

Do Pet Birds Grieve?

Pet birds that have formed strong bonds to each other will grieve when one of them passes away.

By Diane Grindol

If one of your birds die, the remaining birds may grieve for their lost friend.
Courtesy of Elizabeth Kline, New York

If you have more than one bird, and one of them dies, your remaining bird probably will grieve for his lost friend. Sometimes I think it's kinder when a bird dies in the presence of the flock, so that they know what happened.

The kind of grieving you can expect is calling for the bird that is no longer there, searching for him and some depression. At first, the remaining bird may not eat as well as normal and may not want to participate in some activities. When the living bird calls for the bird that has passed away, gently that you understand and that the other bird is not there with you any more. He will understand your gentle tones and be soothed somewhat.

Birds adjust to changes well, and, after about some weeks, the living bird will probably have a new routine. Birds are much better than people at living "now" rather than thinking of what has been or could have been.

Don't forget to think of yourself, too. Allow yourself to grieve for the bird that has passed away and to commemorate its life by making a collage, putting up a photo or planting a tree or bush in its honor. Many bird adoption centers and research projects welcome monetary donations in the memory of much loved pets and list your contribution for their membership.

Our memories are always ours to cherish. Honor your pet bird's memory, keep your still living bird happy, and, after an appropriate amount of time, move on.