

## Pets Help With Life's Transitions

**Cat lover Suzanne Stowe blogs about finding a facility for her aging mom that would allow her cat and dog.**

*By Suzanne Stowe*

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Suzanne's mom My mom was diagnosed with dementia three years ago and my sister and I knew that eventually we would need to move her into a facility that could provide the care she required. Mom made it very clear that she did not want to move without her pet cat and dog.

The process of finding the right place started several months ago. I did some research and Mom and I spent every weekend looking at various places. Some places would allow the cat but not the dog. Other places were too big and felt impersonal.

Suzanne as a child with pets Titi and Kiki. Pets have always been an important part of the Stowe family. Eventually we visited a smaller facility that had a good feel to it. The staff was very caring, the residents seemed happy and were very friendly, and every time we visited, we saw pets. Mom decided this was the right place for her.

The big move took place last Saturday. We crated the cat, Baby Kiss Kiss, early in the morning, put Duchess the dog on a leash and waited for the moving team. Everything went very smoothly and by 4 p.m. all of Mom's belongings were unpacked, the pictures were hung, and the cat and dog seemed right at home.

I realized how important it was to Mom to keep her pets with her through this transition. I personally feel having pets in our lives enriches them, and just because Mom needed to move into a different environment, she should not have to do it without the pets she has shared her life with for eight years. I am so happy that we found the right place for her and that she and her pets are so happy there.