

Coming Back

DEREK YETER'S STORY



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Building Tables | Building Community | ReBuilding Lives

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The Beginning

My name is Derek Yeter, and I'm a Customer Service Specialist at Special-T. I am proud to be in long-term recovery from drugs and alcohol.

I followed the rules in high school, but my story changed when I left home for college. I started drinking and quickly developed a nasty habit of it. I worked multiple jobs to keep



up with tuition and spent the rest on alcohol. I soon realized drinking, working, and being a student were impossible. Unfortunately, that is when my opiate addiction started. For years I stayed in the cycle of abuse, and maintaining my addiction began to cost much more than just money.

In 2012, I joined the No Longer Bound rehabilitation program and stayed there for three years, after which I joined their staff. While at NLB I met Brandon Rayburn: the president of Special-T and a fellow No Longer Bound alumnus. My first child was on the way, and I felt it was the right moment to change. Brandon told me about the company and "Rework": Special-T's community of recovering addicts in the workplace. He explained that rework was another level of recovery-focused accountability in the workplace. The rework program sounded intriguing to me, so I went to work for Special-T.

After working in Special-T's warehouse, I got promoted to the Warranty Manager position. And in October 2015, my first son was born. To say that I was more than excited is a vast understatement. My wife and I married the following year, and I thought I could not be happier. From the outside looking in, my life looked perfect. But I was hiding a dark secret.

Rock Bottom

I had fallen back into drinking and into a full-blown opiate addiction. Because of ReWork's honesty-first policy, I had to tell the truth about my addiction. So, I decided to call my supervisor and let him know that I was not sober, wasn't fit to work, and was choosing to resign from Special-T. Next, I had to tell my wife – knowing I would be breaking her heart while we expected another son.



At this point, I had reached my "bottom." However, I wanted to be there for my wife and sons and be the man they needed me to be. Therefore, I returned to a long-term treatment facility with no job, a young son with another on the way, and a wife who meant the world to me. I knew that my sons deserved a sober father, my wife deserved a sober husband, and I was determined to be that for them.

The Comeback

In October of 2018, after completing treatment, my second son was born... and I was sober! It was an indescribable feeling being sober for my son's birth! I felt like I had officially become the man my family deserved, which propelled me further into my recovery. I enjoy fatherhood, so being able to work from home with my wife and sons during that period was one of the happiest times in my life. Then, one day I received an unexpected phone call from Brandon Rayburn; he asked me if we could discuss my return to Special-T. I had zero reservations; I wanted to join the team and be a part of the recovery workplace again. Working at Special-T is not just about selling tables but sharing our message of recovery with anyone struggling with addiction.



“I’m Derek Yeter, and I’m a Better Man because of Special-T...”

“I am a better man today because of Special-T and their recovery workplace. I can be a good husband to my wife, be a present father to my boys, and financially support my family while still growing in my recovery. I now live a life I never dreamed was possible because of my second chance from Special-T”.





A Message from Special-T's President Brandon Rayburn

What a privilege it is to be able to work with Derek! Special-T prides itself on being a second-chance-focused workplace. Derek is one of the best embodiments of the spirit of Special-T. He has consistently proven himself an invaluable asset to his customers, always going above and beyond and providing the best solutions. Derek is one of the best examples of Special-T's Recovery Workplace Community, "ReWork," and truly highlights our internal mission. Thank you, Derek, for sharing your story!!

Brandon Rayburn

▶ Watch Derek tell his Special-T Story



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11820 Wills Rd, Suite 140
Alpharetta, GA 30009
888.705.0777
www.SpecialT.net