

*“I never imagined I’d need help,
but the Crisis Center was there when I did.”*

December 3, 2009



Dear Friend:

Two years ago, I volunteered at the Contra Costa Crisis Center to help spread the word about its grief counseling services in our community. My heart broke as I interviewed parents who’d lost their children, widowers, siblings, and a widow whose husband had died by suicide. At the time, I never imagined I’d need help, but the Crisis Center was there when I did.

Little did I know as I produced that first video for the Crisis Center that a freight train of pain was heading toward my own family. A year-and-a-half after completing that volunteer project, my wife and I lost our son Travis to leukemia. The ache and fog I felt, and the inconsolable pain my wife was in, were too much to take alone.

“I knew at the time how much love was being showered upon us, but the numbness and sorrow were so overwhelming that I could barely get through the day...” These were my wife’s words after losing our son. I didn’t know how to help my family or console my wife while I was grieving, too.

It felt like friends and family couldn’t truly understand. But the Crisis Center was there for us. The staff and volunteers at the Crisis Center *did* understand what we were going through and they were there for me and my family. They helped us learn that we were not alone in our sorrow and that we could move past the pain.

Today, we continue to heal. I know that someday we will honor Travis by feeling whole, again, and sharing all the joyful memories we have of him with his daughter, McKenna. The Crisis Center has shown us that we can overcome.

For me and my family, the Crisis Center’s staff and volunteers provided comfort, care, and compassion when we were grieving. What amazes me is that their services are available to all our neighbors, 24-hours a day, 365 days a year, always free of charge. The Crisis Center’s programs reach everyone in Contra Costa—24-hour crisis hotlines, individual and group grief counseling for youths and adults, youth services with an emphasis on violence prevention, homeless services, and 211 information and referral.

The Crisis Center has been there, not just for me and my family, but for tens of thousands of local people every year for more than 45 years. Now, the Crisis Center needs your help. Community support makes all of their vital, life-affirming services possible.

(continued)

With Travis' death, I've learned that life is unpredictable. My motto now is "carpe diem," or seize the day. Take this moment—this day—to support the Crisis Center with a significant gift. Your generosity will help another person, maybe someone just like me, get through their darkest hour. With help comes hope.

On behalf of the Crisis Center, thank you for joining me in taking action now to generously support its work. Help make sure the Crisis Center is there for someone else who never imagined needing its services.

Paying it forward,



Greg Freeman
Crisis Center client and volunteer

- P.S. Please help the Crisis Center—and others who never imagine needing its services—by making a significant gift today. With your generosity, the Crisis Center can be there for local people when they need it the most.
- P.P.S. If you've already sent a donation recently, thank you so much for your thoughtfulness! Perhaps you can give this letter to someone else who might like to support the Crisis Center's work.
- P.P.S. If you'd like to give online, or learn more about all of the Crisis Center's programs, please visit www.crisis-center.org.