

JENNY

Interviewer: So we talked about your past, and we'll talk about your future. At some point, if you can think of a turning point, we'll get back to that. Where are your ideas about the next chapter of your life?

Jenny: My ideas? That I would just get a job at a preschool with my teaching license, because I have a ... well, my teaching certificate.

Interviewer: Oh, cool.

Jenny: So I get a job at a preschool, full-time, after I graduate from the [REDACTED] House.

Interviewer: How much time do you have, by the way?

Jenny: Well, it's kind of complicated because ... I've been there almost six months, and really, it was supposed to be a 12-month program. It's been a 12-month program, and now they're trying to say that now they're going to stop ... insurance is going to stop paying, like they're going to start using our insurance to pay or whatever.

Interviewer: So that means it's shorter, or?

Jenny: So now they're going to start saying it's only a six-month program now.

Interviewer: I see.

Jenny: And now I'm going to be up for a review, so now it's every 90 days, they're going to do a review. Basically, I'm going to be up for a review, and they're going to see why I'm still there, because I should be out of the house because I've been there so long. I'm like, "What do you mean? I've been there ... "

Interviewer: Yeah. They promised you 12 months.

Jenny: There's people that have been there for like a year.

Interviewer: I see.

Jenny: They're graduating right now, but still, that's crazy. I don't have the money or the means to leave yet, so I might be able to stay. But anyways, I don't ... I don't know what they're going to do.

Interviewer: You're talking to someone here about-

Jenny: Yeah.

Interviewer: ... your options.

Jenny: Yeah, I got to talk to someone.

Interviewer: [inaudible 00:58:09]

Jenny: Yeah, I really do. I'm trying to see if I can ... I don't know what ... The [REDACTED] House is very confusing. I don't know what they do over there. But I really need to ... I don't know. Anyways. I want to be a preschool ... I don't know how much time really I have.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, no problem. You can talk to someone here.

Jenny: Yeah, no. The [REDACTED] House, I don't know really how much time I ... I don't understand what that means anymore, a six-month program, because I don't know if they're going to give me more time. I don't understand. I just have to ... I really want this [Coops 00:59:07] ... I told them I'm getting the job at Coops. I'll be starting to make some money. Then they try and tell me, because Coops is only for three days.

Interviewer: What is Coops?

Jenny: It's the [REDACTED] program, at the kitchen. You work in [REDACTED]

Interviewer: Got you.

Jenny: But it's only three days a week, so that's like 21 hours.

Interviewer: Yeah, not full-time.

Jenny: Right. But my house is trying to say, "Oh, well, you're supposed to get a 30 to 40 hour a week job." Are you serious? I put in all this work, and I'm getting the job. I'm not going to leave this and just ... I'm doing this, and that's it. After a month, they're going to give me more hours. So they can deal with that? You know what I mean? I don't understand that ... This house makes no sense. It really doesn't.

Interviewer: Yeah. You can work up to 30 or 40 hours.

Jenny: It's ridiculous at the house. But to get back to the question, I want to be a preschool teacher. I would like to start learning how to save my money, get a bank account.

Interviewer: Nice, okay.

Jenny: I'd like to pay my license off and have a car. Or no, well, [inaudible 01:01:04] I just want to be able to get visits with my children. I want to get a job and some

money and a little place so they can come visit. I want to be settled so everybody can see that I'm settled down. I have my old job back, my old career back.

Interviewer: So you were a preschool teacher?

Jenny: Yeah. That was my whole entire career.

Interviewer: I see.

Jenny: Until that whole charge ... that whole entire thing happened-

Interviewer: I see, okay.

Jenny: ... in New Hampshire.

Interviewer: Got it. Okay. So you have a plan sounds like.

Jenny: Yeah.

Interviewer: What are you doing right now to work on that?

Jenny: I filled out that CORI packet, because I want the paper to see what they see on your CORI. You fill it out, and you send it. I think [REDACTED] 01:02:36] did it. We gave it to [REDACTED] and you send it ... You're supposed to get all your ... You get your CORI back so you can see what the people see when-

Interviewer: The records.

Jenny: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Jenny: I want to see what my CORI looks like.

Interviewer: Got it.

Jenny: Or if they even see it. I asked [REDACTED] all about the information about CORIs. I asked her how long it takes, the years after. She said it's seven years after ...

Interviewer: So you're coming up on seven years.

Jenny: Yes. It's 2011, so it's been ...

Interviewer: Yeah, almost seven [inaudible 01:03:42].

Jenny: Yeah.

KATIE

Speaker 1: Then the last chapter of the interview, is about your future, what you think, what you want for the future. What do you think ... What do you want? What do you want to do?

Speaker 2: I want to ... I went to school to be a medical assistant, I would love to get a job doing that.

Speaker 1: Do you have your CNA or?

Speaker 2: My MA.

Speaker 1: Your MA? Wow, good for you. Any particular kind of medical assistant?

Speaker 2: I just want to work in the medical field with people. That's where I'm the most comfortable. I want to stay out of jail. In my future, I see my graduating drug court, getting my kids back, having a good job, and remaining sober.

Speaker 1: So then you really share your kids, how do you see that looking? 50, 50 with [REDACTED]

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Where they could come and be with you for part of the time?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I know it won't be like they come right home. Maybe a night or two for a while. Then weekends and someday I can see them a couple mornings, we'll see how it works.

Speaker 1: What do you think you need to do to get there?

Speaker 2: I need to stay sober, in counseling, stay in treatment, go to meetings with my sponsor and my recovery coach and just remain focused. It's easy for me to lose focus when I don't see immediate results.

Speaker 1: Like getting that immediate reaction?

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: My next question is, real far away, what do you see your life looking like? Five years from now, ten years from now, what do you want to have happen?

Speaker 2: I want to have [inaudible 00:48:11]. A place that's home, like I had growing up. A place where my kids can feel safe and like no matter what's going on in their world, in those walls of my home, everything is okay. No chaos, everything is going great. I'm stable, I have a job, I have things that me and my children need to survive.

Speaker 1: Is there anything else about your experience in the last several years that you feel like is important to help change the way the system goes right now, especially for women?

Speaker 2: I feel like they shouldn't be so quick to throw a woman in jail and throw away the key. When I was going to take drug court, I remember my cellmate said to me, "I feel like I'm being punished for being a drug addict. Every time I get high, I get sent to jail. I need help, I don't need a cell." If they were faster to offer help and treatment, not just throw you in jail, people would come out and admit that they needed help a lot sooner. There wouldn't be so many overdoses because people would reach out sooner. They wouldn't feel scared that they were going to go to jail and run from the law, which cause them to keep running and using. Take the jail option off the table for some people, they'd show up and do whatever you asked. Let them know there's something out there besides a cell.

LUIS

Speaker 1: Then, tell me more about your future and your goals. You said you're going to get married and that's a very exciting chapter.

Luis: Yes.

Speaker 1: When do you think you're going to get married?

Luis: July.

Speaker 1: Oh, it's coming up.

Luis: I don't mind telling you. Yes.

Speaker 1: July.

Luis: Yes, July.

Speaker 1: You've already proposed?

Luis: No, it's going to happen Saturday.

Speaker 1: This is very timely. I'm very excited to hear this. How are you going to propose to her?

Luis: We already have a plan. Her two sisters are very schemey and we're having a plan. They told her that they're going to invite her to dinner. I gave them money so they could buy her everything. My sons, my sisters, and it's supposed to be oh yeah, because I saw one of her sisters. I met one of her sisters and we met at a, she was doing her hair, so she threw up her hair and she was mad. As soon as they told her [REDACTED] hasn't met her, I said I met her when she was mad. I want to see the other good side of her. That's the plan that we have. She invited us to a dinner.

Speaker 1: I see.

Luis: She has no clue.

Speaker 1: Oh man. Oh man.

Luis: I shared with you too much. I don't know.

Speaker 1: No, I hope that's okay. That's very exciting. That's very exciting. All right, so that's coming up in July.

Luis: Yes.

Speaker 1: What other goals do you have?

Luis: I want to get my CDL license.

Speaker 1: Okay, CDL.

Luis: Right now, like I said, I'm in this transition with this job and that job. I want to have, and I'm going to get it now that I have my license, I'm going to get a full time job that pays good money that early from 7 to 9 or 7 to 3, whatever. I want to get a job around that range, so I don't have to kill myself. I want to get myself a real full time job, have my own insurance. I want to keep the [inaudible 01:02:30] on a couple nights here or there, but private place, cause I like this facility. But, this wasn't a job or anything else that I would have to leave [REDACTED] [REDACTED] cause that's what they want.

Speaker 1: That's the point.

Luis: That's the point. It was a transition, which I owe them a lot. But, I'm glad I'm here. But, I know like right now I've got my license. These two things are going to happen.

Speaker 1: Then, the full time job, you want to be able to drive trucks again?

Luis: Yes, yes.

Speaker 1: Doing trucks for construction or doing delivery?

Luis: Yeah, delivery, anything.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Luis: I have a buddy of mine who works in this company down there. He told me once you get your license, give me a call for [REDACTED]

Speaker 1: That's a delivery company?

Luis: A delivery company, yes.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Luis: I don't know the name, but I know that he's been there for years.

Speaker 1: Okay. Any other goals or dreams for the future?

Luis: Yeah. My dream is to, well, I'm going to get married, continue to be reinactive, continue having fun, having a great life with my future wife, those are my goals. My kids are older, her kids are older. Just us, just have fun, go out. She didn't know to ride a bike.

She didn't know to do these things and I taught her all this. I'm doing things, things that she's never done before. We're going hiking. She's never been hiking before. This is just stuff I like. I'm a very adventurous guy and I want to continue with that.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Luis: These are the things that I want.

Speaker 1: Yeah, okay. That's really the last big questions about what the future holds for you. Do you feel like there's anything else about your experience in prison, on supervision right now that you feel like is important for understanding how to help people get out of crime?

Luis: For me to help them get out of crime?

Speaker 1: Just in general, to help people based on your experience.

Luis: My experience, I believe that people should have a positive attitude.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Luis: I believe that people that are in these programs and things like that, they should take advantage of what's being offered. Some of this stuff is for free. They should take advantage of opportunities, be open and share. Don't keep things bubbled in. If you have a bad probation officer or parole or something, speak up. Say something about it. Don't just wait until you'll screw up. No, there's people like you or agencies or people that they could help.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Luis: Sometimes people do things out of anger, out of revenge or whatever and they screw up. People believe that people don't care and that's not always true.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). What do you think is one thing that people could use or need in order to have that positive attitude? Thinking back when you were younger, what would you have needed to have a more positive attitude?

Luis: The thing that I would say to tell myself that I'm worth it, that I'm worth it, that I could do this some work, because before I was like you know what? I'm not worth it. I'm this person. Now, I'm worth it.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Luis: That's just my thing that I would tell myself.

Speaker 1: Okay. That's a good message. Is there anything that you can think of that might be important?

Luis: Yeah. For you to continue doing this.

Speaker 1: Okay. We're going to keep on.

Luis: I was here when you guys were all here. What you guys are doing is great, helping out. I don't know if I wouldn't have called or whatever, but I just wanted to share my experience. I felt comfortable and open with you to speak about it.

Speaker 1: I appreciate that, cause we could not do this without people like you telling their stories. That's exactly what's missing are people's stories about how to make it better.

Luis: Because sometimes people think that you're going to use this information and you're going to hurt them or you're going to do this.

Speaker 1: No.

Luis: I didn't have to tell you why I went to prison. I could've said no, I don't want to talk about it.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Luis: But, that's not who I am. I screwed up and I made bad choices. But, it doesn't mean that I'm dead. No, it means that I could learn from everything that happened in my past, including two good years.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Luis: That's my attitude.

Speaker 1: Okay. That's all I have for you. I appreciate you talking to me for so long.

MICHAEL

- Speaker 1: [inaudible 01:14:28]. What we're gonna wrap up with here is thinking about the future. We talked about the past, talked about right now. Talk about what's gonna happen. For you, realistically, what's the next chapter for you? What's gonna happen now?
- Michael: The next chapter is for me to reopen my stores. I plan on moving to [REDACTED] where my son's at.
- Speaker 1: Cool.
- Michael: My son's down in [REDACTED] with the music. He has music. He has a clothes line out. My future is for me to go back to the essence in [REDACTED] I plan on being ... When I leave this terrestrial world, I want to be in [REDACTED]
- Speaker 1: You want to be there?
- Michael: I don't want to be in Massachusetts.
- Speaker 1: That makes sense.
- Michael: My mother's buried here. My brothers and sisters are buried here. It doesn't matter. Once I go in the ground, I'm in the ground but I would like to be ... Have a climate change. I like the hot weather. I'm a Leo. I love the hot. I don't care, it can be 100 degrees out. [crosstalk 01:15:33].
- Speaker 1: [REDACTED] got that for you.
- Michael: You'll see me with a suit and tie on. People like, "Aren't you wet? Aren't you hot?" No-
- Speaker 1: You gotta get the linen suits.
- Michael: I'm cool as a cucumber. Scientifically, if you've got clothing on, you're more cooler than the person who don't have clothes on.
- Speaker 1: Really? Interesting.
- Michael: I don't know if you've ever seen any of the old movies. In the summertime, you see they wear hats, got suits on because what happens is the layers of clothes, the sun could be beaming, by the time the sun hits this part of my clothes, now gotta go to the other part of my clothes to get to my skin. By the time it gets to my skin-

Speaker 1: It doesn't get all the way through.

Michael: It's not hot anymore.

Speaker 1: That makes a lot of sense.

Michael: Your body is in what's called shade. Just like when you put on a hat, that's why people wear hats in summertime. Why you wearing a hat? Because it shades you. Everything is in shade.

Speaker 1: I've gotta stand in the shade all the time. Look at me.

Michael: That's what I'm saying. That's why if you watch people who wear clothing in the summertime all the time, if you notice, the only thing that really gets tanned is their hands and their face. You take off their clothes, their body is not tan because-

Speaker 1: Nope.

Michael: It's been protected. Just like gorillas and all that, monkeys. Their face and their hands look a certain color but that's not their real color. Take their hair off, they have a pale-

Speaker 1: Pink.

Michael: Pigmentation. But it's the fur that covers them that protects them.

Speaker 1: It's true.

Michael: It's the same as when the sun is coming down, people are like, "Aren't you hot?" No. Man, I'm hot. I'm sweating. Keep taking off your clothes. You're gonna be wet next. Because the sun beams right to your skin.

Speaker 1: Too hot. You want to go back to [REDACTED] You want to live with your son.

Michael: I would like to live in [REDACTED] My nephew is there, he's into music. My son is there, he's building his career there.

Speaker 1: Cool.

Michael: Everybody's been telling me to come to [REDACTED] All my friends that went to [REDACTED] they be like, "[REDACTED] you need to be in [REDACTED]

Speaker 1: No more Boston winters.

Michael: Yeah. Because of my entrepreneur skills.

Speaker 1: You're gonna go down and reopen stores, start a business?

Michael: That's what I plan. My plan is when I open up stores and some land and just have something for my generation that's coming after me.

Speaker 1: So leave something behind?

Michael: I want to leave something behind. [REDACTED] 01:17:48]. I don't want to just leave a name, a story. I want to leave something tangible. My great grandfather left us this. We got some land. We've got some stores.

Speaker 1: That's how you get wealth. That's how you get wealth.

Michael: I don't want to leave ... It's okay. I have a god planning for me to go. That's where I'm going but I would like my plan, as we say too, if you want to make god laugh, plan something.

Speaker 1: I know.

Michael: My plan is to ride off in the sunset.

Speaker 1: I like that.

Michael: Let the sun hit me in the back, going the way that I came in.

Speaker 1: Big breath.

Michael: That's it. You come in, it's a universal call, a universal cry. We all come in the same way. We all go out the same way. When you come in, and when you go out. We're all gonna come the same way, we're all gonna go out the same way.

Speaker 1: When you talk about ... This is your realistic plan. What bigger, what are your dreams and hopes for the future?

Michael: I got an invention that I got in my ... I know it's gonna be something that has never been thought of because it hasn't been thought of.

Speaker 1: Yeah. You invented something?

Michael: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Cool.

Michael: My daughter has an invention. She just aint got around to getting it done, but it's good. I know what it is. My children are very ... They take up ... They come from my genes, I guess, my father's genes and my family, my mother. They're always workers or always thinking. I have step brothers and sister but my immediate mother and father, they always was someone who was trying to do something all the time.

Speaker 1: Hustling.

Michael: Yeah. My father, he was a truck driver, he was the groom. He was a military man. Shot pool, hustled shooting pool. Shooting dice. He always had something going. He always had some money in his pocket. I've taken on that but my children, even my grandchildren have this entrepreneur inside of them. You're always thinking about something. I've got an invention that I already went and had. I paid already for the information. Can't no one start it. I told my lawyer, when I gave it to the lawyer, it's confidential. Now I have to start paying for them to do research to find out if anyone else has that same idea. When you invent something, even though you've got an idea, someone else may have that idea. Someone else may be doing it in a whole other country, another part of the world. You don't know so they have to do research to find out that what you came up with is the only one that came up with that. You're the only one. It's what's called ... I don't know if you've ever heard the saying the real McCoy.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Michael: You know where that came from? How that came about? That's the one ... This is the real McCoy.

Speaker 1: Where'd it come from?

Michael: It come from an inventor, Elijah McCoy. Elijah McCoy was the one who made the steam engine. As the years went on, people was duplicating it, so he used to say no, this is the real McCoy.

Speaker 1: The real McCoy.

Michael: Right. The real McCoy is from the patent. I'm the real McCoy.

Speaker 1: That's cool.

Michael: That's why you hear people say, "I've got the real McCoy." Meaning that's-

Speaker 1: The real one.

Michael: I've got the real one. I don't have no fake one. Louis Vuitton, I got the real McCoy. I don't have the bootleg.

Speaker 1: That's funny.

Michael: The real McCoy. My invention is something that I know has not been thought of because if it had been, it would ... My invention is gonna save lives, first of all. It's gonna prevent things from happening, for people who maybe want to commit suicide, or it's gonna prevent someone from committing a homicide.

Speaker 1: We need that.

Michael: My whole invention is about safety. It's about bringing safety to this world in certain areas.

Speaker 1: That seems like a legacy too.

Michael: It is a legacy. That has not been thought of. Because it hasn't been thought of, it'll be right now. It'll be going right now. I'm [REDACTED] years old. It ain't happen in [REDACTED] years, so I know people, they're 90. It ain't happen in 90 years. I got a friend of mine who just had his 93rd birthday, 93 year old [inaudible 01:22:28] 93. It ain't happen. My mother was 93, it ain't happen.

Speaker 1: Do it man. We need it. People are dying.

Michael: I'm quite sure that at the time when I went to have it done, I was going to the terminal. I just came back home or whatever. I didn't have money, so now I'm in the process of stacking my money again, to restart my business. I'm gonna pay to have them do the research because I just have to get ... I'm gonna have to end up getting an engineer and stuff like that and then it's gonna be worth ... I know.

Speaker 1: Takes money to make money, right?

Michael: I know it's gonna be where the engineers or those who ... Once they find out, people are gonna want to buy into it.

Speaker 1: Yeah, absolutely.

Michael: I have a friend of mine who invented the portable car wash. He just sold the patent maybe 10 years ago. It's called a portable car wash where he can pull up on your car and wash your car [inaudible 01:23:36], everything from his truck. Carries water, everything.

Speaker 1: That's crazy.

Michael: He came up with the patent to do it and he got it done, paid for it. He ended up selling it.

Speaker 1: Nice. That's your dream. Get this patent sorted out. Sell it, maybe?

Michael: No.

Speaker 1: Not sell it?

Michael: No. I want to get it done. I want people to have ... It's gonna be a prototype from it but I want the original to stay with my family. I'm not selling it to nobody. You can make a ... There's gonna be a prototype because for what I'm doing, other people are gonna want that same thing.

Speaker 1: Of course.

Michael: I'm gonna allow you to make a copy but you're not gonna get the original.

Speaker 1: That stays with your family. That's another thing that you hand down, right?

Michael: Yeah. Not getting the original. I'm not selling the original. We have [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who started [inaudible 01:24:37]. They sold everything. The people that don't care about helping people no more, all they want is money.

Speaker 1: I see. It's the moral of it too, not just the money.

Michael: Like I said, my invention is gonna save lives. I want my children, my great grandchildren, great great grandchildren ... I'm a great grandfather now so I plan on being a great great great grandfather. I plan on seeing my 11 year old daughter walk across the stage and become a woman. That's my plan. I think god's gonna grant me that.

Speaker 1: I hope so.

Michael: I wanted to be ... To keep on going to every ending. In the year 200,000 BC or whatever, before, after, they'll still be talking that's who invented this.

MIKEY

- Interviewer: Right, right. Maybe it'll come back to you if we keep talking for a little bit. We talked about the present, now I wanna talk about the future. I have two different questions here, one is about the realistic next chapter of your life, and then the other one is about your hopes and dreams. Let's start with the realistic next chapter. What's coming up next in your life story?
- Mikey: Washing dishes. I mean, I do that every week. I've signed up for social security, so between the dish washing and social security, I should be able to navigate for a year or two, and hopefully ... I don't have a degree. I've got college credits in California, in Tennessee, here, even New Jersey I think, now that I'm thinking about it. I'm hoping to spend a year or two at Bunker Hill, come out with an associates and a certificate, that they will be job specific so I can then stop collecting, and go to work for five to 10 years.
- Mikey: That's a combination of the here and now leading into the future.
- Interviewer: Sure, absolutely.
- Mikey: Because I'm only gonna get \$700 or \$800 a month through social security, but they let you work 20 hours.
- Interviewer: Oh, that's good.
- Mikey: Lately that's what I've been getting, three days at the restaurant. It's about 20-23 hours, right in there.
- Interviewer: Working 20 to 23 hours at the restaurant.
- Mikey: Yeah. Yeah, with one or the other, I can't, I won't stay afloat. With both at the room I can.
- Interviewer: Okay, that's good. Then how about dreams, hopes, plans for the future? How do you want the rest of your life to go?
- Mikey: I gotta go some place warm. The winters are too much for me now. I'd like to find a partner, and probably myself. Have some kind of stable housing, be it a one family, six family, whatever something that we can maintain as we get older.
- Interviewer: Sure. When you get to the end of your life and you look back, what do you wanna be able to see or say about the life that you've lived? It's a big question.
- Mikey: Yeah. I don't recall, I don't think I've ever thought about it in those terms.

Interviewer: Right. If this was a story and someone read it, what would you want the moral of the story to be?

Mikey: I don't want it to end. Being a caretaker I guess I would want it to end as I set something up for my two kids, and my partner if she lives longer than me, so that the important people have something to take with them. You leave something behind physically, some sort of asset arrangement.

Interviewer: Sure. To be able to provide for the people that you care about?

Mikey: Yeah.

JANELLE

- Speaker 2: Okay. Let me see. Now we're going to move over to the last little part here. I have two future questions. One of them is about realistically the next chapter, like what's going to happen? What are your plans next? What do you think you're going to do? The next one is about dreams and hopes for your whole life. The next chapter, what do you think? What's coming up?
- Janelle: I want to graduate the program, and then maybe look into sober living somewhere, a sober house. Then just working on my relationship with my daughter and getting back on track with her, getting her car.
- Speaker 2: How long is the program? Does it have a time period, or is it more like you get to move along?
- Janelle: Six months to a year.
- Speaker 2: Okay. Within probably the next year, you'll achieve that part, right?
- Janelle: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Speaker 2: Then move into somewhere. What are you going to do to work on your relationship with your daughter?
- Janelle: Probably just work on visits from here. They live in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] When I first got on these two, you got a four hour pass, then a six hour pass, then an eight hour pass. I'm not ready to have them ... I don't want to go all the way out. I'm not able to go all the way out to see her in four hours. I don't know if my ex will bring her up here. He's from Boston, too, so he knows this area, so maybe he could bring her up here one day for a visit. I'm not ready to just be able to go pick her up and have her for the weekend. Obviously I'll just have to do it in small increments.
- Speaker 2: Okay, yeah, that sounds good. That's a good plan, right?
- Janelle: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Speaker 2: Start with maybe him bringing up for some visits, and then you being able to have her over. That would be great.
- Janelle: Right, yeah.
- Speaker 2: Getting a car, which is probably just money stuff, right?
- Janelle: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Speaker 2: Are you working right now?

Janelle: No, not yet. No.

Speaker 2: Okay. Is that a plan, too?

Janelle: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2: Let's see. To switch tracks a little bit, how about dreams and hopes for your whole life? What do you want to accomplish? Where do you want to go?

Janelle: I definitely want to get on track with a career. I don't know where exactly I want to live and what exactly I want to do yet, but I want to have a good career and grounded, and just be doing the right thing, and staying clean. I guess just what everybody wants, you know what I mean? Just to be happy. I don't know about ... I'm just thinking little small steps right now, I guess.

Speaker 2: Right. Which is good. That helps you from getting overwhelmed, right?

Janelle: Right, yeah.

Speaker 2: You got to just take little steps in the beginning. What sort of career? What do you think of when you think of ... ?

Janelle: Maybe nursing.

Speaker 2: Yeah?

Janelle: Yeah.

Speaker 2: What do you think that this says? Pretending that your life is a story, and you accomplish this stuff, like people read the book about your life. What do you think the moral of the story is? What's the point? What does it show?

Janelle: That it's not how you fall down, it's how you get up, that you can from that get good. You know what I mean?

Speaker 2: Sure.

Janelle: You can get good out of bad things happening to you sometimes. It will always get better I think if you want it. I don't know.

Speaker 2: Sure. I like that saying. It's not how you fall down, it's how you get up. Did you hear that somewhere?

Janelle: No. I've been saying that for years. I don't know. Maybe somebody said it to me at first. I don't know.

Speaker 2: That's a good one.

Janelle: Yeah. Maybe I read it somewhere. I don't know.

Speaker 2: You think that's the theme of your life, right?

Janelle: Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah. Literally.

Speaker 2: Very cool. Okay. My last question is just if there's anything else about your life or your experience on supervision that you feel like is important for us to know or that you want us to look into some more, like if you think we could find information that would help fix this for other people? What else do you think that we should consider or look at?

Janelle: I just think that ... I think it stinks that drug addicts go to jail, because I think now that I've been there, it was easier than I thought. Before I ever went to jail, I was like, "Oh, my God, I could never go there. I've never been in trouble my whole life. I can't imagine women going to jail." I never even met a girl that was in jail before I moved to Mass. When I was in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] guys that I knew had gone to jail, but no women. I think I was always so afraid I could not even ever imagine getting locked up, but now that I've done it, it wasn't really as bad as I thought it was going to be.

Now I feel like if I had to do time, I don't want to get in trouble, I don't want to go back, but if I had to do time, I'm not afraid now. I think that for drug addicts, non-violent drug offenders to go to jail, addicts, I don't think it's good, you know what I mean? I don't want to go and use right now. I don't, but it's not because I was locked up, you know what I mean?

Speaker 2: That's so interesting.

Janelle: I feel like when I was there, I knew a girl. She was 20. She is 20 years old right now, and she's been there for a year, and she's got another year and some more time to do. For her, I feel like she's so young. She could have gone to a program, you know what I mean?

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Janelle: Instead. I feel like now that she's been there, and she's been there for a while, way longer than I was, and I don't know how she does it, but now that she's been, I feel like nothing is going to phase her when she gets out. I feel like she doesn't care. She's not going to care if she's going to get locked up, you know what I mean? She can do time on her head now, you know what I mean?

Speaker 2: As long as it's this big, scary thing that you think will be terrible, it works to stop you, but once you ... There's nothing else to be scared of anymore.

Janelle: Yeah. It's not really as bad as I thought at all. Not that I had fun, but when I went across the street, it wasn't bad at all. I was with people that I made friends with, and I was sad when I was leaving them. Not that I wanted to stay, but I wanted them to come with me, you know what I mean? I don't know. It's just not what I ever imagined it would be

like. When people say, "Was it bad?" I'm like, "No, it really wasn't that bad. It was fine. I was fine." I never could have imagined getting locked up. Now if I got, I don't think I would be ...

I don't plan on killing somebody and going for life, but if I got in trouble again, I'd rather take time now than probation. I wish that I could have just done ... I wanted to get out of there, but sometimes I feel like I really debated if I was going to ... I thought I was going to come here, hate the program, and run, and I didn't care if I got locked up again because I'd have a warrant, you know what I mean?

Speaker 2: Okay, yeah.

Janelle: I'm not going to leave because I like it, but I mean when I was locked up, I was like, "I don't even care. If I don't like it, I'll leave." If I get locked back up, oh, well. I'll just take my time, you know what I mean?

Speaker 2: Right. I think that's a really good observation. That's really smart I think that you see that. That's really interesting. Yeah. I never thought about it that way before. That's really cool. Thank you.

Janelle: Thank you.

Speaker 2: I'm going to turn this off.

Janelle: Okay.

Speaker 2: Oops, that's the wrong button.

ERIC

Speaker 1: So my next section here, this last bit, is talking about the future. So what's next for you? What are you going to do next? What's your plan?

Eric: Hmm ... I don't know. That, I'm not sure.

Speaker 1: Yeah?

Eric: I mean, not get in trouble. I'm working now and I haven't been in trouble at all.

Speaker 1: That's good. So you're hoping to keep up with that.

Eric: Yeah, I have no reason to really get in trouble.

Speaker 1: So, that's the plan for now? Working the job and staying out of trouble?

Eric: That's what I would like to do. That's what I'm trying to do. I mean, I really have no reason to get in trouble. I'm not chasing drugs or anything. I'm not out stealing and doing things like that. I don't know. Probably, I could go back to school again.

Speaker 1: Really? What do you want to do?

Eric: I like the computer stuff.

Speaker 1: Something with computers maybe?

Eric: Yeah.

Speaker 1: That would be cool. If you could have any job in the world, what would you like to do?

Eric: Maybe something, like help people.

Speaker 1: Yeah? With what?

Eric: ... Maybe with some of the stuff that I needed help with.

Speaker 1: How do you see that you could help with that?

Eric: Maybe just tell them they, just other things that they could do.

Speaker 1: So when you think about dreams and hope for the future, what would you really like to happen? We talked about what you're doing right now, what do you hope will happen in the future?

Eric: ... Just be, just still working and have a family. Just continue to do the right thing.

Speaker 1: Do you want kids?

Eric: Yeah, eventually.

Speaker 1: Maybe? What does it mean to you to have a family and do the right thing? What do you imagine that would look like in the future for you?

Eric: Go to work and come home and, you know, do what regular families do, I guess.

Speaker 1: Is there anything else that you want to tell me, or you think we should know or look into about your experiences on supervision or how it could be improved or anything?

Eric: Think now they should just try to help people more.

Speaker 1: How so?

Eric: Just maybe ... try to- people that have drug issues see why they like doing it. Or maybe try to find somewhere for them to go instead of sending them to jail. When you go to jail, when you come out you're probably gonna use again cause you just been sittin' there doing nothing. Instead of maybe going to a program.

Eric: I think they should try to send people to programs or help them instead of putting them in jail. A bunch are just people that are in, drug addicts in jail with nothing to do. Just talk about using drugs or I wanna get out and use drugs or whatnot. Instead of going to a program and getting help.

Speaker 1: That makes a lot of sense. Probably just sitting around talking about how they're going to use when they get out again, right? And not getting any better. Definitely, I can pass that along for sure.

Speaker 1: Alright, that's all the questions that I have. Turn this off-

TONY

Speaker 1: I agree. This is my favorite part. Thinking about dreams, and hopes, and plans for the future, we've been talking a lot about your life story and who you are and this story that you're building. At the end of it, what do you want to look back and see? What's your dream? If your life was a book, what's the moral of the story at the end?

Tony: Wow.

Speaker 1: That's a big question.

Tony: Just to look back and see that, I don't want to use the word, legacy. I remember one time my mother asking me, "Hey, did I do a good job?" I'm like, "Yeah, mom, you did great." I guess to look back and just know you gave it a go, you did a good job. Not even that you were the best, or you left this great legacy, or you left your mark on the world. I guess just to look back and say hey, I did a good job and I guess ultimately you didn't let yourself down. I think through your life you're basing it on letting other people down, but I think at the very end if you're about to take your last breath and you're looking back and you're like, hey, I feel like I didn't let myself down, I think that would probably be the best thing. To not feel like you failed yourself. That's how I would look at it.

Speaker 1: You stop measuring yourself by others maybe.

Tony: To some people it's a race to the grave and they live reckless. Then other people are just ready for it when it comes. Some people, "Oh, I'll get to join my loved ones," but we're all going to take that last breath and they say your life flashes before you. Just to say you ran that race, you did a good job, you didn't quit.

Speaker 1: What would it mean to you to say that you did a good job? What's the definition of that for you?

Tony: Everybody says, "I don't care what people think," but we all do. I guess for people to say [REDACTED] was a good guy. He's been through some tough times, he overcame. He set a good example. I guess maybe that people could use the memory of you to help them because I guess we all have that marker. Whether it's a family member or a friend or if you have that doubt about yourself, "If so and so did it I can do it." If this guy could go to prison and get out and turn his life around.

Speaker 1: It's a way that you can live on after yourself, if you can have that impact on other people's lives.

Tony: We're all human so we all fall down, so to speak. It's like everybody uses that for an excuse, nobody is perfect and we all fall. I remember getting these letters from my girlfriend in prison and she was big into the AA. She would always end it with this saying like, "[REDACTED] stay in the day, or stay close to God, or God will give you double for your

trouble." I guess trying to build each other up because nowadays everyone is knocking each other down. If you see a story that's 'a success story,' which everybody uses that word, measures it differently, how do you measure success? Health, money, titles? I guess you have to have something to compare it to, your story. To fail is not always a bad thing because I failed. Then I drew strength from the failure.

Speaker 1: I think that's awesome. That is the message and hopefully other people could take that and then do that in their lives too.

Tony: I think you have to fail. When I was in prison, I did all these different jobs in prison. I worked for the wreck department, I worked in the chow hall, I worked for the school department. At one point I was a tutor, helping guys get their GED's. Another twist on being incarcerated so long, I have impeccable handwriting from all the pen paling that I did back before. When I would go down to the law library, there were always these plaques on the wall, these inspirational sayings. I remember one that stuck out for me and it said, "Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it."

Tony: When you look at it like that, everything is reaction. It comes down to patience, and tolerance and restraint. If you're living your life where you know that you have to be on your toes about restraint ... That's one of the messages my lawyer told me, "Keep your hands by your side, [REDACTED] because I know I can't fight anymore. I can't break the law anymore. The consequences are different for me now. Now that I have failed all those times I'm a marked man, I'm on their radar. The judges aren't stupid, if you get in trouble they look at your past. Even if you got found not guilty for this, not guilty, they take everything into consideration. "Well, he got away with this back then." They're street smart.

Speaker 1: Even if you weren't found guilty they're like, oh.

Tony: When they sentence you, and another thing I learned in the federal prison system is, evidence and proof are two different things. It's true. You can get convicted on evidence from the feds.

Speaker 1: Right, but not proof.

Tony: Whereas in the state, they have to prove it. It's a little different. Their conviction rate is up in the 90-something percent. By the grace of God, I beat one of my counts or I would have been doing 25. I went to trial, I got convicted of one and then I got found not guilty for a different charge luckily because-

Speaker 1: You'd still be in there.

Tony: -the difference was 10 years or 25 but because I rolled the dice, so to speak, and went to trial.

Speaker 1: Yes, because 95 plus percent just take their plea.

Tony: I was convicted of a [REDACTED] but was acquitted of a [REDACTED] C statute, the use of a weapon during a crime of violence, which that statute they're fighting it vigorously in the federal system, [REDACTED] C. It's a brutal statute. They don't run in concurrent.

Speaker 1: They tack it on?

Tony: Peoples sentence, yeah. There's a lot of guys in prison right now that are doing 80 year sentences, 90 year sentences.

Speaker 1: That's why you would have gone up to 25 because it was going to be tacked on the end of the 10, yeah.

Tony: Yeah, because for each [REDACTED] you're convicted of it's an additional 10. Say you robbed five banks and got away with all five. Then you got caught on your sixth one, they call it running it wild. They would attach those five that you got away with to get an additional 50.

Speaker 1: An additional 50 years.

Tony: Right now that's one of the big beefs. When you go into the federal prison system, ultimately you end up learning the law. For instance, my cellmate who was a lifer, never coming home, they live in the law library. They know they can't get themselves off but they help getting other people out. Whereas helping you with your appeal, writing a brief for you, they're essentially jailhouse lawyers and they survive that way too. That's one way to hustle some dollars when you don't have money coming in from the street. It's crazy, it's like a little city within a city. It's a whole other chapter.

Speaker 1: All these jobs, learning the law, having these philosophical conversations. You've got to do something I guess with your time.

Tony: It's like being picked up and dropped off on another planet. Every prison is different. Trust me, you've got to play by the politics of it all.

Speaker 1: Yeah, I bet. Then you get moved halfway through and it's like you've got to learn it all over again.

Tony: Definitely the further south you go in the country, the more segregated it is.

Speaker 1: I can imagine.

Tony: Down in Louisiana it was super segregated on the block. Black TV, white TV, Spanish TV, sports TV.

Speaker 1: Everyone watching their own thing.

Tony: That's a whole other chapter. It's was quite an eye opening experience and I think that I got a lot out of it. For me, I need to stay humble. I need to know that it was a humbling experience, that it was hurtful for myself and my family, and it altered the way of my life. If I didn't go to prison, I'd be a mess right now. I hit that brick wall in [REDACTED] It was a wake-up call because I now see guys I grew up with on the street and half of them are still banged up.

Speaker 1: Some of them are probably dead, right?

Tony: I just praise God that's not me. I got another chance and I want to make the most of it. I don't want to fail again at life.

Speaker 1: That was awesome. Thank you very much for telling me all of that.

Tony: You're welcome, thank you.

Speaker 1: I'm going to turn this off and then I've got a gift card for you.

MEGAN

- Interviewer: Now we're going to talk about your future. So what do you think, or what do you hope for, to come in your future? What does that look like for you?
- Megan: See my future is, I hope to... Because right now I'm not working, obviously I'm just focusing on my sobriety, and just doing that, because having money is a huge trigger for me and everything like that. I just started talking to my mom again full time, probably past two months. So yeah, I am working on that right now. But I do want to obtain, I obviously want to have a full time job. I want to be able financially support myself. Support my children. Have my children back in my life full time,, and have a place for myself and them to live and be able to watch them grow, and to be able to take care of myself and watch myself grow with them. That's just, that's all I want. I don't want jewels or gold. I don't want anything. I just want my kids and I want to be able to support my kids and myself. That's it.
- Interviewer: I think that's pretty reasonable.
- Megan: That's a pretty, exactly.
- Interviewer: Cause did you have a dream occupation that you kind of, or even just an area that you want to go into?
- Megan: So, with my assault and battery, I know it's... So I used to work with kids and things like that. I used to work in the daycare, and everything like that, but I'm assuming with my assault and batteries, I probably...I probably won't be doing that. But I used to do a PCA work, and I know that they have agencies that help with getting people who have backgrounds and things like that, getting them jobs and everything. So I would love to go back and do PCA work. I like taking care of people and helping, and doing that kind of stuff. Yeah. So either that or an RNA, phlebotomist, something that I know that I'm good at.
- Interviewer: It helps to kind of have an idea of what would make you happy. What skills that like-
- Megan: Yeah. Exactly.
- Interviewer: You can apply.
- Megan: But I do like working outside. My father owned a tree removal company, his whole... My brother, my dad's son, actually took over the company when my father passed away. So this company's been running for almost 40 years. And I used to work with my dad, when my dad was alive. And I love working outside, and I even do that with a few friends. Do tree removal, and landscaping, and

stuff like that, just to make a few bucks during the summer, and stuff like that, which I love. I love doing. I love being outside and doing that kind of stuff.

Interviewer: All right, so I think that's it. So just last question would be, is there anything else in your life or you know, your experience on supervision, that you feel is important to understanding your perspective on things?

Megan: I don't think. I don't think so. I don't think so.

Interviewer: All right, well thank you so much. I totally appreciate you talking with me and going through all this stuff.

Megan: Of course.

Interviewer: So let me turn this off.