



Laura Slaughter, LMSW will facilitate a discussion group about Geneen Roth's book, "Women, Food, and God" on Saturday, March 19, from 10am-12noon, \$5 contribution.

Call 929-0300 ext.103 to register.

Michigan Lupus Alliance Support Group Monthly Meetings: Tuesday, February 15, and Wednesday, March 16, 2011 at Munson Community Health Center (MCHC). The group is from 6-7:30 pm. Contact Beth Boshoven, ext. 106, for more information.

Beth Boshoven, LMSW ACSW is now a Priority Health provider.

Barb Cain has been certified in EMDR, which is helpful for those who have experienced traumatic events. Call Barb at ext.102 if you would like to learn more about this form of treatment.

Lakeview Beacon

Helping People Find Solutions

Winter 2011 Edition

Lakeview Counseling

1844 Oak Hollow Drive, Suite B

Phone: 231.929.0300

Traverse City, MI 49684

Our Animal Companions

by Jill Kimball LMSW, ACSW

Whether you call Sadie my "animal companion" or my "pet" doesn't really matter to either of us. All I know for sure is that I love my dog Sadie. When I'm feeling down she puts a smile on my face. She's always glad to see me and is entertained by everything I do. The therapeutic value of animals in the lives of humans is well known and supported through scientific research. They soothe us, aid our healing, make us laugh and can motivate us to exercise! For most families, their pet is a member of the family. For children, their relationship with a pet might be the first time they share love with someone other than their parents. Many of us even feel our pet understands us better than our human friends. We love our animals.

It can be hard to understand why people have unhealthy relationships with animals or even abusive interactions with animals. There is a new television show that portrays this extreme by interviewing "animal hoarders" and then they attempt to provide therapeutic interventions. Their homes have been taken over by the animals that they collect regardless of their ability to care for them. These people substitute social interactions and family involvement for relationships with their pets who love them unconditionally. Clearly a good thing gone too far, but also an example of how emotional dysfunction can affect the animals around us. Is there a perfect number of pets for an individual or a family? Probably not, but standards of hygiene and care should never be sacrificed because there are too many pets. There is no excuse for neglecting the basic needs of a dependent animal.

It's even more difficult to understand what goes on with a person who becomes abusive towards animals. Animal abuse involves intentionally harming an animal, sometimes out of anger or frustration, but often as a detached act of violence or expression of dominance. In the Traverse City area we have had several cases over the past year that have involved the intentional injury or death of an animal. These cases are upsetting on many levels. Initially we are saddened that a vulnerable creature was injured on purpose. As that shock settles in, we are alarmed because we know that most people who harm animals, lack empathy for others and are at risk to repeat the violent behavior.

The abusive treatment of animals can not be tolerated in children or adults. If your child mistreats your pets, then your pets need protection and your child needs limits and supervision around animals. When children have grown up influenced by adults who use violence to solve problems they are at a greater risk to use violence to express difficult emotions. Sometimes those same children feel so powerless in their lives that they feel driven to dominate others but can only find success expressing their angry control over animals. These children (and their parents) need to develop improved skills to communicate their needs, resolve conflicts and appreciate the impact of their behavior on others. Adults who mistreat animals need specialized interventions and to be held accountable for their actions.

If you take on the responsibility of owning an animal, hopefully you will also see the rewards of a blossoming love relationship between yourself, your animal and your family; but never forget you have an obligation to ensure that animal's well-being. Having an animal entrusted in your care is a privilege.

For more information about AniCare training or the Rapid Response program, please visit our website at

<http://www.animalsandsociety.org> or

contact Dr. Kenneth Shapiro at

ken.shapiro@animalsandsociety.org. In

partnership with:

Arizona State University, AniCare is

provided online;

University of Michigan School of

Social Work, AniCare Adult is provided as

a Continuing Education course.

Dr. Kenneth Shapiro

earned his BA from

Harvard University

and his PhD in

clinical psychology

from Duke

University. James A.

& Faith Knight

Foundation,

Shumaker Family

Foundation and

Kenneth A. Scott

Family Foundation

generously support

AniCare and Rapid

Response.

Lockwood & Ascione,

1998; Arkow &

Ascione, 1999;

Arluke & Lockwood,

1997

Randour, Krinsk, &

Wolf, 2002

Jory & Randour,

1998

The AniCare Approach: Counseling Animal abuse

Kenneth Shapiro, PhD, Executive Director, Animals and Society Institute

Over the past two decades empirical research has demonstrated an association between animal abuse, violent behavior towards humans, and family violence. In addition to the co-occurrence, we now know that: both perpetrators and victims of bullying are more likely to abuse animals; witnessing animal abuse has a damaging traumatic effect on some children and "teaches" other children to use violence to solve interpersonal problems; and the same issues of control and dominance underlying spousal abuse are often operative in animal abuse.

Twenty-seven states (as of 2010) authorize or mandate judges to order counseling for individuals convicted of animal abuse. There are few treatment options for either adult or juvenile animal abusers that focus on the behavior of animal abuse. Rather, judges who sentence animal abusers often order anger management or substance abuse counseling. The AniCare Approach, developed by the Animals and Society Institute in the late 1990s, is a response to this societal need. To date, we have presented 49 workshops in 22 states reaching over 600 counselors in various fields.

AniCare is a problem-oriented approach founded on the insight that animal cruelty is a behavior that can and should be treated directly, regardless of co-occurring clinical diagnoses. The AniCare Approach encompasses cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic and attachment theory perspectives. The key objectives of AniCare training provide mental health care professionals with: a clear understanding of the link between animal abuse and other forms of abuse and disorders; the range of animal abuse behaviors and appropriate interventions; the basic steps in making an assessment and factors to consider; the therapeutic theories that organize the approach to treatment; suggestions regarding integration of treatment into other interventions; and illustrations of the seriousness of animal abuse as it relates to domestic violence, animal suffering, and continuing patterns of abuse.

AniCare Child includes training in empathy (taking an animal's point of view) and self-management techniques (better problem-solving skills). Many children who abuse animals have attachment problems: They may have failed to develop a secure bond with a parent and may be over-reliant on a relationship with a companion animal; or they may be taking out the frustration of their own unmet needs on a companion animal. AniCare Adult emphasizes helping an individual be accountable for his or her behavior. Often animal abusers do not admit to themselves or others that what they did is wrong. They develop "stories" that deny the presence or importance of the abuse, or that distort their role in the abuse, or that somehow justify it. For both children and adults, their justificatory story often is heavily influenced by the subculture in which they are being or were socialized.

To complement and expand the focus of the AniCare treatment model, the Animals and Society Institute developed its Rapid Response program. We identify animal abuse cases most amenable to the AniCare model and send letters to the media, prosecutors, judges and probation officers, alerting them to the co-occurrence of human violence and animal abuse urging the prosecution of these cases with the sentence to include AniCare.

If you are interested in attending AniCare Adult or Child in Traverse City, please contact petra@centurytel.net. Someone offered to sponsor training in Traverse City if sufficient interest exists.



“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”
Mahatma Ghandi



“One of the most appreciated qualities of animals is that they are beyond language. That they feel but do not require conversation is a great relief to most people.”
Mary Allen

Helping Children Cope With The Loss of a Pet

By Beth Boshoven, LMSW, ACSW

When a pet in your home begins to experience a decline in health, it is an important time to begin planning how you will approach the topic of the loss of that pet. Depending on the ages of the children, many can understand when a parent begins to describe the changes in the pet, such as the pet sleeping more and playing less. Older children may be able to understand the age of the pet as a factor, or simply that the animal has changed over the years.

When the death of a pet is near, consider involving the older children in care giving, memory making, taking pictures, or even just sitting with the pet to share their own thoughts or feelings. It is okay to allow children to ask questions and to talk openly about what may happen to the pet during the dying process. Children will be most interested in ensuring the animal will not be in pain, not be scared, and not be alone. If you are not comfortable talking to your children about these issues, be sure to ask a friend for help. Also, ask if the child has questions and allow them to ask what they may need to know. Some children need very little, or may need more explanation later on. Using simple language, and involving a veterinarian will help ease these conversations. Don't be afraid to show your own grief during this process.

Younger children may be better off to be involved after the death has occurred, when a parent explains that the animal is no longer living in the terms acceptable to that particular family. Some families choose to describe the animal as “in heaven” or “in a special place”. It is okay to allow the child, even older children, to imagine what that animal is doing in the new place. It is important not to deny the death has occurred, or to simply say the pet is “gone”, “sleeping” or “moved away”. These statements are confusing to children.

Memorializing a pet is an important part of this transition for children and adults. Planting a garden, putting out pictures, making scrapbooks, and sharing memories are all easy ways to help a child process the death of a pet. Children can struggle with losing an animal, and may need comforting even months after a death has occurred. Every child is different, so be aware of what is happening with your child.

There are times when a child can experience long term difficulty and may need to speak with a professional. If a child appears depressed, angry, anxious, or if you notice unusual behaviors, you will need to learn more about what your child is thinking or feeling. Some children struggle with the idea that the animal is “in the ground” or “cold”, and many children begin to worry about the death of other pets or people. Children are continuously growing and changing, and it is important to address whatever thoughts or feelings that may be getting in their way, even if it seems simple or silly to adults. Some children also experience a great deal of loneliness when a pet dies. Be sure to monitor for distress at home and at school as a child may deny feelings of loss, while their moods and behaviors indicate otherwise.

Lakeview Counseling

TO REACH US:

**PHONE:
231.929.0300**

**FAX:
231.933.6378**

**ON THE WEB!
WWW.LAKEVIEWTTC.COM**

1844 Oak Hollow
Drive,
Suite B
Traverse City, MI
49686

Please feel free to make copies of your Lakeview Beacon

231-929-0300

Resources: Pets and Loss

Ten Tips on Coping With Pet Loss – www.pet-loss.net

Pet Loss and Grief – vetmedicine.about.com

Pet Loss Grief Support – www.petloss.com

Grieving the Loss of a Pet – helpguide.org/mental/grieving_pets

Coping With the Death of Your Pet –
www.humanesociety.org/tips/coping_with_pet_death

www.123greetings.com>pets (sympathy cards and urns)

Pet Loss Books – www.petloss.com/petlossbooklist

Pet Loss Books & Urns – www.foreverpets.com

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**Barbara Cain, ACSW
Laura Slaughter, ACSW**

**Carol Murray, ACSW
Director**

**Jill Kimball, ACSW
Beth Boshoven, ACSW**