

# Becky Speaks . . .

## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF CAREGIVING

Who is Becky?

As I began writing this bio, my initial instinct was to say that I am 'middle aged' but unless the human life expectancy miraculously increases to 111, I realized that I am over that hill already! My mind isn't even 'middle aged' yet as it still feels like a 'twenty-something', but the mean old mirror reminds me that isn't so... Thanks to J&J, Tylenol, Neutrogena and Aveeno help me out a little.

I have been taking care of my elderly Aunt for several years now while holding a full time job. I do her food shopping; prepare her medications each week; keep an eye on her home; take her for doctor appointments. All of my friends and family began to tease me a few years back... ("*Hey Becky!*") about being at her *beck and call*, and that is where my nickname came from.

It is pretty comical sometimes as she has no problem calling me at work and asking me to come home because a light bulb blew out in her ceiling fixture! (Meanwhile there are lamps galore in her home!) Another time she called me to tell me that her smoke alarm needed a battery...NOW! (Was she expecting to burn toast?) Other times there are weeds that need pulling; snow needs shoveling; etc. Needless to say, she keeps me on the go!

So, as a result of my personal experiences with her, I had cards printed up and began a business running errands for Senior Citizens called "Beck and Call Personal Valet Service" when I was out of work for a six month stint a few years ago due to a corporate restructure. (As you know, the need for this type of assistance is in great demand. Seniors really hate asking their family for help because they know that they are very busy, so this gives them a little independence.)

I registered my business with the county, and handed out cards and fliers. After I placed a few small ads in local newsletters, and through word of mouth, Becky was off and running. Literally! The money wasn't very good, but the material that I get on a weekly basis is priceless. How do you charge for something like this? It is basically for tips! In the meantime I have developed great friendships with some of these seniors. The hardest part was returning to full time work only a few months later, and having to explain to them that I need a "Real Job" to pay my bills!

The life experience I have acquired from this is invaluable. My friends and family now have a small glimpse into our own futures, and it is very scary. I am able to recognize traces of my generation in each of these people who are nearing the end of their lives. It is a short cycle for sure.

Add my Mother into the mix of my life for the past year, and voila! *Becky needs to speak!*

I was playing around one day, and created a CD Cover for the writing I was saving, and it was a photograph of a full moon, and diagonal to the bottom another photo of a sunset. The title of the CD is "**Between the sun and the moon... steps a day in the life of Becky.**" That is as close to a title as I have come for my book. Hopefully before I am too old to read, I will publish it! I would like to leave some sort of legacy when I am gone.

Thank you for taking this journey with me. Hopefully there will be some words of wisdom sprinkled in with the humor in it all.

PMM