



Elder Abuse Awareness Can Save your Life and Assets

Approximately one out of ten people over the age of 60, have experienced some form of elder abuse. Some estimates range as high as 5 Million elders who are abused each year. One study estimated that only one in 14 cases of abuse are reported to authorities.

Abusers are both women and men. In almost sixty percent of elder abuse and neglect cases, the perpetrator is a family member. Two thirds of perpetrators are adult children or spouses. Abusers may pretend to be your trusted friend or a loving relative, but then steal you blind.

Being isolated socially or having a mental impairment, like dementia or Alzheimer's, are two factors which places the elderly in a more vulnerable situation. Recent studies show that nearly half of those with dementia experienced abuse or neglect. Violence also occurs at disproportionately high rates among adults with disabilities.

There are many forms of abuse: Physical, Neglect and Mistreatment, Verbal and Emotional, and Financial. When I hear a story about someone who is famous, wealthy, who may have people all around them, and then learn that they lived their later years in abuse and neglect or how they have been robbed financially, it is apparent that this subject must have a better "awareness campaign".

Many people do not address their abuse, especially when a family member is involved. The fear of more abuse and, also, that the abuser may lose employment and livelihood if an incident were reported.

Those who are born during the 30s, 40s, 50s, or 60s were taught to be polite to everyone. They desire for others to like them. Con artists recognize these aspects, and understand that these age groups are easier to Con for those reasons. Also, the fact that most, own their own home and have acquired other significant assets are the reason they are targeted. No matter what age you are, there is not a sole alive who has not been Conned by someone. It is so easy to be trusting and not see the signs of abusers.

The following are real life stories that may increase your awareness:

An attorney from Minneapolis was convicted of Elder Abuse and sentenced in January of 2017 to a correctional facility for 41 months. She embezzled \$50 Million dollars from her 90-year old aunt.

In Westlake Village, Ca. in 2008, a 78-year old lady's daughter, administered Fentanyl to the mother, then changed her will. Her mother died in four days with her estate going to the daughter.

In Palm Desert, Ca., a 76-year old retired gentleman, who resided in a board and care facility, while being heavily medicated, signed a holographic will, which was re-written and given to him by his brother. The new will transferred his home in Sun City and other assets to the brother, while cutting his only daughter out of everything.

In Palm Springs, Ca., a 74-year old woman, whose mother's estate was to be split between her two daughters, learned her sister terminated the will and the new will gave the 74-year-old sister a house filled with old furniture, while the younger sister inherited \$3.5 Million in Municipal Bonds and property. The mother's granddaughter then took the house and sold it, keeping all the profit. Again, during the time the will was changed the younger daughter made sure the mother stayed heavily medicated.

An incident was reported in May, in which a wealthy lady from Palm Desert gave \$30 Million to her advisor to invest safely. He advised her that the investment was doing great until most of the money was gone. He invested the money in film making, which served his own personal gain and lost most of her fortune.

Financial exploitation is self-reported at rates higher than emotional physical and sexual abuse or neglect, but due to "self- pride", many cases go unreported. Elders who have been abused have a 300 percent higher risk of death.

Financial abuse and fraud costs older Americans an estimated \$36.5 Billion per year. Most have penalties for those who victimize older adults. Increasingly, across the country law enforcement officers and prosecutors are trained on elder abuse and ways to use criminal and civil laws to bring abusers to justice. It is important to review Elder Justice Laws and other State resources, compiled by NCEA.

Janice Gough is a Financial Advisor in Palm Springs. She can be reached for Comments at janice@goughfinancialsvcs.com or call (760) 251-7724 or Cell (650) 200-8291.

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