

Marriage and Down Syndrome

By: Raquel Castaneda



I think a lot of time we forget that our youth with disabilities have the same needs, wants, and emotions as everyone else. They mature and grow up just like the rest of us do, although they do so in different ways and it may happen at a different pace, and marriage can be one of those wants and/or needs.

A lot of people have asked me about my brother, who has Down Syndrome, “Do you think he will ever get married?” At first, I immediately said, “I don’t know, he’s like a little kid.” I made this statement because I, unfortunately, viewed him a perpetual child. Even though he is growing up and is now sixteen, I did not want to see him as an adult in that sense. I sort of wanted to keep him that way and that was not correct in any way. I should want him to grow up and do things just like any other child. It is selfish of me to want anything less for him. As I begin to mature myself, I now realize and see how he is capable of anything, just like anyone else, even marriage.

Because, I was interested in this subject, I was doing a little research online about adults with disabilities getting married. That is when I came across a man with Down Syndrome named Sujeet Desai who is a great musician and is happily married. His marriage sparked others to write articles on the subject and one of those articles was written by a new mother of a little girl with Down Syndrome.

In the article she writes about how she felt when she found out about his marriage and the conversation she had about it with her husband. Her thoughts were, “But don’t you think there’s something a little strange? It’s like being happy that two middle schoolers got married.”

To be continued...



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I think it is this sort of mentality that haunts a lot of us. But it is not correct, whether you can see it or not, love knows no barriers. And in my opinion, it is a small minded and blind view on the subject, similar to the way I viewed it at first.

Her husband's response, on the other hand, was perfect, "I don't think so. There's a difference between intelligence and maturity. These two might not be as intelligent as most of the 20-somethings we know, but that doesn't mean they aren't mature enough to get married." I think that this is the sort of thinking that makes for good expectations and planning for the future.

It is not our place to decide what major milestones in life our loved ones with a disability can or cannot achieve. The only reason they know whether or not they can or cannot do something is because we tell them that. We are the ones that put the word cannot in their vocabulary. But our role is to encourage and do anything in our power to make sure they are given the same opportunities as anyone else, and to make sure we provide them with the proper supports to accomplish their goals.

To read the full article mentioned above follow this link: <http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/thinplaces/2010/07/down-syndrome-and-marriage.html>

To read about Sujeet Desai and his wife follow this link: <http://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=2354714&page=1>



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