

Derek: Hey, Lue Ann. How's it going?

Lue Ann: Hi Derek. It's going OK. How are you?

Derek: Doing well, doing well. Looking forward to our meeting today. I got a visitor coming I'll tell you a little bit about in a minute. But how are things going with Mick and Bianca?

Lue Ann: Well, things are going pretty well there. I was talking to you the last time about Bianca getting discharged. She's been continuing to do very well. She's happy. In fact, the two of them are pretty cute together. They seem so relieved. For a while there, Mick was really worried about not just her feeling well, but also their relationship in general.

But they seemed to be pretty chipper and happy, except Bianca. She has said to me, and she told Mick a couple of times, she said that she's feeling a little bit nauseous. I don't know if it's to do with a medication change or what's going on, but she did say she was nauseous a little bit.

Derek: Well, yeah.

Lue Ann: Other than that though, they're happy.

Derek: Well, she did just ... You said she had med change when she got out of the hospital just recently too, right?

Lue Ann: Yeah.

Derek: I don't know.

Lue Ann: Yeah, I'm not sure what's going on, but overall, they're doing really well. The only thing that is going on in terms of importance is that when she was in the hospital, Mick noticed that she got a couple of letters from Medicare. He didn't open them, because he didn't want to have to deal with it. Then when she came home, she looked at them. She has two, and they're bills from Medicare. She's worried a little bit, because she didn't know how to interpret what it said. It had a really large amount, and then it had another amount. She doesn't know if she owes at all and what she owes.

Derek: Man, yeah, I've gotten frantic calls from people that I've worked with in the past when they get back from the hospital, and there's a bill for like \$80,000. They are quite worried. I don't think she'll have to pay all of that bill, but, yeah, it's definitely probably going to be something to look into, I guess. She has Medicare, is that right?

Lue Ann: Yeah, she has Medicare. I don't really know any more details about it. You know how sometimes people have Medicare, and it's really like AARP, or Aetna, or something like that? I have to see what she received and help her to look at it, because I'm not even quite clear offhand. But like you say, hopefully she won't owe very much, because they're trying to get everything together. I was talking to you the last time about them having difficulty getting their groceries and paying those kinds of bills.

Derek: Yeah, how did it end up with the food situation?

Lue Ann: Yeah, they actually did get connected to a food bank that was operating out of a church. They've been going there. They went there at least once to get some staples-

Derek: Oh good.

Lue Ann: Yeah, so that was a relief for them and me.

Derek: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Lue Ann: That's about it with them. Things are pretty good. What's going on with your case load?

Derek: They're getting by. Actually, I have Michela coming over. She'll be here actually in a few minutes, so let me brief you on that.

But first off with George, I know we were talking last week. We were struggling with ... his Social Security hadn't been reinstated yet. He didn't have insurance, and we were looking into general assistance. Thankfully, our colleagues helped us out with figuring some of that stuff out. It actually turned out we did not need it. The next day after I talked to you, he got his letter from Social Security that everything was reinstated.

Lue Ann: Oh good.

Derek: He's gotten his direct deposit, and his insurance is all right. It definitely, I think, took a little advocacy on our part, George advocating for himself. At times, he was looking to me. I definitely helped him out with just preparing what to say, because he did have to call and checkup a few times. It seemed to work out for him, so I'm happy about that.

Lue Ann: That's good. That's good.

Derek: Yeah, now Michela. Michela is on her way over. Just so you know what's going to happen, I have to ... We went to Social Security. I have to find out if she is interested in applying for general assistance now, because you know as well as I do, it's going to be awhile before those benefits ... any kind of decision is made. We'll see how that goes, and I guess ...

I guess that's her. Do you want to sit in with us? I'll introduce you.

Lue Ann: Yeah, yeah, because I never met her.

Derek: OK, yeah, let me get the door. Hey, Michela, how's it going?

Michela: Hey, I'm doing all right.

Derek: All right, cool. Listen, I wanted to introduce you. This is Lue Ann. Lue Ann is a caseworker. She works with me here. Lue Ann, meet Michela.

Lue Ann: Hi, how are you, Michela?

Michela: Doing OK. Nice to meet you.

Lue Ann: Nice to meet you.

Derek: Lue Ann and I work on the team together, so I wanted to talk to you about a few things. It's sometimes helpful for the other caseworkers to be on the same page with what's going on with everybody, just because if I'm ever out, and you need some help, Lue Ann is available. She might be able to help you out. Would you mind if she sat in our talk today?

Michela: No, that's cool.

Derek: OK, if you don't at all, Lue Ann knows. It would be finally fine, and she could excuse herself. Yeah, I appreciate you helping us out with that. Thanks for coming in, Michela.

I wanted to just say it was really awesome to spend some time with you last week at Social Security. As boring as it was to have to wait that long, it was great to get to know you a little bit. As long as you had to be there, it was cool to find out what you want to do and what kind of goals you have.

Michela: Yeah, I really appreciate you taking most of your day to sit there with me.

Derek: It was no problem. In follow-up, I wanted to check in with you. As you had heard from the Social Security person we talked to there, it's going to be some time before you hear back from them on a decision about either way, if you're going to get approved or not.

I wanted to go over some of the options in the community that are available. Many of them are for families and the elderly. They have a lot of the programs for specific populations. The program that best fits you for single adults would be general assistance. I was wondering if you were interested in applying, we could go down, and it's through the Board of Social Services in the county here. It's not a federal program, but we'd have to go down. It would be a similar application process to what we did last week. But the good news is that the decision will be made fairly quickly. What do you think about that?

Michela: I feel really frustrated. We spent all that time. I have no idea when we're going to hear. It's frustrating. Now we're going to have to go and spend another day, a whole day, just sitting in an office filled with people, crammed in there. Everybody's miserable.

Derek: Yeah, I can totally understand how you're feeling, Michela. You're feeling frustrated, because we're going to have to essentially do this process all over again. I can relate, and if you don't want to do it, it's totally OK. Do you have another source of income right now? I know you're not working. Are you able to ... I don't know.

Michela: I get by.

Derek: OK, so you have an income?

Michela: Don't really worry about it. I can get money when I need to.

Derek: All right, yeah, it's up to you. You have the choice. You can go with me. We can go to the Board of Social Services and see what is available. Like I said, the temporary assistance won't be a lot of money, but it'll be some pocket money. The good thing that goes with it would be the temporary insurance.

Michela: Yeah.

Derek: I know you haven't had insurance for a while. It was something we had talked about at Social Security and maybe getting some medical things checked up on. What do you think? Do you want some time to think about it?

Michela: You'll be able to take me? You can drive me there?

Derek: Yeah, yeah, I can show you where the office. We'll talk ahead of time about what you need to bring with you, much of the same probable stuff that you brought last week. But yeah, I can solely set up an appointment and go with you again.

Michela: OK. I'm just feeling so fed up. Everything is just so hard, and I've got to get my life together.

Derek: Yeah, you're feeling kind of ... It's a hard thing, but it sounds like you have some resolve to move on with the situation. I definitely commend you for that.

Michela: It hasn't been easy.

Derek: Yeah, yeah.

Michela: I appreciate your help.

Derek: All right, no problem. It's my pleasure to do it. If you're OK with this, what I'll do is, let me talk to Lue Ann. We have to coordinate our schedules for the rest of the week. I will reach out to you a little bit later today and give you some dates that I might be able to take you down to Board of Social Services. We'll set a date then.

Michela: OK.

Derek: All right, sounds good.

Michela: Yeah. [crosstalk 00:10:53].

Derek: Yeah, no problem. I have your number, and watch out for my call a little bit later, OK?

Michela: OK. Nice meeting you, Lue Ann.

Lue Ann: Yeah, take care.

Derek: All right, thanks for coming in.

Lue Ann: Good luck.

Derek: Take care, Michela.

Michela: Bye.

Derek: Bye. All right.

Lue Ann: So I got to meet her.

Derek: Yes. What did you think?

Lue Ann: She's young. She's sweet. She sounds irritated, understandably. I guess she's going to have to learn fast the way things happen in the Social Security system and then some of the mental health system.

Derek: Yeah. Community resources, the application process, and the waiting, and sometimes the advocacy you have to do, it's all really challenging. It's challenging for us. I can't imagine what it's like for people with a disability that have that additional barrier. I guess it's important to remember that and to put ourselves in her shoes.

Lue Ann: Yeah, at least you explained some of the stuff very clearly, because it's like a maze. If you never heard of these things, you don't know what they mean. When she asked if you were going to be with her, she seemed really relieved that you were going to help her.

Derek: Yeah, I think so too. Hopefully we'll have another five hours to spend together, maybe not quite that much. I'll get to know her a little bit better, and it'll make the trust a little bit easier. Maybe I'll find out where she gets her money, but-

Lue Ann: Yeah, that's right.

Derek: If she doesn't want to tell me, that's fine too. But all right, so we'll check in again next week then?

Lue Ann: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, let's check in next week. If I need anything in between, I'll let you know.

Derek: OK, sounds good.

Lue Ann: OK, thanks a lot. Talk to you then.

Derek: All right. Take care.