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Addict In Recovery: We See People Get Better At Carrier, I'm Living Proof Of That

Tuesday, December 6, 2016

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Addict In Recovery: We See People Get Better At Carrier, I'm Living Proof Of...

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Transcript:

Keith: You know, as a person that went through the addiction, you know, I came from a good family, you know I had every opportunity in the world to do anything. You know, I was going to be a baseball player, I had a scholarship to Rutgers, you know all kinds of things, dreams I had. You know I got an injury, painkillers, next thing I know I'm sleeping under a bridge in Manhattan. You know so, I'm an advocate for recovery of recovering addicts and I think also recovering addicts need to go out there and show that we do recover. You know people do get better. And we see that here at Carrier. And I think that's why we're so passionate on what we do because we see people get better. You know, I'm living proof of that, we have a few other people that are living proof of that you know as well as you know, the problem that we're facing today. You know I'm from Hamilton Township and I've seen my community get ravaged by this epidemic, completely ravaged. I also work for another nonprofit called City of Angels, which you probably heard about, and we run solely off donations you know, and we help people try to get into treatment and you know, take care of some issues, all free of charge, you know all volunteers you know. We get to see it from different perspectives, I get to see it from different perspectives because they get people that are uninsured you know there and have nothing and then I come here and I deal with people who are insured the problem is that they both get the least amount of care that any other disease would get. You know our average stay is yeah, six days, people get off a taper, they go out and they're still sick. And then we wonder what happened. You know Medicaid, I've actually had people die waiting for beds. I had a kid, last year, 19 years old, waiting for a bed, they told him three weeks to get into a [inaudible] program.

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Three weeks for a heroin addict is a death sentence, you know. And he didn't make it. He had two weeks you know. And I got a call from his family you know. I'm so happy to have you here you know, because it definitely shows and will kill some of the stigma on this issue you know and I hope we can move forward and try to understand where we can put this funding to help nonprofits like Carrier, to help people get to the position that I'm grateful to be in. You know Carrier took a chance on me, you know I have the greatest record in the world, I got the state treatment if you would like to call it that but Carrier you know gave me an opportunity and I was able to build a life and put myself to use and be a productive member of society you know. And there's a lot of people like me out there, you know. I seen them every day, I see them in my unit. I've seen them in our intensive outpatient and you know it's amazing what these nonprofits are doing in these mom and pop organizations, I think we really got to focus on community you know. And where we put the money for community to help this problem because that's where it's going to start.

Governor Christie: Here's Keith who is in recovery, who's working everyday with people who need his help to be a positive example and role model for them but listen to what he said. He felt it necessary to say to me in the second sentence when he looked at me after even this conversation we had he said I'm from a good family. Like that's what I'm talking about. This is a guy who understands it probably better than 99 percent of the people in New Jersey yet at this moment he felt that he had to defend the family that he's coming from so that I wouldn't assume that he was from deadbeat family that had mistreated him. Right. That's part of the guilt and the stigma that we place on each other. That, now imagine someone who's not nearly as sophisticated and as experienced, although I'm sure you would trade it, but you know, as sophisticated and experienced as Keith is in this stage of his life. Imagine how they feel? I can tell you from my experience that they feel so badly, they don't even say it. They don't even say it because they're so ashamed of what has happened to them and what it means for their family.

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