

Cellblocks To Mountaintops
Video Episode 6A: Fresh Hope
Transcript

Men: Cross talk - I was asked to go along and relax. Just once in a while, something changes the vetting process. And It sounds good to me.

TEXT CARD:

Prison Chaplain Karuna Thompson calls a meeting
of Reforming Criminal Justice class facilitators.

Chaplain Karuna Thompspon: So I know that somebody in the room is sitting with some news, that you got on Thursday?

Sterling Cunio: Do you know?

Professor Melissa Buis: I heard right before I walked in.

Theron Hall: Yeah, we want to know.

Men: (Cross-talk) Yeah, I don't even know I just saw you on Saturday...

Theron Hall: I saw you about 10 minutes ago.

Tyler Warren: How am I supposed to be your confident your support, you "Support animal?"

Men: (Cross-talk) Man!

Sterling Cunio: So, on Thursday, the federal court ordered the state of Oregon to give me a release hearing.

Theron Hall: Woooo!

Anthony Pickens: That's a gigantic.

Ben Pervish: I want to hug you, dude. But I'll probably fucking cry.

Men: Go on and give him a hug...

Men: Crosstalk...

Theron Hall: Come on, can't be hard all the time. Come on, let it go

Sterling Cunio: If anyone gonna give me a hug, you gotta give me a hug

Theron Hall: You can cry. Let it go. This is restorative justice. We can cry in here!

Sterling Cunio: As of right now, it looks like I might have a chance to get out of prison. It's probably before Tyler loses his zits.

Tyler Warren: Well, that's going to be a while.

Sterling Cunio: I was telling somebody earlier that it's it's an emotional roller coaster because you get excited. But at the same time, you know, I've won before and then it gets took back. Plus too, you don't want to have to explain the complexities to everybody, because people that don't understand the legal process, they hear "release hearing" and they asking me what I want for dinner. Right? They like planning a dinner I'm like, hold on, hold on, you know what I mean? Like they have 30 days to decide whether or not they're going to appeal. And then if they appeal the decision up to the Ninth Circuit, then that could be another year or two.

Professor Melissa Buis: Well, imagine if the state didn't spend so much money just fighting you having the chance at parole.

Sterling Cunio: Yeah.

Professor Melissa Buis: And instead invested that money in working with victims and getting to true healing.

Sterling Cunio: As exciting as it is for me is, there's also.... it's it's traumatic for, you know, for the people that I hurt, for the people that, you know, shot, I mean, their families like, every proceeding, they got to go to.

Hopefully, I won't be here with y'all too much longer. Then you can do all the fighting y'all want and ain't gonna worry about me saying anything.

Men: Cross-talk: I'm ready now. I feel some type of way.

Professor Melissa Buis: Do I get to give you a hug?