

Dear WC,

My grandma needs help. I told my mother to help her but she said she cannot help her anymore or we're going to end up in the streets. My mother said we should both write you a letter.

A Worried Granddaughter

Hi WC,

Please do not think that I'm a bad person, I just cannot help my mother financially anymore. She gets social security, but it's just not enough and we have helped when we could. If another problem comes up, I won't be able to make my rent again and I cannot take the chance of becoming homeless with my daughter. Please help.

A Concerned Daughter/Mother

Dear Readers,

These are two letters that I received together, the first letter was from the young daughter and the second letter was from the mother. When I contacted them my first inquiry was into why the grandmother/mother lived separately, why didn't they combine resources and live together. At that time the daughter told me that she and her mother had not been close since her little girl was born. I asked why and she replied, "My mother and father were both so upset with me at the time. I was dating someone at the time and they kept telling me that good people get married, if you know what I mean. I didn't heed their warning and I got pregnant. My dad was so upset over it, especially when my mother stopped talking to me. My dad died from a heart attack during this stressful time and my mother blamed me for his death. She will not take any money directly from me. I usually pay money on her utilities, drop off some food and try to do whatever I can. I know how hard it was when my dad was sick and they barely could make ends meet then."

I went over to meet the mother. When I arrived at the mother's house, I knocked on the door and introduced myself. She said that she read our column and has been reading it for a long time. I asked, "Why didn't you ever write me?" and she replied, "Because I am doing ok." She was so excited for us to be able to talk. She was always pausing and saying, "I can't believe we are talking. You're not going to write about this are you?" And I said, "Well if I do your name won't appear in the paper so they won't know who it is." She said, "Well I don't know."

We proceeded to talk for a while. I asked her how much help she received from her daughter. She replied, "To be honest I really don't know. I just know now and then my bill arrives marked with a payment on it and I know I didn't pay anything." I explained to her how her daughter had been paying for her utilities whenever she was able to. I also told her about the other things her daughter has been doing for her out of the goodness of her heart.

I then asked her about how angry she still was about her daughter having a child out of wedlock. She proceeded to look down and said, "Well I haven't really been able to talk to her. You know my husband had a heart attack over it." I asked, "Had your husband had any heart attacks prior to this?" She replied, "Yes two." I then asked, "How old was your husband?" She answered, "Well he was quite a bit older than I." I said, "Did your husband love your daughter?" She said, "Tremendously." She looked down and began to cry. I asked, "How long has it been since you talked to your daughter?" She said, "It's been years." I told her, "You think your husband would want you to ignore her and your

granddaughter?" She looked up at me with her tear filled eyes and said, "You know what's in my heart." And as I looked back she said, "And you know what would be in my husband's heart." I said, "I know what's in your husband's heart and that is he would want you two to love each other." She said, "It's been so long, what can I possibly do now?" I said, "Your daughter has been helping you for so long that she will no longer be able to pay her rent if she helps anymore. I received a letter from your granddaughter requesting help for you." I pulled the letter out and slid it across the table. I said, "Your daughter also wrote that it's been really difficult for her too, and she is going to become homeless if in fact she gives anymore help to you. She loves you so much that she wants to help you."

After she read the letter she picked it up and held it to her heart. She said, "What am I to do? What am I to do?" I said, "What all good grandmothers and mothers should do." She looked up with questioning eyes. "You should move in together to save on rent and utilities. That will give you plenty of time to talk over things from the past and move on with a more loving and open relationship in the future."

I have abbreviated this conversation here in my column. It actually took place over several hours. The grandmother/mother finally asked, "How do I do this? I can't just pick up the phone and call." I said, "I know you can't. Your daughter just had the phone disconnected because they needed to save money for the rent, and I wasn't going to pay for it." She looked at me and asked, "You always help people, why aren't you going to pay for the phone?" I said, "Because my goal is not to keep you two living separate lives, on the brink of poverty, but hopefully to get you both to move in together. In that case you only need one phone." She looked up at me, smiled and said, "I would like that." With that I asked, "Do you mind if I leave and come back in a little while?" She told me that would be fine and I assured her I would return shortly.

I went to her daughter and granddaughters apartment. After talking to them for a while, I asked them to go for a ride with me. I asked the little girl if she would like to visit her grandmother. She replied, "I would love to." Then I asked the daughter, "How about you?" She said, "What is my mom going to say?" I said, "I just left there. Your mom was crying, holding your letter to her heart. I think you should go." She said, "Yes I will." I drove them back and knocked on the door. When the grandmother/mother answered the door she started to shake and cry and held out her arms to her daughter. The daughter immediately melted into her arms. As fragile as the grandmother/mother is you could see her holding onto her daughter tightly and the granddaughter wrapping her arms around both their waists. After several minutes of this I could see the tears between the grandmother/mother and daughter were long overdue and they were crying profusely. I could feel their lost time together had caused them great heartbreak.

It is sad how family members, and good friends, often get separated by different things that come up in life, when all God wants is for us is to be able to offer each other forgiveness and love. We talked for quite some time. I told all three of them that going forward things were going to be much better for everyone. They should experience much happier times living together. The grandmother/mother asked, "Are we moving too fast? How do you even know my daughter wants to live with me?" The daughter said almost simultaneously, "How do you know my mother wants to live with me?" I said, "There you go. I think you answered your own question." They looked at each other and smiled. The granddaughter said, "I think we will have fun living together." The grandmother looked down at the granddaughter and said, "Yes dear, we will. I'll have someone to cook and

bake for.” And the daughter said, “I’ll have someone to take food shopping and...to love. I love you Mom and I have missed you so much.” We visited for a while and we all came to the conclusion that the father would be happy to see his family reunited again.

Together we helped them put their lives back on the right track and helped them put together a realistic budget. We assisted with some past due bills to get them on their feet. Combining the income from the daughters’ job, and the social security check from the mother, they should have no problem making ends meet in the future. I checked in on them several times after they settled in and I can’t tell you how happy they are together. The only regret the mother had was the years they lost, but she said, “We are making up for them by loving in overtime.” I said, “That’s a wonderful way to put it. Everyone needs to love in overtime.”

Once again I thank all of you for Caring and Sharing, making a positive change in our Communities, and for making our Great United States of America a better place to LIVE.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, WC

A Special Thank You To: Louise & Clifford Morris, Steven & Susan Woodcock, Geri & Al Hinton, Brenda & Greg Wisniewski, Terry & Judith Jahnke, the Hollmann-Nordhaus family, Immanuel United Church of Christ, Donald & Gladys Keith, ALL the readers for Caring and Sharing, 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 to Help* donation box in your business, please call 262-249-7000.

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