

Keep on talking and showing support

Andrew: My name is Andrew. My mother's name is Agatha. When she first deployed herself, she was fine. Then when she came back, it was a totally different story. She was secluded. She didn't want to talk to anybody. It was not someone I thought I recognized at first. It was more of like a fearful type of vibe when get, when you're near her, and you couldn't approach her for anything. I would ask her, "What's wrong," and she would say, "It's nothing. I can't talk to you about it," and I would get frustrated because I wanted to help, and I didn't know how to.

One very vivid memory that I remember, even when I was a kid, was that she would drink and she would be locked in a closet. It was a narrow, small closet. I remember and just walking in and she would just be sitting there just dazed out, and I'm just like, "What's wrong with my mother? I don't understand." I felt angry, I felt depressed saying, "My mother's not normal. I don't know if this is worth... if she's worth taking care of or if she's worth looking after." I said, "You can't keep shutting me out like this. You can't keep things inside because eventually it'll explode and lead to the wrong person." So, I gave her an ultimatum. I said, "Either you talk to me or you find somebody else that you can talk to or there's nothing I can really do for you." That's when she started saying, "I'm seeing therapy. I have a rehab facilitation for my anxieties, for anything else that's health related," and then that's when I started to get myself more involved.

At first, it was challenging because she would get stubborn. She was like, "Don't help me. I got this. I don't need your help." Then later on when she as years go by and she was like, "Andrew, can you help me with this. I need help with this," and I'm like, "Sure, no problem." When she has appointments, I take her to doctors. Wherever she wants to go, I give her ride, whether it's groceries, a walk in the park. She's talked to somebody like, again, in therapy, rehab. She's able to vent out a little bit more. Now, she's started building up, telling me exactly what she's going through, what her feeling is, what she wants to do. I can honestly say it's very good. It's been a drastic change and I'm happy for her. Don't give up, even though it may see challenging, just keep on talking to the person, keep on showing support, don't give up.



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