



Older persons & Neglect

Abuse happens often by someone close to the victims which causes victims to:

- 1) be tremendously conflicted when determining how or if, to respond to the abuse
- 2) have fear of jeopardizing their relationship with their adult child and/or causing them harm.

Different perspectives and Challenges faced:

Elderly (Individual)



- Experiences dual feelings: Loyalty and protectiveness vs anger and resentment
- Isolated with limited social contacts
- Dependent on others for care as they:
 - 1) Might develop a physical and mental disability as they age
 - 2) Might have difficulties in communication
- Fear of retaliation: institutionalization, shame and embarrassment

Family/Care-giver



- Unwillingness in taking up the role of a care-giver
- May not have the knowledge or ability to coordinate care arrangements or make contact with services
- High stress levels and inability to cope with competing responsibilities for their own children
- Dysfunctional family dynamics with members manipulating others for their own benefits

Social System



We need to think about...

- The need to admit these elderly to residential care as a solution to their neglect
- Finding a balance between client safety and client's right to self-determination
- Finding ways to support clients who choose to remain in a non-ideal situation
- Providing more services that aim to reduce isolation (i.e. befriending services for old people)

Adapted from: Letters to Social Work Students, "Older persons and Neglect", Pg 64-67, by Ang Bee Lian

<http://tinyurl.com/zethqet>

