

REFLECTION

RESEARCH

The research is an example of how to use the graduation project, the master track, and the master program and combine them into one meaningful project. Meaningful in a way not only for the built environment but meaningful on a deeper social level. Where the research and project can mean something for the lives of people with Down Syndrome.

The study was a great starting point for the design, but the method used for the research (especially the fieldwork) made the design more effortless because you get to know the people you are designing for. The approach is personal, but the outcome will be the same when addressing the exact fieldwork locations and speaking to the same people. Even when someone goes to different places, the result might still be the same to some extent since the four locations I have visited also show overlapping argumentation.

The questionnaire for the parents of children with Down Syndrome could have provided more in-depth information. Unfortunately, this questionnaire couldn't be taken into the research due to the lack of responses.

Looking back at my final design, I can see the guidelines in each plan, section, and diagram. Every (sometimes unconscious) argumentation for designing the building as I did, where from the research and fieldwork experiences. Another thing that stood out was that most guidelines also apply to other target groups, such as older people, which makes it interesting to look further into this design direction on a broad scale, mixing target groups.



Workshop Day @ Thomashuis



Playing Rummikub @ Leemberg



Going to the market @ Brownies & Downies

PERSONAL

While starting the research, I knew quickly that my sources would be personal experiences and case studies since there was no in-depth literature about Down Syndrome, their way of living, and how architecture could influence that. This made the "How" clear from the start, but also unsure because I depended on supervisors, case studies, and living facilities who would need to take me into their lives to get the arguments I needed to provide a better living environment for people with Down Syndrome.

This approach made it more tangible for me to experience the lives of people with Down Syndrome, going to their work and seeing how much independence they have when in the right environment with the right connections and supervisors. The way all the residents accepted me into their lives made this research more exciting and grateful. The guidelines that were conducted from the study were a helpful tool for making the design most fitting.

The most valuable thing I will take from this year is that designing for people with special needs and especially being accepted by them into their surroundings gives more meaning to the design outcome. It has pushed me to new limits to make the research and the building more meaningful and personal for them.