You are actually honouring their life

and what they mean to you by giving another dog a chance at life, one with love, care and more.

I'd like to point out that sometimes adopting another animal too soon cannot bring what you want back. This new animal will have different mannerisms, personality, etc. and if you are looking at bringing a new pet into your home to replace the old, that won't happen and you will become disappointed. It must be made as a conscious choice knowing that this new pet will be their own personality bringing their own unique gifts. It is good to make sure that is clear before you move ahead.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

There are two best scenarios when deciding on the best time to invite a new and loving canine companion into your home:

1. Adopt knowing and understanding that your new dog will have different mannerisms and characteristics, as he/she will be their own unique sentient being. Giving the gift of life to this new dog can bring many rewards and can be done so in honour of your dog that has passed on.
2. Wait to adopt after giving yourself some "time" and do so knowing your heart is in the right space to accept a new furry companion into your life. You will know when this time will be as it will "feel" best for you and your current situation.

There are hundreds upon hundreds of dogs in shelters and humane societies that are waiting for their forever homes. Inviting them into your home can be a magnificent gift to both you and them in building a new life and identity together and sharing in even more love, laughter and companionship.

The choice is yours and my hope is that this article guides you in assessing and making the best decision possible for you and the furry ones that are in your life at the best time.

As I conclude this writing with you, I hold the intention and I light a candle in honour and memory of your furry friend who meant so much to you, and in honour of them and their many gifts.

May their memories always be held in that specially reserved space in your heart. For it is memories that guide us forward in healing, remembering that our loving pets are never far away. We only need to think of them and their love will be there, shining up on us, just like the candle flame that burns so bright. 🐾

About the writer: Marybeth Haines empowers people to make choices that promote action, personal growth and healing. She is an author, speaker, consultant and grief specialist from Ontario, Canada. She is a wife, sister, daughter and a mother to her furry children with tails and whiskers. Marybeth is the author of "The Power of Pets – 7 Effective Tools To Heal From Pet Loss" and "From Empty To Empowered – A Journey To Healing From Unexpected Pet Loss". In 2012, she founded the "I Believe In The Power of Pets" movement. Her focus is teaching proven step-by-step strategies in reinforcing the bond and connection between pets and people. Her books are available on Amazon.com or via her website. For a limited time, Marybeth is giving away FREE copies of her book at: www.authormarybethhaines.com. There is no obligation or anything to buy when receiving this book. All that is required is a request and your book will be electronically delivered to you right away.