

## What can Senior Citizens do for the Society:

Senior Citizens have no doubt given a lot to the Society in their prime time but have taken also a lot from Society. It is now time to give back as much as possible.

- 1) **Civic Facilities for all:** They can keep an open eye on various civic facilities like maintenance & cleanliness of roads, supply of water & electricity, transport services, and wherever required, take up suitably with Civic Authorities by correspondence & personal visits. He should get nominated on various committees like Railway Users Committees, Human Rights Commission, Panchayats, Municipal Committees and various such committees dealing with common cause and welfare of all citizens.
- 2) **Community Projects:** They should take part in all projects like teaching adults & street children, Family Planning, Polio Drops, HIV Awareness, Non-smoking, Drinking, Respect for women, Special Drives like Census, Elections etc.
- 3) **Law & Order Situation:** Volunteering for such jobs at the time of festivals & other special occasions. They can form or be members of Peace Committees of their areas, Social Clubs etc and be helpful in neighborhood areas during situations like floods, earthquakes etc.
- 4) **Maintenance of Facilities:** They should help or takeover maintenance of gardens, gymkhanas, sports clubs, help in getting removed encroachments on footpaths, roads, garages & welding works from residential areas.
- 5) **Help to needy Senior Citizens:** They should collect full data of all Senior Citizens residing in their area and coordinate with other agencies for help of different kinds to needy, with Police for safety, maid servants etc.
- 6) **Free Counseling:** In the field of their expertise, they should give free counseling to Senior Citizens as well as others.
- 7) **Visit to Hospitals, Old men's Houses:** They should regularly visit Hospitals, Old men' Houses etc and look after requirements of Senior Citizens like giving company, reading for them, giving fruits etc, as possible by self or through others.
- 8) **Social Service:** They should join Senior Citizens Associations of their area and do good to Senior Citizens as well as others collectively. Take part in Services of Dignity Foundation & other Social Organizations.
- 9) **Writing their Experiences:** All should write their experiences & opinions on various social situations & problems for benefit of the Society in the field of their expertise without pride or prejudice & without fear or favour.

### **What can Society(including Government & Media) do for Senior Citizens:**

- 1) **Government:** Expeditious Complete Implementation of Policy on Elderly Persons notified in 1999 and special notifications periodically as to what is being done for Senior Citizens by various departments at state & centre level, easy machinery for giving minimum pension to needy & other benefits to Senior Citizens, Special Cell in all departments to deal with all subjects of Senior Citizens, periodical reiteration of directives so far issued with progress report about implementation.
- 2) **Media:** No Association/ Federation/ Foundations can get Senior Citizens their rights, benefits & respected place in Society, as expeditiously as Our Fourth Estate –the powerful Media- the Newspapers, Magazines & T.V. Channels. DNA has taken the lead by giving 1 page of Grandeur every Saturday (to be developed on pattern of their Page 2-Speak Up). All Newspapers, Magazines & T.V. Channels should follow the suit and give 1 page every day/once a week and ½ hour slot on all Channels for Senior Citizen's needs, problems, health care, safety, mobility, second careers, financial & social supports etc. Such a space in Media will create a lot of material useful to elders as well as Society. Moreover, Senior Citizens writing in News Papers, Magazines and acting in T.V. Channels may be given recognition & monetary rewards/honorarium by Media. This will create avenues for Senior Citizens to express themselves and enthuse them. Media may appoint them as Correspondents or Representatives for bringing news, programs, happenings etc and pay them honorarium. This will give not only financial benefit but also feeling of usefulness. These writings will encourage Senior Citizens to do some useful work in various fields instead of just passing time as at present.
- 3) **Individuals & Groups/Organizations:** All must look after their parents well and ignoring/ maltreatment etc should be a social stigma as well as punishable offence. Where children do not exist or are not able to look after, there can be some adoptions of the following nature:

#### **Let Young Couples adopt “God Parent.”**

Many young couples go for service and there is nobody to look after their children. Adoption of Parent or a single Elder of their choice will go a long way to make such Elders happy and will be beneficial to the couple also in many respects including good care and `sanskar` of their children.

#### **Let each Doctor adopt a “God Parent.”**

Most of the Medical Associations are arranging Check-ups and Lectures for Senior Citizens, keeping in view extreme need of looking after the deteriorating health of elders. They can advise all their Members to adopt 1 elderly couple or 1 or 2 single elders for free check-ups & advice, as and when necessary/ once a month and if possible, to give medicines, nourishments, dietary supplements etc, as necessary free. Let each Specialist/ Consultant keep 2 hours in a week for free examination of Senior Citizens. Each Hospital, especially Eye Hospitals, Investigating Laboratories including Pathology may also keep 2-3 hours in a week for free treatment of Senior Citizens.

### **Let Good Educational Institute adopt one Association of Senior Citizens.**

Passing time usefully & peacefully is a major need of Senior Citizens. Most of their Associations do not have accommodation to meet regularly. They hardly meet 2-3 times in a year. Royal College, Mira Road has shown the way by giving spacious accommodation for daily meeting for 3 hours from 16 to 19 hrs and free use of their Library & Indoor Games. 30-40 Senior Citizens gather every day and exchange views on useful topics, do social service to all citizens of their areas and do almost all activities on par with Activity Centers of Dignity & Harmony without any fees. Let Good Institutes open their doors and give as many facilities as possible for passing time usefully in their crucial phase of life. They will be useful to the Institute & the Society with their varied experience in various fields. Let Trusts, Builders, Government Departments, Public Sector Undertakings, Rotary & Lion's Clubs, Gymkhanas etc also come up and open Activity Centers, Separate Colonies, Convalescent Homes, Holiday Homes, Nana-Nani Parks etc for their Elders in various Areas.

### **Let Corporate World adopt Senior Citizens of an Area.**

There are many Senior Citizens, who are facing financial problems and some are not able to meet two ends meet. Big Corporate Houses can adopt an area of their choice after surveying the number & need of such Senior Citizens. Such elders can be given their monthly requirements of food, clothes and very essential necessities. Their services can be utilized in some way, as possible.

### **Let Shopping Malls etc adopt 5-10 Elders.**

Shopping Malls, Big Bazaars, Big Merchant Firms, Trusts etc can adopt 5-10 Elders for giving groceries & other essential requirements, clothing, medicines etc. Let each limb of Society come up to look after their needy elders.

### **General:**

- 4) All Associations of Senior Citizens should be recognized by Government and given powers to represent the grievances of Senior Citizens to all departments, civic bodies etc and given reply in reasonable time. Proper accommodation, grant etc may also be given.
- 5) Better free/affordable Elders' Homes, Separate Colonies for Senior Citizens with food, health, security, cultural etc requirements, more Activity Centres, Nana- Nani Parks, Convalescent Homes, Holiday Homes etc by Trusts, Builders, Corporate Sectors should be encouraged/made compulsory to certain extent and rewarded by some fiscal concessions.
- 6) As number of Senior Citizens is increasing day by day and their problems are not being tackled promptly, separate Electoral Constituencies on pattern of Graduate Constituencies may be given at Centre, State, Civic & Panchayats levels for their welfare as well as contributing to build democratic, plural and just society.
- 7) As financial position of Senior Citizens is not good, it is necessary to fix higher rate of interest for their investments.
- 8) More & more concessions for Senior Citizens are necessary in view of their limited financial resources.
- 9) Social atmosphere needs change for giving respect to Senior Citizens in various matters. Slogans in News Papers, Magazines, T.V. Channels etc may help. At present, separate ques (though implemented at very few places) are resented, separate seats in buses, trains are not vacated, no care of elders is taken at crossing roads by motorists even when light is red etc.

10) Good literature for encouraging Joint Family System, Respect to Elders etc is necessary.

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