

A HOME OF ONE'S OWN

Krystal's Journey—A Mom's Perspective



Maddie, Karen, and Krystal

The other day I dropped off my adult daughter Krystal at her home. She lives on a busy, east end street, just blocks from the subway.

It was cold out and I sat in the warmth of my car as she struggled with the door key, fumbling with the latch, looking over to me anxiously then placing her big, pink purse on the ground so that both hands were free to unlock the cranky door. It opened, she shot me a glance of relief, waved goodbye and walked into the home she shares with three young women. "She can do it!" I thought as I watched her soldier on.

As the mother of an adult daughter with Down syndrome, these are powerful words that I find myself chanting again and again, especially over the past two years since Krystal moved into supported independence.

Planning and preparing for her move would never have happened without LIGHTS. I remember those first meetings with Laura Starret, the Facilitator who guided us from day one on our journey, so well. Krystal and I would stare at each other and Laura, gape-mouthed as she dropped bombs like "Exactly what kind of support do you need, Krystal?" or "What are you willing to let go of, Madeleine?"

It was a scary process, but LIGHTS had faith in us, holding our hands as we walked – no, climbed – through a very hard, uphill process. An apartment was found. Support was defined. Connections were sparked and honed between like-minded families. We interviewed, interviewed and interviewed potential mentors.

A million pieces were pulled together like a puzzle and the result is anything but cookie-cutter-easy yet LIGHTS has been with us every step of the way, assisting with the funding and innovative vision that has made our dream come true.

Meanwhile, Krystal and her housemates don't see themselves as anything other than the norm. They are four, very unique young women who laugh through meals together, squabble over household chores and struggle with the finicky front door.



Krystal opening her "finicky" front door.

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A gift to LIGHTS will help provide funding for those in need and seeking a home of their own.
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