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**Employment aspirations pod - audio only:** Welcome to Point Made, the Centrepoint podcast made by young people for all people.

**Employment aspirations pod - audio only:** Today you'll be hosted by myself, Josh, an ex resident and a current apprentice within Centrepoint. And I'll be co hosting today with

**Anna:** Anna, the campaigns officer here at Centrepoint.

**Josh:** And in today's episode, we'll be talking about the world of work and the unique barriers to employment that exist for young people who have experienced homelessness.

**Anna:** I'm really excited for this conversation. just to frame it with some stats, we have conducted some recent research into young people's employment aspirations. And we have found that three quarters of young people will say that their lack of experience does affect their access to employment and also current benefit rules For young people facing homelessness does decentrifies them to work and become financially independent.

**Anna:** So we want to have a conversation about why this needs to change. And I have an amazing panel who are going to introduce [00:01:00] themselves and share their stories. Andrew, should we start with you?

**Andrew:** My name is Andrew. I'm an ex Centrepoint resident currently living in my social housing property. And I'm currently doing electrical apprenticeship.

**Andrew:** I'm finishing it off.

**Anna:** Awesome.

**Addi:** My name's Eddie. I'm 22. I'm a current. resident at the centrepoint services and i've just finished my cscs card which is a construction safety Card, which proves that I can work safely on a site and i'm starting to Submit my housing application for next month so I can get my own place.

**Addi:** I'm currently looking for work as a painter decorator Honestly,

**Josh:** well done to both of you and loving the progress as well but let's have an icebreaker. So start with you Andy this time. when you were younger, what was your dream job?

**Josh:** What was your passion to grow up into?

**Addi:** Kept switching a lot when I was a kid. One day it was Sonic the Hedgehog, then it was Scooby Doo, making like mysteries and that. Then [00:02:00] when I turned about 12, 13, it was like basketball. Then comics mostly like I used to love superheroes still do, but now it's just more like getting painted decorating.

**Addi:** Cause I like how like the paint just gets on the wall and that. Okay.

**Anna:** It's like very relaxing.

**Addi:** Yeah. Big time relaxing.

**Josh:** What's that word? Therapeutic? Yeah. I like it.

**Andrew:** like Adi. My, my one kept on changing when I was in year two, year three, I went to astronaut museum and I just knew that I wanted to go to space at that time anyway, but I didn't follow through with that.

**Andrew:** And I'm happy. And then literally, as I've went through life in year nine, I just more got into sports. I started becoming quite sporty and I was quite gifted in rugby, And I just didn't really take it seriously. But if I did, I would like to believe I would have been at least semi pro right now.

**Andrew:** But I'm happy with the route I took. [00:03:00] I did a trade and it's going well so far. And I'm going to finish hopefully this year and see where that takes me. Cool, man.

**Anna:** what about you, Josh? Oh, me?

**Josh:** my dreams is kind of in between both. So growing up, I was big comic fan and big into my manga. my family had always been into it. So they got me into it. I also was a big, big, like, I really wanted to be like a superhero kind of person.

**Josh:** Like, I always took certain things, like To the extreme kind of thing where I could behave myself, of course, but, um, no, growing up that kind of transferred. So ended up going to studies and I studied electrical engineering. So not far from your boat as well. And that transpired into aerospace engineering for me.

**Josh:** I could design a turbine at the back of my hand, but unfortunately ended up ill, ended up, um, a point resident as well at the time. And then that all transpired from doing engineering to business. And I [00:04:00] love it. I've learned so much. It's gave me a new passion and it's gave me new goals to live for.

**Josh:** So yeah, definitely.

**Anna:** That's cool.

**Josh:** But what about yourself?

**Anna:** Yeah, I feel like I don't have as exciting stories as you guys are becoming like fighters or going to space. I always knew that I wanted to help people. My dad is a doctor, so maybe like healthcare, but I'm really squeamish with like blood and everything.

**Anna:** So I ended up. Well, yeah, basically, I wanted to work for charity, and that's what I do now. So, yeah, I think I landed it.

**Josh:** Living the dream. Cool, man. Yeah, living the

**Anna:** dream. Um, but yeah, it was really interesting to hear about your goals when you were younger. Adi and Andrew, can you talk a bit more about what you're currently doing for work, and whether your experience of being homeless has changed that?

**Andrew:** I'm currently a full fledged electrical apprentice. I've been doing that Since before I came to Centre Point, I finished college and I went straight to that and that stayed the same. It, it was a point where it was either, you know, I need to quit this because it's not financially helping me.

**Andrew:** But [00:05:00] yeah, I'm happy I stuck with it and I'm seeing it through. I'm

**Tamsin:** How did you make that decision to keep going even when you were like, maybe I should tap out?

**Andrew:** I think it was having good people around me. My my boss slash supervisor. He's he's a very key factor into that because his his patients was what I would say was I was really grateful for because I'm going through a lot financially

**Andrew:** He still has a business to run, but he still kind of took the time to understand and sympathize. Also knowing that he has to also do his own thing as well. So I think the patience allowed me to be able to get myself together, find center point and move forward and take advantage of the opportunity I had.

**Anna:** That's amazing. I feel like you hear so many stories of just managers, yeah, not being that great, but for yours to be so supportive.

**Andrew:** his support and patience and just kind of understanding where I was at the time helped me finish my apprenticeship because it was either that or I just quit.

**Andrew:** And he didn't [00:06:00] want that for me. He actually wanted me to finish it because he's put so much time and effort into it and he didn't want it to just go.

**Addi:** Always get that good group of people that's like to support you stand there. Yeah, pushes you to do more.

**Andrew:** Yeah, helps you helps you help other people as well.

**Anna:** Yeah. Yeah. Thanks for sharing. What about you Addy?

**Addi:** well I'm currently looking for work in paint and decorating. And unlike Andrea, I wasn't doing college. I wasn't doing much, like when I first came to Centrepoint. And then like the first month I moved in, they were like, Oh, we're going to be painting our kitchens.

**Addi:** Like all four residential kitchens. And they said, would you like to try it? I said, sure, I'll give it a go. Cause I'm not doing anything. And you get restless with like energy all the time. And instead of me sitting there playing computer all day, I was thinking, yeah, might as well get some painting. And then the company that they brought in were good people.

**Addi:** I had fun with them. They made it real simple for like someone like me, because it takes me a while to process things. And then when I got into it, like learning how to take down floors, take down all like the equipment and stuff [00:07:00] like that. And then just like getting certain painting aspects really did help a lot.

**Addi:** And then I thought I can see myself doing this. Like, cause I have family that do this as well. Like my brother is currently a carpenter. So I was like, maybe I can help him with that. And then there's just really good people that helped me along the way. With the staff as well, they then pushed me to do more.

**Addi:** Because before I was just thinking, I'll just do it as like a volunteer thing. And then I thought I could actually make a living off of this. So go in there, make it work. Believe me, it was only me and the workers, like four kitchens that took us a couple of weeks, but hey, we got it done in the end. And I just got to sit there with my speaker.

**Addi:** I said, see, we was just listening to old school music and it made the day go quicker. But I think when you do have good people, like I said before, it does help you a lot to do like more of the work that you do. And like working, like even having like just good social banter with them, that just made the day go lighter.

**Anna:** Yeah, that's really cool. And I think [00:08:00] it's also about that exposure of like, you might not have known whether you wanted to do that job before, but people just giving you a chance to try it without a lot of like pressure and everything. Yeah, it's really interesting.

**Josh:** Sometimes it's about people giving you that experience and opportunity.

**Josh:** So you can actually feel. If you are comfortable within that job, that position, that lifestyle, and then it can also teach you about your passions as well. cause I used to paint and decorate, and the one thing it taught me was how to prepare, how to plan, and then how to structure. because any painter worth the salt would always tell you, uh, You do all your prep first, you go with the tape, you go with your lining, you go, you do your skirtings and everything first, then you get to the main base of the wall, and it shows you that actually sometimes doing all the small parts, will build the bigger picture for you, and sometimes going straight for the bigger picture can actually make a bigger mess than actually starting where you need to start and taking your time to journey.

**Josh:** And I think that's [00:09:00] something we've all got in common is understanding patience, experience and being on a journey all has a goal point. but moving on to the next question, what three factors would you say you will consider when applying for a job?

**Addi:** One of them would be like location because usually I get quite lost quite easy like even today making it up here I was on my phone constantly like where do I go make sure I don't get off at this stopper so if I have the route pre planned or like if they're like oh it's quite close by you're sitting at walking distance okay cool it gives me an incentive to go there on time be there Whereas I, if I'm like kind of struggling with it, I'm like, Oh God, I don't want to go there now.

**Addi:** I want to leave it for a day or two. So that's one of my main factors.

**Addi:** money to me at the end of the day is like, I can get it and then spend it like nothing, essentially. for me, it's more like the good fuzzy feeling I get when I finish the work and being like, yeah, I did this [00:10:00] myself or like I did it with a couple of people. So just really my main factor is the location, time.

**Addi:** I could probably sit there all day and paint a wall and not care about anything else. So it's

**Anna:** like that sense of accomplishment that you've like done something. Yeah. Yeah.

**Andrew:** I agree and disagree, Adi with, the money only because I think the money is not relevant when you're comfortable. In the sense of when you're at home with your parents and you're learning something, the main thing you're getting from there is what you're learning from.

**Andrew:** Like you're learning, I'm doing my electrical course, I'm learning at home. Yeah, I'm getting paid a little bit, but I'm learning. But when you actually have to start kind of fending for yourself, the financial bit becomes the bigger picture because you're thinking, yeah, it's cool. I'm learning, but.

**Andrew:** Right now. I need this now, because if this doesn't go or if this roof goes over my head, then [00:11:00] what I learned wouldn't really matter in the grand scheme of things. But you do have to see as the bigger picture is what you do gain from it. Because sometimes thinking about the money all the time, you're just chasing something that you're not going to catch.

**Andrew:** So that's why I agree and disagree, because I think there's a time and a place where the money does matter. Right now, as we're apprentices, the money doesn't matter right now because You're going to get a bigger picture, but when you live in, in the, your struggle anyway, sometimes as much as the mental aspect is, high, the financial aspect is also a big factor, but yeah, I would, that's, that's one of my factors.

**Andrew:** I would say location is very, is a big factor as well. When I was in my apprenticeship, it had to be never near my house, but it couldn't be, I couldn't do an apprenticeship in Essex. Like even, even if I wanted to be an electrician. It's too far. It wouldn't benefit me. back to what I was saying, it's like the people you meet, the people you meet kind of also make your job sometimes you like, you might like [00:12:00] something, but you might have a bad experience with the people that you initially had it with.

**Andrew:** And that could just give you a sour taste of that environment. So that could be a factor. But yeah, that's three factors that I think of right now. Anyway, appreciate it. Thank you for sharing.

**Anna:** what about, like gaining practical skills? So do you feel like having a job where, you know, you have a qualification after it, like does that influence you if something you'd want to do, or do you think it is more than making sure you're doing something and you're enjoying it and that, yeah, it's been a good workplace.

**Andrew:** Having a job where you know you're going to have a skill after that's that's necessary. Because when the pandemic happened, a lot of people got laid off and the only people that made it out was people that was already comfortable or had a skill or had something in place already.

**Andrew:** Sometimes you just need to get as much skills as you can, because nobody can actually take it from you. It's all you. The only thing that can stop is your body.

**Anna:** Yeah, definitely. I guess follow on question is what are some of the kind of issues or struggles you've had with keeping a job?

**Anna:** [00:13:00] I'm neurodivergent, So I have ADHD and ASD, which is autism spectrum disorder. An attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,

**Addi:** And so, whenever I put that in my CV, employers kind of look at it like, Oh, he's going to be a bit of extra work. he's probably not even going to listen or things like that. So, sometimes I get rejected often for that main reason. And I'm thinking, well, if you sit there and explain it and help me a little more, or anybody who has neurodivergency a bit more, we'll get it at the end of the day.

**Anna:** Yeah. That is something we found in our research as well. It was a third of homeless young people who identified as neurodivergent, it said that it did negatively, like, impact their experiences of getting a job. What would you say is like, if you could reframe it, what do you wish that employers did know, rather than just seeing like the label?

**Addi:** that some of us can have good work ethic,that we can do the specific job that you task us with. It's just it might take us a little longer than you expect it to be.

**Addi:** So like if you want it in an hour [00:14:00] and we do it in two hours, we've still done the job. It's just taking us a little longer than you've expected. Essentially, but there is a lot of benefits for it because you get like that creative side

**Anna:** Yeah, that's really cool

**Andrew:** Yeah, one of my good friends is a neurodivergent actually, and I would say for employers speaking on his behalf in general, he's one of the smartest person I know. he might not be able to convey it, but when he locks in, he could do a lot.

**Andrew:** And I think that prejudice needs to stop in general with employers and everybody because it's like. When you think of a homeless young person, you think of somebody that messed up that stigma kind of follows us as well. Because sometimes before you introduce yourself, or if somebody introduces you as homeless, you already fit.

**Andrew:** It's like I grew up in foster care. So there's a stigma that follows you when you when you grow up in foster care. It's like either your parents can take care of you. You're difficult, you're rude, So it's like people, people always have those preconceived notions about you. And then it's [00:15:00] like, it's for you to change it.

**Andrew:** Yeah, that's like that

**Addi:** saying, don't judge a book by it's cover always. Yeah,

**Andrew:** because, because literally it's a real thing. It's a real thing.

**Anna:** Yeah, and I think it's when employers get to know people's stories or they have their, first apprentice, they're like, wow, this is so important.

**Anna:** We really need to do this, but it's getting people to actually make that decision to be more inclusive.

**Anna:** So yeah, I really hope people listening that we can go away Make sure that we do change that narrative.

**Josh:** What do you think employees could do, to support, homeless people that are trying to get a job?

**Andrew:** maybe it's what employers should think about, maybe, is the fact that Your average teenager or average young person might not be an average young person.

**Andrew:** Sometimes you get a flood of apprentices or painter and decorators. And you've seen everybody and you might think that all the same but you've never had time to actually speak and talk to them. Not every young person is going to tell you I'm homeless or I'm neurodivergent or this and the third.

**Andrew:** That's not what I'm saying. Young people to do. I'm not, there's no point looking for sympathy. [00:16:00] By the same time, I think employees should have that moment where they do speak, get to know the person, and then they can actually take it upon themselves to be like, oh, this is why he might do that.

**Andrew:** This is why I might do that. Because that's what my employer did to me. he took time to actually get to know me and It's like, obviously it's a job as well. And you have to make your deadlines and do what you need to do. But I think maybe employers just having more time to actually talk to the people that they're actually employing.

**Andrew:** Because, They're the backbone of your company at the end of the day. And I'm not telling you to, go, over and beyond for them. But I'm just saying, just kind of understand where they might be coming from. Why they might do what they do.

**Addi:** Yeah.

**Andrew:** Yeah,

**Addi:** going back to the point about, look for sympathy and like telling them homeless.

**Addi:** Some people do find it really hard to struggle with that because it took me a while to say like, oh, I'm a divergent because I didn't have a voice for it before. Like, yeah, when I was a kid, I was always just that kid who was naughty and hyper and then like, When I finally got that, I was like, Oh, so now I have a [00:17:00] speaking point of why I do the things I do, like, wow.

**Addi:** Like click my hands of like snap them if I'm overstimulated or why it would take me two or three times getting explained like a certain problem or equation for it. And I just really found that, that when I got that speaking voice, I could explain to them properly why I'm like the way I am essentially.

**Josh:** different people do have different skill sets and you will learn that through actually engaging with them and learning who that person is rather than what they're doing at time.

**Anna:** I think it's about young people as well, or just workers, knowing their rights.

**Anna:** there's so much more now about diversity, equality and inclusion. But just, it could be things like, in an interview, making sure you send the questions beforehand, or someone might need a bit longer in an interview to be able to,explain things. Or it might be like if you do have a disability or you're neurodivergent that can come into how that affects your work and employers making sure they make those adjustments and I think we probably don't push as [00:18:00] much as employees to our employer saying actually like this is what I need to do my job properly And I think what's been really important about this research and from what you both have been sharing is about like potential over experience So just because currently you may have like different struggles, which means you can't work fully That doesn't mean that's always going to be your situation And the more that you get that support the more you can show what your potential is people don't always see what we can bring to the table or don't take time always to like hear that story but when they do we can really flourish so much more.

**Anna:** Andrew, I'd love to just hone in a bit more on your story. What is something that you wish you knew when you were starting your current job? Like, what you wish your younger self knew about employment?

**Josh:** employment can be fun, but also a difficult question. And there's so much more to learn in the sense of just human behavior. I like psychology. That's why it's like you meet so many different people and you just learn as much as I'm [00:19:00] learning my electrical apprenticeship as well.

**Andrew:** You actually just learn other people and then you know how to navigate amongst the actual big big wide world as you move on.

**Andrew:** the advice I would give to somebody starting outstruggling to find employment is that, you know what, keep going, but also try to, hone in your, better yourself as well.

**Andrew:** maybe going to the gym, you taking care of yourself, you reading and whatever religious practices you want to do.

**Andrew:** And then when you do get that break you want to do or you do get that kind of opportunity you were looking for. You have a better sense of gratitude for it. And that's the main thing of gratitude because when You're grateful. You kind of give off different energy, and I think that will help you with the with the tough times ahead because employment is so up and down.

**Andrew:** You might not be working and you might be working, but just being grateful for that journey can help can can help it be better.

**Anna:** so persevering because at one point then when you do [00:20:00] receive employment, you're

**Anna:**

**Anna:** realize how far you've come.

**Andrew:** Yeah, because sometimes I forget.

**Andrew:** like two years ago I wasn't here. I was in a different situation and it's like just constant persevere and I'm still not where I want to be, but it's like, sometimes you're just going through life and you just forget what you've left behind.

**Addi:** like your experiences make you stronger in that

**Andrew:** yeah exactly like that the experiences make you stronger because if if I didn't go through I went through one I wouldn't be here right now and two I wouldn't be as mature as I feel like I am right now.

**Andrew:** all these experiences kind of couple it into a beautiful thing. And you might not see it yet, but other people might. And as you grow and you get better, you know how to manoeuvre. You can start helping the right people. Yeah,

**Anna:** thanks so much for sharing that.

**Anna:** It's very encouraging.

**Josh:** What kind of policy changes do you believe that the government could make to make it an easier or better experience for young people trying to get employment?

**Andrew:** I think, incentivise [00:21:00] actually getting a skill. In the sense of making trades look a bit more glamorous than what they look like.

**Andrew:** I'm 20 now. I might finish my electrical apprenticeship and stop at 25. I don't know what I'm going to do yet. But making young people know that, you know what, even if you're not doing anything, do this until you figure it out, because I'm still figuring it out. And I think that when you're figuring something out, you might, some people just do nothing because they're like, you know, I might as well, I might as well not.

**Andrew:** So I think maybe government's just kind of putting more funding, especially into apprenticeships, trade apprenticeships, so that young people can actually come up with a skill.

**Addi:** like earlier, when we were talking about, like, trauma, like, Experience with them.

**Addi:** They should also put a policy for like that as well to like have more of our understanding Of neurodivergence and trauma based or homeless youth so then they have the proper steps to take

**Josh:** in terms of like benefits do you feel that motivated you to get more work or do you feel like demotivated, um, or can demotivate [00:22:00] people?

**Andrew:** When I left care at 18, I went to an organization and their rent was so high, not their fault, but whatever, their rent was so high that when my housing benefits did come in, it was like the cut was crazy.

**Andrew:** I was getting like 70 percent of my wages was getting cut. And because I was in an apprenticeship, I legally had to do 40 hours. So four days work. Nine to five and a college day, which counted as work. So that was a 40 hour week. And under the benefit or universal credit side of it, you look like you actually have a job, like a full-time job.

**Andrew:** So they don't see, they don't see you as needing any, any extra help. They just see as you have a job, you have a apprenticeship, you work 40 hours a week, do what you need to do. And I think that that was a very humbling experience and also very tough at the time because. I'm around other people that I wouldn't say have given up but have kind of succumbed [00:23:00] to the benefit cycle.

**Andrew:** And I'm just here working.

**Andrew:** the hope gets diminished. And that's, that's what Centrepoint helped me with. They kind of reignited that hope of, okay, cool. When I went to my independent living program and my bills were cut, it's like, instead of having too much fun, Save, but have, but kind of have the fun that you need to have as well.

**Andrew:** work. But people just don't want to sit about some people want to be active.

**Andrew:** But when the systems or powers that be give you an ultimatum, you're going to choose. Some people will choose the easier one because I was very close to choosing it because it wasn't it wasn't worth it for me. Honestly, the apprenticeship was not worth it for me financially. Like the year, the year 2022 and 2023 was not worth it for me.

**Addi:** Uh, this is where I did from Andrew because I went from homeless. So I was already in that cycle essentially of like accepting benefits and being like, oh, this is what my life is going to be essentially. And then once I got to the service, I found out that I could do more just by being myself, being happy and [00:24:00] And I found myself like, instead of just sitting around all day, just like looking at a screen, I was just like, Oh, I actually want to go and do something like the sun's out.

**Addi:** It's a brighter day, each day, each week, and then I'm like, Oh, I actually feel good about myself. Like, because before, if I sat around, I'd feel like, Oh, you're just lazy. You're not doing anything. And then when my money came in before, I just used to like blow on McDonald's, uh, video games, like just bad luck with my financial security.

**Addi:** I got taught that I can save my money and spend it a little bit at a time. Like, as Andrew said, spend it a little, have your little bit of fun, then have like that bit of money that, whatever you need for a rainy day, essentially. So, yeah, like again, the hope was reignited in me,

**Addi:** even if it was just helping, staff, like, move a chair, I felt like I did something. Instead of just sitting upstairs, not engaging with anything, essentially.

**Addi:** I thought, if I don't engage with this, I'm going to feel horrible. If I engage, [00:25:00] I'll feel better and, like, do more. And then it will make me, branch out into other things, like, because I was doing a cooking course after I had done. My painting, decorating work experience because one, I didn't know how to cook.

**Addi:** So I was like, I need to get that sorted. And then just like the education within Centrepoint helped a lot because before I couldn't do any of that stuff, I couldn't clean, couldn't cook. Now I can do all of that and extra now, like provide myself a trade so I felt like it was really good.

**Addi:** Uh, I got that hope back, essentially, because I felt like I was rotting away at some points.

**Tamsin:** One common thread between what both of you just said is, you put it as hope, and hope dying and needing re sparking. I think is one of the biggest problems within homelessness is a lot of people end up complacent because they lose hope, like you said, and they don't see past today, never mind what tomorrow is [00:26:00] going to bring.

**Andrew:** Hmm.

**Josh:** And I think when hope goes that you're going to get a better tomorrow, so does your happiness. And when your happiness goes, your productivity goes.

**Josh:** Thank you both for sharing. To follow up on your point as well, like what you said at the beginning of the podcast, what did you want to do when you were younger?

**Andrew:** when I left care anyway, nobody goes or I don't even think any young person goes wanting to get benefits.

**Andrew:** Every,

**Andrew:** you know, you don't want, you don't want to get benefits.

**Andrew:** So I think maybe the government looking at stuff like that from early because habits just end up compounded into more and worse habits.

**Andrew:** If somebody's been on benefits for a year, you can't tell them, yeah, it's time for you to get a job. It's going to be hard for them and that's not even going to be their fault.

**Andrew:** you can't expect them to just jump straight to work. So I think the government kind of touching on it from early, before it gets, they get a bit too, um, reliant on it.

**Anna:** Yeah, I think on that benefits point it's like when you do start to work and universal credit [00:27:00] goes down If you are in supported accommodation your housing benefit shouldn't go down until you've managed to build a bit more of a foundation financially because the fact that you were working But thenyou'd have your paycheck, everything would go out, and then you'd be back to square one, to then survive for the month, to then go, work for another month.

**Anna:** I think it's that housing benefit needs to stay increased. I agree. Um, yeah, for, like, for work to be accessible and to be something that you want to do.

**Andrew:** Yeah.

**Anna:** But yeah, Andrea, it's amazing that you did push through, like, through all of that, but it does just sound like it was a massive strain at the same time.

**Andrew:** It was, but like, yeah, me and Adi said it's like, as much as I did what I needed to do. The people around me also helped. So I have to give credit to them as well, because the thing is, I do. I would like to believe I would have continued, but at the same time, I don't know. I don't know. And the people around me did help.

**Andrew:** because they were a lot older than me as well. They kind of gave me that sunshine of it will get better. It can get worse as well. But. [00:28:00] It can also get better. So, yeah.

**Anna:** Yeah. And on that, so both of you being people that other people can learn from, um, and have support, where did you go for help?

**Anna:**

**Addi:** In my experience, I went to my key worker. Cause she opened the branches for like, to go to a jet advisor, which then helped me write out my CV, right.

**Addi:** See what I wanted to do, what my interests were, how long I would want to do it for, what time would I like to do it, how long, where I'd do it, when I'd do it, that essentially.

**Addi:** It's also that bond you build with them as well. So you feel more comfortable to talk to them about things like that. Like when I first came in, I was kind of reserved about it.

**Addi:** Like didn't want to talk about much about myself. I was just like, yeah, let me just get through this. And then as soon as I met my key work for the first time and me and her, she sat down and had a conversation. it flowed naturally. Like I wasn't sitting there stuttering, looking like, when do I leave?

**Addi:** Like it just flowed. And then. [00:29:00] We had that communication, that bond essentially. So I knew I could go to them for anything. If I was in trouble, if I had financial or employment trouble, I'd just literally go downstairs and be like, Oh, can you help me with this? They'd be like, yeah, sure. Let's go and sit in the room, sort it out.

**Josh:** Some people don't realize that they're an everyday hero just by listening to people's needs and allowing them to feel heard. And I think that's what you're expressing.

**Josh:** As a final note, what would you like to give to somebody listening or a younger person listening?

**Josh:** But also just an important what was like your highlight from today? What have you been able to take away from today?

**Addi:** Obviously, me and Andrew have different stories, but. We can both see each other's points quite clearly and that people that you are to host will sit there and understand because I have a host that's done it and I have a host that's really well versed in it.

**Addi:** So I'm really glad that people are starting to get educated on it and that we have people that come from similar experiences [00:30:00] or different experience, but that can make us come together. No, I don't know how to explain it, but I appreciate that. Thank you.

**Andrew:** Um. Yeah, exactly. Addy said it's mad. I've never met Addy until today, but there's so much similarities but differences.

**Andrew:** But that's what makes everybody unique as well. And I think that's what helps. It makes homelessness seem less kind of stereotype to certain people. Just everybody can experience it at any time, age, age, or it doesn't. Homelessness is not bias. So I think with that, I would like say to anybody listening,

**Andrew:** be present. Remember where you are now. Because you might be telling, you might be giving somebody advice soon. And also what I would say is that sometimes the best advice that I've got in any way or what I've listened to a lot is from people that have gone through the same thing.

**Andrew:** I think sometimes there's a deeper connection there because sometimes you might, [00:31:00] when you're in care, sometimes it's like the biggest thing I've noticed from other foster children is you've never been in care. You don't know what I went through. And I think from hearing that it's like with every other stuff.

**Andrew:** If somebody has like ADHD. If somebody doesn't have ADHD, they don't know what it's like. So I think sometimes, not that you have to have it to talk to them, but it's like, you, what you are right now might be helping the next person you might be helping. I do have ADHD and autism might be helping the next autistic, um, also called homeless person navigate through all of this.

**Andrew:** Somebody that was in care, I might be helping them navigate through all of this. So I think, Even though you might feel like you're alone, you're also unique, but there's more people for you, for you to talk to, so just kind of hang in there and just, it gets better with time.

**Addi:** I'd like to add on to that point, like, don't be afraid to ask as well.

**Addi:** Like, yeah, you get told that all the time, and then you just go, yeah, yeah, cool, I won't ask. But [00:32:00] asking making that leap of, okay, let me try and break this barrier of what I used to do, what I used to know, how I used to think.

**Addi:** Like it really changes a perspective. Like the world gets a little brighter every time you do it.

**Josh:** Thank you. From what you're both saying, you're making a lot of steadfast and powerful points that a lot of people would value and learn from as well. And like you said, you've got different experiences in being homeless, but the bond of being homeless and developing from that and becoming a better person and not giving up is also a bond that you share.

**Josh:** I'm grateful to have met you both. And honestly, just like you're saying to everybody else, don't give up. Keep your focus going and neither one of you is to give up either. And I hope to see you successfully land where you want to land as well in the future. Honestly.

**Anna:** Well, yeah, just echo all of that. And thanks so much for sharing your experiences, because I know it's vulnerable to go through your story, but it was just really powerful to hear that. I think it's such a sign that lived [00:33:00] experience does have power and that you can make a difference And again, just want to reiterate as potential over experience, you know There's so much that both of you can bring to jobs, but also anyone who'slooking for employment thank you so much for sharing it has been really really interesting and also a lot of information for people to take away so thank you, for anyone listening, we have many, many episodes about different topics.

**Anna:** So we'd love for you to stay tuned. So please continue to support this podcast and like, subscribe and share.

**Josh:** And that's our point made. And that's our point

**Addi:** made. And that's our point

**Josh:** made. And

**Anna:** that's our point made. And that's our point

**Addi:** made.