

Marshall University

Marshall Digital Scholar

0064: Marshall University Oral History
Collection

Digitized Manuscript Collections

1989

Oral History Interview: Elizabeth Means

Elizabeth Means

Follow this and additional works at: https://mds.marshall.edu/oral_history

Recommended Citation

Marshall University Special Collections, OH64-474, Huntington, WV.

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Digitized Manuscript Collections at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in 0064: Marshall University Oral History Collection by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu.



MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25701

JAMES E. MORROW LIBRARY

ASSOCIATES

WU 10 #474

#10

ORAL HISTORY

GIFT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, Elizabeth Means, the undersigned, of
Summers, County of Letcher, State
of W Va., grant, convey, and transfer to the James E.
Morrow Library Associates, a division of The Marshall University Foundation,
Inc., an educational and eleemosynary institution, all my right, title,
interest, and literary property rights in and to my testimony recorded on
11/1/89, 11/8/89, 11/15/89, 1989, to be used for scholarly purposes, including
study and rights to reproduction.

- ERM ^{BRP EKM} Open and usable ~~after my review.~~
initial
- Closed for a period of _____ years.
initial
- Closed for my lifetime.
initial
- Closed for my lifetime unless special permission
initial is gained from me or my assigns.

Date 11-1-89
11-8-89
11-15-89

Elizabeth R Means
(Signature - Interviewee)
Summers, W Va.
Address

Date 11-1-89
11-8-89
11-15-89

Richard R. [Signature]
(Signature - Witness)

WEST VIRGINIA APPALACHIAN CAREGIVERS



AN INTERVIEW WITH: Elizabeth Means

CONDUCTED BY: Diana Parnicza

DATES OF INTERVIEW:

Nov 1

~~8-9-89~~

TRANSCRIPTIONIST/TYPIST: Gina Kehali Kates

DP: This is Diana Parnicza, continuing with my interviews on Appalachian Caregivers. This is November the 1st, 1989. I'm doing Interview A with Caregiver #10. Okay, like I said, these are 90 sentences, True or False, and they're about the family and if you don't understand something, just let me know. I don't understand some myself. Okay. Family memb really help and support one another.

CG: True.

DP: Family members often keep their feelings to themselves.

CG: Yeah.

DP: We fight a lot in our family.

CG: No.

DP: We don't do things on our own very often in our family.

Do you all do things by yourselves; you all pretty much do things together?

CG: Well, sometimes.

DP: Okay. We feel that it is important to be the best at whatever you do.

CG: Yeah.

DP: We often talk about political and social problems.

CG: No.

DP: We spend most weekends and evenings at home.

CG: Yeah.

DP: Family members attend church or sunday school fairly often.

CG: All the time.

DP: Activities in our family are pretty carefully planned.

CG: Yeah.

DP: Family members are rarely ordered around.

CG: Family members are rarely ordered around.

DP: Is that true?

CG: Um-hmm.

DP: We often seem to be killing time at home.

CG: No.

DP: A lot, especially wives, who take care of their husbands say they always answer true because they can't do much. They just watch t.v. But with you, especially with a husband and a child

CG: I just...I have to...I mean, I see these and sometimes I'm tired I want to go to bed, but it's an....I had to...in fact, I went to the doctor one time because I wasn't sleeping. I was...sleeping, but yet I wasn't sleeping. (wasn't resting) Yeah, I wasn't resting. And when I got up of the morning, I was just as tired as when I went to bed.

DP: Uh, we say anything we want to at home.

CG: Yes.

DP: Family members rarely become openly angry. You all become openly angry?

CG: No.

DP: In our family we are strongly encouraged to be independent.

CG: Yes.

DP: Getting ahead in life is very important in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: We rarely go to lectures, plays, or concerts.

CG: We don't go.

DP: Friends often come over for dinner or to visit.

CG: Yes.

DP: We don't....

CG: Family.

DP: Okay. We don't say prayers in our family.

CG: Yes, we do say prayers.

DP: We are generally very neat and orderly.

CG: Yes.

DP: There are very few rules to follow in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: We put a lot of energy into what we do at home.

CG: Yes. [inaudible]

DP: It's hard to blow off steam at home without upsetting somebody.

CG: Yeah.

DP: Family members sometimes get so angry they throw things.

CG: Yes.

DP: We....one of the people I was interviewing is taking care of her husband; he had had a stroke too, and he was really frustrated and when I ask her that, she started laughing... he did too, because...something had happened a few days before with a clock, and he just picked it up and threw it. She said that was the first time he'd done that, but it was...but it happened; he laughed, you know, because he was so frustrated, he just picked it up....

CG: She gets that way, but shesometimes she'll go like this cause she gets aggravated, you know (yeah)

DP: She can't...there's nothing in reach that she can grab and throw?

CG: Well, she wouldn't do that anyway. She's not that type of

person.

DP: We think things out for ourselves in our family.

CG: Yeah.

DP: How much money a person makes is not very important to us.

CG: True.

DP: Learning about new and different things is very important in our family.

CG: True.

DP: Nobody in our family is active in sport, like little league or bowling.

CG: Not now.

DP: We often talk about the religious meaning of Christmas and other holidays.

CG: Yes.

DP: It's often hard to find things when you need them in our household.

CG: Yes! [laughter]

DP: There is one family member who makes most of the decisions.

CG: [inaudible]

DP: There is a feeling of togetherness in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: We tell each other about our personal problems.

CG: Yes.

DP: Family members hardly ever lose their tempers.

CG: We lose our tempers off and on. We'd not be human if we didn't.

DP: Yeah, you're right. Um, we come and go as we want to in our

family.

CG: No, you don't just up and go when you're taking care of somebody sick. Unless somebody's here. [laughs]

DP: That's...that's...yeah, that's what I'm finding. We believe in competition and may the best man win.

CG: No, we don't believe in competition.

DP: We're not that interested in cultural activities.

CG: True.

DP: We often go to movies, sports, camping events.

CG: We use to go camping, but not no more.

DP: We don't believe in Heaven or Hell.

CG: Yes, we do.

DP: Being on time is very important in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: There are set ways of doing things at home.

CG: Yes.

DP: We rarely volunteer when something has to be done at home.

CG: No.

DP: People pretty much...pitch in and
If we feel like doing something on the spur of the moment,
we often just pick up and go.

CG: No. [laughs]

DP: Family members often criticize each other.

CG: No.

DP: There's very little privacy in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: We always strive to do things just a little better the next

time.

CG: Yes.

DP: We rarely have intellectual discussions. Do you sit around and talk about philosophies and ideas about people and political things?

CG: No.

DP: I think a lot of people just don't have time, I mean, that's...there's so many other things.

CG: About the only time we...I sit down, is usually after when I get her to bed.

DP: And that . Everyone in our family has a hobby or two. Does someone like to sew or fish or....

CG: We usually like to fish. We don't anymore.
We just cut out everything since mom has her stroke. Everybody else goes about their own things but our family, Cause we can always have hobbies; we can't always have mothers.

DP: That's uh, that's what I'm finding a lot of people are saying that they kind of put their life on hold, you know, for awhile, but it doesn't bother them.

CG: No, it's something that....it's something that I know that uh, I have to do, because she would do it for me.

DP: That's....a lot of them are saying, that my mother did do it for me when I was little and so,

CG: She did many a times. I always think about that. Whenever I take care of her, I think about the nights she sat up with

me.

DP: Okay. Family members have strict ideas about what is right and wrong.

CG: Yeah.

DP: People change their minds often in our family.

CG: No.

DP: There's a strong emphasis on following rules in our family.

CG: Well, we try. [laughs]

DP: Okay.

CG: It don't always work, but we try.

DP: Let's see, family members really back each other up.

CG: Yeah.

DP: Someone usually gets upset if you complain in our family.

CG: No.

DP: Family members sometimes hit each other.

CG: No. [laughs]

DP: No one that I've interviewed hasfamily members almost always rely on themselves when a problem comes up.

CG: We rely on each other.

DP: Family members rarely worry about job promotions, school grades, things like that.

CG: No.

DP: Someone in our family plays a musical instrument.

CG: Yes.

DP: Family members are not very involved in recreational activities outside work or school.

CG: True.

DP: We believe there are some things you just have to take on

faith.

CG: Yes.

DP: Family members make sure their rooms are neat.

CG: Yeah.

DP: Everyone has an equal say in family decisions.

CG: Yeah.

DP: There is very little group spirit in our family.

CG: No.

DP: Money and paying bills is openly talked about in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: If there's a disagreement in our family, we try to smooth things over and keep the peace.

CG: Right.

DP: Family members strongly encourage each other to stand up for their rights.

CG: Yes.

DP: In our family, we don't try that hard to succeed.

CG: No, we try.

DP: Family members often go to the library.

CG: No.

DP: Family members sometimes take courses or lessons for hobby or interest.

CG: No.

DP: In our family, each person has different ideas about what is right and wrong.

CG: Yeah.

DP: Each person's duties are clearly defined in our family.

CG: Um-hmm.

DP: We can do whatever we want to in our family.

CG: No.

DP: We really get along well with each other.

CG: Yes.

DP: We are usually careful about what we say to each other.

CG: Yes.

DP: Family members often try to one up or outdo each other.

CG: No.

DP: It's hard to be by yourself without hurting someone's feelings in our household.

CG: No. I'm usually by myself.

DP: Or even have to worry about it. (no)

DP: Work before play is the rule in our family.

CG: Well, it has been but I begin to think all work and no play is no fun. [laughter]

DP: Watching t.v. is more important than reading in our family.

CG: No.

DP: Family members go out alot.

CG: No.

DP: The Bible is a very important book in our family.

CG: Very much so.

DP: Money is not handled very carefully in our family.

CG: Yes, it is.

DP: Rules are pretty inflexible in our household.

CG: Flexible?

DP: Inflexible. Which means they don't...they're very strict. They don't change.

CG: No, we're not that strict. We give a little.

DP: There is plenty of time and attention for everybody in our family.

CG: Yes.

DP: There are a lot of spontaneous discussions in our family. Like you all just sit down and start talking about different things.

CG: Mmm-hmm.

DP: In our family we believe you don't ever get anywhere by raising your voice.

CG: True.

DP: We are not really encouraged to speak up for ourselves in our family.

CG: No.

DP: Family members are often compared with others as to how well they are doing at work or at school.

CG: No.

DP: Family members really like music, art and literature.

CG: Just music.

DP: That is something I'm findingmusic. Our main form of entertainment is watching t.v. or listening to the radio.

CG: True.

DP: Family members believe that if you sin, you will be punished.

CG: True.

DP: Dishes are usually done immediately after eating.

CG: Yes.

DP: You can't get away with much in our family.

CG: Oh, I don't know. You get away with a little, don't you mommy? [laughter]

DP: Okay. Now that's uhm....that's all I have to ask you, talk to you about today.

CG: That wasn't bad.

DP: That's what...that's what I....a lot of them kind of hesitated and saying I don't know if I want someone coming in and asking me questions, but then a lot of 'em started after awhile enjoyed it. And the nurses have said that they talked about it and stuff. Next week I've got these questions I'm gonna ask you about your help, and then we'll get more into, like exactly who helpsand stuff like that.

CG: I can tell you that right now.

DP: Yeah, that's what I'm finding out.

CG: I got a big family, but I tell you,

DP: You know, it's interesting because...

CG: I'll tell you who helps me the most....is my 14 year old daughter. (your kidding? when she comes home from school?) When she comes home from school, I leave at uh, I was leaving at 15 till 3 cause my husband got home about that time, but mom had two bad spells last week, so I don't uh, go until....my husband liked 5-10 minutes difference, and I had to be at work at 3 and he doesn't get here until probably close to 3, and she sits just a few minutes by herself until he pulls in. Well, she had two bad spells last week, so I don't leave here until exactly the

time he gets in the door. And she gets off the school bus at 4 and from 4 until I get home, which is about 15 till 7, she takes care of mom. (oh, my goodness) Now, she took care of her last night from 6 until about 8:30 while we went to the grocery store. You don't get too many teenagers to do that.

DP: I was gonna say, not too many 14 year old girls...

CG: She's a special girl. She'll take her grandmother to the bathroom and fix her food and everything.

DP: It's...it's interesting because I've talked to some other people who have young children and umh, in fact this one woman who's taking care of her father, she has a son that's 16, just turned 16 and she unh, he's right there with her all the time to help out.

CG: A lot of people thinks....a lot of people thinks that uh, teenagers are all bad but they're not.

PT: Judy and her brother took care of my dad.

DP: Oh, really?

PT: Yeah.

DP: Uh, but I'm sorry go on.

PT: They take me to the bathroom and everything.

DP: One thing I'm not find...one thing I'm finding, though, is that you know, especially thinking of rural areas and especially places like WV and stuff, that there'd be neighbors and a lot of churches that come out....

PT: Oh, I've got uh, like our Pastor and his wife lives up here and she'll come down here when I need her, if I call her.

But I'm just the type of person that I don'tI don't impose on anyone.

DP: Yeah, that's what everybody says.

CG: I mean, I just moved down here, and Anna Lou and Jessie, this is Anna Lou's nephew, they would do it just like that. But I said, just because I moved down here this far, that I'm not gonna impose and ask someone to do something for me and uh, you know, I'm just not gonna do that.

DP: Unless you really...

CG: Unless I'm just like the other day, she had this bad spell and I got on the phone, and Anna Lou was right down here. But I've had people to, in my churches and stuff, ask me when my family didn't but, she's so funny, she just don't wantto nobody, you know. (yeah) She don't understand, I mean, she does understand and I understand where she's coming from, that she just doesn't like no one else...she relies on me too much.

DP: And it's either privacy; she likes that. Or I don't know what it is, but yeah.

CG: She just doesn't like nobody else to have to take her to the bathroom or (yeah, yeah) do those things for her.

DP: And she knows that you're ...that's okay with you and...

CG: Cause see, when she before when she had had her stroke, she was a very independent person, and she never ...she always was uh, very private and everything.

DP: Independent. (mmm-hmm) And everything's changed now.

CG: And she knows...she knows that I have to do it but she doesn't like for anyone else to have to do it.

Now she'll let my daughter and my sister-in-law. My
sister-in-law went through therapy with us and everything.

PT: I've got a wonderful bunch of daughter-in-laws.

DP: Yeah....

PT:

DP: And you don't find that too much.

PT: And grandchildren too.

DP: Yeah, and you don't find that too much.

CG: Snoopy, quit that.

DP: Well, let me.....

[end of Interview A]

DP: This is November the 8th, 1989. I am now conducting Interview B with Caregiver #10. And like I said, what I want to do uh, today is just ask you about all the kind of help you get. Like you told me before, you don't really get any but I'm gonna get really specific and ask for different kinds of help and see if you can name anybody. First question I'm gonna ask you uh, just say the first thing that comes to your mind. How do you manage caring for your mother?

CG: How do I manage? What way do you mean?

DP: Just....I guess, with more help, how do you manage taking care of her?

CG: I just take care of her. If I need to go somewhere, I leave my daughter here.

DP: Who helps you physical, with the physical help that you need, as far as hygiene and cooking and cleaning and stuff. You do all that? Okay. Your daughter will sit and watch ...will sit and watch your mother, right? (yes) Does she do any kind of ...

CG: She takes her to the bathroom; she'll help take her to the bathroom, and she'll fix her something when she wants it when we're here. (mmmh) You know, things like that.

DP: Uh, you take care of the house, you do the cooking, laundry, and help your mother with her care and everything. Let's see, do you do the yard work, your husband pretty much helps you with the yard work and stuff? (un-huh) Okay. Now, what about going to the grocery store? You do that and your

daughter takes care of your mother? (un-huh) And if you need anything fixed in the house, like the roof or something you would get your husband. (un-huh) Okay. What about emotionally? If you have a problem or if you need to talk to someone or if you really feel depressed or you know, like that, what kind of help do you use emotionally?

CG: Nothing.

DP: Are you able to talk to your husband about problems and stuff? Is there any like hobbies ...is there a t.v. show that helps you or is there certain kinds of reading that helps you or anything like that?

CG: I just ...I keep busy. I just work. (okay)

DP: Uh, now, you do have a nurse, right? (yes) A nurse comes in. How often does she come?

CG: Well, this is the week she should have already been here. Every two weeks.

DP: And what does she do?

CG: She takes her blood and listens to her blood pr....she takes blood pressure and listens to her heart. (She's from Cabell County, right) (You know Cabell County's not coming out here don't you?)

DP: Uh, two nurses quit and they won't....Mrs. M. didn't have the staff to do Cabell County, but she was ...I know Logan County's taking some of Lincoln County. Boone County's taking some and Kanawha County, so this is the week, you may call out to and just check and see....

CG: They said if there was any changes they would get with me.

DP: Cause I know...I know another lady that I've interviewed,

she lives out in Branchland; she's got a nurse from Chapmanville came to the house and uh, checked his catheter; he has a catheter. And is going to see about getting

CG: Cause she's on a blood thinner and that's something you just don't let go.

DP: Right. You might call and just check. (I don't have the number).

DP: I think I've got it.

CG: Yeah, they were supposed to have come yesterday.

DP: Yeah, I'd call, cause it's like you say, the blood thinner's not....

CG: No, because they...she's been on Coumadin 2 point, 2 1/2 mg. for almost two years and they changed it because her blood got too thin; went down to 2, cut out on the weekends. Then they cut it again; they cut ...started back on the weekends with it, so it's a varying right now.

DP: Yeah, I'm sure it is. Do you have any aides or anybody else that comes out here, just the nurse? Do you have a social worker or anything? Just a nurse. Uh, and as far as how you found this help, was your family. And they just pretty much volunteered. Your daughter volunteered to sit with her and everything. What about the church? Does the church come and do anything or help you out that way or any other kind of family members, that you call on them for anything?

CG: Well, uh, I don't...I don't impose on anybody. This is the way I look at it. It's their mother also, and if they want

to assist, fine. You know, I don't impose. I don't ask (okay).

DP: So you have one that sees to....

CG: Yeah, my sister-in-law; she's real good. If something comes up that's a real necessary thing, then uh we'll somehow or another take her there, if she'll watch her until I can go wherever I need to do really important things, such as uh, you know, maybe get a break once in awhile. Uh, she wants to keep keep her on the weekend or something, but she'll usually go up on Thursday....my husband days off is Thursday and Friday and uh, she'll usually take her on a Thursday or Friday so we can have time together, but that's very....seldom 'cause I never send her away because she's not happy away from home.

DP: Okay.

CG: Just like this weekend, we was supposed to go...he wanted to go to uh, Buchcannon to get some apples and a friend of his that works go and we was gonna go and I ask her if she would take care of mom, and she said yes, but we just decided not to go.

DP: But she doesn't come here?

CG: No, we get her as we can get her and walk her to the porch, but she can't walk very far cause she gets short of breath and

DP: Okay, let's see. Do you pay your daughter if she sits and watches...does she get any kind of money?

CG: Oh, yeah, we give her...I don't pay her...I don't pay...I don't say, here's money for watching grandmaw; we give her allowances and we buy her like I get paid every two weeks, I always get her an outfit or give her money. Whatever, you

know. And she's good...not too many...not too many teenagers will do stuff like that, and her grandma will buy her something, you know.

DP: Uh, and then Medicare helps, like Medicare pays for the nurse and stuff like that.

CG: Yeah, Medicare takes care of stuff like that.

DP: And her blood tests. (right) Okay. I'm just looking at all the different kinds of(right). With...[pause] when you think of all the help you have, which is like you said, not very much, what would you consider the most important to you? The most important kind of help that you get from any...from something or from someone, who would you say...what would you say is the most important to you?

CG: My daughter Cause you know, if she wasn't here I wouldn't even be able to step out of the house.

DP: What about well, I'm assuming the 2nd most important?

CG: It would be my sister-in-law, when I need her. I would say my main important help is them being able to come and take her blood. Cause I couldn't take her in to get it.

DP: Okay, yeah, because if they couldn't then, she probably...she couldn't be here (no). What made you decide to or was it a decision? How did it come about that you uh, uh, start taking care of your mother?

CG: Cause we've always been that close; I would never put her in a nursing home. And she...it's obvious she couldn't stay by herself and it's obvious that none of the rest of 'em

....the daughters-in-law...I think they would do it just for a certain period, but I don't think they would do it...

PT: Well... I wouldn't want 'em to.

DP: Okay. Is there any area....

PT: I don't want to be a burden to nobdoy.

DP: Yeah. You don't feel you're a burden to your daughter now, do you?

PT No, un-huh. I still wish I could be able to take care of myself.

DP: Yeah, I...I would feel the same way, I think. Uh, out of all the help that you get, or that you don't get, is there any area that ...is there an area that you're not getting the help that you wished that you could get some help?

CG: Well, yeah, I'd like to be able to uh, get out and do things more with my daughter. Which I'm not able to do because of the circumstances. I have to get my niece to come and take her when she gets her hair done and come and take her when she uh [patient talking also] no, Barbie, my niece. Takes Misty make an appointment for her hairshe takes her to get her hair done and she takes her and does things with her that really I'd like to be able to do, but under the circumstances, I can't.

DP: So, if there was something like uh, a babysitting service or something like that, would you trust...that would come in and Medicare would pay for it, and would like to sit for an hour or two hours, would you trust...would you use something like that? Or do you feel like it should maybe be more family involved? Would that be....more help?

CG: Well, I know that it can't be...I know that it can't be much of a family involvement, because my...I have one sister and she's in North Carolina and the rest of them are brothers and the brothers can't take her to the bathroom and do things for her that she needs to have done and the uh, the daughter-in-laws uh, one of 'em works, and the other one, she's got a family responsibility and it's just that...

DP: Would you feel comfortable with having you know, someone from like an agency like coming in and watching her and then letting you do things that you need to do; would you be responsive to something like that?

CG: I would if she would.

DP: Okay. Uh, any place else that you're not...getting any kind of help that you would like to see?

CG: No, I don't think there is any.

DP: As far as cooking and cleaning and taking care of her, you feel like you're pretty much in control of that, good. Uh, with the help that you do get, pretty much your daughter and then that nurse, and your husband and family and stuff, would you like to have any of it changed? Is there any part of that...the help that you feel that you would like to change?

CG: Yeah, I'd like to have my sister here. [laughs]

DP: Okay, the one that's in North Carolina? (yeah) She would....you think she would help you more? (yeah) Any other thing...

CG: Well, I would just not like to take so much

responsibility....

[end of side 1]

DP: You know, you don't see that too much.

CG: And you know, I feel like...I feel like that uh, I should be able to do things with my husband and daughter that I just can't do but uh, too I feel like when I do have the chance to go, I feel bad because I have to leave her. (mmm-hmm)

DP: It's kind of a two-way uh, you can't win situation. (yeah) Uh, my grandmother used to spend summers with us when she was alive...she was from Czechoslovakia. She didn't speak English too well and she died when I was very young but I use to love the summers. You know, she'd come and spend with us cause she'd try to teach us her language and you know, just have so much fun and do so many things and I'm not that close to my other grandmother. But I was to this one.

CG: She's not her daddy's mother either...my daughter, but she is to her cause she's always been around her.. She lives close to us and

DP: Okay. This is one last thing and then I'll be through with this. Describe an average day for me. From the time you get up til when you go to bed; what usually ...start from there when you get up until you...what happens during the day?

CG: Well, I get up, I get my daughter off to school (what time is that?) Twenty minutes till eight. (okay) I sit and have a cup of coffee. And then I get mom up and then I take care of her teeth and dress her, wiping her off, and then I

fix breakfast and then I'll...after she gets her breakfast I'll uh, usually start the dishwasher and run the sweeper and do some laundry and then it's time to fix lunch. I fix lunch and get uh, all that taken care of. And I go ahead and do some more housework. And at 3 o'clock my husband gets home and I leave and go to my job and I work till uh, usually I'm supposed to be there by 3, but I don't get there because I don't leave home until he's in the house. And I work there till 6:30 and I come home and I continue dinner. After that it's supper dishes, and uh, do whatever else that has to be done. And I sit down a few minutes and I get her ready for bed and then we all go to bed. That's usually the way it is all day.

DP: What time do you all usually go to bed?

CG: Sometimes 10...most of the while I might stay up till 11 just to sit and have...be by myself.

DP:yeah, you don't have anything for yourself. (no, it's like that every day). (It's an ever' day thing.) Okay, I think that's ...answers all the questions I have on here.

CG: My son and daughter-in-law call me to go places and say, well let Misty stay here and you and dad come with us. I can't do that. (Misty's your niece?) Misty's my daughter. And Jennifer and Mark...Mark is my son, (and his wife) and I say no, I can't go off, I can't go off and leave Misty here; it's just not fair to her. I just won't do that.

DP: Do you think Misty would mind?

CG: I think at times she would; and I think that she feels like

she's been deprived of things to do with us, you know.
Cause I know Sunday night, my niece she went to church
[patient talking in background]....

went to church and uh, she left church with my niece to go to
the grocery store and she dropped her off here and she said that
Misty cried to her and said she felt like she didn't have
time for me and daddy to do things the way we ...go to church
as a family. She understood, the circumstances, but she
felt like she you know, didn't get to do the things that
she'd like to do with her parents, but she understood. (yeah)
She said she wasn't complainin'; she was just saying the way
she felt (mmm-hmm)

DP: She sounds like a maturehow old is she?

CG: Fourteen. Fourteen but she's...she's mature. Really
dedicated.

DP: She and her brother get along? (oh, yeah) I know me and my
brother use to fight.

CG: Well, there's eight year's difference between 'em. (okay,
okay) That makes a big difference.

DP: Okay, well, that's all I need to get from you today. And
then uh, I'll come back tomorrow...

[end of Interview B]

This is November the 14th and I'm doing Interview C with Caregiver #10.that I talked with you about earlier, and just make sure I've got everything, and see if there's anything that you need to add or want to add or anything like that. Let's see. Okay. You are taking care of your mother and she lives here in the house with you. You've been taking care of her for about two years. (two years in February) Okay. And uh, you work also; you work part-time about 3 1/2 hours every day at school (mmm-hmm) so, and you have uh, and you're married and you have a daughter and then you have a son, but you, your husband, your daughter and your mother live here and your son lives in another town.

CG: He works out of town but he comes in on the weekends.

DP: Okay, okay. Uh, basically let's see, what you need to do for your mother, well, let's see, is uh, you fix all the food for her (mmm-hmm) you uh, do her laundry (mmm-hmm), you need to help her get up and go to the bathroom and things like that, and help her move around. And uh...;

CG: I assist her with everything.

DP: Okay. You also clean the house, do all the cooking the laundry, and you ...you leave for work when your husband comes home. And so someone is here with her all the time (right). And sometimes your daughter...you say your daughter's probably the biggest help. She can stay with her and help her to the bathroom and things like that.

CG: She's a strong little girl; if she wasn't I couldn't do it.

DP: Yeah. Uh, your husband does all the yard work and fixes up

around the house and things. Grocery store; you go to the grocery? (yeah) And your daughter usually sits and watches her when you go to the grocery. Uh, your mother gets social security and black lung plus she's on Medicare. (mmm-hmm) And....(Blue Cross & Blue Shield) and Blue Cross and Blue Shield, uh, your daughter gets an allowance but that includes everything she does. Uh, a nurse comes out here about every 2 weeks but you get...did you check into that?

CG: She came ...she called right after you left (uh) yeah, she called right after you left and she came the next day.

DP: I wonder....and she's from Cabell County?

CG: No, she's from....(Kanawha County or) Boone (Boone, okay).

DP: So,...

CG: She left her card and....

DP: Uh,

CG: What's wrong mom?

DP: Let's see. Uh, so that's pretty much. You know, you have your husband's here, your daughter helps sit and then there's a daughter-in-law who (Mom's daughter-in-law) yeah, your mother's daughter-in-law who can come and help sit...

CG: Yeah, she came yesterday. I called her from school^s yesterday eve because there was a parent-teachers conference in Kanawha County, which meant there was no school for the uh, students, so the principal told me I could come up early if I wanted to, and get my 3 and a half hours over with and get home early. And I told her I was gonna get my sister-in-law to come and sit with mom, so I called her and she came and sat with mom for uh, three and a half hours while I went to

work.

DP: Okay. Uh, ...but pretty much you...you rely on yourself and your daughter pretty much...you take care of everything (right) control right now. You don't see any...you're not really desperate for more help or need to see any big kind of changes. The only thing is that would help you is that uh, you had time...more time with your daughter. You've got a niece that takes your daughter to do things like get her hair cut and stuff like that, and so you wished that you ...something could be worked out to where you could have more time with your daughter uh, because most of the rest of your sister and stuff like you say (I only have one sister) North Carolina, yeah, she lives there. Uh, and pretty much when I look at the schedule of everything you do during the day, it pretty much revolves around housework and taking care of your mother, except those hours that you are at work (right). Let's see...you do, when you have like problems and get overwhelmed or feel frustrated or stuff like that, uh, you say your religion helps, your belief in God is very helpful to you.. Plus your husband, you can talk to him. Plus a lot of time you just get busy. I've been seeing that a lot of the caregivers just get busy. They get...

CG: I didn't go to bed until 1:00 last night. (from just workin' inside or just...) I justeverybody was in bed and I sit up and made out my bills andcause my bill is way behind. They should have done been out but I

hadn't....found time to do it. I've been so busy, so I just sit up and...and made up my bills (just got caught up) yeah, I took a bath around 12'o'clock last night and said, well, I'll probably be tired this morning, but... I wasn't...

DP: Mmm. I was trying to think if there was anything else. But that's like you say, probably the most helpful person to you is your daughter. Oh, let's see. You...okay, we were talking about uh, oh, and...and with the fact that you would like to have more time with your daughter, you would be willing to try that if someone was available to come in, watch your mother, you'd be willing to try that, if your mother felt comfortable with...with someone coming in.

CG: The thing of it is with mom, she's always been used to going and doing for herself. And she get's very depressed ...you know; she's very alert. She get's very depressed her being in the house so much. And I feel bad when I go off and leave her, although I can't help cause she's the shape she's in except I just feel bad when I do it.

DP: You know that she would like to be doing it too. I went and visited a lady yesterday who's...she's in a hospital bed; she can get up and walk but she has a foley catheter, so she needs a lot of help. And she was saying she stays with her sister and her husband, they've been married 70 seventy years. And so, uh, I'm sorry, her two daughters have moved in and they're taking care of her, but uh, you know she was laying in the bed and she says she just hated being a burden though she wasn't a burden, but she says she was so

...she was so used to going and doing everything for herself and now she's completely dependent on someone. So she said she's really....

CG: I mean, she had her own place and she had all her stuff she needed; her furniture, and everything. And when you gotta give all that up, you...it makes you feel bad and you feel like you're just a burden in your own home.

DP: The major adjustment...right, the furniture, everything

CG: I mean, I can understand where she's coming from but there's not much I can do about it (right) but take care of her anyway.

DP: Well, I think that this is just...I'm thinking the fact that you do take care of her, and yes your life has changed also. But still, you're still able to work a little bit and stuff. And you're here with her and stuff when you don't....you're not going around like a lot of people do saying "oh, if you weren't here, I could do this or I could do that". You know, I think that helps. I really ...because you....I ask a lot of people when they start talking about it, what made 'em decide to take care of their mother or their husband instead of putting them in a nursing home or something...

CG: Well, I'll tell you what. If they worked in one, they wouldn't do it.

DP: One lady I talked to did work in a nursing home.

CG: I worked in one home. (Really? and you weren't

happy with that?) I was happy with my care but I wasn't happy with the other people's care.

DP: One person though, she worked in a nursing home so she moved back here from Florida to take care of her mother. Because she didn't want her to go to a nursing home.

CG: You had some good...some good uh, aides, you know. but then there are those, all they're there for is the money.

DP: And I can see that even more of a change, cause you're in like a ...it's like a hospital (yeah) you're in a room, you share it with someone you don't know.

CG: Well, they don't ...they don't...if you got a person that's incontinent, and they wet on their self or something, they don't uh, care...they just go and take the sheets off the bed and put the powders on 'em and and uh put their clothes back on 'em; they don't think anything about washing 'em and puttin' powders and stuff on 'em and, you know.

DP: And privacy and

CG: They use to get on me because I worked midnights and you're supposed to check every uh, like every 2 hours and I would go quite frequently, and if they were wet, I would change 'em totally. And wash 'em and everything and they'd get on me and tell me I was just wasting my time but I said, but would you like to lay in a wet bed. Which you could put chux and stuff under 'em but they would still drain back...(oh, yeah).

DP: Uh, but she said, she said, and I...and I haven't understood

it but yet I guess that's cause she didn't want her mother there and that's why she moved here to take care of her mother and...she enjoys taking care of her mother and be with her mother. Of course she's single and doesn't have any family so that may make a difference too. But she says, no, I'm sorry, she does a have child. A son, but he lives I don't know. Uh, but she told him, she told me when he came to visit one time, she told him to put her in a nursing home; she didn't want him taking care of her. And I thought that's strange because she's taking care of her mother and doesn't mind.

CG: Well, maybe she...maybe she sees that she wouldnt't maybe she sees that maybe her mother's not...see sometimes, no matter how much you love someone in taking care of her, they don't uh, realize that you feel that...they realize that you feel that way, but yet they wanta ...it's just like mom. Now mom uh, doesn't want to be a burden to me. I know that. But I can't get her to realizesometimes she'll understand and sometimes she won't that uh, I don't care to take care of her, but I love taking care of her cause she's my mother, but she just feels like she's stopping us from a lot of things, you know. And so....

DP: And so...that may be why she doesn't want... she feels that way even though it may not be true with her son but she would want it that way.

CG: But she gets depressed sometimes and she uh, cries and uh, everything and then of course, I don't know what to do

(yeah) ...the only thing to do is the best I know how and that's it.

DP: Which seems very good to me. I was trying to see if there's anything else. I can't think of anything else, can you?

CG: No.

DP: That nurse is still gonna come every two weeks? (mmm-hmm) Continue to come and get her blood and everything?

CG: Mmm-hmm. Did you know that me and her, I got to thinking about that; she had a blood change. He put her on that....2...2...she had 2 and 1/2 mg. of Coumadin and she's been on that for a year, close to a year. And we got

to thinking about that and uh, a lady from church brought her a jar of beets; you know beets is pickled in vinegar (mmm-hmm) and uh, different herbs (mmm-hmm) and when you're on blood thinner, you're not supposed to have no kind of vinegar or anything like that. See vinegar ...is a thinner itself. And she eat a lot of those beets. Could that have changed her blood? That much vinegar?

DP: When did this happen though? Are you talking about a year ago?

CG: No, I'm talking about (just now?) kind of close to where he changed her medicine. About a week or so later wasn't it? It was later, wasn't it?

DP: But ...but...but when did she eat the beets?

CG: That week and then when they came and took her blood the next week, her blood....

DP: Then they changed the medicine (yeah). But how long has she...you say she's been like that for a year, now? I could see...I could see where that may do it for a week or two weeks or a month, but I...if her blood's stayed at that same level for a year, I don't see where it would affect it that long.

CG ...it affected it? Cause if it would went back to it's natural...the way it was on 2 and 1/2, then he would have been able to switch it back to 2 and 1/2; and not left her on 2. I thought of that, too.

DP: But you're right; different things that you eat and stuff can affect....

CG: You know what she says? She says, I've lived this long and my life's too short to worry about what I'm gonna eat now.

DP: Well, I hate to say this [laughter from CG] but I tend to agree [laughs] I know, I took care of this lady--she was 90 years old; she was just so sweet. She had broken her hip and we were in the hospital and she was on a low sodium diet and she loved bologna and tomatoe juice. Every day she would ask for bologna and tomatoe juice. And we couldn't give it to her. Cause she was on a low sodium diet and I thought, here's an,...and she was in the hospital, and I thought, here's this lady, 90 years old, she's lived 90 years and all of a sudden we're saying, "you can't have what's important to you; you can't have your tomatoe juice and bologna". So I tried to call the kitchen and see if they'd bring some up anyway and they wouldn't. Unless they had doctor's orders, and so I called the doctor and

he said if she's bothering you that much, and I said, well, I don't care what you think, and he did say that we could give it to her and we gave her bologna sandwiche and tomatoe juice. She thanked us and...,but I ...I tend to agree with your mother, you know.

CG: What hospitals have you worked in?

DP: Oh, I worked in....

CG: Have you worked in Thomas or any....

DP: No, I haven't worked in any in Charleston.

CG: You haven't? There's a doctor that did her surgery and his name's Dr. ; I don't know whether you've ever heard of him (mmm-hmm) and I tell you... that doctor is the most considerate uhm, understanding doctor. It's not like he's a doctor. It's like he's a member of the family, and uh, uh, when he did her leg sugery, he brought her back to her room, and her blood pressure dropped and (?) and uh, her pulse was good at one time then it started to drop and he come in the room and he was so aggravated and

And he said...he come out and said it look like we're gonna have to take her back. He said, if I was you, I'd go to the man above and he said I would be in good hands. Cause I don't want to take her back. And he...he is so understanding and so considerate. I have never in my life known a doctor like that before.

DP: What kind of surgery did she have on her leg

CG: She had a blockage in the uh, down below the knee and no, he opened...he went down as far as he could and opened up the

arteries and veins but he couldn't go into the uh...he couldn't go into the one's in the foot and uh, been a year in August this past August that she had that done, and it was(it worked okay?) So far. He said that uh, he didn't know how long it would last but

DP: You don't find a whole lot of doctors like that.

CG: No, he is so great.

DP: Did he have to take her back?

CG: No. No, he didn't have to take her back.. They just started next morning...her blood pressure was back up and the blood was a flowin' and it was warm and our pastor, his wife stayed down there with us that evening and uh, he was really concerned, our pastor was, and mom wasn't uh, and when morning came, she was ...everything was a flowin' good and he told the doctor, he says, I'm not surprised.
[laughs]

DP: I bet the doctor wasn't either. That's great.

CG: Not Dr. cause he's really good. His mother...he took care of his mother. He did ...he uh brought his mother in his home and took care of her till she died and he cut back on his hours at his office. And he told me and he said uh, I called him one day at home. He told me to call him any time I needed him, and he said, I took care of my mom, my mother in my home, and he said, although I give her the best care I knew t give her, we was talking about mom's condition, and her stroke, an he said, don't blame yourself for her stroke, cause you....but t day that she had it, she was...her finger's were tinglin', her feet was tinglin'. She was just uh, showing the

symptoms of stroke that day. But I didn't see it and neither did she and I said, if only I had of seen it, and he said, don't he said because as best care as I gave my mother and I'm a doctor, he said still yet it didn't seem like enough but it was the best I could do

DP: And that's right. You couldn't have prevented it. Anyway. Yeah, that's probably why he's so understanding cause he knows what it's like.