**Cody Petrich**

**Narrator**

**Amy Sullivan**

**Interviewer**

**May 10th, 2019**

**Macalester College**

Cody Petrich -CP

Amy Sullivan -AS

AS: Alright this is Amy Sullivan. It's May 10th, 2019. I'm interviewing Cody Petrich? [Pronouncing last name as Petri-ck].

CP: Petrich. [Emphasizing pronunciation of last name is Petri-ch].

AS: Petrich. I always get the names wrong. And we are at Macalester College. And, Cody could you just state your name, and spell your name?

CP: Yes.

AS: And say that you give me permission?

CP: Of course. So, Cody is C-O-D-Y [spelling]. Petrich is P-E-T-R-I-C-H [spelling]. And, I give permission.

AS: Thank you. Let's talk about... tell me about your early life. You're about to graduate from college, here at Macalester, here in a week.

CP: Yes, yes, yes.

AS: So, let's go way back.

CP: So yeah, I am in Saint Paul right now, but came from Lansing, Illinois. It was, it's about twenty minutes south of downtown Chicago. Nestled up next to the border of Indiana. But, I was born in '97, in Lansing, and stayed eighteen years, at least the same street.

AS: Same house?

CP: Yeah, furthest I moved was four houses down [both laughing]. There was a weird set up, at one point my Ma and Dad lived four houses away. And, we lost my ma's house, I just moved in with my dad down the road. Made it pretty easy to move [both laughing].

AS: Yeah I'll say.

CP: Didn't necessarily prepare me for the Minnesota move, but…

AS: Right. So, tell me about your childhood.

CP: I was pretty happy. I was spoiled in a lot of ways. Very outdoorsy. Yeah so, I think right around the time I started actually being cognizant—I was about five, I think. My ma and dad had gotten divorced at five. And so, I lived with my ma, my Aunt Tracy, my cousins, Uncle Rye, my brother Greg. In a small little Cape Cod house. Big backyard, park across the street. I don't know, for the most part childhood was good. Allowed to go outside and play. Do all that fun stuff.

AS: Could you roam around in the neighborhood?

CP: Oh yeah. I still keep in contact with guys from a couple blocks down and around. Playing football, different things. Started to get into sports a little later on. But for the most part, just did school, came home and played, just did fun stuff.

AS: How, how was school for you? Did you have…

CP: Easy [both laughing]. I guess I don't need to be cocky with it, but yeah I had a brother who was pretty focused with school. And smart.

AS: Is he older? tell me about your siblings.

CP: Yeah he's older. Let's see I'm 21. He would be 29. Lives in Colorado. Got a wife and kid. Doing his thing. Yeah, so we have eight years difference. And he's technically a half brother. I think his dad is somewhere in Florida right now. I really don't know if he's alive or dead or not. He was a heroin addict himself. But, I think my mom and Greg had moved from Florida back to Chicago to kind of get away from that. So yeah, Greg was raised mostly with my dad and my ma. Even when they split. Then I've got an uncle who's actually my legal brother. My ma had taken custody of him when their ma had died. So she raised him from I think when he was like, somewhere between five and ten years old. And, he's got another eight year difference from my brother. So, he's sixteen years older than me.

AS: Oh, okay.

CP: Eight, eight, and eight. But yeah, I mean Greg stayed with us up until, up until he went to college. He went to University of Iowa, doing an ROTC program. My uncle Rye stayed with us, till he was like way too old [laughing]—twenty-five, twenty six. He was a little bit more of like a partie. Funny guy. My Aunt Tracey, and Lindsey—Lindsey is my cousin, but we grew up in the same room and stuff, so more sister-like to me. I don't know when they moved out, but I think it was earlier on. Probably when I was like five, six, seven—around there. And yeah. My dad wasn't in the immediate house, the four houses down… until I was about sixth grade. But, he stayed in the town regardless.

AS: Oh, so you grew up with going back and forth?

CP: Yeah, yeah. I think we did the good old court, back-and-forth every other weekend?

AS: By court, you mean the typical custody arrangement?

CP: Yeah, yeah. And, like yeah, I guess like my ma and dad were never like best friends or high on each other. But, they got along enough for me not to ever have to deal with clashes between the two. So, I was very fortunate for that.

AS: Do you have any younger siblings?

CP: No, no. I had a younger step-brother for a little while. My ma's second husband, Rick. And his son was Ricky [both laughing]. That was like a year, year and a half. I don't know what's going on with those two either. Not anymore.

AS: How was your teenage, how were your teenage years?

CP: Pretty angsty, I would say [laughing]. Typically angsty. I think it was right when I got into high school, close around there. Is when I had moved in with my dad. And so…

AS: Did something precipitate that?

CP: Yeah, my ma had… the house that we had got foreclosed down. She was kind of at that point. I'm trying to think. Yeah, I moved out of that house like middle of freshman year, that high school year. After having been out of the house for like a couple of months. The prior summer I wanna say. But yeah it's like, my ma had been clean from, I think she had a three and a half year sobriety time. Which I think was the longest for her since she had started. I think she had started when she was like fourteen. At least with cigarettes, I know that. She had heroin in the house and other drugs and stuff from when she had told me. But, I think seventh grade summer, or eighth grade summer, either or, she had, she was working construction at the time. Making good money, feeling really good. And like, whenever she wasn't working construction she was a server, or doing like cleaning. But I think, whichever summer it was, she had gotten in an accident. Like a motor vehicle accident. She was on her motorcycle, and some uninsured driver hit her. I think she had a contusion on one of her legs. Yeah, so a bone was popping out and all that good stuff. But she went to the hospital, got recovered from it. I think successfully did whatever drug treatment she had chose for that. Little after that, relapsed. And, I knew about some of the relapse… Or, I didn't know up until the point. But I did find her overdosed.

AS: Oh my gosh. When you were a middle schooler?

CP: Yeah, either seventh grade summer or eighth grade summer.

AS: Was that the first time you were aware of her drug use?

CP: No, no…

AS: Oh, do you wanna back up?

CP: Yeah I can go back [both laughing]. I skipped a lot.

AS: Okay, my point is, I'm trying to have you not skip. No it just takes a minute.

CP: Me and my ma were really close. We were… she was probably more open with me than she should have been. Yeah I went to NA meetings with her, open groups, closed groups. It was, her home group had a babysitter, nanny whatever you wanna call it.

AS: So from how old do you remember going to meetings with her?

CP: Ever since.

AS: Your whole life?

CP: Yeah, yeah. Obviously when she wasn't going to the meetings I wasn't going to the meetings.

AS: No.

CP: But, yeah I met a lot, *a lot* of people. 'Cuz I mean, that's how my ma was. Was when she was going to the meetings she was involved, and going to the cookouts, camping things. So yeah, I think once I got up to middle school was when it was a little bit more tempoed. I definitely saw…

AS: What was more tempoed?

CP: Like, meeting attendance, and…

AS: That she didn't go anymore?

CP: No. And for whatever reason, I don't know. She barked a lot of BS towards the end of the…

AS: So was the three years when you were a younger kid? The three and a half years that you remember?

CP: It was… probably like fourth grade, fifth grade, up until she had the accident.

AS: Like seventh grade? Oh, okay.

CP: So it was, I mean, pretty I don't know vibrant time for me. I was just kinda no responsibilities.

AS: Yeah, it's a great age.

CP: Yeah, and yeah she would help me get to practices, games, school, all that good stuff. But, I always say when she was clean best mother in the world. But, it's hard to take care of your responsibilities when you're using. So, so yeah. We did meetings early on. I knew a bunch of her sober friends. I still keep in contact with quite a few of 'em. But yeah, I think it was prior to the meetings. What were we saying?

AS: Oh, we were talking about when you moved in with your dad, what had happened? 'Cuz your mom, and you said your mom had relapsed, and then you also mentioned an overdose.

CP: Yeah so, I mean I…

AS: I was asking what precipitated you leaving?

CP: I wasn't quite aware. I wasn't aware at all really. That she had relapsed prior. Obviously you find her overdosed I knew what it was right away.

AS: You did?

CP: Yeah.

AS: How did you know what an overdose was? In eighth grade, whatever it was. Seventh of eighth grade.

CP: I wanna say partially my ma, partially the town I grew up in, partially I mean just Chicago in general. I was cognizant of it, pretty early on that I knew my ma could die from that type of stuff. So yeah, I had found her in our bathroom, because I had to poop [both laughing]. She, yeah just like the, it's a nasty sound, but like snoring pretty much. I had actually, someone relapsed at the sober house the other day so then, kinda just took me all the way back. So I mean, that incident went down. And got in contact with family, got in contact with paramedics obviously. And, she was fine. And, I don't remember if I had moved out right after that or not. I don't think I had, until like my dad pretty much gave me the option. And, I didn't wanna leave, but you know she got back and things never really got better. And, you could just tell. Fricken’ house is dirty, and my ma would never have a dirty house. Getting home late never was an issue, lack of communication, yada yada. Up until the point where she just took off. Yeah, for I don't know like a year, two year stint.

AS: Where'd she go?

CP: From, what she told me, she was pushing. She was pushing drugs from Chicago Heights to Champaign-Urbana, where U of I is. And, she said she had been a lot of places. I don't know.

AS: So she was dealing?

CP: Yeah, and mostly, what she said, was just for her own fix. She was staying in trap houses and... She said luckily, she had met someone who was pretty much the operator of whatever was going on, and she said you know, relative to what it could have been, he was good to her. And so, yeah. She, I don't think she ever left Chicago, or the area, or Illinois. But, I can't quite remember how we found her. I know that there was jail time at some point, and calls from Cook County. I think it was my junior year, winter. Yeah winter break, my junior year of high school. So, she had been gone. She left that freshman year. I really didn't…

AS: Wow. And you didn't see her?

CP: No.

AS: Were you ever in touch with her? Did she ever call you, or?

CP: It's still blurry to me. But, I'm pretty sure I got in touch with her. Earlier on, maybe a little bit more frequently. 'Cuz once we lost the house I knew she was… I think she was living in, I forget the name of that damn town. Somewhere in Chicago. With her sober boyfriend's like apartment. He just kept an apartment for when he was working construction, so. He'd come down to the city. But, I don't remember too much. It was, yeah like I said I had gotten calls. I remember getting calls from the jail, the prison, being like, "Sweet. At least now I know where she is.”

AS: You're saying it was good, 'cuz you knew she was safe there?

CP: Yeah. Yeah and my ma was tough so I wasn't too worried about her being alright.

AS: No that's a common feeling of relief among many people, at least they're somewhere…

CP: Exactly.

AS: … where, at least they're not out on the street.

CP: Yeah. It was tough for me though, 'cuz I think I got a call. 'Cuz that type of stuff would mess up my day for… I mean, I thought about my ma a lot, but like I also had school, and I was achieving pretty highly with that. And so, I had a good outlet. I had that, and sports to kind of focus on. But, yeah I remember getting that jail call was, I was at school at like six in the morning doing something. And, I got that call, and it just fucked up the day. But yeah, trying to think.

AS: So, you're a junior, and she comes back into your life? What happened?

CP: Mhm. That January she got into a treatment program, in-patient program, up in like Northern Chicago. Northern suburbs. Really fancy program. I don't know how the hell she got in [both laughing]. But, even before that I think she had tried another treatment center before that ‘'cuz I think I remember visiting her at another treatment center. I had also visited her at treatment centers before her three and a half year stint.

AS: Oh, when you were a little kid?

CP: Yeah. I remember that vaguely. But, I think that was around the time my dad, her and my dad were getting divorced or what not.

AS: When you were like five?

CP: Yeah, yeah. Roughly around there. I been to quite a few treatment centers, without having worked there like I do now.

AS: Yeah, right.

CP: Yeah, she had gotten clean that January. And, she was kinda just trying to figure out where to go. You know it's a…

AS: 'Cuz she has no home.

CP: Nope. No home.

AS: Now she has a record, criminal record.

CP: Yeah she had a record before, way before. I think she got picked up for paraphernalia. I think that's what it was. But, yeah she…

AS: Oh, so she never had a felony? Or she did?

CP: I have no idea… I wanna say… no she is a felon. 'Cuz we couldn't get… she wanted a gun, and she couldn't get a gun [both laughing].

AS: Oh my gosh, wow.

CP: But, I remember she got out of treatment, and were just, she was trying to just figure out what, I guess what the next move is. And, somehow, Ken her sober boyfriend—they had probably been dating for four or five years—they had met when she started working construction. He was still in the picture. I talked with him last week actually. But, he lives in northwest Illinois. And so, my thought was, get her out there. And it's a hell of a drive to Chicago Heights to pick stuff up. And, I think she was, with the same idea. So, she went up there. Not too sure if she was working construction, or waitressing, or what she was doing. But, she was working. And, you know she'd come out to Chicago every now and again so we could hang out. Or, I'd go up there. Or, what not. And, she struggled, *big time* with that.

AS: Was it just, do you know about her treatment? Was it just abstinence-based? Was she ever on any of the medications?

CP: Yeah, it was abstinence-based. I don't know if she ever took psychotic drugs, or anti-psychotics…

AS: No, I mean did she ever take methadone or suboxone?

CP: Not to my knowledge. I don't know, she was pretty old-school. So, I don't know if she would've. But, yeah. And, I'm not too sure if she took other medications either for other stuff. Yeah I know, when she was up there, I don't really know what the clean time would be for her, 'cuz I mean she was struggling.

AS: But she lived with Ken?

CP: Yeah, and Ken was good. He was really old-fashioned. I mean they were living in a town of six hundred people. So, there wasn't no dope up there. Or at least, not easily findable. And, yeah. Like I said, she made a lot of efforts to get back down to see me. And like, you know it was rolling a dice every time I got to see her. It was either, she was… I could tell if she was clean, or I could tell if she was high.

AS: You knew that? Yeah, from a long time. A long history.

CP: Yeah, yeah. And I remember going up there with my good friend Harry. Harry grew up three blocks from us, and my ma was his ma. Vice versa, whatever. And, we were up there, and my ma was… she was dopesick. And, I knew that the whole weekend she was dopesick. But, I forget why we wanted to go up there, we did. And, I think my ma was of the mind that we didn't have to drop Harry off in Iowa. 'Cuz he had moved by this time. But, she wanted to cut the trip short. A no brainer to me. And Harry's like, "Okay well, yeah I guess this could be a drive or whatever." And, my ma figures out that we have to drop Harry off, and it's gonna be this much longer. And, yeah.

AS: She couldn't take it?

CP: No. No, I mean she, we did it! 'Cuz she gotta get back to Chicago Heights somewhere. But, that was the first time I had ever seen her be nasty to Harry. And, unfortunately, that was the last time Harry had seen her. And, so yeah that was tough for him. But yeah, that's just one instance. I know there were other instances. She came down for a game, my junior year cuz I was playing or what not.

AS: What sport were you playing?

CP: Football.

AS: Okay.

CP: Yeah, yeah I was. Luckily got to play quarterback for four years. Got to junior year, and started varsity which was cool.

AS: Mhm, that's cool.

CP: Very cool. But yeah, she had came out for one of the games. It was a really *nasty* hotel over by the highway. And, she had gotten a place there for the night. And she was like, "You know…" I could tell she was doing good at the time, she wasn't high or anything, but she was like, "Yeah you know you wanna come hang out, and spend the night here that's fine." And I was like, "I really don't wanna be on those bedsheets, but that's fine." And, so I hung out with her for a little while, and then left, hung out with some friends, came back, probably midnight to one. And, door was locked. And like, I couldn't get the damn door open. I needed to get in there to sleep. But, she wasn't overdosed she was just really fricken’ high. She had nodded out. And so, I remember that night. That was bad for me. I wasn't too sure what to do off the bat. And eventually, just kinda knocking until she woke up. Yelling at her or whatever.

AS: Oh my gosh.

CP: Yeah. But, I don't think she remembers. She probably don't remember it. Or, didn't remember it.

AS: And you, you were able to get in there?

CP: Yeah, I got in there that night. She had kinda slid [unclear]. And, yeah just another instance of us hanging out, or having our time, and she was using.

AS: Right.

CP: Yeah. Even up like before she had passed, I think we had hung out the week, weekend before. She had overdosed on Thursday during football season. So, fall of 2014. Prior to that Thursday…

AS: Is that your senior year, '14?

CP: Yeah, so she was pretty steadily coming down on Thursday nights for football. We would have practice, do our pasta night or whatever, and then we'd be off for the night. So I'd do practice, go to pasta night, lead prayer. I wouldn't eat anything, I'd leave with her. And we'd go to the movies, or go get dinner or something. And, we went to the movies, and I really couldn't tell if she was or not. I wasn't really trying to tell. But, I just remember her like at the end of the night giving me a hug, and I wasn't good. Like, I could feel something was off. And, she knew it too. But yeah…

AS: What do you mean she knew it too?

CP: I think she was a little ashamed. I think she *was* high.

AS: Oh, oh.

CP: And, I think she might have noticed that I hadn't noticed. Which I usually do [laughs]. I don't know… that might be a little…

AS: What would you do when you noticed?

CP: It was better to be hanging out with her, than not to be.

AS: So you would just… would you say something to her, or?

CP: Mmm… no.

AS: So, when you say notice it's more of like, you two in your body language, and how well you knew each other.

CP: Yeah, yeah. And, I mean me and her had had talks about her use, I'd confronted her on more than one occasion. Pretty formally. You know, I wasn't gonna talk to her when she's high. 'Cuz you know, I got a bunch of drunks in the family too. I don't talk to them when they're drunk. But, yeah like, I remember having a conversation out in Elizabeth, the northwest Illinois town. Very *strong* conversation. I remember going and confronting her. That Chicago town, I forget the name of it. And, telling her like, pretty much just telling her, “I know you're using. What's your game plan? At least you need to know that.” And, so yeah. I must've probably talked to her, I was at least checking up at the time. You know, "How you been doing? You been feeling alright?" Yada, yada. When she was coming out, and yeah, the week prior to her passing when we were hanging out, I knew she was struggling.

AS: Was that when you hugged her? What you were just talking about?

CP: Yeah, yeah. And we had both driven separately to the movie theater. So, I remember the hug, whatever. She's tearing up. And, she went back to her car, and just sat there for a while. And, I like couldn't leave.

AS: 'Cuz you wanted to see her drive away?

CP: Yeah, mostly that. Yeah, mostly that. 'Cuz I had, she was staying with my uncle, I think I called my uncle that night. I usually don't like, babysit or you know, I really hated having to make calls to check up on my own mother. So, I didn't very many times. But, I remember calling Rye that night, and just being like, "She make it?" "Yeah." "Okay, cool."

AS: Oh, to see if she made it back. So, she was living with him at that point? Or he was… ?

CP: No, she was just staying there. This was one of her visits from northwest.

AS: Oh right, right. Sorry.

CP: Yeah. Nah it's fine. And so, yeah. It was… still made it to the game that week. We kinda did that, and went back up to Elizabeth. But, yeah the next weekend was when she came down for her normal Thursday to hang out with me. And, she just never made it.

AS: She never made it to… ?

CP: To us.

AS: What did she, what happened?

CP: Might have stopped off in Chicago Heights. 'Cuz Chicago Heights is right next door to Lansing. I mean you can get dope from either spots, but, yeah she… I remember I called her that morning. Didn't get a response.

AS: Called her Thursday?

CP: Yeah, that morning. Just to see if she was coming out. 'Cuz I had spoken to her the night before. And, apparently her and Ken were not doing good. Ken wasn't very honest with me up there. She was living in a different place with three other girls, probably other servers. But, yeah she sounded good, she sounded fine. That Wednesday night. And then, called her Thursday morning. Nothing. I'm like, "Okay, whatever." Time keeps going, and I'm like, "Okay, still haven't gotten a call." School finishes. I have like an hour break in between school and practice. Tried to give her a call again. Wasn't getting nothing. Called Ken, to see if he had heard from her. Nothing. Called my uncle, "You hear from her?" Nothing. Okay. Finally, I get dressed, go to practice. And yeah, like did the whole practice. Hour and a half goes by. We're about to do our last thing for the day. I saw my uncle whip up, like with his car. Right next to the practice field, which he probably hadn't been there since he had played himself. So, I knew, I knew something was up. Like I knew…

AS: Was that Rye?

CP: Yeah, yeah. I knew right away. So, he just gave me the "choo-choo" [imitating sound].

Got to drive back to the… to the locker room. Got dressed. Hopped in Rye's car. And, Rye really didn't have to say nothing. Like we, he gave me the rundown: "She's at the hospital, she OD'd, they didn't find her till very late. And so, she's in critical condition." Yada yada. Comatosed. But yeah, she had apparently went to Chicago Heights earlier that morning. Picked up. I think it was some form of speed ball. So, heroin and coke. I think it was some old lady's apartment, in like a sky-rise. I don't know. Some lady must've either been crazy, or nice enough to let her up into the apartment. I think she, I don't know if she got found inside or outside. But, basically she had overdosed. No one found her for a long time, and they found her when her body temp was like 91°, 92°,

AS: Who found her? Do you know?

CP: No clue. No clue. I didn't get enough answers on that, from my mom [unclear]. Yeah, so we went over there. And she… yeah.

AS: You went to the hospital?

CP: Mhm.

AS: Where? She was in Chicago Heights, in a hospital?

CP: Yeah, yeah. So it was only ten, fifteen minutes from the house. But, but yeah. It was, that was Thursday. And, she ended up passing away on Sunday. Basically, since then had found her so low with the body temp and it took so long, there were like traumatic brain issues that she was gonna be experiencing, if we took her off life support, and she still came through. Even if she would've lived without the life support, she would have been more, for lack of a better term, like vegetable state.

AS: Right.

CP: And so, we waited Thursday, Friday. I think the neurologist met with her on Saturday, or Friday. And, we got results Saturday. And basically, it came down to me and Greg. We had to make a decision. Yeah.

AS: What was your decision? I mean, what do you mean?

CP: Like, whether or not to keep her on life support or not. We knew…

AS: But, if she came through. What was the… ?

CP: There was a chance that if we kept her on life support, that at some point she, her body would like regenerate, regenerate enough to be able…

AS: To stay alive without it…

CP: … Without it, yeah.

AS: Oh, I see what you're saying.

CP: But even if that was the case…

AS: Even if it did, she would never regain her full consciousness.

CP: Mhm, for real yeah.

AS: So that was left to you and...

CP: Me and my brother.

AS: Greg.

CP: Yeah, I don't know it, I mean obviously a very difficult decision. Awful decision. But, I, oddly enough me and ma had had conversations about it prior. And so, I knew what the answer was.

AS: You mean, what she would want?

CP: Yeah. She had told me prior like she would not ever want to live, like highly debilitated or what not.

AS: Right right.

CP: And, so yeah. That was a real shit weekend. But we had family come up, all of her brothers and sister.

AS: Was that, so that was the fall of your senior year?

CP: Yeah, it was.

AS: When did she pass?

CP: October 19th. And, yeah. Nah, senior year from there on out was a little bit tougher. I've done through for me [unclear] a bunch of shit.

AS: Oh, yeah.

CP: Yeah and it was right in the middle of my senior year of football.

AS: And college applications…

CP: College applications. And so I, I just did my best to keep going with it. Yeah. Did the burial and all that stuff. And, had to figure out things to do with items. By that time she didn't have much. When we lost the house she pretty much lost everything.

AS: And, that had been several years before, like three?

CP: Yeah, my freshman year. Yeah, so three years prior. But yeah, that's, I think that's most of that.

AS: So how, how was your dad through all this? Are you close to your dad?

CP: Yeah, we're closer now. He's very, I guess business-like in a way. Not, not in any overbearing manner. He's very quiet and polite. A little quieter than most. But, yeah I mean he kinda let me do what I was choosing to do. I knew that I didn't have to mess with, you know what was going on with my ma. I could've stayed a distance, and you know processed whatever I had to process. But, I had seen family members pull out of relationships with her, no contact with her.

AS: With her?

CP: Yeah. And, that pissed me off. It was really just me and Ken.

AS: Wow.

CP: Yeah, but as time, Greg. Summer before my junior year, my brother got married in Alaska 'cuz he was stationed up there. My ma came with us. My dad went out. Whole family went up. But, I think she was using at the time too up there. She ended up, like not staying with my brother at their house, for a night or too. Mostly 'cuz of an argument 'cuz Greg knew. She went and stayed with some random lady.

AS: Wow.

CP: Very nice lady! [Both laughing]. She's, she's facebook friends with us. But, there was a point to that, but.

AS: Oh, but it was about Greg and his relationship with her.

CP: Yeah. Greg had had enough. And, you know, I never really blame Greg for you know, not being, trying to get his hands dirty in it. 'Cuz you know, he's had two parents tap out from that.

AS: Oh, his father died? Or just disappeared? Oh yeah that was who you… right, you were saying at the beginning…

CP: I don't know. Last I heard of, whatever his name is… he's a double amputee down in Florida from Hep-C, and needle sharing, and whatever.

AS: Oh my goodness.

CP: Yeah, most I ever heard about the dude was you know, maybe a, "Hey I'll come up for… I'm doing better now. I'll come up for your grad!"

AS: And then he wouldn't show up.

CP: No [laughing], no. And so, I don't know. Yeah. I don't think I've ever had a conversation with Greg about… me and Greg don't. Even though I'm a psych major and all this stuff. My family's very much not. Lot of Indiana roots. Blue collar. Union. That type of work.

AS: Don't talk about stuff? Is that what you're saying?

CP: Yeah. To a degree yeah. I mean we, we always knew. Like We always knew if Red was using or what not, but it's not like we were sitting down, and devising plans, or…

AS: If who was using?

CP: Um my ma.

AS: What'd you call her?

CP: Red.

AS: Red. What was your mom's name?

CP: Michelle. Michelle Horsely. [Check spelling]. But yeah, we called her Big Red, 'cuz she was intimidating. She was like 5'1". Very skinny, but very intimidating [Sullivan laughing]. Could clean her, but it didn't matter.

AS: At 5'1"?

CP: Yeah, yeah. She laid the law. Usually with like chores and stuff like that, but so yeah. I got a tattoo of her, and it doesn't have her real name. But, it's just “Red” [laughing]. It was a good nickname.

AS: When did you do that?

CP: Right when I turned eighteen. So, yeah the July following that senior year. Before I came up here. Yeah. Trying to think if there's more.

AS: Do you need a break?

CP: Yeah.

AS: Okay, okay.

…

AS: Okay we're back. So, what I'm wondering, so you're eighteen, and it's your senior year. What kind of support did you have? What kind of a support network did you have to kind of cope with all this?

CP: Like immediate support. I had a lot. *A lot.* Having grown up with, like in the same town for so long. Met a lot of people, and developed a lot of relationships. And I, I still keep in contact with a lot of those folk now days. No, she had immediately passed, and social media is blowing up. People are checking in, and all this stuff. I got a lot of financial support from people.

AS: You did?

CP: That, you know, whether I knew 'em or not. Yeah.

AS: Do you feel like people knew your… they knew, because you were in a pretty small town for a long time, that they knew your mom's story? I mean was it…

CP: To a degree, yeah. And, I became a little bit more aware of other people's awareness as I was getting older. And so, I think I got a little added support 'cuz of that. And, a lot of it because people knew that my mom, she was a good people. But yeah, even when she had overdosed, like my eighth grade summer, she you know even the paramedic that came, I knew the paramedic. I played ball with three of his sons. Baseball with three of his sons for most of life. And so, I, yeah I remember sitting out like trunk, in the bed of some, my uncle's buddy's truck. 'Cuz they came over from the bar. One of 'em. And I was just sitting there. And, I was like, "Fuck." Yeah. Definitely when it happened people knew. It wasn't necessarily a surprise, for any. But, yeah.

AS: What about your mom's parents and her family? You mentioned that there was a lot of addiction in the family? Is that on her side?

CP: I don't know too much about my grandma. And, I heard a little bit more about my grandpa.

AS: Had they passed away already?

CP: Both of 'em are passed by this point. So my ma I think passed away at forty-three. Her ma passed away at forty-two, from I think it was a heart attack. Complications with maybe substance, maybe not. But yeah, she had passed away at forty-two. So, I think my ma was nineteen at the time. Took over custody of Rye. And, her other siblings were old enough to pretty much do their own thing. But, yeah. Her dad was absent. Picked up, and made a new family twenty minutes down the road. Yep. And so, I don't know too much about the dude, besides that. When I went back, I think I went with my uncles and my aunt to Portillos—very good Italian beef place. We were talking about it, and apparently he had passed away. But, I remember my ma telling stories about her... like they knew where he was. And, like showing up at the house and talking with his wife, and you know just not being able to see him. And so, yeah. It wasn't. Unfortunately, like that wasn't like weird to me either ‘cuz I knew a lot of buddies and stuff whose fathers were absent. My best friend's father is you know, mainly absent. Most of the guys around my block have dads absent. But yeah, I mean as far as her childhood went, she, they... it was wild. I know that they didn't have the same opportunities that I did. I wanna say she was, what they called home was Cedar Point, Indiana. Which is like forty minutes, thirty minutes, into Indiana from Illinois. And, they'd bounce at a whole bunch. But yeah, I think Cedar Point was their longest stint. And they just stayed in northwest Indiana, bouncing.

AS: And then at nineteen, she's in charge of her little brother?

CP: Yep.

AS: Who was?

CP: I wanna say like five or six.

AS: Yeah.

CP: He was younger, but at that point you know, he knew what was going on. And, I think that, I think that's when she bounced to Arizona, or to Florida because she, she might've been nineteen, she might've been seventeen. But, I do know that she was pregnant with Greg when she was nineteen. And so, she had to have been in Florida. Or maybe… dude came up, and then went back to Florida.

AS: Yeah, yeah.

CP: She wasn't there for very long. So yeah, like. I don't think all of 'em had, like the same dad. I think my mom's dad, she shared that dad with like two of her siblings. And the other two had different dads. That dad's still in the picture. I think. So, my maybe grandpa. He lives in the backwoods of Indiana. He's fun [laughs].

AS: Yeah.

CP: He could probably use some Macalester education, but that's okay.

AS: You said, he could probably use some Macalester education? [Laughing].

CP: Yeah, he's a funny dude, but I don't think… he's not the most politically correct. My cousin, she's mixed, 'cuz my Aunt Tracy married my Uncle Frank. And so, it's an inter-racial marriage. And so, my Linsey's mixed, and I just remember going to cook out in high school at some point with Lindsey, and my aunt, and Frank, and they're doing karaoke [unclear]. End up saying the "N-word" multiple times.

AS: Oh my gosh.

CP: But yeah. So yeah, as far as her raising and all that. They relied on each other a lot. I mean, she was very close with my aunt and my three uncles. Even though they're spread out.

AS: Your mom was close with her siblings, is that what you're saying?

CP: Yeah. Yeah, she was really the glue for our family as far as getting together or doing events. Doing like, you know, I was always, always had, always celebrated holidays. Always went to church. That type of stuff. And, I can't say that about my uncles or my aunt.

AS: Oh I see, yeah.

CP: And so, she was very high, high productivity. In a lot of areas. But, I don't know where she learned that 'cuz I know her ma and dad weren't, not necessarily the most engaged. But, the one thing that they do tell me about my grandma, my ma's ma, was that she just like, was a very like, loving person. Showed it in different ways. And my ma was too. Strict with little things, chores and she never really monitored homework or anything for me, 'cuz she didn't have to. But, you know I… multiple occasions not being able to go out 'cuz I gotta go whack a bush down or something. I got put to work quite a bit. But, and that's how she was. She was incredibly loving. Not even just like her family, but I mean she, from what I consider pretty racist roots in Indiana, prejudiced roots in Indiana, I think her lived experience, and her relationship with her ma, kind of allowed for her to talk to me more about like, people who don't look like us, or who have less, or more, or yada yada. And so she passed that down to me pretty well.

AS: That's an awesome thing.

CP: Yeah, it was sweet. She was pretty crazy for some ways, she'll talk to anybody. Like I said, when we were in Alaska, she had no idea who this woman was. And, for some reason, that woman has probably posted on my ma's wall more than anyone!

AS: Really? Oh my gosh [laughing].

CP: I think, she showed a, the lady didn't want anything. They went to bed, and my ma cleaned the entire place. Like that's just how she was.

AS: Very outgoing

CP: Outgoing, and she worked for, she could appreciate a good day's work. And, she passed that along to me. I think that's probably as much as I really know about the childhood. Also impressed 'cuz I heard that they used to get their asses whooped quite a bit. I never got a finger laid on me. *Ever,* no. Some stern talkings, but…

AS: That's different.

CP: Yeah, yeah.

AS: So how was it for you at Macalester?

CP: It's been awful. It's really been awful.

AS: Why?

CP: I don't necessarily think it's Macalester or anything. I just don't think I was ready. I think, I was pretty spoiled as far as support back home. Knowing where I'm gonna be, where I'm gonna eat, and all these things. And, I don't know. I just like, didn't do too well with due diligence. Like, planning how I was gonna be living up here.

AS: You mean, once you weren't in the dorms?

CP: Yeah, yeah. You know, I had no cookbook, none of that stuff. And, a lot of it I had to learn. And still learning. But, and I was… back home like, even though my ma had passed from overdose. It's not, like anything like, crazy. It's a little crazy up here. Like guys… you can just see it in the face.

AS: What's crazy here? What do you mean?

CP: To me, the lack of loss. Sometimes.

AS: The lack of laws, or loss?

CP: Loss, loss.

AS: What do you mean by that?

CP: Like I say, 'cuz I mean, even with hearing like how my ma was raised, and family stuff. Like I knew a lot of broken families back home. Know a lot of people who had family struggles that were very different from mine, but like you still understand the struggle a little bit. Us coming from a pretty lower socio-economic area…

AS: To this…

CP: To this.

AS: … school.

CP: I was never really exposed to much money. I didn't take too many drives on northside of Chicago, or any of that stuff. So, from what like, from what I knew and understood, that's just kinda how life was. I knew there was different, different classes and what not. But I just hadn't interacted with 'em very much. And so, that was tough for me.

AS: When you came here, because people had, are coming from…

CP: Yeah, some money.

AS: … a lot of money. Yeah.

CP: Yeah, you know full families. They don't have to worry about, you know, food in the morning or, that type of stuff. And so, yeah it was difficult kind of managing my own like emotional regulation and stuff. It really didn't matter to me whether I was, whether the person was trying to be nice or a dick [unclear] to me, I just had a deep hate, a deep hate for that type of stuff.

AS: A deep hate for?

CP: For people with money, really. And that's just something that I've been working on these four years.

AS: Is it because… why is that? If you weren't exposed to it, what was it about it that made… ?

CP: 'Cuz I knew that… it was probably less so in the dorms. I mean, my first two years were fine. Most of my struggles were self-inflicted. You know, getting too drunk or being disrespectful to the wrong person or something. But, once I got out of the dorms. You know, having to go pick up groceries, having to buy notebooks, and books, and… lot of frustration with just how my family had rallied around the death. Like I said, my ma was the glue. And so, without her, I mean. No one's getting on the other people's case to do the right thing, or what I would perceive to be the right thing.

AS: Did you have, have you had support from your family while you've been here, or you've been kind of alone?

CP: A lot of alone, a lot of alone. In my eyes. You know, I do call. *I* call [laughs]. A twenty-one year old dude, you know calling aunts, uncles. And you know, it's always the same: "Well, yeah we're real proud of you." Yada, yada. But, that doesn't feed me in the morning. It doesn't prepare me for school.

AS: So, how have you… so, has being here been a financial burden for you?

CP: Huge, *huge* financial burden.

AS: With loans, and, I mean or did you have… ?

CP: Yeah, loans… this was the best option. I mean, I wasn't gonna bust butt in high school and grade school, 'cuz I was, I don't know for whatever reason I thought college would really warrant the full twelve year track, but no. Yeah, I wasn't gonna bust butt in high school and not go to a college…

AS: That was…

CP: That was good [unclear] Especially Mac. Ultimately, I picked Mac 'cuz of the financial aid that it offered. And, it's enough. It's close to the full tuition.

AS: Wow.

CP: First two years, I had to cover room and board. And, I'm still covering a little bit now. But, you know that's…

AS: That's impressive.

CP: Yeah, yeah! And I mean, I have had it easy in certain areas. Like, my dad pays my rent. I take care of utilities. You know, work on the weekends. I get paid, you know a pretty good for twenty-one years old. And so like, we make it happen, but it's tight [laughs]. I've had to go to food banks, I've had people drop off food for me. I just, like, it's just… knowing that other people don't have to do that stuff.

AS: That resentment, that's hard.

CP: Yeah, deal with that stress. Yeah it's…

AS: Do you think, do you see an insensitivity?

CP: At times, oh yeah!

AS: … of your peers towards that?

CP: At times.

AS: … Or just lack of understanding?

CP: Yeah. But, I mean I'm also smart enough to know it's not 'cuz of, you know how much money their family makes, it's the individual person. And so, I've just had to remind myself that *a lot.* Unfortunately I've got some roommates that aren't very sensitive to it. And so, that, that hasn't been great. I made a *bad* roommate decision coming out of the dorms, staying with friends as opposed to good roommates.

AS: Oh, that's a hard lesson, isn't it?

CP: Very hard lesson. And, we're still learning 'cuz we gotta get the house cleaned up. But, you know, one of my guys, his dad's a lawyer and his ma teaches, and they do well. Like he, he gets it. Like, we don't necessarily sit there and do cry sessions with each other, but he understands when he's pushing something too far. Whereas, I got two guys who live upstairs that are just dumb. I hear about their stories: "Oh yeah, didn't always live in Scottsdale next to this Arizona Cardinal's player." "Tell me more."

AS: So Cody, I know that you have been working in a sober house. Or, sober living. And then, you also just mentioned getting drunk. So what is your, what's your relationship to substances? And then what, how did you end up getting, working in a…

CP: Yeah…

AS: I realize those are probably two different… they might be two different stories, they might be the same!

CP: No, it's… but it's an important question to ask. So yeah, I… my biggest issue with substance right now is nicotine. I've been chewing, smoking, vaping, since fourteen pretty steadily. And unfortunately, it's a substance that I just like haven't gotten around to do anything about. On the other hand, you know alcohol. I was drinking *a lot* in high school, which is weird to say.

AS: Why? Why does that seem weird?

CP: It just like, I get up here, and I hear about the things about drinking, you know sex, and just like initial exposure to that type of stuff.

AS: When people just get to college, they're just being exposed?

CP: I was fourteen, and I was doing really *not* fourteen year old things. But, it's natural like in that type of environment I suppose. If you're not disciplined—I wasn't very disciplined. And so, yeah. I've drank, smoked weed, you know I've tried… what have I tried. Some psychedelics, I've tried coke on one night—and that's really the only hard drug that I've tried. But, all of that was early. You know, high school.

AS: In high school?

CP: High school was drinking, smoking. College still smoked, drank, but it was really my first two years where I was like, you know I've always known that I had this, I wanted to work in the field, and I don't wanna work as a hypocrite. And so, you know, my first two years…

AS: You wanna work in the addiction field?

CP: Yeah, yeah. And so, I was still getting blacked out drunk and all that in freshman and sophomore year. To a point where like, the issues that were coming from were just too much for me to want to deal with. And so I, I was able to cut back on binge drinking, pretty wildly and pretty quickly. To the point where like I'm, you I'm in bed at ten, eleven PM on Fridays and Saturdays now. [Sullivan laughing]. And yeah, I'll still go out to the bars and stuff, but I couldn't tell you the last time I got unbearably drunk. And you know, I do still, still smoke, but not as frequently as I used to. And it's always been something that's a little different for me, it's more social interaction and stuff. But you know I've, if I know I'm working Monday through Friday, you won't see me drinking or smoking, you know day prior throughout that week. And, right now, I've just been doing weekends. So, kind of hard to use mind-altering substance during school, like during the weekdays. And, during the weekends I just, something innate in me, like I have that discipline.

AS: Yeah, you're able to regulate it?

CP: Yeah, yeah. And it's to the point now where I really don't even… like drinking is a chore. I feel old, for whatever reason. It was a little scary my sophomore year, and I kinda had to have my own talk with myself. Unfortunately I've seen different sorts of addictions, and they don't map out well. Especially drinking with my ma's side.

AS: In your family? Oh yeah, yeah.

CP: Yeah, I have people who… my uncles always said, you know, "Red's gone. I'll step up." Bullshit, you're not gonna step up. You're still drinking.

AS: Oh, he'll… oh 'cuz she died, he's gonna get clean?

CP: Well, no. Not even necessarily. He doesn't think he has an issue. He just "drinks."

AS: He'll step up to be there for you?

CP: Yeah. And like, you know, trying to bring family closer: "We'll do this on the weekend." It's just bullshit. Like, he works a lot which I get. But, he likes to go to the bars, and drink as a hobby. I mean that's the activity. It's not anything else. I've been around for him. He's a large man. He's been up in the three hundreds. I've had to drag him around before…

AS: Oh my gosh.

CP: … or try! And it's just ugly stuff. And I have the two roommates right now, that are still going hard drinking. You know, Monday night, Wednesday, Tuesday… whatever it doesn't matter. Even after asking 'em not to. You know, whether it's for my sleep 'cuz the living room is right above my room. Or 'cuz... I, I tell 'em. I get, I get frustrated. And frustrated is probably a nice way to put it. Like, if you're drunk, and you're spouting… like I've dealt with that way too many times for me to want to put up with you. And so, yeah, mostly seeing a lot of stuff, and then being a part of some issues. After not being cognizant or what not, kinda led me to get away from it myself. Also, knowing that I was going in the field.

AS: Yeah, your exposure. So when did you start being interested in working in… ?

CP: Like third grade.

AS: In drug treatment?

CP: Early, early.

AS: Third grade?

CP: Promise, I promise. I always liked the idea of like, being a counselor and having like a really comfy chair. [Sullivan laughing]. But no, I knew my ma's therapist back then. And she, she was just like a badass lady. I still, I talked with her this week. It's Jan. But, she's an addictions counselor back in, back in Chicago. But she does all sorts of different therapies. Like family, and trauma, this and that. I actually saw her for a little while after, after my ma had passed. With the seven hundred dollars that I had gotten from social security, whatever it was.

AS: Oh yeah, oh my gosh. That's what you got?

CP: Yeah.

AS: From social security?

CP: I've been learning quick that there aren't… no one's gonna give you nothin' unless you build it, as far as money.

AS: Yeah.

CP: Yeah, so that was a nasty taste. But, yeah I saw her for a little while. And, I knew her prior. She had spoken at the funeral. Really, really enjoyed my ma. But yeah, I met her when we were young, and like saw her house. And I was like, "This house is sweet." And, she was cool. She was a little bit more like, hard-headed than other… what I had thought of counselors, you know? She was probably the only person that I knew would tell my ma, like different. Like you know, "No you're wrong. Period."

AS: Oh instead of just listening, kind of placidly?

CP: Yeah.

AS: Yeah.

CP: No, she was about work. You know. Getting stuff done.

AS: Figuring your stuff out.

CP: Absolutely. And so, I liked that idea. And, I never really gotten away with it… or gotten away from it. I've always been good at the math. So I was like, also trying to flirt with the idea of like being an Econ major. I liked the idea of having lots of money. [Sullivan laughing]. But, I didn't really care about the work. But, I got away from that pretty, pretty quickly, so.

AS: So, when did you start working in the sober living?

CP: So this is a year and five months. So, January of 2018. And yeah, I've pretty much worked every shift you could work over there. During the summer I was full-time. Well they sign me for full-time which is nice 'cuz of benefits and stuff.

AS: Oh, so you're a full-time? You work full-time?

CP: Not currently, but they still keep me on so I can keep the benefits.

AS: Oh, that's fantastic.

CP: It's been sweet. Sweet to see things, like build.

AS: And where is it that you work?

CP: Supportive Living Solutions. The recovery program has the Arrigoni Houses. So, Arrigoni East, and Arrigoni West. East is in Saint Paul, and West is in Minneapolis, like next to the U's "frat bro." Which is kind of funny.

AS: Oh that is.

CP: So, I work mostly at East, but you know I've been over to West. They put me on consistent schedules over there at times, and I fill in a lot.

AS: So what do you do? What's your job?

CP: So, say I'm there during the day, during like business hours, along with like having to you know kinda oversee our clients, I'm also trying to recruit new ones, and build waitlists. But, currently what my shits have been is weekend mornings. And so that's more just, you know client focused and facility focused. Lot of it is, you know medication administration. Making sure the guys are taking their meds at the right time. Case management. I've got eight- I think eight right now- eight of the twenty-nine guys in there, will meet with me weekly to go over like what's going on, and cover some basics. You know: "Eating? Sleeping? Feel alright? making your appointments? Do we need to make an appointment?" Yada, yada. I oversee the accountability program. So, making sure the guys are taking care of their responsibilities in the house. Making sure that they're, you know, that their hygiene is fine. That they're washing their sheets once a week, and they're making their meetings that we require, and I guess just like general supervision. We don't offer program in the house. We have like a Tuesday night AA meeting, Thursday night NA meeting. But, some guest speakers on Monday sometimes. But by and large, like the guys are either going out and doing out-patient programs with Saint Joes, Meridian, or you know just making regular meetings on their own. We don't require that they do AA, NA. Really anything that's I guess self-help. So like therapy sessions count for outside meetings, meditations... although not, people don't really do it. What else, guys will go to Church on Sunday, some of 'em. But, yeah no it's been really cool. And like I've done a lot of different things.

AS: Different jobs in that, with that business?

CP: Yeah I mean, one day I'll be you know trying to touch base with other service providers to see if they've got people that want to get in. Some nights I'll just show up, pass meds, really not doing much. If the guys are doing their house jobs I don't really have to do anything.

AS: You don't do night shifts do you?

CP: I have.

AS: You have? Oh okay.

CP: Yeah.

AS: Do you have to stay awake for those?

CP: No.

AS: No.

CP: No.

AS: Just have to be in the house?

CP: I've had night shifts where I've slept for the five full hours. I've had 'em where I get waken up an hour after for whatever reason. And like, yeah. It's just so much variability. And, kinda learning just like what those service providers, like... it's a lot. It can be a lot. And unfortunately the system that we have in place now, not too many people are incentivised 'cuz you're not getting paid much. And so, you really rely on a couple of really good staffers. And that's what we've had over there. I've just tried to do my best to kind of pick up if there is slack on the weekends, try to pick up slack on the weekends.

AS: And do you see the job as informing you about what you would want to do in the future? And what've you… what're you thinking about your future right now?

CP: It hasn't deterred me from wanting to do it.

AS: Oh no, that wasn't my question.

CP: Yeah…

AS: But, sorry! I didn't know…

CP: I think I don't want to stay in residential living.

AS: Oh, okay. Right. It hasn't deterred you from addiction as a field to work in, but you don't... oh sorry.

CP: I still want to go get a degree at some point so I could find that comfortable chair. [Sullivan laughing].

AS: Get a… like another Psych degree? Or an MSW, or something?

CP: Some sort of degree that's gonna...

AS: Counseling?

CP: … allow me to counsel. Right now what I've been looking at is Masters in Social Work. Quick cheap way to get to counseling. And I do like the idea of you know resource allocation. But, still gotta do more research on that and I don't know. It's, it's tough because like I know when I leave here there's just like, there's certain things that I feel like I bring to the table 'cuz of lived experience.

AS: Yeah.

CP: For example, we had a guy... They switched me from my Saturday, Sunday morning shifts to the evening shifts, so that my replacement could just kinda get used to it. And she's bright, and I'm glad that we got her. She's a certified social worker during the week, but no. That night shift that Saturday, or no, that Sunday. I'm supposed to get off at midnight. I didn't leave until 1:30, 1:45. I caught a dude smoking meth in the, in the bathroom. Yeah. And so, similar thing with my ma. I could hear that frickin' snore. And so, immediately I'm thinking I gotta...

AS: A snore from meth?

CP: Yeah the dude, I'm guessing… I can't see behind the door, but…

AS: Right.

CP: You know, I was trying to close a window 'cuz we have a sensor on it. I got, armed the alarm. And, it's midnight. I'm trying to get out of this facility. And, yeah like couldn't get in that bathroom *all* night. And, I just figured like, bad timing, bad timing. Kept happening. But, I also knew that there was two dudes that I hadn't seen all day. And like, sometimes it's just like that. Other times, it's usually not. So, one of the guys got home. And I was like, "Okay, whatever." And, yeah so, my plan was to go shut that window, walk down the hall, make sure that dude had gotten home. I didn't even make it to his room 'cuz I, once I heard the snore, I was like "Okay well, he's using in the bathroom, and he's fallen asleep." And so I: [Mimics knocking sound]. Knocked on the door. "Steph!" I was like "[unclear] Blah, blah, blah. Open up!" And he goes, still snoring. [Mimics knocking sound]. I finally got him to wake up with the banging, 'cuz you know I was like, "Dude I'm coming in." Once I knew he was, wasn't just OD'd. You know he'd woken up, and I could hear him trying to talk to me again. I know he's scared, *very* scared. He's about to lose housing. And so I, and I'm mad 'cuz I wanna leave. I'm human, and I don't wanna be there dealing with this. But, I go yeah, I'm like, "You got five seconds dude, I'm coming in. Make sure your pants are up. Whatever, I don't wanna see it." And, he turns on the shower. And I was like, "[Unclear]" Okay, well that's fine. And so, instead of you know, going in there, and like pulling the dude out, I let him shower. I let him take the ten, fifteen minute shower. Sat by the stairs, played with the cat that we have. Waited for him to be done. Still hadn't came out after I heard the water was off, and I was like, okay I'm coming in. And so I came in, got him out, and it was a long process. Which it didn't have to be. I could have very easily let him shower, went and called the cab, had it ready, and shipped him off like right away. But…

AS: Shipped him just to wherever? Just leave?

CP: The detox. Yeah.

AS: Oh, the detox. Oh, okay.

CP: 'Cuz if you're intoxicated in there you got two options. You got family or friends to come pick you up, or shipping you to detox. We just can't have you high in the facility. And I've had guys, you know high on meth, high, or drunk, or smoked out, or whatever, in there and you know I never had an instance where the guys, I felt that they were a danger to me or to the other guys in the house. Granted, still can't have you in there messing like... I don't want other guys to be urging or whatever. But, at the same time, I try to you know, still like allow some dignity to happen within the process. And so, I brought the client down, asked him questions I had to ask like: "Are you intoxicated?" "Yes." "Were you smoking meth in the bathroom?" "No." "I really want you to be honest with me. Were you? ‘Cuz if you're not honest, it's bad." And, I just, he wasn't able to give me that answer. We knew. And, later found his pipes or whatever. But, you know. I did more than just like, I couldn't be mad at him. The guy was, has a mental health issue. He's been out of meds, for you know a week or two. And, it's a pretty serious mental health condition.

AS: He's been out of his medication?

CP: Yeah.

AS: Why?

CP: Not taking it.

AS: Oh.

CP: Could be insurance, could be his own not wanting to take it. It was insurance. I did more follow up with it, and yeah he just hadn't gotten his card. But...

AS: So what happened?

CP: It's hard to say.

AS: Is he still there?

CP: No. No he got discharged. Yeah, I mean it's a pretty clear rule from when you come in. You use in the facility, you got… we'll bring you back. You got ninety days, but we're not gonna bring you back right away.

AS: You have ninety days what? To come back?

CP: Out of the facility to, you have to wait ninety days, if you got discharged.

AS: Oh, oh I see. Because of drug use.

CP: Yeah. But I mean guys relapse, and it's not an immediate discharge. We've brought a lot of guys back. We just try to preach, you know like honesty. Mostly honestly. That's really… if you tell us that you're relapsed, we'll work with you. Now if it's more frequent and stuff, maybe that bed is probably just better for someone who's a little bit more ready to work it. But, I mean that's always been my thing. You know, if there's people in the house using, we gotta get 'em out so that people who are ready to work the stuff can get here. And, even if they're using in the house, you know what I mean, this is probably the only place where they're not gonna be getting crazy chewed up by the people, and judged, and all that stuff, so it's like... I've had, I had another guy who was *very* high on meth. Call [unclear] Got him to admit. It's midday. But, I still let him go up to his room and pack. Still let him eat the meal with us. You know, supper, but make sure sure he gets something in his stomach before you know, you go sit in detox, or you go sit with this family member that like really doesn't want you in the house. So yeah. Just seeing the side of my ma, and like and I don't know sensing dejection that she received, all that stuff. I get that like it's a fricken' nuisance. Like, people being high is a nuisance. But, same time it's, you know there's a lot of other shit that goes on with it. Yeah, I just try to keep that in mind when I'm working.

AS: They're people.

CP: Yeah. Absolutely, absolutely. And so yeah, I don't wanna be disrespecting them any more than I would a regular person. Or someone without substance abuse problems. So. And that was another thing is that I've learned from it. I really like the field because unfortunately substance really doesn't discriminate. You can be wherever in life, and if you fall into a pattern or whatnot, it's a tough thing to get rid of. So. It's gonna be sad going, a little bit.

AS: Leaving the work?

CP: Leaving the place, yeah.

AS: When's your last day?

CP: Sunday night.

AS: Oh!

CP: Yeah so I'm just hoping no one's smoking meth in the bathroom. [Sullivan laughing]. I'd be frickin mad.

AS: Your wish for your last day at the job, on the job.

CP: And, it's very infrequent.

AS: Is meth the main thing that you… ?

CP: No, no.

AS: Oh it's just everything.

CP: Yeah. Yeah pretty much. I've had another guys in there. I had a guy my age in there for weed. You know if you're a weed smoker, then you start thinking about some things.

AS: What do you mean? Oh if you are, because you are.

CP: Yeah, I'm like, well it *can* be an issue. Yeah, yeah it could be an issue.

AS: Right right.

CP: Yada, yada. But, yeah it's, I don't know. It's been a crazy ride. And, I've enjoyed it. And, it's been challenging and easy at some days. I just hope that… 'cuz I do believe the Arigoni houses— especially East here in Saint Paul— is probably one of the best government funded programs, residential programs that you could get into. So, I just, I hope that the two main staff members don't get more overworked than they already are. And that they're able to stay. 'Cuz I know the guys benefit from it. And…

AS: How many live there?

CP: Twenty-nine.

AS: Wow!

CP: Yeah. And then, Minneapolis one is either thirty-one or thirty-two. So, yeah very rare to, like guys are using in the facility. But I mean, that does happen, and I've driven guys that we've discharged over to the next facility. Or, seen what that looks like. And I'm like, "Shit." Not where I would wanna be.

AS: Right, right.

CP: So yeah.

AS: That's good. Anything else you wanna say?

CP: Can't think of nothing, no.

AS: Thank you. It's really a pleasure. I'm really, I feel really fortunate to have had you in class, and to have you willing to talk about this. It's a hard topic, but I think you're…

CP: No, no.

AS: … I'm sure you're doing your mom proud.

CP: Trying! [Petrich laughing]. Definitely trying.

AS: Yeah.

CP: Yeah. We'll continue it. Definitely continue it.

AS: Thank you.