



## ASK THE SOCIAL WORKER

**Question:** My mother is a 70-year-old widow who lives alone and complains she is lonely. I am thinking about buying her a dog for companionship. Would a dog help her feel less lonely?

**Answer:** Yes, having a dog might help to diminish your mother's loneliness. Visit the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) at [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) or the Administration on Aging (AOA) at [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov) to read about seniors who felt lonely until they adopted a dog. Seniors may also realize other benefits from interacting with a dog. As Kelly Connolly of the HSUS points out, "An elderly person who has a companion animal in her life can expect many physical and emotional benefits, including lower blood pressure, improved social skills, reduced stress and increased physical activity."

I suggest you talk with your mother about the benefits and responsibilities of adopting a dog. The following are a few questions the HSUS suggests people address before adopting a pet:

- Why do you want a pet?
- Do you have time for a pet?
- Can you afford a pet?
- Can you have a pet where you live?

- Is your home suitable for a pet?
- Will you be able to keep and care for a pet during its lifetime?
- Who will care for your pet when you can't?

Owning a dog can be a big responsibility for seniors, so don't be disappointed if your mother decides against it. She might be interested in a "visiting dog" program. This type of program gives seniors the opportunity to interact with dogs during scheduled visits to their homes or senior facilities. Visit Dog Play at [www.dogplay.com](http://www.dogplay.com) and the Delta Society at [www.deltasociety.org](http://www.deltasociety.org) for more information about these programs.

There are many ways to diminish the feeling of loneliness seniors often feel. Give us a call at (888) 994-3864, ext. 2390, and a skilled social worker will provide you with information and recommendations.

*Sources: Humane Society of the United States, [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org); Administration on Aging, [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov); Dog Play, [www.dogplay.com](http://www.dogplay.com); Delta Society, [www.deltasociety.org](http://www.deltasociety.org).*

## JOKE OF THE MONTH

**My doctor recently told me that jogging could add years to my life. I think he was right. I feel ten years older already.**

— Milton Berle, [www.basicjokes.com](http://www.basicjokes.com)

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

## CONTRIBUTORS

- Veronica Rosenblatt, MA, MS, CMC  
Director of Social Services
- Karen Wiener, MA, MFT, CMC  
Manager of Social Services
- Cheryl Cohen, MSW, LCSW  
Social Worker





## CANCEL UNWANTED CATALOGS



Do you find that you are constantly regretting the loss of your time as well as the loss of our natural resources when you dispose of unsolicited and/or unwanted cata-

logs? To date, at least 619,809 persons have used Catalog Choice, a free service sponsored by the Ecology Center and endorsed by the National Wildlife Federation, to opt out of 7,994,014 catalogs.

Visit Catalog Choice at [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org) and find out if you can quickly decrease your mailbox clutter by selecting those merchants that send you repeat or unwanted catalogs. Do Crate & Barrel, L.L. Bean, Lands' End, Office Depot and Urban Outfitters sound familiar? These are a few of the

many merchants that will process your request to cancel their printed catalogs.

Most of the merchants at Catalog Choice have online catalogs, so you can shop on the Web at your convenience and avoid impulse purchases. If Catalog Choice doesn't include the merchant you want to contact, you can suggest they add that merchant to their database. Remember, you don't have to wait for the merchant to enroll with Catalog Choice. You can always call the toll-free number listed on the catalog you want to cancel and request that your name be removed from the mailing list. The time you take today to cancel catalogs will save you time in the future, encourage you to plan your shopping and help save our natural resources. So get going and take charge of your catalogs!

*Source: Catalog Choice, [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org).*

## NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF'S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

### **Alzheimer's Association: [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org), Helpline: 1-800-272-3900**

This organization is the largest private nonprofit supporter of dementia research. It provides education and assistance to anyone affected by dementia.

### **AARP: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)**

This organization is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association dedicated to enriching the experience and providing information about aging for older adults and their families.

### **National Family Caregivers Association: [www.nfcacares.org](http://www.nfcacares.org)**

A national charitable organization dedicated to making life better for all caregivers. It provides education, empowerment, networking and advocacy.



### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Discontent comes  
in proportion to  
knowledge.”

— Will Rogers

### QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Call Karen Wiener, Manager of Social Services at (888) 994-3863, ext. 2390, or write to [karen@wrmail.org](mailto:karen@wrmail.org).