

Transcript of Matthew Bambrick – T2A

Hi my name is Matthew Bambrick, I'm 20 years of age and I've had a care experience and also a transition from care experience.

What is transition from care?

Transition from care is where you go from boyhood to manhood, or transitioned independence from boyhood to manhood. From learning past experiences and taking those experiences to your work and your future endeavours. You fall down and get back up and that's what learning to be independent is. You take your life lessons and accumulate them to be successful in the world.

Transition in to independence in the foster care system means turning 17 to 18. In one year from boy to man in such a short time so there is a big difference there.

What worked well for you transitioning to independence?

What worked well for me was the ability to co-up up with other kids transitioning. To know that you both need something, like if you had to go shopping or you both need to hunt for furniture. Knowing that you were both going through the same situation and knowing there was someone there not just theoretical understanding but with practical understanding. So that worked really well for me having a friend and a companion that was in the same system with me. Helping me and helping each other in to the real world, the adult world.

Who supported you?

To me, the word support means a beam or a structure of support – a foundation or leaning post, someone you can rely on. What really helped for me, in general, were the people. You would have a school teacher talk to you or a friend from around the corner, old case managers or youth workers. What really worked well and supported me were the people calling me asking "Are you ok? Do you need any help? You've got this much money available for excess agendas." That's what really worked well for me – the people.

What could have worked better?

What I think could have worked better was how the system is structured. I don't believe in an ordinary family that you go to your kids on their 18th birthday or a couple of months before their 18th birthday and put a label on them and say "You're 18, you're independent. You now know successfully how to be an adult" and you tell them to transition. What I think would have worked better is a process. They say you learn how to swim by getting thrown in the deep end but I don't believe that's quite true. What if you never understood what swimming meant before you started to learn how to swim. I believe what could have worked better was learning what it is to be an adult before trying to be an adult.

Who inspired you?

I've been asked that quite a lot - Who makes you do what you want to do, who puts the words in your mouth? At the end of the day it's going to sound really corny but the people do. I believe in the world full of different people, different races, different nationalities, different stories, different backgrounds, and I believe as a people we need to work as a body. That's what inspires me so that one day I can get out there in the world, climb the social ladder and make a change for the greater of

the people. Not corporate organisations with powerful positions, but make the people have the power.

What are your hopes for the future?

I have the white picket fence dream. I was never a fan of materialism but growing up without a family and growing up without a strong foundation I long for a house I can call my own. A foundation I can build a legacy on - the house, car, a stable job, income, just a foundation for a good future, that's my hope. My hopes for the foster care system is that it is more human services, which it is. But that we get back to the core for more human services rather than policies and stats and a database in the system.

What advice would you give to other young people?

You are the captain of your own ship, you are the captain of your own life. No matter the course you're going, no matter the weather that is rocking your boat, you have control of the wheel and you get to decide where you go. No matter who you speak to, no matter what comes about go, you have the power to decide where you want to go and what you want to do.

What advice would you give people working with young people transitioning to independence?

No matter what job it is you do, you look at the time and say "I want to go home". So my advice is when you think that "I want to go home", your workplace is this young person's home. This is their family, no matter what structure it is. This is their family, this is their home. So when you get tired and anxiety and you get that feeling and thought "I just want to go home", remember your working in this client's home, this is their home, they don't get to go home.