

Disabled doors

continued from page 8...

workplace is unaccommodating, or they're afraid that the employers will simply say no. If you've ever watched the prime time news magazine shows using hidden cameras, you'll see it's a proliferate act. This fear discourages those looking for work, employers are less likely to accommodate the handicapped, and the cycle perpetuates.

Now expecting many lines of work to be handicap-friendly may be unrealistic. Certainly you won't see many carpenters in wheelchairs or blind crane operators. But how much physical ability does it take to sit at a computer kiosk or answer phones? It reminds me of that commercial where that woman is telecommuting from home, invoicing while still in her nightgown. Sounds like a pretty stress-free life, but she may have inadvertently been taking away a computer which could have gone to a paraplegic, while she would have to hump her lazy butt to the office just like everyone else.

Also a problem is the distribution of disability pension, a system so flagrantly abused it could be bankrupt within years. If a worker is ever hurt on the job and he may be getting up there age-wise, he may decide to fake a more serious injury and ride out the disability pension until his CPP kicks in. It's a very common practice and more prevalent in Eastern Canada. The amount of disability pension receivers has tripled since 1987, and is defrauding a system designed to aid those who truly need it.

Right now it costs™ forty times as much to support someone with a disability than it would to retrain them and help them find jobs. We need to encourage these people out of the woodwork, and pressure the Human Rights Commission to enforce the laws in this country more stringently.

Most importantly it takes a bit of

common sense from the everyday people, even if it includes not pressing a button to have a door majestically open for you. Being stupid is not a handicap; it is a purported act. Is it okay to park in a handicapped parking space? No, so why is this permissible?

As I write this, I am sitting behind the security desk at the Killam library. A few minutes ago a young man on crutches, not a permanent handicap but a disability nonetheless, was trying to open the door to get out. A woman steps up to the door, opens the door all the way, steps around the young man, and lets the door crash on him. Would it have killed her to wait five seconds and hold it open for him? People, we have to open a few doors.

ALAN LEBLANC

AIDS

continued from page 8...

Perhaps one of my greatest mentors is the Canadian Jean Vanier. In his book, *Images of love, Words of Hope*, he discusses how merely being present with people says a great deal about a person. "You are important; you are precious; you are beautiful; you have something to say; there is a light shining in you and that light is something that gives me life." These words are true of all people. Why do we believe this? Our role-model, Jesus Christ, first showed us — he did not frown on the sick or the outcasts of society; rather he came to earth to show love and compassion to these very people. We can only try and imitate that example.

MIKE BULTHUIS
Dal Christian Fellowship

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