



“Family support which I never had”

A Lonely Journey

'I am very tired'

Every single day for the past four years, I wake up at 5.30am to give my bedridden husband a bath after he had a stroke. Subsequently, I will head out to buy groceries for my mother who has advanced dementia before travelling to her house to prepare lunch for her. Hours later, I will rush home to feed my husband before helping him to exercise. By the time I am done with my daily routine, I am extremely drained.

To make matters worse, I suffer from various health problems, including glaucoma and varicose veins which makes it extremely painful to walk. Yet, I am entrusted with the duty of caring for my husband and mother even though I have three children and seven siblings because they are all too busy. Thankfully, I have a helper whom my son hired to assist me in caring for my husband. Yet, it is still not easy to be a caregiver to two. Once, my helper and I nearly fell while we were helping my husband off his bed. Furthermore, I often have to deal with my husband's and mother's mood swings. One time, my mother chased me out of the house because she was throwing a tantrum.

Lately, my legs have been aching but I am unable to seek medical treatment due to time and financial constraints. The monthly expenses for my husband's medical needs exceed one thousand dollars a month. Even with government subsidies, I can hardly make ends meet. Unfortunately, I am unable to approach my family members for help financially. Once, I ran out of money to buy the feeding formula for my husband and approached my sister for assistance. I was saddened when she distanced herself from me subsequently, probably out of fear that I would approach her for help again.

Even though I have a big family, I feel alone as there is no one whom I can ask for help. Even if I were to share my difficulties with my family members, they would just listen to my concerns without lending any assistance. Furthermore, I feel like a burden whenever I approach my siblings for help, especially when I know that they are reluctant to provide any support. I really wished that my family members could give me more support. Thankfully, the counselling sessions provided by the Caregiving Welfare Association have helped me to feel less alone in this caregiving journey.

My neighbours and friends tell me that they empathise with the situation I am in, because they always see me running errands for my husband and mother. I make use of the little time that I have for myself to catch up with my close friends at the market where I used to work as a hawker assistant. I miss my old life and the days where I had time for myself. Now I am constantly tired and stressed while my health deteriorates rapidly. I wish my family members could help me.

Because I am very tired.



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