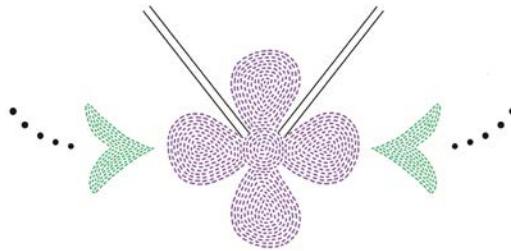


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Happy Valley - Goose Bay, Labrador
Happy Valley-Goose Bay Hotel**



PUBLIC

Wednesday August 8, 2018

**Statement - Volume 460
E.M. & S.M.**

Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay

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II
ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 7 of *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller ordered that all names be made anonymous in this transcript and any related documents. The order for anonymity was made on June 17, 2019.

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Documents submitted with testimony: none.

1 Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 5:20

3 p.m.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** All right. So we'll get
5 started. This is Kerrie Reay. I'm a statement-taker with
6 the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous
7 Women and Girls, and today we are in Goose Bay, Labrador.
8 It is August the 8th, 2018, and it is 5:20 p.m., and with
9 me today is E.M., and E.M. is here to -- to speak, to tell
10 her truth, and along with E.M. is her mother S.M., who is
11 here to support E.M.

12 For the record, E.M., you spell your name as
13 [*spells first name*], and [*spells last name*]?

14 **MS. E.M.:** M'hm.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And, S.M., it's [*spells*
16 *first name*], and [*spells last name*].

17 **MS. S.M.:** That's correct.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And are you here
19 voluntarily today?

20 **MS. E.M.:** (Indiscernible).

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. So, E.M., this is
22 your time and your space, and if you need at any time to
23 stop, I'll also watch to see and may ask if you need a
24 break, but as I said, it's -- it's your space and time, so
25 I invite you to start with your truth wherever you feel

1 comfortable.

2 MS. E.M.: Okay. Before we came here, I
3 asked my mom when her statement had gone, and what I took
4 from it was my mother lived a lot of abuse, and I'm pretty
5 sure that her mother did, too, so I feel that -- looking
6 back on it now, that's -- my grandmother, my mother,
7 myself, and my children, that's four generations of abuse
8 that has happened, and that's pretty sad considering that
9 it's not like it hasn't been spoke of or, you know -- the
10 help wasn't asked for, you know? Like, I feel like a lot
11 of it had been from childhood on.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

13 MS. E.M.: For all of us, really. Saying
14 that, that comes back to how my grandmother grew up, how my
15 mother grew up, how I grew up to how the first couple of
16 years of my children's life started to where we are right
17 now.

18 I grew up with my mom and my dad, and my dad
19 left, with leaving my mom with two girls to raise on her
20 own with a whole lifetime of abuse and generation after
21 generation of alcoholism that had never been treated, and
22 that, really -- like, today, right here, right now, I truly
23 believe that my mom did the best she could with what she
24 had, and I'm grateful for that, you know, because that -- I
25 was raised by a very strong woman, which helped me get to

1 where I am right now, and my mom knows, you know,
2 everything that I'm about to talk about today.

3 Yeah, so we grew -- that's how it started,
4 you know? Right now, I struggle with, you know, having a
5 voice in the past, like, year and a half of, you know,
6 stopping what I look at as, like, a cycle of abuse and
7 alcoholism. My mom has stopped 18 years ago and is, you
8 know, like, getting help for her problems that she -- that
9 I only learned about when I was 18 years old, so, you know,
10 to me -- I grew up with alcohol, like, being socially
11 acceptable. You know, like, I didn't -- I didn't
12 really -- I recognized it was a problem throughout most of
13 my childhood, not only in my home but everybody else's home
14 growing up in the '80s, but I didn't realize until later on
15 that that's a coping mechanism. You know, that's a huge
16 coping mechanism that people use to -- to forget and to try
17 to, like, drown -- it's a crutch. That's how -- that's how
18 we grew up.

19 My mom was a hard-working woman. My dad was
20 no support at all to my mom and dealing with, like,
21 abandonment issues and abuse your whole life, that's the
22 last thing that you want when you get married and have two
23 kids. I found that -- you know, my mom held down a good
24 job. She -- like I said, she was a hard-working woman, but
25 there was also, like -- there was something different about

1 it. Like, I knew that, like, my dad's family was
2 completely different than my mom's family, coming to
3 realize there was -- there was a lot of abuse and a lot of
4 neglect that was going on, and it was never addressed, so I
5 feel like what's normal to some people is not necessarily
6 normal to everybody else, so -- I truly believe that, like,
7 when it comes to how you feel about yourself, like, unless
8 you work on that, that's going to continue throughout your
9 whole life, so low self-esteem, low self-respect, you know,
10 what you tolerate from other people is something that was
11 just passed on through it.

12 You know, my mom drank most of our -- most
13 of my life, and I kind of, like, didn't understand that, so
14 when it came to the time when -- you know, it was, like, 15
15 or 16, and it was that time to, you know, like, be around
16 all of that, you know, like, that was the fear for me, but
17 that's what makes you socially acceptable. Like, I dealt
18 with a lot of what I would feel like -- and no judgment to
19 my parents -- was a lot of -- I don't know, just a lot of
20 self problems, you know? We had, like, social workers
21 involved in our life, not for very long. I don't remember
22 there was a huge -- there was no -- my mom never abused
23 myself and my sister. There was a lot of love and, like,
24 structure, but there was also, like, a lot of -- no
25 self-care on her part, I guess. Like, she didn't deal with

1 any of her issues that she had going on, and -- but a lot
2 of isolation, I would think. My mom isolated -- like, my
3 sister and I were her world besides work, and -- yeah, I
4 think that the abuse that she had -- had leading up to
5 meeting my father and then the abuse she continued to take
6 after -- during, with him, and then afterwards kind of,
7 like, was the stepping-stone to myself and my sister and
8 how we felt and what we saw. Like, we never saw love or
9 anything like that, you know? All we saw was sadness,
10 really, that I can remember. There are, you know, a lot of
11 good times, but -- the only reason I could say that is
12 because I relate to it leading up to -- you know, that's
13 why I said my mom did the best she could with what she had
14 at that point until -- you know, all of that stopped for
15 her.

16 The first real -- I knew it was different
17 when -- growing up in the '80s. We had a babysitter, and
18 she had an older son. We suffered a lot of -- I -- I've
19 suffered a lot of sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial,
20 emotional abuse to the fullest throughout my whole life,
21 but I thought that was normal. Like, I really
22 didn't -- like, because I didn't have a voice. I found
23 that once -- I don't know -- I don't even know how to say
24 that. I guess it, like, fit in. I never had, like, a
25 father figure around, so I wasn't shown it, you know, and I

1 can honestly say that I don't think that my mom even was
2 shown that, right? I think you're taught love and stuff
3 like that and self-respect and everything like that, so if
4 you don't see it, you don't know it, and if it's not talked
5 about, then, you know, anything that you get is kind of
6 what you get.

7 So yeah, I suffered a lot of inappropriate
8 stuff as a child that I didn't know. I remember developing
9 my conscience really early. Like, I wrote an article for
10 CBC on sex workers, because that's at the end of the
11 journey -- the end of my journey. That's -- that's where I
12 ended up, and it wasn't until then that I started
13 remembering stuff that I'd stuffed down my whole life, like
14 the sexual assault and when it started and, like, the abuse
15 and -- and stuff like that, and that was really -- it was
16 an eye-opener for me. It was huge. I can recognize, like,
17 how -- once it all stopped, you know, you just stand back,
18 and it's almost like a ghost that you see it all play
19 through, and you're just like, wow; it's like, that
20 actually happened.

21 So I remember, like, this older boy, and I
22 remember, like, the fear being put in me, like, do not say
23 anything, right? And from then on, like -- like,
24 that's -- that was a young girl. Then I was taught to,
25 like, keep everything secret when it came to, like, men,

1 especially, like, older men and stuff like that, and I
2 always thought that that was -- that was okay.

3 So after that experience, I had moved up
4 with my dad, and my dad was very -- very abusive. Like,
5 so, like -- I don't know. I had developed, like, an eating
6 disorder at this point, and -- you know, it was just
7 constant second-guessing, like, distorted body image, like,
8 never having that confidence, never feeling like you fit
9 in, even with your own family.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** How old do you think you
11 would have been at that time?

12 **MS. E.M.:** Then, I was, like, 12. I was 12
13 at that time. And it was just, like, a control thing with
14 my dad, you know? Like, my dad had left, like, 5, and my
15 mom had raised me from 5 up until this point, and then he
16 just swooped right in, you know? It's like -- and you're
17 so young and you're so impressionable. Like, if you have
18 this one parent saying it's worse than what it actually is,
19 you know, like, looking back on it, he was -- he came in
20 and, you know, swooped me and my sister up away from my mom
21 and said now I'm going to change your life, and as a young
22 impressionable girl who had been neglected by your father
23 their whole life, you're like, yeah, you know?

24 But I mean, like, that was probably the
25 worst decision that I've ever made that -- you know, ever,

1 because I had left my mom and went to Alberta with him, and
2 then it was just control and just so much mental -- like,
3 mental abuse, you know? Like, already working with, like,
4 a low self-esteem. Like, that was just -- (unreportable
5 sound). Like, I still battle with a lot of that stuff now.

6 Like -- yeah, so that was the beginning of
7 it, and I always had, like, this fear in me about my dad,
8 you know? Like, all I saw was in my life, men are going to
9 use you for what they want, and that's okay. I watched my
10 dad use my mom financially, you know? Like, he used her,
11 and then once he was done with her, he was gone. Like, she
12 educated them. She, you know, took care of the household,
13 worked a full-time job while he sat at home and did
14 nothing, but I -- I do remember my parents not sleeping in
15 the same bed. I do remember him being gone all the time
16 and her trying to hold it together, like, and taking care
17 of my sister, and I did not see that, and that's horrible,
18 like, looking back on it.

19 So -- but when I lived with him, I saw a
20 completely different man, but, like, a lot of alcohol.
21 Like, a lot. Like, I was made to wake up every day and,
22 you know, make -- take care of him, like, be his slave, but
23 at the end of the day, he would beat me down. Like, I was
24 never good enough, and I was too fat, and, you know, stay
25 away from guys, and he was extremely racist, and -- you

1 know, it was just, like -- it's -- such an early age, it
2 was so -- wow, it's -- it's crazy to, like -- to think
3 that's what I was battling with, but -- then I
4 went -- lived in Alberta, and it was just -- so -- so
5 multi-cultural. Like, there was just all different
6 cultures, all surrounded by me, and here I was, like -- it
7 was like I was a ghost in my own body. So I left. The
8 abandonment kicked in again, and he was in a relationship,
9 and he had just up and gone --

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** When you say "up and
11 gone" --

12 **MS. E.M.:** Up and --

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- did he leave you and
14 your sister at home?

15 **MS. E.M.:** My sister was with my mom at this
16 point.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

18 **MS. E.M.:** I can't speak for my sister and
19 her past --

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No. No.

21 **MS. E.M.:** -- but she had moved back -- she
22 had experienced the same kind of thing with my father. She
23 had indulged in alcohol and drugs at a really early age,
24 and she decided to come back.

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is she older than you?

1 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

3 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. So I remember coming home.
4 I remember the abuse. Like, his girlfriend was really
5 abusive. Like, she was a very sick woman. She also had an
6 eating disorder, so all this stuff was being pushed on me,
7 like -- you know, and with a lot of control, and she up and
8 moved out one day, and then I was to blame for that, a
9 12-year-old child. Like, that was my fault, and -- you
10 know, when I came home from school, I went to -- I was
11 really good in school at this point, and I came home one
12 day, and there was a puppy there, and then my dad was gone,
13 like, the next day, and I lived in Alberta, and -- like, it
14 was crazy, and I spoke to my father about this the other
15 day, and he's -- he's an alcoholic, and he still drinks,
16 and he has no recollection of this in any way, shape, or
17 form.

18 So at 12 years old, again, fear of talking
19 because no one's listening. I can -- I moved in with one
20 of my friends, and, like, this is the '90s. Like, I think
21 back on it now, and, like, child services would be all over
22 that, and -- you know, this generation, but -- yeah, I
23 moved in with my friend, and -- and then --

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And how old would have you
25 been?

1 MS. E.M.: 12. I still was 12.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, still 12. Okay.

3 MS. E.M.: 12 -- 12 or 13 at this point.

4 Yeah.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Okay. Yeah.

6 MS. E.M.: And I don't know what happened to
7 the dog. All I know is that he -- he came -- I came back
8 one day to get clothes, and he -- he was coming and going
9 and coming and going, but I was never there because he'd
10 come while I was in school, and I was like, I can't stay
11 here, and it -- this didn't surprise me coming from him, so
12 I stayed with my friends for the summer at this point.
13 Like, for instance, like, my father lived in Alberta, minus
14 40. Both of them had vehicles. Neither one of them would
15 walk me to school. Like --

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: And where were you living
17 in Alberta?

18 MS. E.M.: In [Community 1], this little
19 community outside Edmonton.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

21 MS. E.M.: So minus 40, get up, walk to
22 school, you know, at lunch time, walk home from school
23 because you're not allowed in there to eat. We have to
24 portion your meals. Like, I remember the whole time, like,
25 that -- during that age, not being able to go to the fridge

1 and get food, so -- you know, that was -- that's a --

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** In your home?

3 **MS. E.M.:** In my home.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

5 **MS. E.M.:** You know, I remember
6 binge-eating. I remember, like, them being upstairs doing
7 something and eating, like, a full package of crackers
8 or -- you know, knowing that there was chips in the
9 basement, and in between, like, doing their laundry and
10 making their beds and washing both bathrooms and doing
11 everything like that, going down and sneaking chips and
12 eating them to the point where I would, like, throw up the
13 next day, you know, getting in trouble for that. That's
14 what, like, I -- I dealt with, being -- living with him.

15 And I remember during that summer while he
16 was gone, I got phone calls right before school had
17 started, so it would have been August, and he called and he
18 said, E.M., come home and pack your bags, you're going back
19 to Newfoundland tomorrow. To me, I don't know if this is
20 true, but from -- from me, it almost felt like it was a
21 business exchange between my parents. I know -- I know
22 that my dad came home and, like, fought for lawyers. I
23 don't know if he had given my mom money for some reason,
24 but as a child, that's -- that's what I remember. I don't
25 know if there's truth behind it, but I do know he was a

1 very intimidating man, and he, like -- you know, tried to
2 kid -- kidnap me at one point, and I was removed off a
3 plane because he was trying to take me out of Newfoundland,
4 and my mom had custody of me.

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And that was prior to
6 being 12?

7 **MS. E.M.:** This is -- yeah.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

9 **MS. E.M.:** This is leading up to it, and he
10 had won that, and -- you know, he went up there and
11 that's -- that's the life that I lived. I was like, I
12 would have much rather stayed with my mom, you know?
13 Like -- that's something my mom didn't make me feel that
14 way, you know?

15 So I got -- that day, then, when he called
16 and he said come home, you're leaving, I remember I sat
17 down, and I remember him drinking the whole time and making
18 me feel like I wasn't good enough. Conscientious is just a
19 word that when I think about it or hear someone say it,
20 like, I feel like I'm going to vomit because it's just a
21 word that he, like -- he deflected how miserable his life
22 was and I'm guessing the abuse that he must have, like,
23 faced as a child and the inadequacy and stuff like that,
24 that that's what he pushed on me, and it was horrible, and
25 little does he know -- I'm not blaming my father, but,

1 like, as a child, you look -- that -- that was my first
2 relationship with a man, and it just ruined it. Like, to
3 this day, ruined it.

4 Yeah, so I came home and then -- got on a
5 flight and then came home. My mom and sister were -- were
6 here, and it was just normal. Like, my mom, my sister,
7 like, we were really close, but then I started going to
8 school, and that's when drug use started for me. I took
9 that really hard. I think that was, like, my first bout
10 of, like, depression. Like I said, like, everyone in high
11 school and stuff like that were -- you know, were out
12 drinking, and I -- my mom was, like, a weekend drinker, so
13 that was, like, not what I wanted, so I remember being
14 around my mom and watching her drink but hanging out with
15 her, you know what I mean, and, like, playing cards and
16 stuff like that. Yeah, so I had quit school at this point.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** How old do you think you
18 would have been?

19 **MS. E.M.:** When I was -- quit school?

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M-hm.

21 **MS. E.M.:** Started quitting school, my
22 attendance stopped, I was, like, a straight -- like, I
23 would say As and Bs up until this point, until Grade 9 --

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** About 14?

25 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. 15, because I was held

1 back a year. Then I was held back a year in Grade 9
2 because I stopped going to school. I mean, as you can
3 imagine, like, going through all of that -- like, your
4 father, like, you're wanting that relationship so bad, and
5 that's what you experience, and then he's like, I don't
6 want you again and, like, came back, and then -- you know,
7 my mom had recognized -- recognized that my mom was very,
8 like -- I would say she -- she was supportive towards
9 whatever me and my sister were. You know, like, there was
10 consequences to what we were doing, but I don't know, I
11 guess she just recognized the depression, I don't know, or
12 the abandonment, and -- that was fine.

13 So I did go. I never accumulated any
14 credits during high school. I did go, but then when the
15 depression would hit, and I would stop going. I spent a
16 lot of, like, Grade 10 and 11 in my room reading books, and
17 I started smoking pot at that point. I started smoking
18 pot, and, you know, like, coming back from Alberta during
19 this transition back in, I came back, and all of my friends
20 were, like, smoking and smoking pot and drinking and having
21 sex, and at that point, you know what I mean, all I knew
22 was, like, I don't want any part in that because of what I
23 had experienced, and the abuse and, like, you know, stuff,
24 I didn't want any part in that, but I knew, so
25 impressionable, that I had to do all this stuff in order to

1 have friends.

2 So that was fine, and I picked the most
3 abusive boyfriend that you could possibly imagine, the most
4 controlling. Oh, it was -- it was the beginning of the
5 downward spiral. It was almost like he was my father. I
6 remember being with him, and he used me a lot for,
7 like -- I would -- I felt like I was his drug mule,
8 honestly. Like, you know, where his parents were so
9 strict, and my mom wasn't, and she would never suspect what
10 I was doing. I got away with it, and -- he was very
11 abusive. I remember waking up one night. There was -- you
12 know, like, he -- when we -- I'd lost my virginity to him,
13 and it -- it wasn't nice in any way, shape, or form, and
14 then he had broken up with me because he was, like, I
15 didn't want you, I just wanted your friend, kind of thing,
16 then me latching onto that. Like, a couple months went by,
17 and then I got back with him, and then, you know, waking up
18 in the middle of the night and him being on top of me,
19 choking me, you know, and -- and stuff like that, and I
20 remember going back to that depression stage after that
21 happened, locking myself in a room for a couple of days but
22 not being able to go and being, like, hey, this is what I'm
23 experiencing.

24 And then it wasn't until, like -- I don't
25 know, like, little things. Like, I remember I had bought

1 him something, and he didn't appreciate it, and he made a
2 spectacle of me in front of all of his friends, you know,
3 and called me down to the dirt, but I took that because
4 that's what I was -- I was used to, you know? Then until
5 we broke up, and that was fine, and that's when I just
6 became -- that's when I found alcohol, honestly, and that's
7 when alcohol gave me that "I fit in" kind of thing, and
8 that's when -- the eating disorder totally took over then.
9 I started losing a lot of weight, and then I felt good, but
10 I looked like death, but I knew that alcohol and drugs were
11 going to keep that from me, so I was battling with the
12 insecurity, the alcohol, the drugs, the boys, and then
13 trying to keep it a secret.

14 But alcohol and drugs just made me someone
15 completely different. You know, then I recognized and I'd
16 let anything happen to me at that point because I knew next
17 day I would wake up, and, you know, it's either I fit in or
18 I had guilt and shame, and then I could just use drugs and
19 just get rid of that all together, and that's what I did.
20 I did that for a long time.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So what do you mean you
22 would let anything happen to you?

23 **MS. E.M.:** I put myself in really bad
24 situations. Oh, there was -- oh, my God, at that
25 stage -- I don't know. I just -- I felt like I would -- I

1 needed that acceptance, so it was like, multiple partners,
2 like, rough.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So high risk?

4 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. I -- that's -- yeah. So
5 that -- that was, like, bad. That was really bad. A
6 lot -- like, a lot of, like, physical abuse. You know,
7 I'm -- I'm not going to -- I'm not going to say, like, rape
8 in any way, shape, or form, but -- you know,
9 that's -- that's what men knew that they were going to get
10 from me, so that's what they got. Propositions. You know,
11 that was the beginning of -- I -- I know now, I'm educated
12 on it now that in any way, shape, or form, if -- if you
13 have, like, an agreement, like, that's sex trade, kind of
14 thing, so, like, that was just something that was -- that
15 was huge. Like, going out with guys, and then, you know,
16 being like, well, if you do this, then we'll drive you
17 home, or I'll take you out and we'll do this and -- you
18 know, and that's -- that was it, but of a life of
19 want -- looking for acceptance and negative male attention,
20 that's just where I -- it was almost like it was a high I
21 got off it. Some people call it daddy issues, but
22 whatever. Yeah, so that started, and then I'd moved to
23 Michigan.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And how old would have you
25 been?

1 MS. E.M.: I was, like, 19.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

3 MS. E.M.: 19, 20.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: As an adult?

5 MS. S.M.: That you moved to Michigan.

6 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

7 MS. S.M.: [Child 1] was about two years
8 old.

9 MS. E.M.: I was about 20. I think I was
10 about 20 --

11 MS. S.M.: 18.

12 MS. E.M.: -- because I got pregnant -- no,
13 I got pregnant with [Child 2] at -- I had [Child 2] at 21,
14 so it might have been 19, 20. I don't -- yeah.
15 There's -- I'm just going to say it. There's a lot
16 of -- there's incest in our family. Like, there was a lot
17 of sexual abuse and incest that went on in our family that
18 came out later on, but I didn't know that until, like, a
19 while later, and that's -- you know, that's not my story to
20 tell, but I became extremely close with, like, my uncle
21 when they came. That's who I -- that's who I went to
22 Michigan with, and that's when I recognized -- like, that
23 was when I started knowing that I was an alcoholic and
24 everything like that, and he had battled with the same kind
25 of thing, so he was, like, giving me, like, hope and

1 everything like that, but then it was just, like, I had
2 recognized then that everything that I was experiencing,
3 like, the abuse and being promiscuous and the alcohol and
4 drug use was something that I had in common with a lot of
5 my family. I never experienced any incest or anything,
6 sexual assault from any of my family, but I knew it was
7 there, you know what I mean?

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. M'hm.

9 **MS. E.M.:** Like, I knew I -- I was being
10 (indiscernible), so I -- for some reason, during that stage
11 of my life, I was able to, like, cut that line. That was a
12 line, but you know what I mean? It was almost, like, going
13 through my whole life and being like -- I don't know.
14 I -- I have a sponsor through AA --

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

16 **MS. E.M.:** -- because I'm an alcoholic, and
17 we talked about this a couple of weeks ago. Like, the
18 feeling of, like, being able to have a conscience then and
19 then drawing that line, it -- it was something that I was
20 surprised that I was actually able to do back then. Like,
21 through the -- the father figure. My uncle was like a
22 father figure.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** When you refer to your
24 uncle, is that your mother's brother or --

25 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

2 MS. E.M.: Like, your step -- half-brother.

3 Yeah.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

5 MS. E.M.: But the curiosity being there,
6 because any man that was in my life, that's just what I was
7 used to, you know what I mean? Men want me for one thing
8 and one thing only, but yeah.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: But he didn't?

10 MS. E.M.: No. Like, couple of weird little
11 incidents, but, like, no. There was never
12 anything -- anything like that.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: So you -- so what I hear
14 you saying was that your uncle was very supportive,
15 recognized boundaries with you.

16 MS. E.M.: M'hm. We used a lot of drugs
17 together.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

19 MS. E.M.: So there was times where it was,
20 like -- lines were crossed, but then the inadequacy. Like,
21 I remember flying back and forth with friends and, like,
22 getting jealous over that, you know what I mean? Just
23 distorted thinking. Like, that's just what I grew up with,
24 like, feeling inadequate and being, like, what's wrong with
25 me, kind of thing, but then also battling with, like,

1 that's your uncle, kind of thing. Just crazy.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

3 MS. E.M.: But, you know, I'm -- I'm okay
4 with talking about that because from growing up from where
5 I was to understanding it, how would I have known any
6 different, kind of thing?

7 Yeah, so a lot of drug use, a lot of, well,
8 you should date this person because if you date this
9 person, then we'll be able to fit in with this group. So I
10 knew that right then and there, like, offering myself was
11 something that was normal at this point, but I was beating
12 down my self-esteem, and --

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Was that your uncle's
14 suggestion to you?

15 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

17 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

19 MS. E.M.: Because we were using, like, a
20 lot of drugs at this point, and --

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: So there weren't really
22 any boundaries, then?

23 MS. E.M.: No. Sexually.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

25 MS. E.M.: That's probably the only

1 boundary. Yeah. So that's, like, sex trade as -- as it
2 is, and, like, going to, like, clubs and stuff like that
3 and being, like, the pretty girl and getting whatever
4 everybody needed because -- at my expense, you know?

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right.

6 **MS. E.M.:** So -- but to me, that was normal,
7 and I'd, like -- like, coming from no self-esteem to that,
8 I was -- I was okay with that at that point. But being in
9 the States and having to come back, I had to come -- come
10 back for a couple of weeks, and that's when I met my kids'
11 dad. There was a lot of men in between that, and then,
12 like I say, when I pick them, I pick them. So I picked,
13 like, the sickest, most in -- like, insecure human, someone
14 just like myself at that point, and I had gotten pregnant.
15 I would -- the relationship with him went from a lot of
16 neglect, a lot of beating down. You know, at the end of
17 it, he was, like, you know, just calling me down all the
18 time, pouring drinks on me, financial abuse. Like, I had
19 two kids, you know, had no control over anything like that,
20 and I knew that that's not what I wanted for my life, and I
21 had two small children at this point, and I remember my
22 child being 5 and going to Kindergarten and going to school
23 with headaches all the time, and then being, like, I heard
24 my mom and dad fighting, and I was like, all right, enough
25 is enough, and I left.

1 Before leaving, I had been in women's
2 shelters with my two kids, you know, like, going and asking
3 for help; you know, how do I get out of this relationship,
4 the fear of not being able to do it on my own and the
5 financial abuse, and after having, you know, like, it
6 beaten in my head that I had quit school, so I was
7 uneducated and, you know, good for nothing and everything
8 like that. It was -- it was hard to find that -- that
9 confidence to actually get out of it, so I had gone to the
10 shelter a couple of times, and -- until finally, I was,
11 like, I don't even care what I have to do, I'm going to get
12 away from this for the sake of my children.

13 But in between -- before the breakup, I had
14 started drinking a bit then. It was -- I had started a new
15 job because he would not pay for child care for -- you
16 know, like, just financial abuse, you know?

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** He controlled the money?

18 **MS. E.M.:** Controlled all of the money. He
19 was using drugs. He was never home. [*One line redacted -*
20 *personal information*] when I started saying that I was
21 going to leave him and -- that it was just -- like,
22 that -- like, that stuff I never even think about, like,
23 that he did that, but, yeah, when I told him that I was
24 going to leave him, that's what he did. [*One line redacted*
25 *- personal information*], and -- and he was the breadwinner,

1 so he was just, like -- and taking care of -- like, paid
2 the bills, and he made it well known that he paid the bills
3 and, like, abuse like this. Two children, snowstorm, I
4 need milk for the child: Walk. I'm not coming home. So
5 okay, you get up, you walk in a snowstorm to go get the
6 child milk or, you know, like, I need -- you know,
7 any -- anything. Like, I -- if I were to think about -- I
8 need tampons or something like that, it goes back to, like,
9 my father and be like, well, you know, what do you -- what
10 do you want for that? Like, you know what I mean? Just,
11 like, neglect of basic needs, I guess, but I took that for,
12 like, I don't even know -- I think I was with him for,
13 like, seven years, so when I finally left him, I left him
14 with our house. We had a house that we own and a car, and
15 I left with nothing, and I remember going and -- I can't
16 remember if I went to my mom's first or I went to my
17 friend's house, but either way, I -- I remember ending up
18 with nothing, you know, barely having enough to feed the
19 children, but *[one line redacted - personal information]*.
20 Like, if it was his turn with the kids, him calling me and
21 manipulating me into feeling -- oh, my anxiety's so bad,
22 and then me hearing that he was out using drugs and stuff
23 like that.

24 That lead me to, like, a bad place, battling
25 with alcohol and drugs earlier on, and I was able to stay

1 sober the whole time being pregnant with my kid. That's
2 when I fell back into. Then I found that crutch again. I
3 had gotten my own place with the kids, and I was on social
4 assistance at this point, and I was finally getting on my
5 feet, and I remember having a little bit of freedom because
6 we had gone through a divorce, and the judge ordered him
7 that he had to take care of his kids, and I enforced that.
8 I -- as much as I possibly could because I didn't want my
9 kids to grow up the way that I grew up without their dad.
10 And then when they would start -- when they would go,
11 that's when I would drink, honestly. Started, like -- you
12 know, Mondays and Tuesdays for a couple of hours, and I
13 would drink a little tiny bit, and then I would get up, and
14 that was fine, and then on the weekends, the weekends
15 was -- that's when I would let loose.

16 Anyway, long story short, after that
17 divorce, I had given up on all hope of being accepted by
18 anybody else, and then I let the abuse from years before
19 just happen again. Like -- you know, just, like, married
20 men and low self-worth and -- you know, not even caring
21 about it because if I was under the influence of alcohol,
22 it didn't even matter. I wouldn't even remember. That
23 happened. I had gotten into a relationship, and as I'd
24 been controlled, I started developing that attitude that I
25 was going to be the controller. I started taking control

1 of what I was doing and what I -- I was manipulating the
2 other person into getting what I wanted because so low
3 self-esteem at this point.

4 I had been in a relationship that
5 I -- shortly after -- there was two main relationships that
6 brought me to my breaking point, I guess. I dated a guy
7 after -- after my divorce, and I fell madly in love with
8 him, and he didn't want me, so again, I was facing "I don't
9 want you," kind of thing. I started drinking more and
10 more. Then I got in a relationship with another guy who
11 was a great guy, but I didn't know how to handle that, so I
12 was always trying to sabotage that, so I started cheating
13 on him with the guy that didn't want me before, started
14 using drugs, started lying, started -- everything like
15 that, and just inflicting pain on other people that I had
16 inflicted -- that I endured, like, my whole life.

17 I remember the last bit of abuse that I had
18 experienced was unwanted. We were highly intoxicated one
19 New Year's Eve, and I remember -- my father was in the
20 house, actually, at the time, and my dad -- like I said, my
21 dad's a heavy drinker, and I -- I went to go to sleep, and
22 when I went to sleep, I woke -- well, I would pass out, I
23 guess. I woke up to someone, like, touching me, and I
24 thought it was -- at this point, I thought it was -- I
25 thought it was my boyfriend at the time, and then I'd kind

1 of roll over, and I was like, no, leave me alone, and it
2 stopped for a minute, and then I felt it again, but it
3 wasn't -- this wasn't gentle. Like, this wasn't -- this
4 was like, kind of, like, extremely, like, rough, and then
5 the second time I had woke up, and I was like -- my
6 boyfriend had had his arm around me, and I was like,
7 that's -- that's not him. So I woke up in a panic,
8 and -- I didn't have control over this abuse, so I woke up
9 in a panic, and I said, you know, I think there's someone
10 in the room, and (indiscernible) was, like, no. He's like,
11 there's no one in the room. He's like, go back to sleep.
12 And then I felt it again. So I got up, crawled over him,
13 went over and turned on the light -- turned on the light,
14 and in the corner, there was someone standing legit in the
15 corner, like, back on, and it was my friend's husband, and
16 I was, like, what is going on right now? And I knew there
17 was a lot of drugs and a lot of alcohol involved in this.

18 I remember in between one of the times that
19 he was touching me, and my boyfriend at the time was trying
20 to get my dad out of the house because we were trying to
21 hide the drugs and stuff from him, and -- so while my dad
22 was in the house, I was being molested by my friend's
23 husband while my boyfriend was trying to get my dad out of
24 the house, and I remember leaving -- getting him out of the
25 house, not saying anything -- anything to this man,

1 and -- because I got back in bed and, like, laid there for
2 a couple of minutes. I was like, am I going to say
3 anything? And then I was like, I -- I have to, she was my
4 childhood best friend.

5 So I rolled over, went to my mom's house,
6 and it was the first time I ever opened my mouth about
7 anything, and it was, like, the first and the last time
8 that I opened my mouth about anything because of the
9 reaction that I had gotten. It was just, like, well,
10 that's you, E.M., you kind of deserved it, and you know, my
11 girlfriend was -- my friend was, like, we have a marriage
12 and everything like that, so -- you know, it was like,
13 almost like they didn't believe me that it had happened,
14 and that -- that was bad.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** When you say they didn't
16 believe you, is --

17 **MS. E.M.:** It was his word -- his word
18 against mine.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So was this his -- your
20 best friend saying that?

21 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. And then she kind of
22 resented me because she was -- you know, I was -- you know,
23 I was the bad one, you know? Like, there was -- our
24 families, they judged -- we talked about this on the way
25 here. Like, our -- we were judged by the sickest family

1 ever, and that was, like, four generations of families,
2 too, and --

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: But can I just clarify,
4 who -- who said you deserved it?

5 MS. E.M.: My best friend and her husband.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

7 MS. E.M.: You know, it was like, that's
8 E.M., so it was okay, you know? Like, coming from a
9 dysfunctional family of alcoholics and a dysfunctional
10 marriage, and look at you, you're on welfare, raising two
11 kids, and -- you know, like, that's -- that's -- that's all
12 you're going to be, that's -- that's who you are, so you
13 just, you know, take that. That was hard. That was a hard
14 one.

15 I remember going down shortly after and
16 going out with my girlfriends one night, and I -- I
17 was -- I was drugged, I remember that, and I remember
18 waking up in, like, a -- up in a cab, I remember that, and
19 I remember being scared but doing nothing about that too.
20 Don't even remember what had happened, my friends just
21 letting me go on and not caring.

22 So that was, like, the start of it, of being
23 like -- on top of everything, but when, like, it comes to
24 being an adult and taking care of myself, that was -- that
25 was bad.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Can I just ask you --

2 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- you mentioned that your
4 father was in your home. Had he come out for a visit?

5 **MS. E.M.:** Oh, he had moved back at this
6 point.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, okay. Okay.

8 **MS. E.M.:** In this -- in -- I had two
9 children in between this time, and -- after the marriage, I
10 had two kids. I left him, and my father came home to be
11 close to the grand -- to his grandkids.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, okay.

13 **MS. E.M.:** Because he had three.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

15 **MS. E.M.:** That's not what he wanted. So
16 yeah. So, like I said, the man -- the girl who had said,
17 you know, that's your own fault, it was our grandparents to
18 our parents to us to our kids, four generations of families
19 being friends, you know, and -- yeah. My dad was in the
20 house. I -- I don't even know if I've ever told him about
21 that because I don't know if he would believe it. To this
22 day, like, they denied all of that. They were, like, why
23 aren't you guys friends anymore? You know, and it was
24 just, like, oh, that's just Sue. Like, blind eye -- turn a
25 blind eye to it.

1 So after that, that was fine. I had messed
2 up that engagement that I was with that guy, and, you know,
3 was extremely, like, inconsiderate and dishonest, and
4 alcohol was rule -- like, ruling my life when I didn't have
5 kids at this point, and I had cheated on him multiple
6 times, you know, because I was always looking for that
7 acceptance, that love and everything like that, and --

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Sorry, you said you didn't
9 have your kids at this time?

10 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. When they're -- they would
11 go with their grandparents.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** With their grandparents?

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. Because their dad never
14 took care of them, I co-parent with their grandparents now.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, oh, okay.

16 **MS. E.M.:** [*One line redacted - personal*
17 *information*].

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

19 **MS. E.M.:** [*Two lines redacted - personal*
20 *information*]--

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Okay.

22 **MS. E.M.:** -- because he's sick.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The children are having
24 contact with their grandparents, his parents?

25 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Okay.

2 **MS. E.M.:** So let's fast-forward a little
3 tiny bit. After that relationship that I had ruined with
4 that, every relationship -- I never committed -- I stopped
5 committing myself to people at this point because I knew I
6 was -- I couldn't commit. There was no way. Like, I was
7 fine, E.M. was fine, but once I started using drugs or
8 alcohol, I was not fine. I just became that abused little
9 girl, pretty much, is what it was.

10 So I had gone through another relationship,
11 and this person had been in active addiction, so he was a
12 drug addict, and, you know, lied and cheated and
13 manipulated and, you know, stole everything from me, so
14 when that end -- crashed and burned, I had given out
15 my -- I had moved in with him, and when that crashed and
16 burned, I ended up moving back in with my mom, and I had
17 said prior that I had fell in love with this guy who didn't
18 want me, but in every -- every relationship in between
19 then, I always went back to him. It was always drunk E.M.
20 showing up at his -- at his door, like, spilling my heart
21 out and him, you know, getting what he wanted from me but
22 rejecting me, so he manipulated the shit out of that, which
23 is fine.

24 So during this time, he and I reconnected.
25 I was living with my mom at this point, and this is when I

1 started getting really sick. I started putting this man
2 before my kids. I stopped going to work at this point. I
3 started staying up all night and using drugs and then
4 trying to hide it from my mom, so living with two kids in
5 your mom's house, it doesn't take long before your mom
6 starts figuring out what's going on.

7 So she asked me to leave, and I had -- I had
8 left, playing the victim the whole way, don't get me wrong.
9 Like, you know? Like, why -- what is wrong with you?
10 Really, it -- it was all me.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And did you take the
12 children when you left?

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah, I took the children. I had
14 moved out. I -- I had this job at this point. I was
15 running a restaurant, and I worked really hard to get that,
16 so I was able to be a functioning alcoholic, and -- yeah,
17 not until I started throwing drugs into the mix, and this
18 is when I was at my mom's and reconnecting with this
19 person, like, that didn't want me all of a sudden. I
20 figured out that, okay, well, this is what's going to
21 connect us. Like, all of a sudden, drugs and alcohol
22 keeps -- whatever I've ever wanted from a man, this is what
23 I've got to keep going with him because that's the feeling
24 that I like. You know, I'm accepted by him.

25 So that was fine. Like I said, my mom had

1 started -- I was being extremely inconsiderate, coming home
2 6 and 7 o'clock in the morning, you know, like, under the
3 influence, disrupting her household. So she asked me to
4 leave, so that was fine, and I was able to, you know,
5 manipulate and fantasize about how I was going to keep this
6 new house going that I had just gone out and got, and
7 really, deep down inside, I can honestly say the only
8 reason I went and got that house and didn't get something
9 in my own means was to impress this guy, and I was so sick
10 at that point. Like, there wasn't even -- I don't
11 even -- I think it was, like, probably four or five days
12 before the kids even stayed in the house, so the first
13 night, it was just all drugs and all alcohol, and that
14 was --

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** How old would the children
16 have been at this time?

17 **MS. E.M.:** This would have been, like --

18 **MS. S.M.:** Two years ago.

19 **MS. E.M.:** -- three years ago.

20 **MS. S.M.:** Two years ago.

21 **MS. E.M.:** Two years ago. So I was -- at
22 this point, I was able to -- like, the children weren't
23 around, but I was able to find out any excuse as to why the
24 children weren't -- couldn't come home, and -- so I was
25 extremely inconsiderate. Like, it's horrible. I know.

1 But I -- I didn't -- I -- well, I wasn't able to take care
2 of them at that point.

3 So this went on. I got that house in
4 October, and from May, I guess, May, June, July, August,
5 September, October, so we had, like, six months in between.
6 I had received something for my child tax that -- and there
7 was drug use all -- like, I was functioning at my job.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

9 **MS. E.M.:** But when I didn't have my kids,
10 that's what I was doing. Child tax had sent me this letter
11 that I was supposed to send or they were going to cut me
12 off, and that was the last thing that I was thinking about,
13 so in October, they actually did cut me off, and that was
14 something that I had budgeted into how I was going to pay
15 for my house, and I didn't get it, and -- so I was in panic
16 mode, and at this point, I had already burned bridges with
17 my mom and my dad and my sister because I was -- I used
18 them. I lied to them. I manipulated them, and, you know,
19 like, my pride would never go to my family again and be
20 like, hey, guess what, you were right.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

22 **MS. E.M.:** Because at this point, my family
23 had recognized, like, you've got a problem, you know, but
24 total denial. I didn't want anybody pointing fingers at
25 me. I just wanted to get rid of everything, and I just

1 wanted to do my own thing. I had freedom and thought I was
2 doing this great job at -- at life. Meanwhile, I was
3 destroying it.

4 So my first instinct when I didn't get the
5 child tax is I went into panic mode, and the second thing
6 that went through my mind was, like, how are you going to
7 get money? Then the third thing that went through my mind
8 is, you're going to get it from men, because that's where I
9 usually got everything from, so that's what I did. I
10 started leading two separate lives. I was able to
11 manipulate my family into taking the kids more often. I
12 had a daytime job, but then I started escorting, but I was
13 able to tell them that I was working at a promotion
14 company, which I don't -- in my mind, I thought that was
15 great because I didn't know what else to -- I was too sick
16 and not even smart enough at this point to even come up
17 with anything better at this -- at that time.

18 But meanwhile, it was, how am I going to
19 fake it to everybody that my life is good right now, keep
20 the kids going, keep my drug habit going, and keep my
21 sanity? So that -- that was a huge downward spiral for me.
22 Little did I know that making that phone call was probably
23 the worst phone call and worst situation I've ever put
24 myself in.

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And what was that phone

1 call?

2 MS. E.M.: To start escorting.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

4 MS. E.M.: So that was fine. So within six
5 months, I was able -- I was working both jobs, having my
6 kids two, six months later, walking into the Waterford,
7 completely destroyed, social workers in my life, and
8 completely abused and broken and shattered, wanting to,
9 like, kill myself. I put myself in a situation that was
10 the end result for any person to go from, you know, I'm a
11 hard working woman and a great mom to I'm going to sell
12 myself on a daily basis to provide for another man, not to
13 provide for my kids, because I was able -- I knew that they
14 were taken care of because they had a good home from their
15 grandparents, and my self-worth had gone. I had become
16 everything that I hated about my family. I
17 had -- everything that I was like, I'm not going to become,
18 I had become, and, like, I keep saying self-worth. It's
19 because I felt like I deserved that. I was empowered by it
20 because I was -- like, I had that control, and I was being
21 abused anyway, so why not have that control over it and
22 make money at doing it?

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: And it was your decision.

24 MS. E.M.: It was my decision.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Which gives you that sense

1 of control.

2 MS. E.M.: Yeah. I was fed by, like, the
3 man that I had worked for. You know, like, oh, you know,
4 like, you're making all of this money, but it's, like, you
5 have no idea the amount of drugs that I have to use in
6 order to get through this day and, you know, the
7 situations, the abuse, and, like, the times of being, like,
8 I can't even do this and, like, the obsessive-compulsive,
9 like, showers and the flashbacks and, you know, the
10 depression and, like, the self-harm on top of all of that,
11 and it was just the worst, horrible ending to something so
12 beautiful to me. You know, I -- I kept all that a secret.
13 Like, everything was a secret my whole life, so I was
14 living a lie --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: But that's how you coped.

16 MS. E.M.: That -- yeah.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: From what I'm hearing that
18 those secrets are how you moved on, how you kept in your --

19 MS. E.M.: I never let --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: You feeling you were
21 moving on.

22 MS. E.M.: I never let anyone see how I
23 truly felt.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

25 MS. E.M.: Before I had gone and checked

1 myself into a detox centre, I was seeing, like, three
2 different -- three different men in my own personal life on
3 top of these three people -- well, two of them. The other
4 guy, I was funding. Like, I was providing everything for
5 him. Like, I was working to feed our drug addiction to,
6 like, pay for him, you know what I mean? Just to keep him
7 in my life. So I was working in the sex industry, and men
8 were getting something from me, but I was paying to have
9 someone in my life, if that makes any bit of sense.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah, it does.

11 I -- I -- I understand.

12 **MS. E.M.:** It -- it makes --

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I do understand.

14 **MS. E.M.:** Looking -- it's insanity to me,
15 but that's what I did, and it --

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** It worked for what you
17 needed.

18 **MS. E.M.:** Absolutely.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

20 **MS. E.M.:** You know, and then I had that
21 job, and I had this man that I was paying for, but then I
22 also had two other men, one that I could sit down with and
23 cry and be open and honest and be, like, hey, I'm a sex
24 worker, and he was a civil engineer, you know, and we could
25 relate because of the -- you can relate to anyone with the

1 amount of -- the right amount of drugs and alcohol. He
2 made me feel comfortable. He made me feel like the real
3 E.M. Like, I could go to him and felt comfortable. I felt
4 alive. Honestly, as depressed as I was, I still felt
5 alive, and then I had another man. I don't even know why I
6 had him in my life. I think that was just my ego, and then
7 I had this other guy who I was supporting who never wanted
8 me.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's the same guy from
10 years --

11 MS. E.M.: Yeah. Four years --

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's still -- he's
13 still -- still there?

14 MS. E.M.: Four years that went on. And
15 during all of that, you know, I -- the drugs got really,
16 really bad, and I -- I went and asked for sick leave from
17 my job, and I was going through a lot of sexual harassment
18 in my job, and -- but that was it. I was just used to
19 that. You know, I didn't know how to say no to any of
20 this. I just played along with it until, like -- until I
21 had gotten pregnant, and I needed to go have an abortion
22 because I had gotten pregnant by this guy that I was pretty
23 much paying to have in my life, and he wanted no part in
24 it, and I had to -- went to my boss, and, you know, I said
25 I'm pregnant, and I need this work -- time off work because

1 I need to have an abortion, and I went in to my work that
2 time, and he was, like, I can't give you that time off. He
3 was like, it's not my fault that you're pregnant and you
4 have to have an abortion, and I went to my doctor right
5 away, and I was like -- she was like, your sick leave --
6 she was like -- you know?

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

8 **MS. E.M.:** And that was probably -- that was
9 probably the best thing, but it was probably the worst
10 thing that could have happened, too, because then I had no
11 purpose, you know what I mean? That job was -- I was
12 failing at the job, but, like, working the other job and
13 then balancing all of this at that point, and I think it
14 was probably -- that was in February. By the end of
15 February, I woke up -- I didn't wake up one morning. I'll
16 be honest. I had showed up at my mom's door, and after
17 this man that I was paying for, he was kicking me out of
18 his house, and at the -- the depression was so bad at this
19 point. Like, I was just crying all the time.

20 Actually, I'm going to re-track because the
21 week before that, I was still up for -- I was on, like, a
22 2- or 3-day binge, and I was working, and for some reason,
23 something inside me said, call your dad and tell your dad
24 the truth. And I called my dad, and I told him, I was,
25 like, hey, Dad. And I don't know if subconsciously, like,

1 I went back to the person who -- where it all started, but
2 I called him, and I was like, I know I have to be honest
3 with someone about what I'm doing in my life because I
4 can't -- at this point, I had already -- this is my first
5 trip into detox, and I told him what I was doing, and I
6 said, Dad, I'm selling myself for money, I don't want to do
7 this anymore, and I need help.

8 And that was fine, and I went home, and I
9 remember using for a couple more days, and then he -- I
10 don't think he told my mom. This is a blur because I was
11 in a really bad state, but I remember using a couple more,
12 and this is when my conscience of like, hey, where are your
13 kids, E.M.? Like, you don't have a job now, and you're
14 taking all this abuse, and men are pretending that you're,
15 like, 8-year-olds, and, like, they're hitting you and
16 they're degrading you, and you're degrading yourself,
17 and -- you know, you're like -- you can't keep -- continue
18 doing this.

19 So I remember going -- this -- the guy that
20 I was paying, he -- he was kicking me out of his bed one
21 morning, and my first instinct was to get up and to go find
22 someone else to use drugs with, but at 8 o'clock in the
23 morning, no one -- unless you're still up -- everyone was
24 still asleep, so I ended up at my mom's door, and I went,
25 in, and I said, Mom -- I went in and I called the recovery

1 centre in St. John's. They said the only way we can get
2 you in is if you go to the Waterford, so I did that, and --

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: And the Waterford
4 is -- sorry?

5 MS. E.M.: The Waterford hospital.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

7 MS. E.M.: So it's, like, a --

8 MS. S.M.: It's for mentally ill people.

9 MS. E.M.: Yeah. You have to get, like, a
10 psychiatric --

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: So it's a psychiatric
12 (indiscernible).

13 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

15 MS. E.M.: So I went in and I told my mom,
16 and, you know, she was -- she was upset clearly, but that
17 was the first time that I was like, all right, so I'm
18 waving a white flag as a parent right now. Like, you're
19 going to have to -- please, can you call their other
20 grandparents, and I can't -- I can't do this anymore
21 because -- I just can't, and I --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: So can I ask you, when you
23 told your dad, what was his response?

24 MS. E.M.: Get out of where you're to. No
25 more supportive than that. And I was like -- I repeated

1 it. I'll never forget that, and he's like, all right,
2 leave where you are and go home, and I was like, Dad, do
3 you -- do you need me to repeat what I just told you? And
4 he was like, yeah, I heard what you said; but to this day,
5 almost two years later, it's not something that he talks
6 about. Like, he won't talk about it. He kept -- and I
7 understand why. Like, I'm his daughter, but -- yeah, that
8 was -- that was my first phone call.

9 **MS. S.M.:** But after your first stint, then,
10 at detox, when you came out --

11 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

12 **MS. S.M.:** -- you went to your father's and
13 took 60 Valium.

14 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. So he -- he doesn't -- he
15 didn't recognize it. So when I went in the psychiatric
16 hospital, they got me into the recovery centre, and I spent
17 four, five days there detoxing, and -- and I was still
18 feeling bad about myself then. Like, I still -- I was
19 still in contact with this other guy that I was paying,
20 and -- you know, still trying to feel accepted, and I was
21 like, my life was -- you know, at this point, I had social
22 workers, and my family had just found out what I was doing,
23 but I felt free because I was like, this is the first step
24 of me getting away from this life altogether. I was like,
25 I don't even care who judges me anymore because it's like,

1 I'm going to die if I keep doing this.

2 So I stayed there for a couple of days, and
3 when I got out, that man that I was paying, he didn't want
4 nothing to do with me because I wasn't -- I didn't have any
5 money, so I went back to an abuser, my ex-husband, and they
6 let me out, and I was able to manipulate my family into
7 thinking that I was going to an AA meeting, and I ended up
8 using that whole weekend, and it didn't take long for me to
9 be right back to the recovery centre, but I think now that
10 I look back on it, now that I'm educated, I think psychosis
11 started kicking in at this point because --

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The withdrawal part?

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. Like, I was
14 just -- (unreportable sound).

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** They say that that -- that
16 can happen.

17 **MS. E.M.:** Like, hysterical. Like, I
18 wasn't -- like, the stuff that I -- like, I -- I -- I've
19 done, like, it's just -- that's not who I am. So the
20 second time that I went into detox, the withdrawal wasn't
21 that bad, and they'd already offered me all the services
22 and stuff like that, so it -- it was on me to take it, so,
23 you know, my life was disgusting at this point, and I was
24 isolating, and -- you know, I was still able to manipulate
25 men to get what I wanted, and all I was doing was covering

1 up, like, all this pain, and so when I got out of the
2 recovery centre for the second time, I felt like, I'm
3 asking for all of this help and nobody is helping me.

4 So child services was in my life, and I was
5 able to get nine days clean at this point, and then I had
6 relapsed, and I was open and honest with my social worker
7 because they were just great, and -- but I felt -- I was so
8 disappointed when I had relapsed. That night when I had
9 relapsed, it was, like, 4 o'clock in the morning; I don't
10 remember if I drove, or I don't remember if I got a cab,
11 but I remember showing up to the one house where I knew I
12 could get alcohol, and that was my dad's. I showed up at
13 his house at 4 o'clock in the morning. He had opened the
14 door like it was -- like it was nothing. He just opened
15 the door and then went back to bed, never questioned me on
16 why I was there, and that was so out of the normal. Like,
17 I would never show up and -- I looked, and there was no
18 alcohol there, and at this point, I was so tired of my
19 life, I was just, like, I just want to go to sleep. I'm
20 just tired. Like, I don't want to have to go to these men
21 anymore. I don't want to think about how I failed my
22 family and my children, and I went over -- like, it was
23 like an out-of-body experience. I watched -- it's like I
24 watched myself walk over to a table full of pills and just
25 ate a bottle of Valium and just -- just laid down on the

1 couch and put ear phones in my ears and laid down.

2 And then, like, the next day, the next
3 evening, I woke up, so my dad had just saw me there with my
4 coat and my shoes on and a bottle of pills and a bottle of
5 water and never bothered to try to wake me up, and it was
6 almost like a higher power, a thousand percent, because I
7 opened my two eyes, and when I opened my two eyes, my two
8 kids were looking at me, and I've been sober since that
9 day. I went and told my mom that -- what I had done, and I
10 was in rehab two days later, and that's what brings me
11 here, that all of this -- well, it's almost 17 months
12 later. What I've done for myself was completed rehab.
13 I've reached out to every community organization that's
14 offered in St. John's for the addictions, alcohol, the
15 drugs. I'm part of the Blue Door Program for the sex
16 industry, for sex trade workers.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and what's that
18 about?

19 **MS. E.M.:** The sex -- what -- Blue Door?

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

21 **MS. E.M.:** The Blue Door Program is to help
22 women stop working in the sex industry, offer basic
23 necessities and support and counseling, and it's
24 just -- it's a great program. They help you with -- and
25 it's just the basic --

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Giving back.

2 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. So I'm a part of that.

3 That has been a huge help to me to get the therapy that I
4 need for the abuse and stuff like that. That's been
5 helpful. Doing DBT and CBT, so cognitive behavior therapy,
6 and -- just to retrain my brain to not think that that's
7 all that I'm worth. In my sobriety, I had -- like, I had
8 multiple sponsors, and I've gone into schools. I have
9 wrote articles for people in the sex industry to see that
10 there is a way out. Within three months of getting sober,
11 I had gotten my kids back (indiscernible) and everything
12 like that.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So when you mentioned
14 earlier that child services were involved, was that because
15 it -- taking your children into care, or were they watching
16 your children being with the grandparents?

17 **MS. E.M.:** I went and told them -- I told
18 them the truth. I was like, I'm not a fit parent right
19 now.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Because
21 the -- I -- I didn't want to interrupt when you were
22 talking --

23 **MS. E.M.:** No, that's okay. Yeah.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- when you were talking
25 there. So you yourself went and -- and --

1 **MS. E.M.:** When I checked myself into rehab,
2 I told them all -- not to rehab. To the detox --

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** To -- yeah, to the social
4 worker.

5 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And so what did -- where
7 did your children go?

8 **MS. E.M.:** They went with their
9 grandparents.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. So that -- there
11 was still -- the children were still with family?

12 **MS. E.M.:** Yes, absolutely.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. And how old were
14 your children then?

15 **MS. E.M.:** 11 -- this is only 17 months ago.

16 **MS. S.M.:** A year and a half ago.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah. And so they would
18 be how old?

19 **MS. E.M.:** My son just turned 13, and my
20 daughter is 9, almost 10.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Okay.

22 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

23 **MS. S.M.:** But the -- social services didn't
24 take them.

25 **MS. E.M.:** No.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No. No.

2 **MS. E.M.:** No, no, no.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Okay.

4 **MS. E.M.:** They -- they worked with us
5 really close.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** They -- they have them
7 with the grandparents --

8 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- rather than take them
10 into care. Okay.

11 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. But that was my own doing.
12 Like, I went to them. I -- I was honest, and I
13 knew -- like, I have a really supportive family between
14 their other grandparents and my family. That wasn't an
15 issue. The children were going to be taken care of.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But that's -- but
17 that -- that's really a -- a testament to the courage that
18 you had in terms of making sure that your children were
19 looked after.

20 **MS. E.M.:** M'hm.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You know, right?
22 That's -- that's (indiscernible).

23 **MS. E.M.:** I'm no good to them if I was
24 living the way that I was, and I didn't go in there and
25 sugar-coat it. Like, I told them about the sex industry.

1 I told them about the abuse. I told them about the drugs.
2 I just wanted to be heard, and I wanted to be pointed in
3 the right direction onto how I have to stop this and what I
4 have to do.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Did you ever sense what
6 the -- the trigger was? What was that moment, that
7 defining moment? Was it waking up one morning -- because,
8 again, I didn't want to interrupt --

9 MS. E.M.: That's okay.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- and you were
11 talking -- you were talking about waking up, and it was
12 like -- it was like something came over you that you -- was
13 there anything particular that --

14 MS. E.M.: I've --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- triggered this?

16 MS. E.M.: What I've recognized is that I
17 have a fear of criticism, so I'm a huge people-pleaser.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

19 MS. E.M.: Like I said, I had no
20 self-confidence. I quit school. Like, never fit in, but
21 it was just, like, I found this -- this strength one day.
22 Like, I'd always told myself, E.M., you're going to do
23 this. You're going to do this, and it's going to be fine,
24 but it was just, like -- I actually say it in the meetings
25 that I go to that my sobriety is probably the only -- and

1 parent -- well, I went through a rough patch parenting. My
2 sobriety is the only thing that I've ever done for myself
3 and committed to that I've taken serious, I've never been
4 dishonest to. I've never, like, taken a break from it.
5 I've never manipulated it. I've -- you know, like, that's
6 being sober --

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** (Indiscernible).

8 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. The being sober and not
9 putting drugs and alcohol in my body rips -- takes
10 everything away from me. Like, everything. Like, if I
11 don't touch that, then I truly am who I am. I started -- I
12 went back to school last December. I'm doing fine with
13 that. I love that. You know, that recovery centre that I
14 went into, *[one line redacted - identifying information]*,
15 and I go in there a couple times a month to speak to the
16 people who are just starting to where I was. It's -- I
17 guess it's just dedication to myself. You know, before
18 anything else, you know, like, I have to wake up and think
19 about that, like, where I can be, where I was to where I am
20 right now because I know how fast my life can --

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Change.

22 **MS. E.M.:** -- spiral down if I just --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And what about your
24 children? How -- have you -- how's the interaction with
25 them (indiscernible) change?

1 **MS. E.M.:** I have been very open with them.
2 We told them that it was depression at first, but coming
3 from generation after generation, their dad is an addict.
4 We were going to (indiscernible). We were on our way to a
5 pow-wow, actually, last summer, and it was my first
6 weekend -- it was in July -- that I had full rights to my
7 kids since that February, and I was like, you know what, I
8 don't want to lie to them. I was like, I'm not lying to
9 them because I know that they're going to face this
10 themselves, like, this disease, because I think it's a
11 disease, so I was like, I'm going to start educating my
12 kids right away. I --

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Hm. Break the cycle.

14 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. I'm -- and I
15 educate -- and we talk about it. We're very open and
16 honest. They know I went to rehab. They know that I go to
17 meetings all the time. I just tell them the truth; like,
18 open communication. Like, they know nothing about the sex
19 industry.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No. M'hm.

21 **MS. E.M.:** They know that I'm -- I'm single.
22 Like, there's no, like -- like, I'm seeing somebody now,
23 but it's not the obsession part of -- that I need someone
24 in my life is not there because I'm so grounded with, like,
25 my kids and my recovery and my school and, you know, just

1 doing stuff for myself. Like, you know, like, we have a
2 great relationship, you know? Like, it was rough at first
3 with my -- with my daughter because I was installing that
4 fear of abandonment into them, so I had to give them that
5 reassurance that, hey, guess what, I'm here, and I'm going
6 to protect them, and that's -- that's where we're to right
7 now. Yeah. Like, they take notice to drugs and -- they
8 take no -- I look at alcohol as a drug because of the
9 program that I work in.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm. M'hm.

11 **MS. E.M.:** But they notice that. They don't
12 like being around it. If they're around it, they'll tell
13 me.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And is there a sense from
15 your children that they had -- some -- because you spoke
16 about when you were young --

17 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- and you realized what
19 was happening in the family home.

20 **MS. E.M.:** I put my -- the way I look at it,
21 the way I talk to my kids is how I would -- would have
22 wanted someone to talk to me --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

24 **MS. E.M.:** -- when I was that age. Like, my
25 son, if he's -- like, if I can't -- if he won't listen to

1 me, I'll write down on a piece of paper and leave it in his
2 room, write it in his journal, give him some inspiration,
3 give him some motivation, confidence, you know what I mean?
4 Like...

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And that you care.

6 **MS. E.M.:** Absolutely. A thousand percent.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Because I -- that's what
8 I've heard through your truth is about looking for
9 acceptance and looking for love --

10 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- and looking for -- for
12 caring --

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- and not being able to
15 find that, you sought it out, and that included finding
16 ways to do that that involved alcohol, involved drugs, but
17 you've come so far.

18 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah, and you know, like, my mom
19 and I are sitting here right now. It was because of my own
20 doing my mom and I didn't really have a relationship for
21 the first -- I think I was about nine months sober before
22 we start -- before we started speaking again, and then I
23 just had to be honest with her, and, like, there's some
24 stuff that when the time comes we will talk about, but I
25 take full responsibility for anything -- like, for anything

1 that I've done or put them in -- you know, like,
2 I -- my -- I went into rehab and didn't really realize the
3 effect that I was causing on everybody around me until two
4 weeks into rehab, and my -- you know, here I had people
5 taking care of my kids, and my mom was packing up my house,
6 and I can only imagine what she saw going in there, and I'm
7 grateful for what I have and the people that I have, but I
8 feel like going through a life full of dishonest
9 being -- just abusing other people because I've been
10 abused. You know, you've got to prove who are you and how
11 hard you work to stay healthy, and then once you do that,
12 then the relationships can be built again.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

14 **MS. E.M.:** So that's what I'm doing. I'm
15 learning. I'm building healthy relationships right now.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And I would -- would think
17 from what you're saying, you're also choosing those
18 relationships carefully.

19 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. I don't see my dad. You
20 know, my dad [*one line redacted - personal information*].
21 My dad was like, come over for a beer. I'm like, no, I'm
22 good. You know, he -- he doesn't get it, and I don't
23 expect him to get it.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You made a comment earlier
25 about your -- your dad's own issues.

1 MS. E.M.: M'hm.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: So are you aware of issues
3 that face him and -- that may be part of the reason that
4 he's turned to alcohol?

5 MS. E.M.: Bits and pieces, but, like --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm. Because you're
7 talking about all -- the generational stuff, and --

8 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- and I'm just wondering
10 if it's on both sides and whether you have an understanding
11 at all of --

12 MS. E.M.: It's father issues with my dad
13 too.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah. Okay. M'hm.

15 MS. E.M.: Definitely. Definitely father
16 issues. He will not talk about it. Like I say, he stuffs
17 all that -- he's what, 62? And he's still drinking on a
18 daily basis; you know, *[one line redacted - personal*
19 *information]*. And I -- you know, I made -- my sister and
20 I, she was home a couple of months ago because she was
21 Halifax, and we all went out for supper -- like, for
22 dinner, and I -- that's a big no-no for me because my dad
23 is so close-minded, and -- you know, he's just a very sick
24 man, and I'm careful about who I put myself around, family
25 or no family.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

2 **MS. E.M.:** And just the stuff that he
3 started getting on with, and I was just, like, Dad. He was
4 like, do I look like an addict? And I was like -- my
5 sister and I looked at him, and we were like, do we look
6 like we're addicts? And I'm like -- but the difference is
7 my sister and I are moving forward with our life. We're
8 changing it. Like you said, we're stopping the cycle.
9 Like, he just...

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** [*One line redacted -*
11 *personal information*]

12 **MS. E.M.:** [*one line redacted - personal*
13 *information*]. Absolutely. It's kind of funny. She was not
14 here in the province when I went through my rock bottom,
15 but she was supportive.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

17 **MS. E.M.:** Until -- like, you know, she was
18 super supportive, and it wasn't until a couple of months
19 ago that we reconnected, and it was like my sister had met
20 me for the first time sober. We'd gone out for supper,
21 and, you know, she had, like, a glass of wine, and I had
22 green tea, and that's fine, but it was, like -- I guess
23 the -- what I was opening up to her about and being honest
24 and why -- the experience, that gave her that strength to
25 open up to me about it, so that felt good. Like...

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Do you find when you're
2 talking about it that there's some empowerment back to
3 yourself?

4 **MS. E.M.:** Like I said, it's the only thing
5 that I've ever committed myself to. Like, I find
6 it -- well, in the program that I work, I find the more
7 that you talk about it, the less hold it has over you.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm. M'hm.

9 **MS. E.M.:** So it's -- it's not -- I don't
10 mind talking to people about it because there's so many
11 women that deal with it on a day-to-day basis that don't
12 have that voice to talk about it.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you know what it's
14 like.

15 **MS. E.M.:** I know what that's like, yeah,
16 and I find the more that I talk about it, the more that I'm
17 that much further away from walking back into it, and I
18 recognize, like, the signs. Like, there's people that,
19 like -- that man that I was paying, like, I haven't spoke
20 to him since the day before that I had gone into rehab.
21 I've ran into his family, and they just pretended like I
22 didn't exist, but --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** He's not healthy for you.

24 **MS. E.M.:** That's -- he's not -- I would
25 guarantee if I were -- he would be able to manipulate me

1 within an hour. Doesn't matter how long I'm sober, he's
2 one of those people that for some reason, my disease just
3 latches onto.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

5 **MS. E.M.:** I had to do a recovery plan in
6 rehab, and he was the first person. If I'm hanging out
7 with this person, I'm guaranteed to relapse, so I stay away
8 from him, absolutely, every way. I haven't spoke to him.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And it sounds like you've
10 surrounded yourself with people who will help you stay on
11 the road to recovery, because it's -- it's like you said,
12 you've had a long lifetime --

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- of not taking care of
15 yourself.

16 **MS. E.M.:** The only people that I have in my
17 life right now are either recovering addicts or alcoholics,
18 all in recovery, and the people from the Blue Door Program.
19 Those are the only people, and, like, I was selfish when I
20 was using and drinking all the time that it was, like, what
21 are you going to give me, but I'm selfish like that in my
22 recovery too. It's, like, how are we going to help each
23 other? Like, what -- you know what I mean? What am I
24 going to do for myself on a day-to-day basis? This is part
25 of recovery for me. Like, when we leave here, I'm going to

1 an AA meeting, you know? So it's just...

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: And understanding. You
3 know, that's one of the things I've also heard. You seem
4 to really have great insight into yourself, what's
5 happened, what your needs are, and what you need to do for
6 yourself.

7 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: And -- and coming here
9 took -- takes a lot of courage to -- to share what you've
10 shared today.

11 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: And -- yeah. Wow.

13 MS. S.M.: I've never had a drink with
14 either one of my children.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: And -- and you've
16 been -- you've been sober 18 years?

17 MS. E.M.: Yeah. (Indiscernible) --

18 MS. S.M.: 18 years --

19 MS. E.M.: Almost 19.

20 MS. S.M.: -- 1st of August.

21 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Wow. Congratulations.

23 MS. E.M.: That's huge.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Very much so.

25 MS. E.M.: And you know what's huge is,

1 like, my mom went with me to my first AA meeting, and she
2 sat there, and she was like, oh, I don't have a drinking
3 problem, like -- you know, even though she's -- and then we
4 went to an AA -- she joined me for an AA convention, which
5 is, you know what, most people are like, oh, I want to do
6 this with my family, I want to go on a trip. I'm
7 like -- it was, like, mind-blowing having my mom go to AA
8 stuff with me because it's so important, and she introduced
9 herself as an alcoholic, and that was, like, yay, my mom.
10 Like, that's huge, and I wrote my sister right away. It's,
11 like, little things.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

13 **MS. E.M.:** Like, a lot of people -- like, I
14 could say right now, like, oh, I'm just waiting for the day
15 for my dad to recognize that he's sick and that he's done
16 some wrong and own his part. It was, like -- how do I say
17 this? It's something I've always waited to hear coming
18 from my mom's mouth because then I know that once she says
19 that she's on the road to getting to where she deserves to
20 be, and, like, she's got lots of help for herself, you
21 know?

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M-hm.

23 **MS. E.M.:** Like, just talking about it,
24 and -- and stuff like that, it's -- it's huge. Like, being
25 survivors of all this stuff.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and that's where
2 you actually started your truth was talking about the
3 generations.

4 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you now as a fourth
6 generation have the insight about the need to stop that
7 cycle --

8 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- and have found that
10 within yourself, that -- that commitment, that passion that
11 you need to -- to keep you motivated and to be successful
12 like your mom --

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- some 18 years.

15 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and I think, you
17 know, you've -- you've talked so much about the need of
18 getting something for your father, some acknowledgment
19 of -- of you and as being his daughter, but I also hear you
20 saying I understand now that, really, all I can control is
21 me.

22 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. I have no control over --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What he does.

24 **MS. E.M.:** I -- I accept everything about
25 him. I accept that it took me 33 years to be, like, all

1 right, this has got to change, and he might never get to
2 that point. He might be okay spending his whole life
3 drinking --

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

5 MS. E.M.: -- to relive the same day over
6 and over and over again, the same self-pity. I don't want
7 to live like that.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: You don't want that for --

9 MS. E.M.: I didn't see that for my mom.
10 Like, you know, sometimes, like, even -- you know, when my
11 mom got sober, I would have nightmares and call her and be
12 like, Mom, were you drinking last night? She'd be like,
13 no. It's the same thing, and I can only imagine that my
14 kids probably had the same dreams of me being drunk, you
15 know, kind of thing, but it's just -- I came from a strong
16 woman.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: And your children see
18 hope, too.

19 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right? Because they have
21 their mom back.

22 MS. E.M.: And it's kind of funny because
23 before, my kids were, like, always about their other
24 grandparents. God love them. They're great.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

1 **MS. E.M.:** But now me and my mom are totally
2 sober. There's no -- nothing. Like, we went out for my
3 son's birthday, and when we all sat together, both
4 families, when there was alcohol served, my kids wanted to
5 get up and go. They were like, mm-mm.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No.

7 **MS. E.M.:** We don't -- we don't want that.
8 My kids don't need the socialization of, like, sitting
9 around and having a drink with supper or any -- we talk
10 about feelings. You know, they -- our kids see emotion and
11 love, like, hugs. You know what I mean? Like, I was never
12 really shown hugs when I was younger. That's changed now,
13 like, as we've gotten older, you know, and my kids are
14 mauled, you know what I mean? Like, kisses and hugs, and
15 that -- little things like that is so important.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah. Absolutely.

17 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And I think that -- you
19 know, that is certainly something we hear, is, one, the
20 sense of abandonment, and -- and the -- the talk of I know
21 my mom loves me.

22 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I know my mom loves me,
24 but then they speak of the -- of the same thing that you
25 speak of --

1 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- is that the -- those
3 themes that -- that continue from generation to generation.
4 (Indiscernible) --

5 MS. E.M.: I don't believe that people can
6 love anybody unless they love themselves. It doesn't
7 matter if you're a parent or not, and I -- I
8 expect -- like, I -- like we talked about my dad,
9 like -- like I said in the beginning, my parents did the
10 best they could with what they had.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: And when you talk about
12 the -- the generations, and you identify as Mi'gmaq, were
13 any of your family in residential school? Was there a
14 residential school experience?

15 MS. S.M.: I was in an orphanage.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: You were in an orphanage?
17 You lost your parents?

18 MS. S.M.: My dad, and then our mother gave
19 us up.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: And were you ever aware of
21 your parents being at a residential school?

22 MS. S.M.: No. My mother and father
23 (indiscernible).

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: No. Okay.

25 MS. S.M.: But they were born in the '30s.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

2 MS. S.M.: So...

3 MS. E.M.: I have to use the washroom. I'm
4 sorry.

5 MS. S.M.: They were married when they were
6 50 -- in 1951.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Yes, because the
8 residential school goes back a long time.

9 MS. S.M.: Long time.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: We'll just stop this
11 for -- it's 6:46. We'll just stop this to --

12 MS. E.M.: How much longer do -- would you
13 like?

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: This is your space and
15 your time.

16 MS. E.M.: Okay.

17 MS. S.M.: It's all your time, honey. I'll
18 go have a smoke with you.

19 MS. E.M.: Yeah, and then I --

20 --- Upon recessing

21 --- Upon reconvening at 6:55 p.m.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: I'll start the video.

23 Sorry, I need -- I've reached that point, put my glasses
24 on.

25 MS. S.M.: I have to take mine off.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, do you? Yeah. Okay.
2 So we are back on the record. It is now 6:55, and this is
3 with E.M., and her mom S.M. is here. 6:55. So, E.M.,
4 you -- we were just starting to talk, and we were off the
5 record, and you were making a comment about the loss of
6 people that have been in your life that you've been
7 speaking about.

8 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So...

10 **MS. E.M.:** I just -- one of the men that I'd
11 spoken to -- spoke of during this, we just buried him a
12 couple of months ago. Probably -- he died -- what was it?

13 **MS. S.M.:** [Date].

14 **MS. E.M.:** {Date}, yeah, and it was
15 heart-breaking. Absolutely heart-breaking. But then
16 again, looking at it like -- he was a really sick man, and
17 when we put him in the ground, like, I had no hard feelings
18 towards -- I claimed my part in a lot of -- in that
19 particular relationship, but, you know, like, if we -- I
20 thought about it when I was outside. Like, murdered and
21 missing Indigenous women. I read a book for school. It's
22 called "April Raintree," and it's about Native women and
23 the stereotypical -- promiscuous, alcoholic, you know what
24 I mean? It's so sad. But when I -- I read that book, the
25 first thing I thought of was, like, pain, generation after

1 generation of not being taught any different, because I can
2 relate to how many times -- what got me into the Blue Door
3 Program was -- in St. John's, probably last September,
4 there was a sex worker who had gone missing, and
5 they -- she was found dead. That impacted me. Even though
6 I was sober at this point. It -- the severity of, like,
7 what I have done in my life experience --

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm. M'hm.

9 **MS. E.M.:** -- made me be, like, first of
10 all, grateful, but how am I going to get the help for that
11 so I don't go back to that? I mean, I put myself in
12 numerous situations in, like, hotel rooms and stuff like
13 that --

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm. M'hm.

15 **MS. E.M.:** -- you know? Just being with,
16 like, people I have no idea who they are or what they could
17 do to me. You know, I'm lucky to have escaped situations
18 that I've been in and just be, like, no, I'm sorry. Yeah,
19 so I just -- did you notice how I said I'm sorry?
20 That's -- I'm working on that. Criticism. Fear of
21 criticism. That's where that came from. I don't like to
22 let people down. I'm afraid of judgment. I'm afraid
23 of -- you know, I work on that a lot, all the time.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But really, tied to all
25 the comments you talked about, wanting to be loved and to

1 be accepted, criticism is the form of pushing somebody
2 away.

3 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: So it goes hand in hand
5 that if you're looking for love, you don't want to be
6 criticized, either.

7 MS. E.M.: No. I want to be totally
8 accepted.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

10 MS. E.M.: You know, the people that I
11 have -- well, the person I'm seeing right now, I probably
12 offer way too much information. Like --

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

14 MS. E.M.: But I just want someone to know
15 who I am. This is where I've been, this is what I've gone
16 through, and that fear of being criticized, but I was like,
17 you know what? I'm not going to grow or change, anything,
18 unless I tell you who I am and where I've been.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's been a long journey
20 for you, and you're at a place, I can hear, where
21 it's -- this is who I am, love me as I am, accept me as I
22 am.

23 MS. E.M.: But I don't need --

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Because you're okay with
25 who you are.

1 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah, I don't need -- I'm not
2 looking for anybody to love me at this point.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But the acceptance of who
4 you are.

5 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** It's, like, this is me.

7 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And I'm happy with me.

9 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I'm good for me.

11 **MS. E.M.:** I set a lot of boundaries, people
12 from my past -- yeah, it's just -- people from your past,
13 once you've done damage and they only know that side of
14 you, some people are close-minded and don't want to know
15 who you actually really are, and I'm okay with that. I'm
16 like, if that's who you want to remember me by, that's
17 okay, but I was also extremely sick, and -- telling people
18 the truth. A lot of people can't handle that.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No.

20 **MS. E.M.:** They're just like, whoa, you're
21 owning up to this? And I'm like, yeah, absolutely. And I
22 recognize all that.

23 **MS. S.M.:** But they don't own up to what
24 they've done.

25 **MS. E.M.:** No.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Well, and -- and it's like
2 every -- one of my favorite memes or memes, however you
3 pronounce it, is -- so an elephant with an umbrella in the
4 back of the elephant, and it's basically saying, everybody
5 carries a burden.

6 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Don't judge.

8 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right? Be kind. Because
10 we don't know what experiences people have had that have
11 got them to where they have been.

12 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right? And so it's --

14 **MS. E.M.:** I mean -- yeah, no. I -- I
15 totally understand that.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

17 **MS. E.M.:** It's -- you know, it's like, I
18 get through the whole, like, am I fighting through the
19 control thing? Am I trying to have the power over this
20 conversation, relationship, absolutely anything? But,
21 like, I really have to stand firm in every relationship
22 that I have that I'm -- my sponsor always teaches me, you
23 have -- tells me, you have to teach people how you want to
24 be treated, so that's -- if I set boundaries right off the
25 bat, then there's no room for it to be something else that

1 it's actually not, because I know how easily persuade [sic]
2 I am, so I just avoid all situations like that, and that's
3 finding people who are okay with that. Like, to be, like,
4 hey, I've worked in the sex industry, and if I use drugs
5 and alcohol, this is who I'm going to become, like, that's
6 fine. Like, if that's, like, a sexless relationship, then
7 that's -- that's how it has to be. I'm totally fine with
8 that. That's where I'm to at this point, because, like,
9 looking for love from someone else is not -- I've looked my
10 whole life for that, and now I'm just -- my main priority
11 are my kids, my sobriety, and my school.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Wow, you've come a long
13 way.

14 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you're working hard at
16 keeping that way.

17 **MS. E.M.:** Absolutely. Yeah.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Good for you.

19 Congratulations.

20 **MS. E.M.:** Thank you. I appreciate it.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

22 **MS. E.M.:** So that's where I am, and I just
23 hope that -- male or female, because it's so common even in
24 males. I've met a lot of men that --

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

1 **MS. E.M.:** -- have lived the same kind of
2 life I have.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I'm sure.

4 **MS. E.M.:** Men don't -- men don't talk about
5 it, but for some reason, once I start talking about it,
6 like, if I share any of this --

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm. M'hm.

8 **MS. E.M.:** -- in a recovery centre or an AA
9 meeting or something like that, I'm guaranteed at least one
10 person's coming up to me afterwards and being, like, thank
11 you.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And even to open the door
13 for somebody else a little bit.

14 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah. But it's been a lot
15 of -- I did an interview with someone from Eastern Health
16 talking about how to treat people when you go into a
17 hospital that have -- that are suffering from what I've
18 lived through, and I was like, all you got to do is listen
19 to them. Don't look at them as a number. Calling them by
20 name would be a start, not an eye roll. You know? That's
21 all I wanted. When I went in to ask for help, that's all I
22 wanted, someone to take five minutes out of their day to
23 point me in the right direction, and --

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And listen.

25 **MS. E.M.:** -- and listen, and I found that

1 in the support system that I have going on right now.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm. Well --

3 **MS. E.M.:** You know, like, my therapist
4 wrote me yesterday. She was like, good luck, E.M., you
5 know I'm here. Like, I really -- so, like, strong women in
6 my life right now, and men. Like, I have a man sponsor
7 because I need to develop, like, a healthy man/woman
8 relationship, and, you know, he's -- he's teaching me that,
9 and -- yeah. It's a learning curve. Doesn't happen
10 overnight.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No, and didn't take
12 overnight to get where you got to --

13 **MS. E.M.:** No.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- either, right? And I
15 think that's part of that. It's part of -- you talked
16 earlier about the eating disorders.

17 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** A lot of that's about
19 control and --

20 **MS. E.M.:** Oh, that's -- that's something
21 that is on -- it was -- it was so high on my recovery list
22 to -- to deal with that, but I go to a women's processing
23 group, and that's -- we talk about a lot of that, and it
24 could be, like, on a day where it's, like -- you know, all
25 different shapes and sizes, and it depends on what kind of

1 mood everybody's in. We don't talk about scales. We don't
2 talk about food. It's just trying to be all positive,
3 encouraging, like --

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

5 MS. E.M.: -- accepting who you are. If
6 you're so -- the way I look at it, if you're so broken and
7 damaged on the inside, how are you going to feel good the
8 way that you look on the outside?

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: And often, people don't
10 really see themselves on the outside when they look in the
11 mirror.

12 MS. E.M.: Yeah, and you, like --

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: You don't.

14 MS. E.M.: You bank all those negative --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah. Yeah.

16 MS. E.M.: -- comments that people --

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: File them all away.

18 MS. E.M.: Oh, yeah, and they're always the
19 first ones to come there and be, like, yeah, do you
20 remember that one time?

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

22 MS. E.M.: Yeah. I'm working on that.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah. Well, you're
24 working very well.

25 MS. E.M.: Thank you.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You can -- you can hear it
2 in your voice, you can -- you can see it in your smile, you
3 can see it in how you talk to your mom, and -- you know,
4 the -- the body language is there about, yes, I -- I've got
5 this, and -- and motivated by your children and your
6 self-care, because I think that is the key, too,
7 is -- is -- and you've said it over and over: I've got to
8 take care of myself.

9 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I've got to take care of
11 myself first if I can be -- to be there for my kids, and to
12 take --

13 **MS. E.M.:** It's the only way.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah. And sometimes,
15 that's a hard place to find.

16 **MS. E.M.:** It's --

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You know? You --

18 **MS. E.M.:** -- so scary.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I bet.

20 **MS. E.M.:** Like, I have a -- a couple of
21 girls that I sponsor, and that's the first thing that I say
22 to them. I'm like, take care of you. If you're healthy
23 and your cup is -- if your cup is full --

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

25 **MS. E.M.:** -- anything that's overflowing,

1 you have to offer that to people, but you have to make sure
2 that your cup is full, and if it's not -- if it's not full,
3 don't even bother. Like, take -- take care of yourself.
4 That's...

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And in terms -- can I ask,
6 you don't have to answer.

7 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** In terms of your recovery
9 plan, and you've -- you've identified the risks for
10 yourself, and -- and I -- and I come back to your finding a
11 lot of compassion in yourself and kindness to support other
12 people.

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is that part of a risk
15 factor for your own recovery? Have you identified that
16 as -- as something -- when you use the word about the cup
17 overflowing --

18 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- it -- I -- I just -- I
20 thought to myself, you're doing so well. You know,
21 if -- if that overflowing stops --

22 **MS. E.M.:** It does. Yeah. It -- oh, yeah.
23 It definitely does.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Okay.

25 **MS. E.M.:** I have a couple of younger

1 friends. They're just starting out in recovery, and I
2 didn't have any boundaries set with them, so, like, they're
3 19 and 20. They're just trying to get off, like, hard
4 drugs.

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Uh-huh.

6 **MS. E.M.:** I try to interact with people
7 that don't have the same drug of choice as me.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. It's safer?

9 **MS. E.M.:** It -- it is, because if one's
10 going to relapse, I'm -- like, I was a cocaine and alcohol.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

12 **MS. E.M.:** And if these people are injecting
13 opiates, I'm not going to go from cocaine and alcohol to
14 shooting opiates, like, overnight. That's not how it goes.
15 If you're, like, a drug addict, you find your way back to
16 that drug of choice.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

18 **MS. E.M.:** But, yeah, these people have a
19 hard time, and I got really emotionally connected, so when
20 they relapsed, I took it to heart. I took it personally,
21 but then I had to go to my sponsor and build a little plan
22 for me to keep myself safe.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Good. Good.

24 **MS. E.M.:** And that's what I do, and it's
25 nothing to them. It's just I come first, and that's what I

1 had to say to them. I'm like, I go into these meetings and
2 I volunteer, you know, a couple hours of my time to talk to
3 them throughout the day, like hey, how's it going, kind of
4 thing, but other than that, I've always been a
5 people-pleaser, go out of my way to make other people
6 happy. I don't -- I can't do that.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Good for you. Good for
8 you.

9 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah.

10 **MS. S.M.:** It was nice to hear her laughing
11 this morning.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Ah. Good.

13 **MS. E.M.:** Yeah, we had -- I'm so excited to
14 be here. Like, even --

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, good.

16 **MS. E.M.:** -- this is -- while we're here, I
17 was like -- I was saying, I haven't -- I don't remember the
18 last time you and I have done anything like this. Maybe
19 10. I remember -- have a memory of being in Toronto with
20 my mom when we were 10.

21 **MS. S.M.:** We lost just our -- our
22 closeness.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm.

24 **MS. S.M.:** And it was gradually going,
25 going, going, and even the 28th of February when she came

1 to tell me that she was a drug addict and an alcoholic, I
2 did everything I could, you know, that first month of
3 March. There was disappointments with her relapsing, but
4 when it happened the second time, two days I had her
5 (indiscernible).

6 MS. E.M.: She took action, yeah. And
7 that's the thing. Like --

8 MS. S.M.: Yeah.

9 MS. E.M.: A lot of my recovery is -- you're
10 so selfish with you're doing all of these things. You
11 don't realize -- one addict affects 30 other people in
12 their life, and we don't recognize that, and I mean, I can
13 only imagine -- like, I've gone through some stuff with my
14 son, and it affects me, but I got that strength because
15 even though my mom -- my mom did set boundaries because she
16 had to take care of herself after this, because I'm a grown
17 adult. If you're not going to take action for your own
18 life, no other can do it for you, so I understand that. I
19 don't take any of that to heart. I truly believe, and I
20 say it a lot, I feel -- I watch a lot of it in the past
21 year and a half. A lot of people in recovery, if their
22 parents are buttering their bread for them, they fail. My
23 family were just like, you're a grown adult, we're here, we
24 love you, kids are going to be taken care of, but you've
25 got to take control of your own life. I honestly feel if I

1 had my family to enable me, I wouldn't be where I'm to
2 right now.

3 MS. S.M.: And it's her journey.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes. And -- and with your
5 mom who's had -- had sobriety for 18 years, there's a
6 strength there --

7 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- that helps you do what
9 you need to do --

10 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- because you know she's
12 there. That's what I -- I'm sensing and hearing.

13 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

14 MS. S.M.: I've never been ashamed or
15 embarrassed of her or her sister.

16 MS. E.M.: I don't get that feeling from
17 you. I feel -- no, not at all. I feel if anything, we
18 come from a judgmental family; a lot of sick people on my
19 mom's side and my dad's side, absolutely. I'm not worried
20 about the judgment. I -- like you just said, about -- it
21 stops -- it's stopping right here, so anything beyond right
22 here, right now is only in their memory, honestly, and if
23 they're going to live in that memory, that's on them, and
24 if they're not going to see -- not a lot of parents stand
25 by their kids and, like, would come and do this; like, me

1 being able to talk about this in front of my mom,
2 it's -- it's just that freedom of not -- it not being a
3 secret or -- you know, my ex-husband, like, he knew I was
4 working in the sex industry, and he tried to manipulate me
5 like it was a secret, and I said it to my social worker, I
6 was like, there's nothing that anyone in any part of the
7 world can tell you that I haven't already told you. It's
8 always going to come out of my mouth first --

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

10 MS. E.M.: -- before it comes out of anybody
11 else because it's my life. It was --

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's your story --

13 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- it's your truth, and
15 it's your journey.

16 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

17 MS. S.M.: I have -- I have anger built up
18 on -- with some of the people that she's encountered
19 through this -- the drug journey.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

21 MS. S.M.: And -- because of -- I guess not
22 the criticism but the remarks of, well, look where you came
23 from.

24 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

25 MS. S.M.: The dysfunctional family.

1 But -- they might have thought we were dysfunctional, but
2 I -- I was always home.

3 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm. M'hm.

5 MS. S.M.: I'd get off work and home. I was
6 never a downtown person. No matter what was written in a
7 court paper from her father --

8 MS. E.M.: M'hm.

9 MS. S.M.: -- that was put before lawyers
10 and a judge --

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm. M'hm.

12 MS. S.M.: -- which was totally all lies,
13 and -- because I was never a downtown person. I was
14 never -- I was home all the time.

15 MS. E.M.: All the time.

16 MS. S.M.: Didn't matter.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's always easy for
18 people to sit in judgment, right?

19 MS. E.M.: No. Yeah. But that's on them.
20 They're taking that --

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: That's right.

22 MS. E.M.: -- to the grave.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: That's their own. That's
24 their own.

25 MS. E.M.: Only we know what was --

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The truth.

2 **MS. E.M.:** You know. Yeah.

3 **MS. S.M.:** One thing I've always said to my
4 girls, grow -- rearing them up, even when they went away,
5 and -- was that we'll say if they ask for something, we
6 will say, but they didn't. Didn't -- (indiscernible) have
7 happened the next day, but they did get what they wanted.

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And did -- one of the
9 things that you briefly touched on at the beginning, and
10 it's something that the -- the Commission is -- is looking
11 at, as well, and that's the systemic -- and not just the
12 intergenerational violence but the systemic racism and
13 discrimination, and you briefly referenced it at the
14 beginning, and -- is there anything you would like to say?

15 **MS. E.M.:** I've -- you know, I've thought
16 about that, and I have had people when they find out that,
17 you know, I'm Mi'gmaq and stuff, they'd, like -- oh, and
18 I'm like, what does that "oh" mean? You know?
19 Like -- like, really, what -- what does that mean? And
20 they're like, well, I get, you know, where you're coming
21 from and why you turned out, like, the way that you have,
22 and it's just, like, wow, you know what I mean? It's just
23 like, I feel that if you live in a little tiny place,
24 right, and you don't know any different, you
25 don't -- you're not shown any outside hope or anything, and

1 I can say this because I went to rehab with a -- with a
2 beautiful woman that goes -- that lives in Nain, and it was
3 the first time I'd ever met anyone that came from such an
4 isolated community, and she kind of intimidated me the
5 first time that I met her because how she looked on the
6 outside was how I felt on the inside. She presented
7 herself like I've been through everything, don't look at
8 me, I'm here, I need help; and I did the complete opposite
9 of what she would have expected. I went up, and I
10 became -- like, latched onto her. Like, she even said it
11 to me, when I hugged her, she was like, that is the first
12 time that she's had -- like, that she -- if she would call
13 me right now, she would, like, I'd love to give you a hug,
14 and she -- how fast she, like, opened up to me, and -- you
15 know, like, when I was in rehab, I was trying to get her to
16 not go back to Nain and go into the city and go into the
17 Native Friendship Centre and see what could be offered to
18 her to give her a different way of life, you know? I was
19 like, you don't have to settle for just -- for just that.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You said you -- you said
21 small community, so were you from a community outside of
22 St. John's?

23 **MS. E.M.:** No. No, no.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Just referencing
25 St. John's --

1 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- is a smaller community?

3 MS. E.M.: Yeah.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

5 MS. S.M.: I mean, when E.M. talks about
6 this young girl, she came and she was dressed in all men's
7 clothes.

8 MS. E.M.: All men's clothes, yeah.

9 MS. S.M.: Right from the runners too big
10 for her.

11 MS. E.M.: Her boyfriend's pants, her
12 boyfriend's shoes.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, dear.

14 MS. E.M.: Yeah. Actually, to tell you the
15 truth, we'd only took, like, little -- we had got to bring
16 two 50-pound bags for us for our own personal stuff, but we
17 only packed backpacks, and we packed a 50-pound suitcase of
18 clothes that we had in our house that we were no longer
19 going to have -- to use, and we called the shelter here
20 this morning to see if we could drop it off to the women.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Isn't that nice.

22 MS. E.M.: But they said that we had to drop
23 it off somewhere else because they don't specifically take
24 donations. So yeah, we have somewhere that we're going to
25 drop that off to before we leave.

1 MS. S.M.: Tomorrow.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay. That's lovely.

3 MS. S.M.: I want to do -- apparently,
4 there's a lot of homeless here as well.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

6 MS. E.M.: Try to do something --

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, that's -- that's --

8 MS. E.M.: -- for them along the way.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay that's -- that's
10 lovely. That's very, very nice. That's the kindness,
11 right? Kindness and the love. Yeah.

12 MS. S.M.: We have a lot of empathy for
13 other people.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

15 MS. E.M.: Absolutely. No judgment. Like I
16 said to my mom in the airport, I was like, what kind of
17 locals are we going to talk to? That's all I want to do.
18 Like, I'm not even joking. Like, I'm excited to go to the
19 AA meeting. I'm so excited.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: And what time does it
21 start?

22 MS. E.M.: 7:30.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Well, we are at
24 7:15.

25 MS. E.M.: Okay.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So just so you know. So
2 is there anything else that you think would be important
3 from your experiences and your lens (indiscernible)?

4 **MS. S.M.:** Strange that once people find out
5 that we're Mi'gmaq, we're looked at totally different.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is -- is -- can I ask, is
7 that being First Nation, or is that being Mi'gmaq? Because
8 it's just the way you said it. I'm not quite sure.

9 **MS. S.M.:** Well, we only got accepted into
10 First Nations last week.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, okay.

12 **MS. S.M.:** Right? But as of the 31st of
13 August, we are stripped of our -- we're no longer Mi'gmaq.
14 We're going to be considered white people.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and we had
16 briefly -- you had briefly spoken about that before we got
17 on the record, and you're not really sure if that's a
18 decision of the Mi'gmaq band or if this is coming from the
19 Federal Government?

20 **MS. S.M.:** Yeah. One is claiming the other.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

22 **MS. S.M.:** But we are first-generation
23 Mi'gmaq.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** First-generation Mi'gmaq?

25 **MS. S.M.:** My -- my father was on the 1945

1 census as a French Indian.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

3 MS. S.M.: That's what they called them back
4 then.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: So Métis?

6 MS. S.M.: No. Mi'gmaq.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: No? Oh, okay.

8 MS. S.M.: That's what Mi'gmaq is. French.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

10 MS. S.M.: We're -- we're Jackatar.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. I'm from the west
12 coast, so please excuse --

13 MS. S.M.: A little different. Yeah.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: I don't -- I don't know
15 the differences. I -- I know some, but --

16 MS. S.M.: Well, French Indian is Jackatar.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

18 MS. S.M.: Yeah.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And that's Mi'gmaq?

20 MS. S.M.: Yeah.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. All right.

22 MS. S.M.: But we didn't -- we got accepted,
23 got our status. Now they're going to take our names off
24 the register, which means I guess 1st September, we're
25 white people instead of being...

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Well, that doesn't
2 really sit well, does it?

3 **MS. S.M.:** Doesn't sit well with me. I'm
4 broken-hearted, and --

5 **MS. E.M.:** You're awfully dark to be a white
6 person.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah, I know. (LAUGHTER)

8 **MS. S.M.:** I...

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is there any recourse? Is
10 there any avenues for you to --

11 **MS. S.M.:** No. No. They're telling us no
12 because the Mi'gmaq of Newfoundland were never recognized.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh.

14 **MS. S.M.:** Because in 1949, Joey Smallwood
15 at the time said there were no Mi'gmaq left in
16 Newfoundland.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh.

18 **MS. S.M.:** That there's no --

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And at 1949, it was
20 confederation. Is that --

21 **MS. S.M.:** They joined the confederate --

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- is that -- is that
23 the --

24 **MS. S.M.:** They joined confederation, but
25 they took the census from 1945 for to start this band up,

1 and we proved our lineage --

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

3 MS. S.M.: -- and now they came back and
4 said, no, you can't be a part.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: And so the alternative
6 would be to have to take it to a court?

7 MS. S.M.: We're in court.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: You are in court?

9 MS. S.M.: Yeah.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Well, good luck,
11 because that just doesn't seem right.

12 MS. E.M.: No.

13 MS. S.M.: I think the most important part
14 of all this is to show the injustice, the wrongdoings, the
15 stealing, the changing of records, the using of wrong
16 identifications on women like my great grandmother. You
17 know, why would someone want to use my great grandmother
18 and say that -- that she's their great grandmother when...

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, so there's been -- so
20 if I'm hearing you, there's a manipulation --

21 MS. S.M.: Big.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- of the records --

23 MS. S.M.: Yes.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- is what you're saying?

25 MS. S.M.: Yes.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

2 MS. S.M.: So it's been very heart-breaking.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes. Oh, dear.

4 MS. S.M.: And -- you know, like, people
5 getting awards, doctorates, the whole gamut, and they're
6 rewriting history to fit their story.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And when
8 you -- just for the record, this is S.M., E.M.'s mom
9 talking, *[one line redacted - identifying information]*?

10 MS. S.M.: Yes, I did.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: *[One line redacted -*
12 *identifying information]*?

13 MS. S.M.: Yeah.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: *[One line redacted -*
15 *identifying information]*--

16 MS. S.M.: No. *[One line redacted -*
17 *identifying information]*--

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: *[One line redacted -*
19 *identifying information]*.

20 MS. S.M.: -- *[One line redacted -*
21 *identifying information]*.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

23 MS. S.M.: Some of my prayers that I put in
24 front of everyone that I'm praying for my father and my
25 grandmother and my great grandmother to have the

1 recognition that they should have had, and we're -- and for
2 us, myself and my daughter, my grandchildren, we are all
3 being stripped of -- it's just like a rape. You know, like
4 they're -- they're taking what? First time in my life that
5 I could have something to say that it's mine, and it's
6 gone.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And what I'm hearing is
8 the band, although they are the ones taking you off the
9 registry, are laying the blame with the Canadian
10 government.

11 **MS. S.M.:** Yeah.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I sense from you, though,
13 you think it's the band.

14 **MS. S.M.:** The Federal Government wouldn't
15 know who S.M. is. It's the band who gives the information.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Hm.

17 **MS. S.M.:** It's the band who made the
18 regulations. It's the band who made the changes.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And the band is people who
20 are elected officials --

21 **MS. S.M.:** Yes.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- to the -- to the band.

23 **MS. S.M.:** Who are fifth, sixth generation,
24 and not first --

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right.

1 MS. S.M.: -- generation people.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

3 MS. S.M.: We go back seven generations.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes.

5 MS. S.M.: And, you know, it's just -- but
6 it will be fought out in court, and I will be there every
7 day.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

9 MS. S.M.: With a cushion to sit on.

10 (LAUGHTER)

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: And so, E.M., just to
12 cycle back to the beginning, we talked about the consent.

13 [*Registrar's note: off-the-record discussion*
14 *about consent omitted*].

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- that -- and that will
16 be public. Okay. Well, such courage to come here, and
17 thank you on behalf of the Inquiry and the commissioners
18 for sharing your truth. It's such an important truth, and
19 thank you for trusting me to share, and on behalf of the
20 Inquiry, in reciprocity, we have some white sage seeds for
21 you to take home --

22 MS. E.M.: Thank you.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- and to plant, and there
24 is also -- Petra Turcotte, who is our senior archivist with
25 the Inquiry, is interested in pictures as it grows, if you

1 like, so --

2 **MS. E.M.:** Nice. Yeah.

3 **MS. S.M.:** Oh.

4 (LAUGHTER)

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. So it is 7:25.

6 --- Upon adjourning at 7:25 p.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Jenessa Leriger, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.



Jenessa Leriger

September 10, 2018