

Why I Want to Become a Social Worker

The pain in my head is exploding in bursts of bright light, it is a constant blaring of white noise with an internal unease that is indescribable. It builds ever greater and louder as the morning goes on. The day before I had promised myself, I would stop doing the drugs and drinking and would try to get some help again. I had tried so many times before and failed but living the way I was living was intolerable. But as the seconds ticked by, the pain in my skull was so great that there was no other relief except the drug. I loved it, I hated it, and I had to have it to make the noise go away. I stood atop a freeway overpass and looked down wanting to jump. I had earnestly thought I could turn my life around, get off the drugs, get a job and find a place to stay. As I stood there on the bridge, I knew in my deepest heart that I would never be done, I would never be able to stop, and there was no use for me to even try. The last free detox told me they were full and there was nowhere for me to go. I had no insurance and no money so a treatment center was not going to take me. The only place I could go was the dealer. One more time turns into a million times and unless I got some help to escape the hell, I was in I would never get off the streets and get clean.

This story is unfortunately true, and it is not unique. Millions of people are on the streets, suffering from drug addiction, mental illness, and unresolved trauma. Suppose even for a moment they want to change their lives, get sober, get a job, and find a place to live. Suppose they want to get help with their mental illness and their trauma. Many of these individuals have no health insurance or at most have Medicaid. There is nowhere for them to go. Most treatment facilities are full or give priority to private pay clients and do not take people who cannot pay. There is no longer subsidized treatment and mental health. People have been left to live a life on

the streets with nowhere to go for help, or what little help that is available is so overwhelmed with clients that what they can do is minimal.

My vision is not only to become a social worker, but to become an alcohol and drug counselor also and help to create a new type of treatment center that is focused on the long-term success of its clients with a need for profit. This would have to be set up as a minimum of six month with a twelve-step focus as well as a focus on trauma modalities such as Somatic Breath Work and Brain Spotting. Once the clients get off all the drugs and go through with the first three months of the program. The center creates client focused businesses for them to work in to get job training, life skills and financial support for themselves.

The call I have for this work is very personal. Not only am I a recovering addict and alcoholic. I have had every member of my family including my mother and brother die from alcoholism or drug addiction. I watch the people dying on the street and hurt for them and fantasize about building something as a solution for the people that want it. My journey toward becoming a social worker is but one small step in this process. This scholarship will help my daughter and I pay our rent for one month which takes off an immense burden every month. Thank you for reading my essay and considering me.

Respectfully Yours,

Tony Blankenship