



## Euthanasia and Making the Decision

If you are considering Euthanasia, then you are facing what is likely the most difficult decision that you will have to make for your pet. This decision is never easy and rarely straight forward. It may help to understand that Euthanasia means “good death”. And it is a selfless act of love and kindness to help end or reduce the suffering of a loved one in the face of your own loss and anticipated heartbreak.

Although you may wish to discuss your thoughts and feelings with trusted family members and friends, euthanasia is ultimately a deeply personal decision that requires presence and connection. The intimacy of your relationship with your pet allows you a deeper understanding and connection than anyone else can possibly have. Trust your relationship. You will, with presence, know when it is time.

### What Your Loved One Can Tell You

Unlike humans, animals do not actively fear death. They live in the moment. And one of the greatest things we can learn from them is to celebrate life in its smallest detail every day. Their natural wisdom can help us find comfort in the fragile cycle of life and death. If we pay close attention, our companions will let us know when their quality of life has been too far compromised. Has he stopped eating or drinking? Is her mobility declining? Does he no longer enjoy a walk or a favorite toy? Does she appear to be in discomfort, distress, or confusion? Is he having trouble with incontinency? Is she no longer responding to my touch or voice? Some people say they have looked into the eyes of their loved ones and seen that the light has gone out. Some people hear or intuit clear messages. We believe that you know your pet best. Trust your heart connection to guide you.

### Consulting With Your Veterinarian

In addition to diagnosis and treatment, your doctor and staff can help provide information and support at this transitional time.

Some of the things you will want to consider about the health of your pet and discuss with your doctor include: Is your pet’s condition prolonged, recurring, or deteriorating? Is your pet responding to treatment? If they recover, will they be chronically ill, an invalid, or unable to care for themselves in ways they used to? If they recover, will quality of life be compromised? Does your pet appear to be suffering, and if so, is it possible to alleviate this pain or discomfort?

Your doctor will always strive to answer these questions to the best of their ability and with honesty. We do not want you to make a final decision too soon, nor do we want you to wait too long.



### **Practical Considerations**

Although this is a very emotional decision, there are a few practical considerations that must be taken into account: Can you physically continue to provide the necessary care and attention that your companion may require? Do you have the resources of time and energy and patience that may be needed? Are you in a financial position to continue care? Will continuing care cause hardship for you or your family?

In closing, there is no map to follow as we move toward the end of days. And there is still deep love and connection to be shared. Each journey is different, with unique challenges and gifts. And each journey will benefit from presence and an open heart. Know that fear and anxiety is perfectly normal, and don't be afraid to ask questions. Information can help reduce anxiety and give you the opportunity to stay connected to your beloved pet in this difficult time. We are here to help you in any way that we can.

