

Dear W.C.,

You provided help to my family two years ago when my daughter was so ill and in the hospital. My daughter still has many medical needs but we manage to get by. My husband is working full-time and some side jobs so we have enough to at least pay our rent and utilities. I am not writing you asking for help for my family. I am writing to you to ask if you could help a mother I met while our children were in intensive care at the same time. She has just begun this long road of caring for a sick child as her daughter is just a newborn with health challenges ahead of her. We got to be friends while going through this ordeal together. There is nothing that can prepare you for the sight of your child in a hospital bed with all kinds of tubes and wires attached to them. We spent long hours talking while our children fought for their lives. When my daughter was released we exchanged phone numbers and I told her to call me if she ever needed someone to talk to. She called me yesterday because she needed someone to talk to. Her car had broken down and she had not been able to pay her rent due to losing her job over the amount of time she had to take off to care for her daughter. My friend said she would be evicted next week and was worried her car would not make it back and forth to the hospital. I told her about The Time Is Now to Help and offered to write you a letter. Is there any way you could help my friend like you helped me and my family?

Dear Readers,

I remembered the woman that had written this letter and the special circumstances her family was struggling with. I knew they probably still had a daily struggle with their own medical and financial needs. It was a selfless thing to ask for help for someone ahead of your own needs. I also thought of how selfless it is to care for a sick child every day of your life. Many of the recipients of our assistance are caregivers that give of themselves every day. Most are thrust into their role of caregiver by the needs of a sick child or an elderly relative. Many have to give up their jobs to take on this role. This only adds financial stress to an already traumatic situation.

I called the woman and we spoke for a few minutes, catching up on her daughters and the family's progress. She was adamant that her own family did not need help. She only wanted The Time Is Now to Help to bring the same sense of financial stress relief to her friend that we had provided for them two years ago. The woman again told me how "We" had changed their lives and provided them the assistance they had needed to get through an incredibly difficult time. She provided me the name, address and phone number for her friend in need.

I called the friend and she answered immediately. She explained she had been waiting for a call from a new specialist for her baby and knew it would come from an unknown number. She apologized as she told me she would have to hang up immediately if another incoming call interrupted our conversation. I assured her I completely understood that she must not miss that important phone call. I asked the mother some questions about the baby's condition, not sure if she wanted to share all the personal details. She immediately opened up and shared all the medical facts. The baby had several birth defects and complications to deal with and would have a long road ahead. The mother told me she was a single mother and did

not have anyone to fall back on for support, other than the friend she had met in the hospital that knew what she was going through, and had offered to write us a letter in her behalf. The baby's father had died in a motorcycle crash when she was just three months pregnant. I could hear she was crying when she told me about the loss of her boyfriend and the baby's father. She told me how happy they both were to find out she was pregnant. The mother told me about her difficult pregnancy that only got worse after his death and how she blamed the stress and grief on the premature birth and health problems. I could hear in her voice she was under a great amount of stress.

I agreed to meet the mother at the hospital that afternoon to go over her financial situation. She admitted she had slept in her car the previous night in the hospital parking lot due to being worried the car would not make it back and forth to her home.

I arrived and found the car in the space she had told me it would be. The mother was waiting inside the car and opened her door after I showed her my identification and introduced myself. I asked if she would like to go talk in the cafeteria and we could get something to eat. The mother said, "I cannot afford to eat in the cafeteria." I told her I would like to buy her lunch. She collected a few of her belongings in a tote bag and we went inside the hospital. We picked out our trays of food, I encouraged her to fill her tray even adding some nonperishable things for later, and we sat in a less crowded corner of the cafeteria to talk. I watched as the mother ate very fast, as only a truly hungry person does. I asked when the last time she had eaten was and she confessed not since a peanut butter sandwich the previous day. I asked if she had any money on her at all for food, gas, etc. She had \$1.29 in her pocket. My heart went out to this poor hungry woman.

The mother told me she had taken every penny she could find to try and pay her last month's rent to prevent the eviction. She still was \$300 dollars short for that rent and the landlord was demanding that he be paid immediately. The mother told me how she worried each time she left her apartment that when she returned she would find her belongings on the curb. I asked if she had spoken to her landlord about her situation. She said she had not told him the details. I told the mother she needed to share with her landlord the reason she was unable to pay her rent this month. The mother said, "When I called him to tell him I was late he said he did not want to hear any excuses, he just wanted his rent money. He would not even let me give him a reason for being late." When I offered to speak to her landlord for her she looked confused and asked, "Would you?" I called the landlord and once he heard it was The Time Is Now to Help calling he was willing to listen to what the mother had to say. After I explained the mother's situation the landlord went from a place of defensiveness to asking what he could do to help. He apologized for his rudeness in their previous conversation stating he had gotten so used to overdue renters he never thought there might be a valid excuse.

After we spoke with the landlord, and I told him we would be paying her overdue rent and two months into the future allowing the mother time to get the baby well and home, he offered to reduce her rent by \$100 per month. Both the mother and I thanked him for his help. I went through her remaining overdue bills and found she needed help with her utilities.

These were brought up to date and paid into the future. I arranged for her car to get in for the much needed repairs. The mother looked panicked as she asked, "How will I get back and forth to the hospital while my car is in for repairs?" I told her we would provide a motel room for the next few days within walking distance of the hospital. This would give her a safe place to sleep and would eliminate her long daily commute while her car was in for much needed service. We also provided her with some pocket money to use for her food and personal needs for the next few days. The next day the mother dropped her car off for service and a volunteer graciously drove her to the hospital where she would stay with her baby and walk to the motel at night to sleep.

Three days later the mother called to thank all of "Us" for her car repairs. She said she had driven to the hospital and it had run like new. She also thanked all of "Us" for removing the stress and anxiety of the financial situation she was in. The mother said she could now focus on the health of her little girl and getting her well enough to come home.

Thankfully the mother was able to bring her daughter home several weeks later. The mother was so grateful she had her apartment to bring her baby home to. She also had formed a closer friendship with the woman that had written a letter in her behalf. The mother told me to share her appreciation with all of "You". God Bless "You" for making this and all our assistance possible.

We promise to continue our good works, our mission of caring and sharing, removing the pains of poverty for as many as donations allow in our communities. Your support has been crucial in our success at changing lives forever. We are so grateful to call you not only donors but friends in our mission The Time Is Now to Help. God Bless all of you.

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

Please Help: There are many coming to us in desperation. Our good fellow creations need our compassion. Together we make a big difference. Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 1, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. 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 how your donation provided assistance for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Fox Charities, Clarence & Marilyn Schawk Family Foundation, I.Am.Giving Foundation, Geneva Wells Motel, Martin Group, John Stensland & Family, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Petco Foundation, Terry Dignan, Aurora Health Care Partnership Campaign, Heidi Hall, Joanne Abbe, Mary Cucchi, Shawna Kneipper, Gene Krauklis, Judith Mackessy, Jeanne Mc Donald, Walter Myalls, Randall & Margaret Smith, Claudia Garber, Gerald & Joyce Byers, Lake Geneva Antique Mall, Claws Restaurant, George & Loretta Clettenberg, Jack & Mary Lou Mc Kinney, Yvonne Mol, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, and all the God loving volunteers of all our caring 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: Margaret Cardiff in memory of Dot Cardiff. Elaine McMillin and Carolee Olson in memory of Frederick Clausen.

Furniture Donations: Please contact Love, Inc. for all your furniture, clothing and household item donations. Call 262-763-2743 or 262-763-6226 to schedule pick-up.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org