

EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY

An Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) program funded by the NYC Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice that provides individual and group counseling, mentoring, education and employment support, and mental health and substance use treatment to individuals, 18 years and older with open cases in Criminal and Supreme Courts throughout Manhattan.



In 2019, Dustin and his nine-month pregnant girlfriend, Joanne, moved from their native state of Texas to New York seeking to change their lives as they wrestled with drug addiction. Their main opponent and drug of choice was Meth.

During their drive to New York City, Joanne went into labor and gave birth to a daughter, Castaliya Hope Spurlin. Sadly, their newborn tested positive for methamphetamine and was immediately taken from her parents and put into the care of Child Protective Services.

After arriving in New York, Dustin and Joanne made a series of bad decisions that eventually led to Joanne's incarceration and Dustin's arrest for criminal possession of a weapon.

As Dustin went through the court process, his defense attorney referred him to Exodus Transitional Community's Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) program. Dustin was released from Department of Correction (DOC) custody and moved into one of Exodus' reentry hotels, which Exodus runs in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ). At the re-entry hotels, participants are provided with a hotel room to ensure they are not homeless and are also provided with mental health services if needed. Dustin joined Exodus' substance abuse program, the Wellness Center, for the support he needed to stop using drugs and alcohol and to remain sober for 18 months and counting. Dustin also participated in Exodus' Center for Trauma Innovation, where he engaged in various therapeutic services and learned to advocate for himself and use his voice to ask for help when he needs it. Dustin also attended numerous non-mandated groups and workshops, including a wilderness job training program, puppy therapy, knitting at the Center for Trauma Innovation, and the Abyssinian Baptist Church's group, for which he also received various certificates and awards for his participation. Dustin is currently enrolled in Exodus' High School Equivalency program and is also working for Exodus in its maintenance department.

In Dustin's words, "Exodus has played an amazing role in my life. I used to live a different lifestyle and Exodus has opened up my eyes to work towards a better lifestyle for myself. I've learned from my mistakes and I'm not going to make them again." Recently, Dustin received a non-incarcerator disposition, and continues to thrive within Exodus.