

## **Two Week Notice**

**June 13, 2011**

This is one of the saddest days in my career which occurred because of a decision I am forced to make. Everyone at work knows something troubling is going on with me. No one is asking me because they are trying to respect my privacy (except a few nosy CNAs). The cheerful, happy, bubbly person they have come to know doesn't exist anymore. I am trying very hard to cover up my anguish and pain. When asked why I would leave a job I love, the only way I can explain is to unhappily say, "I need to leave due to a situation that is out of my control. If there was any way I could resolve it, I would."

I hold my written resignation for my position as Enrichment Coordinator. I have tried to get up the courage all morning to talk to the administrator. I know I'm going to break down and cry when I do. Doing so feels very unprofessional to me. I fight to gain control of myself. My co-worker, the only one who knows the truth, Jodi, has been very supportive. I know she recognizes I am having a very difficult time today. Finally, I gather up the nerve to approach Jodi and tell her of my decision. As I walk into her office I try to contain my emotions which are already beginning to spill out. I ask if she wants to take a break. She looks down at the paper in my hand and agrees. We step outside to the smoking area and she lights up a cigarette and begins talking to me. I can tell she is waiting for me to compose myself enough to talk.

My heart is pounding; my hands are shaking as I fight back the tears as best I can. I try to muster up the courage to let her know of my plans. All I keep thinking about is how much I love my job, my co-workers, the residents, and how proud I am of what I have done with the Activity Program. A big part of me feels as if I'm letting everyone down — especially my residents. I'm the only "family" many of them have. Now I'm leaving them as everyone else has.

I take a deep breath and try to remain strong. I hand Jodi the resignation letter. She reads it with a concerned and puzzled look on her face. She looks up and says, "Why?" At this moment I can't control my feelings and begin to cry uncontrollably. So much for professionalism. I'm unable to talk for a few minutes. Speaking through my tears I tell her, "I have to go. I just cannot stay here

anymore. I feel as if I'm letting everyone down." Jodi is not a very sensitive kind of gal, so for her to have tears in her eyes makes me cry even more. She is there for me, as she always is. It hurts me terribly to know I won't be seeing her every day; we have become very close.

We talk about what Gerard has been accused of and how many people are now being affected by it. Seeing her cry brings up many more emotions. I feel I am now hurting someone dear to me. I just have to leave Florida. I have no control at all over my life right now and my only recourse is to leave. I hope she and everyone else understands this.

A few people come to the outside door but walk away, knowing something bad is happening. I then say, "I don't know how I'm going to walk into our boss's office and give my notice."

Jodi says, "You don't have to be alone, I'll go with you." We both stand up and start to go through the door. She puts her arm around me, she starts to cry. I lose it. I have never seen this side of Jodi. At this moment she means so much to me, and now I am losing a dear friend.

Everyone is looking toward us. Usually, we are both happy and cheerful. When we get to the boss's office she gives me a hug and a look of encouragement. My heart skips a few beats as I knock on his door. My boss looks very puzzled as I enter the office and take a seat across from him. He can see I am becoming completely unglued. He tips his head to the side and says, "What is going on? What can I do to help?"

"I need to give my two-week notice." I try to explain with as much composure as possible. My decision has nothing to do with being unhappy with my employment in any way. I explain I need to return to Maine. If there was any way I could stay in Florida, I would. His look is so caring and concerned. He realizes my decision is made so he, thankfully, doesn't impose on me to stay. Instead, he tells me what a valuable employee I have been and how much he will personally miss me. He tells me my shoes will be near impossible to fill. Ordinarily, this kind of praise would make me ecstatic but today all I can feel is the overwhelming loss and guilt for leaving my residents.

My last day of work is a very sad day for me as well as for many others. Good-byes are always hard. I chose not to tell the residents and staff until two days before I had to leave. I think part of the reason is because I didn't want to have to deal with my emotions over a two-week time-span. I don't want to disappoint my residents. I care about them deeply. They always tell me I

make them feel special and loved. I caringly let them know I have been fortunate to have known them. Now I have to leave them, not because I want to, but because of situation that is out of my control.

News of my departure spreads like wildfire throughout the building. I keep saying to myself I need to stay strong. I don't want to show the residents how devastated I really am. I worry many of the residents will feel as if I don't care about them. I am the closest thing some have to family, and the longer I got to know them the more they feel like family to me.

On my last day, I plan to go out with a bang so I pick my most popular activity, Bingo for Chocolate. I choose to change it to Bingo for Cash. I hear rumors that many people are coming to play and say goodbye. We are all trying to stay positive even though it is a sad situation. After Bingo, everyone lines up to hug me goodbye. They all cry. My heart is breaking. The residents tell me how much they are going to miss me. I try my best to stay strong for them and manage not to shed any tears. Never-the-less my heart is crumbling into tiny pieces on the inside.

Afterwards I go into my office, close the door softly, turn on some music and completely break down into a mushy pile of pity. After letting it all out I say to myself, "Deb, you are stronger than this." I pull myself together to finish out the day. As my last few minutes' tick away, I try to figure how to get out the building as quickly as possible. I'm filled with shame as I walk out the door in cloud of suspicion.

The number of people affected by the recent events are becoming greater and greater as time goes on. I feel as though my residents — or me — do not deserve what has to take place.

*Content subject to change during editing.*