

Dear W.C.,

My children and I were evicted two weeks ago. We are presently living in a friend's spare room with my two kids sharing a twin bed and I am sleeping on the floor. My friend has asked if we can be out within a week so he does not risk being evicted as well. I am doing my best to find a job but I have many medical problems. People are hesitant to hire me when they see I walk with a limp and have limited amounts I can lift. I lost my last job when I could not physically keep up with the demands. I ended up in the hospital after falling and reinjuring my back. No one wants to hire someone with that record. My wife died two years ago in the car accident that broke my back. We hit some black ice and that is all I remember. It is just my two boys and me. We really could use your help getting our lives back on track.

Dear Readers,

Often times many people come to the immediate aid of people after a tragic event. Crowd funding websites are made and everyone is moved by the urgent need of those involved. Once the immediate needs are addressed people move on to the next story that touches their hearts. But what happens to these people several years down the line? They often have lingering disabilities and financial burdens that go beyond the first few months after the tragic event. We often are written letters by these people once their new reality sets in. When going back to "normal" is not even a possibility. Once they have finished physical therapy and surgeries to repair the damage it sometimes becomes apparent that they cannot do what they used to be able to do. Add in to that realization the grief of losing a loved one and you can get a glimpse of what this father was going through.

I called the father to confirm where he would like to meet, as he was already overstaying his welcome at his friend's low-income housing apartment. There are restrictions on occupancy on low income housing. The father told me I was welcome to stop by the apartment as his friend was at work and the children were in school. I went to the address he provided.

When I pulled up to the apartment building there was a man working on an older car in the parking lot. He watched me park and limped over to my car. He seemed to recognize me and introduced himself as the man who had written the letter. We shook hands and walked over to look at his car. He explained he was trying to keep it running so he could go to job interviews and he had to drive his children to school since they were no longer on the bus route. He seemed mechanically inclined but the car was in bad shape. It would take some major repairs to get it in good running condition. After looking over the car he asked me to come inside.

We had to walk up a flight of stairs to get to the apartment. I watched as the man struggled up the steps. I offered to help but he declined saying, "I have to do this on my own several times a day. I can do it." It was hard to watch him wince in obvious pain. Once we reached the landing he took a moment to catch his breath before continuing down the hall to the friend's apartment. Once we made it there the father had to sit and catch his breath. I could not imagine having to go through that several times a day. He obviously needed to be somewhere that was much more accessible.

The apartment was small and crowded due to the extra belongings and boxes from the man and his children. The father apologized for the clutter saying, "I could not afford a storage unit so my friend was kind enough to let me put our few things in here. I know we are really inconveniencing him and even risking his lease but I have nowhere else to go. My family is all gone and my wife's family lives out of state." I asked if he was still in touch with his in-laws and he confirmed he was. He said they had all been so devastated by the loss of his wife. They wanted to see their grandsons but were limited by their own financial limitations and age related illnesses.

The father showed me the small bedroom he was sharing with his two children. I noted the blanket and pillow on the floor and duffle bags of clothing lined the walls. I asked the father how he was managing sleeping on the floor with his disabilities. The father looked down at the floor, obviously embarrassed, and said, "I feel so bad but after just one night I had to ask my boys if I could have the bed. I could not get up and down off the floor and the pain was horrific. What kind of father asks their kids to sleep on the floor?" He wiped his eyes and looked away. I could see the guilt he was carrying over their situation. The father asked some questions about The Time Is Now to Help and how our assistance works. I shared with him how all of "You" make our assistance even possible.

After showing me their sleeping arrangement we went to talk in the living room. I questioned him on his eviction and financial situation. The father stated he had been working in a factory until a month prior when he slipped and fell, reinjuring his back. He had been working for less than six months so was not eligible for benefits yet. Prior to that he had been on disability while undergoing several surgeries on his back and physical therapy. The children had lived with the grandparents out of state while he had undergone these procedures. The father showed me his medical records showing his surgeries and procedures. Once the father had gotten back on his feet the children had moved back to live with the father. The father said he did not want to burden his in-laws with his long recovery and the care of the children too. I inquired if he had ever asked his in-laws if they felt this would be a burden. He admitted he had not. The father said, "I know the boys were a lot for them at their age. I didn't think they needed to have me asking for help as well." I answered him, "Well, maybe they won't consider you a burden. Maybe they wouldn't feel so lost without their daughter if you and the boys were in their lives." The father took a moment to think about what I had said. He said, "I could never ask them for their help." I told him maybe he wouldn't have to if he just explained to them his present situation. I had a feeling the in-laws would be happy to help and most likely would offer if he gave them the chance.

We talked for a while about the possibility of moving to live with or near his in-laws. The father had obviously given this some thought in the past as he pointed out the many ways this would help him and his children. The father spoke about the expense of the move and the car repairs and tires that would be needed for a safe road trip. They did not have the money necessary for such a move. I asked the father if he had the money would he want to move. The father said, "The boys were very sad moving back here after living with their grandparents. They had their own rooms. They were involved in sports. They already have many good friends there and a great school. It would be such a big help for me while I recover once more." As the father said he did not have any minutes left on his cell phone I

offered him the use of mine. I handed him the phone and told him to make the call. I listened while the father explained the current situation to his in-laws. As we were sitting right next to each other I heard a woman's voice say, "You know you are welcome here any time. If you can get here we have room for both you and the boys. We would love to have you here. You know our daughter would want you guys to be here." I knew those were the words he was waiting to hear. I could see he was struggling to not cry as they spoke a few more minutes and made arrangements. When they hung up the father said, "You were right. I didn't have to ask. They have wanted us to live with them all this time but I was too stubborn to notice."

We went over all the details of what would be required for their move. Until they could move I decided it would be best to move the father and two boys into a motel. The friend could no longer keep them there and the sleeping arrangements were less than ideal. It would take a few weeks to make all the arrangements. The father would need to find a doctor that could take over his long term care and transfer his records. He would need to register his boys in school. "We" would be getting his car in sound running order and putting new tires on to ensure the safest trip possible. "We" also provided food, toiletries, minutes for his phone and gas gift cards for the trip. When the father was ready to make the move I told him to keep us up to date on his progress and "We" would be there to help them if needed in the coming weeks.

Several weeks later the father called to let us know how things were going. The father said, "I don't know how I did this before on my own. The boys are so much happier here. I am not stressing constantly over our financial situation and as a result my pain level is much better. I'm seeing a new doctor and he has been a big help. I got his approval to job hunt once more. My in-laws are so happy to have the boys here. My wife was their only child so I did not realize how lonely they were. We are closer now than we have ever been. Thank you and everyone at The Time Is Now to Help for making this possible. If not for you I don't know where we would be right now." It is heartwarming to know the good works we accomplish together.

This father and children are three of the hundreds helped each year thanks to "You". The new Family Foundation \$30,000 Matching Grant opportunity is the perfect way for us to continue our goal of helping even more people in 2016. Please consider a donation at this time knowing it will be matched dollar for dollar, doubling your donation. The lives changed are all due to "You". Thank you and God Bless "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, Priebe Family Foundation, Dorothy

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**Memorials:** Carla Matz in memory of Harry Bublitz & Heidi Danner. Donald & Marilyn Ketchpaw in memory of Charles Axelson. In loving memory of Brynn Rae Thornburgh from the Brynn Thornburgh Benefit Fund: Bill & Patsy, Eric, Casey, Isabella & Alex, Erin & Adam, Britt, Matt, Kalam & Brayden Brill.

**Honoraries:** Kelly & Lori Carty in honor of their parents Karen & George Davis.

**Prayer Chain:** There have been numerous requests for a prayer chain addition to our weekly column. Please pray for healing for the following people: Caroline, Clarence, Ryan, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi's Grandma.

**W.C. Food Pantry:** The W.C. Food Pantry is located at: 205 E. Commerce St., Elkhorn, WI. 53121. This is in the old Aurora Clinic building off of Hwy. 67 just east of Interstate 43. Their phone number is (262) 723-4488.

Please visit: [www.timeisnowtohelp.org](http://www.timeisnowtohelp.org)