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My first introduction to WW was in college in the early 90's (1990 -1992) where I was studying Rehabilitation Services. In one course, the instructor briefly discussed WW and the theory of Normalization. The entire program I was studying was based on the benefits of deinstitutionalization. I'm not sure, but looking back, I would guess that at least one instructor had attended a TI workshop as WW's work was infused within many of the courses.

I took my first workshop in 1995 in Calgary (Sanctity of Life). I was a front line worker at the time and I couldn't afford the workshop or accommodation. Bruce Uditsky covered my tuition and I remember sleeping on the floor of my brother-in-law's sister's apartment so that I could attend.

It's difficult to put into words, the impact this workshop had on me. I know that personally, I made some decisions and made changes in my life, based on what I learned. Professionally, it guided me towards safeguarding individuals who are devalued.

After that time, I received mailings from the TI. I remember wishing I could attend more workshops, but I didn't have the means to travel or pay tuition, even though the mailings always indicated that bursaries were available. I wish this wasn't the case but I guess I was too proud!

Although I received mailings, I don't believe I was fully aware of the TI until my connection to Carla Hamarsnes and Bill Forman in the mid 2000s while I was completing my degree at the University of Calgary. I credit Bill and Carla for encouraging me to continue my studies of the TI. Carla was instrumental in organizing the PASSING workshop, which I was allowed to use as a "practicum" in my degree program. In addition, I received credit towards my degree for SRV and Moral Coherency the first times I took them.

When I look back over my adult life, I feel strongly that there were positive forces at play to bring certain people into my life such as Tom Cain, Bruce Uditsky (in my early adult life), Carla Hamarsnes and Bill Forman as well as so many people with the Alberta Safeguards Foundation more recently. They were all instrumental in helping me get connected to the TI.

I've come to recognize that I have been blessed to have an authentic calling and connection to people with intellectual impairments. I would never have recognized this without the TI and WW's teachings. I truly feel blessed to have paid work that is coherent with my personal values and beliefs. I also feel very blessed to be connected to the TI and all the people associated with it.