

General Information

Private or Public Statement? - Private

Statement Provider: Anonymous

Date: February 10, 2014

Location: Home, Indian Township, Peter Dana Point

Consent Option - Public (Anonymous)

Previous Statement? No

Statement Gatherer: Margot Milliken

Support Person: Rachel George

Additional Individuals Present: Commissioner Gail Werrbach

Recording Format: Audio

Length of Recording: Three parts, total time 00:58:09

Transcriber's Note:

This is an anonymous statement. Any redactions to the transcript and alternations to the recording have been done at the request of the statement provider in an effort to protect his or her identity.

Recording

MM: This is a statement from *[NAME REDACTED]* Um, who is here today with her support person, Rachel George. Please say your name.

A: *[NAME REDACTED]*

MM: And, um, Gail Werrbach is also in the room, as a member of the TRC Commission. This is file number: M-201402. Today is February 10th, 2014. And we are at Peter Dana Point, in, um, Indian Township. Um, the complete file number is M201402-00018. *[NAME REDACTED]* have you been informed, do you understand, and have you signed the informed consent form?

A: Yep.

MM: Um, I need to (*clears throat*) read this statement to you. Any information that is disclosed in your statement, that indicates that a child is in need of protection, or, if there is imminent risk of death or serious bodily harm, to an identifiable person or group - including you - those statements may not be protected as confidential.

And, now, you may begin your statement.

A: Um. I lived on Indian Island when I was a little girl. And, um... I moved on and off, on and off; but when I did live there I was, uh, uh, like kindergarten age. And, uh...and, I went to school there, and the nuns were teaching. And, uh, I had, uh...you know, a church was important. And, uh, (*clears throat*) if we, uh...we...(*exhales*). If, I mean it was so close that if we wasn't in church on Sunday, we go to school up the road, we'd be punished for it in school. You know? And, uh...and, you know, that's it in a. Like, if you went off the school ground and went down by the water down by the brook and stuff, we'd get a paddle. And we had to stand in line, you know, and walk everywhere. And, uh...it was hard because, you know, uh, I was...inverted. I—when I was little, little, I was okay. But, when I got older, uh, like in, uh...probably eight-nine years old or something.

Uh, we're taught that...well, like I felt...I was bad...bad, bad person. And, I was six-seven years old and I felt like a sinner. You know, "You're gonna be punished. You're going to Hell." And...growing up...I shook so bad, 'cause I did...you know. Even now I kinda say, "What do I do? What do I do?" You know? "Is it right?" You know? In my—but not so bad now, but back then. You know? It's just walking in fear all the time. You know? And, um, and, you know, and it just—they say that (*simultaneous background noise like TV or radio*) God loves you and stuff, but use it like a punishing God. You know?

MM: Mm. Mm hm.

A: And, I'm always wondering about...Indian stuff. You know, like the Indian medicine, and the...you know, it's (*unclear word*). But we wasn't allowed...that. We wasn't allowed our language. Like, my Gram, and my Aunt, and my Mom would go in her ho..that..my aunt's house and they would talk. But, not in front of the children.

MM: Oh.

A: You know? And my older brother understood it, but he couldn't speak it. But, why, by the time it came to me it wasn't spoken? You know? But couple of words like (*inaudible*) or (*inaudible*) or, you know, stuff like that. You know? It—you know, it comes out. And now my—even when I was little they'd say, "Well, what kind of Indian are you? You can't speak Indian." You know? And, I felt really bad. And, you know, ashamed that I didn't know how to speak Indian. But, my Mom, she taught me how to Indian dance. Yeah, since I was a little girl.

Uh...and, uh, we went up to Saint Mary's, or, some place up in Canada and that's where the kids said, "What kinda Indian are you," because they spoke fluent up there. And the kids were learning about, you know...right at home. You know? And I said, "Uh." You know? I looked



bad. And the next morning I said, “Well, I’ll show them.” And I—Mom—I did, but my Mom showed me Indian dance, you know? I said, I’ll— “I’m talking now.” You know? And that’s how I feel like...that’s how I can express myself, you know, to the Spirits and stuff that, you know. And, uh...and I did feel kinda guilty about, uh, not speaking the language. And even growing up, somebody says, “Well, what kinda Indian are you? You can’t speak your language.” You know? And I go, “Oh, man...socked again.” You know? And I just. And, like, when I was younger (*sighs*), going back to childhood...that...to be ashamed...of being Indian. You know? They try to take that out. You know? Even the way how we prayed, and how we had, uh...ceremonies. Like, we don’t have ceremonies like we did-do now. And, I always wondered...when I was little, you know. There was something, something, something missing and I just don’t know what it was.

And—and feeling ashamed of me...and my Mom. And, you know, my Mom really protected me when I was little. She sheltered me so much that, you know, when she passed away (*laughing*), I felt so alone, because nobody would be protecting me (*voice breaking*). And, I was like thirteen years old. And I think I died, when my Mom died. My spirit died there for a while. And, you know, I went through high school. And, um, hardly remember anything. I remember freshman and senior, but the years between...And, I remember, uh...some—nobody sending me to bed one time. Nobody was there to tell me to go to bed. So, I did very poorly in school. I was tired. I stayed up half the night and read uh, books by T.V. light. My eyes hurt. And, nobody was there to send me to bed.

And, what I remember when I was little, they’d send me to bed and uh...and I could hear ‘em talking. It’s like a two...two stories and I was upstairs. And I could hear ‘em mumbling. You know, you can’t hear what they say. And, it was so peaceful. You know? And now...like when I hear people murmuring I’ll—I feel so, you know, felt so good, I fall right to sleep. You know? And, um, and the stuff that they used to do to my Mom. You know? She couldn’t get a job. So, you know, we kinda, sometimes we didn’t have a meal. My—we just had milk and bread. You know? That’s the only stuff we had in the house. So, we have—we break the milk and put it in the bread.

And, um, you know, it was really hard back then, ‘cause, you know, she couldn’t get a job. And she was a real smart woman, you know? And, it just. I heard some things and I go, “Wow!” You know, she really struggled. Because, you know, we’re Native people. And so, you know—I, uh, I know I’m bouncing back and forth...‘cause uh...

MM: It’s okay. (*Pause*) Take your time.

A: That, uh (*sniffs, uses tissue*) I was, like I said, I was...uh...I don’t know when to start that, you know, I felt by myself. You know? The kids picked on me. They called me names. And, and I didn’t know why. And, uh. And, the, and the church, I mean well, you know—the

Christian way. But, you know it's—I mean there's a lot of stuff that, you know, that goes in with that. But, I don't know you want that just how I was treated when I was little. And, you know, how it made me feel. And—not wanted, pushed aside, put me in the back seat. Or, they wouldn't play with me at all. Girls from Old Town would come over and, uh, the whole bunch of kids would get together, and they'd pick. You know? And I was always left out. And one time, you know, a—somebody's standing behind me and said, “You.” And, I said, “Oh, good you picked me!” They said, “No, not you. Her.” You know? And, you know. I mean I...I, I was just always... pushed out from everything. And, they called me names. And, you know, and I didn't understand why. And, so, I got inverted. And, uh, and not knowing who I am. And it's just, you know, it's just so confusing.

And, uh. And, I was told to respect your elders (*pauses, exhales*). And I didn't understand that as a child. And this man started touching me. I couldn't say no because he was an elder (*voice trembling*). I mean he'd treat me good. He'd give me money. You know? And, feed me. And, give me attention. And, you know, I thought it was okay for a while, but then they—something happened. Somebody said that, you know. I don't know how but I start feeling guilty about it and ashamed of it.

Then another man, uh, wanted to touch me, so I could go in the house. My aunt's house. I couldn't go in when he was there. But, uh, when she passed away I wanted to go play with my cousin. And, I had to let him touch me before me so I could come in. And, uh—so I could play with my cousin. And another man tried, but I ran away. And, I felt so ashamed and guilty. I...you know (*sniffs*)? And, you know, I just, I just feel so empty. And confused. I just. And, you know, and my Mom died when I was thirteen, and, I don't know. It's just, just a struggle. And, somebody watching over me, I don't know who, but.

When my Mom died my Grandmother took care of me. My brother. And, my brother helped a little bit. You know, it's just like I (*sighs*), I can't make decisions. I mean, even just simple questions. My mind...you know? It's just, it's so hard...to think without thinking that you're gonna be condemned for it. But, you know, things happened. And, I don't know, something kept me alive. 'Cause I remember when I was a little girl I dreamt that I wanted to go to sleep and never wake up until things changed. You know, everything was bad all the time. Yeah. The church kicked my mother out of the church because she was married to, uh, our father. And my brother kicked, got kicked out of it 'cause of that. And the priests felt like it was a punishment to be sent to the reservation.

You know, it was such a, you know. It's—you know, it just—could not understand why. You know? I don't know it was my understanding, or, you know, what it is. But, uh, it wasn't... You know there was good times too. But the...the fear. And the shame. And, the uh...ignoring. Somebody ignoring you. I mean that, that, that's one of the worstes thing. Or, pushing you aside. Even now, something happened. And, said, “No, you can't because you're not...” You know? And here it—it is. This year! No, was it last year?! And, it happened and, “Oh, my God!” I went frigging backwards. I went, “Chtt, chtt, chtt, chtt,” (*noises of someone going backwards fast*) went right back to that little girl. You know? And, hurt. Oh, my, I was so hurt. And I just, you know? And, I went to talk to her, and I cowered down so I made her more powerful. And, you know, and I felt weak.



You know, I can't—I can't stand up for myself. Nothing, nobody showed me how to stand up for myself. “Just lay down. Lay down. You're no good. You don't count.” You know, and it's just the, uh. Honest, I don't know how...looking back, and thinking back...how in the world did I survive? I don't know. Well, I do know (*exhales*). You know? He's been watching over me. You know? Putting something in good once in a while. You know?

But, it's just. What they, you know, did to, uh, our grandmothers, uh, our ancestors. What they...you know? I—I feel it now. I feel the—I it's still here. The prejudice. The demeaning. The, you know, “We're better than.” And you know, and, um...fixing my—not fixing myself—but, um, trying to hang on to the past. You know, our...our people are being treated. They're still treated that way. You know? It just...just because we wear regular clothes and not Indian clothes we—we're invisible. We were invisible for a long time. And, I think nineteen...uh, ninety-two. I think the Indian movement start coming out. And, they say, “Oh, there's Indians?”

You know, it's just because we wear regular clothes and not...you know? So, we...we don't exist anymore. So, they, you know. They thought they, you know, took us, took it away. And, uh. And, you know, thinking about it just makes me so sad. And, I uh... can you turn that off for a minute?

[RECORDING PAUSES—end of p.1.]

MM: This is part two of, um, file number M-201402-00018.

A: Um. I don't know when it started. Uh. I—I got married and have kids. And, uh, I was living by myself with my kids. And, I had a vision. No, 'cause I asked, “Who am I? Where do I belong?” And, uh—and, I asked my brother I says, you know, because uh...the white, you know, the white man's teachings, you know? They taught me that. To be ashamed of myself, and, “You're not, you don't—you can't be who you are.” You know, your spirit? They, they...almost crushed my spirit. They tried to take the spirit outta me. And, uh. But, my soul...uh...musta been stronger. Because, you know, they really, I don't, you know. Like I said, things happened, you know, bad, bad things happened. But little things started to happen. You now, a kind voice or, a good friend or—or something that helped me hang on. You know, just something to hang onto. And, you know, and...

But, uh, my Mom said always pray. Pray, pray, pray. You know? So I prayed. And, I prayed. And, I prayed. And, I said, “Help me, help me, help me.” You know? “I don't know what I'm doing.” And, you know, and the darkest par, holy cow. I mean I just...psheew. It was bad but, something the next day, something else happened. And, you know, and I remember what my

Mom said. You know? And, and like that's what I said, I was just torn apart. And I said, "I don't know where I belong." And, um...I guess he heard...somebody heard me. And, uh, I was alone. Three kids. All by myself. No husband. Nobody to take care of me but myself and the Creator. And, I had to let the Creator in. You know, I'd talk to him. You know, "Help me," you know? And, uh. And, I had a vision. And, uh, empty antique store. And, a white woman running the antique store. And, uh, she starts hollering, "Indians are coming! Indians are coming!" Right? I start running. We both start running. And, she was in a faulty door that closes, you know, the floor closes. And, I said, "Why am I running? Why am I running?"

And, I open up...beautiful horses running across the field. And a bull moose and a baby moose. A bull moose come out, went back. And, a baby moose came halfway. And three men on horseback. And they had, uh, the headdresses on from Lakota, Dakota, out that way. And a man on a white horse, and two in behind walking this way. I shut the door. And the horse tries to stop me. And I'm wrestling him, kicking, and I woke up. And I said, "Holy cow! What a dream!" You know? I went to sleep. Same dream...empty antique store...the woman calling. And this time it was just the moose. And the men were walking towards me. I shut the door, and I ran. And a little Indian woman come and talked to me. And, uh, I go upstairs, and as I walk up she says, "Be yourself. Be yourself." And, uh, I got on the top floor and there was an Indian man way on the back side. And he had, uh, buckskin and his headpiece on the side. And he had short hair. And we were coming close together. And he said, "Don't speak of luck yet to women." And this was in 1982. I had that vision, in 1982.

And, uh, and after that things started to happen. You know—I went on a fast. My first fast was on a mountain. And then, uh, I saw my mom came to me. And, uh, I couldn't see her face but she was in a brown...I guess it was a buckskin, holding her hand like this. Cradling a smudgepot in her hand. And, she smudged me. She said, "Go slowly." You know? And so, like I didn't know which way to pray. You know? And—and time went on, and went on and stuff. And, you know, things started coming up. You know, ceremonies...and this and that. And I wanted to do something for my people. Because my people are hurting so bad. 'Cause like, I know how they—you know I have the hurts too.

But I wanted to do something to help them. You know, I mean even when I, you know—I wanted to know. And, I didn't know anything about the pipe. I didn't know about anything. The, you know, the sweat lodges, back then they didn't have 'em. Or, they had 'em, but I didn't know nothing about 'em. And, um. And, you know, and things start coming up. Like, uh, the sweats and fasting. And I went on the mountain. My Mom was there. My uncle was there. My cousin was there. You know, and it—before I used to have a veil in front of me. I mean I couldn't see anything. I mean, I could see it. But, I couldn't feel it.

And, one time (*laughs*) I had a joint. And I was smoking it. And that's how I felt. It was like I was wafted; nobody could hear me. That's what I felt like inside of myself that...you know, I can see, but I can't feel. You know? And you know, and I just...I go, "Wow!" So, when I went on that fast, I mean, I didn't know a thing. I found out till after (*laughs*) what not to do, and I did what, you know, and I said, "Oh, my word!" You know? And it was just the animals that came. And, the spiders come. And, the moose came. And somebody checked to see if I was in there, watching my tent. My Mom came. And, you know, it's the lessons from that. And, like,

when I came out everything was cleared, that veil was gone. I could even see a tiny little beetle going across my path.

And, I saw this—apples and strawberries—and you didn't eat for four days you know? (*Background laughter*) You're looking at them and, you know, like they're this big. You know, but they're really that little. You know? And said, "No, no, no we can't eat that." You know? And, we're trudging along. And, and, you know, we had to carry our pack-backs out. And just a (*laughter*) I fell backwards. I had a pack-back, uh, backpack, yeah, and a great big flashlight. You know? And I'm weak, and I have to carry these things. Right? Well somehow I was picking something up and I got flipped.

You know? And, now I know how a turtle feels (*joint laughter*), you know? Laying on (*making waving hand gestures and laughing*). You, say, "Aw, gee." You know how they trying to get to go back over? So, you know. I was a turtle. No. You know? And it was just. But, you know, the lessons and stuff. But that just cleared out and now I even look at...even now today I look at trees, and I feel their textures. I, you know, I can feel. I can feel things now. Like before, I couldn't feel anything. You know? I was so numbed. And that, that—even like when we come up on, uh, on the interstate. I don't know if you got on the interstate to come up here? Like, Bangor to Lincoln?

MM: I've been on it.

A: Yep. Well, uh, is it that, or farther up? I don't know, but I used to have a veil. There was always like a veil in front of me. Like coming up from the, uh, Old Town to Lincoln, and up further. I just could feel this, you know, I couldn't see things clearly. You know? And it was just. You know, it was just me and. And now, that...I don't have that anymore. And, you know. Good things are starting to happen to me. I had to let go of, you know, I lived with this man for nine years. I said, "No more." And I saw it was something. He come to see—you know, he wanted me back and I didn't, you know, I didn't want him. And he was talking—I was in the bedroom and he was sitting out on the outside there. Then all of a sudden, I couldn't hear him anymore.

And the wall—get this—the wall disappeared. And there sat a big white square. And inside was happiness, joy, and light. You know? And, I looked at that, and I go, "Oh!" And, I could feel the peace in that. Then all of a sudden it started to fade away, and then I could hear him talking again. You know? So, like, like stepping out of that depression or whatever. That, that stage that I was in. It to go to, you know, another one. And, uh, and I got—well, I was married in the church, you know, you say. Well, I got a—annulment. For me. To start over again as [NAME REDACTED] And then I started that journey again and it was on the red road journey. I went on the white road for a while and I went on the—you know? And, I'm slowly finding out who I am. You know? And, uh, and you know...and, I said about ceremonies. And,

ceremonies had start coming up. And, you know? And, I said, “Well, if I was to be a pipe carrier I want to wait until I got older.” Because women can’t carry pipes when they’re on their time. You know? It’s, you know? That’s why men wear it all the time. You know? Women are...they cleanse themselves so they don’t need what, you know, the men need. And, what they are women pipe carriers now, because the circle’s been broken and we have to get it back together again.

And I asked na-ah queteleg (sp?) if I’m to have it, because you don’t ask for one. Then I had a vision of holding a pipe, and I didn’t have a pipe yet. And I didn’t know what pipes were before. But you know, going to ceremonies and seeing people carrying pipes, you know, not right away. I just watched and listened and go into sweats. And you know, it’s like cleansing, you know. Somebody said they saw black, muddy—my aura was brown. And then I went to a sweat and they said “bless yourself” and (*clapping hands*) pat all over. And somebody said you could see rainbows flying all over the place. So I guess that stuff is going away and dreams of cutting myself and worms coming up, saying that you’re being healed, and healing. And animals come, and I have visions of going on, you know. And getting connected back to Mother Earth and getting connected to everything around.

And I like—when I talk about that, it’s just, “Wow.” I could go for hours and hours, you know? And you know, I supported Sun Dancers. Men are the only ones who can Sun Dance. But women can support them, they’re out there dancing too, supporting them. And I did that and, you know, and it’s just (*sighs*) I felt all right with that. You know? But I didn’t think I—I don’t know, it’s just the purity. Without that, you know, the way I was praying and thinking and stuff and doing Sun Dance, it helped me a little bit more to understand, you know. And it’s just—the teachings that—simple teachings, like around the fire. They were having something in St. Andrew with this woman from St. Mary’s was telling me about sweet grass, the pipe—well, you know, its strength, honesty, kindness and sacrifice. You know, and that’s on the pipe. That’s what I put on my pipe.

RG: Could you say the four again?

A: Sweet grass, cedar...

MM: The qualities? Strength...

A: Strength, honesty, kindness and sacrifice. Like the pipe is the strength that’s the female. And the stem, that’s for honesty. And the rabbit fur is sacrifice because they sacrifice their life for us to eat. And the sweet grass is for kindness. You know? And it just—it just, like I see everything different now. Like the trees, I hate to have them cut down (*laughing*). ‘Cause everything has a spirit in it. But you know, Mother Earth gave us that to build houses with, for the animals, you know everything—you can learn everything’s connected. And human beings are connected. But—we’re human. So we make mistakes, you know. And trying to—I don’t know. I just can speak for myself. I feel like the Indian people lived the Bible. ‘Cause things happened to me that was in the Bible. Speaking the language—they hear me in Maliseet. The spirit world hears me in Maliseet. (*Phone goes off with loon call*) I was shown that, so I don’t feel bad about not. Speak the language so the spirits can hear—but they understand. What



language you talk. Just the English people—well, English—you know, just people that don't know the language don't know what you're saying. But they do.

So I'm being shown gently from the spirits. Like I prayed for the Ancestor to show me how—how they lived. You know, and it's what the Bible says. I mean we lived that way before the Europeans came over. People say, "How was it back then?" I say, "Well how in the Hell do I know?" (*laughing*). You know? But I don't know. It's just the feeling of what I would like to have. What to be, and I feel peace and stuff like that. When I'm in that—in that realm, I call it a realm like this realm here right now. And that's—and I know how it hurt. I know how it feels to get hurt, so I try not to hurt anybody. You know, but I'm a human being, I do. But not in that degree. And I want everybody to be happy and nice and when they're not (*laughing*) it bothers me. It bothers me bad. It bothers me bad.

But it's just—you know, I believe in something higher than myself. Bigger than myself. And so—but I guess I'm just in the learning stage like. But here. I'm not seen. Because I'm not Passamaquoddy (*whispering*). I'm Wabanaki, I'm their brothers and sisters, you know, but Passamaquoddy brothers and sisters, my Micmac brothers and sisters, Micima, we're all—we're people. You, you ladies. You know? But—no. greed and jealousy and you know, that's what the government did. They tried to separate the Indian people and fight among themselves. They took away who we are—they took away our ceremonies, they took away everything, and we didn't know who we were. And then they showed us—the firewater. They showed us how to steal, they showed us how to lie. And then we're the bad people. You need Christianity! You're supposed to forgive. I say, "Yeah, they do what they do in the name of God."

GW: [NAME REDACTED] Can I ask you a little about your mom? When you were growing up, you said your mom spoke Penobscot.

A: No.

GW: No, she didn't, but your grandmother did.

A: Yep, she did

GW: So were there—do you remember that there were ceremonies growing up when you were a child?

A: Nope, there were no ceremonies. I didn't know anything—there was no sweats, or—the only thing we had is we had to put on to show. My aunt did pageants, Indian pageants.

GW: Like the picture you showed us.

A: Yep. Like—I think that was on a stage to perform. And that’s how I learned how to dance, because we used to go up to the reservations. But that was like, like a gathering. But we had to have people come in, white people come in and watch us dance and stuff. And that’s the only way we could have—

GW: Make some money and survive.

A: Yeah, and still have that culture. You know—it was taken away, you know. But people saved it.

GW: The other question I had was do you remember how the decision—I know this was a real painful time for you—but do you remember how the decision was made for you to live with your grandmother when your mom died? Do you remember how that decision got made or what—

A: It was just family. Family took

GW: Family saying—your grandmother saying, “I’m going to take care of [NAME REDACTED] and her brother?” That was how it was decided.

A: I think so, ‘cause like I didn’t—I don’t know if she had to fight for me—I imagine, you know, going through that thing. I was only 10, 11 years old when that happened. And I just remember my brother. My brother, you know, he was 5.

GW: So he was younger at that time.

A: Yep, and I guess the family or something got together to say, “Grandmother can take care of her.” So that’s how—but you know.

GW: And I guess the other question I had was—I know you weren’t in foster care. But were any of your siblings or any—was that anything that happened to your parents or grandparents?

A: Uh, nope. I remember my grandmother living in her house. And it was pretty much, you know.

GW: It didn’t happen to every family, but sometimes it happened. It might not have happened to you but it might have happened to my parents.

A: I think my grandmother because she—something must have been done to her. ‘Cause she never said anything, but the language was gone. Even when my brother—you know. And he... he said he could understand some but not all, you know what I mean?

GW: Your grandmother wasn’t at a boarding school or residential school?

A: Not that I know of. I’ll have to ask my aunt, ‘cause like I said she don’t really—well she was from Kingsclear, she’s from Canada. So a lot of things must have happened up there.

GW: That's where your grandmother was from?

A: Yeah.

MM: Yeah, they definitely had residential schools in Canada.

A: But how she brought us up, you know, make sure we go to church every Sunday, and you know, and that type of thing. "Did you go to church, did you go to church, get ready to go to church," but her and her sister was big, you know, for the church. But you know, it's just mostly the prejudice, the, you know. The suffering that we did. Going hungry and the state didn't help. They take away not give. It was just (*sighs*). And you had to do things you didn't want to do. And it's just... hmm. But it's better now. Something comes through. I don't want nobody to give up on who they are. Because somehow, I don't know, I just know when it happens to me, it makes me feel better. I wish I could say more about that stuff but I don't know—I don't want to say. But that's how it started—things—just something started to change. You know?

MM: I want to just ask if you feel complete in your statement, is there more or do you want to take a break and see if there's something more you want to ad?

A: Yeah, I'll take a break.

RG: Do you want me to stop recording?

[RECORDING PAUSES – end p.2]

MM: Part three M-201402-00018. These are questions that we ask everybody at the end of their statement so—the first question is, what does reconciliation mean to you?

A: Reconcile. Well, to come—you reckon—I'm bad with—I can tell what I know, but if you ask me a question (*laughing*). Reconcile. I don't know, it's—truth and reconciliation. What does it mean?

MM: I don't mean the literal definition of it. I just mean for you, when you think of reconciliation, if you think about being part of this process, what does it mean to you to be a part of it. To be a part of a truth and reconciliation process. And if there's not an answer that comes to you than we can—

A: Well I—it'll come back later. It's just that—I'll think about it for a while and then I can answer it.

MM: Okay. That'd be great. So the second question is, when you think back to the difficult time in your childhood, what would have helped you? What would you have wanted to have a person or some kind of help? What would you have wanted that might have made a difference to you?

A: Um, to help me through, you know, praise me when I did good and help me to know—do things, you know, say, “Go out and try this, try that,” you know, build up your confidence. And I didn't have nobody to do that. So at my age I can say—I'm not going to say how old I am—but now getting that and—I should have got that as a child. Now I'm still stumbling and not sure of myself and—outside. But just—like I was supposed to—no—have somebody that I feel loved, deeply, deeply loved, like my Mom. Unconditional. I've got some friends that—there's one, oh my gosh, she's a lifesaver. She understands me, other people criticize me. She wouldn't—oh yeah, because you were staying with her, that's where—you stayed with her, right? And that's Stephanie. Oh, just a few people. And she's one of them.

GW: Sometimes one or two is all we get but that's what we need (*laughing*).

A: Somebody's buzzing.

RG: That's me, I'm sorry.

GW: Well thank you so much again for being part of this process. And I believe that—

A: I'm still thinking of reconcile. Isn't that forgiving, or—

MM: Sometimes forgiving is part of it. It's kind of bringing people together who were—in this situation it's trying to—it's speaking the truth. Which was a very important piece today, speaking the truth, so that in the white world there—people can know the truth. And this is just only my rambling off the top of my head now. And I think in the Native American world to heal from what was done. And maybe those to worlds can be kinder and better to each other. That's what we hope. We hope that we can make some—give some ideas and give some recommendations so that there will be more kindness than there was for families, for kids.

A: Yeah, there's just... I mean people treated Native people like they're from outer space. They're different, but they're not. They're just people, you know, in different—like the four directions, you know. There's four kinds of people, different colored people, but they're people. And they're all given—everybody has a gift. But some people get kind of greedy and say, “Well, you do it my way,” you know what I mean? Well I'm not gonna—but it's just, you know, I mean—I've seen other. When I was little I didn't see the prejudice. Because my mom was right there and we didn't really go too far. But when I was in high school, oh my word. As soon as they saw you coming off the Indian bus that comes from the Island, whoa. The—the look is different, you know, they look at you. And I lost a friend in junior high. We were friends but when we went up to high school, she didn't talk to me anymore, she didn't socialize anymore. And my brother and my aunts, and then going through high school was like that. And



then I went, and me stealing a little girl's nylons, please. Extra large for me, and slim for her (*laughing*), "Oh, she must be the one who took her nylons." Not knowing—and you're not—and even there you felt slighted. And that's when I first found out what the prejudice, you know.

GW: And the tragedy is you start believing the things about yourself, or questioning yourself.

A: Yeah, you know. And I knew I wasn't a thief, I knew I wasn't a liar, but—like now, they're a woman going to court to fight for her kids. She's Indian but non-Native father. She was on the stand and they said, "You own a gun, don't you? You own a knife, don't you? All Indians carry guns and knives." She goes, "Yeah, we go hunting." "So you did use the gun." "Yeah, for hunting." (*Laughs*) You know, and it just. You know they put stuff on us that's not true and then they—it's just sad how we're treating each other. It really is, you know. A misunderstanding, and you know, people are—but anyway (*laughing*).

MM: It's fine, it's really fine. But thank you so much for meeting with us.

A: Bringing that back, and we do need—we do need to be—

GW: Do you want to keep that, or would you like us to put that in the sacred—

MM: No, that's the tobacco box.

GW: I know, but some people want to give it back to us and some people want to keep it, so we just ask. Perfectly fine for you to have it.

A: Yep, just a minute. No, well actually—

[END OF RECORDING]