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Video: 'What can I do to help you?'

Ben Thompson discusses what he has learned about compassion and helping others through community paramedicine

Dec 28, 2020

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — A firefighter recently held a TED talk about helping the residents in the community he serves.

In [the talk](#), Birmingham fire lieutenant and paramedic Ben Thompson shared his experiences with patients throughout his career, as well as increasing public health through proactivity.

Thompson discussed launching a community paramedicine program in an effort to reduce 911 calls and a specific patient who had an impact on him.

“How many people had I labeled as abusers of the system without even having any idea how their life was really like?” Thompson said while recalling his experience with the patient. “So I forgot trying to shove down her throat what I thought she needed and asked her, ‘what can I do to help you?’”

Watch the full video below:

You can be the hero someone needs | Ben Thompson | TEDxBirmingham



This article was originally posted July 2, 2018. It has been updated.

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Posted by **garland.carpenter** Jul 11, 2018 at 3:50 PM

Haven't social workers been doing this very thing for decades?

♥ 0



Posted by **Anon Y Mous** Jul 11, 2018 at 11:36 PM

Perhaps.. But the folks we encounter on the firing lines don't call social workers, friend.. they call 911.

♥ 0



Posted by **garland.carpenter** Jul 12, 2018 at 11:31 AM

I don't wish to sound rude, but having nearly 35 years "on the firing lines" I am quite familiar with who dials 911. My point is this, I think we would be naive in assuming that no one else (besides us) has recognized that these individuals have unmet social needs. Do we really believe that during those many visits to the emergency room that no one else has done their job and activated social

♥ 0



Posted by **Anon Y Mous** Jul 5, 2018 at 9:56 PM

Thank you for this, Ben. This little talk has given me a fresh perspective on this topic. As... paramedic at a private service this is a big part of what we see as well. We have "frequent flyers" in each of our coverage areas with varying degrees of complications. I may never get the opportunity to serve in this ever so critical capacity at a private service but one call at a time I can do whatever I can to see that our patients are taken care of not by shoving what we think they should do down their throats but simply take your approach... "What can I do to help you?" and hopefully somehow be able to connect them to willing allied health professionals in their area that would be willing to do what you have done.. to simply care. Thank you again, brother. -S. M. Savage, NR-P

♥ 0

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