

October 28, 2009

Jared Cane

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to inform you of the personal costs of suicide in relation to my own experiences.

Five years ago, my mother, Anne-Maree Cane, committed suicide. She had raised me as a single mother and was only 44 years old at the time of her death. She was a loving, witty and intelligent person whom I miss intensely. She had completed an honours degree in science while raising me and I have great respect for her in this regard. I was 22 years old at the time and had just moved out of home a month earlier, which made the experience quite traumatic, as I was relatively young at the time.

She had suffered from depression for most of her life and had been proscribed heavy doses of anti-depressants to combat this. She had been experiencing bullying in her workplace and was had a large credit card debt. These factors, I believe, all culminating in her jumping off The Gap in Sydney on 10 May 2005.

I feel that there is no one reason for her suicide but a culmination of factors that independently are insufficiently addressed in our society. People who have severe depression like my mother found it hard to find the right course of treatment, and I believe medication is not the answer for everyone. I feel more research needs to be done into other treatments or better ones.

Bullying in the workplace is something I think also needs to be addressed, as I have suffered this myself in the first job I was ever employed in. It is a horrendous and degrading experience at times and I have no doubt that it played role in mother's decision to commit suicide.

Also I do not believe she had enough options available to her in terms of financial counselling or assistance in how to deal with debt. To her, the only solution was her death. Ironically her death led to my financial situation being secured, from life insurance policies being paid out to me, and I believe she hoped that that would be the eventual outcome of her death. I believe that this is a terrible and hopeless situation for someone to end up in and something needs to be done to help people who find themselves in severe debt.

I believe if the factors above could be addressed, in my mother's case, she might still be alive today. Hopefully this inquiry will shed some light on to what can be done to prevent suicide in the future.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit my own experiences,

Jared Cane.