031

**I am going to be interviewing you about your childhood experiences and how those experiences might have affected your current personality. So I’ll focus especially on your childhood, as early as you can remember up to age 12 or so and then I will ask some questions about your adolescent relationship with your parents was like, what your current relationship is like with your parents but really try to keep in mind we are focusing on your childhood. The interview usually takes between 30 minutes to an hour, but it can go anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour depending on the person and the circumstances.**

**1. Could you start by helping me get oriented to your early family situation and where you lived and so on? If you could tell me where you were born, whether you moved around much, what your family did at various times for a living?**

I have two brothers, two little brothers. Um so I grew up with my Mom and my Dad between the ages of 1 to 5. My Mom was an immigrant. She came from uh Country 1 and then my parents separated for a bit uh we moved to a shelter. My Mom and my brothers, and then they got officially divorced and then our time was split um between parents. Uh weekends with my Dad and then um - weekdays with my Mom and every month we’d have a full week with my Mom. Like one weekend a month with my Mom. *(Oh okay, weekend, sorry I missed that)* I stopped seeing my Dad at the age of 13 and lived full time with my Mom. And now I live by myself.

**And so you haven’t seen your Dad since you were 13 at all?** **Have you had any contact with him at all?**

He has attempted to make contact but it hasn’t been reciprocated.

**Okay. I’ll most probably ask you about that again. And your brothers. Were you particularly close with them? Are they a lot younger than you?**

Uh no they’re actually one of them I’m 18 one of them is 16 turning 17 in December. The other just turned 14. So we’re all pretty close in age. And I at – its um an interesting relationship because I cared for them a lot but part of the reason that I had to go to the hospital because I did have to be put in the hospital for a bit was because they were triggering me because of my Dad. So I love them to bits and I would do anything for them and they’re more like my babies than they are my brothers but at the same time it’s hard to be around them because they remind me so much of my Dad. Which is fair enough they have half his DNA.

**I’m sure you remind yourself of your Dad sometimes, too.**

Yeah! I remind myself of my Dad sometimes, too. Some hair dye and furry and. ((laughs))

**And you’re still close with them now, obviously/**

I see them about once a month. Or twice.

**Does your family your mother and your brothers live in City 1?**

Mhm.

**Did you grow up in City 1?**

Yeah. I grew up in Suburb 1.

**And then left as soon as you could I’m guessing.**

Yeah.

**Sounds about right?**

Yeah.

**Did you see your grandparents at all while you were growing up?**

Well my Mom, half my family is in Country 1 so I’ve seen my grandparents a handful of times. Um my other grandparents I saw them fairly, fairly regularly about once every month once every two months until the age of 13 so I cut off that part of my family. Yeah. My Mom or sorry my Dad, my step mom, um my aunt, my grandparents all that side of the family is gone.

**Did your mother ever remarry after the divorce?**

She has a longstanding boyfriend.

**Okay.**

But we - he’s not he travels a lot so he’s not really he’s there always but he’s not a major part.

**So would you still say if I asked you who raised you would you say primarily your Mom?**

Yeah.

**But your Dad was there during the early years.**

Yeah.

**Off and on.**

Yeah.

**2. I’d like you to try to describe your relationship with your parents as a young child if you could start from as far back as you can remember?**

Yeah. Um, I – I don’t remember much, I know that my Mom was - my Mom loved us obviously and she stayed at home as much as she could but she had to work because my Dad wanted her to work. But um she was often distracted and busy so she she loved us and she took care of us but she wasn't always there and uh my Dad worked, quite frequently but when he was home he he preferred movies and music to us which was fine. Um, but my Mom said that while she she cause sometimes she would there later on when I was older um after she gave birth to Brother 1 my youngest brother uh she would go to work and my Dad they’d alternate so that one of the parents was at home and my Mom said that when she’d come home um you know when you’re too young to speak you scream.

**Mhm.**

I would scream and scream and scream and scream and scream for 45 minutes and throw big temper tantrums and she figured something was going on when she was away but I don’t remember. Um/

**How old were you here approximately, do you remember/**

3, 2, 3 like from the moment I was born they just/

**Preverbal.**

Oh yeah. Pre definitely preverbal. I preferred um if I couldn’t I I was a linguist at a young age so I knew how to put things into words but if things were beyond putting into words I resorted to screaming. {{laughs}} Yeah I was a handful, it was lovely. Um yeah and I know that my my relationship wasn’t necessarily bad it just wasn’t like any other kids’ relationship, there and you don’t remember a lot of it when you’re young. I know that my mom, I remember distinctly that my mom and my dad’s relationship from the get-go was destructive. It was not a good relationship so I remember distinctly a lot of screaming matches, a lot of fist fights and all that kind of stuff so that affected my relationship with my parents because I didn’t feel that I could be as close to them.

**3. Now I’d like to ask you to choose five adjectives or words that reflect your relationship with your mother starting from as far back as you can remember in early childhood—as early as you can go, but say, age 5 to 12 is fine. I know this may take a bit of time, so go ahead and think for a minute… then I’d like to ask you why you chose them. I’ll write each one down as you give them to me.**

Okay. The relationship or her as in/

**/The relationship between the two of you.**

Okay, okay. Um.

**Take your time.**

Yeah it’s difficult to describe your your them is an individual the relationship it’s difficult. Yeah. Warm, but cold. . . . . . {5 sec} power struggle . . . . {4 sec} um – what’s the word . . . {3 sec} someone that contradicts themselves.

**Like a paradox?**

Yeah. Para paradox. I don’t how to put that paradoxial [sic] {{laughs}}

**Cal. Paradoxical.**

Okay. Good. Now I know that. Now whenever I try to express a paradox I know.

**Paradoxical situation.**

I like that word. Um – hm at the same time it was loving. *(Just one more)* – ummmmmm . . . . {4 sec} strenuous.

**So the first one you said was warm but cold. Do you have a memory from your childhood that made you chose that phrase?**

My Mom was always – she - she was like a light switch. Um so – when she was having a good day and when she had time to focus on us she was warm and loving and wonderful and that that’s the mother I try to focus on. But other times when she was stressed or worried or caught up in her own um in her own uh mental trap I guess she would be very cold or very distant and kind of robotic so, um. There’s not a particular time I just remember a constant state of confusion or not really knowing where I stood because she would be really warm and then really distant.

**Are you able to describe what her behaviour would be? Like when she was warm what would she do with you or to you? And when she was cold?**

We’d sleep together. We’d, she’d you could tell and then the front of her face would be engaged and whatever you were doing she’s very affectionate. Um uh very, patient. Very calm and very nurturing. But when she was more distant she was very impatient. She was affectionate but she, you know when you’re not you get a hug but the heart’s not there. The feeling isn’t there. Um she’d be very robotic. Um she would try to get through the day and not necessarily, she would count she would focus more on getting through the day than the quality of the day. So I don’t know if that {{laughs}}/

**That clears it up a little for me. And the next one you said there was a power struggle. Do you have a memory to show that?**

Um - I had ah I had a particularly difficult weekend with my father um and had undergone a lot to protect my brothers and my mother was being harsh - and we never told her anything that happened with Dad, so I started defending my brothers and being headstrong and saying she shouldn’t treat them that way and she obviously said I’m the adult I’m the mother um you’re not in the position to tell me, to dictate how I do and do not - treat you and your brothers. So that was always, that’s a specific time but that was always a very difficult because I was headstrong and going through things should grow up too fast so believed that even though I was 12 that I deserved to be treated older.

**Mhm.**

And my Mom you know advised me that I was 12 but I was that I had that I was mature but that I was still 12. So that was always. We were often at - cause we’re both very headstrong so we’re often at each other’s throats. Constantly arguing um - and not necessarily. Sometimes it would be over small things but sometimes it would be over bigger things and they would be longstanding arguments. There was always an awkward uh now I I understand our relationship but when I was younger I didn’t understand it as well. So I would often go up against my Mom and say like you shouldn’t do that or you dut dut dut dut dut. And my tiny little 12 year old mouth not knowing any better. {{laughs}}

**Do any other instances stand out?**

Um, my freedom.

**How so?**

I believed that I deserved uh more freedom to make my own decisions which is fairly – with a lot of stuff she was fairly reasonable but going through my friends I felt that I should be able to go see my friends if I was doing well in school and uh, later on in the night maybe I should be that um I didn’t have to report to my Mom where I was - um that I could pick whatever courses in school I wanted to take. Just stuff that wasn’t as consequential.

**Okay.**

The main, the main arguments were were over my brothers but the rest of it was just picking up whenever we could.

**Right. And this is more of I’m guessing pre-teen years and teen years.**

Even when I was younger!

**Oh yeah?**

When I was younger. Yeah. I loved my Mom dearly and she was my island from a lot of um horrible experiences but at the same time I always picked fights. {{laughs}} Always. Even when I was younger before I was a pre-teen. Over small little things like I don’t wanna eat that orange I wanna eat the apple. But you already had an apple you need your vitamin C. no I wanna eat the apple because I just wanted to be difficult.

**Do you remember how old you were in that instance?**

Probably about 8.

**Like, what’s the, apple and orange/**

Yeah. That one sticks out in my mind.

**I wasn’t sure if you were making/**

No. No. When I was about 8. And food was a big issue for me too. So that’s where we argued a lot.

**Okay.**

There was just a lot of head butting in general. {{laughs}}

**The next one you said was it was a paradoxical relationship. Do you have a memory for that?**

That taps into the warm that yeah - that kinda coincides with the warm and the cold because as much as um as much as I – love my Mom and as much as I trusted my Mom to make me feel better when I was actually I’d never tell her anything but I would just you know I’d come home and I’d feel a little bit safer. Um - we would still like I loved her so much and yet we would still treat each other um verbally so so poorly that it was a weird sort of relationship because there was so much love and yet there was so much fighting.

**Okay. Can you think of another specific instance to depict this or if you’ve tapped out on all those memories.**

Oh there are just too many instances.

**Yeah.**

Too many instances that they’re all kind of blurred.

**Blurred.**

Yeah, they blur together. {{laughs}}

**Alright we can leave it at that.**

Okay.

**The next one you said was that it was a loving relationship.**

Yeah. Because um because as much as we argued as much as everything happened she was the person that I could talk to about the smaller things that were you know if you have so much built up that you just can’t function even though the main part wasn’t talked about I could talk to her about any of the small things and if she was if I caught her at a good time she was a great um sounding board to bounce ideas off of. To bounce um situations off of. To bounce - sort of she was kind of my almost my therapist for so long and so that kind of - trust built a lot of love a lot of longstanding love between us because it’s difficult it’s still underneath there.

**Do you have a memory of something? Or of what she did/**

Yeah!

**For instance.**

Yeah. I I remember. I was always uhm whenever all the other girls were talking about boys I was always more focused on other things and I didn’t really care about my appearance and I wasn’t you know I was more I was focused on other things. I just didn’t understand that so I went to my Mom and I asked her if I was weird because I wasn’t interested in boys and because I didn’t like to brush my hair {{laughs}} and I didn’t care if I wore clothes from this place or this place and she sat me down and she explained that, no, I was just smarter. That’s her being biased and not wanting me to engage in activities prematurely. Um and she was she explained that I was just a little bit different that it was nothing to worry about that I was spending my time on productive things and if I preferred booked over all that kind of stuff that it wasn’t a bad thing. And she was so understanding. She put my mind at ease so much and I didn’t mind and but at the same time if I came up to her and said Mom I wanna go try mascara she’d be like okay you can start off with clear and I’ll teach you how to put it on. And that’s interested. So she would she understood that I didn’t necessarily enjoy those things but if I came up to her and I showed interest in something and it wasn’t negative she would - she’d be happy to teach me about it, to make sure I started it off right. All those kind of things. So that was yeah that was great cause it helped me – it took away a lot of the stress that was building up when you add big life occurrences with tiny little things you know so that was that was great.

**How old were you in that episode?**

I was a late bloomer. I was probably about - 12.

**Yeah.**

When I yeah when I started worrying because I didn’t like boys. Um not that I didn’t like boys but I wasn’t as interested as I remember like you know that kinda stuff and I didn’t wanna read magazines I preferred reading books and all that sorta stuff.

**So like, around/**

And I didn’t underst [sic] like I didn’t know the names of those celebrities or what was like popular when I was younger. I don’t know they were like NSYNC I was like who’s that? I know Great Big Sea, that’s one, is that okay? I was just yeah I I wasn’t as current at 12 than most people.

**And the last one you said for your Mom was that it was a strenuous relationship. Do you have any examples of that?**

Um strenuous is is kind of a long - it’s a term that’s more descriptive of long term in diligence so um - but we would sometimes because we would fight we would have these very long processes of we wouldn’t be on good terms for a week or we wouldn’t talk to each other and we’d be very snippy and short and curt um and then go through other weeks where we’d kind of reconcile but we’d still try and be really short with each other and then we’d have the next week we’d be a little bit more you know we we’d kind of like be okay or I’m sorry you know and we’d kind of work on that and that’s exhausting to go through over and over and over and over and over and over again so - we were always on eggshells - and things were always kind of tight sometimes - but at the same time the loving component so it was just strenuous because it was a lot of there’s a lot of extremes and a lot of back and forth and a lot of um – a lot of like and and we wouldn’t see like you know I’d go to my Dad’s every weekend so a lot of things would change between that so it was hard for us to keep up with one another. Where we were emotionally. Where we were uh physically, so. {{laughs}}

**I’m not going to ask for a specific example because I think that’s long term/**

Yeah. Very very tiring. And as much as I yeah the specific example as close as I can get is the week 1 week 2 week 3 week 4.

**Right. And how old were you when that started? If you can remember.**

Um I started becoming headstrong at the age of about 7.

**So late childhood.**

Yeah.

**For a while then I guess.**

Yeah.

**4. Now I’d like to ask you to choose five adjectives or words that reflect your relationship with your father** *(Oh!)* **starting from as far back as you can remember in early childhood—as early as you can go, but say, age 5 to 12.**

Oh my god. {{laughs}}

**Are you going to be able to do this, are you okay with it?**

Yep. Um – destructive. These are all really negative.

**They are what they are.**

Confusing . . . . . . {5 sec} um . . . {3 sec} what’s the word for . . . . {4 sec} what’s the word for something that that really heavily affected the way that you view yourself?

**Like self-impactful?**

Yeah. Sure. Yeah you know what we’ll use that word self-impact pactful [sic]. {{laughs}}

**Impacting.**

Yeah. Impacting. That will be a better ending to that word.

**And two more if you can think of them.**

Um - counterproductive. Which is kind of the same word as destructive.

**It has a slightly different nuance.**

Yeah. A little bit. A little bit. And – painful. Yeah I’m just gonna put painful. It’s a simple word. It’s not as, as nice as paradoxical - *(But it says a lot)* Yeah.

**Okay so the first one you said for your Dad was that it was a destructive relationship. Do you have a memory that shows why you chose that word?**

A specific memory. Um . . . . . . . . . . {10 sec} oh again it’s it’s all, it stretches out, um -

**You can start more generally if it’s easier.**

Okay yeah, definitely.

**Sometimes it helps.**

We would - he would spend all this time trying to convince us that he was um a good Dad and everything and then he had a lapse of I guess judgment where he would start becoming abusive and then he would - be abusive and then he’d try and convince us again that he was a good Dad and then he and {{laughs}} the same cycle as my Mom and I not getting along my Dad would have this really like he would work so we would both all of us would work so hard for a good um non-abusive relationship but then it would slip and it was so -

**Was your father still living with your Mom?**

No.

**This was over the weekend.**

Over the weekends yeah. And over and we’d have um let’s say like um uh we would have summers where he would have us for two weeks and my Mom would have us for two weeks and that’s where a lot of the stuff would usually happen because we would go camping, and camping to my Dad is is is it’s his temple almost so he would spend weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks preparing. Months even, ahead, preparing these trips and then his attitude, his negativity would destroy the whole experience and make it negative and just not fun. I love camping still because of the nature aspect and the component of of the earth but he’d just make it such a - he would taint the experience. And it seemed the whole his whole way of operating seemed so destructive because he’d build something up and then he’d just [makes a hand gesture]

**Do you remember a specific camping trip and what he did that made it so negative?**

Hm. We were camping um in a little bit more of a it wasn’t we didn’t it wasn’t car camping it was when you had to hike out and we had um we obviously we couldn’t bring water bottles for fresh water and there wasn't a water pump because - we forgot we didn’t have those so um – uh my stepmom had been with us and we had gone camping and um we were making salad and we had to boil the lake water before you could use it um and so my stepmom rinsed the lettuce in lake water without it being boiled and he spent he spent 2, 3 hours yelling at her um he you know threw the lettuce aside. He started - like throwing the food and saying you know the animals might as well eat it. Um and then the rest of the trip he wouldn’t talk to her. He would put - you know make us shun her. It – and he he really wanted he set this camping trip up to be really, really good and yet just the fact that she washed the leaf in in in water and we weren’t going to have lettuce leaves he let that destroy the whole entire trip.

**How much longer was the trip after that?**

About a week. It was a week and a half.

**So a significant period of time.**

Yeah! A significant period of time. And he he it’s not cheap to go camping sometimes, so it was a lot of waste.

**Any other ones come to mind?**

That’s that’s pretty much it.

**Just in general.**

Yeah. That’s the best example I can come up with.

**The next one you said was it was a confusing relationship. Do you have a memory for that?**

My Dad was, as much as I love my Mom I’m a a daddy’s girl. And that that that made it really confusing because we – and when my Dad was was – normal – to an extent his normal wasn't exactly normal but normal you know the way you imagine on TV and everything, we got along so well. We liked the same music um we talked about the same things. He - we got along so very well - and I thought that – I thought that he he loved me a lot. But then – like um when he whenever he picked us up we had a he had a different CD in the car. He loved music. I loved music. Um so we’d be singing along and he’d you know he’d - we’d be happy and then we’d get home and first he’d ask us why we hadn’t called all week – and so um, then he’d start in on why our clothes had a speck of dirt on them um and then came food. And I had a lot of food allergies and he would not care and make me eat things that I was allergic to anyways and so it would start I’d be so confused cause I didn’t I didn’t understand how I could have this person here singing songs with me in the car and getting along so well and then screaming at me and making me eat food like cause it was all, really giving a really gruesome image in your mind - for example he used to love to give me tuna with um with a really strong cheese, mayo and onions. I’m allergic to cheese. Um I’m allergic to mayo. Uh cheese makes me throw up. I can’t even swallow it without throwing up. Um mayo gives me lovely diarrhea. So {{laughs}} sorry about that.

**That’s alright.**

He’d make me eat so he’d make me eat the tuna and then obviously it was cheese so I threw it back up on the plate and then he’d make me eat that and then I’d throw up again, and then he’d make me eat that. I don’t understand how someone who had been so nice to me in the car could put me through that. So I was always confused because things like that would happen all the time. I just couldn’t wrap my head around it. I didn’t know whether or not to hate him or to love him. Like because he had both and it was just the whole thing was so confusing. So yeah.

**How old were you when that was happening?**

Oh my gosh. That started when I was - 6 and it continued all the way till I was 13.

**And he would always make you eat things that would make you sick?**

Oh yeah.

**Yeah.**

Yeah.

**Clearly he knew that/**

And he yeah, oh yeah. And my Mom would my would like you know we’d get allergy tests and it would be updated and she’d say you know like tell your Dad that you’re allergic to this this and this.

**Mhm.**

And they had this oh my god they had this book. I forgot about the book for so long, I just remember the book. They had this book and the book was just a notebook and during the week at the end of the week they had to give a summary of what was happening so that each parent had caught up. And someone would write you know took Name 1 to the allergist. She’s allergic to this, this and this. And that book was horrible because sometimes my Dad would read sentences out loud and mock my Mom in front of us and that wasn’t cool. And but so yeah we had this book and it was clearly written that I was allergic to certain things but he continued to, to feed me those things and punish me when I couldn’t eat them. And you know if I at one you can only - eat something you’re gonna throw up you can do it for so many times so when I couldn’t do it anymore he would put me downstairs in the basement um close the door, turn off the light and I I was a really weird child I um I didn’t like the dark.

**That’s pretty normal.**

Yeah. {{laughs}} Okay I really didn’t like the dark. Um I think I was a little bit crazy because I or over imaginative because I would create things and I’d pretend that saw them and convince myself that I saw them so like I had a twin um I was one of twins. My Mom pushed my Dad down the stairs or my Dad pushed my Mom down the stairs when she was pregnant and the next ultrasound there was only one and that was me so I’m convinced when he locked me down in the basement I’d see my twin and she that was angry and all this kind of really crazy stuff. So yeah. But yeah I don’t know where I was going with that.

**You were saying how he would punish you.**

Yeah. And I/

**And how it wouldn’t work.**

Yeah. And then he’d pun [sic] and then I’d be crying and and I would close my eyes and I’d roll up into a little ball and he’d yell at me for crying and then you know I’d have to go to bed without like he’d yell at me. Like oh my gosh. He when my Dad got started on me he did not let it go. So - um obviously if he if he had me on Sunday and school would be the next day. So he got angry at me on Sunday it was usually earlier on in the night and he’d yell at me for 10 hours straight. I don’t even know how he did that. No one can {{laughs}} like if anyone tried to yell for half an hour they’d be gone. He would go this close to my face and he’d yell and scream at me for 10 hours straight so that I would go to bed at 6 in the morning and I’d have to be up for school the next day. Um - and yeah it was just – it was like what? What? It doesn’t make sense. How can you love me. How can you say I’m and he’d always call me his princess and yet he’d do stuff like that. So I was always in a state of confusion.

**Yeah. I imagine so.**

And I - and that lead me to be confused about everything else too. I didn’t know how to approach things. You know whether or not to approach like I didn’t know if it would hurt me and say it loved me.

**Mhm.**

So that yeah. That that affected a lot. And that and and you can actually like get on the topic but that affected a lot of the relationships I have now because of it’s it’s still like if if you say you’re supposed to love me are you going to hurt me.

**Mhm. Hard to break, yeah.**

Yeah, oh it’s so difficult especially if you’re raised that way. Like what you learn in childhood carries on to the rest of your life. So it’s such a difficult habit to break. Automatically approach something um without - an unhealthy amount of caution. Approaching with a little caution is good but an unhealthy amount. And then I started to try and counterbalance it by approaching things with my arms wide open without a care in the world and that’s dangerous, too. Because I would get myself into really horrible situations.

**Too much to the extreme.**

Yeah. Cause you know - and that’s the other thing. I I I’m not – maybe it’s because I was used to two extremes with my Dad that I’m an extremist so that, yeah. I don’t know. {{laughs}} Don’t know if I told you that or not.

**That was a very good explanation.**

Good. {{laughs}}

**I asked you how old you were when that happened. The basement one was around 6?**

Starting at 6, continued until I yeah continued till I was about 13.

**The next question was how have these experiences affected you currently but I think you’ve answered that.**

Oh yeah, yeah. Because yeah it’s difficult to approach situations and not be afraid to trust people. Especially male.

**Yes.**

Especially male. {{laughs}}

**The next adjective was a self-impacting relationship. You said it really impacted you and changed you.**

Yeah.

**Do you have an explanation or a reason why you chose that word?**

Um, he – he would physically abuse us. But he would also emotionally abuse us so um I was always told that I was um stupid, ugly and worth nothing and um evil and that I would hurt everyone around me and that I should be locked up and that I should just stuff that didn’t make sense. You shouldn’t say that to a 7-year-old so if if it’s repeated often enough you start to believe it. And – um he would - I got if - you are always anxious and always afraid you don’t wanna eat. If you associate eating with with something as horrible as I did then you don’t want it to pass through your system so I developed at a very young age actually a severe eating disorder um and because of that uh my hair would fall out and I’d be very pale and he would yell at me for that too saying that I should why do I look so unhealthy - when he feeds me and when he takes me camping. So - it it was it’s - it impacted my self-esteem in such a way that it was really not that fair. So that’s one of the main chief examp [sic] like the main things I tie um - the relationship with my Dad is complete destruction of my self-esteem.

**How old were you when you developed the eating disorder?**

So young. It’s I started unintentionally not eating when I was 8, no 7.

**Were you purging as well?**

No. No no. Well. Yeah and like I couldn’t keep food down so I would my body would purge I didn’t need to. I didn’t need to stick my finger down my throat it would just do it for me so it was my body and then I started following with the with the thinking later on and when I was about – 9 so its I started not being able to eat when I was 7 and it followed on until I was 9 and because of that I developed um I’ve developed obviously a lot of physical symptoms. Um I and that that also affected my self-esteem because I couldn’t, you know, I always broke bones, I couldn’t keep up with other kids um so it all kind of tied hand in hand.

**And now when you say that your Dad was physically abusive, what would he do aside from what you’ve already said like locking you in the basement and the forcing you to eat foods you were allergic to and then/**

Yeah.

**And then you’d vomit. That counts as physical abuse okay.**

Okay.So more psychological/

**I think it’s a bit of both. Locking in the basement I guess was more psychological. Were there any other ways he abused you physically?**

Like he - would push me into stuff. He’d hit my head against walls. He would um pin my arms behind my back and scream in my ears. It would hurt. Um - he would um – he would/

**Like choke you?**

Choke me. Strangle me. Um – he would kick me - sometimes – um – he would throw objects at me.

**What sorts of objects?**

Plates.

**Okay.**

I remember/

**Big objects.**

Big objects. Books.

**And what would you have done that would get this sort of treatment. Do you remember?**

I burnt ground beef once.

**Okay.** *{{laughs}}*

And he started uh throwing plates at me and then twisted my arm behind my back and yelling at me. Um he would also oh my gosh. Have you ever heard of waterboarding?

**Um is that where they drip water? No. Chinese torture technique.**

Yeah. Chinese torture technique.

**Okay.**

Waterboarding.

**Really.**

Holding your head underneath water/

**Okay.**

Pulling it up and putting your head under water. He used to do that. He’d line us up in the bathtub we were all naked me and my brothers in the um in the bathroom which was humiliating enough. Um he’d berate us and then he would draw the bath and he would tell us to get in the bath and while the others were watching he would hold our head under water um them pull it up put our head back under water pull them up um and he started getting to the state so I’m pretty sure my grandpa was abusive where he would smash our heads into the bathtub and I remember it had these weird edges cause it was like a Jacuzzi style and he hit me at an angle and it my collarbone went back really painfully um and you know I had bleeding and had concussions um I’d go to the hospital and say that I’d tripped and all the kind of stuff um and because my brothers were littler and this is where the relationship with them is interesting um it was more painful to watch them suffer and then oh yeah and then after we were done we’d have to stand dripping cold and everything um but so I would often - cause my Dad didn’t care who was punished - as long as a punishment was delivered um and if it was specific to one of us um I would often either take the punishment or act out so that he would target me, so/

**To protect your brothers.**

To protect my brothers which is why they are more like my babies than they are my um my brothers. But part of the abuse was watching him abuse them.

**Yeah.**

So he had all the physical components he had all the emotional components but then he would take it a step further and abuse us in front of one another so that as a like a lesson you know when a long time ago they hung people and they put them and as a lesson like don’t do this. That’s what he would do.

**How old were you when that bathtub incident happened?**

Oh that’s, that was throughout.

**Oh okay. It would happen frequently.**

Oh yes. That was that was his favourite punishment.

**And again what sorts of things would you have done to get punished that way?**

We were in swimming lessons and because of of that kind of punishment I uh was afraid of the water. He he taught us that swimming is a very important thing um and it was very important survival technique so when I was very slow at swimming and wouldn’t put my head under water he’d teach me how to put my head under water.

**Okay. So that’s what he’d said about the bathtub thing?**

Yeah and then it progressed to um – uh what’s a good example. Oh I was not allowed to wear girl’s clothes I had to wear boys clothes at all times. I um I had to wear a belt everything was 10 sizes too big for me and I wasn't allowed to wear a bra. So one time um my friend had given me a bra or something and my Dad caught me with it and that was the punishment for that. {{laughs}}

**How old were you that time?**

12.

**12. Okay. And okay so I’m guessing it was only at his house that you had those rules.**

Oh yeah. Oh no no. If he caught me outside.

**Okay.**

Yeah. I’d wear a bra at my Mom’s obviously but if he caught me wearing one - I received that or you know a beating or mixed with a yelling session.

**And what do you think about the physical abuse specifically. What do you feel the effect has been on you?**

- Um . . . . . . {6 sec} it put a lot of - stress and anxiety on me because I was obviously afraid of a beating but I was also afraid of someone finding out. So I missed out on a lot of activities um when I was younger because I didn’t wanna you know if I had a bruise or something I didn’t want them to see it um and that combined with malnutrition meant I missed so much and now I regret missing all that so there’s a certain that that comes back to self-esteem where I feel like I haven’t accomplished anything because I wasn't able to accomplish anything. I dunno if that makes sense. {{laughs}}

**So it’s similar to the other one. Okay I have two more adjectives for your Dad and then we can continue. The next one you said was counterproductive.**

Yeah. And that again - that ties into the destructiveness. Because there’d be all this effort to maintain an illusion of a good relationship and then it would be shattered and then we’d try and build that image back up and then it would be shattered and then we’d try and build it back up. So it was this whole it got in the way of – of, schooling, it got in the way of friends, it got in the way of everything. It was so I I I view it as so counterproductive cause there was so much energy spent on it and nothing came out of it. It was like a self-imploding - ball of never going to happen. {{laughs}}

**And the last one that you said, again I think you’ve pretty much covered it, is that it was a painful relationship.**

Not just because it hurt and it hurt but because you know your Dad is supposed to be the one that ah you gotta a boy comin’ over let me whip out the shotgun you know? He’s supposed to be the one that protects you and your family. The one that - um the one that you know I’m a daddy’s girl you know. He’s the one that’s supposed to - teach me fishing and – and - tell me that he can’t wait to see me grow up and that I better watch myself because I’m gonna be so pretty. Um but it wasn't and that was probably more painful than all of the abuse - because you’d you’d walk around and you’d see Dads that would do that and like I love my Mom, love her to death but it wasn't the same you know having your Dad so that you know that’s how it was painful.

**5. Now I wonder if you could tell me, to which parent did you feel the closest, and why?**

My mom, because she was my protector without realizing it. Because um - because when I could go when I went home and home was with my Mom when I went and I lived in the same house and that’s the other thing. I lived I had lived in the same house my whole life. That was the house that I watched my Mom be abused and at the same time that was the house where I went after I was abused so being there and knowing that like I could have I I would I I could actually eat stuff that I could eat. That I could tell my Mom everything I had learned in school without her correcting me or saying I didn’t learn enough just being, having somewhat of a semblance of of everything my Dad wasn’t and the reason my Dad’s household wasn’t. It’s that made me closer to her. And watching her raise - us realizing how many sacrifices she makes how much she works, worked and worked. Um how much she wanted to give us and tried to give us. That’s what made me closer to my Mom. Even if my Dad hadn’t been abusive, I still would’ve been closer to my Mom - because I watched her sacrifice it and I watched her deal with it at the time. It’s not easy coming from she’d never been outside Country 2 before she left with my Dad to come to Country 1. Leaving behind your whole family now I know what it feels like leaving behind half my family. I didn’t even leave behind my whole family I left behind half my family so because she’s so shows and showed so much strength it’s, I kind of I wanna model myself after her and that’s why she’s she’s my closest parent because she’s everything I want to be um - and at the same time I feel a great amount of empathy toward her.

**Did she know that any of this stuff was going on with your father? Or did you not talk about it?**

I told her when I was 13. We all told her when we were 13, when I was 13.

**6. When you were upset as a child, what would you do?**

Like early child?

**5 to 12.**

5 to 12 okay. Um I would distract myself. {{laughs}} I would read. I always had my nose in books. Which was another thing my Dad yelled at me for. You wouldn’t think you’d think that would be a good thing. No it wasn’t a good thing apparently. I always had my nose in a book so I would always distract myself. Um . . . {3 sec} the other way I got through it oddly was tell myself that I wasn’t worth anything more - and it sounds like that would not get you through - but I didn’t pity myself. So that made me stronger - and so when I when I finally yeah so I went through all that and I was like oh no you deserved it so it’s okay. But then the realization that I didn’t deserve it was powerful enough to make me not want to go through it anymore.

**Do you remember a time when you were upset emotionally that you could describe and tell me how you dealt with it?**

Um . . . . . . . . . {9 sec} yeah I could give you the bra example, I was really distressed because obviously when you’re first developing - they become really pointy and they’re a little obvious through shirts - especially when you’re cold and I was so distressed - because I went to church and there were little old men and they were looking at me and I was just not comfortable at all and so um - I went and I talked - with my Mom and that’s actually it. That’s how I dealt with all of it. I dealt, I talked to my Mom. Yeah. *(And that is the bra instance)* Oh well I I she didn’t know that I wasn’t allowed to wear a bra at my Dad’s she and she said well Mom what do I do if I get cold and if I don’t like people staring. And she made suggestions and she she said you know don’t worry about it. Every girl goes through puberty and they all know those tiny little pointy things are are natural, it’s okay. So yeah I was I was emotionally distressed and I went and talked to my Mom. Um and I – I also found - self-talk was really handy. So you know the next time I’d be out I’d be like it’s okay you know, it’s it’s everyone, no one’s lookin’.

**You’d sort of it’s okay, repeat the things your mother said.**

Yeah. And that helped me a lot. And it was - she’d give me little nuggets of wisdom that I could repeat to myself without even realizing it sometimes too which is which is really handy. Really really handy. She’s say something that wouldn’t even apply to the situation and yet somehow it would help so she yeah she was the way I dealt with a lot of my emotional stuff even if it wasn’t directly.

**And what about a time when you were hurt as a child like if you fell down and scraped your knee or something. Do you remember something like that when you were hurt?**

By accident?

**Mhm.**

Like what would I do?

**If you could just remember a time and then describe what happened and how the issue was resolved.**

Oh - I was at my babysitters and I was running towards the bus and you know how you have those uneven cracks um you know how you have the slightly tilted pavement you have the uneven cracks. I tripped and I fell forward on my face across the pavement. Um – and I cried a bit - and I pitied myself a bit {{laughs}} and I – um told my Mom I didn’t want to go to school because I looked like a lobster ‘cause half my face I they they I went to the doctor and they said that I was lucky not to be blind because I had rocks literally studding all the way down here and yet none of them had gone in my eye and I it was it was horrible. It was a big scab on half my face. I’m surprised I picked it all the time so I’m surprised I didn’t get scars. But um I think I did though a little bit. (*Just a bit that’s okay)* Um but yeah so I pitied myself a little bit. I complained to my mother I didn’t want school didn’t want to go to school and uh – yeah. I dunno.

**Did school go okay though?**

Uh well I was self-conscious and everything but I it wasn’t . . . {3 sec} it I was big I was and still am a big fan of - powering through. You have what you have, you’re dealt with what you’re dealt with you might as well make the best of it. So that’s what I did. I made up cool stories. And I make games with my friends around it. Like super villain games, I’d be a super villain and I have a lot of fun ‘cause I get to be evil. So it’s kind of weird stuff like I’d be yeah. I’d try and make the best of it. It was difficult at times but that that’s another way that I managed to get through. I’m not - you know not taking everything too seriously not sitting there and moping.

**And how old were you at that time?**

8.

**Okay.**

8 or 9.

**And what about when you were sick as a kid? Do you remember a time being sick?**

I had chickenpox. All of us got chickenpox at the same time on Christmas. {{laughs}}

**Your mother was lucky.**

Oh yes. Yeah. She was chasing around naked itchy babies with with calamine lotion like she’d stock up. Um yeah. So we got the chickenpox and.

**So what happened? How did she deal with it, do you remember?**

She – gave us a lot of love. A lot of calamine lotion. Um a lot of really nice cold baths. Um she’d you know if there was one that was bleeding and and we’d be like it hurts she’d kiss it better and she’d treat that one even though there were tons all over she’d treat that one little one with a little bandaid and make a big deal. She’d say it’s okay. It’s you know mommy magic it’s better now it’s gonna be better now. So yeah she’s just and then because she was so positive about it because she was you know she wasn’t panicked she wasn’t, neither was I. It’d be itchy but you know mommy said it’s not the end of the world it’s not the end of the world.

**Okay, how old were you when that happened?**

Oh my God. If Brother 1 was - Brother 1, how old? We - I lived still with my Dad. So we were young.

**So you were 5, basically?**

Oh yeah, Brother 1 was like 2 months old 3 months old. Yeah, poor little itchy screaming baby. Lovely. *(He doesn’t know what’s happening, too when he’s that little)* but then you know babies have really sharp nails?

**Yeah.**

We had to put little we’d have to have mittens with elastic bands so he wouldn’t but then he’d scream harder. Yeah so if Brother 1 was so I would’ve been about 4.

**You were young.**

We were really young.

**Good memory though. Like details. Details.**

**7. What is the first time you remember being separated from both of your parents? Like if they went on a trip and you stayed with somebody else?**

Never. Didn’t happen. Oh no it did happen sometimes and I’d go with family friends but the constant oh my gosh – the longest my brothers and I were apart - was camp. And we didn’t see each other my brothers saw each other I didn’t see my brother for a week

**Or your parents, right?**

No I was with my Mom. And then I went to camp and I saw my other brother but I didn’t see my other brother. It was weird, Brother 1 was at camp for three weeks and Brother 2 and I each went for eight weeks so we were always like they went for the first two weeks and then Brother 2 went home, I was at camp and I went and then but yeah and that happened when I was 14, 15 so from the age of 5 to 15 I was always in the company of my brothers for no longer the longest we’ve been apart is like a sleepover and then we’d see each other the next day. So that no matter even if I was wasn’t there with my Mom or my Dad I had my brothers so that was okay. So that was actually sometimes it was a nice break yeah cause I could never like we we argued but we - once you go through abuse - there’s a whole new level of understanding and of respect and of love so - sometimes my Mom didn’t leave them my Mom didn’t have time to leave. But if if on the rare occasions she did I always had my brothers so it was no big deal. But I apparently I got the worst and I remember the feeling of separation anxiety when I was going to my Dad’s like I would not let go of my Mom and I would cry and I would scream and I would vomit um and I would refuse to go out the door but then I knew I had to so I would make myself but it it was - it’s worse than a panic attack or an anxiety attack was separating from my Mom.

O**nly to go to your Dad’s house.**

Only to go to my Dad’s house. No! Actually in general I stuck I clung to my Mom. Clung.

**How old were you from what you’re remembering right now?**

Um separation anxiety started about a month after we started the divorce pattern so 5, the visitation yeah. 5, 6. And then it continued - all the way up until 13. All the way up. And then even then it continued beyond then where I didn’t – I’d be happy and I was it wasn't as bad that I would still feel a little pang every time I was away from my Mom. So.

**8. Did you ever feel rejected as a young child?**

From my Dad yeah. Yeah. When you’re told you’re an abomination by your Dad that’s rejection. The worst form of rejection and my Mom I I would blather on about - I’d like compile stacks that I’d learned from different places and make up stories and I would blather on and my Mom and I remember feeling rejected when my Mom would be like yeah just be quiet. You know it was like but but my ideas! I want to tell you because I love you so much and you’re like the only one I wanna share these things with. And then you told me to shut up that’s not cool.

**How old were you when that happened to your Mom?**

It happened regularly.

**Do you remember when it started?**

Oh no when I was little I I used to say that and she’d say you have to be quiet.

**So it was ongoing.**

Because I’d learn something from Children’s Program 1 and I was like mommy blah blah blah blah and like something else that I’d imagined blah blah blah blah she’d be like just be quiet. I’m like okay.

**And do you think in either case when you felt rejected from them to you think either of them knew you felt that way?**

No. Definitely not. Definitely not.

**Do you have any ideas why they did that? Like why your Dad was abusive or why your Mom would ask you to be quiet when you were sharing ideas with her.**

Well my Mom was distracted she had a lot to do. She had a lot to deal with. She had to make sure that we were clothed and fed and that’s always been ongoing so I could understand that um when I was older on an intellectual level because that makes a lot of sense. You don’t want like she appreciates it and everything you know like I’ve got such a smart daughter. There’s only so much little kid yammering you can take before it gets too much to be too much and then at the time it hurt though. And then my Dad I’m pretty sure he was abusive because um he had a ton of undiagnosed mental disorders. They’re so obvious and because he had gone through abuse like he had watched abuse the same way I had that he just didn’t cope with it or he didn’t he didn’t get help he didn’t acknowledge it even. He had severe OCD which was the overreaction was usually caused by OCD. Um but he he refused to acknowledge it. He refused he refused to take medication. And it was obvious. Because things if they were moved a millimeter away from where he put them he’d know and he’d get so angry so angry. It just - beyond what you should be angry at. The remote control being that far away from its usual place. And so that that that made that makes a lot of sense. And like I at to a certain extent I guess he couldn’t help it. He could have but he decided to and it wasn’t exactly he wasn't making a conscious decision to be a butt hole but - it it provides more understanding when you under- when you get where it’s coming from.

**As a child did you ever feel frightened or worried?**

Oh yeah. I worried 24/7, all the time. I made myself sick with worry. Um and I was constantly afraid of my Dad. Constantly. ‘Cause it was literally walking on eggshells with my Mom was nothing compared to walking on eggshells with my Dad because he’d be set off by the tiniest little thing so I was - constantly, I couldn’t sleep. I would wake up – I’d be awake all night um and he would he would get me out of bed at like 1 in the morning I would’ve been sound asleep sometimes and start screaming at me and like when you’re when you’re just woke up you’re like what what is this what is this because I had gone to the bathroom in the middle of the night.

**How old were you then?**

Again long term. Long term. I started holding my pee at night. I’m pretty I categorize that as a form of abuse cause it hurt. A lot. Like a lot. And then the moment he would wake up I’d run to the bathroom or I’d or sometimes I remember it being so bad that I’d have like little cups stored in my room and I’d pee in a cup and not be able to sleep because all I could think about was oh my god what if he discovered pee in a cup. You know like what if what if that happens.

**And that was ongoing.**

Oh yeah. That was ongoing.

**9. I think you’ve already covered this but were your parents ever threatening with you?**

**Dad obviously.**

Yeah.

**Was your Mom ever threatening with you at all? Even jokingly or for disciplinary purposes.**

Yeah, jokingly. Um and she was a big because she was raised with [makes slapping sound] the hand so um when we were little she used a smack on the bottom but that’s that’s parenting. Not abuse, that’s parenting. Um but when we got older she would constantly she would either make threats like you’re not too big to have you over um my lap or she would make if she knew something was coming up that we were looking forward to she goes you can’t have that I’m gonna make it so that you cannot do that or you can’t have that. And that was the way it was. I was unprepared for that because it was dangling a carrot. So, yeah.

**And your Dad was he threatening as well as abusive with you?**

Yeah.

**Like he would threaten you.**

Yeah. Usually it would be if things just happened but sometimes he’d be like if you don’t do this then - yeah. Then I’ll do this, or I’ll do this.

**10. In general, how do you think your overall experience with your parents have affected your adult personality?**

{{laughs}} Oh the many. Um obviously self-esteem. I’m pretty sure I’m always going to struggle with self-esteem. Um – I actually have been diagnosed with mental disorders, with post-traumatic stress disorder that’s obviously a tangible, a tangible fact, um major depressive disorder um dysthymia and I’m pretty sure those are all - after effects of abuse. Um I don't – I uh - boyfriends, call them up, don’t laugh, I think the longest one lasted two weeks because I can’t I can’t get close to people and I start analyzing and picking them apart as to why um they’re not good for me and I’m not good for them and everything. Um I have periods where I don’t keep in touch with friends or family - um where I disconnect entirely from acquaintances, from obligations which is troublesome obviously if you’ve got responsibilities like school or work. Um - I’ve just recently overcome flinching {{laughs}} - I dunno.

**Like flinching/**

/Flinching at anything.

**Like at sudden movements and stuff it would just startle you?**

Sounds.

**Okay.**

Yeah. Over startling I guess. Um - yeah. Recently just recently I’m 18 I started I start I’m not as easily scared but that was a big thing too. People would, people would use that against me, they’d come up and they’d, I’d you know ‘what?!’

**Not understanding where the startle reflex came from.**

Yeah. Um I have um very weak wrists and arms because of them being constantly broken. Uh that was I can’t do sports.

**And was that from the abuse?**

Yeah, six times.

**Wow.**

{{laughs}} Uh I’ve broken a lot of bones. Um – I physically I have uh oh broken bones. Um - I think I started developing a curved back scoliosis and they didn’t understand scoliosis is usually doesn’t have a cause but my muscles somehow he with the abuse they are so out of sync that my back developed scoliosis. What? Cause they’re pulling in different directions and that was directly related to um damaged tissue and muscle and nerves. Um I feel like I I I have my Dad’s coloured hair um it’s actually blonde. I I can’t look I have a hard time looking at myself in the mirror because I see my Dad in certain features so um and that makes it - difficult to have confidence in yourself and you need to have confidence to be able to pursue what you want to pursue in life and love and everything so that gets in the way a lot. A lot. And only through self-injury the whole reason and the whole reason why we’re in here, um it was a byproduct um and that – is a chain reaction for shame, for, um, for self-loathing like so many effects. So many effects. It’s endless. I can’t even I can’t even think of all the effects emotionally and physically – it’s had.

**You’ve given me a good list there.**

Pretty decent. Pretty decent.

**Very comprehensive.**

**11. Why do you think your parents behaved as they did or why they chose to be those type of parents?**

Upbringing.

**Mhm.**

Like my Mom was strict and sometimes distant because she came from a very strict family. And my Dad my grandpa and my Mom both went through my grandpa and my gran [sic] my grandma and my grandpa my maternal ones both went through a lot of stuff so that reflected in the way my Mom disciplined or they disciplined my Mom which reflects in the way she disciplined us and acted around us and my Dad was also and a lot of his behaviour was the product of the way he had been brought up which wasn’t exactly the best way. I don’t really I intellectually I understand that it probably didn’t have a lot to do with me that it I was just there you know wrong time wrong place but - but it’s hard to understand.

**Absolutely.**

Here. {{laughs}} At an emotional level it’s really hard to to understand. But yeah.

**12. Were there any other adults with whom you were close, like parents?**

No.

**Any other ones that maybe they weren’t parental but they were important figures in your life?**

Not when I was small, no.

**13. Did you experience the loss of any close family members, relatives or friends in your childhood?**

No.

**What about in more recent years?**

Um – having to cut off my family. I would’ve been happy if I didn’t have to cut off the rest of my family but that that that for me is synonymous with a death.

**Okay. This is specifically a death question but my next question will deal with traumatic experiences.**

Oh okay.

**So we can discuss that/**

/Oh okay sure.

**14. Other than any difficult experiences you’ve already described, have you had any other experiences which you should regard as potentially traumatic?**

**What was it like to cut off your family?**

Well because some if it was already in Country 2 like I’ve it - I’ve always had a small family and I’ve always wanted a big family but I live with a small family so cutting the remaining people away, my family is my brothers and my Mom. That was so difficult like so difficult. I – uh {{laughs}} – um oh my gosh it’s so very difficult. It was more it was one of the most - difficult decisions I’ve made in my life. Choosing to not see my Dad anymore that was fairly easy. You get to a point it it’s difficult until all of a sudden you get to the point where you’re ready.

**You just can’t take it anymore.**

Yeah. Cutting off the rest of your family - it’s not it’s not an easy choice. It’s never something that you’re ready for. It’s never something that you can get over. It’s never something you can stop regretting in wistful little moments until practicality pops your pops your bubble bursts your bubble sorry and says like it’s for the better. But um yeah that was that was - really difficult.

**And so you were 13 when you stopped talking to your Dad. Is that when you stopped talking to everybody else, too? And how do you think that has affected your current personality, the way you are now?**

I . . . {3 sec} I don’t – I don’t get close to people too fast. All the usual kind of things that are synonymous with abuse and, are also reflected because I I don’t have because I had to cut off my family I worry all the time, all the time about my remaining family cause there’s only three and – yeah that, at the same time - I pull away from them because instinctively I don’t I know that if one of them gets hurt I won’t be able to deal with it. So I don’t I try and sever attachment with them it’s impossible but I still stubbornly try to because I I know that they do mean a lot to me that they do if something does happen to them that I’m not going to - like I just I won’t function. I won’t um - I won’t be able to continue. It it would be impossible. So – kind of the rest of the family of my family means that - the relationship with the remaining three becomes more complicated in a way.

**Have your brothers cut off contact with your Dad’s side, too?**

All of us did. But they have moments because they weren’t as old so Brother 2 especially - because he was younger uh Brother 1 and I received punishment first so sometime Dad got tired and he wouldn’t punish Brother 2 and he was also very young so he doesn’t really suffer any of the effects. Um.

**What about your middle brother?**

Oh he {{sighs}} - Brother 1. Brother 1 my middle brother is the most caring, gentle, compassionate person in the world. So and my da [sic] because of that and because he looks like the splitting [sic] image of my Mom they look oh my gosh identical he Brother 1 got picked on a lot for that um so he’s got a lot of pent up frustration, a lot of anger, a lot of - a lot of um what’s the word? It’s not jealousy it’s harbouring negative feelings because that Brother 2 didn’t have to go through what he went through.

**Envy?**

Envy. Yeah. Or no there’s another word. Ah! I can’t remember right now. It’ll come to me.

**It’ll come to you.**

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I’ll leave the door and like ahh! There’s the word. Um yeah he harbours a lot of negative feelings towards Brother 2 because he didn’t have go to through and that makes him/

**Resent.**

Yeah, resent! Thank you. Um so that - that frustrates. He has so much pent up. He’s got everything squished down cause he doesn’t want anyone else to, to worry about him and to to um he only he he feels the onus is being the man in the family. Um so he suffers for it - because he’s too - good. He’s too he’s too - he’s a big puppy dog. He can’t deal with those kinds of things. It’s too much for him - and that also that comes back around because – even though they’re not I don’t have to watch them being abused anymore, it’s difficult to watch the after effects in Brother 1. Brother 2 he’s fine, he’s honestly fine.

**Good.**

It’s good. It’s great. It means that 1) time was on our side and b) I feel like I did a good enough job. But watching Brother 1 still suffer is the most disheartening thing ever. Ever. It’s worse than losing my family or having to cut out my family. It’s far worse because it it’d be better if he yelled and he screamed and he was a complete bum hole. Second time using that word! Asshole about it.

**There you go.**

Yeah it feels good. But he’s not and that makes it even worse to watch because you can see it destroy him and tear him up inside and yet he refuses to take it out on anyone but he does take it out on Brother 2. He yells and he screams at Brother 2 and that’s why he can’t be in my house because it reminds me he sounds exactly like my Dad when he does it.

**Triggering.**

It it’s too stressful. That and being in the house because - there’s so much left over. There’s so many left over memories and a lot of them are bad and it’s hard to see the good when you see the bad.

**Absolutely.**

Yeah.

**15. Now I’d like to ask you a few more questions about your relationship with your parents. Were there many changes in your relationship with your parents after childhood?**

Um as I got older was no changes with my Dad. Actually no the change was within myself regarding my Dad because um I was so very angry for so long and then as I started to mature a bit um I started to make peace to a certain extent with what happened um so that changed my view of my Dad and that allowed me to heal a little bit in terms of how I uh react with others. Um with my Mom the biggest change like we we’ve never we’ve always had - a lot of a lot of arguments. It’s always been but recently the biggest change was me in January I went to Program 1 in Hospital 1 Program 1. Are you familiar with it?

**I’ve heard of it.**

Oh really? I can’t imagine working there. They’re really good there. Um from that moment on to me cause first I went to Program 1 and then I went to the Hospital 2 as an inpatient and then as a partial patient and then I started living um at the shelter and then eventually by myself that whole transition is the biggest made the biggest difference with my mom because now - I don’t pick fights with her anymore because I realize that it’s so it doesn’t matter in the long run. So out of all of the things that have happened the biggest change was me moving out because they’ve now we don’t argue we’re not always at each other’s throats. Um I understand more uh what she’s gone through. She understands more what I’ve gone through. Uh we both realize that both of us that it’s not worth picking at the small things. Um I can tell my brothers I can say okay guys everyone calm down without my Mom turning around and saying I’m the parent you know. It’s that that that’s been the biggest change. The biggest dynamic change for a good, in a good way. Both of those are positive. There hasn’t been any negative changes. Um.

**And this is very recent. Last year.**

Very recent. This past year. Yeah.

**16. Now I’d like to ask you, what is your current relationship with your Mom. It sounds like it’s pretty good.**

Pretty good. She worries all the time. I worry all the time. We bond in our mutual worringness and cry and uh it’s actually - it’s - now my relationship with my Mom is actually amazing - now. It took a long time to get there. A lot - of years. A lot of events but it’s actually an amazing relationship. That’s one of the things that that helped me through um my quest to stop self-injuring. Sometimes, right – back around. Which is good.

**So how long have you not been self-injuring?**

I have not self-injured since February.

**Fantastic, congratulations.**

It started when I was 11.

**Good for you.**

I’m so happy.

**You should be. You should be very proud of yourself.**

I am. Um oh my gosh. I haven’t even starved myself and that was a good form of self-injury too. I consider that self-injuring. Because I haven’t even starved myself since like March. It’s great. It’s great.

**Excellent.**

**17. I’d like you to imagine that you have a 1-year-old. That doesn’t look like very much fun on your face.**

{{Laughs}} No, right now, I’m good. Yeah I’m Age 1. I’m Age 1. I have this 1-year-old. I have a nice husband and a house. I’m – I’m - okay.

**And this beautiful little chubby 1-year-old.**

A little boy.

**Sure. How do you think you might feel if you had to separate from this little boy for a weekend? How do you think that would feel?**

Oh - not good. No. I would cry. Oh my gosh. Because I know what it feels like - um to be abandoned. To be all those kinds of negative things I oh my gosh I don't wanna be separated from him. Oh. It would be so sad. I couldn’t do it. I couldn’t do it. Maybe when he was like 6.

**But not 1.**

Not 1. Not 1. Oh no.

**Do you think that in general when you were around him do you think that you would worry for him?**

Yeah.

**What sorts of things would you worry about?**

Oh the usual things. And myself. I’d worry - I’d worry about how good of a parent I was - I’d wor [sic] I’d hope yeah I’d hope that - that I would be good a good enough parent and make good enough choices so that I could do everything in my power to make sure that he wouldn’t feel all the pain - but – I dunno. I know it happens anyways sometimes. But I’d be constantly worried that I wouldn’t be - a good enough parent to to so that it wouldn’t start on my behalf. I know it starts for other reasons - but I’d worry that I wouldn’t be a good enough parent to a) keep it from starting on my behalf and b) know what to do if it started. But yeah. No I wouldn’t be able to separate from my little 1-year-old.

**18. If you had three wishes for your child twenty years from now, what would they be?**

He’s 20 years old. That he - doesn’t regret. Make - that he makes decisions that he doesn’t regret anything in life. Um, that he follows his heart. And keeps the faith in everything and, and shows it to others but doesn’t wear it on his sleeve all the time and that he’s happy. Actually happy. He finds something, someone that makes him happy.

**Good wishes.**

**19. Is there any particular think which you feel you learned above – all from your own childhood experiences? I’m thinking here of something you feel you might have gained from the kind of childhood you had.**

. . . . . . . . . . {10 sec} To look beyond what we see as bad people and identify them not as bad people but as people who have gone through bad experiences and – that - it doesn’t matter what you’ve gone through in your life -it’s how you continue to move forward with those kinds of experiences. Um and the most important thing is not to not to let those experiences eat away at you the way they did at my Mom and my Dad. And to – to make the best out of the situations. To help people to - to not hold it against anyone because it’s not anyone’s fault. You know just the hand that he was dealt with. So that’s you know probably the best thing. And that with that comes acceptance of myself to a certain extent which is good. Of others. Of situations. A lot of, the best thing I got from my parents was understanding. Because it’s a lot easier to - it’s really easy to judge someone when you haven’t been in their shoes.

**That’s a very important lesson to have learned.**

**20. What would you like your son to say if I asked him that question? What would he say was the most important thing he learned from being parented by you?**

Hmm. Same thing. That - there’s no such thing as bad people. There’s only bad situations and that you can make - your life whatever you want it to be. No matter what where you are or where you have been.