

# What happens at reunions

## Expectations vs Reality

SHOUNAK REZA

A few weeks ago, I was taking a stroll by Dhanmondi Lake, waiting for a friend I hadn't seen in months. We had been planning the reunion for a long time. We had imagined how overjoyed we would be to see each other again but contrary to our expectations, once we saw each other, we found it quite difficult to open up like before, as some time had elapsed since we last met. This incident made me ponder over the unpredictability of reunions.

When it comes to the reunion of two people, the reality can sometimes be similar to expectations. The first few minutes might consist of struggles to find a subject to talk about and all those very British discussions about the weather. In many cases, it takes them only minutes to realise that physical distance has not affected their relationship at all. The ice breaks and they start talking about the good old days and everything that has happened in their lives since they parted their ways. It feels like nothing has changed. The void created by time and physical distance disappears. However, in many cases, the awkwardness might persist, causing the ice to remain unbreakable. The two people might try their best to make the reunion as memorable as possible, but the elapse of time, instead of being kind to them, made the void too permanent to be filled.



In the case of high school or college reunions, you might hope to catch up with people you haven't met in years, reflecting on old memories and keeping grudges at bay. People at a group reunion are initially delighted to see one another and if this atmosphere persists throughout the event, congratulations to everyone on making it a successful reunion.

However, in many cases, a not-so-thoughtful person might recount something that can open wounds that time managed to heal and dig up grudges that were buried ages ago. Such an incident might lead to tears and quarrels. The result? Disaster. Several (if not most) people might vow never to attend a reunion of the group again.

We look forward to family reunions as it gives us an opportunity to meet the family members we don't get to meet that often anymore because, well, we grew up and got busy, but such reunions are often tainted by the presence of judgemental and nosy relatives. Such relatives judge you for everything, starting from your major to what you are wearing. Nosy relatives are possibly even more interested in your life than you yourself are and their endless queries can make you regret your decision to attend the reunion. And, of course, fights often ensue when relatives start blaming one another for something that happened three decades ago. Introverts attending the reunion are particularly scarred when, instead of being what it promised to be, the reunion technically ends up becoming a playground for nosy and quarrelsome people.

Reunions are supposed to be emotional and memorable, but we often end up making them cold and awkward or turning them into wars. Shouldn't we make sure reunions bring people closer all over again?

*When he is not dealing with mood swings, Shounak Reza devours books and tea and longs for eras he has never lived in. You can contact him at [www.facebook.com/shounakreza](http://www.facebook.com/shounakreza)*

# Stages of owning a pet

SUBAITA FAIROOZ

The increasing number of people who have started to appreciate keeping a pet is an indication that having one is a way of life now. The bond that we share with our pets is a rare one and overtime they become a part of our family.

### STAGE 1

The first stage is rather simple but undeniably important. Unfortunately, this is one that most people skip out on. If you are planning to buy a pet, be it a cat, dog, rabbit, or birds, you need to research which breed is best suited to your lifestyle. For instance, if you have to stay outside for long hours, then it is not a good idea to get a dog since it requires a lot of attention. If you have allergic tendencies then it is best to find out which breed is hypoallergenic. This saves you the heartache of having to give your pet away because you are allergic to it.

### STAGE 2

At this stage you have already gotten your hands on whichever little ball of fur you fancy. You have to remember that animals are not exact copies of each other in terms of personality. So if your cat ends up acting completely different from what you saw in that YouTube video do not be disappointed. Just give it some time to get used to its surroundings. Chances are it will not immediately crawl into your lap and start purring. You need to provide your animal with an environment it feels safe in and is surrounded by all the things that it needs, like a litter box, or a hutch to burrow in.



### STAGE 3

By this time your little pet is well accustomed to its new surroundings but the difficult task of training begins. Puppies are

super energetic and it is just one of the things that makes it difficult to train them. With the right amount of determination, and a few treats, you can get them rolling on the ground or giving you high-fives. It is much easier to train cats to use the litter box, though, because it is an innate nature of these friendly felines to be as clean as they can. At this stage your pet will probably start exhibiting its individualism and the two of you will even start understanding each other better.

### STAGE 4

This is the stage that tests how strong the foundation of your relationship is. Most people pass this stage with flying colours. Most people, though, tend to give up. They

realise that they cannot accommodate their pets' needs around theirs and even if they love their pets, the time comes for them to part. At other times, people lose interest and are no longer prepared to take the responsibility. Many domesticated animals are set loose in the streets to fend for themselves but the truth that we forget is that they are not equipped to handle themselves out there because they were trained to be dependent on us for food and shelter. Thus, if you think that you cannot take care of your pet any longer just make the extra effort to rehouse it.

*Subaita loves cats and dogs, and everything that flies and hops. Send her your favorite animal videos at [subaita.fairooz@gmail.com](mailto:subaita.fairooz@gmail.com)*

