

Dear W.C.,

My grandmother is one of the best people in the world. She has been there for me my whole life. My mother and father left me in her care when I was a young child. They said they were too free spirited to take care of me. My grandma always said they were just too self-centered to have children. I remember being hungry and dirty when I was a kid but everything changed when I moved in with my grandma. She always made me feel loved and wanted. I didn't realize how much of a struggle it was for my grandma, as a widow and struggling to get by, to take on the care of a child. I didn't realize any of that until I became an adult myself. Now I am away at college and I know she is struggling financially. I am working my way through school and have received grants and scholarships as I knew my Grandma could never afford to put me through college. I am writing to see if you can help my Grandma. I send her a little money each month but I know it is not enough. I just do not have anything else to share either. She does not ever complain or ask for anything. When I go home to visit I see her empty cabinets and stack of bills. She had a part-time job for years but recently she has not been feeling well and not able to make it to work. I don't know how she is getting by right now. She is the type of person that would give you the shirt off her back or cook a meal for someone in need without any thought to her own well-being.

Dear Readers,

There are many people in this world that do nothing but think of themselves and take. That would be the selfish parents of the young woman that wrote this letter requesting help for her grandmother. Then there are people like all of "You" and this grandmother that are givers. We give not for our own self satisfaction but because our hearts are drawn to helping those in need. This grandmother does not worry about her own well-being; she only cares about the well-being of others around her. I called the granddaughter to get some further information on the grandmother and discuss some details on my planned visit. The granddaughter was filled with gratitude and cried tears of happiness when she realized we would be checking on her beloved grandmother. We agreed the granddaughter should tell her grandmother about my upcoming visit so she would not be frightened about a stranger at her door.

I arrived at the grandmother's apartment the following day. When the door was opened by the senior woman I noticed how tidy everything was and smelled something delicious coming from the kitchen. I said to the grandmother, "Now this is why I usually do not announce my visits. I did not want you going to any trouble. I like to see how our clients are living every day, not just on the day of my visit." The grandmother smiled and said, "I couldn't help myself. I had been saving up the ingredients for my granddaughter's favorite cookies for her next trip home. I decided this was a good time to make them. And really the apartment doesn't get dirty with just me here alone." I looked around the two bedroom apartment and saw many pictures of the granddaughter and grandmother together. I asked the grandmother questions about some of the pictures and she filled me in on some of their history.

I saw the small batch of cookies on a plate and asked the grandmother if she had other food in the house besides just the ingredients she had saved for this special batch of cookies. She

tried to make the usual excuses, “I don’t eat much. I only cook when my granddaughter is home.” But I know from experience that these are excuses to cover the shame of hunger and poverty. Everyone in our great nation should have access to good food and safe shelter. After looking through the grandmother’s cabinets and refrigerator I could see her food insecurity. I knew we had to sit down and go over her budget and expenses.

Once we were seated at the small table with the plate of cookies and stack of papers between us I was able to get a clearer picture of the grandmother’s financial state. I asked the grandmother about her son and the mother of her granddaughter. She shared she had found out several years prior that they had both died due to drug overdoses. She had only seen them a few times over the years when they stopped in to see the granddaughter. They had never given her any money to care for the granddaughter over the years. The grandmother said, “I was angry with them for so long over their selfishness. I kept questioning how they could just leave their daughter with me and not care. I did not know they were so addicted to drugs nor did I understand how that affected their ability to care for someone else. I now thank God everyday that they knew they could not care for her. What if she had stayed with them all those years and watched their slow death? What would have happened to her in their care? Now I think they were not selfish. They loved her enough to get her somewhere safe. They just did not love her more than they loved their addictions.” I saw some wisdom in what the grandmother tearfully shared with me. It would have been truly selfish of them to have kept this child in certain neglect and danger rather than bring her somewhere they knew she would be safe and loved.

The grandmother shared with me her part-time job she had worked at for the past ten years. She had just recently had to take several weeks off after tripping and twisting her ankle. The job helped her pay for a few extras the women needed. Now on top of the injury the grandmother told me she had two car repairs she was trying to pay for and the medical expenses that were not covered by Medicare. Now I could see why the grandmother had gotten by fine in the past but was struggling now. Looking through her bills and bank statements I could see she did not have any savings and had lived for years just getting by. When the granddaughter had been home she worked part-time and had always helped with the expenses too. Now that she was away at college the grandmother said she felt guilty even taking the few dollars she was able to send every week.

After we talked for a long time, and had both eaten several of her delicious cookies, I came up with a plan to help this grandmother out of her financial downward spiral. Immediate help would be given with gift cards for food and toiletries. The grandmother said her ankle was healed enough now to even shop and cook for herself. I could see the excitement over the possibility of good fresh food that only a person that has done without can appreciate. We brought her rent and utilities up to date to give her a chance to catch up on her other expenses. We also paid her remaining balance on her car repair and had additional repairs completed with our own trusted car repair team after a thorough evaluation of her vehicle. When I laid out the plan to the grandmother she began to cry again. I asked her why the tears and she said, “I can’t accept all that help. There are surely other people that could use some of my assistance. How can I ever repay you?” I thought of all those years this grandmother cared so lovingly for her granddaughter when she had probably been tired, financially

strained and all alone as she had no other family to turn to. Then I replied, “You have already done more than most to help those in need around you. Just knowing you raised such a wonderful caring granddaughter and saved her from a life of pain and possible addiction is all the thanks we need.” The grandmother reached across the table for my hand and squeezed it tight as she wiped her eyes. Then she smiled and said, “I did do a good job didn’t I.” We both laughed as I got up and walked around the small table to give the grandmother, now crying happy tears, a hug.

Several weeks later the granddaughter called me with an update. She was so grateful to all of “You” for your donations that made this assistance to her beloved grandmother even possible. She told me how her grandmother had even sent her a care package with her favorite cookies in it. The granddaughter said, “She has not been able to do something like that in a long time. I cannot thank you enough for your help.” The following day I decided to pop in and check on the grandmother unannounced. This time the grandmother greeted me with a hug and invited me into her still spotless apartment. I looked around and she laughed saying, “See I told you it always looks like this.” We both laughed over this. She proudly shared she was able to return to her part-time job and any extra funds she earned were being saved for her future. With the few changes we had made to her budget I was relieved knowing the grandmother could get by even without her job if necessary. After a short visit we said our tearful goodbyes. The grandmother said, “I thank God everyday for my blessings and that now includes everyone at The Time Is Now to Help.”

Please donate to our Barnabas \$50,000 Matching Grant. Your funds are desperately needed to provide the poverty stricken senior citizens, the handicapped, working poor families, children and veterans in our communities with shelter assistance, utility assistance, transportation assistance, food, toiletries and the many other daily necessities. Every dollar of your donation will be matched by the Barnabas \$50,000 Matching Grant doubling your donation and the poverty relief you provide. Thank you, thank you for your support in helping our fellow Americans in desperate need. God Bless “You” for your compassion and Caring and Sharing for God’s creations.

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: Barnabas Matching Grant, Fox Charities, Kunes Country Auto Group, Gregg Kunes, Bess Spiva Timmons Foundation, The Harold & Bernice DeWeerd Family Foundation, Martin Business, The Dan & Donna Casey Family Charitable Fund, James & Lynne Newman Foundation, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Thomas Getzen, Donald & Emily Henderson, John & Marian McClellan, The Sowers House, Estate Art & Collectibles, Walter & Donna Anderson, Marvin & Audrey Hersko, Randall & Margaret Smith, Joanne Zeasman, George & Lauretta Clettenberg, Elkhorn Chemical & Packaging,

Marshal & Susan Ketchpaw, Harvey & Nancy Beaster, Barbara Kufalk, Carolyn May Essel, David & Penny Froh, Alan & Irene Rednar, our anonymous donors and 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.

Honoraries: Laina Papenfus in honor of Kurt & Dixie Fielgel's Wedding Anniversary. Ed & Sharon Christensen in honor of Uncle Bernie's 90th Birthday. Robert & Mary Ann Zelenski in honor of John Koenen's birthday.

Memorials: Arlene Clausen in memory of her beloved brother Ray Buchanan and her forever friend Jean Ellen Hennix. Robert & Mary Ann Zelenski in memory of Bill Martin & Mary Aspinall.

Prayer Chain: Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline, Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Ryan, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi's Grandma, Marilyn, Sal, Corinne.

Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop: Please donate your gently used household items and furniture to the Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop. For local pick up of major items or collection appointments please call (262) 275-2264. Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop is located at N2270 State Rd. 67, Walworth, WI 53184. New hours: Monday – Saturday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closed Sundays. Please visit often knowing your support will provide life changing assistance for the fellow creations in their care. Inspiration Ministries is home for up to 80 residents that live with multiple physical and mental challenges. I thank all of you for helping. For more information visit www.inspirationministries.org.

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