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| Interviewer  Interviewee  Interviewer  Interviewee  Interviewer  Interviewee  Interviewer  Interviewee  Interviewer  Interviewee  Interviewer | Thank you. So, can we start by talking about what you’ve put first, please?  Box one?  Mmh.  So, box one I would like to express this in order as well. The first place I put is ‘Las Iguanas’. ‘Las Iguanas’ is a restaurant slash cocktail bar and um… I have many fond memories at this place; it was the favourite place for my ex-girlfriend to go to and on top of that this year, um, there's been times where I might have  been at ‘Las Iguanas’ what? Three times in one week like it might have been a friend's birthday we decided to go there, have a drink, I’ll be there with like six of my friends, you know, very socially connected with them, um group of uh… young guys and same like ethnicity, demographic and background as me, having a good time, celebrating life. As I said in the prior recording, you know, for us to reach 21 is a big deal for us, you know, so the fact to even hit in 24s, in my friend’s case hitting 25, that’s a fantastic master, I’m very happy. So, in that week I also… ended up going there with my cousin, or in the same proximity, over week… I went there my cousin and this is like a cousin that I made myself, this is not a blood relative, and in terms of me feeling connected and um, feeling social, feeling, not… feeling the opposite of lonely you know, um this particular person that I'm calling my cousin at the moment, me as a young man I kind of figured out how to feel socially connected with people, um my parents aren’t originally from the city, they're from Africa, so um them coming to Africa and not like a lot of my family came from Africa to London, United Kingdom, um I realized that it will be very helpful to have allies, to have a family per se, let's say, not, I didn't have the pleasure of having like blood family, but me growing up seeing people from the city, people from the city let’s say or from this country, the whole family's here, you have a stronger kind of social backing, opposed to somebody that parents came here, I had to learn the social cues, and fashion, and language, and my parents’ language wasn’t perfect, so I had to learn how to speak the language properly myself, independently, a lot of like bullying happened for, you know, maybe not pronouncing things correct, maybe not dressing accordingly, um so these are things that I had to learn along the way, and going back to the longing for more and having this climb, so my cousin is someone I met at secondary school, my first year of secondary school, this guy came from a city called Telford and he was a young man from the same country as me, and didn't have no friends in London, and I said, at that time I kind of climbed the social ladder in primary school, so I knew how it felt to be at the bottom, having no friends, having no status in a city or in a school or place and um I kind of fast-tracked his climbing the social ladder by having that conversation within to say ‘Oh you’re from the same country as me, let's be cousins’. So, as we grew older, we grew distant: um he got moved to Ireland and coming back to this theme of us, um… as young men not believing we're gonna reach the age of 21, his mum was very scared for  him for all the violence that was happening to see, so she sent him to Ireland to do, to finish off his education, so those years where he went away, um we still love each other the same, but we weren't physically in each other's lives, so he's made, he made a great effort on a bank holiday weekend to um organize an outing and we went to the cinema, and he invited another one of his friends from university and I invited my older brother and after we watched the film in the cinema, well we didn't, unfortunately the film was very popular, we didn't get to sit next to each other, I've got to sit next to my brother and he got to sit next to his friend and was in two totally different parts of the cinema, but I felt very socially connected to them because we organized to go there together, and um after we left the cinema, we all chose to  go back to this place called ‘Las Iguanas’, so this is why this place has given me so much feeling of social connectedness. Then um the final time I went there, in this, I had three times in my head mainly, outside of it being my ex-girlfriend’s favourite place, the three times that made me put this, ‘Las Iguanas’ down on the paper, the final time, one of my friends has moved to Spain and to go over there and work. She's born and raised in England, I met this person in college, friend of my ex-girlfriends, at the time my ex-girlfriend was my best friend and I heard about this lovely mixed-race girl um from Yorkshire and her accent’s very um… how could I say? Is very… a UK accent in London is very noticeable. I was in my ICT class and I heard this girl speak and I knew that this was the same girl my best friend always used to speak about and um I reached out to her and I was like ‘You know, you’re Christina, I know who you are’. She was very confused with my approach of introducing myself and I-I said to her, yeah, like ‘My name's Simo’, which isn't my real name is alter, alter, alter-ego, let's say, and then, you know, blackberry was very popular in those days and um blackberry messenger was, um, let's say as much of a strong force as WhatsApp is today, and this is another kind of application that is connected to social connectedness and we can feel connected and we could speak to people we may not have known, you know, prior to the other generations, before us you only speak to people you know, but um through social media, um at times I feel connected to people that I don't know online and she went online to blackberry messenger and put in her status ‘Who knows Simo?’ then my best friend popped up and said ‘Yo, that's the guy, that's my best friend’, then we became very good friends and um, I'm speaking about this because, in terms of social connectedness, I feel very connected to that girl, despite that she's moved out of the city, and she's in another country right now, and before she left, we went cinema and ended up at ‘Las Iguanas’ and she invited some more friends and there was this guy called Martin, that I've never met before, but all my lady friends kind of raving about him, this guy called Martin and my friend Kirsty's made from work and I've got to finally meet him that day, and I felt connected to Martin before I met him because I heard so much about him, so when I met him I actually hugged him and it was very like that kind of brotherly love going on throughout the night and I do hope to see him again. Yeah, so, social connectedness first I put ‘Las Iguanas’, then I put my childhood um estate B15 focus, I drew a picture of it, um all my best friends lived there.  No, I think um, I think one should be sufficient.  Yeah, that’s sufficient, yeah.  Thank you. What about the other box?  The other box…  Where do you feel most lonely?  Funnily enough, the first thing I put is not where it makes me feel most lonely, but these places are all in the same area, and um I've done a kind of cliché thing here, um I put a drill image of a lady on a pole, representing a strip club, this is like the Western world's kind of cliché in a movie, where you will see kinda men drowning their sorrows in a strip club. Um, I haven't had the pleasure of doing this year, I may do it one day when I feel alone, when I’m an older guy, I may experience it, but uh, plus it does came in my head, I've been to a strip club before for a mate’s 21st birthday, so, in essence, in my life, it may not represent loneliness ‘cause I haven't gone there for those purposes, but it's in the area where I have wandered around by myself, at a time, when I felt longing, I've gone to this area, called ‘Old Street’, trying to fulfil, that, that was one of the first times I come outside of my house tryna fulfill that whole I was talking about earlier, um just going out to the bars, tryna see if I could find some women, try um battle that  feeling of loneliness, it was um, a very nice social experiment, to see if I could go outside by myself and see if I could um make friends, even though I have friends, I could have easily found some other friends that have been in my life for ages, but it was like a coming-of-age kind of moment, where I went out by myself to see and I think that was very heavily influenced by movies and shows, so there was an immaturity in the maturity of seeing if I could um function by myself outside, on an unplanned evening, because there’s times where, as humans being, we have to travel by ourselves anyway, we could be going to work, but you usually travel with a purpose, when you come outside your house, or some people does. I'm not ever been the type to go outside without a purpose; I’ve gone on walks by myself as an introspection and me going on a walk, me going out of the purpose, um I did it for only going out on that walk, it was me understanding, as human beings putting yourself in nature in a city can help reverse the kind of negative um… emotions or attitude that may develop in a city, so I took myself to a flower garden and I walked around, I did it for learning, walking around in that flower garden, but I felt learning that night I went out to walk around in ‘Old Street’, going to bars, trying to make friends and chat with them. So, yeah.  Thank you. Okay, I’m gonna pause the interview. |