

Dear W.C.,

6/13/2011

I am writing to ask for help for a coworker. She is a hard working woman in her late 50's. She waitresses five days a week and I know it is hard on her. She has had two operations and I see her in pain at times, yet she never complains. I have noticed her coming to work early to do her personal grooming. She tries to sneak in unnoticed and seems very embarrassed about it. Her only child died fifteen years ago in a car accident and she cares for her elderly mother. I know she is a truly good person and is really struggling to make ends meet. Her car is falling apart and there have been times I offered her a ride home due to it not starting. I do not know how she gets around when I am not there. Please help.

Dear Readers,

I did not have a telephone number or address to pay a visit. I had the name of the restaurant where both the person that was requesting assistance for her co-worker and the woman in need of assistance worked. I called and asked to speak to the writer letter. She was very happy to receive my call and informed me when it would be best to visit. I did not want to arrive at the restaurant during a busy meal time. I wanted to speak to the person in need privately.

I arrived at the restaurant and met the letter writer. She made a point of seating me in the section of the woman that needed assistance. When my waitress arrived she seemed very polite and even had a smile on her face, but I could see the stress of poverty in her eyes. The smile did not radiate to the rest of her face, as so often is the case in those we help. After several attempts at a conversation I decided I would just have to introduce myself and see if she was familiar with The Time Is Now to Help. She looked surprised and very politely spoke about our organization. When I asked if she knew of anyone that would be in need of our assistance she told me she was concerned over an elderly neighbor of hers. I asked if she would pay a visit there with me the next day and she agreed. I could see she was a proud woman and would not easily share her need for assistance with me. I left her with a good tip and my business card.

The next morning I met the waitress at her neighbor's house. We knocked on the door and it was answered by a petite woman with a walker. I could see it was dim inside and I immediately worried about the utilities being disconnected. She invited me in after being introduced. The waitress had been right in her concern over her elderly neighbor. She was recuperating from a recent fall and the medical bills had made it impossible for her to pay for rent, utilities, and food. Here the waitress was certainly suffering in poverty herself, yet she only had asked for help for her neighbor. I could see she was a selfless woman, and that made me want to ease her pains of poverty even more.

We assisted the elderly neighbor with food, utility reconnection, and past due rent. The elderly woman cried and took me aside when it was time for us to leave and whispered in my ear, "The woman that brought you here to help me is in need of assistance herself. Please help her as you have helped me. She is kind and always checks on me. I noticed she never has any lights on so I think she may be in as bad of shape as I am." I left with a promise to help the kind waitress as well.

When we left I asked the waitress where she lived. She pointed to the small house next door. She said she had rented the same house for many years. Her mother had just moved in with her six months earlier. Her mother was disabled, wheelchair bound, and needed her help. I told her I would love to meet her mother. She hesitantly invited me inside. Sure enough when we went inside her home I could see her utilities were disconnected. Not only was the electric off, but the water also. There were jugs of water lined up on the counter and the house was strangely quiet and dark. I kindly told her we needed to talk. She looked down in tears and shame. I assured her there was nothing to be ashamed of.

I met the mother and she delicately took my hand in hers. I could see the misshapen joints and fingers that reminded me of my own mothers. She had suffered from the same disease for many years. The mother was propped up in a chair with pillows and was reading a book with the only light that came in through a window. We talked for several minutes more and after the waitress asked her mother if she needed anything, we went into the kitchen to speak in private. I could see the waitress did not want to alarm her mother anymore than she already was by their present state. As soon as we got out of the room the waitress broke down in tears. She said she had been holding in her worry for so long because she was too embarrassed to tell anyone about her poverty. I assured her we would help both her, her mother, and her neighbor. I saw some of the stress and sadness leave her eyes and a look of hope replaced them. She told me of her shame and humiliation when she had to do her personal grooming at work. She shared how difficult it was to care for her mother without the most basic needs of water and electricity. We also talked about the death of her only child and the toll it took on her marriage and her life. Her husband had left soon after and they had never pursued a divorce. He had been the main income earner so she was left to fend for herself with his departure. The only way she had found to do that was by becoming a waitress many years ago.

We went over her bills and budget. I saw how the economy had taken its toll on her income. She shared with me how much easier it was with fair tips even a few years ago. Now as people have become more frugal they cut back on their tips. Since most service employees count on tips, not an hourly rate for their income it has been especially hard for them. Most waitresses only earn two dollars and some change per hour. Please remember this with your generosity when you eat a meal in a restaurant.

I made a suggestion to see how well it was received. I asked how she would feel about taking in her neighbor as a boarder. It was an idea I thought could work to ease both the senior women's loneliness at being homebound and ease the financial strain of two households combined into one. The neighbor could live within her means if she only had to pay room and board. She also could keep the waitresses mother company when she was at work. The waitress was very happy with the idea and suggested we go back next door immediately to share the idea. We found the neighbor sitting in a chair on her front stoop. She was surprised and happy to see us both visiting again so soon, and this time with smiles on our faces. The waitress told her neighbor about our idea and we both saw her eyes fill with tears. She said, "I thought no one would want to live with an old lonely woman like me." The waitress wrapped her arms around her and said, "You will never be lonely living at my house." With that we went over the details of the move and their future budget. The Time Is Now to Help assisted them with a month's rent and had their utilities reconnected. We surprised the waitress with a recently donated reliable car. This time the waitress was crying. The need for a reliable vehicle was a constant stress for her, yet she never asked for any help with her old car. She promised to take good care of the car and gave thanks to God and the anonymous owner that had donated it to The Time Is Now to Help.

Several weeks after the women moved in together I stopped by to see how things were going. The waitress was at work but the two senior ladies were at home. This time both women were sitting outside enjoying the sunshine after a long winter. They both were overjoyed to see me and full of thanksgiving for all the help we provided them. They were so thankful for running water and electricity. They told me how nice it was to have someone to talk too all day, rather than sitting in their house all by themselves. Then I saw them both reach out and take each other's hand and reach for mine. They said, "Praise God for bringing you, The Time Is Now to Help, into our lives." Once again, together, we have eased the pains of poverty for our fellow creations.

Please remember the Lake Geneva Area Realty \$40,000 Matching Grant. Every dollar you donate will be matched with another doubling your donation. Every penny you donate will be utilized 100% to provide food, utility, housing assistance, toiletries...to ease the pains of poverty of our fellow Americans.

Thank you for Caring and Sharing.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C.

Please Help: Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 70, Pell Lake, WI 53157. 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.

A Very Special Thank You: The Summertime Foundation, Lake Geneva Area Realty, AptaGroup Charitable Foundation, Martin O'Brien, Dick & Jean Honeyager, John & Sally Dicmus, James & Marilyn Dyer, Ron & Kerrie Vyskocil, Frank Huml, Jr., Pat Ebert, Carrol Pitel, Ralph & Sharon Graber, Walter Myalls, Bertha Pepper, Carson Derda for his 10th Birthday party fundraiser, the following gifts were given in honor of Carson Derda's 10th Birthday: Troy & Kristie Derda, Michal & Meaghen Vandyke, William & Sonja Bingen, Timothy & Patricia Goff, Stephen & Nancy Welka, Jeffrey & Trina Robshaw, Michael & MJoanne Wright, Laurie Cornue, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, and all the God loving volunteers of all our caring food pantries, 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 donation box in your business, please call (262)249-7000.

Memorials: Audrey Wunderlin-Hersko & Marvin Hersko in memory of Don Wunderlin & Barbara Hersko. Patricia Vozel in memory of her son James and her husband "Sully". Arlene Clausen in memory of a friend that reached out to others, Dale Hennix. Frank & Mary Jean Gauger in memory of Gloria Stoflet.

We Desperately Need Cars: Please donate a used car to help our fellow American's get to work and other daily necessities.

Goodsearch for The Time Is Now: Search the web with www.goodsearch.com and help to raise funds for The Time Is Now to Help. Just make www.goodsearch.com your homepage and pick The Time Is Now to Help as your charity.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org