

Dear W.C.,

For 15 years I was the caregiver for my disabled brother. I was working as a CNA at an assisted living until my mother passed away and I took over the care of my brother full-time. My brother was a mentally and physically disabled paraplegic since he was in a car accident when he was 18. He was hit by a drunk driver who died years ago from his alcoholism and my brother never received any compensation for his suffering and intensive care. Three months ago, my brother died due to pneumonia after he caught the flu at one of his therapy appointments. Now I find myself alone, without income, any family, or employment. The only work record I have is caregiving for my brother and there are no references for that. I have applied for several jobs but the only ones willing to hire me are not paying enough for me to get by. I used what funds I had saved to pay for my brother's small funeral and for the property taxes on the home left to me by my mother. I do not even have money for food or gas right now. I am behind in my utilities. I never considered the predicament I would be in when my brother passed away as I did not expect it to happen for years. I am not afraid of hard work or difficult tasks as that has been all I have known for the past fifteen years. It is discouraging that those skills do not account for much these days.

Dear Readers,

I contacted the discouraged woman to not only help her get on her feet, but also to encourage her to not give up. She needed to hear she had something of value to share with others and her skills were appreciated.

After speaking for only a few minutes, I could hear the sadness in the woman's voice. The years of caring for her brother around the clock, and as I learned from our conversation, no visitors or friends to talk to, she was in need of our care.

When I asked the woman about her food insecurity I did not like hearing how she had been skipping meals and cutting back. There was no fresh food in her home as she only had canned soup and peanut butter left from her last trip to the food pantry. We would solve that problem for now, but we would have to find a long-term solution to her lack of income and resulting pains of poverty.

We went over the woman's budget line by line, and I was encouraged to see that with a modest income she could live comfortably in the small home that was now hers. Her mother had put a stipulation on her will that the woman must care for her brother to inherit the home, but the caring woman said she would have cared for him even if her mother had not had a home to give. It was easy to see how much she missed him and grieved his loss.

I steered our conversation to what we could do for this woman now. We would start with gift cards for food, toiletries, and gas. We would bring her utilities up to date and pay some in the future. We would help the woman with several other expenses, including a minor car repair and home repair she could not afford. We then talked about her job and her employment options. I had heard about a company hiring and I knew they would hire this hardworking

woman if I asked. They would pay a fair wage that would allow her to pay her bills each month and still be able to buy food. When I asked the woman if she was up to applying for one more job, she gave me a resounding, “Yes!”

Thanks to our assistance and her new job, this formerly discouraged woman is now enthusiastic about each day. She is making friends at work and at the church her co-workers invited her to attend. Thank you for your assistance that made all this possible.

Please donate at this time as all your donations will be matched by the New Year 2024 Helping Hand Up \$50,000 Matching Grant, doubling your help provided to remove the pains of poverty in our communities. Thank “You” and God Bless “You”.

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. Please visit our website for more information, to read more of our past and current columns and/or to make a donation: www.timeisnowtohelp.org

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Memorials: Beth Pizzo in memory of Joe Pizzo.

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: Brian, Mike, Sylvia, Megan, Kayla, Maria C., Sal, Betty, Scott, Annie, Marilyn, Brandon, Helen, Dennis, Mary, Joseph, Jordan, Jean, Tom L., Dr. Peter, Matthew, Pam E., Jenene B., John S., Patricia H., Ron K., Marian K., Judy, Wendy, Eric, Anthony, Mary, Charlie, Tom P., Christina, Billy, Mike, Cheryl, Bryan E., Ellie and Cornelia.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org