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Dear Harold,

I just got back from out of town and got your letter of May 9. Sorry to be answering it a month late.

Sorry to hear about the problems with Lil. From a distance it is difficult to comment on such things.

The biggest problem with the situation, as you describe it, is that many of the symptoms are quite chronic. So, even though it may have gotten worse in recent years, Lil may well have been somewhat chronically depressed, which means that it won't be easy to change for several reasons:

1. She is used to it and may not "hurt" enough to be motivated to change. This can be a sort of "been down so long it looks like up to me" situation.

2. There may be a chemical basis to it. Although not well understood (psychiatry is in its infancy at best), we arepretty clear that some depressions, especially chronic ones, have a chemical basis. Correction of this is sometimes possible, but require some experimentation with different antidepressants until the proper one is found--assuming that one of them does work. But, this requires perserverance and cooperation on the part of the client. Feedback as to effects is key, and it can take several weeks to see for sure if a given antidepressant is working.

3. Whenever depression is chronic the depressed person has often found ways to find rewards in being depressed.

There are no tricks to getting someone to get help. A somewhat chronically depressed, angry, and cynical person is one of the hardest types of people to go get help. And, even if you get her in, it is very unlikely that any praeticioner could do so impress her as to be able to get her attention long enough to do any good.

Beyond what sounds like depression, Lil sounds quite socially and emotionally withdrawn.

From what you say, I would also have concerns about something else. Some of Lil's behavior sounds like it could be a bit organic. By this I mean that underneath the depression and withdrawal may be some early senility or other organic brain syndrome. While I don't want to get carried away with this notion, especially since I'm basing my concerns on second-hand observations from a distance, given her age such a thing is more likely.

So, I don't know what to suggest other than that you try to make sure that you're getting emotional support from other sources. It sounds a bit grim.

It is sad to have someone remain that isolated and distant when one can remember better times. It sounds like she got angry about something a long while ago and just won't let go of it. Whatever the cause, it doesn't sound hopeful. The best thing you can do is take care of yourself.

If you do "go" first as you expect, and as statistics would predict for all of us males, then she will have to fend for herself. She may either come alive or may end up institutionalized. IT's hard to predict. Sometimes very hostile people can't redirect their energy after yearsof being withdrawn and angry--sometimes they can.

It sounds likeyou've been able to keep active and productive vis a vis the case. I admire your determination and energy.

I continue to be busy with the walk-in clinic. We recently got some national publicity for our volunteerism which is suddenly in style again. They did a national study and found nothing even in the same ballpark. It's hard to believe that we're in our 14th year--I suddenly feel old!

We continue to put therapists who abuse their clients out of business and the professions are generally getting more active in doing something about this problem. There are now self-help groups, run by consumers, in Oregon, New York City, and Ft. Worth,Texas.

By the way, out of the blue, after a number of years, I heard from Fred Newcomb, who's in Atlanta, Georgia. He's out of work and minding the kids. Marylynn has a job. They've had to move to find work.

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As you probably know, Jerry Policoff got a good job in Fayetteville and is down there. I just had a long talk on the phone with him. I managed to see him last Dec. when I was in New York city for a conference on psychotherapy abuse.

Vince Salandria has remarried. He and Livy broke up over Ernie's (their son) drug problem which got blamed on Vince and then denied. Sadly Ernie killed a man in a drug deal and Vince turned him in. It was a long painful period of time but Vince seems to have gradually recovered.

Now for my news: I'm engaged to get married in Sept. I met a woman last year who finally seems like the right one. I had enough relationships that didn't work out to know the difference.

She is the director of Ebenezer Ctr. on Aging which does research and consultation in special housing issues and other issues related to aging. We hit it off right away and the relationship has continued to blossom. So, on Sept. 3 we expect to be married. I'm 38 and she's 35. It's her second marriage--she was married for 4 years to an MD and got her divorce 4 1/2 yrs. ago.

Right now we're in the midst of trying to plan things, find a house, etc. etc.

When you mentioned you were 70 I felt even older than 38. I was a young man when we first met and you were I think about 55. Those ######## were some fun and exciting times and I have a lot of fond memories of them. I recently gave Katherine,(Gray), my fiance, those early articles to read, to give her some feel about the assassination work. She found them interesting. It was fun to re-read them myself. And, recently I was in Dallas for an ex-roommates wedding and took people on an "assassin's tour of Dallas."

Please give my regards to Jim and take care of yourself. You've certainly had a few health problems.

Best wishes.

Gary