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Hey Rudy + Erin,

7-2-18

I wanted to tell the story of a couple of women here in Aliceville. These are stories of healthcare, or lack thereof. Because these are not the only women I have seen in similar situations, I am very thankful to have my health. Women here are living every day in pain... this should not be so. It is cruel and inhumane, but in here, we are not human. I heard one guard yell at a fellow resident "You are an inmate. Act like one." Well, if we are 'inmates' here for rehabilitation, then should we not act better? Anyway, on to my two stories...

First story involves a woman who has had a hard life. She did smoke, do drugs and drink on the outside. This does not make her a bad person. She has been homeless, living out of the trash of others. She has been in abusive relationships. Yet, still she persevered. I find her to be likable and friendly, and she says hello to everyone as she passes, guards and residents alike.

This woman was on several medications... high blood pressure meds, heart meds, meds for a very severe case of heartburn, among others. Well, as they have done with many of the women here, they took her off some of her meds when she walked in the door here, cold turkey. And as with many of the women here she was told to buy off the commissary, but she is considered indigent and the medication she needs off of commissary (if even prescription strength) would cost her over \$10 for a 30 day

supply. She makes only \$5.25 a month as an orderly. As a result of being taken off of her medication, she had to watch ~~and~~ what she ate and started eating less in order to attempt to stave off heartburn and acid reflux into her esophagus. For 6 weeks she went to medical asking for her refill. She was told to go to medicine pick-up, but they never had her prescription filled.

Finally, in order to determine if she really needed the medication, they took her to the local hospital to do an upper and lower GI. The doctor at the hospital found that she had

a sizeable hole in her esophagus from the acid reflux and repaired it. She was told that she had to remain on her medication and the doctor would let the prison know. They also repaired a small hernia that she did not know that she had. It still took 2 more weeks for them to fill her prescription once she had returned from the hospital.

All this time that she was without her heartburn medication, her blood pressure was all over the place, up one day and down the next. This woman had had a heart attack before I arrived here, so it was, an is, important to keep her blood pressure stable. I am thankful to God that she is doing better now. But she need not suffer for 2 months at a risk to her health, or her life possibly.

This is not the first and only and nor will it be the last, I'm sure, that they take someone off of their medication cold-turkey. I only

pray that no one loses their life because of it.

The next woman's story is a painful one. She is not the only woman here living with pain every single day of her life. I have seen one woman rolling in pain on the concrete floor, needing surgery, but not getting it. This was a couple of months ago and she will be going home soon. I pray she will get the help she need then. But I am sidetracked...

My next woman, I spend a bit of time with. She was in a car accident many years ago and had back and neck issues from them. Her

knees are bone on bone, no cartilage remaining between. She had had surgery on one knee, so it is not as bad, but her right knee causes her great pain. Shortly after I got her, she had an injection in her right knee from the doctor here. She told me she had wanted to scream out in pain that it had hurt her so badly.

Afterward, her knee had swollen so badly, she could not put on her knee brace. And then her thigh began to swell also. I have walked across the compound with her and seen her double over in pain crying, and I think her to be a pretty tough woman. After a couple of trips to what they call 'sick call' and being sent away unseen, the doctor finally examined her. Come to find out, she has a bone out of place in her hip. She soon after remembered that before she was arrested, she had fallen down some stairs. I think she was even scheduled for hip surgery before all of her troubles began.

It appears that much of her back pain and her inability to straighten up has been caused by this pain from her hip injury radiating to her back. She has probably even been compensating for her hips with her knees also.

The doctor asked if she wanted him to do another injection in her right knee, but she said no after the last time. He did give her 2 knee braces. They no longer give back braces... I do ~~not~~ not know the reason why. She will have a trip out to the local hospital to check on the hip. I hope that something can be done after all this time; she has

been in prison for 9 years.

She was also taken off of her stomach medicine abruptly. She needs it as she has difficulty digesting red meat, not they we get much of that here anyway. She was lucky enough to be seen by the 'regional' the day she was seen and he did say that she needed her medication. She is still waiting for her stomach and joint medications to be filled after 2 weeks. They (the regular doctor) also did not put her on 'idle' (take her off her job, until she was properly seen and taken care ~~of~~ of.

Doctors have come and gone here at Aliceville, I am told. One that was here only 3 months left because the system would not allow him to treat the women here and he could not uphold his hippocratic oath. I am told that he was saddened to leave, but he could not help them anyway.

I thank God that I am in good health and that I follow a natural path for medicine, although that is close to impossible to do in here. I have refused their conventional treatments and hope to not go to medical as long as I remain here.

But for those who have serious problems and have no choice but to succumb to the system... I pray for them to get the help and care that they need. No human being should be forced to live in daily pain.

Please pray for the women here at Aliceville, ~~and~~ and any of the other women and men that are imprisoned and are not getting the care that they need.

May God help us all.

