



LOVING THE LESS LOVELY

The Foster Home Series

By ThinkJP.Com

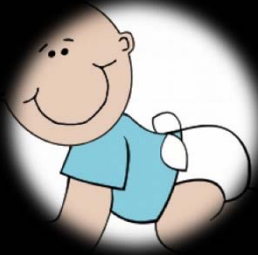
Copyright 2014 - All Rights Reserved



We had a total of 19 foster people live with us during the 15 + years we did foster care. Ranging from 3 to 80 years old, they were very different and yet alike in so many ways. Though we did some childcare, most of those years our home was designed for the Severely Mentally Impaired (SMI).

Life was NEVER dull! One young lady obsessed over being in love with one of our guys. Her obsession finally developed into a fantasy of "pretending" to be pregnant with his baby. She announced it to everyone she met. We tried to redirect her very active imagination but she would not be dissuaded. Her family insisted on a pregnancy test, which of course proved negative.





On more than one occasion we found her entertaining everyone in our home by having them choose names for the unborn baby. They all loved the game and were anxious for the day they could help with the new baby.

Then of course there was my uncle who was a real sweetheart most of the time. He served our Country in WWII and it left him with severe challenges. He could remember detailed information from years ago but couldn't remember what just happened five minutes ago.





My uncle suffered from a type of dementia and always thought he had just moved in, bless his heart. He would remember a shirt or a pair of glasses that he owned years ago and could trash his closet in no time looking for them. Sometimes out of his frustration, his anger would flare and he would take it out on the person nearest him.

Those days were a real challenge. He would get up in the middle of the night and gather up his belongings and hide them in various places throughout his room. Of course by morning he would forget that he had hidden them.

Once we searched all morning for his missing dentures before finding them between his mattresses. I thought he would never stop laughing at himself. He said, "I must be nuts to put them under there". Thankfully, he was pretty easy going and had no problem laughing at his own funny antics.



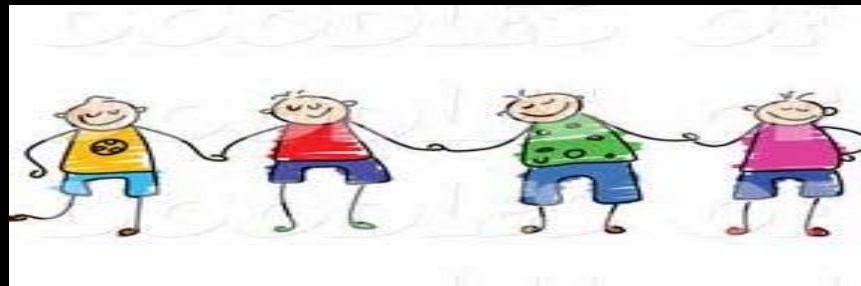
Once we were reported to Protective Services by an angry Mom. She complained that we had been locking her daughter in our basement. Of course once a complaint is made, an investigation is required.

The team of investigators found that there was no lock to the downstairs; second they learned the basement was a walkout to the lake; and third that we had a pool table, large TV, hot tub, and wet bar in the basement recreation area, which made it the "fun" place to be. The complaint was totally dismissed with their most sincere apologies for bothering us.



Apparently when this girl told her Mother she spent a lot of time in the basement, her Mom envisioned some sort of dungeon and assumed her daughter was being mistreated and forced to be there.

Yes, there was ALWAYS some type of drama happening while we were in the foster care business. We spent many hours in the courtroom before the judge during custody hearings, etc.



We were known as the home that took the "worst" cases in our County and worked wonders with them. Several of our people had been refused by other homes, but after Johnny, whom you can read about in "The Johnny Series", we usually were willing to at least TRY to help whomever was brought to attention. The judge valued our opinions and never made a judgment without speaking with us first.

One of our most pleasant and easy to love folks was a short little man with Downs Syndrome and a heart of gold. Often when he would go out with his family, he would return with treats for everyone in the foster home.



He LOVED to share. This little man loved folding the laundry and did an excellent job. When he finished folding a shirt it looked like it came from a professional laundry service.

When his sister brought him for the initial meet and greet, we explained to them that everyone in our home was given at least one chore so they would experience some ownership in the home and a sense of belonging. He was quick to inform us that he "didn't do windows or bathrooms". It was so adorable!

Special **NEEDS KIDS**



We are attracted to and amused by the mentally challenged whenever we see them in public. They are all the same! We have learned to look beneath the exterior and see into their hearts, and what we find there are some of the most loving souls we will ever meet.

A church member once bluntly blurted out that we should not bring our people to church because it made others uncomfortable. If only she could have seen their hearts like we did!



Whenever we took our foster family into the community, I was so often reminded of the lyrics of a song by our friends, Henry and Hazel Slaughter, the well known and now retired gospel musicians; "Let me see this world dear Lord as though I were looking through Your eyes".

It is so nice that we will all be covered with the righteousness of Christ when we go to Heaven so no one will have to feel uncomfortable by being near all the "special" folks that I'm sure will be there at the feet of Jesus.





The End