

# Dolls in Power

By Karen Lynn

We have often noticed that the attitudes of the public towards people with disabilities can vary. We have not looked at our own attitudes towards the world and its impact. We haven't looked at what we do and what we say to contribute to these unfair, intolerant, chauvinistic, bigoted behaviors. We all deal with prejudice and outmoded ideas on some level or another. However, in some cases, it is far more direct and discriminatory than others. With some of us, it leads to an iron determination. Yet, in still others, it sadly leads to a desire where a person escapes into a safety net which they work, and operate the system only to run and control people, places, and things. These manipulations are very discreet, delicate, and impeccable. It isolates, all unto itself. And, it is all too easy, trouble-free, and effortless on the individual's part. That is why it is so very simple, and easy to believe what experts say to us.

Sometimes like an over-seeer on a slave plantation, a person can carve out a small niche of power over their peers. It is simple and painless because they have no morals, ethics or emotions. They are cold and detached. They lack from feeling. Many a times in my life, I have witness first hand these unfortunate events. They take place anytime, anywhere, in any given situation. It can happen in so many different ways. We must learn to be one step ahead, as well as very in tune. It is a counterfeit for real genuine attempt's to better one's self and one's situation. It is a phony, forged, bogus, sham to get something for nothing, or to take advantage of a person in a particular way, together with trying to erode someone's good nature. The two best examples I can think of occurred years apart, in totally different situations, and at totally different times; but reflect the same idea.

In many incidents, outsiders, (persons' or professionals') seemed to think they have a right to control what it is "we" are trying to do, say, or accomplish with our lives. They try to get their way at all cost.

Many years ago, when I was working in a transitional center, for the disabled with Cerebral Palsy, my boss not only kept trying to alter my working conditions, but, made fun of my personhood. He made enjoyable and entertaining remarks about my disability, only to remain in complete control, and have direct command and power over me. Slowly, one incident at a time, my boss began to impose unrealistic job duties on me. He began to act in a cruel and insulting manor. He didn't have

compassion, consideration, or any kind of a sincere, kind of sensitivity; let alone an awareness of how to act towards others. He also couldn't understand how important my work as a recreation director, and dance teacher was to me, nor, did he understand how valuable I was to his organization, the clients I worked with, or as a human being and a representative of the disabled community.

His determination for power to control me was at all cost, although, it cost him and the organization a very valuable employee, and taught them an expensive lesson.

It harks back, and reminds me of another time in my life when I was bullied by a disabled girl, whom I thought was a friend. What she wanted was deceitful. Her devious, disingenuous, and false-hearted attempts only wanted my beautiful, well kept doll clothes. Again, it was the same issue and subject matter. She was convinced that she had a right to have what she wanted while being straight faced and disrespectfully witty with me. She was only fourteen years old, yet she knew exactly what she wanted, how to get it, and how to control and orchestrate the situation. Her quick and scheming mind won me over in minutes. She was so powerfully hungry, for whatever these doll dresses epitomized, characterized, and represented on a deeper level, that she would attempt anything to get her way. She was very clever, bright, and brainy. So subtly smart- smart enough to influence and use me to profit in her own gain. She was exceptionally skillful and knew how to hunt and pray; by simply wearing me down.

This gal might have won me over that one particular day, and got the best of my doll dresses, but she didn't get me! She helped me all the more! She taught me some significant things about myself, about human nature, and man kind. She also taught me about myself. For that I am totally beholden to her. I am grateful beyond words. These have been just a few lessons in my life. While at the same time, they have shown me what type of person I am, and what type of strengths and weakness, I possess. These experiences taught me what types of attractive qualities, temperaments, and behaviors I hold and wish to develop and build upon further.

Long, long, long ago, I decided to take these teachings and turn them around. I decided to build upon the positive, even though at that given moment, I was angry, hurt, and frustrated. I decided long ago to take these lessons in stride, put them under my wing, and fly-