

Myself, my husband and my two other children were deeply affected and our lives changed forever by the death of our youngest son, Jack, by suicide. Ten years on our grief is easier to bear but without the support of The Compassionate Friends in the first years, a voluntary organisation which also receives some support from government sources, I'm not sure where we would have ended up. They were warm, caring, understanding and because they had been there too, were an immense support to us. We still needed and received counselling and support from other agencies but this group proved to be the most important one in helping our understanding and subsequent 'sort of acceptance' after this most horrible time in our lives. We now contribute to this group by being team leaders for the Suicide Support Group of The Compassionate Friends.

I feel that in the community there is still a reluctance to talk about this type of death of a child or relative and that this can hinder some people from beginning to [rebuild](#) their lives again. The usual network of sympathy and support is sometimes lacking, perhaps because of [the](#) perceived social stigma of our loved ones deciding to take their own lives, rather than it being taken from them by illness or accident. They still don't realise that depression or mental illness can be just as lethal.

Thank you for allowing us to speak.

Jennifer and Robin Morris