

# Sobriety Superpower

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## SPEAKERS

Russ White, Dawn Kepler, Chris Anthony



Russ White 00:00

In the best of times, pursuing recovery from substance use disorders and maintaining sobriety are a daily grind, factor in the pandemic, it's isolating affects the social and economic upheaval that has followed. And those personal challenges are made all the more difficult. Today we're joined by Dawn Kepler, coordinator for the MSU Collegiate Recovery Community. And Chris Anthony, Vice President of U.S. Consumer Goods at Salesforce. We're discussing recovery, sobriety and the destigmatization of both on college campuses and in the corporate world. Dawn's passion for helping others struggling with substance use stems from her journey with recovery 18 years in the making, with a BS in psychology and work in the substance use disorder prevention and recovery fields. Dawn strives to improve behavioral health services by incorporating research and program design, with the ultimate goal of achieving sustainable outcomes for those in recovery. Chris studied marketing at MSU and has established himself as a business leader, public speaker, coach, mentor and lifelong student striving to be of service to others. With over 25 years of experience in technology, He currently serves as the vice president of U.S. Consumer Goods at Salesforce Marketing Cloud, where he grew from account executive to Vice President, Chris recently opened up about his 15 year journey with sobriety and established the soberexec.com to help others navigate recovery and sobriety. It's a pleasure to welcome both Dawn and Chris to MSU Today, welcome.

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Dawn Kepler 01:47

Thank you so much for having us here.

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Russ White 01:48

Dawn, why don't you start if you can provide us with some insight on the founding of the Collegiate Recovery Community on MSU campus and the progress it's made since being established, I guess, kind of the mission?

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Dawn Kepler 01:59

Yeah, thank you so much for asking. So our collegiate recovery community here at MSU has been quite a journey. From the very beginning. It has been spearheaded by students, it's for students, by students who have come to MSU, our health promotion department seven years ago, there were three students who said, We are in recovery, and we don't see the resources that we need on campus and asked for help. And at that time staff and Health Promotion department, which I work in, helps those three students to establish a registered student organization, and the students just continued to advocate for themselves with the help of staff and faculty at MSU. And it wasn't too long after that, that MSU had actually added on, expanded our support, and have found some space on campus for a recovery lounge for our students in recovery to have a safe space, where they feel like they can be a part of the campus community, and also feel supported in their recoveries from a substance use disorder. And so students continue to advocate and then it was approximately three years ago, that of more formal program was established that is similar to what we have today, the collegiate recovery community. And the students didn't stop there. They continue to see some needs on campus, around housing for some on campus recovery housing space. And so then it was two and a half years ago, actually that recovery housing was established on campus. And MSU has the first on campus recovery housing in the state of Michigan. And it all stemmed from needs being identified students advocating for that and working with staff and faculty on campus to make that happen. And so the ultimate Michigan mission of the collegiate recovery community is to help students achieve their goals, their academic goals, their personal goals, and their recovery goals and live a full college experience, feeling supported in their recovery from a substance use disorder.

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Russ White 04:13

And Dawn, say a little more about this need for destigmatization.

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Dawn Kepler 04:16

Yeah, that's a great question. So that plays a huge role in why these kind of services are actually needed on college campuses. Because research has shown us that addiction and recovery are often stigmatized. There are a lot of mis perceptions about addiction and recovery. And in fact, research has also shown that students in recovery in particular on college campuses tend to be marginalized and under served and recovery. hostile environments. So research has also told us that college campuses can be recovery hostile and so When you have a long history of, of cultures on college campuses that aren't supportive of, of being sober of not using, it kind of sets up this precedent. And that's where the D stigmatization comes in. And that is why MSU has launched a recovery Li training here at MSU. So that we can help educate, and provide resources for staff and faculty, students and community partners to learn about the disease of addiction, and how to be an ally supporting and advocating for our students in recovery. These trainings, these recovery ally trainings convey the importance of empathy and openness with students in recovery, and that the language we use related to addiction and recovery really does matter.

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Russ White 05:51

You know, thhe Collegiate Recovery Community is a relatively new concept, not just on Ms. Us campus, but nationwide with its founding occurring less than a decade ago. And Dawn and Chris, both of you attended MSU, before the program's establishment, what were some of the hurdles or consequences you faced as students without a supportive community in place?

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Chris Anthony 06:14

I think, Sure, thank you, Dawn. And I think from my point of view, what I'm witnessing is, we're in a really challenging situation for a lot of individuals, because it's hard enough for people to make themselves vulnerable to reach out and ask for help. And when we're quarantined or locked in place, it makes it harder sometimes to reach out to others because they're just not the physical element or the privacy that we once knew. And then secondly, I think that the challenge around just addiction in any form whatsoever is hidden more than ever, right now, because we're all on zoom, we're all on video. And someone can easily be living a very dark moment in their life, and get on camera and smile to everybody. And when that camera turns off, they're back in their dark dungeon have whatever misery they're experiencing. And they're not going into an office space where someone can notice that they're declining, or it's easier to hide, use now, because you can have a coffee cup with wine in it and sit on a zoom and do that all day long. And no one knows the better. So I think there is a lot of challenges that not only are occurring

right now. But we're gonna start to realize over the coming months and years, the long tail of this, that's going to require the community getting even stronger.

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Russ White 07:35

Dawn, what about your experience

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Dawn Kepler 07:36

I've had, I had a similar experience in that not being able to find the resources that I needed at the time. And Chris brings up a really great point about awareness. And I think that plays into the stigma as well, in that there's a lot of awareness, think goodness around other mental health issues, particularly depression and anxiety. And I think that's the direction we need to go with substance use disorders. Some of the students we have in our collegiate recovery community have told us that they were diagnosed with depression years ago, and so they sought treatment for the depression. And they've never even were made aware or had any kind of awareness that the substance use piece might be part of the problem. And it wasn't they didn't see that turning point until they were diagnosed with a substance use disorder and began receiving treatment and assistance with the substance piece. And so for me, I, I was a young person in recovery when I was a student here at MSU. And I searched hot as with with the capability that I had at the time for not not even understanding the word recovery or identifying that that was what I was part of at the time. And so I found some various community service groups that were helping other people that I could relate to, and try to find a sense of community there since I couldn't find recovery focused peers at the time. And so for me, that was really a challenge because those community service groups in and around campus had a culture of socialization outside of the service opportunities we did that really revolved around partying, drinking, and some of the meetings were even at bars. And so, for me, I didn't find my own kind of community until I decided to make my career out of my passion to support others around substances.

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Russ White 09:38

So Dawn, how do students Now typically discover Ms. Use collegiate recovery community and what is its impact on their campus experience and success?

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Dawn Kepler 09:47

Yeah, that's a great questions. So it's a little bit all over the board for how students find us and as Chris mentioned, we have the great resources now of having online promotion, it

still can be hard to connect the individuals who need the services with the services themselves. We have the majority of our students who are currently part of our collegiate recovery community. 80%, who found out about it after they became an MSU students. So either word of mouth, they did an online search, they heard about it at a 12 step or other recovery support meeting. About half of those also heard about it through a campus partner. So we are really indebted to our campus partners, the counseling and psychiatric services, Dean of Students Office, who have been great partners in helping to try to identify when students need these supports to get them connected in. That leaves about 20% of our students who are part of our collegiate recovery community who found us before they even came to MSU, and many of them before they even decided to become a Spartan. And so this is actually in line with what the research tells us that one in three students in recovery would not be enrolled in college, and actually one in five would not have selected their current present institution had there not been a collegiate recovery program, because these students recognize the importance of having supports available so that they can succeed as a college student. And, and our students are some of the most successful students on colleges. We see it here at MSU. And the research that's been done across the country, our own students in our collegiate recovery community have reported, we collect data from them annually, and they've reported GPAs above 3.04 100% of our students cumulative GPA is above three point, and 50% of our students have a 3.5 and higher, and our students have gone on and graduated and done amazing things. As you anyone who knows an individual in recovery, you will be able to recognize the resilience and strength and dedication of an individual, when you have to balance out everything that it means to be a student while also taking care of yourself, because you really have to prioritize a lot of time and energy into self care and to your mental health into your recovery supports. And on top of that our students, most of them also have jobs, and do a lot of work through community service. So our students are very busy. They're very dedicated. And they do go on to do amazing things after they graduate MSU.

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Russ White 12:43

Well, and of course, the pandemic is affecting everyone and everything. How in particular, is it impacting the recovery community? And how is the community adjusting?

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Dawn Kepler 12:53

Absolutely, we are seeing similar trends with our students and recovery struggling through the pandemic as well. And I think isolation was mentioned, that is a huge risk factor that our students report year after year even before the pandemic started. And the pandemic itself has been an isolating experience for a lot of our students who are living alone off campus or even on campus, and don't have those social connections. And, as Chris

mentioned, it is really difficult to reach out to others, especially when you don't have those kind of natural opportunities that you would typically have to engage with other people. And this is an issue specifically for the college population. Because when you have young adults, this is the developmental time when that social connection is particularly salient. So that's one of the biggest priority areas for student when they're at that developmental age. And so, really looking for spaces to safely Connect has been huge for our students and our students have had a lot of anxiety around the pandemic and wanting to stay safe. And how do you balance staying safe and healthy in a pandemic, while also supporting your substance use disorder, which can also be deadly. And so it's been a really hard balancing act for our students. And so through the collegiate recovery community, we have tried to provide as many safe spaces that follow pandemic guidelines is possible. We've been providing our services through hybrid formats whenever possible. So we provide it both in person as well as virtual platforms at the same time. So students who either live far away or learning from home right now can still stay engaged with students who are local can also come in person or if they feel more comfortable joining virtually they have that option. And so that's been something or if They're quarantined waiting for Coronavirus test results, they can still be able to join virtually. We have done some outdoor physically distanced activities as well. We've gone kayaking, we've taken campus walks in the botanical gardens and the horticultural gardens here on campus. And we've also added additional meeting opportunities for our students. Because we've the feedback we've received from our students is that it's really important to hold space right now. Even if students are fatigued from virtual meetings or feeling really overwhelmed or, or not being able to reach out when they need to just knowing that there is that space available for when they do need, it has been really important. So in addition to our weekly all recovery support meetings we have every Thursday night, we also added on Monday meditations as another option for our students as well.

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Russ White 15:58

Chris, we mentioned you're an executive at one of the fastest growing tech companies in the world. And in June of 2020, you opened up to your network about your sobriety in a LinkedIn post. After 15 years of sobriety, what made you feel comfortable with the vulnerability of becoming an advocate and what what kind of response did you get?

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Chris Anthony 16:19

Yeah, it's it's it's interesting rests on the beginning of this year, like most people do, you sit down and you start mapping out your resolutions for the year and your goals for the year. And I knew that I was creeping up on 15 years of sobriety, which is you highlighted was going to be in June of 2020 of this year. And I was thinking a lot about the fact that here I

am hitting almost 15 years, and yet I really don't talk about it publicly, I'm sure people around me that worked with me would know, but I didn't talk about it publicly. And that was really bothering me a lot. There was two main things that really were drivers that got me to open up. And it happened to be through giving to others. One of them is I have the extraordinary opportunity to work with Navy SEALs through the seal future Foundation, and Navy SEALs as they are looking to make the transition from military life into business life. I've been able to take what I know in business and help empower them to move into the business world and interview and think about resetting the next phase of their life and what they're going to do in the business world. And if anybody knows anything about navy seals, that's a community of some pretty gritty top performing tough guys. And I was always ashamed to talk about my sobriety, I didn't think it was admirable, I didn't think it was all that cool. I was ashamed of it just flat out ashamed to talk about it. And I also believe that somehow is going to limit me from getting ahead in life. And so as I'm working with these seals, I would talk to a couple of them. And I'd mentioned that I was sober. And one day one guy said to me, he says we'll wait a minute, what 15 years of sobriety? And I was like, yeah, and he goes, you have to tell every person you meet about this. And I was like, Well, why? And he said, because we think that's cool. And I was like, What? And he's like, yeah, you had an adverse adversity in your life, you took control of it, and you overcame it. And he goes, there is nothing cooler to us than anybody that gets their life in order, and sets them selves up for success. And so I talked to a couple more seals, same response. That's cool to us. And, and so that was weighing heavily on my mind, like, Okay, and then the other charity, I get the extraordinary chance to work with is a little bit of a dream come true. I'm a big Metallica fan, the band, and I help with their charity, and try to help help others through that community. And it's such a gift to get to work with them. But we help individuals that are struggling. And a lot of times these individuals have really, really tough backgrounds that really need a helping hand to, you know, get a welding degree in community college, or just get some help getting food from a food bank. And, you know, you meet so many these individuals along the way that we're helping and you start to talk to them and they're so vocal about the challenges in their life and everything that they've been up against. And with admiration, I would ask, Well, hey, what gives you the courage to speak up about the adversity in your life? And they kind of look at me like I'm a little bit of a bonehead. They'd be like, well, it helps others. So I my wake up moment to finally answer your question was like, Okay, if Navy SEALs thinks it's okay, that I'm sober. And the Metallica community thinks that's cool that I'm sober. I'm like, What is my problem? Like, why am I so ashamed and hidden of this? So you're right. On June 20 of this year, I decided to, quote unquote, come out about my sobriety, and I posted an article on LinkedIn called 15 things I've learned in 15 years of sobriety, and I put it all out there, and I was scared as could be. And I put it on a couple other social media channels as well. In exactly zero bad things happen to me. In fact, just the opposite occurred. In that very moment. I had discovered my why in life, I discovered my purpose in



life. And I knew right then that it was simple to be of service to others. Literally every day since that post, I get asked for help. It's been outstanding experience. And it's led me to this discussion six months ago, Dawn, I would not have been on this podcast with you, Russ, no way, wasn't going to speak out openly. But here I am. And it's the greatest feeling ever. And if it gives anybody an ounce of encouragement that you can speak up about being sober and be proud of it, I'm doing my job. And you know, Chris, both on college campuses, and in the corporate world, there is sort of that, that pressure to celebrate and commiserate with alcohol or substances, what are some mechanisms or responses you've developed to navigate these social pressures? And that maybe you can recommend to others? Yeah, I just to dig in deeper to what you're saying here, too, is that I think if I look, I work in I work in sales, and anybody that's in the sales, culture knows that alcohol is very central to it. You know, the phrase, we wine and dine customers? I mean, look at that, right there, take them out in wine and dine them. I mean, that just denotes alcohol, and celebration, focus, the hall and I think in business business world, it's just something that's a to your point, just very typical and normal. Well, I've been navigating it for 15 plus years. And to me, it's about saying no, and it's about remembering that I'm simply just trying to be healthy. And never, ever apologize or feel sorry about it. Because there's lots of things that people reasons why people need to be healthy, whether it's eating better, not smoking, not doing tons of things, but for whatever reason, there is a massive stigma attached to saying I don't drink, right? That doesn't happen with mayonnaise or cilantro. When you say no to it. People don't say What do you mean? Were you addicted to cilantro? Were you addicted to mayonnaise? Nope. Just with drinking, it opens up another question. And you just have to get comfortable in your own skin answering it. And first of all, no apology ever needed. No need to ever feel bad for the fact that you're choosing a healthy lifestyle. And I know this gives people anxiety all day long. And it scares people that I can't do listen, I hear horror stories all the time. Now that I've opened up about my sobriety, I hear some horror stories. But I am here to say that part of my other mission is I'm going to end the segment. But there is no need ever to apologize for being healthy.

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Russ White 22:18

And I wonder if you could explain to people Chris, what you mean, when you say sobriety is your superpower?

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Chris Anthony 22:24

Yeah, I, too, to give full credit to Rene Brown, who's an extraordinary author and you know, 25 year plus sober individual herself. I took that from her. I heard her talk about that. And in the reason that I really leaned into that statement is, as I mentioned, I was very ashamed of talking about it openly. Yeah, as I reflected on how much I've been able



to achieve in my life, I realized that that achievement only happened. Because of that sobriety, that 15 year window of sobriety, I grew more far more than I ever did every year before it. And everything that I've been able to do and be in a position to help others is because of that sobriety. And there's an old saying, for people that have challenges with addiction, you either get locked up, you get covered up or you get sobered up. I chose to get sobered up and then has paid dividends since the day I made that choice. It's my superpower.

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Russ White 23:25

And Chris to say a little more about some of the initiatives you're championing like sober force and the sober exact.com. And, you know, Salesforce is a very employee centric company. Were you surprised they didn't have something to assist with sobriety?

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Chris Anthony 23:40

Yeah, there's quite a few things that has happened since that June 20, coming out about my sobriety, and one of the most rewarding aspects of it aside from the daily ask for help or encouragement was at my great, wonderful company, Salesforce, I'm very much speaking not for Salesforce, but is me Chris Anthony here. But immediately, three other executives in the company came to me and said, All right, you're sober to cool, we should do something with this. And we talked and we all were vulnerable with each other. And we shared our stories. And we, we all talked about that challenge in business and sales about this idea of the stigma attached to being sober. And we thought we have such a gift. We work for such an extraordinary, equality driven company that's thoughtful about social initiatives and wellbeing for all. And we thought why don't we create a community within our own company that encourages others, first and foremost, to feel comfortable to ask for help because the resources that we provide as a company are suddenly much more visible by us sharing our own and our stories. And so we came up with this named sober force, which is our internal branding for our communities. Salesforce, we have Latina force and bold force and all the different forms That drive communities together faith force, that force etc. We created this community in the spirit of getting others to ask for help. But also just to point out that our stories are hopefully going to destigmatize addiction and being recovering again, just being healthy. It's just being healthy. And instantly the response was overwhelming in a beautifully positive way. Yeah, sure, a few people reached out for help. We had a lot of like, non drinkers that are, excuse me, drinkers alike, that have family members that were challenging, or just said, hey, that's right. This is ridiculous. Why do we have the stigma, and the response has been extremely favorable. And we're just we're so proud of that initiative. And I think about, it was easy for us to do in our company, because we do work for such a fast forward tech company that is equal, equal,

equality driven, and really, you know, well minded being. But we still know that there's a lot of companies that would not do that support that kind of network. So we're trying to get the word out about it over time. And here to set that template of success as an example for other companies to follow suit with, you know, we've

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Russ White 26:05

touched a bit on the importance of D stigmatizing Roku, recovery and sobriety. What are some proactive steps we can take to be good analyze,

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Dawn Kepler 26:14

and I think Chris just gave one of the greatest examples ever. I think celebrating and talking about recovery is huge, raising awareness, exactly like Chris said earlier. Part of how someone could do that is by taking a recovery ally training. msu isn't the only one who offers recovery Li trainings, there are other entities, including Collegiate Recovery communities across the nation who also offer those. You can also when you're concerned about someone start a conversation and tell them that you're concerned about them and continue that conversation with empathy and openness, correct misconceptions. So a big part of what contributes to stigma is misunderstanding and myths around addiction and recovery. And also not only crafting the misperceptions, but also correcting hurtful language, language really matters and can propagate, continue stigma. And so not talking about substance use disorders as substance abusers. You don't want to have any of that negative connotation associated with addiction and with an individual who is navigating addiction and navigating recovery, talk about it in with language that puts the person first. So a person with a substance use disorder versus an addict. And recognizing also that, that because recovery populations, research tells us they are marginalized, the individuals who are in recovery may use language that they have taken ownership of, and that in that context, it's okay if a person who identifies as being in recovery uses language that it isn't always okay for other people to, we don't want to have someone else describe a person who has returned to us as dirty. And so language really matters and in how we talk about addiction, how we represent individuals who are struggling with this disease of addiction. Another thing is, as Chris talked about, honoring someone's decision to refrain from alcohol and other drug use, regardless of they don't have to give a reason. When a person does say that they might be struggling or brings up some concerns for their own use, helping them connect them to resources. So being a warm hand, pulling them maybe virtually right now on the time of the pandemic, but get it giving that warm handoff, because it as Chris mentioned, also like it can take a lot of courage to reach out for help. And so when a person does reach out to help, that's huge that they've made themselves vulnerable to because of the stigma. There's often a lot of guilt and shame associated

with struggling with addiction as well as recovery that extends into recovery. And so when someone does open up to you honor that and tried to help them and follow their lead coming up alongside them. Sometimes a person might not be ready to take a step forward, opening up and talking to you might be that step and so understanding that sometimes planting a seed is the biggest step at all that you can take at that moment. Also, when you're planning gatherings, being thoughtful of how you host those gatherings, do you have non alcoholic options available, where you do hosting those gatherings right now obviously, this isn't as much of an issue as non pandemic times, but Like when I had that experience as a college student, where the community service organizations hosted events at bars. And so being mindful of it, of the context, and the locations that you host gatherings can also be important.

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Russ White 30:18

And Chris, same question to you about how can we be good allies, but extending it to as dawn started to, if there's someone in our life we think needs help? How do we, you know, go about that with empathy?

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Chris Anthony 30:31

Yeah, I really like what Dawn talked about with the idea of just being thoughtful with our language. And I think we're, there's a lot of lessons being learned right now globally about the importance of language and how we think about communicating with others. And we can just leave it at that. But, you know, I think the same applies to what's happening with individuals that need some encouragement or need some direction towards getting help. And I think that the idea of trying to have our eyes and ears open for those that will need help, and are simply wanting to live healthy and fruitful lives. And so if if terraplane, about, you know, offering a lending hand and being able to point them to some resources or being supportive as they try to find resources, that's because it's going to go a really long way. You know, I think back to the stigma concept, too, we're running into this territory, again, where someone makes the declaration, hey, I'm not drinking, and then they find themselves on their heels trying to defend why. So let's not crucify someone for the fact that they're choosing not to drink or be caught up in the motion of whatever is happening, it is really possible with just sparkling water or a Red Bull to have equally as a good time, if, you know, you really look at it that way. But that seems to be a struggle. I think that, you know, for the individual that's on the receiving end, and that type of questioning and stuck with, you know, managing through that it is super scary. It is just ominous for so many individuals, and it keeps people cooped up in their homes, because they don't want to go out for fear of just even being asked that question. And so, to that, I would say, you know, there is a community to what everything done and talked about from both the

collegiate level, but I think in the business world as well, there's a lot of different paths to start to open up this dialogue with others, so you can get comfortable with that conversation and almost be ready and excited to answer the question about, you know, whether you're drinking or not. So it's a matter of seeking some community and knowing that you're also not alone.

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Russ White 32:33

And we've been talking about recovery and sobriety with Dawn Kepler and Chris Anthony dawn leads Michigan State University's collegiate recovery community. And Chris is vice president at Salesforce. And I guess, just let me pass you both to sort of summarize what you want us to take from this conversation?

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Dawn Kepler 32:52

Sure, Chris, I just want to say how grateful I am to have this opportunity to talk very publicly about addiction and recovery and help increase the awareness, kind of the theme of what we have talked about is the need for increased awareness, the need to kind of try to overcome the stigma associated with it. And along those lines, the get out the information, instead of myths about substance use disorders, and raise awareness about the fact that addiction is a chronic brain disease. And it is a way for individuals to pursue a healthy, normal life and that many of the stereotypes around what an individual who struggles with substance use look like are not in fact, what we see, most people in their lives, either have struggled with substances themselves are no another individual who has struggled. And if you don't know who that individual is, it might be worth starting to talk about addiction and recovery. Because, as Chris mentioned earlier, I guarantee you when you start talking about it, other people will join in the conversation because they personally have been affected by addiction as well. It is very widespread. It is a disease like any disease, and it is something that should not be silenced, because people feel shame or guilt over it. Being a disease. And people in recovery go on to lead hugely successful, happy lives. And so I think raising awareness will help more and more individuals, be it to be able to achieve their goals and live that healthy, happy, happy life.

C

Chris Anthony 34:47

Yeah, I want to echo Dawn's gratitude. And I just I have to say this too, because I've mentioned six months ago I would not have had this conversation. This is yet another wonderful gift that has come along in this process. being vulnerable and speaking out. And so, you know, for any listener that's out there, if this helps you just a little bit, you've got one happy individual sitting here right now. So if it gives you any encouragement, I'm

super pleased and happy in that gratitude comes from this opportunity. A couple of things and takeaways that I really want to highlight here. So first of all, ask for help. Full stop, ask for help. If you are struggling, if someone you know or love or care about is struggling, ask for help. There's a ton of resources that Dawn highlighted. I don't care what walk of life you're from where you're at, there are tons of resources that we'd be thrilled to help you with, you can reach out to me on LinkedIn, Chris Anthony, you can find me on there. I also, as Russ mentioned, have a website that I created in Hovis called the sober exec.com. And reach out to me there, nothing would make me happier than to point you in the right direction. The second takeaway I want to highlight is for the student that may hear this that's in recovery now, and is really scared about going into the corporate or a career, that somehow your sobriety and choice to be healthy is going to put a cap on your career, and I'm here to tell you that it will not, you may have to manage it, you're gonna have to learn to manage some conversations. But you should not be fearful about achieving everything you hope and dream to achieve in your life. This should not be a hindrance, simply because you choose to be healthy. And if you want to talk about that, and you want to practice the conversation, reach out to me, again, nothing would make me happier. And then lastly, I think for the general audience overall, is to recap a little bit of what Dawn was talking about is that let's just give some folks a break. For those that are genuinely trying to take care of themselves. Let's be extra mindful of helping those individuals out being an ally and being supportive. Now more than ever, as we've talked about that's needed, and come to find out. And this is a little lesson I learned as I get allegedly older, while I definitely am getting older, but as I allegedly get wiser is everybody struggles with something. And if you don't think that's true, you're lying to yourself. Everybody struggles with something, and someone has helped you through that at some point in your life. And so there's an opportunity to help others be better individuals and you'll become a better person in the process. That's my closing thoughts, Russ. Oh,



**Russ White** 37:23

Thank you very much. Both Dawn Kepler and Chris Anthony for being so articulate and sharing your insight into this deeply personal topic of recovery and sobriety. To learn more about their work, for Dawn, its [healthpromotion.msu.edu/recovery](https://healthpromotion.msu.edu/recovery). Of course, you could just Google collegiate recovery community as well. And as Chris said, his site is the [soberexec.com](https://soberexec.com) or just Google that too. And special thanks to Alex Gillespie for making this conversation possible. And I'm Russ White. This is MSU Today.