



Rebecca and Anna – Their Friendship

Transcript

(Onscreen title: A young woman with her life to give)

Anna: I really didn't start to get to know Rebecca until I had committed myself to being part of Spirit Movers full-time with Rebecca and being her dance partner.

(Video of Spirit Movers dancing)

Anna: We dance together every Friday, and I think that keeps us really connected. I didn't come on Fridays just to fill in my hours for the day and push Rebecca around in a wheelchair-- that's not why I came. It was because I loved to dance with her, and she loved to dance with me.

You know, I think about it now and people ask me about my relationship with Rebecca-- "Oh, how does she speak?" And "How do you communicate?" Those are the same questions I was asking.

Susan Beayni (Rebecca's mother): If she's in situations that she loves and is with people that she really respects, she shows her joy, and likewise, if she's not happy she makes it quite clear.

Anna: I guess once all of that initial uneasiness about her care and her physical needs, once I learned about that, it was easy to let go and just start seeing Rebecca for who she was and seeing her joy and realizing that she has so much to give me in a real relationship that wasn't one-sided anymore. It wasn't that I was providing care for Rebecca. She was giving me something wonderful, a gift of herself.

My time with Rebecca is a little different than when I'm with other friends. I can be totally silent with her, just lying somewhere still, quiet, and it feels like we've had this amazing conversation.



I remember when we tried the subway for the very first time, and we hopped on the bus and it was a struggle in itself, and we got onto the subway and Rebecca was loving every second of it. As soon as the subway came out from underneath a dark tunnel and came into the light in Rosedale, Rebecca just lit up and was beaming and just really experienced that moment of the darkness into light. And I looked around, and no one else saw what Rebecca saw. Everyone else was sitting in the subway with their nose in the newspaper or whatever and no one experienced that same joy that she did.

Narrator: Webster's defines teaching as "to give to another knowledge or skill that one has oneself." Rebecca has earned her profession. She is a teacher. The course is life. We are all enrolled. Now it's time to listen.

Anna: I always joke that Rebecca should be the one to get my social work degree instead of me. She's influenced the way I look at people and the world, the way I look at what I want to do with my life, my career. She's definitely influenced my continuing my spirituality and practicing my faith.

(This video is extracted with permission from the longer video "Revel in the Light: The Story of Rebecca Beayni," by Masterworks Productions. Copies available from beayni@sympatico.ca)

