

## **Disability and Family Blog Post #1: Juan Ortega, Shana Heath and a Talk About Marriage**



Question: I hear you two are getting married. How did that come about?

Shana: I met him in relationship class. And now he calls me...

Juan: Every night.

Shana: Every night

Juan: Tell them where we go

Shana: We go to class. We'll try to be there.

Question: Anything you might find challenging or difficult about getting married, that maybe you wish could change?

Juan: The budget

Question: So what's been happening with your budget?

Shana: He's got to be less...He spends too much and then asks me for money and I say, "What happened to all your money baby?" And he says, "I spent it."

Juan: [Laughs]

Daniel: One of the things that people worried about if they get married is that the government will cut the payments in half if someone who is on SSI and has a disability marries someone else with a disability that is on SSI. What do you think of that policy?

Juan: I tell them, why are you cutting our Social Security? I can't lose my Social Security.

Question: Anything else you'd like to add before we wrap up?

Shana: I wish that they wouldn't mess with our Social Security and our Medicaid.

Juan: It just makes it harder.

Shana: Yeah. It's a really big issue.

*Juan Ortega and Shana Heath are self-advocates and participants in the New Mexico Center for Self Advocacy Program*

*The questions were asked by Program Manager Daniel Ekman*

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