

COLLIER COUNTY ADULT FELONY DRUG COURT

“MOVING ON” SPEECH BY AMBER,

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When I first came into Drug Court, I was lost and confused. I had no idea what I wanted to do in life. No idea that I was even worthy of a life. Honestly, I didn't see my life being anything other than the life of an addict. I didn't know there was even another way to live. Growing up, I saw everyone around me using and living life to the bare minimum. I believed that's just the way people lived. I followed in those footsteps. I used to live, and lived to use. My life was meaningless. I didn't have healthy relationships, I didn't have goals for my future. I didn't even think I had a future. I never thought that getting arrested would be one of the best things to happen to me. I went to jail and hated myself. Hated the person I had become. I was nothing, not a mother, not a friend, not a daughter. I was not me. I had a realization in jail. Life didn't have to be that way. I could be something better. Better than my past and better than everything I was used to. I decided to try out this program. Everything I'd ever heard about Drug Court was negative. Except from 1 person. And because of her sharing her experience, I decided to try it. I wanted to change. I wanted to be a mother to my son. I wanted to know what life could be if I was sober. I took the chance and now here I am. I have a great job with a future. I have a relationship with my son. I have meaningful friendships and people I actually love in my life. People that I know love me. I couldn't have gotten here on my own though. I'd like to thank everyone on the Drug Court team and everyone in my life right now for helping me and never giving up on me. When I relapsed back in October, I thought every-

thing was over. I thought I would lose my job and my son. I was terrified that Drug Court would just send me back to jail. But I was trying this new concept called trust. So I did what they asked me to and let them know right away that I messed up. And wouldn't you know it, they worked with me. They helped me and we came up with a solution. One where I didn't lose my job or my son. But I received the extra help I needed to get me through that bump in the road. So thank you Brooke and Niki, and everyone behind the scenes for that. And a special thank you to Judge Martin for pushing me out of my comfort zone after that and into Jenn's open arms. Moving into the Art of Living was by far the best thing I've done for my recovery. Jenn and the girls there gave me the support and love I needed at the time. And still support me to this day. And thank you to all the girls in Drug Court, especially Misty, Lindsey, Tina and Gabby. I could not have done this without any of you. Thank you for showing me real friendships do exist and they don't just have to be temporary. I love all of you and I don't know where I would be today without any of you or this program. And this is definitely scary but I think I'm ready for the next page to open in my book.