

I AM Ryan Gerhold – Age 34

My History: Normal at birth – meningitis at 9 mos left me brain damaged resulting in OCD, Anxiety, Seizures, ADD and moderate intellectual disability

MY LIKES:

My girlfriend and going out with her
Movies, Restaurants, Concerts, Live shows, the beach
Sleeping with my dog, Jax
Hanging with family, especially mom
Helping around the house
Being able to decide who works for me as staff
Staying busy

WAS RESIDENTIAL in a group home for many years – discovered neglect and abuse. I cried a lot, felt unsafe. Never knew who was going to be taking care of me. Did not get to see my girlfriend or go where I wanted. Many nights I had no lights in my room or toilet paper in my bathroom or milk for my morning cereal. My roommate and some staff were often mean to me. No one was listening!

Self Direction is important to me because I am

1. **Allowed to manage my DDA budget** and decide where/how the money will be spent
I go to **CAMP** three times a year and have **mileage** for staff to take me places
2. **Select own staff** – eliminating anxiety about who is going to take care of him
3. **Able to hire family as paid staff** which makes me feel **SAFE** If I couldn't do this, my mom would be working more outside the home instead of being with me
4. **Plan my own day.** Have a more meaningful day.
5. **Staff is more Personal Support** staff instead of the "one to one" They can take me to visit my girlfriend, friends, sports events and go anywhere I want. They keep me safe and clean



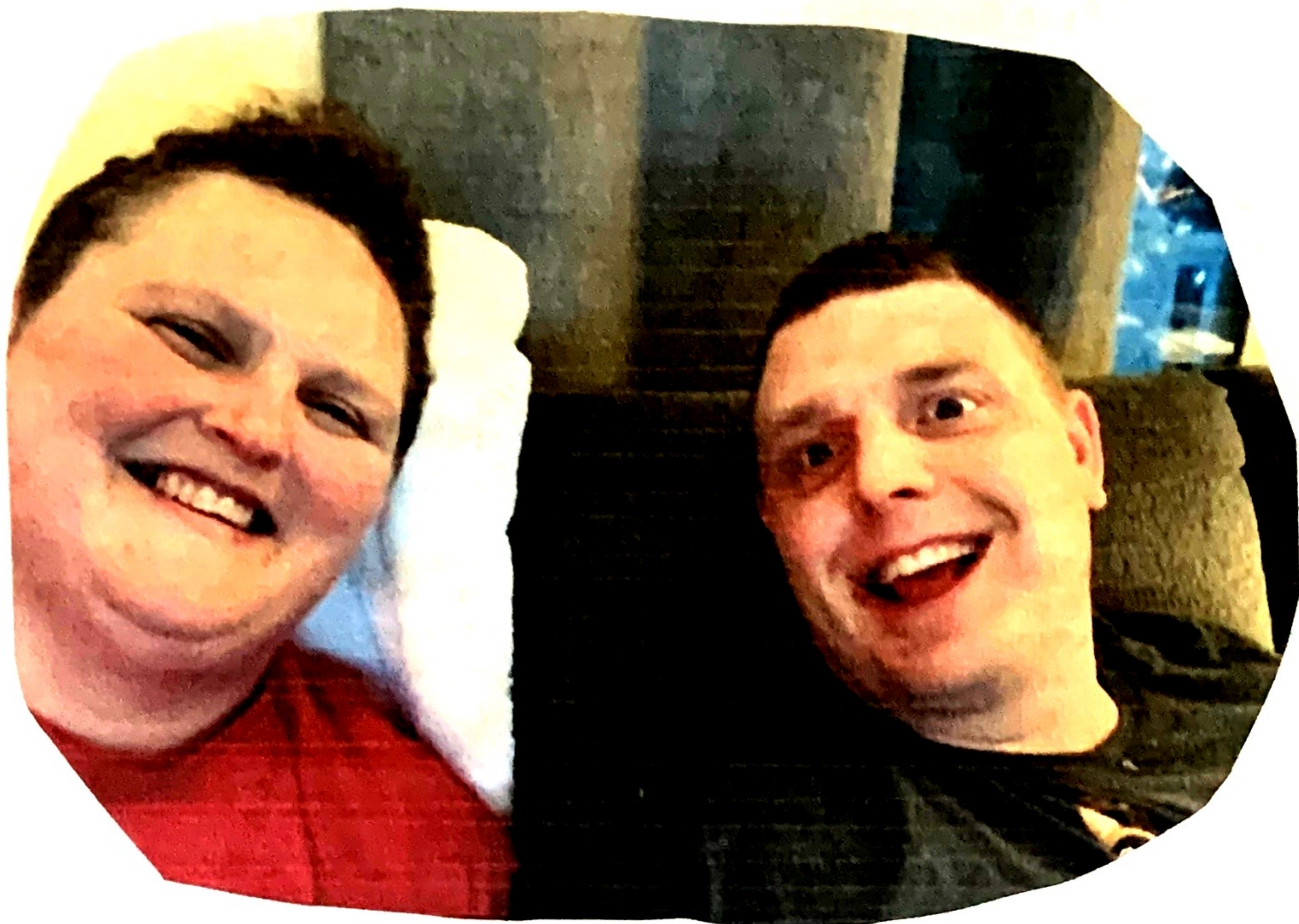
Running Hare Cookies with Santa with my family

Watching trains at FLAT IRON FARM



Christmas Eve Dinner with my Girlfriend Wanda





Enjoying time with
my personal support
staff!

xxoo
Ryan Gerhold