

MHLS  
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Anne Marie Whelan  
721 W. Court St.  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
March 24, 2002

Richard Wenig  
Mental Health Legal Services  
44 Hawley Street  
16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Wenig,

I would like to offer my support to Kevin Eric Saunders in his request to be released from the Court's Order of Conditions which requires outpatient treatment. As he is my ex-husband and the father of my daughter, I have known him since 1980 and continue to see him once or twice a week when our daughter goes to his house, or when she returns to my house.

There was indeed a period of time five years ago that was quite frightening, when Kevin burned down the trailer of his then-girlfriend, Susan Hamman. The violence of this behavior was totally out-of-character. He had had his problems before and could be difficult at times, but never before was he violent. At that time, his talk was strange and out-of-touch with reality. Never before had he sounded like this. Frightened as I was, I arranged to get an order-of-protection and to not allow my daughter to see him for a few months.

But he improved over the next months. After a few months he was allowed supervised visitation with Rachel, our daughter. I started speaking to him again in January of 1998 and he had obviously begun to return to his former self, but with a new humility and maturity. Over that year he was allowed more contact with Rachel and that seemed to be good for both of them. By the next year we had returned to our former arrangement where she spends approximately half the week at each house.

Financially things have been tough and Kevin has not been able to contribute as much to Rachel's upbringing as he would like. He has been trying to revitalize the work that he had been doing before the terrible days of 1997. He needs to devote his time to his work and not be distracted by the issues of the past and to dwell upon them. Now they want him to travel to Elmira or Seneca Falls to get treatment that he doesn't need? This would require unnecessary time and expense for him.

And let's not forget the expense to taxpayers to support this treatment that his therapist as well as his former psychiatrist feel that he no longer needs.

From my standpoint I see the events of 1997 as aberrant and not likely to occur again. Two major factors seem to have contributed to Kevin's psychosis at that time. His relationship with Susan Hamman and an interaction in the medications he had recently been prescribed.

I regret that I ever introduced Kevin and Susan to each other, as their relationship turned very toxic. Her strange and changeable behaviors caused him considerable anxiety and stress. After months of periodic arguments he got her to leave his house. But she came back and in her manipulativenness seemed determined to do him harm.

Kevin's hypothesis that his delusions of the time were caused by an unfortunate interaction of his medications seems to be a plausible explanation, as he had never before had such horrendous delusions, and once he ceased taking those medications, the delusions went away. I could tell he was not in his right mind when he committed the arson because after he was apprehended I brought his car back to his house in the company of a state trooper. We saw that the doors had been left wide open and a candle was left burning. He was always very security-conscious and would never leave his house like that unless he was in a terrible panic.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Marie Whelan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anne Marie Whelan