

# Loving and Losing a Pet: A Psychologist and a Veterinarian Share Their Wisdom

Michael Stern, Susan Cropper



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Michael Stern, PhD, is a clinical psychologist practicing in New York and New Jersey. He is an adjunct associate professor at Teachers' College of Columbia University, and a clinical supervisor in a number of other academic institutes. He has worked and published in the field of the human-animal bond, is counseling bereaved pet owners, and is currently involved in assisting pet owners who are threatened with evictions and legal actions by their landlords. This activity grew out of frequently asked questions at book signing events, radio call-in shows, and television interviews, when it became clear that too many people are forced to part with their pets because of housing restrictions.

Stern's experience with various age groups serves as background to many of the chapters in *Loving and Losing a Pet*. In following the meaning that pet ownership has in different phases of life, one can gain a better appreciation of the bonds that develop. It also enhances one's understanding of the grief involved in losing a pet at any of these phases.

The book is based on real people with real pets. The many anecdotes that are offered as illustrations were taken from the professional experience of the book's coauthor, Susan Cropper, a veterinarian with a unique home visiting practice in northern New Jersey. Such an approach made it easier to address practical issues and concerns in a clear and specific manner, while all along preserving the authors' awe and appreciation of the wonderful bond between people and their pets.

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