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INCLUSION NEWS

COVID-19 Awareness

It's September. This time of year many would be going back to school, finishing school or transitioning into employment/community involvement. These times are different but also the same. With many places and organizations in line with stage 3 Protocol: Safe Travel, gathering with friends family & co-workers we need to continue these safety precautions. As I've watched and listened to current events, I've noticed the trend backwards. This is due to the end of summer and wanting to travel or visit with those before life resumes. I myself have felt this desire and as much as I like many, want to live life as it was before, that's simply not the case. This pertains to many young folks from 19 & up. I want everyone to know that as trapped as we may feel, as lonely as we may get or as anxious as it may be to not know where we fit right now, it'll be okay. There are safety protocols in place to help ensure this step forward and in many ways I root with those that are excited. I admit in the beginning, as we began the learning process, I was skeptical and not as adjusted as I am now. In the last couple of months I've made sure that if I venture out, I have my mask and sanitizer. These have become my two primary importances as of late. It has helped to stem my fears and heightened the feeling of safety and comfort for others. One way we could look at it as a slight towards us or we can choose optimistic thinking. The way I've helped to transition my thinking around wearing a mask is to pretend you're a super hero. Or find one that speaks to you as an accessory like earrings or a tattoo. That may sound crazy or far fetched, but I feel in sharing this story can spark a trend. I truly believe that we all can be resourceful and creative and that we'll overcome this. It may take longer or feel out of place, but things have a funny way of falling into place when least expected. I don't mean to try and sway any of my readers or to feel as though I'm an authority figure. I in many ways, relate to a lot of folks. We like to know what's next or that we are in control and we are. It's been my dream to see that people from all walks of life can enjoy the amenities that go with any age group. From kids to adults. So I hope that in reading or listening to this, we can all make the choices needed to be better. For ourselves and others. It isn't always fun to hear about something over and over or to feel like it's a dark cloud hovering over us. But if I have any consolation to give it is that all the folks I know in BC as well as you, can be successful. Please stay aware, please stay mindful and most of all, stay you. I wish I could predict the future but until then, stay strong, stay healthy and know you are loved.

Being an Individual in HomeShare

Back in 2013, as I graduated the previous year I transitioned from MCFD care to CLBC. Over the years it has been quite an experience. I had the ability to choose where I live and with who & as well as the service provider I felt best suited my aspirations. At the time, I wasn't sure where I fit or how I would belong. This was large part due to not having yet found my identity of self. I thought for a long time that music production and creation would be my primary calling. As it turns out it was beyond that. The idea formulated from my folks being foster parents, raising kids, teaching and learning together as a unit and feeling comfort in knowing it was a family effort. I too wanted to bring that same kind of care and attention to those around me and I found that through advocating. It has opened so many doors and moments in time that will stick with me. It's provided me the chance to create my own destiny of sorts. What do I mean? Well, in the last year 2019 up till now I've been involved with many things. Podcasts, Welcome Workshop Mapping for COVID-19 safety and sharing with the public on all these experiences. All these things couldn't be as possible if I didn't have the security in where I live, how I live and with who. That brings me to Homesharing. Many fellow advocates and individuals have or are thinking of this option. It provides the chance at taking life's next steps. It can be daunting at first and nerve racking but there are many that want the best for you just as I do. It takes patience and finding the right fit and that's okay. Some enjoy the sanctuary of family life and others may like to be more independent and geared to their own drum and that's okay too. Often times, things I've experienced or shared isn't as well known depending on which side of me is out there. Reason being that as much as I've been part of a spotlight of success or involved with growth, I'm quite private. And I've learned that many others out there want to be heard and acknowledged. One of my biggest goals this year and the tail end of last, was to ensure this happens. That's why I've been pushing for extended reach outs and inclusion. I have a feeling that there are others out there that can share and be afforded the best life has to offer. I myself wouldn't have found that without taking chances. It took a long time to grow out of my shell, to feel that I mattered or was important. But with the right supports and connections through CLBC and HomeSharing, it's opened that door and kept many others open. I may not be a revered expert or highly educated with a degree, but I do have a degree in caring. So I hope that this story can help inspire and motivate and cheer on those that may be starting the journey.

