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Influence to Dominance

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Influence to Dominance

STORYTELLER: Dev Bailey

When I was growing up I spent most of my time outdoors. This is just what was expected of kids. Dayton had so many parks and so many places for us to be safe, that all my Aunties and Uncles would just toss their kids out of the house. It was just like that, and no one gave it a second thought. Dayton was different then. Crack use to be for parties, way back when, no one knew what it would do to them; no one had ever seen a drug like that before. Originally it was for parties; it was just like that. Quickly people became addicted. Soon our Aunties and Uncles that we all loved became the first addicts. The places we considered safe turned into something else.

I joined the army not because my dad was in the military; it was because I wanted to escape

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the community that I had loved that was now beginning to crack and crumble. **IT WAS PETRIFYING TO SEE MY FRIEND'S PARENTS, MY AUNTIES AND UNCLES, USING. HOW COULD EVERY PERSON FALL TO THIS ADDICTION?**

I came back to the city to see my Uncles and Aunties expecting, hoping, to find the town changed. But, the city had become worse. So, I started working with kids. I loved teaching because a teacher is concerned with the future of the kids. Being a mentor to the kids and guiding them was so rewarding, helping them know what should be done in the community and for their future. Every person has their place in this life.

When I learned how to relate to others, the decision to become a politician became a duty. It was the only way to save my people, my kids, my city. I tried to run for the mayor of Dayton. It was a requirement that every candidate collect three thousand signatures from the people, to show they wanted and trusted me. The politicians played dirty, and I got disqualified. Some of the names I got before I had changed my address to one in the city limits, so they didn't count.

But I learned something. Those signatures showed me what I could do and that people still had hope. **AND THE POLITICS SHOWED ME THAT I HAVE TO KEEP FIGHTING BECAUSE IF YOU'RE NOT AT THE TABLE YOU'RE ON THE MENU.**