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# Honoring Their Memory

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*A Family Guide to Pet Remembrance and Healing*



*For every beloved companion.  
Of every size. Of every species.*

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A free resource from Memorial Merits

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## Share This Guide Freely

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You may also upload it to your own website or share it through any professional platform as a free resource for your clients, patients, or community. The only requirement is that the Memorial Merits branding and footer remain intact so that families can find their way back to the full library of free grief and memorial resources.

### **Free Grief and Memorial Resources for Families**

*Our full library of guides, workbooks, and planning resources is available free at  
[memorialmerits.com/free-resources/](https://memorialmerits.com/free-resources/)*



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# A Note for You

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You gave them everything. Morning walks and afternoon naps. A name they heard a thousand times and came to love. A warm spot on the couch, a hand to lean against, a voice that meant safety.

They did not understand our language, but they understood our tone. They did not know our worries, but they felt when we carried them. They asked for very little and gave back something that cannot be measured or replaced.

Now you are in the hardest part. The house feels different. The quiet is a different kind of quiet. And the grief you feel, whether others understand it or not, is real. It is the shape of the love you gave.

This guide is for you. Not as a checklist or a to-do list, but as a companion for the days when you need something to do with the love that has nowhere left to go. You can work through it alone. You can sit down as a family. You can follow it in order or turn to whatever section calls to you today.

*There is no wrong way to honor someone you loved.*

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## Before You Begin

*Find a comfortable seat. Place your hands in your lap. Take one slow breath in, hold it gently, and let it go.*

*Think of one moment with your pet. Not the last one. One of the ordinary ones. A morning greeting. A walk in familiar weather. The particular way they slept, or watched you, or waited by the door.*

*Hold that moment for a few seconds. Let yourself feel it fully.*

*That memory is yours. No one can take it. No amount of grief can reach it.*

*When you are ready, begin.*

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

Anatole France

*“Animals are such agreeable friends. They ask no questions; they pass no criticisms.”*

George Eliot

*“What we have once enjoyed deeply we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.”*

Helen Keller



P R A C T I C E O N E

## Tell Their Story

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Every life has a story. The day you brought them home. The things they were afraid of that made no sense. The things they loved fiercely. The sound they made when they were content.

One of the most powerful things a family can do together is gather those stories before they start to fade. Not a eulogy. Not a tribute. Just the real, ordinary, irreplaceable details of a life that mattered.

A memory book is the place those details live. Photos, captions, ticket stubs, a pressed paw print, a lock of fur, the collar tag. The tangible record of a companion who deserved to be remembered in full.

### How to Begin

Gather the family, or sit quietly by yourself. Pull out your phone and scroll through photos together. Print a few of the ones that make you laugh or catch your breath. Let each person choose one.

Write a caption. Not the date. Not the location. The story behind the photo. What was happening that day. What they did that made you take it.

Set aside a night each week for the next month and work through it together. Let the children lead when they want to. Let the silence be there when it needs to be.

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## Recommended Keepsake Albums

### StoryBook Memories: Pet Keepsake Album

The activity anchor for this practice. Includes an inkless paw print pad, 32GB USB drive for photos and videos, and a built-in compartment for physical keepsakes like the collar, tags, or a small toy. Sits naturally beside the urn and invites the whole family in.

*Use the paw print pad as soon as possible. That impression cannot be recreated later.*



*StoryBook Keepsake Album*

### Personalized Pet Memorial Photo Album

A faux leather album laser-engraved with your pet's name and the years they were with you. This is the display piece, the one that lives on the mantle beside the urn. Holds 200 photos. Available in five colors. Made to order with two text inputs for name and dates.

*Important: this album is personalized to order and is non-returnable. Have your pet's name and dates ready before you scan.*



*Personalized Memorial Album*

### **Your Story: Photo Album with Memo Sections**

One hundred pages with space for three photos each and a lined memo section for notes alongside every photo. A good choice for families who want to write alongside their pictures rather than in a separate journal.



*Your Story Photo Album*

P R A C T I C E T W O

## Write Them a Letter

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There are things we never said. Not because we did not feel them, but because the moments were ordinary, and ordinary moments feel endless until they are not.

A letter is a way to say them now. To tell your pet everything you wish you could, in the language you would have used if they could have understood. What they meant to you. What they taught you. What the house is like without them.

Each member of the family can write their own. Children often surprise themselves with what comes out. The act of writing is not just for your pet. It is for you.

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### Your Letter

*Use the prompts below to begin. Write as much or as little as you need. There is no right length. There is only what is true.*

***The thing I want you to know, more than anything, is...***

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***My favorite memory of you is...***

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***You taught me that...***

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***What I miss most right now is...***

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***If I could have one more day with you, I would...***

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*Continue in your own words:*

## **A Journal for the Days Ahead**

Grief does not arrive all at once. It comes in waves, often when you least expect it. A journal made for this specific kind of loss gives those waves somewhere to go.



*Pet Grief Journal*

P R A C T I C E   T H R E E

## Remember Together

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Grief shared is lighter than grief carried alone. Not because the loss becomes smaller, but because the memory becomes larger. When a family gathers their stories together, a life becomes a legacy.

This practice needs nothing except time and a willingness to be present with each other. No materials required. No preparation needed. Just a table, some chairs, and the people who loved the same animal.

### The Memory Circle

Gather everyone together, at the dinner table or wherever you feel most at home. Go around the table and let each person share one memory. Not the saddest one. One of the real ones. The funny ones are welcome too.

Use these prompts to get started:

*What is one word that describes them perfectly?*

*What did they do that always made you laugh?*

*What was their favorite spot in the house?*

*What is something they did that only your family would understand?*

*What is one thing they taught you about love?*

*What do you want to make sure you never forget?*

## **A Note About Children**

Children often process grief differently than adults. They may laugh at something that surprises you, or become quiet at an unexpected moment. Both are right. Let them lead when they want to, and hold space when they go silent.

For younger children, simple and concrete questions work best. Ask them to draw their favorite memory instead of describe it. Let them place the drawing in the memory book when they are ready.

*There is no age too young to understand that something they loved is gone, and that it is okay to be sad about it.*

## P R A C T I C E F O U R

# Build Their Corner

Some people need something to look at. A place in the home that says, without any words: they were here. They mattered. They are still part of this family.

A shadow box is that place. It holds what cannot go in a photo album. The collar and tags. A favorite toy. A paw print on paper. A handwritten note from a child. A small jar of fur. The things that carried their smell and their presence and the particular texture of a life well lived.

It lives next to the urn, or on a shelf, or wherever in the home they were most at home. And it stays there as long as you need it to.

### What to Put Inside

There are no rules. These are ideas that families have found meaningful:

Collar, tags, and ID tag

A paw print made from clay, ink, or the inkless pad from their memory book

A small clipping of fur or feather

A favorite toy, a leash clip, a small stone from a place you walked together

A photo printed small enough to fit

A child's drawing or a handwritten note from each family member

A small plaque with their name and the years they were with you

### A Living Element for Their Corner

Consider adding a Turning Hearts QR medallion to their shadow box or resting on top of their urn. Scan it with any phone and it opens a living digital memorial profile: photos, videos, written tributes. A physical memorial and a digital one, side by side, so that anyone who holds the medallion holds the whole story. **[Scan the QR Code to Learn About Turning Hearts]**

Learn more: [memorialmerits.com/turning-hearts-review-qr-memorial-medallion/](https://memorialmerits.com/turning-hearts-review-qr-memorial-medallion/)



## P R A C T I C E F I V E

# Express It Differently

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Not everyone processes grief through words or photographs. Some people need to do something with their hands. Some need to make something. Some need to go somewhere.

All of these are valid. All of these are grieving. The goal is not to follow a process. The goal is to honor what you are feeling and give it somewhere to live outside of you.

### **Paint a Rock**

Find a smooth stone at a park, a riverbed, or a garden center. Paint their name. Paint what you remember. Write a word, a date, a small picture. Place it somewhere that was theirs: a garden corner, under a tree, by the front door.

This is one the children can lead. Give each person their own rock. Let them paint without direction. What comes out is what needed to come out.

### **Draw a Memory**

This does not require any skill. Draw the thing you remember. Their shape on the couch. Their face looking up at you. The place they slept. A child's crayon drawing carries exactly the same weight as a finished portrait. Place it in the memory book when you are done.

### **Build a Playlist**

Music carries grief in ways that nothing else can. Put together a playlist of songs that remind you of them: songs that were playing during good times, songs that match the feeling of missing them, songs that feel like a kind of tribute. Play it when you need to feel close.

### **Return Them Somewhere They Loved**

Spreading or scattering ashes in a meaningful place is one of the most personal memorial practices there is. Their favorite park. A hiking trail. A backyard garden. A beach at sunrise.

Regulations vary by location. National parks generally require a permit and ask that scattering happen away from trails and water. State and local parks have their own rules. Private land

requires only the landowner's permission. The ocean is permitted beyond three nautical miles from shore. Check with your local parks authority before you plan.

For a full overview of ash scattering and disposition options, visit:

[memorialmerits.com/what-to-do-with-pet-ashes/](https://memorialmerits.com/what-to-do-with-pet-ashes/)

## Tend Something Living

Plant a tree, a bush, or a flower in their name. Watch it grow. Let it mark the seasons the way they once did. When it blooms, you will think of them. That is not grief. That is remembrance. And remembrance is a form of love that does not require them to still be here.

## A Closing Word

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You have done something most people do not do. You sat with your grief and gave it a shape. That takes courage.

Your pet did not need you to be impressive. They needed you to show up. You did, every day, for as long as you had together. And you are still showing up now.

Keep this guide. Return to it when you need to. Pass it on to someone who is standing where you stood.

*"One of the greatest gifts I have ever received from loss is the understanding that I have been so fortunate in my life to know what the deepest kind of love feels like. To know that kind of grief means you have lived a life full of love, and in their absence, it is then you feel how truly meaningful those connections were."*

*- Gabriel Killian, Memorial Merits*



*They were lucky to be loved by you.*

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*What to Do with Pet Ashes*



*Free Resources Library*

[memorialmerits.com/what-to-do-with-pet-ashes/](https://memorialmerits.com/what-to-do-with-pet-ashes/)

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# Five Ways to Honor Their Memory

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Every family is different. Every grief is different. These resources exist to meet you wherever you are, whatever path feels right.

## Keep Them Close: Cremation Urns

An urn is the most traditional resting place, and it sits naturally at the center of everything else in this guide. The memory book beside it. The shadow box next to it. The medallion on top. It becomes the anchor of their corner.

**Handcrafted art urns (6% off with code MemorialMerits):**

<https://memorialmerits.com/pulvis-art-urns-handcrafted-cremation-pet-memorials-6-off/>

**Engraved ceramic urns (PetUrn):** <https://memorialmerits.com/peturn-net-review-engraved-pet-cremation-urns/>

**Character-designed urns (TenderRest):** <https://memorialmerits.com/tenderrest-urns-review-customizable-pet-cremation-urn/>

## Wear Their Memory: Cremation Jewelry

A small amount of ashes can become a pendant, a ring, or a bracelet, so that each member of the family carries something. This is especially meaningful for families spread across different homes. Everyone can keep a piece of them.

**Spirit Pieces cremation jewelry:** <https://memorialmerits.com/spirit-pieces-cremation-jewelry-handcrafted-ashes-keepsakes/>

**Pulvis cremation jewelry (6% off with code MemorialMerits):**

<https://memorialmerits.com/pulvis-cremation-jewelry-hand-crafted-memorials-save-6-memorialmerits/>

## Return Them to Nature: Scattering Ashes

Scattering ashes in a meaningful place is one of the oldest and most personal memorial traditions. A full guide to legal considerations, location options, and how to plan a ceremony is available at:

**What to do with your pet's ashes:** <https://memorialmerits.com/what-to-do-with-pet-ashes/>

### **A Living Memorial: Turning Hearts QR Medallion**

A small QR medallion that attaches to an urn, a shadow box, or anywhere meaningful. Scan it with any phone and it opens a living digital memorial profile with photos, videos, and written tributes. Families separated by distance can all contribute to the same profile. The medallion makes it accessible to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

**Turning Hearts QR memorial medallion:** <https://memorialmerits.com/turning-hearts-review-qr-memorial-medallion/>

### **Transform Their Ashes: Parting Stone**

Ashes can be transformed into smooth, solid, touchable stones that hold their shape and weight permanently. Many families keep one stone per family member, so the memorial can be divided without being lost. Others place them in the shadow box, in the garden, or in painted rock collections.

**Parting Stone: ashes into stones:** <https://memorialmerits.com/parting-stone-review-turn-ashes-into-solidified-stones/>

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