

Dear W.C.,

My neighbor is an elderly man who I know is struggling. His wife passed away last winter, and she seemed to do most of the yard work and upkeep when she was alive. He has been disabled ever since we moved in three years ago and we rarely see him outside. Recently I noticed I do not see any lights on in the house at night. I worry about him not having air-conditioning on such hot days. I stopped by a week ago to offer him some cake from my son's birthday party and he had tears in his eyes when I handed it to him. He looked frail and I could not help but notice how hot the home was. I offered to help on my days off work, but he declined my help. I know it was his pride that caused him to say no. I never see anyone stop by to check on him or help. He really needs more help than I know I could provide. Please check in on him as he seems like a kind gentleman who really needs a helping hand.

Dear Readers,

I knew this request would require me to stop by and see for myself the conditions the caring neighbor described. After calling her and confirming some information over the phone, I got in my car to head over to meet the elderly gentleman.

When I arrived, I was met in front of the house by the caring neighbor. She had agreed to introduce me to the reclusive elderly man as she knew his pride would most likely cause him to decline he needed any assistance. With one look at the home, it was easy to see he needed some help.

We walked to the door, and I noticed the long grass and tall weeds overtaking the small yard. When the caring neighbor knocked on the door it was soon answered by an elderly man walking with a cane. He looked happy to see the neighbor and even happier when she handed him a plate with a sandwich and some fruit. The neighbor introduced me to the elderly man and politely asked if we could come in to talk. He hesitated at first, but finally agreed to let us inside.

Together we walked inside the small house, and I noticed how the inside of the house seemed to be in better shape than the outside. There were some Knick knacks on the shelves, but everything seemed to be dusted and clean. When I asked about some of the obviously older and fragile items, the elderly man stated they were things his wife had loved and cherished. He added, "God rest her soul. I try to take care of everything around here just like my wife liked it, but I'm just not able to do everything she did."

We talked about his wife, and we learned she had passed after a long battle with cancer. After some prompting, he admitted how her health care had depleted all their savings and put them into debt. He had been cutting back everywhere he could to pay the remaining medical bills and overdue expenses. To the point he had hardly any food in the home and his utilities were disconnected.

The neighbor asked how he stayed cool in the summer heat and he said he went down to the basement, but it was hard for him to get back up the stairs. He had one son who had not come to visit in years due to his struggle with alcoholism. The elderly man did not have anyone to help him.

This elderly mans plight touched me and I knew we could at least remove the pains of poverty he was enduring. I put together a plan to restore his utilities and add a credit for the future, with a promise he would turn on his air-conditioning and not risk a fall down his steps to the unfinished cellar to escape the heat. The neighbor who had accompanied me offered to pull the weeds in his yard and have her son mow his lawn when he did hers weekly. The elderly man tried to decline our offers of help, but with some coaxing he agreed and finally admitted he needed the help. Another volunteer dropped off groceries and a few prepared items. I looked over the remaining overdue bills the elderly man had tried to hide, knowing paying these off were key to his ability to live within his budget in the future.

Two hours later the caring neighbor and I were hugging the elderly man goodbye, with promises to check in on him from time to time. This time he accepted our help with a smile and a grateful, "Thank you."

That is what we do together. We renew hope when there feels like there is none. We remove the physical pains of poverty and step in when others turn away. Thank you and God Bless You for your support that makes this assistance and all our poverty relief efforts possible.

*Health & Happiness, Love & GOD Bless Everyone, 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. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing how 100% of your donation was used for providing poverty relief.

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