

# **Reflection on the past 25years**

**Many times I have wondered what life would have had in store for me if it had not been for the birth of this amazing person, (my daughter Babli) who has taught me to be what I am today... a happy positive person .**

**Even as a child I remember reaching out to the less fortunate kids in my neighbour hood and, try to please them by giving them my pencils or my erasers.**

**My father constantly dinned it into my head that he wished me to be a medical doctor and do free service.**

**When I completed my Doctorate and got the label of a doctor i felt I had come one step closer to his dream. When Babli entered our world I never realised that one day I would be able to serve the people by helping them to free themselves from the enormous guilt of having brought a child with challenges into the world. It seemed difficult to understand this feeling that was projected by most parents, of rejection!!!**

**When Babli was presented to me with all her challenges I do not remember a day that I felt weighed down or afraid of raising this child.**

**A child is a child and every child will work to their fullest potential if they are given the opportunity.... However one must also understand their limitations and guide them to overcome them.**

**During my counseling sessions, whenever I reach out to the parents I often wonder, “ is it so difficult to accept this child?” Sometimes I believe that not having the internet and the numerous sites was an advantage as I took one day at a time and allowed my child to develop at her own pace. At other times I realise that but for my website not many parents would have sought me out.**

**Most times I feel the parents are feeling sorry for themselves and their questions are always the same, “Why me?” Feelings of guilt, shame, rejection, and many feel they have sinned and this is a punishment . To me, If this is His way of punishing then I do not mind this punishment again and again. The pleasure I have had in raising Babli can never be equated to raising the so called “normal” kids.**

**I find the same questions racing through the minds of every parent and with the 4300 parents that I have reached out to and spent time with I have learnt a little more, and they have been my teachers and have actually given me a solution to all my problems.**

**With every parent I have envisaged different level of pain, tolerance, levels of acceptance, and with some it seems like the best gift from God. I have cried with the parents, laughed with them, appreciated every single achievement of their child, been with them during medical complications, guided them through schools and into professional careers.**

**What a life .....yes 25 years of working and living with people with Down Syndrome has made me what I am ... As a good friend once said “A smile is a light in the window which tells all, that there is a caring, sharing person inside” ....**

**What made me feel really proud was when my son presented me with a smiling face stone sculpture for always smiling!! Thank you son for being there....**

**- Rekha Ramachandran.**