

# Another Week Beyond - 1311

Dear Team

Daisy's mother called us out of the blue "just to keep in touch." After the pleasantries, we enquired about Daisy and were informed that she had been in hospital under observation for about a week. An adult friend at church had noticed a fresh dressing on Daisy's wrist and suggested to her that Daisy needed psychiatric support. After visiting Daisy and speaking to her doctor and medical social worker, we suggested to Daisy's mother that a meeting among friends and family members who would like to support Daisy may be helpful. Mother wasted no time; consulted Daisy as to who should be attending the meeting and coordinated a meeting at the hospital which involved grandmother, an aunt & uncle, Daisy's sister, a cousin and a family friend.

Halfway through the meeting Daisy stormed out and we took her aside to find out why. She explained that even though we were in the room, we would not understand the insinuations about her past mistakes that were articulated by those in the room. She stormed out because it felt like one big scolding session. We apologised for not facilitating a "safe enough environment" and asked her how she would like to carry on the meeting. Daisy said that she was really grateful that so many people cared about her but these very people did not believe that she was grateful. Hence, we suggested that she let them know how she felt.

When the meeting restarted, Daisy told everyone in the room that she was really grateful for all the help they had given her. She turned to her uncle and reminded him of the time she pushed him away after she had a fight with her mother. In her mind, uncle was a disciplinarian and she did not want another lecture. However, uncle patiently waited for her to calm down and both had a very gentle and meaningful conversation about her struggles. She added that she valued that conversation and always remembers how surprised she was at her uncle's gentle kindness. Daisy continued to address every other family member in the room in the same way; recalling the kindness she had received from them. The tone of the meeting changed and a plan where family and friends took turns to be with Daisy for the first month after her discharge emerged. Daisy's doctor who was present also provided the family with some helpful tips on how to support Daisy better.

Finally, when we asked the family who would monitor the plan, Daisy's uncle quickly said that he would and assured us that the family will take it from here. "Job done!" We thought to ourselves but of course, in the near future we will give Daisy's mother a call "just to keep in touch."

Enjoy your weekend.

Gerard

*"Above all, be the heroine of your life, not the victim." – Nora Ephron*

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