

Dear W.C.,

I know many of your requests for assistance come from people that are care givers asking for help for their clients. My request is for the woman that provided hospice care to my mother. My mother recently passed away after many years battling cancer. The last month of her life she was cared for by a lovely woman that gave her loving compassionate care and helped her to pass peacefully. In that month of long days and nights sitting by my mother's side I got to know this woman. We had many serious conversations and I learned a little about her own struggle. This woman is a single mother with a son that is handicapped. He has multiple disabilities and her mother cares for him while she works. Her son's father has not helped with the expenses of his child since his birth. As soon as he learned the fate of their child he disappeared. Her son cannot communicate and will live a shortened lifespan due to his handicap. Several times she was late showing up for her shift and when I questioned her repeatedly about it, she did not want to share with me her struggles as a single mother of a severely disabled child, she finally told me about the troubles she had with their wheelchair accessible van. It is her only means of transportation and she needs it to get her son to his many medical visits and her hospice jobs. She did tell me she is only able to work part-time due to the care required for her son and she does pay for her own health insurance. I am not in any position to help her financially but I would like to see if I can help her find the help she needs. It is the least I can do for this woman that so kindly helped my mother and I both through one of the most difficult times in our lives. I know she is having other financial difficulties but she would not share any more information with me in fear of losing her job as a hospice nurse.

Dear Readers,

I called the woman that had so kindly written this letter in concern over her mother's hospice nurse. It was a very emotional conversation as the woman was still deeply grieving the recent loss of her mother. What the woman kept returning to was the compassionate final care her mother was given by the hospice nurse she was so concerned about. The woman sobbed as she said, "This caring nurse made sure my mother was comfortable, clean, had on her favorite music, held her hand and hugged her when she was scared, prayed with her and made sure she was not in any pain. I could not have asked for a more peaceful passing for my mother."

I thought this nurse had to be a compassionate kind person to even have the profession of a hospice nurse. To also be a single working mother of a multiple handicapped child would require much strength. It could not be easy for her even if she was financially secure. To be doing this while struggling financially would be nearly impossible for most people.

After the emotional but informative conversation with the woman that wrote the letter requesting our assistance I called the hospice nurse. After introducing myself over the phone, and explaining who had written in her behalf, the nurse told me the woman had called her just a few minutes before my call to let her know I would be calling. The nurse had several questions about our organization and admitted she had heard about us from some of the other nurses but had never considered herself for assistance. I asked if she was struggling

financially and after a moment's hesitation the nurse said, "Yes. My son, my mother and I are going through a hard time right now. I had to take several months off work to care for my son after he had a recent set back and then my mother was sick so she could not care for him while I worked." I set up a time to visit the next day as she was leaving for her new hospice nurse job in a few minutes.

The next day I arrived at the apartment in an older building. The woman thankfully had a first floor apartment as I did not see any elevators. The nurse opened the door and behind her I saw her son in a reclined supportive wheelchair. I also saw an older woman sitting beside him that I assumed was his grandmother. After introductions I learned the older woman was indeed the nurse's mother and I also found out she lived in the apartment with them. The older woman apologized for not getting up to meet me but explained she was having some hip pain and was soon going in for surgery. I looked at the nurse when she said this and noted the concern on her face. Not only was her mother going in for major surgery, which is stressful enough for most people, but she was also losing her caregiver for her son when she went to work. As if she could read my mind the grandmother said, "I have been waiting as long as I can because I know they need me. Now it is getting too hard for me to help lift my grandson and all the other physical things he needs help with throughout the day. It will be a long recovery but once I'm better I hope I can be helpful again."

The nurse and I pulled up chairs by the grandmother so we could all talk together. The nurse said her mother had been living with her for the past thirteen years, since her son was born, so she had nothing to hide. I had told the nurse over the phone what paperwork I would need to see, including a budget, bank statements, utility bills and any other late bills. She had these ready for me and handed them to me to review. After looking over her financial situation I could see the recent attempts to get her car running, the rise in her health insurance costs and the missed days at work had taken a toll on their budget. Even with working part-time they could get by in the past due to the mother's social security and her contributions to their budget. Once she began having problems with her used wheelchair accessible van that started eating away at their carefully planned budget. She also was making payments on the medical bills for her son's continued health problems.

I questioned the nurse about several of the medical bills and she filled me in on her son's condition. He was born with a rare genetic disorder that continued to worsen over time. She said, "His father knew about this genetic problem on his side of the family and did not want to deal with it at all. He never told me about the possibility of our child being born with this. I had to learn everything on my own. I love my son dearly and would not trade a minute we have had together for anything, but it has not always been easy. He could speak when he was younger but now he can no longer speak. He has lost the ability to use all his limbs." I could see tears begin to spill down her face when she said, "The reason I decided to become a hospice nurse is because I knew one day he would need my care and I wanted to be able to be the one that was there for him." The nurse covered her mouth as she tried to contain a sob. She could not carry on with what she was saying but I understood what she was trying to convey.

The grandmother hugged her daughter and said, "I am going to take him in the other room. He does not need to see you cry. He knows you cry because of him." The nurse wiped her eyes and struggled to say, "I know. I'm sorry. I will be better in a minute." As the grandmother slowly helped her grandson to the next room we carried on our conversation. I asked about her sons cognitive abilities as I heard what the grandmother had said and did not want to upset the son by my visit. The nurse said, "He is losing all we taught him but he still knows who we are. He is happy when I come home from work. He loves his grandmother and likes when she reads books to him. Soon he will be on a feeding tube and we may not have much time after that." Again I watched the nurse try to contain a sob as she wiped away more tears. She added, "I thought doing this kind of work would make it easier for me when his time came but I was wrong. I may know every process he will go through as I lose my son but it will not help to ease the process or the loss I will feel when he is gone."

Trying to calm her down I asked about her job. The nurse told me how she loved her work and felt privileged to help people get through such a painful time with dignity and care. She said, "It has to feel kind of like how you feel when you help people while they are struggling financially. You must talk to a lot of people during very difficult times, like illnesses, deaths, job loss. It is not always easy to know what to say but it comes from my heart." I agreed as The Time Is Now to Help does help people during their most difficult times. I love what we do and the satisfaction I feel, knowing all of "Us" together have removed the pains of poverty for our fellow creations, restoring dignity and providing care, is something I share with all of "You".

The nurse went to check on her son and provide a medication he was due for. I looked around the apartment and noted they did not live extravagantly. It was simply furnished to allow enough room for his wheelchair in the small rooms. The bathroom had been modified slightly so she could put her son in a shower chair for bathing. I noted the hospital bed and twin bed sharing the larger bedroom. When the mother returned she explained she shared a room with her son as he sometimes had problems breathing at night. The remaining small bedroom was the grandmothers but the mother said they sometimes took turns at night if she had to work. I asked the nurse how she would handle caring for both her mother and her son after her mother's surgery. She seemed confident she could handle it but I offered some help from one of our volunteers during this time. The nurse first declined but when I explained we have many volunteers that are skilled in different areas, they too want to feel good about helping, she finally agreed this would be a great help. She cried saying, "Yes, yes thank you."

After reviewing her vehicle and all her bills I put together a plan to help this mother, grandmother and handicapped son. We would have some repairs done on her van to allow safe transportation. We paid her utilities up to date and into the future to allow them some room in their budget. We also paid up their rent and paid it a month into the future. Several gift cards for food were provided and gas gift cards for work and medical care. Once the grandmother had her surgery and was back at the apartment, one of our caring volunteers made several deliveries of food and even prepared a few dishes for them, knowing how busy this mother/caregiver was. An additional volunteer helped with other daily chores and even helped with the son.

I stopped by several months later and was happy to find the grandmother back up and about, helping to care for her grandson. She said her pain was much relieved and she was ready to let her daughter the hospice nurse return to her job. The nurse gave me a big hug and I heard her crying. When I asked, "Are you crying again?" She answered with a smile, "I am but this time they are happy tears. We would never have made it through these past months without you and your wonderful volunteers. My son is not better but thanks to everyone at The Time Is Now to Help I am able to care for him and not worry about our bills all the time too. I am never late for work due to my van being fixed and I can always get my son to his doctor's visits. You have changed our lives so much. God Bless You." I'm sharing that gratitude and blessing with all of you. Your support allowed us to be there for this woman that is used to caring for others, her handicapped son and elderly mother.

There are many of our fellow creations turning to us for help or being referred by others. The children, the handicapped, the elderly, those that cannot fend for themselves, those living in desperate need will be crying happy tears of relief thanks to all of "You", the Family Foundation 2017 \$30,000 Matching Grant and The Time Is Now to Help working together to provide poverty relief. Please donate now knowing every dollar will be matched, doubling your donation. Together "We" make a big difference removing the pains of poverty for our fellow creations. Thank you and God Bless you.

Health & Happiness, Love & 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: Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust, Family Foundation, Fox Charities, Marilyn G. Schawk, Martin Business, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, Debra Guzman, Unilock, Rhoades Foundation, Freedom Plastics Foundation, Petco Foundation, Lake Geneva Economic Development Corp., Rotary Club of Lake Geneva, Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin, Grunow Family Fund, Deborah Halverson, Margaret Plevak, Duane DeYoung, Jeannene Smarslik, Rob Sturru, James & Marilyn Dyer, Judith Gallo, Beth & Jody Rendall, Thomas & Jacqueline Cashman, David & Shirley Heigl, Walter & Florence Strumpf, Michael & Kathe Beach, Albert & Ellen Burnell, Church of Jesus Christ LDS, R. & Janice Erickson, Jack Mallory, Robert & Mary Winter, Joel & Annette Hovestol, Linda Vrchota, Shari & James Loback, Michael & Pamela Tasch, Aurora Health Care Employee Partnership Campaign, Jeanne Mc Donald, Gene Krauklis, Tom Wigton, Heidi Hall, Mary Cucchi, Shawna Kneipper, Paul Symons, Eugene Luptak, 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.

Memorials: Peggy Cardiff in memory of Dot Cardiff & Lisa Haydam. Arlene Clausen in memory of her dear niece Sherri & dear cousin Mary Crowell.

Prayer Chain: A big "thank you" for all of your prayers and good thoughts. We have

received phone calls and letters from those that have gotten well. Some of our loved ones have had their cancer go into remission, some have had their enormous anguish of pain physically healed. The power of prayer and positive thoughts comes from the true healer, our Lord answering our prayers. Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline, Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi's Grandma, Marilyn & Lois.

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. 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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