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Bonding a rabbit after the death of a spouse

By Susan Curtiss, Bunny Expert

Many times we bond rabbits in pairs as pet owners. They seem happier and originate from living with others. What do we do when a member of the pair dies? In many instances it is a good idea to re-bond the living rabbit. Sometimes the living partner can die of loneliness if left alone after his love passes away.

It is important to keep a close watch on the living rabbit. Let the living rabbit see and be with the deceased partner if possible so they know they died. It is easier to know what happened rather than always wonder what happened. Sometimes the living rabbit will not eat with sadness of losing it's mate. That can be crucial to losing that rabbit too. Help get him over the mourning period by giving extra attention and make sure he eats. If he gets too depressed, you should re-bond him/her to another. It is important to have bunny dates with rabbit rescues or shelters to find another appropriate partner. The bunnies need to pick someone they like and personalities are very important in bonding.

Many rabbits will be happy to re-bond again. Always make sure all the rabbits are spayed and neutered and healed before starting a bond. Size does not matter. Opposite sex bonding are easier, although some same sexes will bond.

Personalities are the most important to consider. One partner wants to be the boss and if both are bossy, chances are it will not work. Many people I know, including myself, have recently lost a partner in a bonded pair. Re-bonding in these situations is great. It keeps the rabbit happy. We get to save another rabbit that might otherwise be on death row at a shelter for no other reason than being over crowded. We get to enjoy a new soul that will teach us much about life. Lots of times our dear friends that went to bunny heaven will lead us to another to adopt that needs us. Some rabbits will do fine not being re-bonded, especially if they have another pet friend like a cat, dog or guinea pig. Also if the rabbit gets enough human attention it might be fine alone after losing a spouse.

What better way to support Adopt a Rabbit Month and save a rabbit by re-bonding your rabbit that recently lost it's loved one. Rabbits can be re-bonded numerous times after losing their partners to death but you and your rabbit need to take the time to find another good match. It is also possible to take your single rabbit and try and bond him to another pair if you have one, depending on all personalities involved. There are books, rabbit rescue web sites and post groups that can aid you in how to re-bond and support you in mourning of your rabbit. Save another life and re-bond your rabbit after death of a partner if you and your rabbit feel it is what you need to do.

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