IT 'S A NICE LIFE: MY EXPERIENCE WITH INCLUSION

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Abstract: I want to tell about my nice life, about my own dog, my car, my hobbies, my house, my study, my practical work etc. And I will tell about Professor Feuerstein, why we went to Israel, and how my life changed and what was the influence from Instrumental Enrichment in my life.

Hello to all off you.

My name is Peetjie Engels. I am 27 years old. I live in the most southern part of Holland, called Limburg. I have Down syndrome and I would like to show you how I live my life. A normal life just like every one of my age.

I live in my own house, together with my dog Takkie. My house has a sleeping room, bathroom, kitchen and living room. Upstairs is a guestroom. So when you want to visit me, you can sleep in my house. My house is next to the house of my parents. I live independent but with coaching.

Takkie is my dog. She is 7 years old. I learned her all, I am her boss. At night she always sleeps in my house and guards over me. Takkie is a so-called German pointer.

In my house I do the cooking, the cleaning, wash my clothes and iron them. I learned how to do the groceries and how to pay. At this moment a professional coach comes two times a week. She helps me organize the household.

With my own car I can drive to my practical work and to most of my hobbies and the shops. It is not allowed to drive on the expressway with my car, but that is no problem.

Of course I have hobbies and I like to do sports.

1 This text has been presented by the author at the 4th Network Conference of the Inclues Network, at the Karlovy University in Prague, October 30th 2005. English is her second language. The text has only been corrected with a spelling checker, but is left as it is. Peetjie was the first person with Down syndrome to obtain a regular high school certificate in the Netherlands, i.e. a diploma of caretaker in social care for the elderly and children. We include her full text in this issue, because we wanted to give a voice to people with a cognitive disability themselves. (editor’s note)