The Karnes household has always had pets, live in the house, sleep in your bed, give them food off your plate, pets. The most at one time was three dogs, five cats, and a run free, use the kitty litter, and sleep with the cats, rabbit. I can tell you the names of all the animals I have ever had. No matter how long or short a period of time these animals were in my life they will always have a special place in my heart.

I am not an expert on the animal dying process but I do know a lot about human end of life experiences. Between being involved with the deaths of my animals and in-depth conversations with veterinarians, I have concluded there are similarities between animals dying and humans dying.

Understanding those similarities as the normal and natural way that death approaches our pets can ease fear and apprehension. The dying experience of our pets is traumatic to us. We find ourselves experiencing fear because of what is happening. We want to help, but don't know what to do. All of our reactions to our beloved pet dying are basically the same as they are for a person who is close to us----because our pet is someone close to us.

Animals, human or otherwise, die the same way. The physical body is internally programmed to die. From the moment of birth the body begins to die, slowly, daily. This is life. We are born and at some point we die. But we don't think about dying or death until it begins to happen close to us. We are never prepared. Most of us don't know what dying is like, how it happens, or what it looks like. Because of this lack of knowledge we bring fear of the unknown with us to this experience.

Animals don't have the same emotional connection to living that we humans do so they probably do not fear death in the same way we do. Death is just another change for them.

Gradual or Fast

There are only two ways to die: gradually or quickly. For animals, quick death can be being hit