



*BLINDNESS: LEARNING IN NEW DIMENSIONS, INCORPORATED*

## Operation: Freedom Bell



**LET FREEDOM RING!**



“There is life after blindness and getting good training is the key for independence and a full life.” - Mark, a Marine veteran and graduate of BLIND, Incorporated.

The staff at BLIND, Incorporated agree, and can prove it. Just as with military training for hostile territory, living as a blind person isn't learned in a week or two. It takes time, effort, and commitment. We know because those who designed the program are successful blind people, and most of us who teach in the training program are blind as well.

Members of the military are highly trained, strongly motivated, and used to getting things done. If loss of vision interrupts a service person's career, that interruption affects not only the person's general sense of control for his or her life but the can-do spirit. The staff at BLIND, Incorporated will call upon that motivation to get back your freedom and independence.



BLIND, Incorporated provides a comprehensive residential group and one to one adjustment to blindness training course designed to get the job done. Until recently, only civilians were eligible for this program. The Department of Defense has now decided to give members and veterans of the armed forces the same choice civilians have to an array of service models.



BLIND, Incorporated offers you the opportunity to get back control and independence of your own life. You put in the time and effort, and we'll match you, step for step, until you walk confidently into your own future, believing in yourself.



## **Mastery Takes Time**

Freedom and independence in countries around the world didn't happen in a week or a month. People worked to achieve both of these by learning skills and perspective, guided by others who possessed knowledge. This is also true with blindness which affects everything a person accustomed to using vision will do.

Some non-visual skills can be achieved more quickly than others, and achievement of all depends on the overall attitude, the "can-do" approach to vision loss which enables re-entry successfully into life.

Our students typically stay six to nine months before their highest potential is reached. However, adjustments can be made depending on one's medical or other conditions.

The coordinator in conjunction with other staff and medical professionals will make this decision.

Attitude merges with mastery of individual skills to yield the result: over 80% success rates as measured by the rest of the world's standards - higher education or employment.

## **Master What?**

BLIND, Incorporated schedules a full day of classes every weekday to teach and drill and pass on proficiency in skills of blindness:

Reading and writing *Braille*: The Braille code and Braille writing devices enable a person to take notes label household items, give a speech by reading an outline or word-for-word. With vision, people use the printed word and ink pens.

We use Braille.

Change of model, same result.

A long white cane enables a person to walk safely.

EVERYWHERE! *Travel Class* will enable you to travel safe and independently crossing streets safely, maneuvering through airports, and navigating crowds in shopping malls, are just a few examples. We'll add using your ears and, most importantly, your head to keep track of where you are and where you're going. We'll drill and drill and drill so the skill becomes part of how you walk. Safe? You bet! We'll teach and drill so that your reflexes will protect you without conscious thought.



We do it every day, and you can too!

Using *computers*: You can use computers efficiently by replacing mouse clicks with keyboard commands. For example, this brochure was written by a blind person using a computer with speech output and no mouse. Change of model, same result.



*Home Management and Industrial Arts*: Cooking, shopping, power tools, managing finances - all these are routine for people without vision who have learned non-visual methods for doing them safely and efficiently. Change of model, same result.

Positive Philosophy promotes positive results. The real problem with blindness is not the lack of eyesight, but the lack of information that exists; blindness can be reduced to a mere nuisance. We discuss this, and many other blindness related topics on a regular basis during our *Seminar Classes*.

Adventure Learning: Activities are scheduled periodically such as dog sledding, canoeing, horseback riding, rock climbing, and bowling, and are a vital component in gaining confidence and practicing those skills taught and discussed in the classroom



### **Mission Achieved**

While we're teaching you skills, we'll be working with you in CareersClass exploring careers, planning further education, and supporting those decisions you'll start to make about the rest of your life. Within a year of graduation, over 80% of our graduates are either earning college degrees or working. A small sample of some jobs held by blind people include:

- Dispatcher
- Lawyer
- Carpenter
- Mechanic
- Electrician
- Cabinet Maker
- Electrical Engineer
- Chemist/Scientist
- College Professor
- Public Relations
- Firearms Safety Instructor



We'll connect you with other professionals if needed to assure you receive the services you need and are entitled as a veteran. These services may include: home instruction, financial, psychological, family education and/or support, and we'll continue to focus on getting you ready to go back to living a full and productive life.

### **Interested?**

Give us a call or come for a visit. Know a friend or family member who could benefit? Let us hear from you.

We're here to serve active-duty personnel who experience sudden vision loss and veterans who undergo gradual or sudden vision loss. Our goal is to enable those who have lost vision to complete their mission. We'd like to partner with you in order to help you achieve freedom and independence.

We'll be right here when you call.  
Please contact Charlene Guggisberg  
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**"The real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight. The real problem is the misunderstanding and lack of information that exists. If a blind person has proper training and opportunity, blindness can be reduced to a physical nuisance."**

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