

How does the GriefCare Line work?

- The GriefCare Line is an exclusive *free* service offered by *Companions for Life*,® so we may continue to provide unique and valuable services for the pet parents who have placed their trust in us.
- It is a 24-hour telephone grief counseling service designed especially for grieving families in central and eastern Iowa.
- It is staffed by trained, compassionate counselors with a required college degree in Human Services, all of whom are pet parents.
- Pet parents are encouraged to call anytime, from anywhere, when they simply need to talk to someone.

Your access number is
(319) 362-5929
or toll-free at 1-888-836-6367

“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.”

— Anatole France



Members of the PLPA recognize that we have special obligations to the pets, families and other businesses that we serve. As guardians of pets in death, we pledge:

- To care for the remains of those entrusted to us with dignity, respect and professional skill.
- To honor the wishes of the family and to serve all families with respect, understanding and confidentiality.
- To be guided by the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations set by governing bodies with jurisdiction over our activities in the ownership, management and operation of a crematory.
- To be an educational resource and guide in standards relating to pet death care options for our pet parents as well as their veterinarians.



COMPANIONS
FOR LIFE®

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COMPANIONS
FOR LIFE®



GriefCare



Cedar Rapids Cremation Center

Our care continues

The journey we must travel after the loss of a cherished pet is a personal one, but it does not have to be done alone. The GriefCare program provides compassion, direction and most importantly, someone to listen and help you find appropriate support resources.

Grief resources

Companions for Life offers a variety of resources to pet parents who are grieving.

- The GriefCare Line
- Books about grieving the loss of a beloved pet
- Videos
- Assistance finding local and national support groups



Waukee Cremation Center

Types of Grief

Anticipatory Grief

Anticipatory grief is the name given to the angst and sorrow that accompanies the knowledge that your loved one almost certainly is going to die from whatever disease or debilitating condition he or she is suffering. The watchword of anticipatory grief is angst: you fear the loss that you know is coming. Because this type of grief is intertwined with fear, you find it particularly draining, especially when you're dealing with other stresses from every day life.¹

Anticipatory grief doesn't usually take the place of post-loss grief; there is not a fixed amount of grief to be experienced, so grief experienced before the loss does not necessarily reduce the grief after the death.²

Don't ignore the feelings of angst and stress associated with anticipatory grief. Instead, find ways to express and validate your feelings. If you're the primary caregiver for your pet, you may feel as though you have to "keep it together" in order to be effective, but you might actually be less effective if you don't deal with the psychological tolls from anticipatory grief.



Post-Loss Grief

One aspect that can make grieving for the loss of a pet so difficult is that pet loss is not appreciated by everyone. Friends and family may ask, "What's the big deal? It's just a pet!" Some people assume pet loss shouldn't hurt as much as human loss or it is somehow inappropriate to grieve for an animal. They may not understand because they don't have a pet of their own and are unaware of the companionship and love a pet can provide. Accept the fact that the best support for your grief may come from outside your usual circle of friends and family.

The grieving process happens only gradually; it can't be forced or hurried—and there is no "normal" timetable. It's important to be patient with yourself and allow the process to naturally unfold. Expressing your grief doesn't mean you are weak, so you shouldn't feel ashamed.

Trying to ignore your pain will only make it worse in the long run. For real healing it is necessary to face your grief and actively deal with it.³

"There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief...and unspeakable love."

— Washington Irving

ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE
Companions for Life family, we extend our deepest sympathy at this painful time, and thank you for placing your trust in us.

Losing a pet is one of the most difficult things we face in life. Understanding and coping with loss is an important part of the natural grieving process.

At *Companions for Life*, we believe our service to you does not end with the return of your pet's cremated remains. Our grief care support is here to help families with the days, months and years following the loss of a beloved pet. In addition to sponsoring the GriefCare Line, *Companions for Life* has a comprehensive grief library offering books and videos at no charge, but with the hope that you will pay it forward to someone else who has started on their own journey through grief.

There are many beautiful ways to memorialize your pet and the special times you shared. Please contact *Companions for Life* and we will help you select a unique keepsake from our extensive collection. A loved one is never truly gone if you keep their memory alive in your heart.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. John Linge".

C. John Linge
President



Sources:

1. Greg Harvey, PhD.
2. National Cancer Institute
3. Helpguide.org