

APRIL 2011 NEWS

The month of April seems special in so many ways and to me it often opens the doors to discussion regarding death and resurrection. Therefore, I asked three people to contribute to my newsletter by offering their own recent experiences with death. Each contribution different as Jill is a fellow Animal Communicator and one of my gifted students who now works professionally in the field. Jill Tait can be contacted on 084 104 2489.

The other ladies, being Holly and Lorraine, are past students but now are good friends. It is always such a privilege to assist animals and humans when decisions need to be made and when we, as animal lovers, face the difficult task of knowing how to proceed regarding the management of our most beloved pets.

AS THEY LEAD US

My blind dog, Smartie, was the reason I contacted Debbie. With encouragement I started and completed the Animal Communication courses. I changed in so many ways through this awesome experience, realising that I could really start to listen to what they had to say.

On my arrival in Cape Town a year ago, my friend Sue told me all about Chester Bell. What an awesome dog!! A handsome full blooded Staffie, whose adventures are legendary, possibly even making him an honorary cat!



Chester resided with his humans in a house on the beach at Bakoven. He loved the beach and chewing his stones and he especially loved lots of attention and praise! Year after year, when his favourite families returned to the Cape, his humans would allow him to spend a week or the weekend with them! His Mum still has phone calls asking if Chester can come for a sleep over. Over the last few years Chester has declined these invitations as he just gets fed too much!

During some of these stays he would visit the beach with the new family and totally ignore his 'permanent' humans if they happened to be on the beach.

He enjoyed the stroll from Bakoven to the promenade along the main strip at Camps Bay. He once spent the weekend with a young pregnant woman who fell for him and took him home sitting in the passenger seat of her open-drop-head sports car! Whilst on one of these strolls he was spotted by some dubious characters who thought he would make a good fighter (this came out in my first communication with Chester). They drove him off in a blue-green car, screaming all the way and returned him asking for a reward three hours later when they realised all his teeth were worn down by his love of chewing stones!

A few months after my first reading with him, his health started to deteriorate and his mum and dad asked me to come and see him. He was thirteen years old and when I asked him how he felt, on the Wednesday, he said, "bad, bad, bad". He said he would like to 'go' on Friday.

Such a transformation took place in that family. All love and care was focussed on Chester for the next two days.

All tension and personal focus was put aside. He took his spot on the red Persian carpet facing the open door so that he could see the comings and goings in the complex. His elbows rested on a pillow and his wee breaks were lovingly handled by his dad, Graham. He was fed lovely soft food and the best treat of all, Biltong. I did say that the day he refused Biltong was the day he would pass away; I thought nothing of this remark.

The weekend went by; he rallied. He was carried into his favourite dog park, De Waal Park, for a picnic and loved it.

On the following Friday, after good wishes for Chester's recovery coming from all corners of the world from friends whose heart he had captured, his mum phoned to say could I come and see him. He had lost the shine in his eyes, he said he was ready to go now. His humans called in the vet to come to the house. As she entered the vet said she felt so much love in the house.

Chester, the 'legend', passed away peacefully in his mum's arms on 11 March 2011.

On reflection:

When an animal gives you a day of the week for euthanasia, don't assume which Friday it is. In this case it was next Friday.

Debbie says that often such a strong and close connection to one's animal is only made at the end; in this case, it was in the last 10 days of his life.

His humans grieved in unison and qualities of compassion, patience and empathy surfaced constantly in the complicated inter-family relationships.

His dad took comfort in visiting De Waal Park and 'felt' his presence there and even picked up a message from Chester that he should get a full face white helmet for his scooter.

Candles burn for Chester on the dining room table surrounded by photos of him.

To this day, messages of condolence continue to pour in on blackberry and email.

All we have to do is think of them with love and they are forever with us!

Letter from Holly and Lorraine to Debbie

I have never previously experienced the privilege of being close to a beloved pet right up to the moment of death and I can honestly say that it was a real blessing and a uniquely profound journey. I thank Saffron for making that happen and a truly big thank you to you, for your insights and guidance that kept us firmly on the path that Saffron had chosen. Our priority was for her will and her choices to prevail; without you, we'd have struggled to achieve that reality.

At the time, it was really challenging to stay with the process of allowing her to die at home; not because we were against the concept but we had just returned from holiday and were anxious to get back to work. It was our deep love for Saffron and her choices that kept at least one of us at home day and night. I made my bed on the floor beside hers and we stayed with her 24/7.

Accepting the fact that no treatment would cure her; that she was going to die no matter what, was the difficult part. One is so tempted to chase after all manner of alternative as well as conventional treatments to keep her alive. Even after a renowned local 'cancer specialist' vet gave us his opinion on just how very terminal this disease was, we still sought other alternative treatments with our holistic vet. Acceptance is a big stumbling block; something I really struggled to get to grips with. I think that processing anger and denial was part of the path to achieving acceptance. The other part was listening to the professional opinions of animal health experts but this came with its own challenges as all 3 of them recommended immediate euthanasia.

Once we got through that phase, we felt peacefulness prevail. Those last couple of days of peaceful, just 'be-ing' time with Saffron, were profoundly precious. We are so extremely grateful to you, for communicating with Saffron and letting us know that she did not wish to be force-fed or given loads of medication as well as how to work with the pain that she experienced (luckily minimal). Your feedback made it so much easier for us to make her comfortable without complicating simple things or over-riding her wishes.

We are both completely accepting of death as part of the life cycle and have no fear or negative thoughts around death. As a result, I was urging Saffron to go into the light and leave the planet but this was born from my own selfish motivation of needing to get back to work. At the time, I struggled to understand why Saffron wanted to drag it out; we all knew she would be leaving the physical body soon ... why delay it? However, when I look back now, I completely understand why she took her time to “say her goodbyes”. It is simply not a quick process. Perhaps for those who have been sick for a very long time but for someone in Saffron’s position, who was only sick for a couple of weeks, taking plenty of time to ‘say goodbyes’ is very important. Not knowing if she was in pain or not would have been the worst aspect of this journey with beloved Saffron so your communication with her and your feedback to us on this, was hugely helpful.

With the benefit of hindsight, I can clearly see that our scarcity of pain and anguish after she passed, was directly related to the considerable days and hours spent with her whilst she was sick and dying. I recognize that we were able to process our poignant feelings of grief, anger and sadness whilst she was still with us.

She chose her moment of death; she chose to leave when she was well and truly ready and for this we are deeply grateful. If and when there is a next time with a beloved pet or even person, I will put the rest of my life on hold to spend as much time as necessary to finish saying goodbye. I now understand that this process is very important for the one who is preparing to depart and of course it has the added benefit of allowing those of us who are left behind to go on with our lives with calm acceptance, rather than grief.

Debbie, your guidance was a truly special gift to us all; we are deeply blessed to have the gift of your deep love and amazing ability with animals in our lives.

With love and honour, we thank you.

May you always be blessed with an abundance of love and peace!

Holly and Lorraine

The one certainty of life is death. None of us can avoid this happening. To me what is important is that both humans and animals are kept in a space of dignity and pain free until we move into the light. As an Animal Communicator, I feel privileged to assist both animals and humans to do this.

LOVE AND LIGHT
Debbie

(Please email info@zeropointhealing.co.za with suggestions about topics you’d like me to cover in future newsletters.)