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Forward this e-newsletter to three of your friends.

usOWLs.com: *LookOut*

A favorite song of mine has always been, "June is busting out all over..." from the musical Oklahoma. In my case there was a lot of personal issues along with normal patriotic events that delayed me in my update.

So, why the delay to the end of the month? June busted out all right. My computer was badly damaged in a near car accident on one of my treks to Sacramento to do training, and getting a new one up and running took almost a week. A week without a computer has become a *nightmare* for a business person. My phone could not back me up for all the things we are dependent on our computers to do. Worse the Microsoft 8.0, an upgrade that nearly put me in the "facility" with my sister. Why is it these upgrades have no respect for the user and their actual needs? I am still struggling to figure this out, although one can get 8.1 to survive the chaos and help you adapt to a "Mount Everest" learning curve.

The other issue in delay were the horrors(literally) of needing to move my sister from one Long term care facility to another for her own memory issues. She had been placed in a locked facility for her signs of some cognitive impairment and physical limitations, and when there was *natural improvement* it became apparent this was a scary and depressing environment. My point is before you consider locking anyone up, check on the level of *cognitive impairment in others* at the facility. This turned out to be very challenging as I watched my sister deteriorate around others who became aggressive, following her, yelling at her, and necessitating a move from her room to another, which caused more intense "transfer trauma". The medical answer is drugging them more? Her fear was being disbelieved about what she was surviving. She said she had to fake passive cooperation to remain sane. Watching the demise of a loved one in a "prison like" environment can be equally if not more traumatic. Some just give up.



I am moving her to a group home now, a better alternative if one get one's one room, it is homey and clean, and the staff compassionate rather than "clinical" as a first priority. If you are considering putting a loved one in any facility, focus not only on medical control, but prepare them for it, making it their choice. Invest more on privacy and personal space. The new place feels more private and calming with outside gardens and space. Being more like a home than a prison, it will give my sister the sense of peace she has been missing for months. I avoided a group home initially feeling that my sister would be isolated.

But the *child care model* long term health care is wrong. These are adults very sensitive to how their rights and dignity are taken away long with their memory. They are not children, but are only childlike in their need for compassion and staff undistracted by oppressive rules all are under.

Cognitive impairment is not severe irreversible dementia. We had better start treating people with the care we offer our pets when they are severely disabled and no longer treatable, but we must not treat those who can improve like animals in a zoo. In July, I will report on what I believe is REALLY needed for our growing dependent elderly in a new models of care. Guess what? It includes lots of fun and laughter which I have been testing and they DO remember it.

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