

Assumptions & Arrogance

By Karen Lynn

After another year winds to a close, I have often been moved deeply. The years, months, days and hours past through my heart and mind like a stamp stuck on paper.

It takes me back to all those moments and times that people's arrogance and assumptions held me back from what I was trying to do.

Because of my rebelish nature, I was not only able to survive but thrive. I was able to do a lot which people in power, thought was impossible. But it would be very naïve of me not to tell you of the extra effort I have had to spend because of what people in the twentieth century were taught to believe about my disability.

I can't help but think about these moments going around and around in my head when I reflect about how much time has had to go by. Time that I could have been contributing to a caring world- Time that could have healed all wounds by a simple gesture of acceptance- Time that could have carved out recognition for not just me, but for our whole community.

Instead, I have had to run up over and over again against the electric chair of official stupidity. Of official neglect- And, of voluntarily lowing of self!

I have had to beg time and again, as I have had to explain the obvious to every expert imaginable shape and size.

What I knew was never enough. It had to be done on their terms.

I was labeled and mislabel mentally retarded all because of an IQ test, and people in power who only pretended to know what they were doing.

Fifty-eight years have gone by. Fifty-eight years of sheer hell on earth. Fifty-eight years which I have smiled, grinned, and bared it, and made bearable. For what?

But who will give me my youth back? Who will give me the degree I was so worthy of? And, who will give me the job or recognition I have busted my buns for? Whom, I ask? Whom?

Why do I have to be tide to a stake for someone to gloat over? Why do I have to suffer for someone else's arrogance? Why did I have to waste my whole life away?