

Dear W.C.,

My sister and her three young children are struggling right now. She recently escaped years of being abused by her husband. She finally had enough when her husband started going after the children. They are all presently living in my two bedroom apartment with my two children and me. It is extremely crowded and I worry every day I am going to be evicted because I am not allowed to have so many people living here. I've already received a warning from my landlord. I also did not want to have my sister go back to her abusive husband because she did not have anywhere else to go. I barely get by each month myself as a single mother and cannot afford to lose my apartment or care for so many people with my small paycheck. She is not able to get a job yet because she has no one to watch the children ages 1 to 5 years old and she does not have a car. She barely was able to contact me over the years other than an occasional email sent from the library computer. She was not allowed the use of a cell phone or computer. It is hard to fathom someone controlling your life like that but it is amazing how using fear and stripping you of all self-confidence can be used to brainwash you. That is exactly what happened to my sister. We have already gone to other organizations for legal and other assistance and we have been referred to you for additional direction and input in how to put her life back together. We have heard good things about The Time Is Now to Help and are hopeful you will be able to help my sister take the final steps to free herself from the financial grasp her husband has over her. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dear Readers,

We provide assistance in abuse situations more often than most people know. They are frequently brought to our attention by people working in other organizations that provide legal assistance and other human services. Most of these situations are very difficult and require more than one group to free these women from the psychological and financial holds their abuser has on their lives. When these fellow creations turn to us for assistance it is our mission is to find them safe shelter and help them to become independent. All of us working together help to restore their self-confidence and their ability to live without the constant fear of domestic violence, both physical and psychological.

I called to set up a time to visit as I did not want to startle the women with an unexpected knock on the door, knowing what kind of affect that would have on the women and children. The sister that wrote the letter was very grateful we were coming to visit.

I set up a time to visit when the letter writer was home from work. The sister had thankfully set up a play date with a neighbor in her apartment complex so the children would not be listening to our conversation in the small cramped apartment. When entering the apartment I immediately noticed just how cramped their situation was. The two sisters were sharing the

one bedroom and three of the five children were sharing the other small bedroom. Two of the children were sleeping on the couch in the living room. It was not ideal but they were making it work for now and at least they were in a place safe rather than sleeping in a car or even worse back with her abuser.

The sisters introduced themselves and we immediately got to work discussing the abused woman's difficult situation, knowing our time was limited to the children's play date. The sister that was abused was the younger of the two by several years but looked older and lacked the spark of life I saw in the older sister's eyes. The joy had seemed to be snuffed out of the younger sister and been replaced with a nervousness that comes from years of living in fear and dread.

I asked many difficult questions of the younger sister and when she could not answer sometimes her older sister would pull the answer out of her. The younger sister showed me several scars and marks where she had been hurt by her husband but had been forbidden to get medical care by her abusive husband. She seemed to talk about all of this almost impassively, as if it wasn't even herself she was speaking about. I could tell this was the only way she had been able to protect herself from the psychological turmoil she had been through in addition to the physical abuse.

When I began to ask about the children and how they were affected by their fathers abuse was when I finally saw some emotion. Telling me how her husband had been drunk and become enraged when she had locked herself in the children's bedroom to protect herself from his abuse he had burst the door down and turned his anger on the children. She said, "This was truly the first time he had done more than an occasional spanking or yelling at the children. This time he had our five year old up against the wall and was threatening to punch him. I begged and pleaded for him to hit me instead and he did, several times until I fell to the ground, while my children watched in horror. I saw our future at that point and knew we had to get away. I had convinced myself all those years my children were safe but they never would be. Neither would I." The younger sister was now sobbing and I watched as the older sister tried to console her.

I was so angry and saddened to hear this young woman's story of abuse yet sadly it is not the first time I have heard this. I knew what this woman needed to be set free was to have this so called man that was her husband put in jail. That was thankfully being worked on by the proper authorities and our job was to get this woman on the path to safe shelter, employment and transportation. That is what I had to keep focused on during this painful and emotional visit.

When the younger sister pulled herself together once more we moved on to talk about her employment options, the assistance she had already applied for with the help from other

organizations and places to live. This was an in-depth conversation that took some time to complete. The older sister told me what she paid for rent and utilities and it was very reasonable. I asked about other apartments in the building she was in, preferably a top floor and in a secured building like the sisters. The older sister told me about a two bedroom apartment that was available on the third floor. It was in the neighboring building and would be ideal to keep the sisters close to each other for support. The older sister had already gotten the rent information from her landlord when she had called to talk to him when she received her notice about overcrowding in her apartment. The landlord was hesitant to rent to the younger sister as she had no credit history and was not presently employed. I knew the landlord and he had worked with us in the past. I gave him a call and with assurances that we would be providing the security deposit and two months' rent he was willing to let the younger sister rent the apartment. With both sisters permission I shared some of the facts with the landlord and he was so moved he participated in her assistance by providing a year's lease with a substantially reduced rent.

When I got off the phone the two sisters were overjoyed to hear the good news that they would be close to each other and that the sister now had a place to live. I also arranged for furniture to be delivered from Inspiration Ministries and new beds were purchased from Verlo Mattress Factory for the mother and three children. As the shelter arrangements were now finalized we moved onto her employment options.

The younger sister shared she had been employed when she met her husband five years prior. Her husband had rushed her into marriage and she had gotten pregnant immediately. As soon as they were married he started drinking and his personality completely changed. He insisted she quit her job. This had been their first real fight and the first time he had struck her. Of course his apologies had seemed heartfelt and things had gone back to "normal" once she quit her job. With each passing day he had taken a little more from her. Before she knew it she was pregnant with her third child and lived in constant fear of her husband's drinking and then ritual of abuse. I asked what her job skills were and was not surprised to hear she was an educated woman with good skills. This kind of abuse can happen to anyone, at any stage in their lives, in all economic and education levels.

By this time we heard the neighbor woman entering so I knew we would have to continue our conversation another time. She had four of the children in tow and one very tired toddler in her arms. The younger sister got up to take the toddler from her arms and all the children gathered around to meet me. I could see how shy the three younger sister's children were compared to the older sisters more confident two children. Looking at those beautiful children's faces I gave thanks to God for all of "You" and our ability to be a part of saving them from a life of sadness and fear. I knew they were all tired so I said my goodbyes with a promise to follow up in a few days. On my way to the door I handed the sisters both some

gift cards for food, toiletries, clothing for the children and younger sister since they had left most of their belongings behind and gas for the older sisters car.

The following week the younger sister contacted me to let me know one of the other organizations she had been seeking assistance from had assisted her with subsidized child care and creating a resume. Through our networking we were able to help in her job search. She soon found a job and after several weeks the employer contacted me and was very complimentary of her work ethic and skills. I felt confident with the information provided to put her on our car waiting list now that she had found good employment. Again I saw the tough shell of this woman breakdown and all the emotions she had kept hidden for the past five years filled her face. She began to cry as she thanked us for our help. I told her all about The Time Is Now to Help and how all of "You" make our charity work a success. Both sisters shared emotional thanks giving for all of us working together to help the sister and children.

A few weeks later we had the younger sister and three children moved into their own apartment. They carried over their few belongings and were surprised to walk into an apartment that contained beds and furniture. The cabinets had dishes and the beds had bedding. There were even some toys for the children. The sisters looked at me again with tearful gratitude. We all watched as the children ran through the apartment with excitement and happiness. Happiness provided by all of "You" and your generous support of our good works.

Thank you for your continued support of the charity work we all do together. It is a group effort, a labor of love and a blessing to many suffering in poverty in our communities. Please remember the new Fox Charities Summer 2017 \$25,000 Matching Grant. Every dollar you donate will be matched by Fox Charities, doubling your donation. 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: Fox Charities, Kune's Family Foundation, Mark & Natalie Reno, Martin Business, John Stensland & Family, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, Christine Adams, Jeffrey Martin, Thomas Morrissy, Elkhorn Lions Club, Rita's On Wells Street, William Davit, Teresa Hurley, Karin Collamore, Margaret Plevak, Gregory Swanson, Duane DeYoung, E. & Barbara Andres, David & Penny Froh, Judy Dishneau, Charles &

Patricia Wehrmann, George & Laretta Clettenberg, Church of Jesus Christ LDS, Charles & Donna Corson, Gloria Dastoli, Gerald & Marilyn Wilkin, Joan Marabito Rietz, Robert & Shelly Hecht, Elkhorn Chemical & Packaging, Virginia Sammon, Robert & Patricia Davis, Carolyn May Essel, Shari & James Loback, Mary Dunham, Jeanne Allen, 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: Daniel & Donna Casey in memory of their sister Eileen. Kenneth & Patricia Sharp in memory of Vera Lawton. The estate of William & Mary Osborn, David Osborn, Valerie Lincoln and Judy Sokolowki in memory of Mary Osborn. The children of Ray Wells: Jeanne, John & Jim in memory of Mary Osborn. Gerald Neinfeldt in memory of Nancy Fraser.

Prayer Chain: 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.

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.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org