

OF COURSE YOU CAN CRY

When you lose your best friend, the one you could always count on to be there when you were down, the one who warmed you, played with you, and made you laugh no matter how bad you felt, then of course you can cry.

Your other friends may not understand how painful it is for you to lose your pet, but only you know how strong the bond was between you. No one else has the right to judge your sorrow.

Some of the people you know will understand your feelings because they have pets of their own that they love. If they're willing to listen, tell them about your pet—the good times, the bad times, and the way it ended. Talking about your loss will help you feel better.

In recognition of the loving bond you shared with your pet, you might also make a memorial donation in his or her memory to a humane organization or animal care and control agency. Your generosity will help protect unwanted, abandoned and abused dogs and cats.

People use ceremonies to mark important passages in their lives. One way to recognize your pet's death is to hold a memorial service. You may do this alone, standing in the woods or by your pet's favorite creek or pond. Bring a cherished photograph to symbolize your pet. Say a prayer or read a poem that expresses your feelings. Leave flowers, dog biscuits, or kitty treats as a parting gift of remembrance. Let yourself feel the pain and the loss, and appreciate all the years you had together.

And remember, of course you can cry.