

Sitting in the middle of the parking lot was a full-grown man with his socks and shoes off, hitting himself in the face and screaming. An elderly gentleman was trying his best to collect the socks and shoes and get him on his feet again. But the seated man, the much larger of the two, would not be budged.

It was clear to everyone that the man on the ground was mentally disabled, and the elderly man was his father. The onlookers didn't know whether to call for help, offer help, or politely walk away. They seemed relieved that a uniformed official was there to deliver them from their paralyzing confusion.

I immediately cleared the crowd and asked the father if he needed assistance. The elderly man explained to me that he had picked up his son for a day visit from the group home where he lived.

"I knew better than to go at it alone, but sometimes he does really well. I wanted to spend some time with him so I brought him to the mall to get him some new shoes. He was fine until we got to the parking lot," said the exasperated dad. "When he gets upset he takes off his socks and shoes. His name is Donald."