



Title	Pet bereavement experiences and its pilot interventions in Hong Kong
Author(s)	Poon, W; Wong, P
Citation	10th Hong Kong Palliative Care Symposium, Hong Kong, China, 10 August, 2013
Issued Date	2013
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10722/195287
Rights	Creative Commons: Attribution 3.0 Hong Kong License

Pet bereavement experiences and its pilot interventions in Hong Kong

Workshop: 10th Hong Kong Palliative Care Symposium
10082013

By

Mr. POON Wing-Lok *MSW, RSW, B. Comm.,*

Fieldwork Supervisor,

Certified Pet Loss Counselor, Founder of Animal Power

Dr. Paul WC WONG *Reg. Clinical Psychologist (Australia), AFHKPS, AFHKPCS, MAPS, D.Psyc. (Clinical)*

Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong



WORKSHOP RUNDOWN & EXPECTATIONS

Part I: Preliminary findings on qualitative research on pet bereavement experiences

- Introduction & research method
- Interviewee sharing: grief experiences & coping
- Research findings & implications/ Q & A

Part II: Pilot interventions of pet bereavement

- Introduction of Animal Power
- Uniqueness, service types of interventions
- Recovery sharing of ex-support group members
- Empowerment strategies
- Euthanasia & guilt coping/ Religion & after-life bond
- Theoretical applications
- Collaboration in counseling for complicated cases

Part III: Discussion & Way Forward

- Q & A, sharing on own practices
- Service advocacy

2

Your Expectations! ?

互相認識

心愛動物離世、病危或走失而傷心的經歷?

曾接受相關哀傷輔導或出席相關講座?

曾提供動物善別輔導的社工或輔導員?

曾協助末期病人與心愛的動物善別?

曾參與有關動物輔助治療的義工/ 工作 (e.g. Dr. Dog, Dr Pet)?



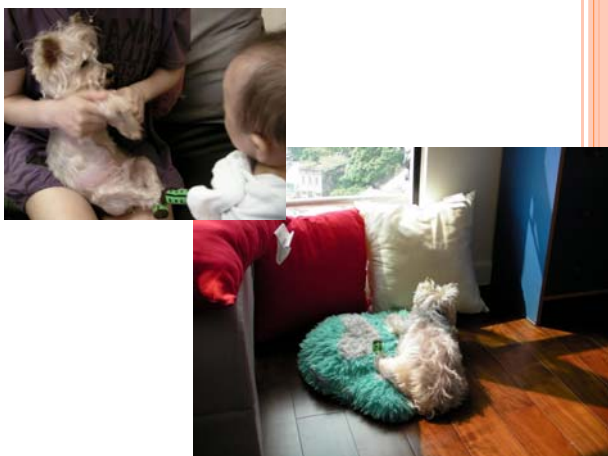
動物力量

3

PHOTO TAKEN IN 2007



PHOTOS TAKEN IN 2009



HIS LAST WEEK IN A CLINIC





WHAT DID HE TAKE AWAY FROM US?

Is it better to ask
"What did he
give us?"
instead??

Ming Pao Weekly 2011 02/26, pp.104 - 107

THE IMPACT OF PETS ON HUMAN HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

THE EVIDENCE THAT PETS ARE GOOD FOR PEOPLE

Stroking dogs and cats, watching tropical fish in an aquarium, and even caressing a pet boa constrictor have been reported to reduce **blood pressure and stress levels** (Well, 2009).

Researchers have also reported that psychological benefits accrue from living with animals. These include studies showing that pet owners have **higher self-esteem, more positive moods, more ambition, greater life satisfaction, and lower levels of loneliness** (El-Alayli, Lystad, Webb, Hollingsworth, & Ciolli, 2006).

Epidemiologists have also connected pet ownership to better health and well-being (see review by Headey & Grabka, 2011). For example, an epidemiological study of Chinese women found that pet owners **exercised more, slept better, felt more physically fit, and missed fewer days from work than women without pets**. Further, these effects were particularly strong for individuals who reported that they were very closely attached to their pets.

THE EVIDENCE THAT PETS ARE BAD FOR PEOPLE

A recent study of 425 heart-attack victims that found pet owners were **more likely than non-pet owners to die or suffer remissions within a year of suffering their heart attack** (22% vs. 14%; Parker et al., 2010).

Another recent study found that older adults who were highly attached to their dogs tended to be more depressed than individuals who were not as attached to their companion animals (Miltiades & Shearer, 2011).

A study of 40,000 Swedes found that while pet owners were physically healthier than non-pet owners, they suffered more from psychological problems including anxiety, chronic tiredness, insomnia, and depression (Müllersdorf, Granström, Sahlqvist, & Tillgren, 2010).

A Finnish study of 21,000 adults reported that pet owners were at increased risk for hypertension, high cholesterol, gastric ulcers, migraine headaches, depression, and panic attacks (Koivusilta & Ojanlatva, 2006).

In an Australian study of 2,551 elderly adults, dog ownership was associated with poorer physical health and with depression (Parslow, Jorm, Christensen, & Rodgers, 2005).

THE DEATH OF A PET

How is this type of grief like human bereavement? How does pet loss impact our lives?

Scholarly literature documents that the grief for a loved animal companion can be **severe and parallels** that of grief for a human in both intensity and duration (Archer, 1997; Carmack, 2003; Clements et al., 2003; Cowles, 1985; Field, Orsini, Gavish, & Packman, 2009).

In fact, people often describe being more connected to their companion animals than to humans in their lives (Carmack, 1985).

According to DeGroot (1984): ' *The emotional attachment which many humans develop for their pets . . . frequently transcends the emotional attachment which they form with humans* ' (p. 283).

Pet loss has been classified as a form of **DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF**. Disenfranchised grief results when a person experiences a grief reaction, yet there is *no social recognition or validation* that the person has a right to grieve or a claim for social support (Doka, 2008; Stewart et al., 1989). Carmack (1985) described several features of pet owner grief: **anger, often directed toward the veterinarian; difficulties eating, sleeping, and concentrating; and avoidance of painful reminders.**

Weisman (1990) described several common themes among bereaved pet owners: **preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased, regret and flashbacks, as well as a tendency to view the deceased animal as a primary attachment figure.** From his perspective, the extent of grief in bereaved pet owners may approach clinical proportions, especially in individuals who **'valued their pets more than friends or relatives'** (p. 246).

OUR STUDY

Funded by the Small Project Funding, The University of Hong Kong

Qualitative study using convenience sampling since April 2013

Semi-structured interviews

Audio-taped interviews have been transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis method by the research team

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

About the pet and the death experience (if more than one pets, discuss each separately):

寵物物種是甚麼？何時開始飼養？如何獲得之？
 寵物何時逝世？如何逝世？逝世時牠的年齡是？
 逝世的原因？例如：一）慢性疾病；二）急性疾病；三）意外損傷；四）年老；五）其他。
 在其逝世過程中，你有否作出替牠安樂死的決定？如有，為什麼？
 逝世的過程是怎樣的？你有否在場陪著牠？
 你的寵物對你有何特別意義？你懷念牠的甚麼？
 對其他家庭成員的影響？

Practical issues:

你是否與別人一同居住？
 獸醫的診金會否令你：一）即是寵物有病，也減少求診；二）不會嘗試盡量延長寵物壽命。
 你認為獸醫或護理人員對於主人對寵物逝世的哀傷反應/情緒應該要有更多認識？為什麼？
 你或你的寵物有接受過一些你希望獲得的治療或協助 (treatment for what, grief? Or health issues?)?
 你認為獸醫或護理人員應該接受與哀傷反應相關的訓練作為他們專業培訓的一部份？

After the death:

你有否作過一些悼念的儀式？是甚麼？如果沒有，你會否想過作一次有任形式的悼念活動？決定如何安置其屍體的時候，有甚麼因素影響你的決定？金錢或是其他？
 你曾否做過甚麼事情來紀念你的寵物？
 你曾否有任何其他的寵物？這次的逝世經歷與其他的有任何不同？相同？
 當寵物逝世時，家中還有飼養其他的寵物？如有，請描述之。
 據上題，當時有其他的寵物的反應為何？
 自從寵物逝世後，你有否再飼養寵物？如有，甚麼時候？
 知否，你會否再飼養？為什麼？
 你有否妥善保存牠/她的遺物？
 你會否觸景傷情？你會否避免去某些地方？
 你有沒有試過看/聽/感覺到牠/她返回你的身邊？
 你的寵物對你有何重要性？
 由一分至十分的重要性分數，十分代表在你生命中最重要：你會給你的寵物幾分？

Pet Bereavement issues:

對於面對哀傷的時候，有什麼困難？
 面對哀傷的時候，有什麼人樂意聆聽你的分享？什麼令你感到舒服？
 如果你知道有一些寵物逝世哀傷輔導服務，收費亦不高昂，你會否使用嗎？
 你認為應該提供一些免費的哀傷輔導服務讓寵物主人使用嗎？
 你希望進行以下任何活動：
 一）一些有提供寵物專屬的報紙雜誌上撰寫文章
 找別人協助辦理寵物悼念活動
 你如何面對因寵物逝世引起的哀傷？請回想任何事協助你渡過哀傷。
 請提出一些建議考協助主人渡過哀傷階段。
 假如情況有需要，你對於向寵物給予安樂死有何感受或想法？
 你會否因為決定為寵物安樂死而引起任何自責？
 你曾否失去一些親密關係而尚未有處理/面對？

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

31 Participants

Conducted 30 interviews
 19 dogs, 8 cats, 2 rabbits, 1 bird
 8 males
 Majorities are 30-49-years-old

EMERGING THEMES

- Disenfranchised grief
- Close bond (e.g. attachment, relationship as compared with other family members)
- Pet's great attributes rarely found in human relationships
- Personal life meanings enriched or blessed by pet
- Decision and dilemma on euthanasia
- Guilt/ self-blaming
- Impacts made (e.g. psychological, sleeping, weight, career) after animal loss
- Perception on after-life bond
- Self-help coping and supportive network
- Coping by professional help-seeking and its effectiveness
- Any association with other loss or unresolved problem of close human relationships
- Raising a companion animal again or not in future

IMPLICATIONS

With great love comes great grief (Carmack, 2003, p. 5)

Education for the soon-to-be pet owners and children about responsible pet ownership?

Pet bereavement brief counselling services for the newly bereaved at vet clinics?

Pet Loss Support Groups? Professional led?

Pet bereavement clinical counselling for the prolonged and severe bereaved?

1.

Pathological Mourning after the Death of a Domestic Pet

By KENNETH M. G. KEDDIE

Summary. Pathological bereavement reactions following the death of a close relative or friend have been well documented in the literature. Similar grief reactions have been described following other personal losses, such as the loss of a limb or the loss of one's home. The cases of three women are described in whom pathological grief followed another category of loss, that represented by the death of a much loved domestic pet. The patients suffered disabling psychiatric symptoms following the death of their pet dogs. The dogs were all of the toy dog variety and had been at least 13 years of age at the time of their death. Institution of psychiatric treatment resulted in rapid recovery and at follow-up after a year there had been no recurrence of symptoms.

Introduction
It is widely agreed that a man's environment plays a critical part in determining not only his quality of life but also his vulnerability to illness. In a psychological context the most significant aspect of the environment usually concerns a person's relationships with other people. How a man gets on with his particular domestic pet, or pets, may in many cases be equally critical in determining mental equilibria. This may seem self-evident. Despite this, the valuable contribution that domestic animals can make towards the general health of the community appears to be largely ignored by contemporary psychiatric writers.

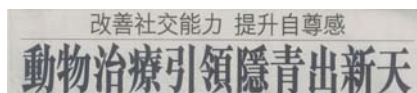
In a variety of ways from having a budgieger as a companion. The group of pensioners who had been given a budgieger were more outgoing and generally happier compared with those without one. In addition, the budgiegers appeared to have acted as catalytic agents, enabling elderly people to keep in contact with friends, family and local children. The prophylactic value of pet ownership, from the mental health point of view, will not doubt be confirmed by further studies. Companion-ship in any case tells us that lonely people in the community are likely to benefit by adopting a domestic animal of one sort or another. This would certainly accord with the views of Gerald Caplan (1964) on primary prevention in psychiatry.

Industrialization has had two alienating effects on Western society. First, urban life has tended to remove people from their natural heritage, the world of flora and fauna. Kenneth Lorenz (1992) comments on man's need for the companionship of domestic animals. He describes the particular meaning his own pet dog has for him:

"The pleasure I derive from my dog is closely akin to the joy accorded to me by the waves, greying upon either wild coastline of my native Norfolk through the countryside; it seems like a re-

lation of the feeling that a dog has of me. The fact that a domestic pet may have on the psyche of any particular individual, Mufford and McClelland (1975) in their preliminary study, showed that pets could indeed play a positive, psychosocial role for their owners living on their own were noted to benefit

2. ANIMAL ASSISTED PROGRAMMES/INTERVENTIONS IN HONG KONG



3.

The 'pet effect'

Health related aspects of companion animal ownership

Health benefit	Benefits to owners	Patients most affected
Physical health	<p>Cardiovascular health**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pets can help reduce stress and lower blood pressure (eg. putting a dog or watching fish swim occasionally in an aquarium) Pets increase stress (improved recovery rates from heart surgery) <p>Prevent illness (primarily for dog owners)**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dogs use small exercises patterns and provide social support Dog owners are more physically active (primarily through walking dogs) and have reduced risk of obesity and better general health <p>Immune system development**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to pet hair lessens the likelihood of developing allergies 	<p>Adults and the elderly, in particular those who are stressed, and/or have cardiovascular ailments</p> <p>All ages, particularly those who are physically frail or overweight</p>
Psychological health	<p>Animal assisted therapy (AAT)**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAT with dogs reduce pain (increase morale, eating habits and overall health in Alzheimer patients) AAT increased self-esteem, decreased violent behaviour, and increased language and social skills in children with ADHD In clinical settings, AAT reduces stress in children <p>Mental health**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diseases are less likely to exacerbate loneliness and depression, as pets provide animal assisted (not human) assistance to boost human relationships, and provide a means of purpose Older people with pets are less stressed by major activities like walking than youngest co-workers <p>Child development**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pets may play a role in the social-emotional development of children, providing self-esteem, autonomy and empathy for others Children who own pets show increased trust, compassion, empathy, ability and confidence (and self-motivation) 	<p>People of all ages with various ailments</p> <p>Adults spontaneously during times of stress or times of a known need, who receive therapy (voluntarily or requested) on their own or through a professional, and/or physical impairments</p> <p>Children and adolescents</p>
Sexual health	<p>Pets as social lubricants**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pets are an ideal catalyst for meeting people (eg. neighbours, strangers) Older social opportunities, including sexual desire and activation Sexual satisfaction is positively correlated with having outdoor, used adequately Improves social interactions for the elderly and those with Alzheimer disease when used in existing programs 	<p>People living alone and/or those having difficulty meeting others</p>

Allen, K. (2003). Are pets a healthy pleasure? The influence of pets on blood pressure. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12, 226-229.

Allen, K., Shykett, B.E. & Ezzo, J.L. (2001). Pet ownership, but not ACE inhibitor therapy, blunts home blood pressure responses to mental stress. *Hypertension*, 38, 815-820.

Becker, M. (2002). *The healing power of pets: Harnessing the amazing ability of pets to make and keep people happy and healthy*. New York, NY: Hyperion Books.

El-Alayli, A., Lystad, A.L., Webb, S.R., Hollingsworth, S.L., & Cioli, J.L. (2006). Reigning cats and dogs: pet-enhancement bias and its link to pet attachment, pet-self similarity, self-enhancement, and well-being. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 28, 133-143.

Friedman, E., Katcher, A., Lynch, J., & Thomas, S. (1988). Animal companions and one-year survival of patients after discharge from a coronary care unit. *Public Health Reports*, 95, 307-312.

Gibbey, A., McNicholas, J., & Collis, G.M. (2007). A longitudinal test of the belief that companion animal ownership can help reduce loneliness. *Anthrozoos*, 20, 345-353.

Gilum, R.F., & Obasan, T.O. (2010). Living with companion animals, physical activity and mortality in a US national cohort. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 7, 2452-2459.

Headay, B., & Gablack, M. (2011). Health correlates of pet ownership from national surveys. In P. McCordle, S. McCune, J.A. Griffin & V. Maholmes (Eds.), *How animals affect us: Examining the influence of human-animal interaction on child development and human health* (pp. 113-122). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Herzog, H. (2010). *Some we love, some we hate, some we eat: Why it's so hard to think straight about animals*. New York, NY: Harper.

Jainwala, J.P.A. (2005). Why most published research findings are false. *PLoS Medicine*, 2, 696-701.

Kovushk, L.K., & Ogilvie, A. (2006). To have or not to have a pet for better health? *PLoS One*, 1, 1-9.

Miller, H., & Shearer, J. (2011). Attachment to pet dogs and depression in rural older adults. *Anthrozoos*, 24, 147-154.

Millsdorfer, M., Scrandin, F., Sahqvist, L., & McL. J.A. (2010). Aspects of health, physical/leisure activities, work and sociodemographics associated with pet ownership in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 38, 53-63.

Nimer, J., & Lundahl, B. (2007). Animal-assisted therapy: A meta-analysis. *Anthrozoos*, 20, 225-238.

Parker, G., Gayle, A., Owen, C., Hyatt, M., Hilton, T., & Heur, G. (2010). Survival following an acute coronary syndrome: A pet therapy put to the test. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 122, 65-70.

Parlow, R.A., Jorm, A.F., Christensen, H., & Rodgers, B. (2005). Pet ownership and health in older adults: Findings from a survey of 2,551 community-based Australians aged 60-84. *Gerontology*, 52, 47-57.

Rozin, P. (2009). Domain designation and process preference in academic psychology. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 365-376.

Stratman, L., Hanson, E.K., Endenburg, N., & McL. J.A. (1997). The influence of a dog on male students during a stressor. *Anthrozoos*, 10, 191-197.

Wells, D.L. (2009a). The effects of animals on human health and well-being. *Journal of Social Issues*, 65, 523-543.

Wells, D.L. (2009b). Associations between pet ownership and self-reported health status in people suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 15, 407-413.

Wright, I.D., Kritz-Silverstein, D., Morton, D.J., Wingard, D.L., & Barron-Connors, E. (2007). Pet ownership and blood pressure in old age. *Epidemiology*, 18, 613-617.

Carmack, B. J. (1985). The effects on family members and functioning after the death of a pet. *Marriage & Family Review*, 8, 149-161.

Cornack, B. J. (2003). Grieving the death of a pet. *Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Books.*

Pargerson, H. G., & Jacobs, S. C. (2001). Traumatic grief as a distinct disorder: A rationale, consensus criteria, and a preliminary empirical test. In M. S. Tombs & R. O. Hansson, W. Stroebe, & H. Schult (Eds.), *Handbook of bereavement research: Consequences, coping and care* (pp. 613-647). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Quakenbush, J.E. (1985). The death of a pet: How it can affect owners. *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice*, 15, 395-402.

Weisman, A. D. (1990-1991). Bereavement and companion animals. *Omega*, 22, 241-248.

「善別動物」哀傷輔導
Pet Loss and Bereavement Counseling

歡迎查詢詳情
查詢電話: 2383 0303
查詢時間: 星期一至五, 上午九時至下午六時

個人輔導
小組輔導

查詢人: 潘先生 Lok 電話: 2383 0303
查詢時間: 星期一至五, 上午九時至下午六時

查詢人: 潘先生 Lok 電話: 2383 0303
查詢時間: 星期一至五, 上午九時至下午六時

註冊團「動物力量」乃由愛護動物的註冊社工成立, 以非牟利宗旨、誠實及專業知識, 滿足社會上對動物的需求

為耆老提供有關寵物及動物生死教育的不足, 並關注愛護動物人士的權益

個人輔導
小組輔導

查詢人: 潘先生 Lok 電話: 2383 0303
查詢時間: 星期一至五, 上午九時至下午六時

分享會 (歡迎任何愛護動物人士)
費用: 每場 \$20, 全數將撥捐予非牟利獸醫服務協會

日期 時間 主題 講者/地點

4月16日 (星期六) 2:30 - 5:00pm	安樂死的抉擇 遼浪動物護養基金會	執行主席 - 非牟利獸醫服務協會 (九龍: MAAK 47 25)
4月30日 (星期六) 2:30 - 5:00pm	從視察動物生死 參觀再見兒童發展服務中心	再見兒童協會 - 組策 (再見兒童 - 動物醫院)
8月27日 (星期六) 2:30 - 5:00pm	動物晚年照顧及善終	非牟利獸醫服務協會 (九龍: MAAK)
9月9日 (星期六) 2:30 - 5:00pm	從視察動物生死 動物安樂處	動物醫院 - 香港醫務發展署 (長沙灣: 海山中心)

情緒支援及互助小組
(為因伴侶動物離世或患病而受情緒困擾的人士而設, 聯絡詳情請電查詢)

費用: \$0 (共助); 全數將撥捐予非牟利獸醫服務協會

日期	時間	主題	主要講者
5月6日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	9月21日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	與家人傾談心之痛 情緒支援及評估	註冊社工 (動物力量)
5月13日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	9月30日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	面對醫療與自責	註冊社工 (動物力量)
5月20日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	10月7日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	輔導員	輔導員 (再見兒童)
5月27日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	10月14日 (星期日) 7:00 - 9:30pm	患上憂鬱及生活艱辛 (組策人分享)	註冊社工 (動物力量) 輔導員 (再見兒童)
2011年6月11日 (星期六) 11:30am - 2:30pm		動物醫院中心探訪及服務* 正康評估	註冊社工 (動物力量) 正康評估員
2011年11月 11:30am - 2:30pm		關注動物福利諮詢社* 正康評估	註冊社工 (動物力量)

鳴謝: 李嘉誠基金會 (Love Idea ♥ HK) 贊助
非牟利獸醫服務協會、再見兒童、香港基督徒學會、動物關懷、
拯救廢棄動物中心、香港動物紀念館、E-MAX、香港長沙灣中心及善學會 支持
相關網頁: http://www.loveideas.hk/vote/project_detail.aspx?appid=90027

UNIQUENESS OF PET BEREAVEMENT COUNSELING

5 Key Points to Keep in Mind:

- Close Human-animal Bond and its Life Meanings
- Great Attributes of companion animals
- Huge Responsibility and Life & Death Decision faced by animal lovers who may not be certain about their animal wills
- Disenfranchised Grief of bereaved animal lovers
- Ambivalence of Raising a pet again or not

動物力量

25

為何與動物建立深厚感情： 動物所扮演角色及所賦予人生意義

寵物/ 心愛動物/伴侶動物 = Pet/ Beloved or Companion Animal
主人/愛護動物人士 = Animal Lover/ Pet-owner/ pet Parent or Guardian

動物所扮演角色:

- 傳統功能
- 家人如子女/ 伴侶 life companion/ 最好朋友/ Soul mate
- 輔助者 Service Dogs 如導盲犬、狗醫生、長者貓
- 工作犬: 警犬、緝毒犬
- 鄰居如社區動物

動物力量

26

心愛動物賦予她/他什麼人生意義?

為何與動物建立深厚感情： 對主人身心的正面影響

不少研究指出，伴侶動物能：

- 提高動物主人/家人「快樂、安全感、自我價值」感覺，並減少「孤單感及疏離感」(Stable, 1995)
- 可於「病患及人生轉變」時提供支援力量
- 可減低「高血壓、心臟病、孤單感及抑鬱病」(Akiyama 1986; Allen 1991; Anderson 1992; Conel 1984)
- 助隱蔽青年提高自尊心及溝通技巧 (港大, 2012)

動物力量

27

伴侶動物離世後：

- 超過一半妻子及四份之一丈夫感到相當或非常困擾 (Gage & Holcomb, 1991)
- 一些動物主人跟失去至親 (significant human loss) 的創傷相似，甚至感到更傷痛! (Anderson 1994; Hart & Mader 1990; Sife, 1993)

伴侶動物離世對護動物人士的影響

哀傷(grief)可產生的反應(因人而異):

- 身體 (失眠、胃口不好、體重下降等)
- 情緒/ 心靈 (常常哭、心痛、自責內疚、精神欠集中、憤怒、孤單、抑鬱、自我質疑、感到失去靈魂或身體重要一部份等)
- 行為 (工作及決策能力下降、請假、離職、失去動力、逃避溜狗地方、獸醫診所等)

動物力量

28

因心愛動物離世或走失而傷心乃正常反應，感覺就如失去親人般痛心，但若長時間哀傷而明顯影響日常生活；如睡眠、飲食、工作、學業、家庭生活或社交等，便須考慮尋求專業輔導

寵物主人走出哀傷的心路歷程

STAGES OF PET BEREAVEMENT (DR. WILLIAM SIFE)

- 驚訝及不相信 Shock & Disbelief
- 憤怒及疏離 Anger & Distancing
- 否認 Denial
- 內疚 Guilt
- 抑鬱/悲傷 Depression or Sorrow
- 康復 Resolution (Closure)

動物力量

29

她/他現屬於那個類似階段呢?

為何與動物建立深厚感情?

CLOSE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND

(1) 動物因素：

- 動物(如貓狗)對主人高尚的天性(從人際關係中不容易找到)
- 忠誠、純真、可愛
 - 無條件的愛(接納/信任/聆聽/陪伴)
 - 陪伴人生成長、改變及起跌

(2) 個人心理因素

- 滿足人類的深層心理及社交需要
- 去愛及育養 To Love & Nurture
 - 被愛: 被需要、接納及肯定、安全感
 - 加強聯繫(愛護動物的)家人及朋友



動物力量

30

為何與動物建立深厚感情?
CLOSE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND

(3) **主人照顧重任、與伴侶動物的日常生活作息緊扣 (daily attachment) :**

- 居住飲食、衛生、生老病死
- 陪玩、運動 (溜狗)
- 不方便夜歸家及出外旅行
- 互相日夜陪伴，特別為主婦、單身女士

動物力量

31

為何與動物建立深厚感情
及因動物離世而那麼傷心?

- 動物對主人的高尚性情更令主人愛牠萬分，一些主人可從伴侶動物身上找到從朋友(甚或親友)身上得不到真摯的愛、接納、信任及肯定! 因此部份主人可與動物建立密不可分的關係，不知不覺地於生活及情緒上高度依附牠，失去牠後可能感到如失去家人、個人價值或生活意義般傷痛!

「我感到佢佢親過我男朋友，只有佢默默陪我10多年經歷人生起伏，每日給予我無限快樂，無咗佢，好痛心、睡唔好、好唔習慣、生活好似失去重心及動力.....」



動物力量

32

為何與動物建立深厚感情
及因動物離世而那麼傷心?

(4) **承擔照顧一生重任，包括生死抉擇的「安樂死」因素 :**

- 動物主人須承擔照顧動物的日常及終生責任(如生老病死)，而動物亦不能與主人以言語溝通令對方清楚明瞭，所以因著愛及負責任的態度，容易產生痛苦的內疚 (guilt) 及自責 (self-blaming)，尤期對心愛動物選擇(及早或延遲) 用「安樂死」皆可產生痛苦的自責!

「若果我選擇去另一間獸醫診所.....若果我唔對佢(心愛離世動物)用安樂死，佢今日可能還生存，我好似親手結束佢生命，佢可能會怪我帶走佢.....」

「我好後悔延遲對佢安樂死，見到佢特然感到好痛苦，令我好心痛! 早知提前(安樂死)結束佢痛苦.....」

「後悔冇抽更多時間帶佢出街玩.....最後一程陪唔到佢.....」

動物力量

33

為何與動物建立深厚感情
及因動物離世而那麼傷心?

(5) **社會因素 :**

哀傷中的動物主人可產生複雜情緒 (如傷痛、內疚自責、抑鬱等)，但此哀傷大多不被社會認同

Disenfranchised Grief (哀傷不獲社會認同/ 被剝奪哀傷的自由、包括朋友、同事、上司及家人，於是強忍及隱藏哀傷，不敢舒然地分享、宣洩及求助! 更可能因別人的冷言冷語 而自我質疑(self-doubt) 個人是否失常!)

「身邊朋友唔能夠明白我感受，佢地仲話：死隻寵物唔駛傷心到咁誇張，死咗咪考慮養過另一隻囉」

「都叫妳唔好養啦，傷心成咁自己擺離!」

「噢.....(別人無再回應)」

動物力量

34

為何與動物建立深厚感情
及因動物離世而那麼傷心?

(6) **宗教因素 :**

「一些」傳統基督教牧師/天主教神父稱動物沒有靈魂，因而不能上天堂，哀傷中的愛護動物人士(信徒)感到與牠永久分離，哀痛中信仰反未能令他/她們得到安慰!

(備註：但近來多了一些基督教領袖及團體有不同的釋經領受，稱死後動物可於主再來後與人類同獲拯救，萬(受造物)於天堂裡與主永聚)

動物力量

35

為何與動物建立深厚感情
及因動物離世而那麼傷心?

(7) **獨特親密關係的因素 :**

- 獨居長者、獨居女士、無子女夫婦、以及朋友不多、與家人關係不太好的人士，更容易與伴侶動物產生深厚關係，若動物為該人士主要情緒支援，自然地產生情緒上的依附(strong Attachment)，一旦心愛動物離去後可令他/她們的日常生活作息大大影響及人生失去重心等 (current secondary loss)
- 動物陪伴他/她們人生起與跌，並可賦予寶貴的生命意義及動力
- 伴侶動物離去可勾起他/她們過去的至親離世的傷痛 (symbolic link)、或可引發還未處理好的親密關係或家庭問題 (complicated by unresolved relational problems by past significant losses, beyond pet loss)

動物力量

36

1. 教育講座

- 應生死學會、寵愛軒、NGO、教會邀請主講Talks (對象：愛護動物人士)
- 應社總、學院、NGO邀請主講workshop/ course (對象：helping professionals, RSWs, SW/ theology students)
- 邀請特別嘉賓從佛學看生死



37

教育講座



38

2. 同路人互助小組 PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

- 1st group: >May 2011
- 3-4 group sessions each, totally 10 hours
- Special activities: case discussion, reframing mutual-aid exercise, videos, self-healing letter uploaded in AP fb, experience sharing from ex-group members & peer supporters
- Added with an organized volunteering for abandoned animals or disadvantaged families



39

3. 個人哀傷輔導

40

4. 動物追思會 MEMORIAL

- 追思儀式 + 從動物福會看生死



41

5. 延續大愛做義工、助己助人助動物



42

同路人(自發)互助網絡及網絡平台

- 動物力量Facebook文章分享 (Notes)
<http://www.facebook.com/animalpower.hk>
- "Whatsapp" group
- 自發聚會、暫托組員家狗



動物力量

43

6. 公眾教育/學術研究

- 蘋果日報 (7.4.2013)
<http://hk.apple.nextmedia.com/supplement/service/art/20>



- DBC1 寵愛有家 (June 20, 27, 2013)



- Quantitative/ Qualitative researches on pet bereavement

- 動物政策倡議



動物力量

44

過來人義工分享 (前互助小組組員)



動物力量

45

EMPOWERMENT INTERVENTIONS: 走出哀傷、延續關愛 4部曲

- 1) 自愛：
 - 尋找合適傾訴對象、尋求協助 (輔導/互助小組/講座)
 - 不再自責、過度悲傷 (輔導/互助小組/講座)
 - 文字舒發感受及自我鼓勵 (互助小組)
 - 與心愛動物保持心靈聯繫 (追思會/ 互助小組)
 - 平常心面對動物生死 (輔導/互助小組/講座)
 - 建立健康及平衡的生活模式 (輔導/互助小組/講座)
 - 加強/重尋人生意義 (輔導/義工)



動物力量

46

EMPOWERMENT INTERVENTIONS: 走出哀傷、延續關愛 4部曲

- 2) 互愛：
 - 同路人互助互勉、互助網絡 (輔導/互助小組)
 - 回顧及加強/改善人際支援網絡 (輔導)
- 3) 大愛：
 - 同路人義工分享: 互助小組、教育講座、工作坊 (義工)
 - 同路人互助 > 關懷新組員 (互助小組/ 義工)
- 4) 動物愛：
 - 動物義工 (互助小組)
 - 再(領)養動物? 或自發做其它動物義工?

台灣歌星Ella：蕾蕾 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jF1VOAlwUkI>

多謝牠的陪伴及給予幸福日子，牠離世後長留心中，主人會收起悲傷，讓愛延續

動物力量

47

痛苦自責、內疚的迷思及反思

- 「若果我唔對佢(心愛離世動物)用安樂死，佢今日可能還生存，我好似親手結束佢生命，佢可能會怪我帶走佢.....」
- 「我好後悔無對佢用安樂死，不必要延長佢痛苦，見到佢特然感到好痛苦，令我好心痛，早知選擇以安樂死結束佢痛苦」
- 「我好自責方及早察覺佢病得咁嚴重，深入檢查就驗出癌症末期，我無知令到佢早走！」
- 「我早知佢咁特然走：就辭職陪佢最後日子、或應該提早帶佢出院番屋企」
- 「我早知佢咁快走，就出街見朋友，好後悔趕不及陪佢最後一程...」
- 「如果我唔見這個獸醫，佢可能唔會早走！」
- 「我好自責方足夠經濟能力比佢最好醫療和藥物...我係唔係好自私！」



動物力量

48

動物安樂死的認識及心理準備

認識安樂死 (Euthanasia)

- 動物安樂死由獸醫提議、主人決定，較人道做法，以動物生活質素為重 (非漁護署人道毀滅那類)
- Euthanasia希臘文是 = “Good Death” = 好的死亡、無痛苦的死亡、無痛楚及安祥的離去

抉擇難度

- 正確的决定？Right Decision?
- 太早？太遲？Right Timing?

其它考慮

- 醫療照顧 (陪伴時間、金錢、耐性)
- 主人心理準備
- 動物意願?

49

動物安樂死的抉擇及正面想法

不同想法/信念:

(支持)

- 主要考慮動物生活質素，非生活長短，經痛苦折磨
- 認為是主人負責任、有愛及勇氣的做法
- 考慮主人經濟負擔能力

(反對)

- 延長生命、求病情有轉機，及讓動物自然離去，認為動物與生俱來是求生，不是求死
- 不確定動物意願
- 宗教因素：佛教主張不殺生，一些基督徒認為只有上帝才有主宰生命權 (但也有不同基督徒看法)

50

動物「安樂死」的抉擇及正面想法

- 未必有最佳答案，最重要乃主人為牠好，出於愛及負責任的動機，主人是不能逃避「做痛苦決定或善終照顧」的責任，乃「愛、勇氣及負責任的決定」
- 沒有最好時間，只有適當的時機選擇
- 為動物著想、做了良好決定，無須後悔及回望、自我批評
- 沒有「如果/早知」：「...如果我沒有決定安樂死...」、「早知我早些做這決定，便.....」，不能預知、控制結果
- 從動物個性出發，牠不會怪責主人，反而感受到主人愛的照顧
- 也莫要不負責任地因寵物年老病患，不願照顧牠，隨意致電漁護署遺棄牠，任牠接受「人道毀滅」

51

宗教與心靈連繫

- 雖肉身分離，但牠永存心中、精神上永不分離
 - After-life 將於「彩虹橋」、「天堂」再遇，因上帝再來時萬物將獲拯救，與人類及動物永聚，或於(佛學)輪迴後來生過好生活
- (不需獲別人認同，個人相信便可)



→ 文章: <從失去哀悼離世動物的自由及社會反思> 動物力量
<http://www.facebook.com/animalpower.hk/notes>

52

THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS OF INTERVENTIONS

Empathy

Normalizing pet bereavement responses or disenfranchised grief
 Mutual-aid networking among bereaved animal lovers

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention:

- Dealing with perceived/ self-invented guilt associated with irrational beliefs (e.g. perceived control; what if? I should have?)
- Self-validation of loving & responsible intentions (e.g. euthanasia/ medical decisions)
- Reframing (e.g. shorter life vs. quality of life/ sudden death vs. no pain/ selfish vs. self-care)
- Self-acceptance and self-forgiving

53

THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS OF INTERVENTIONS

Dual Process Model of coping with bereavement
 (loss/ avoidance & restoration/ confrontation oriented)

Empowerment and role transformation

- Service user to service provider as peer supporter, peer counselor or volunteer for abandoned dogs & disadvantaged

Readjusting past relationships and life meanings

- Religion and after-life Bond
- Continued blessings from the deceased animal to enrich new life meanings

54

DOS & DON'TS AS COUNSELOR OR HELPER

Dos:

- Recognize the close bond with the deceased companion animal
- Listen to the beloved loss, & possibly the story behind
- Respect the choice of lifestyle by raising animal responsibly
- Refer out to pet bereavement counseling and/or support group when needed

Don'ts:

- Trivialize the loss or grieving experience
- Impose your religious beliefs on after-life bond & euthanasia
- Simply recommend pet-owner to raise another animal

55



Nicky

個案經驗
分享
(Heidi)

阿美的故事

性別 / 年齡：女 / 45
 職業：中學教師
 離世的動物：狗 (M / 12) 阿Lin
 死亡原因：心臟病
 居住情況：獨居
 家庭成員：媽，已婚姐姐



阿Lin後傳.....
 • 由細照顧到大
 • 結識狗友



- 生活以阿Lin為中心 (如：陪伴左右，傾訴對象)
- 為保護阿Lin，和同事/街坊反面

一天，阿Lin因心臟病突然離世，阿美難以接受，並請病假沒上班.....

- 傷心
- 自責
- 失控感
- 孤獨



