

#4

## Assessment

For the past two years or so, our daughter has gotten herself into tough, dicey situations that compel us (her parents) to live in a constant state of near panic or in a repetitive pattern of problem solving. It is exhausting. When you voluntarily place a person with disabilities into residential / work programs that are large bureaucracies, you begin to understand the military term FUBAR. I am appalled at how completely unhelpful the staff of her supportive living and housing organization has been over the past few years. In my observation, there seem NEVER to be any solutions, only restrictions. There are no people willing to step in and brainstorm a problem. But they are very good at blaming and scolding. We thought such a program would foster self-reliance, instead it has demanded reluctant compliance of our daughter. To no one's surprise except my own, this organization (which only exists to help the disabled) spends all its collective time herding, bossing and muscling them around. It breaks my heart to know that this is how she is being treated. The most egregious element in the structure of the place is that the smallest, most innocent mistake spins out of control. Every incident that might have been saved expediently by imaginative thinking or quick and generous response escalates within minutes into a dire, irreparable humiliation for the resident. One would think that the overall goal would have been exactly the opposite, that is, to have safeguards in place and alternate solutions for everything, second and third backup systems for everyone, so that any mistake is readily solved. These are People With Disabilities!

In a fragile community full of emotionally unstable young adults who revert to a childlike level of behavior when they are frightened or stressed, this bossy prison guard approach is utterly ineffective at it's best and dehumanizing at its worst .