



**Pet
Behaviour
Science**
open access journal



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

Pet ownership and grief - Exploring how pet ownership effects owners' mental wellbeing during times of grief, a qualitative pilot study

**Blandine French^{1,2*}, Zoe Anctil², Beverley
Brown³, Sophie Hall³**

Pet Behaviour Science
2023, Vol. 15, 1 - 19
[doi:10.21071/pbs.vi15.16052](https://doi.org/10.21071/pbs.vi15.16052)

Supplementary Material

Appendix I. Semi-structured interview schedule

1. Can you tell me about how (pets name) has impacted on your mental wellbeing in your times of grief (an example of your mental wellbeing is how low, stressed, anxious you may have felt)

Prompt: In your opinion, did (pet) change how you felt for better or worse?

Prompt: What aspects of mental wellbeing (i.e., happiness levels, stress levels) do you think your pet had the most impact on?

- If they only talk about only one aspect... were there any other aspects of your mental wellbeing that you experienced a change in?

2. What did you do with (pets name) in times of grief?

What do you mean? Were there any activities or interactions you engaged in with (pet's name)?

Prompt: Can you think of any low impact activities you did (i.e., stroking, reading book, cuddling, watching tv together)

- How often did you do this?
- How did this affect the way you felt?
- Before the grief, was this something you did regularly with (pet's name)?

Prompt: Can you think of any high impact activities you did (i.e., walking or exercising together, cleaning rabbit cage, grooming, training)

- How often did you do this?
- How did this affect the way you felt?
- Before the grief, was this something you did regularly with (pet's name)?

Prompt: Out of these activities/interactions, which did you find most helpful or unhelpful. Why?

3. How do you think your thoughts/feelings about (your pet) has changed how you dealt/dealing with your grieving process?

Prompt: How often do you find your thoughts/feelings about your pet change how deal/dealing with your grieving process?

Prompt: Did your feelings about (pet) change at all after grief?

- If yes - Did this change positively or negatively?
- If yes - Why do you think they changed?

4. How do you think your experience of coping with grief would have been without (pets name)?

Prompt: Are there any ways you think your experience would have been different (i.e., would you have done other things more like go out with friends?)

Prompt: In your opinion, how do you think you would have felt without (pets name) through times of grief?

- If only talk about negative... are there any ways you think not having (pets name) may have brought positive aspects?

5. Do you think (pets name) has offered you anything that one of your friends or family could not have?

Prompt: Do you think (pets name) has provided you any support that your friends/family could not have?

Prompt: Do you think your pet or your friends/family are better at providing support in terms of activities (e.g. going out for coffee vs walking the dog), or emotional support?

Appendix II. Demographic data

Variable	Category	n	%
<i>Total</i>		12	100
<i>Age</i>	18-24	7	58.33
	25-34	1	8.33
	35-44	3	25
	45-54	0	0
	55-64	1	8.33
	65+	0	0
<i>Gender</i>	Male	2	16.67
	Female	10	83.33
	Nonbinary	0	0
	Prefer not to say	0	0
<i>Ethnicity</i>	White British	8	66.67
	Italian	1	8.33
	American	1	8.33
	South African	1	8.33
	Polish	1	8.33
<i>Occupational status</i>	Full time employed	9	75
	Student	2	16.67
	Retired	1	8.33
<i>Living status</i>	Alone	1	8.33
	With family	4	33.33
	With friends	3	25
	With partner	4	33.33
	Prefer not to say	0	0
<i>Number of pets</i>	1	6	50
	2	6	50
	3	0	0
	4	0	0
	5	0	0
	6	0	0
	7	0	0
	8	0	0
	9	0	0
	10	0	0
<i>Type of pet</i>	Dog	10	83.33
	Horse	1	8.33
	Bunny	1	8.33

Variable	Category	n	%
<i>Total</i>		12	100
<i>Length of pet ownership</i>	0-6 months	0	0
	7-11 months	0	0
	1-2 years	3	25
	3-4 years	1	8.33
	5-6 years	3	25
	6-7 years	0	0
	8+ years	5	41.67
<i>Perceived closeness to pet</i>	1 - Not at all	0	0
	2 - Somewhat	0	0
	3 - Fairly	2	16.68
	4 - Very	1	8.33
	5 - Extremely	9	75
<i>Length of grief</i>	0-3 months	0	0
	4-6 months	0	0
	7-9 months	0	0
	10-12 months	4	33.33
	13-15 months	0	0
	16-18 months	1	8.33
	19-21 months	3	25
	22-24 months	4	33.33
<i>Relationship to lost loved one</i>	Parent	2	16.67
	Spouse	0	0
	Sibling	2	16.67
	Child	0	0
	Grandparent	4	33.33
	Friend	3	25
	Cousin	1	8.33
<i>Perceived closeness to lost loved one</i>	1 - Not at all	0	0
	2 - Somewhat	0	0
	3 - Fairly	0	0
	4 - Very	4	33.33
	5 - Extremely	8	66.67