



MISSION MOMENTS

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The Best is Yet to Come

Change, though sometimes daunting, can bring great and unexpected opportunities to grow.

Karen knows all about change and opportunity. Before receiving services from Tangram, Karen lived in an institution where she was given few choices, had no independence, and relied on her caregivers to do everything for her.

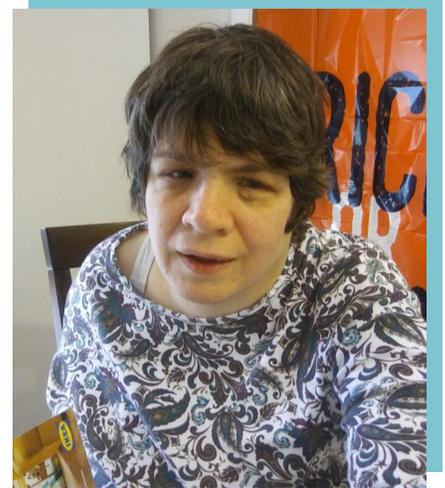
As a result, Karen came to Tangram with limited experience with the outside world. She had been given very few, if any, opportunities to get out into the community, and she was hesitant to leave her new home, posing an ongoing problem for Tangram staff members who needed to take her to medical appointments or other community outings. Furthermore, Karen is non-verbal. Her time in the institution had been colored by isolation and because of this, she had developed few communication skills.

Though faced with these challenges, Karen's support team at Tangram remained positive that she would overcome these barriers. Fast forward to today and Karen is a completely different person. Whereas she wouldn't leave the car before, she now goes out for lunch every Thursday, goes to the park, shops for small items at the convenience store, and even does small chores around the house. She also uses sign language to communicate and is more engaged with people—she smiles and makes eye contact.

Perhaps the best example of how far she has come is her reaction to a visit from her dad. "She looked out the window, ran outside, and gave him a big hug. He couldn't remember the last time she did something like that and was amazed," said Kim, Karen's Program Manager.

In just two-and-a-half years, Karen has come a long way from where she started and seems to be happier than ever before. "I can see so much more coming for her as time goes on. She is so funny and is really smart," reports Kim.

More change is on the horizon for Karen—she is preparing to move into a new house and will also gain a new roommate. Her story shows the dangers of making assumptions about someone's ability and the wonderful outcomes that can be achieved when an individual is supported and encouraged to direct their own life. We look forward to watching Karen continue to flourish and grow in the years to come.



Karen, a magazine lover, flips through a new addition to her collection

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