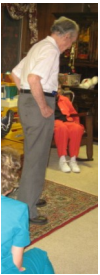


VISITING WITH MY DAD



I just had a good visit with Dad. I went to his room and woke him up. He knew who I was and even asked about you and everyone in California. We went out for a little walk and then to the main dining room for lunch. He looks good, having lost a little weight. He is pretty thin, but, it looks good on him. The nurse said he eats well about



once a day and then nibbles the rest of the day. Doesn't sound bad since he is almost 100% immobile! But, things are pretty much the same. He does have a little spark in his eye which is good. He can actually walk pretty good and the team here keeps his clothes clean and pressed. *Overall, a good report.*

I don't think my Dad has *Alzheimer's* but rather dementia. Alzheimer's is when someone totally loses touch with reality. My Dad knows to get dressed, that he needs to shave—certain things he has to do. You can hand him a telephone and he knows what he is suppose to do with it, as opposed to an Alzheimer's patient who might be befuddled by the instrument. i.e., should he wear it, put it around his neck. The longer I stayed, the better my Dad became.

Just took Dad back to his room from lunch. He walked with me to the dining room, ate a good lunch—chicken and dumplings, green beans, stewed apples and a brownie. So, he is doing pretty good. They have taken him off of some of his meds and I think it is making a difference—he is more animated and talks a lot more. Someone asked him today who I was and he said with a little smile, “She is my first wife!” Then, he just laughed.

I will see how tomorrow goes and then will probably go back to S'burg for the week-end. I spend an hour with the director of the

facility today—wow! This health care for the aging is a tough field—highly regulated and ruled. She keeps 88 patients in the health care center and 98% of the funding comes from Medicare. So, for every pill and every diaper there is a form and a regulation.

Tough job!

What simply astounds me is the fact that these wonderfully accomplished people for most of their lives end up in a care facility that is locked down much like their minds. And, just as remarkable are the people who care for them—mostly, they are very large caring African American women who live on minimum wage. God bless them.



Dr. Cooper in a playful mood

enough, there is Dad lying on the bed in another patient's room. She got him up and said, “Dr Cooper, this isn't your room!” His response, “Well, I think I should get out of here and into my own room, don't you?” This is all humorous—sad, but very humorous!

Today with Dad has been good. We walked outside to get to the dining room for both meals. His appetite has been good today so he ate well. At dinner tonight, this lady came to sit with us and she talked and talked. She announced at first that she has only been here 4 months and she was 86. By the time she left the table, she was 88 and had been here almost a year. In the midst of this, she talked about how her mind has been rock solid but her hearing is a little bad. *Chuckles over that one!* Then, I walked Dad back to his unit and sat and played the piano a little. Dad got up to walk around and I couldn't find him. Rosie, one of the attendants, said, “I know exactly where to go look.” Sure



The author with her grand daughter, Lilly.