

Properly Preparing Yourself for Grieving Your Pet

A Special Interview With Nancy Gordon

By Dr. Karen Becker

Dr. Karen Becker:

Hi, I'm Dr. Karen Becker. And joining me today is Nancy Gordon. She is a professional grief counselor for people who are struggling with the death, or the upcoming death of their pets. This is what she does for her full-time job. We're so thankful that Nancy has taken time out of her busy schedule, to help all of us learn more about what we can do to help manage the anxiety and the emotional feelings associated with us as guardians, knowing that our pets are going to die. And Nancy has made it her mission, as a counselor, as a professional, helping people deal with the loss of their animals.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Her specialty, really, is in helping people preemptively or right when they recognize that they're having these feelings, helping them minimize the pain and provide tools for addressing these feelings of anxiety. So Nancy, thank you so much for joining me. And thank you so much for having a passion towards this one, little, incredibly difficult, massive issue that each and every one of us struggle with, it's really comforting to know that there is a professional out there, that that's their mission field. And that's you.

Nancy Gordon:

Thank you so much. I'm so grateful to have this opportunity to help educate, to share. And to dispel a lot of the fears and avoidant behavior that arises from that anxiety and depression, is so much of an obstacle to healing grief before as it's happening and after.

Dr. Karen Becker:

I have so many questions for you. But let's just start with a little bit about you. How did you decide first to become a licensed clinical social worker? But then how did you decide to specifically focus on animals and pet loss and humans dealing with the grief of an animal death?

Nancy Gordon:

Since the time I was little and as far back as I could remember, I was always the person someone came to for advice. So I grew up, kind of, my calling was very clear from very early on. And so I

continued to follow that path my whole life. And I got my master's degree in social work, and then a license for that. And I had a private practice for about 17 years. The last six of those were after a car accident. And that experience was so devastating, my life just turned upside down. And I got to a point where I couldn't work anymore. And so I had to – I learned the first practice of my seven practices. That is my methodology for helping people, at least the core of it, was about surrendering. And I thought I left my practice and closed it, that I was surrendering, but actually, I discovered in that whole journey that I really had just given up my practice. Hmm.

Nancy Gordon:

So, uh, fast forward less than a year after I closed my practice, I discovered this rare breed dog called the Mexican hairless, or the Xoloitzcuintle, dog breed that go back to the ancient Aztecs over 3,500 years. And they were used as spiritual, mystical, healing dogs, they were highly respected. And what they were primarily used for was their body heat to relieve muscle and joint pain. So I had been living from this car accident and I got fibromyalgia and mild traumatic brain injury. And my go-to medication was this microwave neck rack, 24/7 microwave neck wrap. So when I heard about this breed and actually met one, Toasters' half-brother, my dog Toasters' half brother —

Dr. Karen Becker:

What a great name.

Nancy Gordon:

I'll tell you how that happened. I had wrist pain. I put my hand under the belly of this dog and my pain was relieved. Not gone. Of course they don't cure you, but it was relieved and I thought, "I'm going to get one of these toy-sized dogs put around my neck and call her Toaster." And that's-

Dr. Karen Becker:

And did Toaster work better than the microwave neck wrap?

Nancy Gordon:

Oh, my goodness, well, short vignette to answer that is I used to go into the movie theater with my boyfriend and he would be kind enough to go to the popcorn microwave and ask them to reheat the neck wrap. Well, with Toaster, of course, I never had to do that. So I trained her as a

service dog. And she went everywhere with me in the movies, sat around my neck, heated me. heated my neck pain. And it I mean-

Dr. Karen Becker:

Amazing. I do. Amazing. Like that is a partnership. That is a spiritual partnership. That, yeah, it's magic is what it is. Yeah.

Nancy Gordon:

Yeah, it was profound relationship. She changed my life in so many ways, including how I work and including the whole pet loss journey, which I you know, experienced and can talk more about with her when she was 17. And yeah, so, to back up. I had Toaster with me for about three years. And then I wanted her to have a litter of puppies. Animal Planet found out about her puppies, or her pregnancy, they were looking for a dog who was pregnant. Well, they found out about me, and that's so much more of a rich story because Toaster was a service dog, she was a rare breed. I had fibromyalgia, which back then wasn't even as well-known as it is now. And they did a documentary, which you can find on my Linktree. And so that documentary was went on for years.

Nancy Gordon:

And I can always tell where people where finding the documentary because I would get emails saying, "Can you help me get a little Toaster my own," basically. And so I started a nonprofit and placed 18 dogs —

Dr. Karen Becker:

Wow.

Nancy Gordon:

Xolos, over the course of many years. Through that pregnancy and birthing of Toaster, you'll, you'll see Pink, her daughter, her hairless daughter, was born. Pink was fine at first. And then she was diagnosed with a luxating patella and ended up at the age of 1 with an amputation.

Nancy Gordon:

So my Pink became my three-legged dog, and I wrote a book, “Pink: The 3-Legged Dog Who Lost Her Leg and Found Her Courage.” So that Pink began in her whole journey of disability teaching me how to get off the couch and just do it anyway. [inaudible 00:08:17] messages. So with them, I developed, within through them, I developed this methodology of seven practices to manage your mind and heal your heart. And that, in a nutshell, is what I do. And what I did for myself about my chronic illness. And it brought me to answer your question into this part of pet loss. I use those same practices that helped me recover and find my resilience from my chronic illness and disability to navigating all the stages, starting with anticipatory grief when I realized I had to face that with Toaster.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Okay, and okay, and that makes sense. I think all of us once when we get to the end of this interview, every listener and reader will have a sense of exactly what anticipatory grief is because we've all experienced it. But we may not have all identified it in our life. So it's there and as you kind of unwrap what this is, and most importantly, what can we do about it. Our listeners and readers myself will all be able to be like “Aha, yes.” And so Nancy, as a trained professional, undoubtedly you had heard about anticipatory grief in your training as well as in clinical practice. However, were you able to identify it when it happened with you with Toaster, were you able to identify it immediately or did were you into it long enough and thought, “Oh my goodness.” Like was did she teach you that as well?

Nancy Gordon:

No. Toaster taught me many things about grief and the journey. But that wasn't one of them. Because as a psychotherapist for so many years, loss was inevitably part of everyone's story that they [inaudible 00:10:18]. So loss is inevitable. How you deal with it is really what makes the difference in your experience of loss. So I recognized my own anticipatory grief. Several years before I lifted Toaster up, I call it lift up instead of put down. Several years, because Toaster and Pink both had many different chronic illnesses and Toast had compressed discs, degenerative disc disease. And I could see she was aging, she was having more problems, she got kidney disease, etc.

Nancy Gordon:

And when those things started happening, it became real to me that that at some point, and maybe sooner than later, she was going to pass. And I remember saying to my best friend, and this is, you know, maybe sounds like a weird thing. And I didn't mean it seriously, but it's a metaphor, the movie, “They Shoot Horses, Don't They” with Jane Fonda. Long time ago, she has a line in there, you know, They Shoot Horses, she was so depressed. And I said to my best

friend, “I don't know how I'm going to live through this. I don't know how I'm going to bear my life without Toaster.” She had been with me, you know, for so many huge, defining moments in my journey of these last several decades. So I, at that time, I thought, I don't know how I'm going to be able to do this. I really didn't know how. When it got to be about a year before and then the months, you know, through that whole year, I did my own work on that practice of surrender, it's the first one.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Okay.

Nancy Gordon:

So yeah, I experienced it long before in a mild or milder impact. And then as it got closer, yeah.

Dr. Karen Becker:

So do you find when you are counseling people, and I find this in the exam room, that my clients don't know that they're having anticipatory grief or anxiety? They can't see it? Can you? Can you tell us what exactly is anticipatory grief? And how do you know if it's going on?

Nancy Gordon:

So, anticipatory grief is the first experience you have of loss. So anticipatory means that it's before the loss happens. So this is an experience where you are anticipating that you're going to lose your pet, for example, and feelings come up around that a process comes up around that because we don't want to lose our pets. And the less you know about grief, and the less you have actually healed your past grief, the more frightening that realization of “my pet is going to die,” whether it's two years or one year or one month. And so what people experience is more the symptoms, the anxiety, the depression, the irritability, the lack of, you know, interest in things the, possibly even, you know, sort of clinging to their animal even more so. Worrying, worrying is huge. And then of course, the biggest the biggest kicker is the guilt while you're in that process, and you people don't know how to deal with the guilt. Yeah.

Dr. Karen Becker

Yeah.

Nancy Gordon:

[crosstalk 00:14:30] in what I do, and I what I see over and over, and I myself have been in counseling for many years to gain the tools I needed to move past this. My anxiety about my beloved's dying when they were healthy, Nancy, they were healthy and thriving, but I see so much sickness and so much degeneration, and I see so many accidents that I end up robbing my day-to-day joy of my time with my animal being present because I'm in the background having not a panic response, but I'm in the background having a stress response. I can't fully appreciate being present. I can now but I couldn't for many years, because of in the back of my brain and like, all of this beauty, this relationship, this magic, is going to end in death. And I couldn't get over it. It was like a reel in my head I couldn't get over. I know, I cannot be the only person that feels this way.

Nancy Gordon:

No, not at all. I experienced that as I described a little. Yeah. But you have just touched on one of the biggest benefits of navigating anticipatory grief, which is that you learn to hold emotionally, psychologically, both. They're dying, and they're here, the old, both, and how do you stay present? Because if you can learn to stay present, that's where the healing already begins. And not only the healing of the grief, but your connection with your animal. And through a process where you don't lose that connections.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes.

Nancy Gordon:

[crosstalk 00:16:29] So, yes, so staying present, you stay connected. And animals never disconnect. They're always present. Always present. That's one of the biggest lessons they teach us. So it is a very common, I would say almost inevitable, experience with anticipatory grief. And you can learn how to go through that and come out the other side. That's what I call transformative grief. That's what the blessing of anticipatory grief is about, you have the opportunity while your animal is alive, to prevent guilt, to know that what and how you need to interact with and help and care for and be of service to your dog, to your cat. Instead of them just being of service to us.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes. And I think as a proactive veterinarian, this resonates with me so much because we can proactively – we know it's going to hurt like hell, that's no one's trying to minimize, it's going to

hurt like hell, no one's trying to minimize that, but it's going to hurt like hell regardless. What if, the last part of the chapter of this beautiful blessed life and relationship, I have clients that say “I don't even remember it,” they don't remember they're unable to absorb the beauty because of the fear and anxiety and as a wellness, proactive human and doctor, this, what you are suggesting what you have created, and what you are implementing as a professionally trained grief counselor for people dealing with these feelings, is so critically important because you're allowing them to work through the stress and begin to carve out space, to extract the richest and to not have regret.

Dr. Karen Becker:

I think the not having regret about the time and where our brain was, and where our focus was, is one of the richest blessings we could ever give anyone struggling with this. And yet, it doesn't come intuitively to us as humans. Most of us can't sit down and think about, “You know what, I can tell that the monkeys are really going crazy in my brain, I'm going to try and do some things to quiet the monkeys.” We don't have those tools on our own. So can you help us understand the nuts and bolts, the premise of working this system, this proactive system of intentionally working on our pain, our thoughts, our painful thoughts, to be able to balance all that's going to happen in this chapter where our animals will eventually die, but we don't miss the moment and we don't miss the beauty because we are preemptively coping with the stress. How do we do that? From a 10,000-foot view? It's not intuitive to do that.

Nancy Gordon:

No. Grief is not something that we learn how to get through. We learn how to avoid it. We learn to pick up your bootstraps. We learn to stop crying, we get all these messages to stuff it. And unhealed grief puts a lock on your heart. And that's an important piece for people to remember that the unlocking, the key to unlocking that guilt and that grief is facing it. Now facing it is often very, very hard for people to do alone.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes, yes.

Nancy Gordon:

Grief is meant to be shared. Grief is meant to be expressed in positive ways, in the healing ways. Not in stuffing it.

Dr. Karen Becker:

So first of all, do you do? Do you do Zoom? Are you doing teleconsults? How? If people say, “You know what, this makes a lot of sense. I need help.” How are how do people go about getting help?

Nancy Gordon:

I have a Linktree that has a list of all the ways people can connect with me and get help in different ways. Through books, through writing, through telehealth sessions with me, consultations with me, ongoing work groups, courses, all of that.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Okay, awesome.

Nancy Gordon:

-variety so that people, you know, anybody can find something some way to get help.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Okay, that's, that's awesome. So, so you have this online resource available with all of these different options. If you were to tell our listeners and readers, some of your top take-home thoughts or messages, when it comes to this universal feeling of some anxiety, when we think about the things that we love most transitioning, those are hard thoughts. How have you been able to rewire your brain and now your teaching or thought process. You're teaching others how to do that? What are some of your top tips on maybe even avoiding getting into that cycle? But once we're there, what are some things that would offer some relief for people just being introduced to this idea?

Nancy Gordon:

Well, one of the problems with pet loss and grief is that a lot of people don't understand it, it's devalued. It's misunderstood. And so it's important to find people who understand, friends who maybe have experienced their own pet loss and understand what you are feeling. So getting support from your support system, whatever that is, family, friends, that's a very important key first step, so that you start expressing, as I said processing and expressing and sharing the grief is a huge part of the healing.

Nancy Gordon:

So you find people in places that support that process for you, where you feel comfortable, and you feel trust, and you feel understood. So that's, that's one of the first steps. And the second step is once you start feeling and expressing, you have to embrace self-love, self-compassion, and begin to see that your feelings are natural. Their grief is a natural process in relationship to loss as long as the loss has a meaning. So if the role of your pet, for example, with service dogs, was to depend on them, really, for daily functioning, that is going to bring up a lot of loss and grief from that role.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes.

Nancy Gordon:

So the more that you understand that grief is normal, there's nothing wrong with you, you're not crazy. And that you have avenues to express that grief. Those are two very important first steps, kind of hand in hand. And there's, there's one thing, one quote that I love and I share with clients is they find relief, especially for those people who feel that loss is unbearable. It goes like this: "If there was ever a tomorrow when we're not together, there is something you must always remember. You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, smarter than you think, and loved more than you'll ever know." And that's by Winnie the Pooh.

Nancy Gordon:

So I think having, you know, an understanding of the journey of pet loss and doing this transformational grief it within that journey lies, hope and healing hope and growth and through our resilience as human beings, we can find that our hope and our hearts can be a gift of the unconditional love that we experience with our pets. And in growing through grief, ourselves, we honor our pets.

Dr. Karen Becker:

And we can also be more available to them emotionally, mentally, and sometimes even physically. If we – the reason I would encourage anyone who's listening or reading to contemplate addressing anxiety, preemptive anxiety. If you have repeated thoughts, when you look at your dog, or cat or horse or hamster, if first you say, "Oh my gosh, I love you so much" and "Oh my gosh, you're going to die soon."

Dr. Karen Becker:

If you are going through this process of feeling all of the good feelings that are instantly minimized or marginalized because of fear or anxiety associated with losing that animal. This is something I would encourage you, as a proactive veterinarian, to address the minute you can. The minute you can identify that you're doing this address it. Because by you addressing it, you will have a fuller, richer, more meaningful relationship because you're not being distracted by an emotion that isn't serving you at that time-space reality.

Nancy Gordon:

I agree totally with that. And I guess if there's anything I would really want listeners to understand is that it's unhealed grief and unhealed guilt in this whole process of loss that imprisons us, it's not the loss itself. You can learn and get support for going through this loss. And not only come out accepting it, but growing from it. The anticipatory grief and the transformative grief are two, what I consider, stages that have been missed in the grief counseling world.

Nancy Gordon:

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross was the founder of the five stages of grief. And she doesn't talk about anticipatory grief, really, not in those stages. She might have in her books, in general, but people stick to those five stages, while there is anticipatory grief, that is a stage. And the last grief, or the last stage of grief is not just acceptance, in my opinion. It's transforming it. It's getting [inaudible 00:28:25]. It's finding meaning. It's opening your heart to another pet when most people feel it's so unbearable, and this was so unbearable to lose the dog, for example, they're not going to get ever get another one. And, you know, as I said, unhealed grief puts a lock on your heart, but there isn't a key to unlock it.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yeah. I'm so thankful, Nancy, that there are qualified, trained professionals that have made it their mission like yourself, to help people through this incredibly painful stage. I'm so thankful. And that's one of the reasons I wanted to really have an awareness week is to begin a conversation. Letting pet lovers know that if they are experiencing some of these feelings and if they feel that they are never going to feel better, that grief is this ongoing open wound that they will die with and it will not improve. That is not that does not have to be the case.

Nancy Gordon:

No, it really doesn't. There is really such hope and love that comes out of that locked heart when you deal with the grief. And yeah, it seems hard to face. I mean, it was hard for me to face and I'm you know, I've been, for decades, dealing with other people's pain. It is hard, I recognize that. It's painful. It's heartbreaking. I call it gut-wrenching. Heartbreaking and gut-wrenching were the two phrases, I think, for years, before and after, were the words that I use to express how devastating that loss was, and I lost Pink within nine months of Toaster, I had to lift her up as well. And I have a lot of clients who have had that experience. And that's, you know, that's an overwhelming kind of grief. At the same time, it's something that, as you face it, it becomes less overwhelming, right?

Dr. Karen Becker:

And you're able, I think, to make better decisions because your brain is not in that overdrive, highly stressed, almost shock-like, sometimes oftentimes, especially if you just if you just have received a diagnosis that your pet is terminal or something terrible is going on. It can be, you can get stuck in that state. And it actually compromises not just your ability to remember but your ability to make the decisions that are best at that time. And there again, you can have more regrets.

Dr. Karen Becker:

So a little bit about when – you probably have done quite a bit of counseling with people who say, “My dog or cat or animal is terminal and I need to be thinking about euthanasia.” This is a way that people can begin talking about euthanasia or helping, assisting their animal without necessarily trying to block it out or say, “I’ll address it when it happens. I’m going to leave that to my veterinarian.” Why do you see as a kind of a proactive therapist, why do you think it's important to have a discussion or at least, if people are having anxiety about an upcoming euthanasia? Can we talk a little bit about how to go about preparing for that emotionally, and why it's so important?

Nancy Gordon:

Yes. So you've tapped into a really, really important part of how veterinarians can help this anticipatory grief process. So one of the first things that I would suggest to clients who come with me before the loss, but they're looking at, you know, “My dog isn't getting better,” or “I got this diagnosis,” is to talk to the veterinarian and get educated, ask questions. Sometimes I give them questions to ask. So one of the best questions is, “I don't know what I don't know, please tell me.” You know, “If you were in my shoes, what would you be seeing? What would you be thinking what-” you know, all of that, because we only make the best decisions based on the information that we have.

Nancy Gordon:

And you add that lack of information, let's say with the anxiety that you're talking about comes with, oh, and then the responsibility that we have with pets, or that we're allowed to have with pets through euthanasia that we don't have with humans. So there's no practice in our world, with other losses with human losses that that are like what we are faced with that decision to make. I know when I was in that realization that Toaster might need help. And I realized that because she had seizures, which turned into undiagnosed fainting spells, and she was used to going everywhere with me but she could no longer, I started thinking how I would feel if she passed when I wasn't home. And Pink is there, helpless, traumatized.

Nancy Gordon:

It was part of my decision-making process with my vet to understand, really, what is the next few months looking like for Toaster and planning for that. So I did a whole ritual with that. Two weeks for example, this is the benefit. This is a good example, dealing with anticipatory grief and being present is he was, you know, Toaster's daughter was an attention hog toaster was a wise more introverted dog. Pink, literally would get herself in front of between Toaster and me.

Nancy Gordon:

So for two, three weeks, I made a decision. I'm going to do this in three weeks with my mobile vet. And I orchestrated how those three weeks were going to be spent. And so I took Pink and Toaster together places, but I also made a point of taking Toaster alone. So she would be driving on my neck in the car and doing errands, she went to a movie, those sorts of things, so that her last three weeks, I was really there. And if I cried, it didn't matter to her. She comforted me. They know. They know. So it's just another way of that reciprocal, unconditional love and service that makes that whole experience bearable.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes.

Nancy Gordon:

And without guilt. So that's one of the biggest pieces is this guilt when people can't think straight or they don't have the information or they make rash decisions.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yep.

Nancy Gordon:

They can't-

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes.

Nancy Gordon:

[crosstalk 00:36:36] make what's in the best interest of the animal or for them. And I have so many more clients who call me the day before, they're going to lift up their pet or the day after or three days after, when it's over and done, and I can't help them with that process. You know, that window's gone.

Nancy Gordon:

But the ones that call me before, for example, we had this whole discussion about those last hours, days, minutes, whatever, how can you be present and still feel this intolerable grief? You know, that particular person felt badly about having so much sadness when their dog is the one they [crosstalk 00:37:28]

Dr. Karen Becker:

Right.

Nancy Gordon:

I said, "No, no, no, no, that's not that's not the way to look at it." You know, it's both. You're sad, and you love your dog, and you want to be present, and they're not – you can hold both.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Really, Nancy, what you are helping pet lovers do is to multitask the balancing of many difficult emotions, without letting one take over the other. So that out of balancing, not choosing one

emotion but being able to balance grief, with incredible life experiences that are happening right now.

Dr. Karen Becker:

We won't have regret about missing those moment-to-moment experiences that are providing rich interaction with the animal that's still physically here and dying. But you're allowing people to learn the skills they need to be able to balance many emotions simultaneously. And it's a really important skill that most of us not – I was not born with intuitively.

Dr. Karen Becker:

But through being able to learn this, I have been able to dramatically reduce my own anticipatory anxiety because I've learned some of these tools to help me when I feel like the my anxiety or anticipatory grief is going to take over. It's out of knowing these things like you said, you only know what you know, but it's a godsend to know more because it allows you to make better decisions and most importantly, create memories and experiences while you are in pain.

Nancy Gordon:

Yes and the gift of anticipatory grief is that it's it is your last opportunity to do whatever or say whatever or heal whatever wounds between you and your human, between you and your animal that after the loss occurs, you will not regret.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes.

Nancy Gordon:

If that's the biggest gift and that's what I experienced, really, earlier when my both my parents died. My mom had a two-year cancer journey. And I had anticipatory grief for two years. And by the end, you know, she was in a coma. And we were just in the hospice room waiting with terrible angst for her to go. And one of the things that I thought about then is, you know, this is this is a really gut-wrenching moment. But I know that the last two years of my mom's life that I spent with her, I brought her great joy. And I have no regrets. I have no guilt. And that is huge. So human, you know, grief is grief.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yup.

Nancy Gordon:

There are differences with pet loss grief and part of that comes from the ability of you know that we have euthanasia, which creates this experience, again, that people probably don't understand either called cognitive dissonance. So cognitive dissonance is when you have two competing emotions and thoughts or decisions to make, like you're in a hospice situation and you don't want to experience that loss with your pet. And yet at the same time, the care that is that you are having to do to keep your animal alive.

Nancy Gordon:

And sometimes people go, myself included, go way beyond what a what an average person would do financially, physically for their pet to remain alive I mean, when Pink became 24/7 hospice patient. And I did get to that point where I had that cognitive dissonance like, "I can't do this anymore." And yet, I don't want to lose her. Yes. And having, you know, the skills to navigate that myself was, you know, very — it got me through that to the decision making point. But for people who don't have those skills, it's like a nightmare.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Yes.

Nancy Gordon:

It's a living nightmare and causes just great stress, anxiety, insomnia, indecision, confusion, all of those things. And those things that occur as part of the anticipatory grief and loss, those emotions are natural, it's not that there's something wrong with you, if you feel anxious-

Dr. Karen Becker:

Of course, of course.

Nancy Gordon:

[crosstalk 00:42:46] bond to the anxiety and how you let the anxiety, for example, impact your daily function, impact your relationships, impact how you interact with your dog, or cat. And that's where the healing is. And that's where getting help is what helps.

Dr. Karen Becker:

That is exactly right. And I'm so – that's a perfect place to conclude. Because getting help, the minute that you recognize that you need it, the sooner you can address what you're feeling, the sooner you're going to feel different. You're going to shift, you're going to have tools to be able to navigate these incredibly difficult and stressful times. You will be better-equipped with the tools you need to be able to get through this the best you can. And oftentimes, because we are not born with these innate tools, reaching out to a qualified professional who can help you where you're at is one of the best decisions we could ever make for ourselves.

Dr. Karen Becker:

It really is a love gift to ourselves. And for those of you that think, “I don't need that I'm going to get through this fine,” as long as you can stay present and in the moment, fantastic. If you find yourself, your brain, your thoughts being overtaken with anxiety and fear and a whole host of negative emotions that prevent you from making good decisions, or being in the moment, I would encourage you to consider to get help.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Nancy, this has been a beautiful interview. We appreciate your commitment to animal lovers worldwide who are ready to get help because they want to be the best guardian for their animals and you're equipping them with those necessary skills to be able to do just that. And we're very thankful for everything you do.

Nancy Gordon:

Yes, thank you for sharing this in this awareness week. It's so important, especially in the pandemic, because we have global grief. We've had global grief since 2020. And I see the gift in that is, that globally, we're all having to learn how to navigate this painful experience, and lift each other up through that process.

Dr. Karen Becker:

Well, thank you. Thank you for everything that you do. Readers and listeners, please either click the link above or below or if you're reading, obviously, there will be a link provided for you to learn more about the resources that Nancy has available, as well as learning more about how to equip yourself with the skills you need to get through this difficult process. Nancy, thanks again.

Nancy Gordon:

Thank you so much.