**Deb Holman**

**Narrator**

**Amy Sullivan**

**Interviewer**

**May 19, 2017**

**Duluth, Minnesota**

Deb Holman -**DH**

Amy Sullivan -**AS**

**AS:** It’s May nineteenth, this is Amy Sullivan I’m with Deb Holman. Deb do you give me permission to record this interview and will you state your name?

**DH:** Yes, I give you permission. This is Deb Holman.

**AS:** Thanks. Okay so Cloquet. I heard you were born in Cloquet.

**DH:** So do you want me to start way back at age one or whatever?

**AS:** Just what you remember of your childhood.

**DH:** I kind of grew up in Cloquet. A history of alcoholism in the family, my grandpa was an alcoholic, my dad was an alcoholic. My grandpa committed suicide when I was in second grade. I always remember being scared of my grandpa because he was a mean drunk. Then my dad’s an alcoholic too. Growing up he was kind of like the weekend drunk. He’d get paid on Thursday and Sunday or something. There’d always be some kind of blow out on Saturday generally. Mom was super stable, obviously probably co-dependent. Just one of those people that everyone loved, just because that’s just the way she was. Then I started acting out kind of young, blaming it on my dad. Being in treatment as early as age fourteen just for getting in trouble for drinking, skipping school, whatever I was doing, fights at home.

**AS:** You were sent to treatment?

**DH:** I’m trying to think of what happened. I’d end up in different places. I ended up getting a social worker. I used to run away and drink. I’d run away to Duluth which was fun.

**AS:** How far is that?

**DH:** It’s only like twenty miles. Looking back on it my home life was not bad, not really. My mom was stable. The dad thing, there was never any sexual abuse or anything like that. A lot of probably verbal abuse and some physical but not a lot. He was more the type that would break things. I don’t recall that. Sometimes I go, “Are there things you’ve shut out?” Sometimes I can’t remember. I really haven’t had a huge indication that anything super bad happened. St. Luke's used to be the detox center here in Duluth and I think I'd end up there a few times.

**AS**: As a teenager?

**DH:** This is starting at fourteen. Then I ended up in some treatment program in Duluth and ran away. Two days later me and this girl ran away and then we ended back up at St. Luke's detox. Then we ran away from there too in our jammies. It's all about getting loaded at that time. Somehow, I don't know if I got committed or if I've got a social worker at this point. I ended up going to a group home in St. Paul for wayward ladies. Booth Brown House. It's still there today but it has a different kind of, I don't know who they work with these days. It's a Salvation Army program. I think I spent about six months there. It actually was a lot of fun, the ladies and stuff but looking back on it some of them I wish I could connect with but I can't find a lot of them. I spent about six months there and continued to drink or use. I was one of those that would use whatever. There was no like really heroin or coke or anything like that in my life at that time in my life.

**AS:** What year were you born?

**DH:** '60. Then at some point…

**AS:** So this is the mid-70s you're in treatment?

**DH:** Yes.

**AS:** What was treatment like at that point? What are they doing?

**DH:** Oh I'll be getting to that. Oh gosh. I get a little confused but I think I have a pretty good recollection of it. I got in trouble at the group home kind of using and stuff like that. Then I ended up going to St. Mary's which is at Riverside there.

**AS:** Oh the hospital?

**DH:** Yes, they had a treatment program. What do they call it now? I'm drawing a blank.

**AS:** Was it Synanon?

**DH:** No, what was it? Oh God I can't believe I can't think of it. It was very confrontational.

**AS:** If you think of it you can just text me the word.

**DH**: I cannot believe I can't think of it right now. It had a name, their treatment way. You had to sign a contract. If you left the program and wanted to come back you had to be willing to sacrifice something. Some people cut their hair or shaved their head. Then at that point they made people wear signs and stuff too. I was fourteen or fifteen I think, fourteen probably, and I wore this sign that said, "I'm a lying, cheating, slippery, slick junkie." I wish I had a picture of it. I should make one just for kicks. Part of my thought is that, "Well, you made me one."

**AS:** They referred to you as a junkie?

**DH:** You made me wear this sign so I became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Then the other part of me knows there's addiction in my family. I know I have the addictive personality.

**AS**: That was traumatic for a teenage girl.

**DH:** I think it was but I didn't realize it at the time. I think of course I ran from there. Then I got sent to Willmar State Hospital. I got put with the adults and it was the state hospital and the treatment. We interacted, they still had the tunnels, I don't know if they still do. They had a canteen and you mingled with the MI people. I still remember a few, Charlie, Linnette, Robert. It's like I can picture them clear as day, you know. Then there happened to be an older gal from Cloquet that was in treatment there at the time and I knew her. We kind of buddied up or whatever. I didn't really talk about my childhood partying with the Weed Weevils and stuff like that. That's kind of where it all started. That's kind of what got me in trouble. I think I stole a car one time too. That might be what started it all.

**AS:** Because you did something illegal.

**DH:** It was Easter, we went to a keg at Chub Lake and then we went to some bar. You know what? This was later. I'm getting a little mixed up. Where did I leave off? The Willmar State Hospital. I think after that I got to go back to Cloquet but of course I never stopped using. Then I suppose if you jump ahead to graduation or whatever. Then I came down to the Cities.

**AS:** After high school graduation?

**DH:** Yeah. Sue and them went to Colorado, they went travelling. I think I went out. I did meet up with them once that summer. I think I just got some little job. I've always been like, I'd say I'm the super responsible person, pretty responsible. Like right now the difference between me and Sue, and I envy her for it sometimes, is I like a homebase. I need to have my comfort zone. Then the other part of me right now is feeling super stressed because I've got five dogs. I'm getting totally kind of burnt out. I don't know how much longer I can do this. I wish I could escape it. Right now I'm just looking for the one good, positive thing that happens every day. It's really somewhat bleak out here. I don't know how to describe it. There are things that rejuvenate me so I'm not totally there yet but I'm aware.

**AS:** What's your job right now?

**DH:** I do street outreach with homeless folks. Another thing I'll mention because I know that I feel the stress that I feel that led me up to my last OD and things like that. I kind of know when I'm there but I'm really good at controlling it because when I did overdose...or at least I think I'm good at controlling it. You've got to be careful. I'm just really aware of my inner self and when I'm at that point where it could happen. Then I go well, I've got all these dogs I've got to take care of. I'm loyal to them and my last dog sat through the OD with me. I always felt kind of bad about that but we both made it through somehow. I don't know if that makes sense. I just need that spot.

**AS**: So let's go back to graduating from high school.

**DH**: I graduated from high school, took off to the Cities and it's kind of all somewhat of a blur. I got some little job at a photo place. I just got an apartment and started living down there. I was hanging around with some Cloquet people. At that time we were using drugs. At that time it was cocaine that was the big craze.

**AS:** Are we like in the 80s right now?

**DH:** I graduated in '78. Yeah I pretty much worked at Maidl Photo for quite some time. I just continued to be a partier. I'm trying to think, by this time I had already been through one, two, three, I think three treatments before I was eighteen. I don't know if there was four. Every time that I started to get to the point where maybe things were getting out of control or I'm like missing work now the answer I would always think would be, "Go to treatment." Now looking back I don't think that was the answer. I think that was ingrained in me because of my experience.

Then 1981, I think, I went to Twin Town. That was when it was mixed. I'm still working at the same job. From Twin Town I went to a halfway house and did the sober thing for awhile. There's just all these little groups of treatment people in my life. I'm starting to think of them all. I'm never one of those people that's been totally sober like I always smoked pot and I always will I'm sure. That doesn't go over well with the AA crowd. Especially back then. There might be a little more, I don't know what it's like now. I still think they're pretty strict on it. I'm just going to chronic smoke too. I went to Twin Town and then went to a halfway house. I was always the type of person who got really connected and hooked up. I would do well and make friends. I can't even remember. After the halfway house I moved in with somebody. I went to Jane Dickman. It used to be Jane Dickman and Team House. They were affiliated like sister, brother house or something.

I think all this time too I didn't know if I liked boys or girls. I had a lot of boyfriends in high school. I think I started having my first attractions towards women. Of course I always fall in love with straight women. A lot of them want to try it though too. There's a few stories there too. That was going on. I think at the time I had a boyfriend at that time. I moved in with somebody from the halfway house. Eventually just back to using again at some point. I think she moved back to New York. I'm trying to think where I was working at that time. I think I was still at the photo place. Yeah. I worked there a long time.

**AS:** Through all this you kept your job?

**DH:** Yep, I did. That's what I mean a responsible user. I always knew the way to get out and just go to your employee assistance program and now I'm going to treatment. Everything is kind of a blur when I'm thinking about it like this. We're in 1981. All of my relapse crises are over women too. It seems like there's usually a woman involved so now I'm single. There's always a woman involved in it. Sue will back that up too I bet. Now I'm thinking of all them too. Some of them were f'ing crazy. So then I think I moved out on my own. I'm still working at the photo place. Sue went back to New York. I was using. I wasn't using hard drugs at that time. It was just pot and alcohol. Alcohol can tend to get me in trouble. That's one of the reasons I don't drink now because I'm a drug user and the alcohol, I'll get to the point after being intoxicated day after day that I go "I hate drinking and I like drugs so where's the drugs?" Then you're back at it. I'm a super binger too. I might have a few but I try not to get drunk.

So then I got some other job in St. Paul. I'm working in Eden Prairie at control data. I was always a workaholic. So anytime I wasn't using I was working two jobs or three jobs. So I definitely still have that issue too. I have two jobs and I have for like ten years. I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing.

**AS:** You work two jobs now?

**DH:** Yeah.

**AS:** What do you do?

**DH:** They all kind of roll together. HDC is like one of the mental health agencies in town and they have a homeless project. I just do outreach for them.

**AS:** You do outreach in both of your jobs?

**DH:** Yeah. It's the same people. My thought process on it is that my job at CHUM, it's never a forty hour a week. This stuff doesn't ever end.

**AS:** What does CHUM stand for again?

**DH:** It used to be Churches United in Ministry but now the synagogue joined so they can't use the church word anymore so it's just CHUM.

So now, during this time my mom got cancer. She was diagnosed I think it was, I have a hard time remembering dates. September of '86 maybe. Then she died in July of '87. It went super fast. At that time I took a leave of absence. We knew it wasn't good from the start. We had prearranged that my mom didn't want, my mom and dad had gotten divorced around eighteen. I always felt like I kind of pushed that. I kind of felt bad. As I look back on it now I was a little brat to my parents. It's like, "Why was I like that?" Maybe part of it's because they're both dead.

**AS:** That you feel guilty now about that?

**DH:** I try not to feel guilty just because I know that it's useless.

**AS:** How many other siblings did you have?

**DH:** Three, two brothers and a sister.

**AS:** Were you kind of in the middle?

**DH:** I was the oldest. I laid the ground down.

**AS:** Don't you think some of that might have to do with the fact that your dad was alcoholic and your mom was so dependable. You're kind of a combination.

**DH:** I'm both. I could go either way. Right now I'm on the whatever side.

**AS:** Or are you finding balance? You're keeping a better balance.

**DH:** I try. That can be a challenge for me too just because I do tend to work a lot. Last night I was trying to be home at seven thirty by all means and I didn't get there until eight thirty.

Then my mom dies. It had been prearranged that my sister and I would be guardians for my brother. My dad was drinking heavily.

**AS:** He was under eighteen?

**DH:** He was thirteen. At that time I would call my dad homeless, precariously housed. Sleeping on Grandma's couch. There was a bar in town called The Northeastern. Me and Sue can joke about Jerry. I don't take it personal when she says it.

**AS:** Is Jerry your dad?

**DH:** Yeah. Old friends can joke. There was a homeless guy on the street one time who said, "God I knew your dad. I used to drink with him." It would get to the point where I'd be like, "Shut the fuck up." He was my dad. Oh my God. Thank God he's gone. He used to drive me nuts. Then I moved back to Cloquet, duh, to live with my brother. My other brother Mark moved out of the house. I'll slow down a little bit. I got some job at the match mill.

**AS:** The one that just got bought?

**DH:** Did it? Diamond Brands. I didn't know that. I don't pay attention. I probably hated it.

**AS:** You got a job at the match factory?

**DH:** Then I'm living at my mom's house with my brother. Then things went on, I'm working. Thinking back on it I did start using then at that time. My friend got married in August. She got pissed at me. We talked about this recently, it was because the coke was flying around. I was weepy because my mom's been dead a month. One of those, not a good situation. I didn't know how to deal with it. I had this little kid too to deal with it. Both of my parents are dead. My dad was suddenly.

**AS:** Your dad died before your mom?

**DH:** No, it's coming shortly. When you know someone's going to die, I grieved all that time. I remember the day she told me she had this lump. I like bawled from Duluth to Minneapolis listening to the same song the whole way. It was making me cry. I was just worried about what's going to happen. I cried a lot from September to July. When she died I was all cried out. Then I moved in with my brother. I pretty much told my dad, "Screw you. I'm done with you. This is your responsibility and I'm here.” I loved Jerry. He was a good guy too but just a drunk. That's probably why I work with drunks, one reason, or can tolerate them.

Fast forward, going through all this grief stuff. I tried to do everything like my mom. I love dumplings and I remember trying to make them and it didn't work out and I started bawling. Then dabbling with use on and off through that whole thing. Then having this new responsibility now too and really being responsible for Steve. The one thing about Steve was that I was fourteen when he was born. He was this cute little baby and I took him everywhere. When I moved to the cities every year, every summer he'd come down. I spent a lot of time with this kid. It was already kind of like he was partly my kid. Then of course he's been this football kid, active in everything, As. Then he starts to be a user. I'm working shift work. Not really knowing how to deal with that.

February of '88 my dad is super drunk and falls down some stairs at someone's house and ends up in the Emergency Room. To make a long story short he's brain dead. We made the decision to unplug him. It was kind of too soon. It's like six months later. My little brother, I felt so bad for him and my grandma. Then we go through that. They're both dead. I worked at the match mill for awhile. Then I got hired at USG. I kept trying to upgrade.

**AS:** What's that?

**DH:** It's another mill in town. Then eventually ended up at Potlatch which is like the mothership. They all want to be there if you live in Cloquet. Then my partying started again, mostly cocaine use. I could do it for a long time, go to work. You could call in sick in those days. You could go to work loaded in those days. People got loaded at work. It's just the way it was. Then I also moved my girlfriend up here after my dad died. Nobody really knew or it was something that wasn't talked about. There was really no ill feelings about it. I would say everybody was good about it. There was still some, I had some of that shame. I wasn't this real comfortable lesbian. I wasn't comfortable telling a lot of people.

**AS:** People weren't really telling.

**DH:** No one was really open at that time. Eventually I got into trouble again. The relationship too because of the drug use was having some issues. I had actually moved out of my mom's house by then. We had bought another house. I'm trying to think how things went down. My sister, if you look at the AA model she's the hero. At some point there was an issue. I think my brother Steve, I don't remember clearly how it went, he started partying and stuff. He had an accident. He was found in the morning as a John Doe. They didn't know who he was at first. He took off on his three wheeler at two in the morning in the winter drunker than hell. It turns out my cousin... let me stop for a minute until they go by. It's an issue right now. I don't know why. I wouldn't' say depressed, I don't know how to explain it. It isn't depression really.

[Conversation about the weather]

**AS:** So you were talking about, you'd moved out of your mom's house and your sister was the hero. What do you mean? What happened?

**DH:** She had been going to college at UMD. She always had an issue about me being a user. She's a mean drunk and didn't really like the way me and Carol were doing things, the woman I was living with. Carol was a very positive influence on him. He'll tell you that too. Really a pretty level headed person. Drugs and alcohol too but was a musician. That's how she was making her living at that time. She travelled a lot. I think at some point there was some issue that we ended up moving out, buying a house, and my sister moved in with my brother. Then the accident happens. They were living together. I'm getting lost. We didn't buy our house by then, we were renting. Carol and I were renting.

Anyways, Steve has this accident and we're all at the hospital. At first they didn't know if he was going to live or die just because it was a really serious head injury. He ended up making it. There was like this big argument about where's he going to go to rehab. Julie didn't want him with the lesbians. Things like that. I think he had to go to a rehab center for awhile. This is where things get a little fuzzy. Steve goes to rehab. I think he actually was staying with Carol and I. He had to kind of learn a lot of stuff over like talking and eating. I think he lost the vision in one eye. He can't smell anything. He's had complications since because of that. Then another really stressful time. We've already been through these two deaths and we all have the addictions gene or whatever. My brothers are drinkers. My sister is a drinker. Pretty much I'm just the pot smoker these days. Julie still, there's stories about her. I think she's getting better now but up to even three years ago it's like oh my God just terrible that I take pot and Klonopin. Then what happened?

At some point Carol and I started having problems because I was partying quite a bit. There was a little house. By this time we had bought a house and Steve moved in with us there too. He's living with us. He's partying. I think at some point she just got sick of all that. I wasn't a super good drunk. I don't know how to explain it. Drinking doesn't look good on me. I'll put it that way. I think eventually she moved out. I took it really hard. My brother is still there at the time. I really started hitting it hard. There's a little house attached to the garage that we rented out. My renter was a cocaine dealer. I'm like, "Billy never pay me the rent in cocaine." This has been going on for a long time, sneaking over to Billy's or whatever. Billy also worked at the papermill. Part of the thing being back in Cloquet too, eventually, not eventually but right away being gravitated to that group. I think at first I tried to be super responsible and the mom and take care of business. Then I fell into it again. After shift work at midnight or seven in the morning people go out drinking when the bar opens at eight because that's their morning. I just remember kind of being at the mill and I was definitely in a cocaine psychosis.

**AS:** Did you work the night shift?

**DH:** Rotating shifts. Just kind of getting to the breakdown point with the addiction. That, "Okay I can't go to work." I knew how to play the game to get through that. Then I went to the mothership: Hazelden. I'm like, "This is going to be it." Looking back it's like that whole thing that was ingrained in me that you're an addict and you've got to go to treatment. I don't think that anymore. I go to Hazelden. I always loved treatment. I loved to connect with those people. Tatum O'Neal was there when I was there. I have her lip prints in my big book. She got pissed at me recently because I posted a picture on Instagram of when we were on the Lily Unit. I'm like, "Whatever Tatum." I didn't say we were in Hazelden, I just posted the picture. There were like six of us in the picture.

**AS:** And you could see that it was her?

**DH:** I went and tagged her. I think I did. Whatever. She'll just have to get over it. It is what it is. Then I went to Hazelden. It was actually Christmas. I remember being there on Christmas. Then I went to Fellowship Club which is still there today. Did super well.

**AS:** Is that the St. Paul sober house?

**DH:** Yeah. The one on Watson off of West 7th. Kind of by the old brewery down there. I think I was at the halfway house four months. I had my house in Cloquet still. I was on worker's comp. At some point they talk me into, "You can't go back. You've got to stay." I really didn't want to come back to Cloquet either. I just decided to get an apartment down here.

**AS:** In Duluth you mean?

**DH:** In the Cities. I'm sorry. In the Cities. Like a block from the halfway house was this fourplex that everybody that went through the halfway house moved into. Oh cops, I like him.

**AS:** An officer just drove by.

**DH:** He's waving away.

**AS:** And waved at us.

**DH:** They're pretty nice most of them. Susan Phillips at your little meeting. She's like, "Oh Deb." She's the one with the shaved head. She's like, "I just see your cop pictures and I go it's a thing I know Deb because..." She's very active in holding the police accountable for the brutality. I mean so am I. I try to portray good interactions with the police because I do interact with them in a good way quite often. They're very helpful to me and I want people to see that. It helps the homeless cause I think too.

**AS:** It does because they know you're paying attention to everybody.

**DH:** Yeah. This is what happened at Hazelden too. I'm not a person that, I think, I was the president at Fellowship Club. I had a good friend, a lifelong friend that was in treatment there too, like a leaving Las Vegas alcoholic she was. She never did quit drinking. I would visit her while I lived at the halfway house. Actually it was the day I was going to graduate I get called in by my counselor. She's like, "Deb," she was from Texas. "I've got some bad news. You know we're not going to be able to graduate you tonight." Basically because I'm talking to people that are still using.

**AS:** Because you were talking to people?

**DH:** And spending time with her and stuff like that. I'm like, "She's my lifelong friend. I'm not going to abandon her. No, she's not a threat to my sobriety."

**AS:** For that reason you wouldn't graduate?

**DH:** Yeah and I think there was a few other people too that had left the house that I was associating with. That was frowned upon. Then they told me I had to get up and resign my presidency too. I'm like, "You're fucking kidding me." This is kind of obviously a sore spot with me. I never talked about like when my parents died I eventually ended up going to see a therapist who really was an amazing lady. I saw her for quite a few years. I go call her because I'm in an uproar. I said I was just going to leave then. It's like, "Screw you guys I'll just leave. I don't care about your f'ing medallion." Then they held the thing, that would be against medical advice and your insurance won't pay. I did the whole bullshit that they wanted me to do. The next day I came back super high and I'm like, I demanded them to accept me. I'm still the same Deb that left here yesterday. It's like I'm the type of person that keeps in touch with everybody. I've usually had relationships later with counselors, they've become friends and stuff. I thought it was such bullshit. It's just bullshit. It doesn't help anybody.

**AS:** It almost drives you back to your addiction.

**DH:** Yeah, it does. I think treatment's a lot more gentler these days. That was like '95, we're talking Hazelden too. They really think the only way is abstinence. I don't think they really believe in harm reduction in all. A little bit now? I don't really pay attention but I know I've had a few interactions with Moyers over with the wet houses. I don't know what he really thinks about needle exchange, we've never talked about that. He doesn't agree with the wet houses. I think I pulled it together rather quickly after getting high and getting right out of there.

I got kicked out of the house then of course, trespassed, barred, whatever. I think if I stayed sober so many days then I could come back and I could get my medallion and stuff like that too. I think I did do that. I still had a connection to the house, I did. I had a dog at that time that everybody loved Harry. He was kind of famous. Me and Sue used to joke that we were going to do the harm reduction books like: *﻿When Harry was Homeless, Harry Does Harm Reduction, Harry Does Street Outreach.* ﻿He went everywhere. Just do a kids book or something.

I don't even know where I was working. I was working for a lady that, when I was in the halfway house, she'd come and get people for day jobs. I stuck with her. She rehabbed houses and things like that, painted. I stuck with her for awhile. She knows how to deal with harm reduction. We were always relapsing and oh we didn't show up for work.

**AS:** She understood that.

**DH:** Sort of, she's even paid me when I didn't do a damned thing because I'm so high and just goes, "Oh Deb." I guess I've always dabbled in it but at the same time I've always, there's been a few short periods when maybe I was precariously...I'm trying to think at what point things fell apart. I think I remember now. I worked and lived in this duplex with other Fellowship people. We were tight. Everybody went and had coffee. It's like the bullshit AA thing. It works for some people. I still have some good friends from that time. They are totally AA people. I'm losing my train of thought. At some point, I lived in that house for eight years and pretty much the same people lived there too. I don't know what year it was.

**AS:** Were you in St. Paul, Minneapolis?

**DH**: St. Paul. I like St. Paul better. I love Minneapolis too. I've lived both places but I think I like living in St. Paul better, I don't know why. Quieter, a little bit. Eventually people in the house started using. The whole crowd, people would start relapsing. People even died I think. You know how it is. One of my Cloquet friends, I know Sue probably talked a lot about Lisa. Lisa and I had gone out to Colorado and we stayed with her brother Joel who is the one who ended up committing suicide a short time later. Joel was kind of scary on that trip. He's kind of one of these neo-white-Nazi dudes. He was like talking the homosexual thing. Me and Joel, we were a couple at one time. In the early 80s we did a lot of drugs together. I think he had recently gotten divorced. He had a lot of back pain so he was addicted too. They had cut him off.

**AS:** To pills?

**DH:** Yeah. I think he lost his job. We didn't know. With this supremacist attitude that can get kind of scary. He's got rifles. Even Lisa was concerned about him. I'm like, "Shit is he going to shoot me because I'm a lesbian?" We got through the trip. Me and Joel went out together one night. Very fitting we saw the movie *﻿Blow.* ﻿That was all of our experience together, a lot of it. We went out to dinner and had a great talk. We come back to Minnesota and I don't remember at what point but it was within two weeks he killed himself. He shot himself.

Then I come up for the funeral. Of course it's a really tragic thing. At the rendezvous after the funeral which is one of the Cloquet drinking bars that everybody would go to and a lot of people were doing drugs. That was just the crowd. I was kind of trying to do this AA thing and stay sober and off hard stuff. I did stay sober there. I drove home to Minneapolis that day. The whole way my palms were sweating. I knew. Just thinking about, "When I get back I'm going to use." I knew my neighbor could get me something because he was using heroin at that time.

**AS:** Had you used heroin by this point?

**DH:** I had in the early 80s with Joel a few times but cocaine was really my thing. It really was. It was back when it was like good cocaine, not like what you see these days. I don't even know. Can you get the good cocaine these days? Probably not. You'll have to investigate that. I don't hear about it. I just hear about meth and heroin and crack. Some people still smoke crack. Rick wasn't home when I got to St. Paul. I pretty much just paced the porch. It's just that whole feeling that you know you're getting it. I asked him if he could get me some drugs. By this time I kind of missed out on the whole starting to do volunteer work with Sue.

**AS**: In Minneapolis? You did some of the Women With a Point Stuff?

**DH:** Yeah. I had been working with Patty, just doing my own thing. When Sue started Women With a Point I started going down to shelters with her and doing street outreach out of the back of her car. I missed that whole part. Eventually I got a little job, front desk job, at Mary Hall Catholic Charities and that's kind of what got me going. I worked there for a long time. I decided to go back to college at some point. I'll have to see where that fits in. I missed a whole section. See what I mean here? I was working for Patty and decided to go back to school.

**AS:** Who's Patty again?

**DH:** She's the one who redid houses and stuff. I started to go to St. Kate's for social work. Then I was working at Mary Hall. I had a couple of incidences too doing needle exchange where I ended up in a hotel with somebody shooting up just because it's like, "There it is." Sue would get super pissed at me. "Get out of that hotel room. Get out God damnit Debbie." I don't know I was always pretty impulsive. I think I still am sort of.

Going to college. That's when we took the trip. I go to the funeral. I'm waiting for Rick to get home for the drugs. I just proceed to go on like a four day bender. I was doing street outreach at that time for People Inc. I think I had been kind of falling apart. I had been drinking a lot. Not really falling apart just drinking a lot. I was kind of in the setup mode to use. Rick came home. We got some coke. Even though they were using heroin. I was doing needle exchange so I had all the stuff we needed. I just went on a four day binge that ended up, Sue came over and pretty much saved my life.

I don't know if you heard this story. I had been communicating with Sue because she's in the, "God damnit Debbie," mood. "Here goes Debbie again." I've done some crazy things. She told me some of this when we met at your deal. Stuff that she's never told me regarding that incident. I think we had been communicating. Apparently I was going to go to the Employee Assistance Program or something on Monday, whatever day it was. We were supposed to do something together that morning and she hadn't heard from me. She called Dave, her husband, and said, "What should I do? I haven't heard from Deb." She calls me Debbie. She's about the only one that can. Or Frybrain. Did she tell you that, Frybrain? I was proud of it at one point. Dave just told her, "What if something's wrong and you didn't go?" She came over and pounded on my door, no answer. This is the stuff she's told me recently. I think she was getting ready to leave and then the neighbor came out and said, "Deb's fine. She's sleeping on the couch."

[Interruption]

**DH:** The neighbor came out and said I was sleeping. Well I wasn't. Sue said I was shallow breathing, turning blue.

**AS:** Had you used heroin?

**DH:** We were doing speedballs. At this point they were heroin users, my neighbors. There was no more coke. I could remember during that four days you can't go to sleep or anything. There was Jamie giving me a shot of dilaudid in the neck. I can remember this really well. Then just getting up and just starting over. I don't know how it would have gone on if I didn't OD. I don't know. Like I said, my poor little dog sitting there with me. Sue called the ambulance and they Narcaned me. This is when that wasn't really…

**AS:** What year is this?

**DH:** The anniversary is coming up too. Was it 2001? I think it was 2001 or 2002. Then I was super pissed. Some of my co-workers that I was doing outreach with threw me under the bus. Specifically Brett Byfield. My neighbor, his girlfriend lived in public housing. I had went with her to public housing to get some drugs. She's not a client or anything. That's how Brett looked at it. I don't even remember how it all went down. Then I couldn't go to Dorothy Day for awhile. The executive director....

**AS:** To do outreach?

**DH:** Yeah. Eventually they fired me at People Inc. I played their game. I went to treatment again for fuck's sakes. Then I OD, I'm in the hospital. It was Memorial Day weekend. Then they start to say, "You tried to kill yourself." They're wanting to sign releases for my sister. I'm like, "Hell no." All my co-workers deserted me. The people who were calling me were my homeless people. I mean I had a few. My ex came down to see me. A few people that were supportive.

**AS:** How long were you in the hospital?

**DH**: Nine days. I got shipped up to the psych ward because they said I tried to kill myself.

**AS:** On what evidence were they basing that?

**DH:** Just the OD and thinking I was depressed or something. At that point I inside of myself woke up to how I used drugs. I'm like, "No I was not suicidal but it's suicidal." I play that whole scenario out if I get a trigger or something. I do, that shit's all over the place. If I ever killed myself it would be with heroin. That would be the easiest way to do it. That's just where I'd go. Not that I'm going to. That'd be my choice. That was a super hard time for me then. The job made me go to treatment mostly because they wanted their paperwork done.

It was like 2001 because it was the terrorist attacks. I was in treatment right after that. There was a bunch of flight attendants from American in treatment at the time. It was really sad. That time I went to Pride Institute. I thought, "I'll try the gay one this time, see how that goes." My leaving Las Vegas friend, Deborah, I got her to come to treatment. Then we were roommates. She's had a million treatments. She did the Jellinek thing at Hazelden. Do you know what that is? The intense six month. It costs thousands of dollars. It probably costs a hundred thousand these days.

**AS:** Is that how they detox you?

**DH:** Back when I was there the detox was called Ignatius. Then I think I was on the Lily Unit. Then Jellinek was the long term for the chronics. I did that, went to Pride Institute, went back to work, got my paperwork done and then they fired me. I was kind of depressed for awhile. I was still going to school. I was like, "Fuck, I fucked this up." At the same time the executive director at Dorothy Day said, "Deb you're good with us. Just right now you've got to stay away because of Brett." This asshole pushed it I guess. There was support that way. Do you know Monica? Did you meet her?

**AS:** No. She's at Simpson?

**DH:** She was the executive director at Simpson. Now she's doing something. She's had a lot of jobs in the homeless world. She's an icon down there. Monica Nilsson.

**AS:** What did you say about Monica saved your life?

**DH:** Me and Sue were at the May Day parade a few weeks ago. Monica walked by so we said hello. I looked at Sue and said, "The person who saved my life and the one that gave me a second chance." She hired me at Simpson. I asked her down the road, "When you hired me did you know I had had this incident?" She did. Then I'm like, group hug. That was just kind of funny. I just kind of did outreach and worked in shelters in Minneapolis for awhile. Always smoking pot.

**AS:** But you stayed away from heroin?

**DH:** Yeah and I have stayed away from all hard drugs ever since. That's a long time now.

**AS:** That is a long time, like sixteen years.

**DH:** Is it that long? Oh my God. Wow. I never thought of it that way. It's not that I don't get triggered I just know where I go and what stops me. I'm that person who needs some kind of security and I don't want to lose it. I am very grateful that I made it through the last one.

**AS:** Was that the last one? What do you mean by the last one?

**DH:** I mean when I ODed. It doesn't seem so long ago, wow.

**AS:** The way you talked about it I thought it was much more recent.

**DH:** No, no. I've never really thought about that it's that long ago. It almost makes me go, "Was it 2011?" But it wasn't. Then I just worked. I super got into homelessness. Outreach was my thing. I've always poured my heart into it. I don't have kids or I don't have a family I've got to go home for. I've always been pretty available. Then I worked in the shelter for awhile in the cities. I really missed the street outreach. Have you heard of Charlie Parr the musician?

**AS:** Yeah.

**DH:** He did outreach in Minneapolis and he was known as Jeff Parr at that time. He had moved to Duluth and I just said, "If you ever leave your job," he was doing outreach for the Homeless Project where I work part time now. I said, "Let me know." Then in 2005 he left to go do music. I applied for his job, HDC. I didn't work there long because their idea of outreach was, "Oh you can do it from eight to ten am on Tuesdays." They're a mental health agency and the boss was a controlling asshole. I can't work for you. I went to work at the Dom Yono which is like the soup kitchen in town. They have a couple programs like a clothing program. At that time they had a cooking program where you can learn a trade like a culinary. They have a kids cafe. I worked in the social service. I still really wanted to work at the shelter and do outreach.

Eventually I got a little part time job at CHUM in the shelter. I think I also did an internship here. When I came up here I was still going to St. Kate's . Then I was going to go to Scholastica but they wanted too much money. I did an internship at CHUM though. Then I got a job there. I've just been there ever since. They let me do my thing. There's some things about the shelter that are totally punitive that drive me crazy. I don't have a lot of control of it. I can argue a lot and I do advocate a lot to the point where my boss says, "You're a pain in the ass." It's like that's my job. I'm kind of getting to the point where I don't feel that they do harm reduction enough to the point where it satisfies me.

**AS:** At the shelter?

**DH:** Yeah. Even though they say they do. Some of the staff we hire for the shelter, they're mean. [Off the record statement]. As far as the heroin use, have you talked to the needle exchange yet in Duluth?

**AS:** Yeah.

**DH:** How did that go?

**AS:** I interviewed Mary McCarthy, the executive director and my students interviewed Maggie and Jameson.

**DH:** I think we kind of find that it's hard to work with them a little bit. Yeah. Right now, I have all this Narcan and I don't have barrels and points. I've been trying to get them from them. I need to get them somewhere. I need to start passing it out. I finally got a hook up.

**AS:** Talk about your job. When you say outreach what does that involve?

**DH:** We've developed a collaborative over the years that I've been here that involve the...homelessness used to be, it's still really bad here, but it used to be visibly much worse. Since they built the San Marcos which is actually having its ten year anniversary this year.

**AS:** Greg told me about that yesterday.

**DH:** Did you talk to Greg Anderson? I'm glad. He's an awesome person. I love that guy. I was thinking that you should have talked to him. I was just thinking that yesterday.

We kind of built this collaboratively where people who are homeless and chronically on the street using the Emergency Room, ambulance, fire department, going to detox and having nowhere to go. We just all work together. What it's developed into is I would be kind of the one making the contact. You're on the street. We have twelve agencies that meet once a month that include the hospitals, probation, the courts.

**AS:** That's different from OARS?

**DH:** Yeah. I used to go to OARS but I dropped off just because I don't know. They can do it. I still get all the notes though which is cool.

**AS:** What you're talking about is a coordinated effort for the homeless where people are talking about the people who are chronically on the street.

**DH:** Because I work at HDC I work with everybody but at my CHUM job I get kind of a monthly list of referrals from the police. It's just this ongoing list. He counts up the police contacts.

**AS:** Who does?

**DH:** Dave, Officer Dave the one that wouldn't talk to you. They're usually for drinking in public. They might get fifth degree assaults. It's proven that all these minor things and they can lead to a felony. Then people are really...You're the person on the street, you've signed this release that it's covered by all these different agencies so now we get to talk about you. It's more for coordination for care. I can't get medical records. You go to the ER and tell them one thing, you go to detox and tell them something else. Now we can all kind of coordinate on what the real story is. I worked a lot with Dave, the police in general. I wouldn't say work with them. I don't tell on people. It's not to get them in trouble it's more to try and help them. The frustrating part at the end of the day is that there's no housing. You can do all these things with people, or adequate shelter either.

**AS:** How big is the shelter here? How many beds?

**DH:** We'll take anybody. I had to laugh the other day when they told me, I think the legal capacity is like twenty four or something. We have like seventy to eighty people there some nights. In the winter, yeah.

**AS:** Is anybody working on housing or on another shelter?

**DH:** We actually have a meeting Monday because there's a guy in Duluth, Charles, he works at the county right now. He's doing something. I don't know much about it. I'm going to find out on Monday. It's some kind of a shelter he's going to open up west, out west. He's been kind of secretive about it. I don't know why. Me and Dave the cop are going to go talk to him on Monday. I will like that for me because as an alternative when I'm doing my outreach at night on the weekends there might be another option instead of just CHUM where a lot of people are kicked out of or can't go to. I kind of heard a rumor that he wasn't going to take super drunk people and stuff like that. I don't know. The ones that get kicked out of CHUM or can't come he doesn't want them either is kind of what I heard. At CHUM it seems like they do kick out a lot of people. I never kick out anybody.

**AS:** So CHUM has a shelter.

**DH:** Yeah, that's where I work.

**AS:** That's the twenty four people one.

**DH:** Yeah. It's always full. There's three bunk rooms for the guys and three for the women and then a common area where there's mats on the floor and then overflow too. I'll give you a tour if you want. It's not that much to see though. It's your typical dirty shelter.

**AS**: Is there an issue with homelessness and heroin here?

**DH:** Yeah there is but it's hidden. There is. I tried doing some outreach at the Clear Path Clinic. I found it really difficult partly because of the way people go in and out of there. You never know what time they're going to show up. I see it more as the counselors. I did spend a fair amount of time there talking with people. I think just because I've been doing this so long that people know me. It's word of mouth, it gets around. They seem to not want to tell the clinic that they're homeless.

**AS:** Maybe it has to do with their medical care.

**DH:** That outreach part has been difficult. That's why I thought if I could get some Narcan. I know a good number of people that are using heroin but they're not like camping out in a tent. They're hiding out in a drug house. Some of them are in tents I guess. They tend to not come around. Sue just shared that harm reduction thing that the minister, did you see that? One thing she said in there is that stigma makes people go underground. That's exactly how I see the homeless population. If you're homeless and using heroin you're underground. The drinkers aren't. They're out here. You just gotta build the relationships and get people to trust you. I do have a few people that will help me out to distribute. I always like having that face to face contact. You've got to. Then you know who they are.

I'm seeing almost more meth use. Definitely the heroin. I probably only see a portion of the heroin just because obviously no drugs discriminate but you know there's a larger group that's, I hate to say the word normal because that's not what I mean. Do you know what I mean by that? Like just you or me going to use the exchange. A lot of functioning addicts that are going to work everyday and then doing their heroin or whatever they do. I think heroin users can function. I don't think meth users can as well. I think my story's a little boring actually.

**AS:** You do?

**DH:** I do. There's a lot of it. I haven't really gotten into too much trouble with using in this town just because it goes back to that whole OD. I'm just scared to be. I know where it goes. It's a healthy fear. That doesn't mean I wouldn't want to do it once in awhile. Sometimes I think about it. It's that whole thought process. I've got the type of personality where one hit's not enough. Damnit. I wish I could be one of those people that just used occasionally.

I'm getting a little bored, I wouldn't say bored at CHUM. We've got some changes coming up now where Dave is leaving again. I'm getting a new officer that I work with. They hired a new social worker. It's going to be interesting. I told Dave if this pick this lady officer. I said I won't even want to work on the group anymore. I'm kind of getting to the point in my career or my life where I feel like I'm not living up to some of the principles, just the things I believe in. Sometimes I even think we're criminalizing homelessness by what I do, my little job, the police contacts. I don't know. I'm frustrated that everyone needs to have an SPMI diagnosis to get certain kinds of housing.

**AS:** What's SPMI?

**DH:** Serious or persistent mental illness.

**AS:** To get housing?

**DH:** Yeah. You have to have these forms signed to be eligible for some programs. Then the other side of it too. It's just like Hazelden. Everybody that goes to Hazelden you get on anti-depressants. I see that in the homeless world too. Let's get everybody an arms worker and a case manager. It's helpful to a point. They have to have a diagnosis to get all that. That kind of drives me nuts. I just go, "Just do what you do everyday." A lot of people tell me I make a difference. I guess I could say that I have. Now my hands are tied in a lot of ways just because of the bureaucracy. They have this new, for a couple of years now they have what's called a coordinated entry for homelessness. The whole United States is using this model. Anyone that's homeless has to do this coordinated entry. What it looks at is vulnerability. People with higher vulnerability technically would go to the top of the list and get in quicker. Which makes sense in a lot of ways. I've seen in work a little bit. One of the problems for me is I can no longer help people directly apply for housing. Then people don't keep in touch. They're on this list but they change their phone number every week. Anyone I do it with I use my phone number. I can't do direct housing apps with them anymore. You've kind of got to wait until their name gets pulled. Certain scores get you certain supportive housing. I don't know. Then people get denied because they've got criminal history. They're mentally ill and they're addicted. Why don't we lighten up on the criminal shit? They're going to win in the end anyways. Why make them wait three months to get housing or six months just because you deny them. I don't know. I don't know what it is right now. I'm kind of feeling jaded in a way.

**AS:** I would think there would be a pretty high incidence of burnout.

**DH:** If you look at what I do too, I worked with Street Works for awhile too. I left out that whole thing and Gail, I left out that whole thing. Gail actually gave me my first outreach job. I left out that whole thing. When I went from Mary Hall to Seton Services and Gail was my boss. We were doing harm reduction outreach at that point with youth. It was for youth escaping prostitution. I think I was using through that time too. I don't remember what happened. I think I went from there to People Inc. I went from youth to adult outreach. It was hard doing outreach with homeless youth and having them outside in the winter. It was awful.

When I moved back to Duluth I actually moved in with my ex. I left out that part too. We were just going to live together platonically. This is one of things I think is kind of telling about me is I'm fifty six years old and I've only lived with one person my whole life and it was her. It adds up to like twenty five years worth.

**AS:** Of living with her?

**DH:** Yeah. I don't have an interest to move anyone else in in that capacity. I just look at it that I'm loyal. She's since got married and stuff. It didn't go well, four years ago. I don't think I went off the deep end that time. But I had been on Adderall. I was super skinny. I wish I could get back on it for awhile and lose some of this weight. At the end of that too I think I was in Adderall psychosis when I look back on it. I think after awhile it didn't work for me. It made me kind of crazy. I quit taking it. I like it. I do like it. I still have one bottle. I'd like to take it for like thirty days just to see if I could fit into my summer clothes. I didn't feel addicted to that. I used it as prescribed.

**AS:** Why did you get on Adderall?

**DH:** I got tested for ADHD. Mostly because I wanted a prescription at the time I did. I don't know if I believe in all that prescribing either. I have Klonopin. I don't abuse it. There's a time I did abuse it. I know when Lisa died I was into that phase. We didn't talk about that either. That was a super hard time, as you know, for Sue and for all of us. I was using pills pretty heavily at that time. I stay away from all of it all. I don't abuse the klonopin. My new favorite thing is wax, the old hash oil. Three or four hits at night of that stuff and I sleep really well. I don't use it during the day, maybe on the weekends. I just don't beat myself up for any of it anymore.

**AS:** How would you describe harm reduction? Just to wrap up.

**DH:** Definitely just really meeting people where they're at. It's kind of like loving them up, trying to show them that they have worth because everyone does. No expectations really. After I've been with someone or know them in a helping situation. I have very little expectations. At some point there has to be that want, that contemplation to change.

**AS:** They have to want that.

**DH:** Yeah, yeah. Then I start having this much. I tell them that.

**AS:** This much expectation?

**DH:** Yeah, like you have to participate this much. Maybe it's more I just ask them to participate even if it's just a little. I think that's pretty much what it is. If I was running the shelter people wouldn't be getting kicked out for thirty days for stealing a sandwich.

**AS:** That's what happens?

**DH:** Yes, there's a couple that have. They're super mentally ill.

**AS:** They get kicked out for that? They're supposed to find housing for thirty days?

**DH:** Yeah or they end up out here.

**AS:** What do you mean out here?

**DH:** On the street, sleeping out here. I think harm reduction is pretty simple. Things like the needle exchange, that's important. People need to support those. I'm a little worried with this administration in here.

**AS:** Where? In the US?

**DH:** Yeah. I don't know. I think RAN was saying, I don't interact with them much and I should more. I feel like they aren't inclusive it doesn't seem.

**AS:** Are they a part of what you would call this partnership?

**DH:** No, no, no, no. I would say that the majority of the people in the CIG group, a very small percentage of them are using heroin. They're either using meth or…

**AS:** What's the CIG group?

**DH:** We call it all the agencies that meet. Community Intervention Group. How appropriate, cig. Not to say that they don't dabble in it. I think there's a lot of synthetic use too still. That causes a lot of problems. We just had a guy intubated for like eight days. They finally filed to commit. I struggle with that too. After doing this for so long, I'm like it's the only thing that works for some people. Not even, it's just to give them a break. Just take a break. I don't know. I've always had trouble with the system doing things to people. What I see out here is people that are maybe really mentally ill and get committed. It's just to keep them safe and get them help. What happens is they get off their commit, they come out here and pretty soon they're right back there again. We really need some places. I think even with that crowd you need a shelter that's just going to let them walk in and walk out. It doesn't matter.

**AS:** Is that what San Marcos does?

**DH:** Yes. San Marcos, they even discriminate against drug users I feel. Everyone does. They have the drinking side which is like a Waukegan or a wet house. They can have thirty two on that side. The other side of the building has forty units with single room occupancy. There's a ton of people probably using drugs in there. It's not really, if they know you use drugs coming in it will be an issue getting through the process. It just came up the other day. It's like, "Well, he's trying." These people still deserve housing.

There are some grants being written right now for more outreach to substance abuse users. Part of this is the OARS group, they're involved. I think there's two going on right now. I don't know where they're going to find the housing. It's like get people into housing no matter what they're using or what their mental health is and then start getting them hooked up with services. Get them inside first of all. I don't know where the units are. We'll see. I've kind of been rebellious and dropped off all meetings because I question authority I guess. I'm so sick of the bureaucracy. I go, "Oh I just do what I do everyday." There's good and bad to that. I probably have a strong voice in that. People get mad at me. I stand up for it. When necessary I would still do it.

I remember we went through this, I haven't been to the Summit to End Homelessness for, this is the fourth one and I haven't been for two years. The first one I got so pissed. It's like everybody went through the whole day and at the end they came up with bullet points. Outreach wasn't on there. I wish Duluth would have even like safe spot camping like Oregon has where people can just go. More like inreach than outreach. This town you've really got to rely on tips. For a lot of years I would walk the trails. It's fruitless to do that. There's so many woods and trails and hiding places that you've just really got to rely on tips.

**AS:** You get tips about where to go find people.

**DH:** Yeah, to really go looking you can just waste a whole day looking and not find anything.

**AS:** When you mean outreach you mean you go looking for people?

**DH:** Yeah, I go out in the woods and stuff.

**AS:** Like that picture you posted of the tents when it was pouring rain this last week.

**DH:** Yeah, I think it's funny because people like my dog pictures more than they like and pay attention to...I didn't even talk about the dog thing. Somewhere along the way I started working with animals in this. My first one was in St. Paul which I did get in trouble for. I had gotten Rusty out of the pound and I put him in my name. When he ended up there again it was an issue, it's against their rules.

**AS:** To do what?

**DH:** I had bailed this dog out of doggy jail so the dog was in my name. They felt it was a liability to them because the dog was living with these folks but was bailed out in my name. The funny thing is HDC, on my HDC time I can't take dogs home but it's always on my HDC time. So I just say, "No, I'm on CHUM time."

**AS:** What does HDC stand for?

**DH:** It's the Human Development Center. They're HIPPA, they're a mental health agency. We are too I guess but we don't have a lot of the records.

**AS:** So you're rescuing homeless people's dogs?

**DH:** Yes, somehow I started taking pets home. I don't know when I got the first one. 2005 some homeless guy had him in his backpack. He was just this beautiful little puppy. It was like twenty below and he's drunk. Bless his heart, Benny and Joy a couple were out here. I asked if I could take the dog home. The rest is history. I think Benny's eleven now. The real Benny died. I fostered a ton of dogs. I had my two originals just together for a long time. People are out here, they have pets, they can't access shelter. I'm like, "Are you willing to foster your pet?"

**AS:** To me?

**DH:** Yeah, I've developed a little bit of a network too. Obviously I can't take every one.

**AS:** So you'll take care of them until the person can find a home.

**DH:** Yeah but you never know if they're going to come back really. Most of the time they do. Now I actually have five. I think I'm going to have a permanent four. Then this little Yorkie that I just took home the other day who's kind of driving me nuts.

**AS:** The one who's not potty trained?

**DH:** Yeah. She's in the cage. She was last night too because she peed on my bed the first night. You're just going to stay in the cage. The owner told me she let her dog go to the bathroom in her bathroom. Which I don't really know what that means. I'm like, "On the toilet?" They're like, "No on the floor." Now I got to take that one out on a leash. I'm carrying a Chihuahua up and down the stairs because that guy, well that's a long story. He's really struggling with meth and he's living in a condemned house. They're just condemning it right now. Somebody gave him five thousand dollars to get things back in order and it was gone in a week. He knows that his little dog, it's this little eleven year old Chihuahua that came from a puppy mill. She's had like ten litters. I really didn't want her forever. He knows he can't have her. I kind of look at her and go, well really is she a trouble? She just lays on the couch and doesn't really do much. Then I start to feel kind of tied down because of all these animals.

**AS:** They just hang out at your house while you're working?

**DH:** Yeah. I've got two cats. The ex, I moved two blocks from her just to haunt her. No, we're still friends. The new person, there's an issue with her and me. I don't know if she feels threatened or what. She doesn't have to obviously. Carol comes over and lets them out everyday while I'm at work. I'm flexible. I work twelve hour days. I can go home.

**AS:** Five days a week?

**DH:** Yeah.

**AS:** Do you give yourself weekends?

**DH:** I do. I don't work twelve hours every single day. I'm trying to now just so I can have my weekends off in the summer. If I'm not busy, if I'm just at home I usually will always answer my phone for the police or the hospital even on the weekends. Sometimes it's just a quick question or something or with that coordination thing going on. I don't mind. If I'm at home and somebody really needs something I don't really mind if I'm not doing anything.

The weird thing about my siblings is none of us ever got married or had kids, all four of us. I think that's super strange. I do see my brothers. They live in Cloquet. They remind me of Felix and Unger in a way. They're good guys. My sister I don't see her a whole lot. I don't know how to explain. She's always been kind of judgemental of my drug use. I think she's coming around a little bit. There's been a number of times where basically she's got drunk and I'm at her house. Sometimes with co-workers. I stay there when I go to hunt for stuff. She starts shit. It goes way back to when we were kids and the fact that I did drugs. I want to say it was three Christmases ago she flipped out on me. She's kicked me out a number of times at like eleven at night. I'm like, "Really?" I just draw a line with them now. I won't be around her when she's drinking. I even told her, "No drinking at Christmas." If you're coming to my house. She didn't come. I don't care if they drink. Just don't get super drunk. Let's have a few and get along. I don't fight, she does.

**AS:** I think I probably have to wrap it up.

**DH**: That's okay. I probably do to. I haven't even been to work yet today. CHUM is like that though. They don't care.

**AS:** You do some incredible stuff watching out for the people that nobody else is watching out for.