

SENIOR SOLUTIONS

Real life cases dealt with by Counsellors, Dignity, Mumbai

Difficult solutions to difficult problems. But solutions do exist.

By Alois Mackwan and Neha Shah

Case of Mr and Mrs. More

Mr. and Mrs. More had an issue with their 40 year old married son. Though he was a graduate from a reputed college of Mumbai, and 40-years-old, he did not have a job. He had begun harassing his parents for food and was being a burden to them. He was drug addict since 1988, during his college days till now, and has been to a recovery centres three times for the treatment, but all in vain. When he first raised his hand on his father, he was studying in Third Year B.A. and was put behind the bars for the crime. He hated his father and would beat, spit, abuse and harass his parents until Dignity Foundation intervened.

The parents had approached the police several times and even filed a case in the family court. Following that, the court passed the order of injunction and prohibited the son from entering the house to put an end to the harassment. In spite of court order, he continued to go to his parent's house and created problems for them. When it became impossible for them to go through the agony, as a last resort, they approached Dignity Foundation.

Our counsellor visited the family and had a meeting with the parents and the son. While the father was indifferent to him, the mother seemed like she wanted to help the son. The parents then formulated temporary suggestions to help their son. Since they couldn't help him directly, they decided to pay for his accommodation for one month till he gets his salary. After one month, he would have to make his own arrangements. Until he gets a job they would give him Rs. 1,500 up to five weeks. In the future, the parents would buy him a small flat where he could live with his wife. Unfortunately, none of above solutions worked, and he continued to behave in the same manner. Our counsellor had three sittings with the son and following that, he accepted his misbehaviour and promised that he would not repeat the mistakes in the future. He also promised that he would work sincerely. At present he is at Patna, Bihar and working.

By Alois Macwan

Case of Mrs.Asha

Since 2006 Mrs. Asha had been coming to our Dignity Dementia Day Care Centre as she had almost reached an advanced stage of Dementia. After her husband's demise, her son and daughter decided to take their share of her property. She had a big house in the western suburbs and a property in Alibag. Since her son is based in USA, he was unable to take her there. Her daughter then decided to take care of her in lieu of the entire property in her name. Since the daughter was unable to manage the mother without her husband's support, (though he happily accepted her mother's property), the daughter then began to send Mrs. Asha to our day care centre. The daughter's commitment was not up to the mark since she never sent her mother to the day care centre on time nor did she attend any monthly support group meetings for a year.

Mrs. Asha was also complaining that "they hit me, they hit me." When Dignity Foundation's staff went for a home visit and spoke to the daughter, they were shocked to know that the family would throw water on Mrs. Asha's face if she would not wake up in the morning or refuse to have a bath. When the DF staff counselled the daughter, she revealed that she was under depression and needed to talk to someone. The staff advised her on how to take care of the mother and explained that people with Dementia, people lose the capacity to understand normal things and can no longer be normal. She still felt that her mother was doing it on purpose and with the intention to harass her. The abuse continued and soon Mrs. Asha's condition started deteriorating.

One day, DF received a call from the family informing us that Mrs. Asha had been shifted her to an old age home in the western suburbs. This old age home is blacklisted because they make their residents sit naked as they do not have any control on their bowel and bladder. Some patients are tied up because they wander away. When DF informed the daughter about this, she told us that her mother suffered from convulsions and is unable to eat. The caretakers at the home now have to feed her with a rice tube. This came as a big shock for DF as she was quite healthy and never had any problem in eating.

When DF called Mrs. Asha's daughter with other old age home options, there was no reply. And sadly, after two days, DF received word that Mrs. Asha had expired. With certainty, we can say that it was an untimely death. Mrs. Asha was abused by the family as well as by the people at the old age home.

By Neha Shah 