



Healing Touch

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Quality Of Life Questionnaire

Pet Name: _____

Date: _____

"Quality of Life" is a very subjective and difficult-to-discuss topic. This assessment is an attempt to help quantify this abstract topic and open a dialogue between you and your veterinarian. It is never too early or too late to consider quality of life. We recommend re-assessing routinely to help pick up on any changes as soon as possible. The frequency you reassess will vary for each owner, pet, and life stage. There are no right or wrong answers. If you are considering euthanasia, it is important to remember your motivation for starting to wrestle with this decision. In most cases, it is an attempt to prevent any unnecessary suffering. Feelings of guilt are very common and normal. Navigating this decision and all the emotions that come with it is one of the hardest things pet owners have to do, however, to do so is a labor of love to make sure the patient does not have to experience more pain/discomfort than is unavoidable. We at Healing Touch firmly believe there is no "right time", but rather a window of times that is appropriate, and you as the owner are always the best judge. We are here to support you in whatever way we can. This assessment was adapted from The Ohio State University's document "How Do I Know When It's Time? Assessing Quality of Life for Your Companion Animal and Making End-of-Life Decisions"

Directions: For each question, in each category below, fill in the blank with a score between 1-5 each corresponding to the following answers:

Strongly Agree (all the time for extremely) = 1

Agree (most of the time or significantly) = 2

Neutral (sometimes or mildly) = 3

Disagree (occasionally or slightly) = 4

Strongly Disagree (Never or None) = 5

Attitude/Behavior - Attitude and behavior are a large part of assessing quality of life. Pets cannot speak to us with words but often communicate through their behavior.

- My pet does not want to play
- My pet does not interact with me in the same way as before
- My pet does not enjoy the same activities as before
- My pet hides or removes themselves
- My pet's demeanor and/or behavior is different than it was prior to their diagnosis/illness
- My pet does not seem to enjoy life
- My pet is sleeping more than usual
- My pet seems dull and/or depressed

Category Total: ____ / 40

Discomfort - Animals often mask signs of pain, so there can be more discomfort present than we can see, but it is essential to assess any apparent signs of pain.

- My pet seems to be experiencing pain
- My pet is panting (even when resting)
- My pet is trembling or shaking
- My pet has more bad days than good days

Category Total: ____ / 20

Nourishment - Eating and drinking are life-sustaining functions. While these activities can be temporarily decreased during bouts of illness, sustained or uncontrollable episodes should be considered significant signs of a rapidly declining quality of life.

- My pet is not eating well (may only be eating treats or only if fed by hand)
- My pet is not drinking well
- My pet is losing weight
- My pet is vomiting and/or seems nauseous

Category Total: ____ / 20

Elimination - Eliminating waste products from the body is crucial to maintaining health for a pet. In addition, inappropriate urination and defecation can be stressful to both the pet and the owner.

- My pet is not urinating well
- My pet is having diarrhea often
- My pet is urinating/defecating in inappropriate locations (e.g indoors)
- My pet seems to be struggling to urinate and/or defecate

Category Total: ____ / 20

(continued on next page)

Movement - Daily living requires a substantial amount of movement, and as a result being able to move around comfortably is very important to a good quality of life.

- My pet is not moving normally
- My pet is not as active as before
- My pet does not move around as needed
- My pet needs my help to move around normally

Category Total: ____ / 20

Hygiene - Poor body hygiene can result in discomfort and health conditions (e.g. skin infections, discomfort, itching, etc.) and so this is an important factor to consider when assessing quality of life.

- My pet is unable or less willing to keep themselves clean after soiling
- My pet's hair or coat is greasy, matted or rough looking

Category Total: ____ / 10

Other - One often overlooked aspect in the discussion of quality of life, is how the care required affects owners and other pets in the house. A lot of owners feel extreme amounts of pressure when it comes to taking care of their pets and often feel “selfish” for considering themselves. While these feelings are understandable, the quality of life of every affected person (and other pets) does matter and should be considered.

- I am finding it difficult and/or stressful to manage my pets care
- Managing my pet's care is causing a financial strain
- I feel less able to offer care to my other pets due to the demands of my pets care.

___ Worry for my pet is taking an emotional toll on me or my family

Category Total: ___ / 20

Total Score (across all categories): ___

Interpreting The Results

If in any of the categories above, your pet's total score is less than 50% of the total score in that category, and you have not already made peace with the decision to euthanize then it is strongly recommended to seek the advice of a veterinary professional to determine what treatment options are available. Additionally, any severe change to any one of these questions could signal a significant decrease in your pet's health and/or quality of life and should be addressed with your primary care veterinarian.