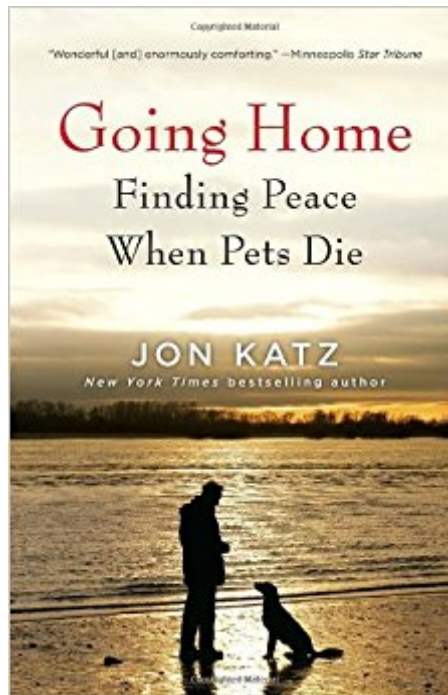




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Going Home: Finding Peace When Pets Die



Synopsis

In this invaluable guide and touchstone, New York Times bestselling author Jon Katz addresses the difficult but necessary topic of saying goodbye to a beloved pet. Drawing on personal experiences, stories from fellow pet owners, and philosophical reflections, Katz provides support for those in mourning. By allowing ourselves to grieve honestly and openly, he posits, we can in time celebrate the dogs, cats, and other creatures that have so enriched us. Katz compels us to consider if we gave our pets good lives, if we were their advocates in times of need, and if we used our best judgments in the end. In dealing with these issues, we can alleviate guilt, let go, and help others who are undergoing similar passages. By honoring the animals that have graced our lives, we reveal their truly timeless gifts: unwavering companionship and undying love. With a brand-new Foreword by the author

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Customer Reviews

“Wonderful [and] enormously comforting.” —Minneapolis Star Tribune “A must-read . . . Numerous books have been published on the subject, but *Going Home* ranks right up there with the best.” —Seattle Kennel Club “[A] heartrending book . . . Katz addresses a need, and he does it beautifully.” —Library Journal (starred review) “Refreshing in its honest depiction of grief over pet loss.” —Kirkus Reviews “Katz offers wisdom on finding peace.” —Baltimore Sun

Jon Katz has written twenty books—eight novels and twelve works of nonfiction—including *Soul of*

a Dog, Izzy & Lenore, Dog Days, A Good Dog, and The Dogs of Bedlam Farm. He has written for The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Slate, Rolling Stone, Wired, and the AKC Gazette. He has worked for CBS News, The Boston Globe, The Washington Post, and The Philadelphia Inquirer. Katz is also a photographer and the author of a children's book, Meet the Dogs of Bedlam Farm. He lives on Bedlam Farm in upstate New York with his wife, the artist Maria Wulf; his dogs, Rose, Izzy, Lenore, and Frieda; his donkeys, Lulu and Fanny; and his barn cats, Mother and Minnie. From the Hardcover edition.

We had to put down our cat after being with him for 16 1/2 years. He came down with cancer a little over a year ago and with medications it slowed the progression of the disease but we knew that the remaining time with him was going to be limited. We loved him dearly and spoiled him even more so during the last months of his life. Even though we knew the day was coming, we dreaded the reality of it. I was overcome with grief and missed him dearly! I decided to try this book to see if it could help. It is an easy read and although the tears of grief flowed while I read the book, it helped me significantly transition from sorrow and grief stricken to embracing the fond memories that we had together with Hunter, our cat, and what a positive impact he had on our lives. Those memories will always be with us. Katz's discussion about being an advocate for your animal and how they think versus people was extremely helpful. He discusses many topics and emotions you are going through as a result of your loss. I highly recommend this book to those that will be putting your pet down or will be shortly. He also has great advice when children are in the family and how to include them in the process.

I did not find any peace reading this book, just more sadness. I can not recommend this book. If you're already sad do not read this!

we are glad we chose the audio version because my husband and I could sit and listen together. As we grieve the loss of our 13 1/2 year old precious Yellow lab, Bailey Boomer. Yes, he filled the empty nest when the last of our four kids left for college. He was sunshine and love all rolled into a gorgeous creature. This book was needed. It helped us put into perspective our loss. It is a must read for relieving the pangs of guilt and bewilderment when Bailey was suddenly gone. Bailey has a little brother, Brix, who has been mourning the loss too and it has helped us look at him and realize the close bond animals have with each other. Jon Katz has the ability to write with compassion so that the reader can relate to the lessons in life we learn from loving animals.,

First of all let me say that this is my first review of anything. However, I find that writing about this topic has helped me cope with the loss of my best friend. This book is not a cure, a solution, quick fix and most likely you will not agree with everything in it. Some chapters will not apply to your situation and who you are as a person. Reading it will most likely make you cry and maybe laugh a little. I read the reviews and I do not understand what the nit picking is about. This book was not written for us individually but I feel there is some good in this book for everyone. It may be 10 percent for some 90 percent for others and everywhere in between. If you have an open mind and want to try and start walking down the road to feeling better this will help to some degree. It provides perspective, that we are not alone and that the number one killer is GUILT. I knew subconsciously that my dog would most likely not outlive me. That a terrible day was in store for me at some point in my future and we never want that day to come even though we knew it was part of the deal from the start. I miss my companion more than air and I am very sad and do not have much motivation for anything else right now. It has been 2 weeks and I could have still had her here today with me, but would it be for the right reasons? For our own feelings we say of course what I did was wrong and I should not have given up on her. We say this because we feel so awful that it must have been the wrong decision. My wife says she knows in her heart that she did the right thing though it was the hardest thing she had to do in her entire life she is at peace with it. The fixer, problem solver in me is not so lucky and confident with what has transpired. My Scratchy loved looking out the window, car rides, going to the park, chasing bunnies, playing tug, steak, carrots, chocolate and hanging out on our roof deck. I spent the last day doing all the things she loved that she could still do and then did the unimaginable, I said goodbye and let her go to heaven. If deserving I will see her again. Until then she is immortalized in a oil on canvas painting, in a Humane Society calendar, on a wine bottle, a self made painting and hundreds of pictures. I have read this book and had e-mail communication with a pet-loss counselor over the past 2 weeks and though I am still very sad I feel that these outlets have helped make my days a bit better. Below is a bit of my story. It may help, it may not. If it does and you can relate or have more questions perhaps we can help each other and your comments and perspective are welcome. I never had a pet of my own growing up, nobody close to me had passed away and my worst day was when my dirty, torn blanky disappeared when I was 5. I was raised by my grandparents, never knew my dad and the thought of finding him or getting a pet were the furthest things from my mind. In 1997 I starting dating my future wife and had just moved into my own home. In 1998 she moved in with a bunny rabbit in tow. I did not really like the bunny and saw him as too much work, a distraction and his pee was stinky! She had him since college and

I knew it was going to be a tough road for me. Being the master problem solver I offered a solution. Can we find a good home for the bunny if we can get a dog? She agreed and with a Petsmart across the street from my job, I headed over for the first time and saw this black skinny 45lb shepherd/lab mix with the biggest radar ears you have ever seen. She was there from the local Humane Society and something about her instantly drew me in. I went home got my girlfriend and went to the Humane Society. She liked her as well and the deal was done. Her name was Jan at the shelter; however that did not fit so while in the car we provided her with her forever home and her forever name: "Scratchy". She had separation anxiety and being a new dog owner I was not even sure what that meant but I learned quickly. Our first 6 months together proved to be difficult at best. The problem solver (me) was feeling like I outsmarted myself and almost wished the bunny was back. The door trim was destroyed, she houdinied her way out of her crates, bent them to be they were almost unusable without a master lock. Slid the tray out of the bottom, moved the entire crate across the room and would bolt out the door without warning at everything that moved. She pulled on her walks like a freight train and was a sensitive eater. We all made through and she became the most amazing companion and I cannot remember my life without her. In 2003 My Grandfather who was always there for me and who I depended on for so much of my life went to be with the Lord. It was the first experience at 31 that I had with true loss and it was devastating. I developed health issues and I prayed daily that if the Lord could help with through this I can make it through anything life has in store for me. I did get through it but I was wrong. In a way Scratchy became me and I was my Grandfather. She depended on me and it was my job to be there for her, provide for her, give a warm place to sleep, food, walks, and playtime. Scratchy provided unconditional, nonjudgmental love in return. Neither parents nor kids are perfect but we do the best we can with what we have. Kids are suppose to outlive their parents, however dogs are with us for such a short time and medical science as is with people and pets can keep them alive much longer than they can provide a good quality of life. At 14+ a 70lb lab/shepard mix has lived a long life and i would have kept her going till the end. However my wife who saw things in a different light kept telling me that enough was enough. My poor Scratchy could no longer do the stairs, then was tripping and falling on her walks, then stopped getting up to greet us, needed my help to go potty and could no longer stand to eat. Her Arthritis was bad and her legs were weak. Mr. Problem solver (me) was trying everything and kept saying she is still having good days, please give it more time. My wife saw me as selfish and was stripping our Scratchy's dignity away from her and this is not how she should be remembered. I would have carried her anywhere and done anything, but was it for Scratchy or for me? Regardless, guilt steals our joy and our loving memories with poisonous thoughts that keep us

in the dark. One more day was never going to be enough and whether it was one more week, or one more month the day I dreaded was coming soon one way or another. Either way guilt was right behind it. I do not feel we can escape it; however we must learn to fight it. Our best weapons are our happy memories, knowing we do not have to fight alone and time. Thanks for reading.

Having a dog in your family suffers the eventual problem of death.....when you best friend dies what do you do? My very most favorite Doberman breeding bitch started acting poorly with a bad cough too. I took her immediately to the vet who saw a fast growing mass in her left lung. I kept her home that night and then about an hour after arriving home she was laying in my lap when she looked in my eyes, coughed and died. I sobbed for two days straight. I can't ever recall being so devastated. She had protected the entire family for her short seven years. I can't tell you how bad I felt. Many folks would just say "No more sad times, I just won't get another dog." What a sad decision that would be. I still have her son who makes my heart sing daily. He sleeps on our bed with his head right next to me on our pillow. He makes me so happy and I know one day he'll pass on but the happiness given to my wife and I are very much worth the sadness at the end. GOD has blessed us beyond compare.

I was so deeply saddened when my BABY died. There was a hole in my heart and in my mind that was unconsoleable. (SP). I didn't know who to talk to, who would understand my loss and deep feeling of sadness. I felt so alone. I knew surely someone somewhere had felt this loss before. I couldn't be crazy. Jon's book let me know that YES these beautiful animals come to us and leave us. And that YES we miss them terribly. Even more important that YES it is OK to miss them, and there is a group of people who understand. I am so thankful for this book. Time is helping, but I re read sections just to get through some days. So moving, compassionate, loving, and healthy for my soul during my unimaginable time of sorrow.

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