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*Bev Chappell with Silas,
the youngest participant at two-
and-a-half years old. This photo
was used on the cover
of a publication,
This Week Magazine.*



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Early Years of The Dougy Center

After about a year, the support group outgrew our home. The family room in our basement had served us well, but now there were eight children and four facilitators that more than filled that small room. Upstairs there were five mothers and three facilitators in the living room. We needed to find a larger space, so we began the search at once.

A church allowed us to use their formal boardroom—complete with large tables and tall, stiff chairs. It was nice of the church to help us, but the environment was much too formal for the children. When they sat in the office chairs, their feet dangled far from the floor. It was if they just could not get grounded in this boardroom environment. We tried meeting in several other places, and finally found the perfect house. It suited our needs; we could use it free of charge; and it was in Southeast Portland, not too far from my home. For the first time we experienced enough space to do the things we needed to do with children from ages five to early teens. The children and facilitators met on the third floor and the mothers met on the first floor.

We had been in this house for about four months when we ran into some trouble. The owners of the house were very disheartened one evening when we became quite noisy. We had brought balloons for the kids to blow up and to draw faces on the balloons that expressed their feelings. One balloon accidentally popped and suddenly, chaos broke loose. The kids began blowing up balloons and popping them any way they could, whether it was stomping on them, putting them under the leg of a bench, or in the case of one five-year-old boy, biting the

blown-up balloon with his teeth. He asked me to blow up one balloon after another. I would tie a knot on the end and he would put it up to his mouth and bite it until it exploded in his face. Balloon after balloon, I watched as this precious little face become nothing but a mouth full of bared teeth as he bit and exploded balloons.

After that evening of balloon popping, the caretakers asked us to leave this wonderful place. It had been a perfect arrangement and we were sad to leave. Once again, we were back to holding the support groups in my home.



The Warner Pacific House

The Warner Pacific House

I had stayed in touch with many of the people I had known when I taught at Warner Pacific College. One day I went to the college's office and told Roberta Peterson, an administrative assistant, about our need for space. I asked if we might possibly use their gymnasium one evening every other week. She talked to the right people, pleading our cause, and before long the college offered us the use of an empty house on the periphery of the campus. The only caveat for using the house was that we had to first do much-needed repair work, and then clean it. The house had been used for classes and there were sheetrock walls where walls should not have been, and no walls where walls were needed. The house had been empty for a long time and was filthy. Despite the problems, my response was, "Yes, indeed, we will clean it and fix it and make it usable."

At this transitional time we were in great need of help. Fortunately, The Skyline Council of the Oregon Chapter of the Telephone Pioneers came into our lives with help from Dougy Turno's mother, Carol. She was a Southern Bell Telephone employee in Aiken, South Carolina, and

I had kept in constant touch with Carol ever since she and Doug had been in Portland a year and a half earlier. When I mentioned to Carol we needed help, she put me in touch with the Skyline Council Pioneers. At Carol's insistence, I called the Oregon chapter and asked if they could help us secure an electric typewriter, not expecting anything more.



Bev Chappell with Jean de Lacey Bourke of the Skyline Council Telephone Pioneers

We were trying to get The Dougy Center's new home functioning and we had little to nothing to work with. The request for a typewriter was relayed to Jean de Lacey Bourke, president of the council. Within days Jean called with the good news that she had a used typewriter. She offered to deliver it to The Dougy Center so she could see our new headquarters. Several of the folks on the Skyline Council's board came with Jean. Recalling that visit years later, Jean laughed and told me, "We entered through the back door, which was open, to find you, Bev, on your hands and knees, scrubbing the kitchen floor." Then she asked me, "Do you remember how pleased you were to show off your new quarters, which needed so much work? On our way back to the office Skyline board members started talking about taking on The Dougy Center as a council community service project, and so we did."

Many members of The Skyline Council spent quite a few weekends cleaning, scrubbing, painting, and repairing the new home for The Dougy Center. When the Pioneers and so many others came to our rescue to clean this downtrodden house, we were all delighted. Many people worked hard at many projects, from knocking down walls to plastering to painting. Coni Lloyd, one of the early volunteers, was artistically talented and she painted a mural in the children's meeting room to brighten it. All of us were thrilled with our accomplishments. Recalling those early years

at the Warner Pacific house, Jean described in a letter the Pioneers' next step on behalf of The Dougy Center:

A few months passed and one of the council members suggested that the money we had accumulated from Pioneer sales could be used to supply The Dougy Center with furniture for a Christmas gift. One of our members contacted a furniture store, explaining what we were doing and the store gave us a wonderful offer. We were able to purchase a sofa, two end tables, a couple of easy chairs and two lamps at far less than their regular cost. Bless the furniture store; they even delivered it all to The Dougy Center.

The Pioneers also gave us dishes, cutlery, cups, glasses, a stove, refrigerator, and dishwasher. This house was beginning to look like the safe, warm nest we wanted for the families who would come. It was already feeling like that for those of us who worked there. Without a doubt the Telephone Pioneers were essential to the beginning of The Dougy Center. They assisted at a time when our needs were overwhelming. It felt as if Dougy Turno's spirit infused our new home through his mom's fellow employees in Oregon. On February 29, 1984, this quaint fixer-upper house became The Dougy Center's home for more than four years.

A Cadre of Angels

Another group of special angels who came to the aid of The Dougy Center in those early days was the Loma Linda University Medical Auxiliary/Portland Chapter, headed by Linda Usher and Sandy Bingham. The members were wives of physicians on the staff at Portland Adventist Medical Center. My husband was also on the staff at this hospital.

This medical auxiliary had a tradition of supporting projects around the world. When the members heard about the needs of The Dougy Center, they thought having a local project would be worthwhile. Linda had told the auxiliary, "We need a purpose—a mission." Since Linda's interests revolved around children, she had made a list of possible

THE EARLY YEARS



In the early days, the Center hosted pot luck meals before meetings.

projects, putting The Dougy Center first on her list. She knew little about our vision other than we needed a place where we could help children deal with death and grief and she respected that I had a strong sense of what grieving children needed. Linda also knew my husband was a pediatrician on the same hospital staff as her husband.

Linda made an appointment to meet me at our small house at Warner Pacific College. During our meeting I had to laugh when she told me most emphatically, “By the way, I don’t do death and dying. That said, I *do* do children.” Linda was impressed by both our desire to help children and by The Dougy Center’s many needs. In turn, all of the auxiliary members willingly said, “We will help. Tell us how we can.”

The auxiliary members’ introduction to the workings of The Dougy Center was as “house parents” for a brand new group of children. Linda later told me that the experience was profound, one she would never forget. She also admitted that the situation with the participant families was far worse than they had anticipated. In the early days of the program, there were potluck meals before the meetings. The children loved that there were meals because most of their parents were so steeped in grief they no longer cooked at home. Often, families ate at a variety of fast food places, grabbing a bite to eat on their way to the Center. Jenny, one of the early kids whose dad had died, told me, “We love the food we

get to eat here. Our car is filled with fast-food wrappers where we used to stop before coming to The Dougy Center. My mom doesn't cook any more."

These auxiliary "moms" and the Pioneers were the best things that could have happened to The Dougy Center. They were determined to help make this program work. And with help and love from these volunteers, the program worked!

Linda Usher and Sandy Bingham joined the board of directors because they saw the value of what we were trying to create at The Dougy Center. Linda served on the board of directors for five years and Sandy served for three. While they were house parents they saw people healing. Our new Center offered grieving children and their families nutritious food, conversations, laughter, and homey comfort. Linda told me, "Breaking bread together is an important concept. We saw it on a grand scale."

The Principles of The Dougy Center

As we worked out the logistics of where to hold our support groups, train new facilitators, and reach out to the community, we also clarified the principles that would guide us. From the beginning, we knew the mission of The Dougy Center was to provide loving support in a safe place where grieving children could share their experiences as they moved through the healing process. We intended for The Dougy Center to extend supportive services to the families, caregivers, schools, and the community.

We founded the Center on the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to grieve in a supportive and understanding environment. Based on that belief, we identified four basic principles for The Dougy Center.

- Grief is a natural reaction to loss of a loved one for children as well as adults.
- Within each individual is the natural capacity to heal oneself.
- The duration and intensity of grief are unique for each individual.
- Caring and acceptance assist in the healing process.

These principles have guided The Dougy Center since its early days, and continue to do so twenty-five years later.

A Visit from Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

The Dougy Center was blessed to have an official residence just a little more than two years after our first support group. We felt more independent; at last, we really were an official organization. Elisabeth had been an inspiration during those early years, so we asked her to join us for the official ribbon-cutting at The Dougy Center in February 1985. She agreed to come for the celebration as well as help The Dougy Center by giving a fund-raising lecture at the University of Portland. The event was held at the newly built Chiles Center, a domed facility for university athletic and convocation events. This was the only place we found that could hold, at a minimal cost, all of the people wanting to meet this world-renowned grief specialist. Nearly five thousand people attended, and it was standing room only. Elisabeth split the profit from this lecture with The Dougy Center, giving us \$7,500. This was a life-saving gift at a time when we were trying to financially survive.

The next day, Bonnie Strauss from ABC's "Hour Magazine" was in Portland to do a story about the Bonneville Dam, but when she heard Elisabeth Kübler-Ross was in town she sidestepped the dam and let someone else cover that story. Bonnie and her crew met Elisabeth at The Dougy Center and they spent the entire day videotaping for a segment to be shown in April on "Good Morning America." This was the first national glimpse at the small and unknown children's grief support group in Portland, Oregon. This kind of national media exposure for The Dougy Center and our vision for



Elisabeth Kübler-Ross attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Warner Pacific House.



Elisabeth brought media attention to The Dougy Center.

helping grieving children was priceless.

In April 1985, the board of directors hired the first full-time employee at The Dougy Center. Jim Hussey became the Director of Volunteers, coordinating the volunteer program and recruiting and training new volunteers. He

started the first official newsletter for The Dougy Center, *Bearhouse Chronicles*. Over the years Jim worked at the Center, he wore many hats—facilitator, newsletter editor, handyman, fund raiser, teacher, and public speaker. Volunteer facilitator Dean Conklin, who began working at The Dougy Center in 1985, wrote about Jim in the fall 1989 Newsletter:

When I asked Jim for a message to the rest of us, he said, “I think the thing that I have, quote, ‘learned’ from The Dougy Center is that the volunteers there aren’t healers. They are not there to heal people. They are there to heal themselves, to help themselves, and as long as they’re there for that reason, the kids will be healed. But the minute they start trying to fix them or trying to heal them, they’ll lose it. The message is stay aware of your own process. Stay aware of your own buttons that you pushed and your own weak spots and ‘heal thyself.’

In this same vein: “The facilitator is not the machinery, it’s the oil that makes the machinery run smoothly. So your job is not to solve problems—just be oil.”

Spreading the Word

The Dougy Center began receiving attention from Portland’s news media in 1984, informing Oregonians about a program that most did not know existed. Reporters from *The Oregonian* wrote articles about the Center, and the regional television show, “AM Northwest,” invited a six-and-a-half-year-old Dougy Center participant and me to be on the show. Additional local television and public

service announcements helped get our message out to the community. However, the eight-minute segment on “Hour Magazine” gave The Dougy Center national attention. In July 1985, “ABC World News Tonight” with Peter Jennings ran a segment on The Dougy Center.

These nationally aired programs featuring The Dougy Center immediately resulted in requests from hundreds of people nationwide calling the Center asking, “What are you doing?” “How are you doing it?” “How can we do it in our community?”

In August 1985, we held our first National Training workshop that explained the vision of The Dougy Center. We offered firsthand experience in support groups for the five people who attended. Rachel and Paul Burrell attended our first workshop after the death of their eldest son. They realized there were no support groups for their other three children in Cincinnati, Ohio—or anywhere else, except for The Dougy Center. The Burrells started Fernside: A Center for Grieving Children in 1986. It became the second children’s grief support program in the nation.

A reporter with the local PBS station, Marilyn Deutsch, developed a six-minute story on The Dougy Center that aired in February 1986 on Oregon Public Broadcasting’s “Front Street Weekly.” Ongoing local media exposure resulted in more interest from Portlanders who wanted to train to be facilitators—and, of course, more participants seeking support after a death in the family.

The print news media gave The Dougy Center consistent coverage from early on. One of the finest articles, and the one I cherish most, appeared in *This Week Magazine* in August 1986. (See page 120.) There was a cover photo of two-and-a-half-year-old Silas Quine sitting on my lap. The article, “The Fine Art of Caring” by Michael Burgess, included additional photos of children from The Dougy Center. Soon after, *The American Academy of Pediatrics News (AAP News)* published a two-page article on the Center, along with photos. I was thrilled to realize that the *AAP News* reached 34,000 pediatricians in the United States and Canada.

Bonnie Strauss at ABC continued to be interested in The Dougy Center. She had fallen in love with the program, and particularly with Jenny Richardson, a little girl whose story of loss moved Bonnie to tears. (See Jenny’s story in Chapter Seventeen.) In July 1987, Bonnie returned

to The Dougy Center to see how the program and Jenny were doing. She did a second story, a four-and-a-half minute segment for “Good Morning America.”

After Bonnie’s story aired nationally in July 1987, many more people contacted The Dougy Center seeking help to establish grief support groups in their communities. Urgent requests came from across the United States: “Please set up a workshop to train us to do what you are doing. There is such a need!”

That September we put on a far more polished National Training workshop than the first one in 1985. People came from across the nation—and when they went home new centers sprang up: The WARM Place for Grieving Children in Fort Worth, Texas, started by Peggy Bohme; the Center for Grieving Children in Portland, Maine, started by Bill Hemmens; and Bridges for Grieving Children in Tacoma, Washington, founded by Beverly Hatter; among others. Our national training sessions became longer and more professional as we learned more about helping grieving children. Today, this five-day program is called the “International Summer Institute,” and draws participants worldwide who are interested in establishing programs for grieving children. (See Chapter Twenty, “The Dougy Center Today.”)



The second National Training at The Dougy Center held in 1987.

More Support Groups

By the end of 1987, The Dougy Center had grown to eight evening groups for children, age six to eighteen, and eight corresponding parents' groups. After only five years the Center had served more than 3,200 children and parents. We never dreamed The Dougy Center would grow this rapidly.

Ongoing local and national television coverage inspired a growing number of people to contact The Dougy Center; they wanted to be trained in what we were doing or they were seeking help for grieving children. In March 1992, ABC's "20/20" showed a seventeen-minute segment about The Dougy Center with reporter John Stossel. Within five days after this show aired The Dougy Center received more than two thousand calls nationwide. Most of the callers wanted to know if there was a program in their area for their children.

Within the first five years we regularly had 110 children and 88 parents in ongoing groups. We had started more groups addressing different kinds of grief, many of them still functioning at the Center to this day.

There were two "Sons and Daughters" groups dealing with the death of parents; a new "Sibs and Friends" group for children who had experienced the death of a sibling or a best friend; a "Healing from Suicide" group that addressed the needs of children who had a parent or sibling die from suicide; "Healing from Violent Death/Homicide" for those healing from a violent death or homicide; and a group we called "Littles" for children age three to five who had a parent or sibling die. Each



The original "Sons and Daughters" group at The Dougy Center, which evolved from the first group of four children.

group had from eight to twelve children and at least four facilitators, except for the “Littles.” This group needed to be smaller because of the children’s young ages and their tendency to act out their grief rather than sit in a talking circle and talk. Many did not have adequate verbal skills to express what they felt inside. The “Littles” group was in great demand and continued to be unique in the U.S. and Canada at that time.



Jim Hussey (left) with a Dougy Center participant.

One of the top national experts in the area of death and dying was so astounded by our work with three-to-five-year-old children that he decided to visit The Dougy Center. Charles “Chuck” Corr, Ph.D., was a humanities professor at Southern Illinois University and was a member of The Dougy Center’s Honorary Board. At the time he had already been involved with the publication of fifteen books on grief, as an author, co-author, or editor. I had met Chuck at an annual Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) conference and we continued to connect annually at the ADEC conferences. Chuck decided to visit The Dougy Center and learn more about our work with young children. He took our volunteer training and was delighted to witness miracles at work. Chuck decided to include The Dougy Center in a research project he was working on at the time.

We added a special feature at The Dougy Center’s Warner Pacific house after someone donated an eighty-pound punching bag. We anchored the bag to the water pipes at the bottom of the stairs in the basement. Izetta Smith thought it would be a great idea to have the

punching bag for the children, noting, "Emotion equals commotion and motion." (See Chapter 15 for Izetta's story.) We adults named the punching-bag area the "Commotion Room." Before long, the children renamed it "The Volcano Room." The kids would line up to use the punching bag, jockeying to go first. We had to post facilitators nearby the punching bag to be sure all the children had an opportunity to have at the bag. They loved it. Eventually, when The Dougy Center moved to its permanent home, we created an actual room called "The Volcano Room," complete with padded walls, floor, ceiling, and punching bag.

A Permanent Home

By 1987, The Dougy Center had established itself in the local community as a place where children and their parents could find help for their grief. The house that had seemed more than adequate when we moved in was becoming crowded. After nearly four years we realized the small house on the campus of Warner Pacific no longer met the needs of so many children and their families. We were bursting at the seams with offices doubled up for staff, daily intake interviews with new potential participants, and practicum students observing at the Center.

As the groups expanded and the need for more support groups increased, we all began to look for a larger permanent home for the Center. One of our children's group facilitators, an older gentleman named Ralph Schwab, had his eye on a large, fixer-upper house with a huge yard in Southeast Portland. One day he walked up the front steps and knocked on the door. When the lady of the house, Beth Thorne, answered the door, Ralph stunned her by asking, "Have you ever considered selling your home? It is exactly the kind of home we are looking for."

This sizeable house had two stories and a full basement. Mrs. Thorne had been renting out three parts of the house as apartments, but at the time Ralph approached her about selling she had no renters. It took several months for Mrs. Thorne to decide that her house was truly too large for her. Finally she agreed to sell. This was an answer to our prayers. A price of \$100,000 was finally agreed upon, and Mrs. Thorne gave us ten years to pay off the loan. The Chiles Foundation of Portland gave the The Dougy Center a \$25,000 grant for our new home. That amount, plus a \$5,000 donation from the Central East Rotary were huge financial boosts. We were on our way!

This beautiful old house was definitely a fixer-upper, but it held a promise for nearly three times as much space and a homeyness we wanted to provide for the families. Linda Usher and Sandy Bingham, now members of The Dougy Center's Board of Directors, pledged to do everything in their power to help. Through their creative efforts and hard work, they co-chaired the first "Hearts and Flowers Benefit" held at the elegant and historic Pittock Mansion in the West Hills of Portland. This black tie optional, fund-raising event featured desserts from Portland's finest restaurants, bakeries, and caterers. In addition, musicians played love songs from the past two centuries for entertainment. This event raised much-needed capital for the house. "Hearts and Flowers" has become an annual fund-raising event at The Dougy Center.

While writing this book, I asked Linda to share her thoughts about working with The Dougy Center. Linda was exuberant as she shared how The Dougy Center started out looking like a shaky proposition and moved on to become an international model for helping children deal with death. Recalling their efforts to raise money, Linda wrote:

Because of the Hearts and Flowers event we were able to raise \$10,000 for the house. By begging desserts, musicians, balloons, printing, and free public service announcement TV time, we were able to pull off a memorable event at the Pittock Mansion on Valentine's Day 1988. It was a grand success.

Then it was time to fix up the house. Everybody was involved. We shamelessly abused our friends, families, and every appropriate



The house that became the permanent home for The Dougy Center.

business that could possibly help us. We were obsessed and our group absolutely committed. We burned a lot of midnight oil, manhandled (and womanhandled) paintbrushes, and exerted a lot of elbow grease. We used every bit of ingenuity we could muster. We even indulged in a bit of driving one day as we picked up a vehicle full of dozens of floor pillows in bright primary colors from an upholstery company. There was room in the car for the pillows, but no room for Sandy and me. Somehow we made it to the Dougy house.

The house was remodeled, flowers planted, the groups moved in, meals continued to be served, and children continued to heal. The Dougy Center family became our passion. Over the years the auxiliary has received far more from the center than they have given. We have become much more understanding of people who have suffered a loss; learning that “grief work” means work. We learned that there is no right or wrong way to react after a death. Healing takes time and our experiences as volunteers at The Dougy Center have helped us with the loss of our own parents and other people’s losses around us.

We shall ever be grateful to The Dougy Center, to Bev, and to those who have followed. Of all the things and organizations and efforts the auxiliary has been involved with, we consider The Dougy Center to be one of the most memorable and life-affirming.

So many people stepped forward to help during those early critical years of The Dougy Center’s formation. While writing the final chapters of this book, I found a sweatshirt in a box of mementos. It reads, “5th ANNIVERSARY - BPA” in a blue star. Below the star a line reads: “BPA’S Energizing the Community Benefit for The Dougy Center.” The Bonneville Power Administration’s 5th Annual Auction benefited The Dougy Center—another wonderful example of community organizations and individuals stepping forward to support our efforts.

Browsing through photos of Dougy Center events, I remember the carnival put on by Central East Rotary Group spearheaded by the same Ralph Schwab who found the Center’s permanent house. He volunteered to be on the carnival dunk tank platform. We also held car washes, garage sales, and sold holiday wreaths, among many other events, to add to our coffers in those early days. Some of The Dougy Center children

even donated their allowances to help out. The list of individuals, fund-raising events, and special angels is long.

The dream would never have materialized without the efforts of so many in the community. There was no money for anything for at least two years, so their services and donations were true blessings. Without this constant flow of blessings, I have my doubts that The Dougy Center, with all of its struggles to become, would have ever made it.

New Leadership for The Dougy Center

I served as The Dougy Center's Executive Director until February 1988, intensely involved with all aspects of its growth. However, after five-and-a-half years I realized I wanted to spend more time with the families at the Center and less time on administrative concerns. My new job title was Associate Director. I continued to work as a group facilitator—my greatest passion—being with the families and tending to the “heart” of the program.

In April 1988, the board hired Roselyn Meier as the second executive director of The Dougy Center. She had extensive experience with nonprofits, including serving as a vice president with regional YMCAs. At the time I wrote, “Roselyn's greatest strengths are my greatest weaknesses—board development, personnel management, administrative expertise and fund development.” Roselyn stayed until December 1990, guiding the Center through difficult financial challenges and expanding services to the community. Among them was securing a two-year grant of \$80,000 from the Murdoch Charitable Trust. This funding allowed The Dougy Center to create a children's grief support network among the twenty-six “sister programs” established at that time. This grant also allowed The Dougy Center to develop materials, including manuals and videos. In May 1990, The Dougy Center published the book, *I Wish I Were in a Lonely Meadow*. This book was for kids, by kids, in which the children shared their stories and artwork about a loved one's death by suicide.

For two years I worked with Donna Schuurman, a volunteer facilitator who joined The Dougy Center family in 1986. We worked as co-facilitators in the parents' “Healing from Suicide” group (now called “Healing from a Suicide Death”). Donna and I worked together extremely well, perhaps the most in tune I had ever been with another facilitator. Donna brought an intuitive wisdom as a facilitator that I

greatly admired. She also showed a passion for and a commitment to The Dougy Center's work. During her time as a volunteer facilitator she conducted research for her doctoral dissertation titled, "The Impact of Parent Suicide on Children." Excerpts from her interviews with children at The Dougy Center were used in the Center's book, *I Wish I Were in a Lonely Meadow*.

Donna also served as a board member at The Dougy Center for four years, offering her strong business sense and great fund-raising abilities to build a firmer financial foundation for the Center. Previously, she had directed development and communications for several international relief and development organizations for twelve years. She also had worked with a consulting firm specializing in nonprofit organizations. After being a member of the Center's board of directors for several years, Donna became the third executive director in 1991. Prior to accepting the position, Donna had been the Director of Development for Pacific Crest Outward Bound School in Portland.

I continued to work as a group facilitator for a couple more years and was also the facilitator for the "Monthly Meeting" for families on waiting lists to join a support group. Bev Fulk had left the Center after about six years, and Izetta Smith moved on to her next life challenge after about nine years. In December 1990, I decided to pull back further, which coincided with my husband's diagnosis of bladder cancer. Allan's struggle with cancer consumed my daily life until his death in August 1993. After his death, I continued to volunteer at The Dougy Center, co-facilitating the "Monthly Meeting."

In December 1994, I decided to step back from my work as a facilitator, but have continued to stay connected with the Center to this day. In my July 1988 *Bearhouse Chronicles* column, "A Paws at Bev's Desk," I addressed the question, "Who is The Dougy Center?" I repeated this column in 1990 as I stepped back further. It summed up my feelings well. In part, this is what I wrote:

I have frequently heard the statement, "You, Bev, are The Dougy Center." This has been said by board members, staff, volunteers, participants, and friends in the community.

At first, when this is said, I feel greatly appreciated and it's like a pat on the back—a real boost to the ego. But always, directly following

the boost, other feelings bring me back to reality. Can you imagine what a burden it would be for one person to be The Dougy Center?

Let me share with you who I believe is The Dougy Center. I see The Dougy Center as a big family, growing larger and larger as families tend to do. Just because a participating family moves on to make closure from their group doesn't mean they are no longer a part of the family. And as volunteers move on to another place to serve, they, too, are still family members. It is the same with board members and staff.

... Being The Dougy Center is special for all of us—not just Bev Chappell. Being The Dougy Center is experiencing caring, safety, sharing, support, understanding and love. Being The Dougy Center is too great a burden for one person alone. We, The Dougy Center, must all continue to give and reach out to receive (right hand giving, left hand receiving) a constant circle of caring, support, and love. I invite each of you reading this article to take a rightful ownership of being The Dougy Center.