

On Saturday the 31 March 2008 my daughter committed suicide. Lucrecia (Lu) has suffered from depression for many years. She was 32 years old. In January of that year her best friend died from accidentally overdosing on her medication. Lu went downhill and no matter what we did we could not get her out of her deep depression. I rang the Cat Team (Crisis Assessment Team) begging them to come to my house and assess Lu which they have done before a few years ago and after assessing her at that time they put her into Clayton Hospital. My son also rang them begging them to come and assess her but their response was they rang Lu and Lu told them she was fine so they took her word for it even though I told them I was worried she was going to harm herself. I got her an appointment with my work physiologist. After her session the physiologist was so worried about Lu's state of mind she rang the 'Cat Team' and spoke to them for an hour and a half begging them to come to the office and assess Lu who was in the waiting room. They did not even bother. The next morning the same physiologist again rang the Cat Team pleading with them to assess Lu. Two months later on a Saturday morning after coming home from buying breakfast for myself and my daughter I found my beautiful daughter had hung herself in the garage. I do not remember much about that day but apparently the house was full of police, fire brigade, my family. I have not been able to have a normal life since. My work sent me to the same counsellor that I sent Lu to who I had never been to before. When I got there she said to me 'how can I help you' and when I told her about Lu she said 'I knew that was going to happen within 2 months'. She asked me to write a letter to the Health Commissioner to complain about the Cat Team which I did but of course have had no response.

My financial situation is very low. My son Michael worked for the National Bank for 8 years but when his sister died he left his job and went on the Unemployment Benefits. He and myself being a single mum well our lives will never be the same. I cannot do normal things like I used to e.g. reading. I cannot even pick up a newspaper as the image of my daughter is on my mind every day. I have been on antidepressants, sleeping tablets, Valium since I lost my daughter but I would not harm myself for the sake of my son but I am so ready to be with Lu and am not afraid of dying like I used to be.

On the 16th of April of this year I also lost my brother to suicide. He lost his wife many years ago to illness and had been remarried for 11 months to a lovely person. None of us can understand why he did this but the Fire Brigade came to his house as there was a bush fire in the back of his house and to their horror came across his body. He had poured petrol over himself. This happened in Auckland New Zealand and my twin brother had to try and identify him. I feel numb and don't think I even cried when I was told as I feel too devastated over the loss of my daughter to feel any other pain.

Just to add to this after many visits to the physiologist and finding absolutely her no help at all so I stopped going. I ended up joining the Compassionate Friends in Glen Waverley and my son and I go the first Monday of each month and as far as I am concerned they have saved my life. Just sitting there listening to other people that have been through the same as myself and Michael makes me realise I am not the only one who is suffering from the loss of a child. Unfortunately I haven't been able to share my experience with the group as I still find it hard to talk about my daughter so this has been good therapy to write to you about this. I visit Lu every Saturday and Sunday and find so much comfort in just sitting with her in Springvale.

Marguerite Foss