

**PHILADELPHIA TRANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CENTER FOR FEMINIST, QUEER AND TRANS STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA**

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

ACE EDWARDS

Interviewers: Maria Murphy and Clay Tenhula

Date of Interview: April 27, 2023

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Transcript by Liz Rose

Philadelphia TOHP Interview Transcript #001

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Content Warning

This interview mentions death by suicide, murder, school bullying, cyberbullying, anti-Black racism, homophobia, transphobia, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

Transcript Summary

Ace Edwards shares his life history with Clay Tenhula and Maria Murphy on April 27, 2023 in a recording studio in Van Pelt Library, located at the University of Pennsylvania in West Philadelphia. Edwards has given approval for this life history to be archived with the Philly Trans Oral History Project, in collaboration with William Way and the Kislak Center for Special Collections. This document is a nearly verbatim transcript of the oral history interview.

In the interview, Edwards shares about his life growing up as a trans child in Willingboro, New Jersey. Edwards discusses his experience with chronic illness in the DYFS system, school bullying, experiencing gender dysphoria as a child, domestic abuse, and losing his sister. He then discusses his decision to move to Philadelphia, and his experience navigating his sexuality and gender. Specifically, he talks about going to the Mazzoni Center and starting testosterone. Edwards talks about using substances to cope with anger and depression, and his experience of seeking support and learning positive coping mechanisms as an adult. Specifically, he talks about different recovery programs and his experience at Morris Home. He also talks about his experience getting cleared for top surgery and shares about the healthcare barriers he has faced.

Edwards discusses his current experience of T4T relationships, especially his experience dating his current partner. He also shares about his chosen family in New Jersey and his friendships with trans women and trans men. He shares about being a trans advocate on TikTok and facing cyberbullying and anti-Black racism on social media. He talks about future projects he would like to create, including a podcast featuring trans people and a comic with all trans characters. He also discusses his love for music and dancing.

Edwards closes the life history by expressing his perspective on mainstream politics and voting, decrying recent anti-trans legislation. He ends with a love note to his future child.

Edwards: [00:00:00] Okay.

Tenhula: Right, hello. My name is Clay [Tenhula], and I will be having a conversation with Ace [Edwards] for the Trans Oral History Project in collaboration with the Center for Research in Feminist, Queer, and Transgender Studies, the William Way LGBT Center, and the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania. This is an oral history project centered on the experience of trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people. It is April 27th, and this is being recorded at Van Pelt Library in the recording studio. And Maria Murphy is present in the room as well. So, Ace, I'd like to start with, where were you born and where are you from?

Edwards: Yes, I was born in New Jersey. I was born in Willingboro, New Jersey. I'm from New Jersey. I moved out to Philadelphia in 2018.

Tenhula: In 2018. You lived in New Jersey all your life before then?

Edwards: Yes, dirty Jersey [laughs].

Tenhula: [00:01:09] What was it like growing up when you were a kid?

Edwards: Well, for me, I was in foster care. Um, it sucked [laughs]. It really did suck. I was born with two holes in my heart. I was in an incubator for two years of my life. So my heart wasn't pumping. I had two big holes in my heart. So, everything delayed with me growing up. Like, I didn't start walking until I was three and four. I didn't start talking until I was three and four. I had to do speech therapy. And you know, walk around with a big heart monitor because it was like, if you scared me, my heart would stop on its own. So basically I was in and out of hospitals all the way up until I was like, I would say like 11. I had heart surgery at 9. Yeah, because I was in the system. You know, the DYFS [Division of Youth and Family Services] system is...it sucks being in the system as a child. And I was like the money bag [laughs]. Their money bag. It's like, the more sick you are in DYFS, the more money you get. As you know, I was a sickly child with heart problems, so... I was with the, um, I'm not going to mention their names, I'm going to keep it blank, but I was with them from birth till I turned 17 and a half. I was supposed to get adopted at 14, and they denied my adoption, of course, because, you know, I'm their money, so, it was very, I was very, like, outcast, in fact, the outsider of the family. I did visit my – I call her my oven baker – through supervised visits. I did visit her and at first I was like, I was mad and angry because I was like, I'm with these strangers and they're not, they don't love me. So don't know what a mother's love is or a family biologically is. So that's like, going to the system was hard. It was hard. Going to school, getting bullied, because they all knew I wasn't, you know, I didn't, you know, "you don't have your mom, that's why your mom don't love you. That's why your dad don't love you."

[00:03:27] And, you know, my sister, she was in the system. I have a younger brother that I don't know of. My sister, she unalived herself, because she had, you know, problems too. I had problems, you know, I was very suicidal. I didn't know what was wrong with me because at age 5 I thought I was a boy. At age 5, I knew I was a boy.

[00:03:49] I always used to say, "I'm a boy, I'm not a girl." And I always used to look for my penis, like, "where is it at?" [laughs]. You know? And I used to get beat for it. And I used to, I used to be like, I don't want to wear these clothes. I'm not a girl. And I used to get beat for saying I was a boy. So, people think it's a "choice," quote-unquote, as a society. It's not a choice. You know what you are at 5. I knew. But I didn't know nothing about LGBTQ or trans. I just thought I was a boy without a penis. And, yeah. It sucked. And it was just very uncomfortable. I knew I liked the girls, and that's where most of my suicidal thoughts came from because I didn't know what was wrong with me. I thought I was not normal. I thought I was an alien. I thought I was not a normal person. And, um, there's seeing other people and seeing other boys with their shirts off – I'd want to be one. Walk around with my shirt off and I used to get beat. Like, "you supposed to have your shirt on, you're a girl." It was, it was, it was a battle that I had to deal with until I was 33.

[00:04:57] I just came to Philly to figure out, wow, this is who I am. And that's when, um... Now at 18, I came out as a lesbian. Cause that's what I thought I was, a lesbian. I said, I knew I liked girls all my life. I knew I liked girls. And, you know, they, you know how when you grow up, you need to be in the kitchen. [00:05:19] "That's how you're supposed to cook for your husband." I'm like, "No, my wife, you mean?" [laughs] But I didn't say it out loud. And they used to call me the D-word, a dyke. Like, "You're going to be a dyke when you grow up." And I used to say, "No, I'm not." And I'm going to have a, you know. And I was in high school dating this guy.

[00:05:34] He was gay and I liked girls. So, they thought we was the cutest couple. They thought we was going to be married and have kids together. We used to be like [sound of disgust] [laughs] "No!"

So it, it was, it was really a struggle with my sexuality. And I just remember being on the bridge, and I called my biological mom. I remember this day, like, I had the bridge on my Facebook. [00:06:00] And I said, "If you don't call me, I'm jumping the bridge." And she never called me. And I don't know how my friend found me. Because I didn't make no letter. Didn't write no goodbye letter. I was just ready to go because I couldn't, I couldn't figure out what was wrong with me. And my friend tussled me, like fought me on that bridge, and I just was like, "Why, why?"

[00:06:19] Like, nobody loves me, nobody cares about me. "Why are you here? Just let me go." And that's my first time when I went to the crisis center at 26. But I had issues when I was growing up. And it's like the system, the system only cares about who you want to live with. They don't care about your mental health.

[00:06:37] And I, now that I'm older, I always have mental health issues. Well, I didn't get, didn't even get taken care of until I was 26. I was already an adult and now, me being all pumped on all these medications, and trying to figure out, diagnosed with, and what I am, and this, that, and the third, and still, still, still. [00:06:58] Still processing that and the anger came up. I was very angry as a child, very angry, very, I was an angry, angry person. I didn't love nobody and care about nobody. I didn't want nobody coming close to me with love, you know, and as I got older, I did not, I did not want to treat others how people treated me. So as I got older, I started to love and see, I try to see the good in everyone.

[00:07:23] But at the end of the day, it will bite me in my ass, seeing the good in everyone, because everybody is not good in here. And why they hurting me? And that's what, um, my struggle was with, with, um, friendships and relationships with friends. So I do have a chosen family today, but it's still nothing like, I can't call my biological mom, like, "Hey mom, getting my top surgery," you know? [00:07:46] It still hurts me, but I know I gotta move on with life. Cause there's no pause button in life [laughs]. Life goes on, and that's what's gonna go on in life. So I have to, you know, keep going. And I'm still figuring out who I am. Yes, I started transitioning August 8th. No, not August. October 31st is my first shot of 2018. [00:08:16] And after that, I felt tears of joy, like I was crying, like I was just pouring. It's like I'm finally here and I thought transitioning would make me, it makes me happy, but I still want my mom a part of my life type of situation. But I'm happy how far I've come and all the obstacle courses that I went through, and I had to look back, either if I lived with my foster mom who denied me and my biological mom who denied me, I would not be here today. [00:08:49] I have to realize that I would still be living in a miserable, living as a woman. I was still living as a woman. And I wouldn't be happy. And I would've ended in my life. And I have to realize that the universe put me through those obstacle courses to keep me where I am today. So my childhood sucked [laughs]. And most of my adulthood sucked, because I, you know, was... meeting different people, hanging with the wrong crowds and everybody asks me, "Well what made you come to Philadelphia?" And what made me come here is because I knew that there was a lot of trans people out here. And I knew that if I stayed in Jersey, I was going to be locked up or dead, because I was going down the wrong path, hanging with the wrong crowd. I knew that I needed help. And Jersey does not give you the, now they starting to, but back when I was out there, everybody was coming to Philly to the Mazzoni Center. There was a waiting list. And I remember I went, and this is when I had my last episode of anger, and I lashed out in my group. And they 302'd me. And I remember, I actually called her Nurse Ratched because she had the mean look. But she was so sweet. And I remember her telling me like, "Why don't you just go to Philadelphia and get clean?" And with Divine Light, that was August 8th, 2018. And she gave me a couple dollars and she said, "You go there and get clean and the doors will open for you." [00:10:21] And I'll never forget that saying. Doors have been opening since I've been out here. It was just my transition from the suburb life to the city life. It was just two different things. Now I miss Jersey, but I know I can't go back there because it's toxic. But most of my family's out there.

[00:10:40] Tenhula: Sounds like you had a lot to cope with. I'm wondering if you could talk more about how you coped through that time growing up.

[00:10:47] Edwards: Honestly, I coped with drinking. I started drinking at 12. Mad Dog 2020 was my best friend. And I went from Mad Dog 2020 to E&J and Four Locos. And that's how I numbed the pain with, you know, that's how I numbed everything because I didn't want to feel the hurt. [00:11:07] I didn't want to feel the pain. I didn't want to feel. I didn't want to feel at all. So I was at, I guess I could say I was an alcoholic at 12. That's what I coped with. I didn't have therapy. I didn't have no outlet. I didn't have no friends. I didn't have nothing but E&J and Mad Dog in front of me. That's how I coped with life. [00:11:34] And that's not a good way of coping, you know, drinking at 12 and stuff. It's kind of stupid as I think of it, but where else who else was I turning to at that age? There's nowhere to turn to. I feel like I was, like I said, a loner. I feel like I've always been a loner, and I always was outside of everything. I tried to be a people pleaser, but I fit into

the wrong crowds and stuff. And I was just bullied. Then I became the bully. Yeah, I was just with Nelta, I remember her. She kept bullying me, bullying me, bullying me, bullying me. So one day I just snapped and blacked out. I just thought I punched her once, but she, I beat her up real bad. [00:12:23] I don't, I didn't, I felt bad afterwards, you know. I don't like hurting people, but I just had enough of it. And that's when I gained my respect, when everybody was scared of me. I didn't want people to be scared of me. But, I also didn't want her to keep bullying me. And I don't, that's why I don't like hurting people.

[00:12:42] I don't like altercations. I don't like getting into fights. I don't like none of that. But how I cope now is through, I'm in the Morris home. I've been seven months clean because of the Morris home. So I'm starting to learn how to open up more to other people and let people inside. Cause I'm a stuffer, and I stuff and stuff and stuff until I explode and snap out. [00:13:08] So I'm learning how to have positive coping skills without alcohol and drugs. Because this leads me to self-destruct. And I had my own apartment, I had everything. That I had it all and I lost it all like that [snaps fingers]. Just lost it all. [snaps fingers] Just like that, I lost it all. I have to tell people, like, I just gotta find happiness in myself.

[00:13:33] And, I was doing good at first, and then I just started hanging on the block, and started smoking and drinking again, and then, went from there to losing my job, then I lost my apartment, then I lost, most important in this run, I lost myself. I lost myself. I stopped taking my testosterone. I stopped taking everything. [00:13:53] I just stopped taking my meds. I just, like, "eff it." I just sat in the apartment in the dark. Stopped paying my bills. Everything went to alcohol. Everything went to marijuana. That's what it went to, and then in the process of that, I got laced with cocaine. And then, I just woke up one day and I felt like I was dying.

[00:14:15] And, um, basically... it was either, Doc said, I was running out of money, had no job, and I said, I have to go get the help. So this is the first time I had to go to detox. It was embarrassing, a shame, and guilt because everybody that I helped with the recovery was looking at me like, "What are you doing here? Are you here to speak?" That's what they thought I was there to share my story. Now I was there to detox. [00:14:42] So now I'm just trying to learn better coping skills. I have more trust in people and have an outlet outside of Morris home and have, you know, I've built my support system in the Morris home, so I can cope better with life.

[00:15:04] Tenhula: Thank you. Can you talk more about your journey with dealing with your anger, how you've coped with your anger, specifically?

[00:15:13] Edwards: Yeah. My journey with anger led me to a lot of 302s in the hospital. [laughs] That's what led me to. At the time, I didn't know how to deal with my vulnerable side. I don't like dealing with the emotional side. So I turned my emotional side into anger. And I dealt with anger, of course, with drinking and smoking and it led me to the crisis center for months and months and in and out, in and out, because of my anger. I didn't cope with it right. I would lash out at people, especially the ones closest to me. I lash out at them the most. And I hurt a lot of people because of my anger. I know it wasn't violent anger, but I was violent with my tongue. I hurt a lot of people with my anger. So I'm still learning how to cope with it as of this day. As of the day we speak, I'm still learning how to cope with it. And I don't like to be angry. But a lot of anger is from my mom

and my childhood 'cause I didn't have a childhood. Now I feel like I'm experiencing my childhood as my adulthood. So I'm still learning how to cope with my anger.

[00:16:31] Tenhula: Yeah. Makes a lot of sense that you're so angry. Sounds like you have a lot to be angry about. It's very valid.

[00:16:37] Edwards: Yeah. Mm-Hmm, I'm learning slowly but surely, but I don't wanna be a 52 old man, grumpy on the porch, mad at, you know [laughs] I don't want to be that, I don't want to be in my 50s angry. I'm ready to deal with it now, and I have to deal with it, and I don't want medication to be my outlet of controlling my anger. I want to be able to control my anger on my own, not be medicated to control my anger.

[00:17:09] Tenhula: What has been your journey like with being vulnerable and expressing your emotions, besides anger?

[00:17:15] Edwards: Oh, ooh, my emotional side? I don't deal with it. I stuff it. Every time I want to cry. I [sighs] I don't want to cry! And I don't cry. Cause it's like, I cried so much when I was younger. I cried too much growing up. It's like, I'm DONE crying. I'm done crying. I'm tired of crying and all that hurt. I have a lot of hurt. I walk with a smile on my face and like, everything's good, but deep down inside, I'm hurting. I don't like touching my vulnerable side. I know I have to, eventually. When I feel vulnerable, I feel like that's when people get me. So I have to put on this tough man role, this tough demeanor, wear a mask, and wear a mask on like, it's, you know, you're not gonna touch that side of me. I would never let nobody touch me, because when I did, let people touch my vulnerable side, or speak out or express how I felt, they used it against me. And my best friend, that's not been my best friend for 15 years, put everything I said, my deepest, darkest secrets, and she blasted it all over on social media, so I won't let nobody touch my vulnerable side no more. I can't. I just like, I call him evil twin. Evil twin protects me, protects that side. It's like, I will not let nobody see me vulnerable ever again.

[00:18:43] Tenhula: Do you have any ways that you express that vulnerable side privately with yourself?

Edwards: Um, I express through music. I talk to my therapist. But out in the open I can't let people in, cause then I feel still people think I'm weak, cause they already think I'm weak cause I'm short and quiet. And you know, that's what they think, cause "Oh, he's so cute. He's adorable. He's so short. This, that, and the third." They think I'm, cause I just show love, people take that as my weakness. So I feel like that's my curse, but my good gift, but my cursed gift at the same time. Because I really am a kind hearted person. I really do love people. And care about people, because I don't want people to hurt like I hurt, like I said before. And, it's just, from all sides it's a hard place to be with me. But I know I can't always play this tough role and always have that wall up my vulnerable side. Because eventually, it's going to get me heavy. It's going to get me hard if I don't tune into my soft side, I guess.

[00:20:04] Tenhula: Yeah. It sounds like you grew up in spite of a lot of things [Edwards nods], and... you started to talk a little bit about all the positives that that has impacted, and how it's impacted who you are today. And I wonder if you can speak a little bit more about that, and about,

I guess, some of the relationships you're working on now and in your life since you've moved to Philadelphia.

[00:20:35] Edwards: Well, I met some awesome people through recovery. But most of them fell back into addiction, so we're not in more contact, but there are people at the Morris home that I really, really hope that we can be friends afterward, and you know, I have a great relationship with my therapist and my case manager, and I do have a significant other named Nikki. We met through Morris home. And I love her. I love her, she loves me. It's not like a perfect relationship. You know, I wasn't expecting to meet somebody. Cause I just got out of a relationship before I came to Morris home. And I was like, you know what? I'm going to give myself a break from dating. And it just happened. Not like, [snaps fingers] like that.

It happened over the course of... watching True Blood [laughs]. That's it. [laughs] See, that's how we started out. Like, she's a great person. But the crazy thing is, Nikki was the last person I talked to in the Morris home. And we didn't start talking until I was like two or three months in. And she always used to tell me, let's go watch a movie. I'm like, "Nope. Nope. Nope." And then, one day we started watching True Blood and it just happened naturally on December 16th. It just happened naturally and she's a great person. You know, she's very, very, a great person. I love Nikki. She loves me. And a lot of people think it's awkward that, you know, a trans man and trans woman dating. Then they start asking me dumb questions like, "Well, how do y'all have sex? And how do y'all do this?" And I'm like, the same way everybody else does. Like, it's none of your business. And my thing is this: why does it matter? Why is it that people think it's weird that a trans man and a trans woman are dating? Then it's like, "Well, then technically you're straight." And they read too deep into it. Or they think I'm, uh, they call me a gay, or the F-slur, or, you know, if I'm not clockable, like they say around here [inaudible]. And, they ask me certain dumb questions sometimes. I'm like, it's none of your business. It's none of your business what me or her do, or how we do it, and this, that, and there's nobody's business. [00:22:58] As long as that she loves me and I love her, that's all that matters. And that's all that matters to me. And she's a big support with my recovery. I'm her support in her recovery, you know, and it's not gonna be what they call a rehab romance. We're both going to take this outside of the program. We are going to do a big journey. And they always ask, "Do you wanna have Kids?" Eventually, we will have kids. Doesn't matter how we have them, we are gonna have a child. And it's just like, that's how society is. It's so focused on who's dating who. Instead of focused on what's really going on around here. But I'm slowly but surely trying to open up new friendships. But... there's always that "but" with me. Even with Nikki, it's like, when is the shoe gonna drop? When is she gonna hurt like the rest of my life hurt me? And it's not fair to her. It's not fair to her at all. But I'm trying my best. I'm trying my best to keep this relationship going. And it's mostly me and my shit. Because I just feel as though if my mom, the one that birthed me hurt me, anyone behind me is going to hurt me just like her. But she's been in my corner. She's been in my corner and trying, she's understanding, she's trying to understand me. And I just hope that I can get over this hump and just let that hurt go so I can develop better relationships. And I don't want to be intimate, just having relationships with women as my friends, in general.

Because I feel as though once they get too close to me, I don't like waiting. What is your purpose in my life? Why do you want to be my friend? Why do you want to be with me? Like, why do you want to be my friend? Why do you want to be my sister? So yeah, I have a lot of relationship

problems with women. Even men. Not all men, because I can get over the hurt that men did to me as a child, which I'm not going to get too deep into that, but yeah. **I thought of them, I was a man, but as a woman.** But I'm okay with, I would say trans men, gay men, but cis men that are straight, it's iffy with me, because what they did, the cis men I grew up with, wasn't too nice and friendly.

[00:25:43] Tenhula: Um, can you talk a little bit more about how you and your partner support each other? How she supports you, how you support her?

Edwards: Umm, we definitely go to meetings together. We definitely talk about like, if we disagree with things, we talk about it. You know, our relationship isn't perfect, we're not a perfect couple. She supports me through everything. She's definitely going to be there for my top surgery. She's going to support me every which way she can. We did talk about having kids. And that's where, you know, I do want to have it biologically, but I'm just not ready for it yet. Cause, you know, we both gotta start the hormones and stuff. So, I do wanna have a biological kid. At first I wasn't with it. I'm like, "No, I don't wanna have a child," cause with me, I gotta get out that mindset of what makes a man. And, in my mind "Men can't have babies, this, that." I can't worry about what other people think of me. If I want to have a child naturally, not, then I'm going to have my child naturally.

Tenhula: [27:01] What does manhood look like to you?

Edwards: In my mind, with me, in my messed up mindset, how I used to think manhood, manhood is like, "You gotta be the tough guy, you gotta protect your wife, you gotta protect your girlfriend, you gotta go out there and make the money," and stuff like that. That's not manhood. Manhood is what, manhood is somebody that's this journey through a person, it don't matter if you got a chest, no chest, penis, no penis, that does not make manhood, cause there's cis men who sometimes don't have a penis, cis men have, you know, fatty tissue.

[00:27:39] And that's what's wrong with me. I try to go off what society thinks what manhood is. But me, what a man is, is me. I'm my own man. I can't compare myself to any other man on this earth. I'm me. And I don't care if I have a penis or not penis. I know I'm a man. I know that I will protect me and Nikki. I know if I want to have a child with a baby, then it's not going to stop me from not being less of a man for having a baby. I just think that that's just a plus for me. I am a man who can have a baby [laughs]. That's a plus for me. Because manhood is just how you want to think as a man. If anybody, everybody insists on "trans man," your manhood is your manhood, in your own eyes. Not what people think of you as a man. Because not all cis men can be men [laughs]. Not all cis men are men. Some are little ass boys. And very insecure. And they can't stand trans men sometimes. And they always gotta prove their point that we're not real men. But I mean, sometimes I ask, "What makes you a man?" And they all go, my muscles, I can do this, I can produce babies, this, that, and the third. I said, not all men, not all cis men can produce babies. Not all cis men can help a cis woman have a baby. And that's what I don't understand because technically we all was born women, little girls. We was all born and it goes in or out. So, we all got estrogen and testosterone in our body. We all got it, a little bit of something. So, I try to tell people, don't compare yourself to anybody. Just be your own person, your own individual person.

Tenhula: [00:29:44] Um, what was it like for you when you started testosterone?

Edwards: Oh, I need a drink real quick [laughter from all speakers] [drinks some water]. Yeah. When I started my testosterone, those first three months was like hell. It was hell and back. I was angry, horny, I didn't know what the fuck was going on [laughter from all speakers]. I was like, what is going on? I was snapping on people. That first shot, it was like, that was like a rush, like "Finally it's happening!" You know, menstrual stopped, then I started...Everytime, I'd be like "See this?" I was getting so excited and I'm just like, "The little hairs is growing in! Look, my little hairs! And started getting the little spurts and I started getting a little shadow. My mustache is still struggling [laughs]. And everybody was like, "Oh, how long you been on T?"

And the crazy thing is -- Dr. Kwak, she was --- because before you get to T, you gotta, you know, check your testosterone level and my testosterone level was extremely high and estrogen level was low. So she was like, "Ace, what testosterone were you on before here?" I said, "I've never been on testosterone." It was my first time. She said, "Really?!" So my testosterone level was extremely high. So that's why most people have been on testosterone for 10 years, seven years. I was develop[ing] quicker. They always used to be envy or jealous. And I was like "I can't help it." And like, I just felt so good. But those first three months was hell. Cause I was trying to balance out. But I was happy. I was happy. I was just ready. And you know the crazy thing is I don't like needles. I don't like needles. I am scared of needles. And that's why I tell people it's not a choice. Who's a person who's scared of needles and wants to get a shot every week? I'm scared of needles. I got to get this shot. I've been breathing like [takes a deep breath in]. And especially to do it by yourself. Say, "I don't like needles, but this is what I had to do for my journey." And, in the beginning, it was going real fast for me. Like, you know. But I always used to be in my mirror like, when is this going to grow [points to mustache] [laughs]? Everybody, I said, I don't care about all this. I just want a mustache. That's all I want, and it's like, as you can see, it's like real light, and sometimes I dye it to darken it [laughs]. And everybody's like matching, like "Really, you want a bit of like?" And that's when I first got over like a year. So I was pre-teen. Most of this I already had before [points to his beard]. I already had most of the hair. And once I stopped smoking cigarettes, this started to grow really, really in [points to beard again]. But my journey wasn't a perfect journey, and the growth in certain areas and all this hair. My back's all hairy now. And I'm like, "Oh my God!" And wearing the binders, and I can't wait! One more month and I don't have to wear this binder again. But I'm just so hairy. That's the only thing I don't like is how hairy I got. I don't like to be all hairy.

Tenhula: [00:33:04] What changes did you like? Besides, I hear facial hair was a big plus.

Edwards: Well, my voice got a little deeper. My voice was always deep, but it got a little deeper. I don't like the sex drive. Cause I'm so horny. I don't like that part because I'm like, "Yo, what's going on?" [laughs]. I didn't like that part, but I did like the facial hair. I did like the masculine side and my masculine features. I didn't like the acne that came with it because I had, I didn't like my hairline going all the way back. I had a perfect hairline. My hairline was so perfect. I was in love with my hairline. Now, I've got the old man hairline. So, it pushed it all the way back here. I said, "Please, just don't make me bald in here in the middle." And it did, but I used some drops to

make it grow back in. I love my hair. I just don't like my hairline. But that's when I really started getting into the community. A lot of people asked me to be in the ballroom scene, and they say "you'll get your tens!" But I'm not comfortable yet until I get my top surgery. Then I'll walk realness and all of that.

Tenhula: [00:34:18] What's been your journey with top surgery? How long has the process been?

Edwards: See, I was supposed to get top surgery in my first year. I had it all set up, and then this one trans man, I see him at the bus, he just got his top surgery. And his nipple was hanging out, bloody, and all his stitches busted open, so it freaked me out. But I've come to find out that the reason that happened to him is because he started smoking cigarettes and drinking. So he didn't heal right. So, I stopped everything. And now... It's this: I'm going through this obstacle course to get this surgery, because I suffer from epilepsy, and I had heart surgery, so I had to get clearance through my heart cardiologist, and I got to get clearance through **NORO**, and then I got to do all these appointments, and I've been doing this since December. Getting all these clearances.

Tenhula: It's a long process.

Edwards: Yes. And finally got the date, and then I almost got scared because they did deny my surgery date at first. My insurance wouldn't cover it because they said they didn't put "gender dysphoria" in the letter. But my case manager was like, "It happens a lot." So she made a very, very detailed letter. [00:35:34] So, I just hope they don't change my date. But they said everything should be back and going. But I'm nervous, but excited at the same time. Cause I've been wanting this for years, but I just had to study, I had to study to make sure this is what I wanted. I had to study, look at other doctors' work, and I know people don't like Dr. Rumer, but she's very good with top surgery. And I don't, I mean, I like Dr. Rumer because she's very good with top surgery.

Tenhula: You're going to Dr. Rumer? Yeah.

Edwards: Yeah. But, yeah, I'm going to her. I've seen her work. I've seen a lot of trans men that went through her. Their chest looks nice. Phenomenal. Compared to other doctors that I've seen. [00:36:16] So I did all my studies through my doctors. I know Dr. Rumer is one of the most popular doctors out here. But I've studied other doctors. I just didn't like their work. And their, and a lot of, their work and how they cut people. I didn't like how they cut. And I don't want to just have those scars and stuff.

Tenhula: [00:36:38] Yeah, what are your goals with top surgery, if you're comfortable sharing?

Edwards: My goal with top surgery is to follow directions to the T. I don't want to be one of those men that takes off my shirt after three months. I want to heal properly, so I know for the first year you gotta wear a shirt, so that's what I'm going to do. [00:36:54] After that, I'll probably try the ballroom scene after that. I'll do that. My journey's definitely to get tattooed. [laughs] Get tattooed up on my chest. See, I'm scared of needles, but I want my chest tattooed.

Tenhula: Do you have any other tattoos?

Edwards: I've got one right here that says, "No regrets." And it's spelled right. That's my tattoo. I got this done when I was like 23. Cause man, that hurt. I want more tats, but I just want to get my surgery done. See on my chest. Cause I want a tattoo over the scar. I already have the tattoo I want planned out in my head.

Tenhula: What are you thinking for the tattoo?

Edwards: It's going to be angel wings. Angel wings. That's it. Nobody's name. It's going to be angel wings. And now, on this one, I should have started on no regrets. I'm going to put like different things I don't regret that happened in my life.

Tenhula: [00:37:57] Beautiful. You mentioned you have a chosen family. Can you talk a little bit about your chosen family?

Edwards: Well, my chosen family... It's crazy. We both lived in Willingboro. And they lived across the street from me. And we used to hang out and play. We've been, like, yeah, we used to hang out and play with each other every day. Every day. And they became our family. And they've been there with me through thick and thin. Thick and thin. Even when I walked away, they still was right there with me. They support me. Most of my family's LGBTQ [laughs], my chosen family, you know, so they support me. They, you know, knew I was a man before I did, you know, and they very, very happy for me. They're excited for me. Even with my addiction they was there for me. And I left. When I get, when I be in my addiction, I just isolate myself and, you know, don't talk to them. And my sister was very hurt by that. She was very hurt, but they love me. They're excited for me. They can't wait until they're going to come. Well, they was going to come up for my surgery, but my niece has something to do that day. So I was like, I'm going to be okay. They're in Jersey. They want me to move back to Jersey, but I don't think I'm going to move back. I don't want to move. My final destination is not going to be Jersey or Philly, but they are very supportive of me. And we've been rocking and rolling for like, going on 18 years. You know, I'm the oldest person, but they swear they're my oldest sisters. They're very protective of me. I can say that [laughs]. They swear they're my oldest sisters. They was really mad at me that I didn't tell them I needed help. This is what you do. When you need help, you don't ask for help. You wait to the last minute of everything, and they don't like that. So, I told them, I'll try better if I ever fall again, which I hope I don't. I will reach out for help.

Tenhula: On what occasions do you see them now?

Edwards: Well at the moment, I can't see them because I'm in Morris Home, but they did make a day in the works, me and my team are planning a day where I can go to Jersey on a weekend to see them. I haven't seen them since August of last year.

Tenhula: [00:40:28] Can you talk a little bit about Morris Home and how you came to Morris Home...?

Edwards: Sure. So how I came to Morris home was like, the day, like I was telling you about that day, when I felt like I was dying, my heart was racing, I was sweating. I didn't know what was going on with me. I know my blood pressure was like 160 something over 1 something. It was very high. And I was shaking and the doctor told me, you know, do you do drugs? You know, they always ask that question. I mean, I drank, I smoked weed and I drank. And they say, well, you're going through withdrawal from alcohol. And I knew I didn't have no money no more. And, I went through Kirkbride detox for five days and I called to Morris Home and they let me in. Even though they had waiting lists, they let me in. And I've has been clean rock and roll since then. They're a great program. I can tell they very caring. They do care about us and they go to bat, they will bend their back to make sure we're okay. And I never seen no program like them. I could say this: I've been to Divine Light, compared to Morris Home. Morris Home is like a suite compared to other programs in here. Cause they don't do, like, Amazon wish lists for Christmas or provide the food for us. We keep our money, you know. This is sad, but Morris Home is the only trans rehab in the USA. [00:41:58] There should be more programs just for trans people because we're part of the LGBTQ, but the T is silent in LGBTQ. The T is silent, and I feel like we have to go through more, a lot more, than any other letter of what they call the alphabet mafia [laughs]. I feel like we have to go through more. I feel like we have to fight for more. [00:42:19] I feel like our first thing is our rights is taken more than the rest of the LGBTQ. And there's a lot of LGBTQ places for the community as a whole, but as trans people, I think, for me, I feel safer with just trans people, my community, because I've been through a lot with the more masculine lesbians of the community coming down on me, and nine times out of ten, because they want to transition, but they're scared of what their partner's going to think of them, what their family's going to think of them, but then they put so much hate on me. [00:42:58] So I just think the Morris Home is a good place for trans people. It really is. It's a very good program. They get you what you need. They help you in. We're spoiled [laughs]. The Morris Home spoils us. [00:43:15] They definitely spoil us. I just wish there was more programs like this for the trans community. That's my bucket list to have my own trans recovery house for all trans men. The only reason why I say that is because trans women, their stories are out there more than trans men. I feel like with trans men, we're like on the bottom of the trans community. And yes, they are the spotlight. I know they go through a lot, but trans men go through a lot too, but you just don't hear our stories like that.

Tenhula: [00:43:51] Yeah. Through being in all trans recovery space, are there any specific relationships besides your partner and even other trans men that you've formed connections with?

Edwards: See, this is with me with trans men in general. I have trouble making friends who are trans men. I don't know why. [00:44:18] I can get along with trans women like no other. With the trans men, I feel as though they try to compete with me, or have a competition with me, or simply envy me, which I don't know why. And I think that's, it shouldn't be like that, it should be like brotherhood. It should be a brotherhood. You shouldn't compare your transitioning to my transitioning. At all. I just want to live my life. I want to have more trans brothers. I do have one that I did bond with. But, it's what I've been coming across lately. It's just, it's just not, the connection's not there. But trans women, yes. They're like my sisters that I didn't ask for. But, can I just get real, it can be, it can be hectic living with, you know, a lot of trans woman. Let's just

leave it at that [laughs]. It can. I just feel like trans woman, I feel like this is a trans woman house and the trans man just live in there.

Tenhula: Yeah, is it mostly trans women?

Edwards: Yes. This is like a history of the Morris Home history. This is the most trans men that have been in there.

Tenhula: [00:45:33] Right now, how many trans men are there now? Including you?

Edwards: Three. Including me, three.

Tenhula: And that's the most in history? At one time?

Edwards: Yeah.

Tenhula: What is your relationship like with your one trans brother?

Edwards: Uh, we cool. He's at the house now. He graduated. But we're real cool. He's younger than me. But, you know, we go work out together. We go to meetings together. That's my little bro. And I'm just like, hopefully, I get out into the scenery more, meet more trans men. Because I be on Beagle and I see the trans men have their panel and stuff. They have groups out there for trans men that I'm slowly but surely trying to get into, just to meet other people.

Murphy: [00:46:58] Can I insert myself just for a moment because I wanted to ask, I had a couple of follow up questions. One, just you were talking about ballroom and what that might be like. And then I also want to ask just a little bit more about... Because you were talking before we began the interview about like how you want to, you know, give back to other trans folks. And so this recovery home that you're imagining sounds like an amazing way to do that. So, I don't know if either of those threads would be interesting for you to follow up on, but we'd love to hear more, if you feel like sharing.

Edwards: No problem. So, for me to give back, so I was a TikTokker, and I had like 20k followers. [00:47:17] So that was... It's right on, you know, talking about the trans community. I want to be an advocate. I've really wanted it, and they banned my page for defending myself. It was a gay male, I forgot his TikTok name, I'm not going to put his TikTok, and he was basically being disrespectful to the trans men, and he's been disrespectful to the trans community. [00:47:47] And first I let it go. Then he was saying like, "Oh, Marsha P. Johnson is not the reason why we have our rights, this, that, and the third." And that's when I said something like, "Listen, don't erase history. Don't take that from her. She is the reason why we have our rights." And then he called me a little girl, and then he was like. "You don't even have balls, and this, that, and the third, and you better fuck up and walk to manhood." He was being so disrespectful. And I let it go. Cause I let it go. He kept on antagonizing me. Then that's when I snapped and came back at him. Then he had all his little friends writing the N-word in my comments. [00:48:29] Real bad. And I snapped out and said, "This is the problem, right? This is the problem now." I said, "You don't want unity

in LGBTQ, cause there's racism, there's racism in LGBTQ.” I said, “Now you show your true colors.” And that's all I said, and they mass reported my page and took me out, wiped me out. [00:48:51]

So to give back, I want to do a podcast. For all different, it's mainly going to be for the trans community, but LGBTQ, but I really want to focus on the trans community, like sex workers and talk about all different walks of life. I want to involve everybody under an umbrella to have interviews with, like how y'all doing it here, but I'm going to do it in the podcast. That's how I'm going to give back. That's how I can help people without overwhelming myself, and give back at the same time. And I want to do an all trans comic book.

Murphy: What would that be like?

Edwards: I've got it all planned out in my head, but I've got to get my recovery first. What would it be like, because I want to, you know, disabled community that's trans, they're not spotlighted. [00:49:42] They don't really have a big spotlight at all. You know, I want to have like a trans kid in there. They, them. The trans man, the trans woman, the non binary, gender fluid. I want everybody to be a part of it. I don't care about race or none of that. I just want to have a cool ass all trans comic book. [00:50:05] That's all I want. That's my book. That's my dream. And I want to have a documentary for all trans men. So I have a lot of ideas and goals I want to do to give back to this community. And what was the other question?

Murphy: You just mentioned ballroom a couple of times, and I just wanted to follow up, if you feel like talking a little bit more about that.

Edwards: Oh, ballroom. See, the ballroom scene, I love watching the clips. [00:50:32] I love seeing the trans men. I love seeing everybody go out there and do realness and the drag queen that does realness and not really a trans woman but they a drag queen. I love the ballroom scene. I love watching the clips. I love the tramp. I love everybody competing and I see it, but I just don't see it for me right now, in time. I feel more, cause you gotta have confidence. Like they can read if you're nervous. And I don't want to get chopped [laughs]! So they can read that. They can read that. And so right now I'm very, I'm not ready for it, but I do want to be in it. But I don't want to be any, I just want to be a free agent. [00:51:10] A 007, that's what they call it. I don't want to be in a house, because you being in a house, that can get messy, and I don't wanna have no bad rep. You know, I know about the houses and stuff. So I just want to be myself, just be my own agent.

Well, eventually I will be part of the ballroom scene, but just not right now. [00:51:31] I just got to get my card because I know the ballroom scene got a lot of drinking and drugging and it's not, it's not... I got to have the willpower to do that. I know my limits, but I want to get back before I even go to the ballroom scene. But I'm definitely gonna do the podcast. [00:51:49] I don't know, I was gonna call it “Tea Talk.” But I want it to be something that's catchy. “Tea Talk” [laughs]. You know? You know so, in the comic book, I definitely want to have a lot of youth in it because the youth is getting so so bad with these bills for the youth, the trans youth. Leave them, leave the kids

alone. [00:52:09] Who are y'all to tell how somebody else how to take care of their child [scoffs]? I just want to do it. I want to do it, and I'm going to do it. I just gotta get my foundation set first before I can give it back.

Yeah, I definitely want to start with the Morris Home. The people that [00:52:34] I grew up, like, I had interactions with at Morris Home. It's going to be a series. It's not going to be just one comic book and that's it. It's going to be a series of the comic book. It's got to figure out the names and stuff like that. So that's what I'm going to do to give back.

Tenhula: [00:52:54] You talked a little bit about your music. You also make music? You are a musician?

Edwards: No.

Tenhula: Or you listen to music?

Edwards: I listen to music a lot to help me. But I do a lot of editing. I do a lot of editing with TikTok. I like to make videos and make them pop out. And it's just so dope. [00:53:17] I do. That's why I want to be in filming. That's my goal. I used to want to be a veterinarian. But I know with me and animals, I'd be the man that had to collect all the animals that have all types of goats and cats and dogs and all that [laughs]. But my passion is editing. I love to make a video, then do the editing to the video and make it pop out more with the, I could say, like lightning, make it sound like a thunderstorm and all that. [00:53:48] I want to be like this. I want to learn how to do green screening. That's hard. Now green screening is hard. I tried it once and it looked horrible [laughs]. So I just want to do like little clips and stuff like that. There is so much I want to do. But I love, I love, I love to listen to music. I think music is a good therapy session for me. [00:54:12] Music is really good therapy.

Tenhula: What kind of music do you like to listen to?

Edwards: I like all types of music. Country, jazz, blues. I just don't like this new generation stuff. This mumble rapping and "Lil Uzi" and all. Whatever they call it. I don't like the new music. Some of them I do, but not all of them. I like old school though. [00:54:35] Mainly old school music. I just can't get down with this new stuff. This new rap. I like, let's see, Miley Cyrus. I like her now. I like Miley Cyrus now. Flowers, that's my song. You ever heard of Flowers? That is my song. I love that song. I say, "Okay, Miley!" You know, I like all types of music. I'm a music person. [00:54:58] Now can I make music? No. I cannot make music [laughs]. Can't rap, can't sing. I can, now, I know how to do poetry, but that's not my passion. Only time I do poetry is when I'm really dark. And I know how to write. I started a book, but that's not my passion.

Tenhula: [00:55:18] Where are you when you listen to music, and kind of have these music therapy sessions?

Edwards: In my room. Sometimes I have my little boom box I carry around town. It's just so cool. I'll be at a car park listening and everybody be dancing. And I'll run, I'll be down. Going to the gym, put my boombox, and everybody do they one twos, like, "Oh, I remember that song! What

you know about that, young boy?" [laughs]. [00:55:45] I ain't had all the little, like the old people, we do a little two step. And it just feels good. It feels good to just listen to music. And I don't, see some people like when they sad, listen to sad music. I don't do that. I listen to whatever is on my spirit. I like most of my time is pop music. [00:56:04] Like, I love Sam Smith. And speaking of that, I was listening to Sam Smith and I came across this artist called Parson James. You ever heard of him? He's like another Sam Smith. I think like an underground. And once I, I love him. Parson James, he is like another Sam. he's a gay man. He's another Sam Smith. [00:56:28] Sinner is a good one, Temple, Minute, all his music is awesome, but Sinner, Sinner and Minute is one of my favorite. Yeah, I was like, where, where has he been at? But they say he's been out, but I never heard of him. He's a real good artist, he's like a pop artist. See, I like pop. And everybody just think cause I'm Black, they think all Black people like rap. [00:56:54] That's that stereotype stuff. But yeah, I'm really a pop person.

[silence]

I'm an open book to anything.

Tenhula: [00:57:19] Is there anything that we touched on that you'd like to add more on, or anything we didn't get to that you wanted to talk about?

Edwards: The only thing I'd like to talk about is just how important it is to vote. It's very important to vote because this 2024 election is going to be pretty ugly. Now [Joseph] Biden's running the game, but what has he done for us? [laughs] [00:57:46] I was just like, where the hell has Biden been? Like, I just, I'm scared. I'm very scared for our community, the LGBTQ as a whole, especially the trans community.

Because I just feel as though after that shooting that happened in Tennessee, now they're directly going to target us even more because he, that person was a trans man, not a woman, they misgendered him. [00:58:12] It was a trans man. And every time you go on TikTok, they told a trans man to hold this person accountable. So how can we hold a dead person accountable? We don't do that when all the rest of the people are going and doing these shootings and stuff. How are we supposed to hold this person accountable? [00:58:31] And then that's because the person was trans, that had nothing to do with it. He was a person that was sick. And the bills got to him. Or whatever could have happened in that church. It's not because he was trans. And I just don't understand why they want the community to hold this person accountable. [00:58:51] And it's sad. Was that person wrong? Absolutely. He was wrong for doing that. But - there's no buts after that. He was wrong. But now they're attacking us. Now they're attacking us more.

And even within our community, not even, our allies or accomplices in our community are making things difficult for us too, because they have these debates on TikTok, and they're saying if you're not cis, If you don't call yourself cis, then you're transphobic. And then that's very, very, very...I try to get them to say, that's just not the right way to do it. If they don't want to be called cis, then they're not cis. A cisgender. They don't like to be called it. They don't like to be called it. You can't call them transphobic because they don't want to be called cisgender. [00:59:36] And I say, you're not even part of our community. You're making it harder for people to understand us. Cause you're

making it seem like they're transphobic cause they don't want to be called cisgender. And I keep telling them this is not the right way to do it. And they block me. Cause they don't like to hear the truth. Then... Any people in our community make these debates, "trans women are women, trans men are men, prove me wrong." They're having these debates and when people come up to talk about it, they'll get mad, but they -- stop having these debates! Why don't you talk about the trans people that's getting, that's getting killed and murdered. [01:00:12] There was this one trans woman, I think she was a rapper in Tennessee or something like that, her name was, Koko Doll [Rasheeda Williams aka Koko Da Doll]. Like why don't you talk about stuff like what's really happening, the deaths and the murders and stuff like that. Stop having these debates. It's not getting nowhere, but hurting the cis people and hurting the trans community at the same time, because y'all talking about what makes a woman, and then when y'all tell what makes a woman, y'all hurting the cis woman because some cis woman can't have babies. [01:00:40] Some cis women don't have a uterus. Some cis women doesn't have that. And you have these men coming up and saying, "Well, that makes a woman, to produce babies." And I said, that's not necessarily true. And you're hurting your heterosexual community at the same time trying to hurt us. So it makes a battle. We don't need no battles right now. This is not the time to battle, to battle the sexes. It's not. We need to come as a whole, as a unit, as a human race and go against the government because they don't care about you. If you ain't rich, they don't care a fuck about you. [01:01:15] If you ain't rich, they don't care about you [laughs].

And it's this time, because 2024, who are we going to vote for? And it's not a type of politics because Biden didn't really do nothing. So it's either Trump or Desantis and he's worse than Trump. And so it's like, this is what I'm focused on. I want more people to vote. And it's not even the president. It is really the senate in our states that could really save us. And they keep repeatedly putting these people back in office and they come out with these outrageous bill that makes no sense. And then we wanna cry about it. Bro, it takes five minutes to vote.

I just want peace in the world. That's it. Peace. And I just, seems like we're going backwards. We went forward and now we're going backwards. And everything is getting reversed and I don't understand why people are so focused on the LGBTQ community and protecting the kids. What about the guns? The drag queen is not hurting the kids by reading books. You can't say trans women are out there molesting the kids, and if it is, it's not a trans woman, it's a man pretending to be a woman going into the women's bathroom and doing the creepy stuff. And that's the problem, that's why I stopped going to TikTok. [01:02:45] Because when I try to have these conversations, and I say pull up factual articles that say trans women are molesting little girls in the bathroom. Not an article that a blogger... I could go on there and make up a whole story and say this is what is true. Anybody can make a blog these days and write it. I said, I need factual articles about trans women going into the bathroom touching little girls. And this whole bathroom thing. I said, I'd rather have my daughter in the bathroom with a trans woman than a trans man. You know why? Because the majority of people are going to be like, why is this man in the bathroom? [01:03:24] Why is this man with a big beard in the bathroom with a woman? This little girl is not going to look at the trans woman and say, Why is this man in the bathroom? They're going to say, "Oh, she's pretty, mom." And everybody's just going to do the same thing. Go in

there and wash their hands. Do what they got to do. [01:03:36] Touch up your makeup and keep it pushing. Then me going into the same bathroom as your sex. Me going in there with a little girl to pee the girl be scared of me. Than a trans woman. I just don't get how society is. This is crazy. It just blows my mind that we're the biggest sinners. The LGBTQ community, the biggest sinners of sins. A sin is a sin. If they want to go by the Christianity, whatever, a sin is a sin, if we're a sinner. But I'm not a sinner, I'm just me. I'm not sinning. This is who I am. This is who I am. I'm Ace. Before anything. I'm Ace.

Tenhula: [01:04:27] Thank you, Ace. Yeah. Is there anything that you would say to your future kid?

Edwards: My future child, be who you want to be. Love yourself, and I will be here for you through every step of the way. If you come out and you like men, then hey, as long as they love you and don't put your hands on you [laughs]. That's all I care about my kids. You want to be trans? Hey, I'm here for it. You know what I'm saying? Let kids be kids. Let kids...cause there is no gender on clothes. There's no gender on toys. If a kid is gonna play with Barbies as a child, as a boy, let them play with Barbies. Isn't necessarily gonna be gay. They wanna play with a kitchen set? Let them play with a kitchen set. There's so many men chefs out here. There's so many men that do hair. They're not gonna be gay cause of a toy or what they wear. I would let my child be a child, let a child be. I want my child to be the best child they can be. I will let my child make their own decisions, and I would guide my child in the right direction. I'm not going to disown my child, I'm not going to be like my mother. I would never do that. As long as my child is healthy, loved, and cared about, as long as my child is not out here doing crimes, as long as my child is in school, doing what they gotta do, I will support my child no matter what they want to be. If they want to be an astronaut, hey, we gonna be...they wanna do drag shows, they can do drag shows. They can do whatever they want. Let kids be *kids*. Let them be *kids*. I'd let my child be in the house playing with Barbie, I don't have them playing with guns and knives. I just let my child be my child, tell my child, "I would love you no matter what. Don't be scared to come to me for anything. [01:06:21] You want to be a sex worker? I support you. As long as you have protection because sex work is work." I ain't going to buy shame on slut shaming. That's what you want to do. As long as you can do it protected. That's all that matters to me. Because it's hard enough with the children growing up as it is in society now. [01:06:42] It's kids. It's hard. Kids are not making the past 15, 16, 17 years old lately. So I just want my child to be healthy and loved. That's it. That's it.

Tenhula: Thank you Ace.

Edwards: No problem.

Murphy: Thanks Ace.

Edwards: No problem.

Tenhula: There's anything else you'd like to add to wrap up, otherwise?

Edwards: I always tell my trans community: I love y'all. We got this. We got this. And let's keep up the good work. Get our stories out there. That's it!

Tenhula: Thanks for sharing your story.