

Derek: Hey Lue Ann, how's it going today?

Lue Ann: Okay. So, I have some exciting news. Bianca was discharged and she's doing a lot better. She really seems stable and actually the two of them, Mick and Bianca just seem so happy to be reunited. Any problems that they were having where, you know, sort of like difficulties because of all of her symptoms and Nick wondering if it was the right thing. You know, they've only been married a couple years. But they seem really happy lately. And it's like ... it's just such a nice thing to see. And it's a relief for them and for me, I have to admit.

Derek: That's awesome.

Lue Ann: Yeah. yeah, it ... they're so cute, the two of them and it's really exciting. So, she's on, like a new medication, meal regimen, and she feels better and, you know, so ... obviously she just marched right back home to Mick but it's a little bit tricky because, you know, as I was telling you at the ... at last week's meeting or, you know, a couple weeks ago, that they've been having some trouble with managing to afford groceries and Mick used to get them from their grocery store. Remember he ... you know, where he works, they were letting him have some things that they, like, weren't selling and it was all like almost expiration date.

Derek: Yeah, yeah, wait so that-

Lue Ann: But, there were-

Derek: What happened again with that? Can you remind me? Because that was, like, working out really well for them?

Lue Ann: It was really cool. It's like, you know, it's such a small kind of grocery store and all the coworkers are like family and stuff and they were being really good to Mick and if things were almost at the expiration date or, you know, like just expired that day or something like that, they were letting him take home some things. Like, you know, breads, and you know, some stuff like that. Maybe some frozen stuff. But, the manager didn't want the other cashiers doing that for Mick so he kind of like, put a halt to that.

Derek: Oh, man. Yeah.

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: I can imagine that-

Lue Ann: And it's-

Derek: Yeah, it really impacting their budget, then.

Lue Ann: It really does because they struggle. Like a couple of the other folks that we work with, I heard them say that sometimes they only eat either every other meal or every other

day. So, they're worried about that and, you know, Bianca just got back and they want to be happy and eat and do good and stuff like that. So, so they're not quite sure what to do. Mick, you know ... Bianca did mention that when she was growing up, she does remember ... her mom was single and she does remember getting some kind of benefits or welfare or something. But she wasn't sure what it was and neither one of them have ever applied before for anything.

Derek: For any kind of like county type of resource, you're talking about, right? Because, I know Mick, we were talking last week, has Social Security. You know, that might be an option. So, Mick and Bianca, basically their made need now is food, at the moment.

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: What are some other things you're thinking about? Because I ... I mean, I've had some people run into problems like this so maybe we can help.

Lue Ann: Well, I wasn't sure because I'm ... I wasn't sure about if there was a food bank or something in our county or even in, like, more than one location because, you know, where they live, I wasn't sure if they would be able to access something like that until we could figure out what do we apply for, where do we apply, how do we get all the necessary documentation together.

Derek: Yeah, that's a good idea Lue Ann. I know there might be a food bank in that area. I'll have to check. I'll have to ask somebody. But if not, super close, definitely within our county. There has to be at least one that ... especially because they're sort of newly ... you know, this isn't an ongoing issue. I think food bank's might be more inclined to help them out, you know. So ...

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: That's a good ... that's a good suggestion. And then, what do you think, you're going to look into food stamps for them, then?

Lue Ann: Yeah. I'm going to have to look into something for ... I don't know if I'll base it on ... if I'll apply for Bianca based on her income. I don't know if Mick's income is going to impact her income because they're in the same household. So I have to figure that out. So, I don't know if either ... I'm not sure if either one of them or both of them will be eligible for something. You know, sometimes, you know, some of the other folks I work with, they'll go through the self-help center and, you know, they [inaudible 00:05:01] food bank but sometimes they'll have, like, some, you know, emergency closet with, like, some pasta or just stuff like that that could be available but it's mostly just that. Just some carbs and things like that. And I really want Mick and Bianca to be able to get ... you know, to eat well.

Derek: Yeah.

Lue Ann: So to be able to ... for one or both of them to be able to get something because, you know, at least then they'll eat better.

Derek: Yeah, definitely and I know that they were probably getting some pretty good food from the food store, even though it may be have, you know, slightly past expiration. At least it was ... you know, it wasn't like boxed stuff and, you know, it was fresh, so ...

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: Oh, that's a shame.

Lue Ann: It was. Yeah. Yeah. It's a shame. It's a shame that it had to happen like right around the time that, you know, she wasn't doing well and now she's back and now they're stuck in this predicament.

Derek: Yeah.

Lue Ann: Yeah. So, so, so that's what I've got to get taken care of for these folks. So what's been going with Michela?

Derek: Oh, boy.

Lue Ann: Did you get her to ... yeah-

Derek: Yes.

Lue Ann: Did you bring her-

Derek: Small victory. So, yeah, as you remember, the plan was, last week, we had made a ... set a date to meet up at Social Security. We were going to apply. And she showed and she was even, apparently, sober. So, that was a really good sign to see. And we were able to talk a little and I got to know her a little bit. You know, we didn't start with anything super, you know, heavy kind of topics. You know, we're in a Social Security office, first off. So we couldn't really talk about anything super confidential anyway. Or anything that would, you know, she wouldn't really feel comfortable sharing around others. So we kind of kept it light, you know.

I learned, kind of, that she, you know, aspirations of being a nurse and we talked about, you know, what it is about nursing that she likes and that was kind of cool. And she told me about her boyfriend and, you know, I told her a little bit about the agency. It was good because it wasn't super formal. Like, you know, how some agencies will make you have an appointment and have all these documents and you have to sign one thing after another and I think, for some people in recovery, that's a little too much, too soon. You know? It's like, information overload a lot of times and maybe, perhaps a little too aggressive and formal. And this was nice because it didn't feel like an intake, right? It was just me and her talking. I'd say, "Oh, you know, this is sort of what the agency is stands for and this is why we were founded and, you know, these are the kinds of

services that I help other people, like in similar situations as you, like apply for Social Security."

And so, that was like the best part of the meeting. She definitely had a hard time waiting. You know, you know how it is a Social Security. You know, people ... it can take hours and it did. And I applaud her, she stayed there the whole time. It took, I think, close to five hours in total. But, you know, at one point, a friend ... somebody she knew showed up there and they left for a few minutes. And I was like ... I was actually kind of annoyed because, you know, it's her benefits and you know, she should be responsible for, you know, waiting and knowing that when she's called ... so, I at one point had to come find her and say ... and remind her of that and she was respectful. She apologized. But things seemed a little different after that. I don't know if she was ... I don't know what she was doing with that friend but ...

Lue Ann: Oh, no.

Derek: I just don't ... I'm not ... I don't think she's completely sober. But, I do see some signs that she's kind of turned a corner. So, you know, we applied, you know ... how it is with Social Security. We probably won't hear for a number of months. So we will have to kind of come up with some temporary options for her as well. But that was some good news.

The actual ... the other person that I'm working with, this guy George. You remember George?

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: Yeah, he's having some problems with Social Security, actually, that have been sort of more pressing for me. So, yeah, as you know, he had gotten out of the hospital like over a month ago at this point and we had applied to have his Social Security reinstated. And it hasn't been. He hasn't been getting his deposits into his count and, you know, also there ... his Medicaid doesn't seem to be working as well, so ... I'm really not sure what we're going to do. I mean, I'm almost wondering if we may have to go the food bank route for George at some point. I mean, he has food at this point but he really just needs some spending money. You know, just basic necessity's kind of thing and a few dollars to get by. So, I started looking into the county social services ... actually, before I headed over to this meeting. It seems like there's a few out there. There's the TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. But I don't think that would ... I don't think he is eligible because that is for families and not for single adults.

Lue Ann: Right.

Derek: And then there's WIC. WIC is another county service I ran across but again, because it's for women and children, George doesn't qualify. So he might ... I don't know about general assistance, GA or welfare. That's something I think I need to look into, just to see if he could get some temporary assistance, like, now, you know. A couple bucks in his pocket to help pay for, you know, medication co-pays and, you know, he did have a few prescriptions sort of on hold so it didn't actually ... the loss of insurance hasn't

impacted him yet. But I got to help him get on the horn with Social Security and find out what's up with that. But, in the meantime, going to look into general assistance and see what the eligibility requirements are and I don't know if any of our other colleagues have applied to GA ... helped somebody apply recently but maybe somebody out there could help us out too. But-

Lue Ann: Now, I do ... oh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt Derek.

Derek: No.

Lue Ann: But I was thinking ... I think I recall somebody else on our team saying that ... I'm not sure if it depends on whether it's Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income. I don't know if it's SSD or SSI or both, that if George, or somebody applied and gets something, they might have to pay some of it back when they ... when their Social Security finally gets reinstated.

Derek: Yeah, that's true.

Lue Ann: So ... yeah.

Derek: He has SSI.

Lue Ann: SSI, okay.

Derek: And that may be the case and I honestly think it would be fine, you know, if he ... it's only hopefully going to be a month or two and he needs the money now. So, the agency, I think will help him out, you know, in terms of making sure, you know, he doesn't lose his apartment, you know if he's a few days late on his rent. I think we can help him out and advocate but just, you know ... I think if he could get ... I got to see how much the general assistance actually would give somebody but I know it would be at least enough to get him through the next few weeks. And I think if I ... if I were to talk to him about it, he would be okay with it. You know, kind of see it as a loan and know that once he ... once the Social Security started back up, he could pay them back or have it deducted, however they do it. So ...

Lue Ann: Yes.

Derek: Yeah, so ... I don't know-

Lue Ann: Cool.

Derek: We'll look into these things. So you're going to look into some food options for your guys and I'm going to look into this general assistance thing for George. And hope Michela, you know, continues to kind of follow through with some of the things we talked about so ...

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: All right.

Lue Ann: Yes, yeah.

Derek: Great.

Lue Ann: Good luck with her.

Derek: Thanks, thanks.

Lue Ann: Okay.

Derek: All right. Until next time-

Lue Ann: Well, cool, all right.

Derek: We'll be checking in next meeting. Take care.

Lue Ann: Okay, I'll see you then. Bye.

Derek: Bye.