

Help for Two Devoted Elderly Friends

Dear WC,

A neighbor, and friend, of mine would most likely be upset if she knew I was writing you. She and I have been friends for a long time and we have been through a lot together. If we didn't have each other we would have no one. We have both been widowed for the past ten years. My husband and I never had any children. My neighbor had a son who was killed in an automobile accident.

We used to get together once a month and go out for breakfast, lunch or dinner. We have always lived frugally so it was quite nice to do that. It was never anything expensive. We enjoyed each others company and getting out of the house for a bit. We haven't been able to do that for some time because our budgets are so tight. With the additional prescription medication that my friend needs, she can no longer afford our going out to eat once a month.

The last time I visited her, I found her crying. She was so upset over the state of her finances that she was inconsolable. I stayed with her for hours trying to calm her down. When I finally left I realized I had forgotten my purse. When I went back to get it, I found her crying again. I guess my talking with her didn't help as much as I hoped it would.

I'd be so appreciative if you could please look in on her. Thank you for being there to write to. Your column is a source of inspiration. In the past it has given both of us strength to know that there are people worse off than us and they are getting their lives together. There is so much we should be thankful for. It is at the point where I feel I wouldn't be a good friend to her if I did not bring this to your attention. I want her to be happy again, please help.

God Bless You,
A Concerned Friend

Dear Readers,

First of all I want to thank this compassionate woman who wrote to us. She is a part of our column, as all you readers are. We share in the experience from the hardships, to making everyone's lives a little bit better by our sharing and caring. By opening our hearts to the conditions her

friend lives with daily, she shows her compassion and love for her friend. I thank her very much for that.

I went to visit with this woman and when she answered her door I could see she had been crying. She is a sweet, elderly woman who was a little taken back when she saw me standing outside her door. At first I thought she was alarmed so I quickly introduced myself. She said, "I know who you are. I am surprised to see you standing here on my doorstep."

I told her it was meant to be and with that she invited me in. Of course I gave her a hug and I received a big hug back. I thanked her for that warm welcome. I knew, after talking extensively with her friend, this was going to be one of those situations where pride was going to stand in the way of our help.

She said, "I wish I had something to offer you, but I don't think any of the food I have on my bland diet is anything to offer you." I said that I was fine, having eaten just before I came to see her. Later I discovered the only things she had in the house to eat were noodles, rice and potatoes; they were the only things she could afford to eat.

Only after I asked her how things were going many times, and she kept repeating everything was okay, she began to cry. I told her I was there for the two of us to be very honest with each other, we were both God's creations and I was there to help. I reminded her that I represent a lot of God loving people who also want to help. I told her that she was one of those people. She said, "I believe in what *The Time is Now* does, I believe in all the good works you do to help everyone, but I am not one of those that need any help. One way or another I will get through this."

I asked her if she was expecting some surprise support from our government that was going to increase her menial social security check. With a stern look on her face she said, "Well, of course not! The only miracles I know of come from God, not from our government." With that I told her that by believing in God, we believe in all God's creations and in the good works of so many generous, caring people and that is why we are together now.

I gave her a hug, she hugged me back and then I said, "Now, let's get to the facts." She told me how she had to have some additional medication and it was so expensive that she had to cut back on everything. I asked, "Including your dates with your friend?" She said, "Aha!" and I smiled, hoping she'd smile back. I then said, "You know having a wonderful friend is one of those precious gifts from God." With that, she gave a half smile.

I said, "Yes, it is your friend. She wanted it to be known that she cared enough for you and she knew you needed help."

We helped her catch up with her utilities and enabled her to get a little bit ahead. We also helped her out with some household items. She had some items for over 47 years that were in bad shape. I have to say that when I went to the friend's house, I discovered her situation was not much better. I couldn't do less than to help her out also, especially with her utilities, one of which was behind...well, let's say she also needed our help. Both these good natured, caring, elderly women were so deserving of a hand up.

I did receive a donated small color TV which was in excellent condition and gave it to one of them whose own TV had broken down about nine months ago. When I visited for the second time their spirits were much improved. The friend who wrote the letter was so much happier because her friend was her happy, strong self again.

When people get older and get in a financial crisis, with nowhere to turn, their spirits can get broken and they tend to give up. This can make them very ill and serious financial problems for one of advanced age can be life threatening.

Prior to my last visit I stopped at a restaurant close to their house, which I knew they frequented in the past. After telling the owner their story, the owner had given me a dozen gift certificates, which he wrote up himself on some pieces of paper. I had actually gone in with the idea of buying some for them myself but he said, "My business has been good. I also read your column and I want to be part of helping."

I told the proprietor that he should give the gift certificates to the women. He laughed and said, "No, that's your job. I have to stay here and run my restaurant." I thanked him very much and brought the certificates to the ladies. I told them that they needed to use them as a gift from the owner. With that they both looked at each other and I could see they were going to cry some happy tears. At this point I gave them both a hug and they began to laugh as they hugged me in return.

I want to thank everyone for reading and before I close I want to comment about another elderly widow. I went to visit this lady who was very distraught after having had to move into subsidized housing. The housing actually turned out to be very nice but she didn't know anyone – once again, no family, no children, no anyone. When I visited her she was doing okay but after we visited for a while she broke down crying because she was all alone and she was so happy to have a visitor. She kept reaching over, grabbing my hand and putting it to her forehead and then she would start to cry again. She was so thankful for our visit.

I said, "Don't cry. Be happy. That is why we are here. We are

supposed to be spending some special time together.” She said, “Oh I just can’t help it. I am just so alone. Everyone has somebody visiting them but me.” I reminded her that I was visiting her so she did have somebody. With that, I told her that I had initiated several other people who want to visit her, others who I networked into helping her move. She was very happy they were willing to visit with her.

As I left, she asked, “Can I walk you down?” I assured her that I could go down myself but she was determined we walk down together. I felt uncomfortable that she had to walk all the way back by herself but as we walked I could see why she had insisted in accompanying me. When we walked outside we passed an area outside the front door where several of the residents were sitting and talking. She gripped my arm really tight and as we walked among them she said, “Hi everyone. This is my friend.” With that, I could see what she was doing because she lit up like a Christmas tree. I said hello to everybody and shook everyone’s hand. I remembered the look on her face so as I was driving away I rolled the window down and I said, “Bye Mom, I’ll be back in a few days.” With that, she turned to see if everyone else had heard me. Of course I said it loud enough so everyone could hear and I said, “Goodbye everybody. Looking forward to seeing you too.” as everyone waved back. She threw me a kiss and I threw her a kiss back.

Since then we’ve talked about that moment and she said that was her highlight, her Christmas in summer.

As a reminder, please do not forget the Richard Driehaus matching grant. I want to thank everyone who has donated already over this period where every dollar you give is matched by Richard Driehaus’ \$30,000 matching grant. Please everyone, let’s break a record and do it in less than five weeks, as we did it in five weeks last year. These very necessary contributions and donations allow us to provide faster help for all of those who are waiting, who have requests that I am behind on.

Thank you for reading, networking and sharing and caring the wonderful work we do to make our communities a better place to live in our Great United States.

Health and Happiness, God Bless Everyone,
WC

Please Help: I presently have over 100 requests for help. Richard Driehaus’ \$30,000 matching grant will double your donation dollar for dollar. Please give what you can. Every penny will be utilized to assist the

poverty stricken of our communities.

A Special Thank You To: David Ahler, Richard & Jean Honeyager, Maureen Welch, Timothy Rasmussen, Paul & Cindy Gilbertson, Margaret Guidarelli, Thomas & Susan Stelling, in honor of Julie & Jeff Partridge's anniversary, Bemis Company Foundation, Gary & Crystal Smith, Glenda Linendoll, ALL of you who support *The Time Is Now to Help* donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a *Time Is Now to Help* donation box in your business, please call 262-249-7000.

Please Help by Caring and Sharing. Send your donation to: *The Time Is Now to Help*, PO Box 70, Pell Lake, WI 53157. Every penny of your donation will go to the needy for daily necessities of life including: food, clothing, utilities, toiletries, shelter assistance, and household necessities.

Please make checks payable to: *The Time Is Now to Help*. *The Time Is Now to Help* is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing exactly what every penny of your donation provided for the poverty stricken.

Endowments/Helping Others through Your Will: For those of you who wish to leave an endowment for the poverty stricken, we would greatly accept any gifts. Please think of those in desperate need, good people, living in fear of poverty and consider helping them through your will.

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Desperately Needed Cars: There are those in desperate need of reliable transportation, so they can regain their independence, retain their jobs, provide food and necessities for their families, and ease their pain and suffering. Thank You and God Bless You. Please call 262-249-7000.

Please visit: HYPERLINK "<http://www.TimeIsNowToHelp.org>"

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