



**Context  
Deck**

## CONTEXT

I live alone on a farm outside of town. I wish I saw my family more. I have been seeing a therapist for some personal issues I am struggling with. I have PTSD from childhood trauma and am so scared sometimes I wet the bed. When I feel uncomfortable around new people I use humor and sarcasm to mask my emotions.

## CONTEXT

I like my house to be clean and I have a spot for everything. I didn't plan very well when I was younger and don't have a savings account. I'm not sure what happened but my health care expenses increased a lot last year. I pay a lot more for meds now than I used to. I am learning more and more about the Medicare "donut hole".

## CONTEXT

My spouse and I lease our apartment. My spouse makes most of the meals. I'm stubborn and hate not having the energy I used to. I cross paths with lots of people from the building, but I feel lonely most days. I spend a lot of time talking to our cat.

## CONTEXT

**My partner passed away six years ago. I'm an active member of the local historical society. When I am feeling down I call a friend or make plans to get together with one of them. There are many people far worse off than me. I feel blessed and thank God for all that has been given to me.**

## CONTEXT

My spouse and I still love to dress up and go out, although it happens less often. We live in a restored farm house on 3-acres of land and have for the last 32 years. We hold most of our family gatherings here because of the size and openness of the house. We used to be able to maintain the house and property ourselves, but now need to contract out some of the work. Cold temperatures bother my joints and make getting up a chore.

## CONTEXT

I spend a lot of time with my dogs. I adopted them both six years ago. When I was still working, coming home to feed and walk them was the highpoint of my day. Now that I'm retired we spend a lot more time together. I can't play the sports or hobbies like I used to be able to, but the dogs and I like to watch golf on the tv together. I have a hard time hearing people speak to me with a lot of background noise and need to drive to get everything because I live in the country.

## CONTEXT

**My spouse and I eat dinner by candle light each night and clean-up the dishes together. This is our time together. Generally I head to bed at 9:00pm. The winter weather makes it harder to get out of the house because I'm scared of falling on the snow and ice. I share my problems with God through prayer when things feel like too much. Why worry about things I have no control over?**



## CONTEXT

I live with my partner and we'll likely be divorced soon. We're pretty co-dependent—I can't afford rent anywhere else and he can't be bothered looking after the place or himself. It's a very difficult living situation and we fight a lot. Sleeping at night is hard due to pain. I can't remember the last time I had a good night's sleep. I have started stockpiling medication because I am worried I might not be able to afford it one day soon.

## CONTEXT

**My spouse and I spend a lot of time together. I love them, and I like my independence too. It is important for me to also do things and see people without my spouse. I make friends easily and keep most of them for years and years. Depression and anxiety runs in my family. It keeps me from doing all I'd like to do during the day. Mornings and winters are the worst. I spend a lot of evenings watching my shows and cuddling with my cat.**

## CONTEXT

I lost my spouse a few months ago. It's hard to accept that I'm alone now—not much makes sense. It is hard coming home to an empty house. Getting out to see others is also a challenge. I don't like to drive when it is dark anymore. I wish my spouse was still alive. Most days, I'm incredibly lonely.

## CONTEXT

I'm an active volunteer for a few programs in the community. I can speak a few different languages and am a tour guide for the local historical society. I consider myself a pretty good golfer for my age, although my friends might say otherwise. My spouse still works part-time out of the house. They have been sick with Bronchitis for the last two weeks.

## CONTEXT

I've been happily married for 43 years. I have great relationships with my kids who are all grown up and live all over the country. I don't like to travel when I am in pain, which happens more and more as I age. The older I get the more anxious I become before doctor's appointments. Since my surgery I feel really isolated.

## CONTEXT

I love teaching and public speaking and really enjoy sharing my life-stories with scrapbooks and slideshows. As I've aged, I've noticed my feet get pretty numb after a long day. Somedays it's really bad and feels like thousands of hot needles are being stuck in them. My doctor says it's peripheral neuropathy from my diabetes. I wish I was younger.

## CONTEXT

I live alone in a small apartment and use the local seniors centers for both exercise and my social life. I'm openly gay and the acceptance of that varies across my social network. I like to use the internet and go on Facebook when I am at home. I called my younger brother this week to wish him a happy birthday and catch up. I love music and nature.

## CONTEXT

I met my partner at the grocery store 51 years ago. My partner's health has been declining for a number of years. I am now their full-time caregiver. I've noticed I've been losing some weight and I think it's from stress. I pick-up our prescriptions from the next town over. Luckily, I can still drive with no issues.



## CONTEXT

I'm not in the greatest frame of mind during the winter when the days are grey, snowy and cold. I used to hope that I would live to be 100 in relatively good health, but pain now gets in the way of almost everything I do. My days are all the same and sleep helps to pass the time.

## CONTEXT

I hate my living situation with my spouse. We have nothing in common. I take 14 different medications and vitamins each day to control various health issues that have built up over time. Sometimes I wonder if they're all necessary, but my doctor laughs when I bring up alternatives like holistic health.

## CONTEXT

**I never married and live off a monthly \$1200 social security check. I used to make that in a week before my workplace injury! I don't qualify for seniors supports because of my age, but my body makes me feel a lot older. I love my dogs; they are my family and keep me company. I spend a lot of time online and I also like to write and cook.**

## CONTEXT

I live in an assisted living home now after the death of my second spouse. I moved here to be better supported by my kids. Their jobs forced them to moved away and we're now in touch a few times a year. I have people around, but it's hard to replace old friends. I can't drive anymore which makes it difficult to get the things I need.

## CONTEXT

**Becoming old means coming to terms with growing invisible. I started to feel old when I turned 60 about five years ago. I am still very active in the community and help out at the local nursing home. I have been on disability for a long time. Despite the difficulties I've faced, I consider myself endlessly blessed and wouldn't change a thing!**

## CONTEXT

I resettled in the United States seven years ago with my adult children and their families. I can't speak English very well. I take ESL classes but they are taught in English and it is challenging to follow along and remember. Not being able to speak English prevents me from making friends with my neighbors and from participating in programming at the community center.

## CONTEXT

I live in the country and while there are positives like friendly, helpful neighbors, as I age it becomes harder to maintain the lifestyle I expect. I often have trouble getting around—public transportation is virtually non-existent in the countryside. I think about moving but there are very few housing options for middle income older adults like myself.

## CONTEXT

I was excited a few years ago—my city was finally putting in sound indicators at all of the intersections for blind people like me. This excitement turned to fear once I realized they couldn't afford to do every intersection. I am now terrified about trying to leave my home because so many intersections are a gamble when I walk and my bus route was just eliminated.



## CONTEXT

I have HIV, and even though it is no-longer a death sentence the associated stigma is really hurtful. Even at the doctor's office they announce my diagnosis loudly and I feel judged by everyone in the waiting room. I wish my medical staff was more sensitive to my physical health issues.

## CONTEXT

I live in low-income seniors housing. I stay in my apartment most days. There is a park across the street, but I don't like to go it. There are lots of steep hills and very few places to sit in the shade. At night I worry about an intruder breaking into my home. The building has a secured entrance but it is rarely locked and I have seen strangers in the halls before.

## CONTEXT

I drink alcohol when I am stressed out, which seems to be happening more and more frequently. My child keeps borrowing money, with or without my permission, causing me to be short for rent the past few months. I think my drinking is increasing and I've also recently started smoking cigarettes again because they go so well with my booze.