

**Fwd: This week in the life of a Search and Care Client**

Doug King

**Sent:** Thursday, April 02, 2020 5:02 PM**To:** Linda Thompson

A little narrative of what Search and Care does.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Robin Strashun <strashun@searchandcare.org>  
**Date:** April 2, 2020 at 4:47:56 PM EDT  
**To:** Doug King <dking@brickchurch.org>  
**Cc:** Brian Kravitz <Kravitz@searchandcare.org>  
**Subject:** This week in the life of a Search and Care Client

Dear Doug,

We think of you daily as you are facing the same issues. These are disconcerting, uncertain times as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve. Search and Care is on the front lines, providing support to one of the most at-risk populations—older adults—many of whom are homebound, live alone, are medically fragile, and afraid to leave their apartments. Our team of 20 care professionals have been diligently providing necessary services, tailored to the needs of each client.

Stories of our older neighbors are the silver-lining during these trying times as they remind us of the true definition of resilience, strength, and determination.

Take Mr. L, an 80-year-old man from Puerto Rico, who's lived in East Harlem for about 60 years. He suffers from chronic health conditions, and lives alone in a walk-up building. He thinks of himself as fiercely independent. When speaking to an agency Social Worker about COVID-19, he said, "I've seen it all."

Mr. L faced a lot of adversity growing up in tough neighborhood. Determined to escape this, he joined the Army Reserves, was a youth boxing coach, earned a degree in psychology, and worked as a crisis counselor in prisons.

Mr. L insists his past has given him the strength to deal with the current public health crisis.

He is uninterested in utilizing home care workers, as they take public transportation and may expose him to COVID-19. He's using his own "survival techniques," such as hand-washing his clothes at his own pace and hanging them to dry. He takes pride in his independence.

Search and Care recently provided Mr. L with an emergency supply of perishable and non-perishable groceries to avoid leaving the house, along with telephonic guidance from our P/T Nutritionist about easy-to-prepare, healthy, and affordable recipes.

Mr. L was not always amenable to Search and Care services, other than securing Meals on Wheels. Since a bad fall last year, Mr. L gradually built trust with his Social Worker, and began to accept other forms of support. For the first time in years, he allowed people to enter his home—Search and Care workers who arranged for apartment decluttering. He has also received help with budgeting, financial assistance to reduce debt; utilized our Handyman to install light bulbs throughout his poorly lit apartment; had Medical Escorts assist him to/from medical appointments; and accepted homecare to assist with daily routines.

Mr. L is thankful to the Search and Care team, and plans to spread the word to other seniors that building community is vital to a happy and safe life.

Please be safe, Doug, and be well. Alert me to any congregant 60+ not already served by a social service agency we may help.

Sincerely,  
Robin Strashun  
Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator  
Search and Care  
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