

My long way from the institution to the shared apartment and from the shared apartment to my own apartment

Part 3: The time in the shared apartment

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Our shared apartment was super wheelchair accessible.

I could even bring down the kitchen cabinets with the push of a button.

I had my own room right next to my boyfriend's.

We had two bathrooms for four of us.

We were able to buy what we wanted to eat ourselves.

Only in the evening was there an attendant.

I liked the freedom.

I became more and more sure that I could solve all the problems.

At work I often held courses for other people with learning difficulties, where we talked about what is a good supporter and what is a bad supporter.

Also, at the Independent Living Centre Innsbruck (where I work),

I noticed how my colleagues all have assistants.

As time went by, there were more and more conflicts in the shared apartment, and I often had a hard time getting along with the attendants.

They often had a different opinion than I did.

I didn't want to be told what to do.

It is very difficult to assert yourself against attendants.

So the desire for more freedom arose in me again.

And secretly I dreamed of having my own apartment.

In the beginning, I kept talking to my boyfriend to see if he could imagine living with me in an apartment.

That was very important to me.

For me, my boyfriend is something very special.

He is always there or I can call him at any time when I'm not doing so well.

He can often give me a good advice with my problems.

He is always honest and open with me.

It is great for me and I don't like to leave my boyfriend after many years.

We appreciate each other very much and also more and more.

My boyfriend liked to move out with me.

So we made an appointment with a counselor from the Centre for Independent Living.

Together with her, we imagined what it would be like if my boyfriend and I ever moved in together as a couple.

So we became more precise.

But for my boyfriend it was still too early.

His family determined that he couldn't move out.

They were too worried.

Besides, he had a guardian. That was a big problem.

Alone I did not want to move out.

But then my friend said to me,

I should first move into the apartment alone.

At the beginning I didn't like the idea.

It somehow made me very sad and I had a bad feeling.

I meant that then our love relationship would suddenly break up.
But my boyfriend kept encouraging me and assuring me that he likes me so much that he doesn't want to have another girlfriend.
This would not change even if I moved out to my apartment.
He also doesn't even like to let me go anymore,
in fact he wants to marry me. But that's just too soon for me.

So my boyfriend supported me
that I should finally start looking for an apartment.
And he promised that he would visit me at any time

That's when I threw myself into work.
I asked my colleagues at the Centre for Independent Living
if anyone could help me find an apartment and also help me plan it.
After all, everything had to be wheelchair-accessible.
I had to think about the door widths and the electric door opener.
I needed a driveway to the apartment and a parking space with a power outlet for my electric vehicle and my friend's electric vehicle.
The patio door had to be easy to open
and there had to be no slippery tiles in the bathroom.
Electric blinds and much more were on my list.

Then I went to the City of Innsbruck.
I took the third apartment they offered me.
Since then, I have been the proud tenant of my own apartment.