

Hope in Action

I am Tracy Thresher and I am here today to type about dearly rewarding work as an advocate and mentor. First I want to share my thoughts on typing to communicate and having a voice. I have been communicating by typing since 1990 and was one of the first people in Vermont to be introduced to it.

Not being able to express myself was like being in a world of silence. I couldn't tell people what I liked and didn't like. People thought that I didn't understand what was being said to me. It was frustrating and made me angry and I withdrew.

The experience of the world looks different from my experience. Most people take their ability to talk for granted and I take my inability to talk quite seriously. I live with it everyday – it is always there each time someone wants to read my thoughts.

The impact of learning to speak up and have a voice has been quite meaningful for me. I have typed life goals and dreams that have actually come true. This would never have happened without typing.

Hope is essential for dealing out success. When I first met Kyle I felt his despair and anguish with time lost - he did not have hope. He came to a typing to communicate workshop I was helping to do. Kyle could not enter the room that first day and stayed downstairs the whole time. On the next workshop he came in the room but stood in the back the whole time and on the third day he sat with his team.

The next year Kyle hit the road running. Thoughts that had been trapped inside for years had a place to go. Letting out lost thoughts is moving out of despair into life and fulfilling life's hope.

One thing I was able to help Kyle do was present to his class about who he is and autism. The audience was able to hear first hand about autism. Getting the information like that is essential for true understanding of autism and its effect on us.

So please have hope and find your voice and with a strong voice you can move from anguish and lost time darkness into a world of fun and life.

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