

Coping with a pet's death

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When a pet dies, the loss can be more devastating than losing a person,” says Birmingham psychologist Camille Greenwald, who will conduct a workshop on Pet Loss and Grieving at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 27, at The Cat Practice in Birmingham as part of the veterinary hospital's cat hospice program and series on Caring for Aging Kitties.

Today, pets are living longer and are considered part of the family. Greenwald will talk about how pet owners are forming closer relationships with their pets, making end of life and death more difficult to face. The human-animal bond is also unique in that pets provide unconditional love without conflict, whereas human relationships are mixed. Plus, pets have come to fill very special void in a world that has become increasingly unpredictable and hostile.

At the same time, Greenwald says that many pet owners who lose their pets have difficulty coping with their feelings of grief since friends and family oftentimes do not understand what they're going through.

“We live in a culture that says we're not supposed to feel unhappy about anything. When it concerns an animal, some people may brush this off. But the grief is very real.”

Donation is \$10 for the workshop with proceeds going to The Cat Practice's Rufus Memorial Feline Fund for cats in need. To register, go to www.thecatpracticepc.com or call (248) 540-3390.