

Perspective

By: Nick Cibel, brother of JFGH resident Ted

My name is Nicholas Cibel, born on March 10, 1964, exactly four years after my older brother Ted. Ted has been a resident in the Sondra and Howard Bender Home for the last thirty-four years and is an amazingly fit Down-Syndrome adult who has thrived his entire life. I credit much of his success not only to his JFGH support, but to my family for raising him in a loving, often humorous, and especially compassionate home.

Fortunately, Ted has been able to perform most of the basic daily routines of life, enabling us to include him in a plethora of physical activities. He played many different sports throughout his childhood, even competing in the Special Olympics. As with anyone, mental and physical health is critical to a long life span. And in Ted's case, his strong health in both aspects has allowed him to outlive many of his contemporaries.

From my earliest recollections, my parents always guided our family in regards to perspective. If I ever complained, they quickly reminded me of how fortunate and wonderful my life was. It wasn't always easy to see, especially after returning from a physical altercation with some of Ted's bullies, who I never tolerated. Throughout my childhood, I fought literally and figuratively to protect my brother from all manners of ignorance, but these battles helped me become a more compassionate individual, for which I am eternally grateful.

During my young adult years, I was in charge of the community service club in my high school and volunteered for many events that further taught me invaluable life lessons. I am extremely proud to say that I have passed on these lessons to my children, giving them the perspective they need to appreciate their wonderful lives. All three of them in turn have volunteered throughout their youth and continue to do so as young adults.

My family is truly blessed to have Ted, and Ted is in turn blessed to be a part of JFHG. His involvement has prolonged his amazing life and given him the platform to continue to thrive. Thank you to all the volunteers, family members and contributors to this exemplary foundation.

If you have a sibling story you'd like to share, please email bshapiro@jfg.org.



Nick and Ted Cibel



Nick, Ted and Dean Cibel



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