

## A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Hi All:

We had our parent teacher interviews for our now in grade 11 son, G., last night. What a change of perspective from the teachers who had all but given up on him 4 years ago! When our son was in grade 7 we were told by a teacher that our son would be lucky if he could finish high school and would in all likelihood only be able to work at McDonald's for the rest of his life. They all felt he was lazy and unmotivated. The medical profession had also given up on him. We were told to expect less and accept that he would be on Ritalin in all probability for the remainder of his life. By the time we had our first encounter with what was to be a life changing experience, with the Hope Centre for NeuroEducational Development, G. was on 20 mg of Ritalin 3 times a day for what professionals identified as severe ADHD. He had also been labeled with notable Sensory Integration Disorder and a probable anxiety disorder. Failing academically, emotionally, physically, and socially, family life was dismal and quite dysfunctional to put it mildly. Nine months of program our son was off Ritalin, we celebrated with a "flushing of the pills down the toilet" ceremony. Last night we were told our son is continuing to show growth in independence and responsibility, with good work habits. He diligently does all his homework, studies for all exams and takes his classes seriously. Teachers have seen a great improvement. He is taking a grade 12 psychology course this semester, to date his grade point average is 91%. He did a remarkable job on an essay question on his psych exam, best by far in the class. His teacher said he has great insight related to the psychology classes and wonders if he should not be considering a career in this field.

Today we met with the career counselor and we discovered to our great delight that he is university material based on his grades. So much for working at McDonald's! Neurodevelopment has given us so much over the course of these last few years. G. did not for about 2 1/2 years. It was a tough time but I would not ever want to go back to where we were prior to Elizabeth Harms and her gifts of program activities. What we had then compared to what we have now is indescribable. For those professionals that say neurodevelopment places too much responsibility on the parents, expecting them to do program possibly 2-3 hours per day, well I say they have no concept of what it is to live with a severely dysfunctional child as we had too. Without doubt, I don't know if our son would be with us today, (depression was a real issue back before Elizabeth). Our son has a future, filled with choices. We have allowed him to reach for his potential. Our family life is what I had always dreamed it would be, G. will not be dependent on us for the rest of his life, his life is full of promise. What an exciting place for him to be now! With his life ahead of him, figuring out for himself what he wants to use his gifts for, deciding on a path.

I later asked him if he thought he wanted to go to university and he said he didn't know. He got a terrific website from the Career Counselor and he is going to spend time looking at all the possibilities. Pretty good for a kid who was originally destined to work at McDonald's the rest of his life, hey!!!! We have given him the chance, through

neurodevelopment, to have choices in his life not to be limited by the labels of his "learning disabilities." I use this word very loosely.

Program is not always easy but the changes it has made for our family are beyond anything we could have ever hoped for prior to The Hope Centre here in Saskatchewan. It was an answer to prayers, it gave us the ability to help our child which is what we had been asking professionals for, for many years to no avail. I hope that it does not sound as if I am bragging, although I sure am proud of our son and I guess I am bragging a little but I wanted to share what he has the potential to do in your lives, for your loved ones. It can be very hard when you are in the midst of it, but for us and for each of you there is a "Light at the end of the tunnel and no it is not an oncoming train." I took this from Elizabeth Harms, and I hope she doesn't mind as I am not plagiarizing but I can think of no other statement that best describes what neurodevelopment can do for us.

I guess what I am trying to say in a round about way, is what an incredible journey we have been on and continue to be on. It has been hard, filled with tears, frustrations, and doubts, but it has provided us with a remarkable recovery. We are thankful for Elizabeth and how she was placed in our lives. We are thankful for the recovery G. and us, his parents, have made in the course of these past few years. We are thankful for all the people that have been part of our lives. God has placed many incredible people at our disposal, to help our family, and for this we are grateful and humbled. We are thankful that we refused to believe what "the system" saw for our son, no future, no potential. We, as parent, need to look beyond what so many see-failure and limitations- and use our own eyes to see the potential that can be released in our children.

Although I have not been conversing on c-fop lately, more lurking, I have been silently reading and praying for your many needs. I just felt lead to share with you this celebration.

God Bless,

Sylvia.