

Dear W.C.,

I am a young woman that had dreams of attending college and having a career. Those dreams ended when my mother died unexpectedly when I was only sixteen years old and I had to go live with my aunt. She was very difficult to live with due to her drug and alcohol use. I had a terrible few years living in her home until I moved out when I was eighteen. She had many people coming and going and one of those men raped me one night while my aunt was passed out on the couch. I never knew who he was and after his threats to kill me and my aunt if I said anything, I never reported it. I ended up pregnant from that attack and I told my aunt. She refused to go to the police then because of her drug use and her refusal that it even happened, even blaming me, calling it my mistake. She then convinced me that if I went to the police they would find me at fault and since I did not even know the father of the baby I had no morals. I hit rock bottom then and knew I had to get away from my aunt and her so called friends or I would never make it in this world. It was my goal then to prove everyone wrong. I not only had the baby, I finished high school and graduated with honors. It has not been easy. Everything has been a struggle. Since I had the baby I moved out because I did not want those kinds of people around my child and I. My baby is now three years old and will be innocent to the evil in this world for as long as I can shelter him from it. We just get by each month on my limited income. Of course I do not receive child support. By the time I pay for child care, food and rent there is hardly anything left. Last month my car broke down and my son was so sick I took him to the emergency room. He is fine after a bad virus but our budget is not after receiving all the bills. I have fallen behind in rent and utilities. I am so worried I will never be able to catch up again. Please help us.

Dear Readers,

After reading this letter I could not help but think what a strong person this young woman is. There were many ways the outcome of her terrible situation could have brought her down. Instead she chose to prove everyone wrong and even love the child that was the result of a violent crime that most people would have a hard time moving on from. This young woman was brave enough to get herself and her child out of harm's way by moving out on their own. That had to be very difficult and scary at her age but perhaps it was more frightening to stay in the unsafe living conditions that had made the violent crime against her even possible. I wanted to meet this young woman and child and assess their situation.

I called the young woman to set up a time to meet. To respect her possible fear of strange men I arranged to meet the woman and child in a park close to her apartment. I asked her to bring someone with that would make her feel more comfortable. She said she would bring someone with from her support group. When we spoke she seemed relieved to have that

option versus a virtual stranger arriving at her door. We made an appointment to meet the following day after work.

The next afternoon I arrived at a park to find several children running around playing on the playground while two young women watched them. When I got out of my car they all looked at me but one woman stepped forward and introduced herself. The woman was the writer of the letter. She then introduced me to her friend that would also be watching her son while we talked. I shook both women's hands and was met with curious stares from the three young children. The woman that had written the letter of request gently pushed her young son forward and told him to shake my hand. Even as young as three the handsome boy shyly shook my hand and then all three children ran off to play once more.

The young woman watched as the three children went back to play and then asked her friend if she could keep an eye on him while we talked. We walked over to a picnic table not far from the playground and I noticed the woman carried a folder full of papers. I asked if that was the financial documents I had told her to bring over the phone and she said it was.

We talked a long time about the woman's troubling teen years. Her mother's sudden death after a brain aneurysm had been shocking and heart breaking. The young woman dissolved in tears as she told me the details of her sudden death and the aftermath when she found out her mother had chosen her aunt as her caretaker. Her mother had a small savings that the aunt had been unable to touch but had been hoping to get when the young woman turned eighteen. It was that small savings that had enabled the young woman to get away from the aunt and her drug filled lifestyle. Now that the savings had been used to purchase her older car and for first month's rent and security deposit the young woman had no savings to fall back on. When looking through her bank statements and bills I could see she just got by with a very modest budget for food and other necessities each month.

The young woman then brought up the night that would change her life forever. She said, "I have been going to a support group for sexual assault victims and they have helped me to get past the constant fear I lived in. I will not be defined by this one event. I was badly beaten and raped but lucky to not be killed. I have only minor physical scars but the scars on my mind and my heart are huge. It was not my fault and I won't be blamed for any part of it. I also do not plan on ever telling my son he is the result of a violent crime against me. I would not change having him in my life now. I love him more than words can say." She again began crying as she told me how her aunt had treated her after the rape. She said, "The following day my aunt didn't even notice the bruises I had all over my arms, neck and face. I hoped she would say something but she never did. When I finally told her what had happened I reminded her about those bruises yet she still did not believe me. She said she didn't even remember the man being in her home, but she was so drunk how could have

remembered.” At that moment we both looked over to watch the beautiful child running and playing with a huge smile on his face.

The young woman had no other family other than her neglectful aunt she has never seen again, her father and mother were both deceased. She had no siblings. Her family now was who she chose to surround herself with. The people from her support group were good friends. She said her co-workers and boss were supportive of her when she needed days off to care for a sick child or her car broke down, but the determined young woman said she did not want special favors because of this. She said, “I have worked so hard to be independent and make our own way. That is why it is so hard for me to ask for help now. I read in your column how many people are brought down by a medical bill or car repair, and here it has happened to me. That is why health care in our country is so important. Everyone could be just one illness away from financial ruin.” I couldn’t deny her statement. So many people still remain uninsured or with high deductibles and you never know when you will have a health emergency. There are millions of working poor American’s living on the edge of poverty every day.

After we talked for a long time I went over all my notes with the young woman. We noticed the children were tiring and no longer running like they were before. It was time they all went home. I told the woman about our plan of assistance. We would be paying her overdue rent and one month ahead to give her a chance to catch up on her other bills. We also would pay her overdue utilities. While we had talked we walked over to look at her car and I found it needed a few more repairs she had been unable to afford. I told her we would have it repaired for her. The young woman again burst into tears, saying, “I never expected this. I mean I had heard about you, even read your columns, women in my support group told me about The Time Is Now to Help, but I still never expected all this.” I took a minute to tell her about all of “You” and how you make our good works possible. This brought even more tears as she said, “I didn’t know there were so many good people in the world. I have closed myself off to meeting new people and was often living in fear, but now I see I shouldn’t do that. If I do that my son and I might not get a chance to meet some of the good people in the world. I am so grateful for the good people that let The Time Is Now help people like my son and I.” I shared with her my own gratitude for the good people in the world that do care about those struggling in their communities, the good people that help to make the world a better and gentler place to live.

As we walked back to meet the friend and children I watched as her son ran to meet his mother. His face was full of happiness as he threw himself into her arms and when she picked him up he laid his tired head on her shoulder. The good mother in her knew it was time for her son to go home and go to sleep. She invited me over to see their apartment the following day with another one of her support group women by her side. I knew she was not

ready for strangers in her home yet but she was willing to take baby steps towards ending the fear she lived in. The women both seemed comfortable in my presence and I was able to determine what help she would need in her home, including a twin bed for her three year old son that was still sleeping on a crib mattress on the floor. We also helped with some additional food and gas for her car. The poverty relief we had given this woman was clearly visible on her face.

Once again we all came together to relieve the pains and stress of poverty. We have come together to help a woman regain her faith in humanity. That was all thanks to “You” and The Time Is Now to Help working together in our mission to do God’s good works helping our fellow creations.

As our summer quickly moves to fall we continue to have many people coming to us in desperate need, living in fear, trying to survive without the necessities of life. As we continue to work very hard verifying the genuine need of good people, we also need your continued support. Together “We” need to carry on our good works that make our mission for God a success. 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: Fox Charities, Kune’s Family Foundation, Martin Business, John Stensland & Family, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, The Harold & Bernice DeWeerd Family Foundation, Jeffrey Martin, Jack Fogle Memorial Foundation, Alan Cornue, ITW Foundation, Kathryn Drexler, Cornerstone Shop, Chavez for Charity, James & Marilynn Dyer, Beth & Jody Rendall, Russo Drywall, Albert & Ellen Burnell, Church of Jesus Christ LDS, Michael & Kathe Beach, Marilyn Carver, Marvin & Audrey Hersko, Walter & Florence Strumpf, Father Hugh Fullmer, Stanford & Alice Shuping, Robert & Patricia Davis, 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: Sharon Christensen in memory of Larry Ritchie. The estate of William & Mary Osborn, David Osborn and Valerie Lincoln in memory of Mary Osborn. Melissa Gehrke in memory of Mary Osborn.

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, Jayden, Santina, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Sheila,
Adrian & Marilyn.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org