

Psychology and the Study of Sensibility

By
Karen Lynn

The greatest challenge that we all face within the disabled community, is the understanding of the psychological make up of those in authority with which we much deal with. Day in, and day out, throughout our lives, we encounter people whose understanding of our needs and abilities is very different than what they really are. So, a great deal of our time and precious energy is spent by bargaining and negotiating for the right to exist, live, and survive. We are the only group who must seek the permission and consent of experts for activities which any other sane and rational adult can undertake without question asked.

When I decided to attain my college education back in the middle seventies, I had a burning desire to quench my thirst for the knowledge I did not get in twelve years of normal schooling. To my self appointed guardians, this was absolutely crazy. My thoughts, to get an education, and self-direct my own life was dismissed, misdirected, and shelved, for someone else's idea of what seemed appropriate. These experts were determined and resolved to force me into their limited idea of passive mediocrity. This ordinary labeling was not my destiny. This ordinary labeling was going to get me as far as the couch. This ordinary labeling was supposed to stop me in my tracks. It was suppose to stop my self-governing will, my self-directed freedom and especially my morel independence. Their helpful advice was supposed to shape every aspect of my existence.

It took a law suit and years of waiting in unbearable agony to make my dream possible. Every trick in the book was used. Every ounce of strength was used, and every effort was made to push me to go too fast so I would emotionally and mentally quit. But I was stronger than that! I was stronger than they ever thought possible. And in the end, they wound up yielded to me. Although, my victory was not total! It was nevertheless permanent.

This pattern has happened to so many of us, in different aspects of our lives. But our iron will, and pure hearts have enabled our personal victories. They have enabled us to move forward. They have enabled us to have some sort of peace of mind. And, they have given us the ability and know-how to function in a certain way which has empowered us; even though they continually, subsequently try to assert

and impair our vision. I set my standard. I was confident throughout it all. Now it is your turn to set your bar.