

FYI- as a commentary on how a calm, dignified but pain-ridden old lady broke through a wall of the unheeding if well-intended. Without the medical fear engendered by her outbursts they'd probably not have changed the medication, either. Understaffing, I guess. Bad situation.

JL- My mother's situation has taken a remarkable upward turn so I am less worried about not being able to do all we have in mind on the Ray case. Still undiagnosed but no psychological involvements. Were it not so tragic what caused her to blow for the first time in her life would be very funny. It is a commentary on hospital bureaucracies. It all stems from their giving her a sedative when they should not have. She was, to my knowledge, a heart condition, cataracts, sciatica, bursitis, arthritis and whatever this new thing is and she is past 80. Pains from the orthopaedic complaints are such that she has to get out of bed at night and move around. We have known this for years. She has taken all this in stride, making out and insisting on independence and living alone. The doctors were all very nice, but her own was away. Not until he got back did anyone take the time to hear her through. They all knew better. They have now all decided, including my younger sister who is a social worker among old folks at a fine rest home, that her outburst was from a combination of a sedative to which she reacted negatively (similar experiences in the home in which my sister works), and frustration and extreme anger, the latter, surprisingly, all also considered justified. Through whatever the sedative is she felt this pain, knew that it could be eased by walking, wasn't able to because of the restraint, got no audience, so she got her audience the only way she can think of! Without that explosion there probably would have been no change. As it is she is now allowed out of bed, but she is supposed to ring for a nurse first. No more restraint because once they changed or eliminated the sedative to which she reacted there is no need. And my sister has warned her to be patient with night-nurses who are often overloaded. I am happy that despite the hardening of the arteries and the heart condition her brain was not adversely affected and the outburst did not come from that. I was really worried about that. While we don't know what the condition is we have no reason to anticipate any new emergency. Whatever it is, it is not a potassium deficiency, as first diagnosed. Another drug, apparently a cardiac drug, also was changed, followed by her improvement...All this because some busy person just would not take time to hear an old lady out. Not a bill of complaints but what she has to do to cope with each so they'd know. Like Ecclesiastes says, there is a time and a place for everything and that was, indeed, the time for my mother to lose her self-control for the first time in her life! It may also be the most important single factor in her improvement, not just a reduction in her discomfort. Anyway, I discussed our schedule with my sister last night and she believes there will not be any need for me to change it now. HW 9/27/74

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