

Interview by Juilee Decker and Joysetta Pearse with Marcellus
Morris Recorded October 1, 2020
5:30 pm ET
Conducted over Zoom. The interview is 18 minutes.

154

00:14:51.870 --> 00:14:53.220

Joysetta Pearse: Marcellus is here.

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00:14:57.090 --> 00:14:57.570

Juilee Decker: Awesome.

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00:14:57.660 --> 00:14:58.440

That's awesome.

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00:15:00.990 --> 00:15:05.220

Joysetta Pearse: I'm going to call this other lady. She said she was on a call and I haven't heard from her some

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00:15:05.520 --> 00:15:06.150

Joysetta Pearse: Of her but

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00:15:07.320 --> 00:15:08.250

Joysetta Pearse: You may have forgotten.

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00:15:09.090 --> 00:15:10.860

Juilee Decker: Let me get my note paper on

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00:15:11.190 --> 00:15:13.260

Joysetta Pearse: My phone you can turn this around so she can see right

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00:15:19.980 --> 00:15:20.250

Juilee Decker: Marcellus.

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00:15:20.370 --> 00:15:22.290

Juilee Decker: How you doing good, how are you

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00:15:23.850 --> 00:15:34.170

Juilee Decker: I was just telling Joysetta we were having a chitchat about all the wonders of zoom and I just told her that I have a sore throat. So I have like cough drops in and she's like, it's probably

from all the interviews and talking

165

00:15:35.760 --> 00:15:37.410

Juilee Decker: Like, you're probably right about that.

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00:15:40.620 --> 00:15:42.330

Joysetta Pearse: Okay, you'll see you'll hear me.

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00:15:44.820 --> 00:15:45.510

Joysetta Pearse: Call him now, she's

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00:15:47.490 --> 00:15:50.280

Joysetta Pearse: Rolling. You know, people one at a time.

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00:15:50.730 --> 00:16:08.640

Juilee Decker: Yeah so Marcellus, I can start with you. If you're comfortable with that. And I, what I do is I ask you, each of the questions and then I'm taking notes to and then though there's six questions. And the last one is kind of open ended. But if

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00:16:10.110 --> 00:16:10.500

Juilee Decker: What

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00:16:10.800 --> 00:16:15.150

Joysetta Pearse: You hear the TV. We think maybe in the background.

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00:16:16.200 --> 00:16:17.610

Juilee Decker: I do hear something. You're right.

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00:16:20.580 --> 00:16:27.120

Juilee Decker: I thought it was down over down the hall. But you're right. I think it is on your end, yeah. Um, so

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00:16:28.530 --> 00:16:29.580

Alicia Evans: Oh, I'm sorry.

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00:16:29.820 --> 00:16:34.800

Juilee Decker: I don't know. I'm just talking with Marcellus. I'm on the that you're welcome to stay on. That's cool.

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00:16:35.670 --> 00:16:36.930

Juilee Decker: That's cool. Um,

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00:16:38.340 --> 00:16:43.140

Juilee Decker: Marcellus. So I'll start with you. And then we'll, we'll kind of go from there. If that works good.

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00:16:44.400 --> 00:16:54.360

Juilee Decker: Perfect. Okay, so first question is to state your name. You can do first name, first name, last name, and just so I make sure I have it right. Can you spell your first name, please.

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00:16:55.500 --> 00:17:00.120

Marcellus Morris: My soul is more senior ma RC LL us

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00:17:03.420 --> 00:17:13.440

Juilee Decker: And before COVID, what would you say your average day was like for you and what is it like now since Kobe.

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00:17:14.910 --> 00:17:25.860

Marcellus Morris: Kobe my average day was going out doing my work, I started organization for rain for life. And I was putting it together. We just got some funding. So everybody was excited about that.

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00:17:27.390 --> 00:17:35.280

Marcellus Morris: And we were doing our thing, you know, helping young people being able to pay young people to do some work universes clean up a payment building something like that.

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00:17:36.210 --> 00:17:55.590

Marcellus Morris: So it was relatively good I wasn't in a perfect relationship with my arms and maybe mother, significant other at the time. So, but we had a understanding. I got two kids. So we were able to function. And I was able to visit him get them at the school and all types of situations like that.

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00:17:56.940 --> 00:18:08.160

Marcellus Morris: After now, not a virus hit once the virus it. I wasn't really taking it serious until you know certain people started to drop. And then, you know, we had to take it serious

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00:18:09.900 --> 00:18:15.120

Marcellus Morris: I think one of the questions where you were from and I was raised in a lot of different places. I was born in Miami, Florida.

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00:18:16.080 --> 00:18:28.740

Marcellus Morris: Raised in Philadelphia raised in Chicago raised in New York. So I had all these affiliations with all these different types of people. So when your Facebook and get every day, you're getting bombarded by, you know, who just died.

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00:18:30.090 --> 00:18:38.670

Marcellus Morris: And things of that nature. So you got to deal with a lot of death. Now you fast forward and you add black lives matter to the situation.

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00:18:39.810 --> 00:18:42.540

Marcellus Morris: It just kind of compounded everything and

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00:18:43.890 --> 00:19:01.920

Marcellus Morris: took everything to another level on the young people protested on the young people. Well, in my area. Gavin I wanted me to galvanize around them and protest with them, but it just so happened I think God kind of took me out that situation because I happen to get arrested that night.

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00:19:03.060 --> 00:19:10.260

Marcellus Morris: And I wasn't able to make the protest, because I had to stay overnight inside the booking and so on. Rain.

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00:19:11.760 --> 00:19:24.270

Marcellus Morris: So I didn't make the Protest. Protest kind of turn ugly for wrong turn, or whatever the case may be. And I kind of understood on some of the understood all the anger all their frustrations and everything.

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00:19:25.440 --> 00:19:35.550

Marcellus Morris: But I should know as a leader, the community as in the fed into it. Any type of man I was supposed to be that that piece. Keep on but I lost it.

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00:19:36.360 --> 00:19:45.030

Marcellus Morris: Just, just because of the sheer loss of life and going through the system doing 17 years, knowing the prejudices, knowing the racism.

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00:19:45.420 --> 00:19:50.490

Marcellus Morris: I'm going through Nassau County Courthouse and getting railroaded is known it was a

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00:19:51.030 --> 00:19:59.640

Marcellus Morris: unjustifiable case. Not that I have done wrong. And I've done time and I deserve to do time. But when you're innocent in the case shows that you're innocent.

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00:20:00.030 --> 00:20:09.060

Marcellus Morris: That should be more president than trying to convince me because I'm a three times felon or whatever the case may be and that doesn't happen in Nassau too much.

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00:20:09.750 --> 00:20:19.920

Marcellus Morris: So, you know, I was going at it with the dean's office. I was going at it with the police department and I was going at it with the people inside my building where I was working there.

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00:20:21.510 --> 00:20:22.410

Marcellus Morris: So eventually

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00:20:23.430 --> 00:20:33.780

Marcellus Morris: You know that build a situation ended so I didn't have that place to come. People are used to galvanize around me didn't have that inside place to come and all

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00:20:36.870 --> 00:20:38.190

Marcellus Morris: A lot of them took a left turn.

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00:20:41.220 --> 00:20:44.070

Juilee Decker: You know, you brought up Black Lives Matter and I'm

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00:20:45.630 --> 00:20:46.350

gonna finish.

203

00:20:48.330 --> 00:20:49.080

Marcellus Morris: A lot of them.

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00:20:50.730 --> 00:20:51.690

Marcellus Morris: took a wrong turn

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00:20:54.360 --> 00:20:55.350

Marcellus Morris: One of them got shot.

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00:20:57.090 --> 00:20:59.280

Marcellus Morris: One of them shot his own brother.

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00:21:01.980 --> 00:21:03.600

Marcellus Morris: Two of them concert

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00:21:05.400 --> 00:21:07.020

Marcellus Morris: And one of them was in a shootout.

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00:21:09.090 --> 00:21:10.650

Marcellus Morris: With the police would have fake on

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00:21:12.510 --> 00:21:14.340

Marcellus Morris: After I realized all of that.

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00:21:15.450 --> 00:21:25.350

Marcellus Morris: And the importance of that that space for them to come and someone just wanted to come and rest and is go to sleep on a couch. Someone just wanted something to eat.

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00:21:26.130 --> 00:21:41.490

Marcellus Morris: And someone just wanted a simple place to go and for somebody to listen to, because all and didn't want to live the life that they was moving on. So that took effect and the whole so go ahead and mention right now, but I just want to get that thought out.

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00:21:41.880 --> 00:21:51.240

Juilee Decker: I know I'm glad you did know what I what I wanted to ask was how you you started to touch on that was how you sensed

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00:21:51.990 --> 00:22:08.160

Juilee Decker: What the community was feeling and you can use and you said that and how and how that's that's come upon you like the sense of your community is you're feeling it because you're you're seeing what's going on there.

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00:22:09.660 --> 00:22:10.020

Marcellus Morris: Well,

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00:22:11.190 --> 00:22:23.250

Marcellus Morris: You know it is what it is when you inside the community you able to see and feel the hardship. I mean, your houses. Somebody individual kids confirm you know what's going on inside the house. You know, sometimes they not eat.

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00:22:23.910 --> 00:22:30.480

Marcellus Morris: Or they don't have a close they need. They don't have food or they may be even getting abused or whatever's going on.

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00:22:31.500 --> 00:22:42.600

Marcellus Morris: But I'll let you know that somebody is kids. And so these patterns. They want to change. They want some way to go. They want something different, you know, when they took that we took a piece of me.

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00:22:44.220 --> 00:22:58.770

Marcellus Morris: God bless me. You know, sometimes I wonder why keep keep keeping situated where I can still help people. You understand I'm saying I got a whole new situation. Other situations going on, but that was happening at that time when COVID just hit

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00:22:59.820 --> 00:23:08.310

Marcellus Morris: Being sitting in talking to you and Miss Pearse have access to this type of building and these type of this type of information is a blessing you

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00:23:09.420 --> 00:23:14.400

Marcellus Morris: Will find people like Miss Pearse, Mr Pearse. I'm too often in your lifetime.

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00:23:16.500 --> 00:23:21.510

Juilee Decker: Yeah, I hear, I hear you. With that, um, when you said

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00:23:22.620 --> 00:23:38.340

Juilee Decker: The question three is sort of what's your COVID story and like, what have you been doing since COVID to make sense of everything around you, like, is there any specific thing that you're doing to kind of help you get through this.

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00:23:40.350 --> 00:23:56.460

Marcellus Morris: Well, I work my work. My work is what I've been working on. Like I said, I continue to be blessed. Find different people that continue to believe in me and support me and give me funding, whether its financial free shirts free food.

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00:23:57.480 --> 00:24:06.690

Marcellus Morris: I got two houses that I'm invested in reentry housing for people coming home for president on the house manager at one and I'm invested in another one so

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00:24:07.230 --> 00:24:17.910

Marcellus Morris: These things keep me busy and I got two little kids so they don't have the most beautiful thing in life at six and two, so you know how much they hard work but they're fun in itself.

227

00:24:18.450 --> 00:24:26.940

Marcellus Morris: To hear them. Laughing And, you know, hear the stories. But the sad thing is to he he was son is only six but he first. He wanted to be a police

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00:24:28.140 --> 00:24:32.220

Marcellus Morris: Then after Black Lives Matter is free to punks.

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00:24:33.330 --> 00:24:41.610

Marcellus Morris: In the police. They pop right down the block for where I live in Hillsdale saying so he had positive into x and then after

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00:24:42.030 --> 00:24:56.790

Marcellus Morris: Seeing Black Lives Matter going to different marches and watching the news and stuff. Now he thinks to police the bad guys all police a bag, so I had to explain to him, you know, all police on

bad he's got some good carbs and some bad cops and I left it there.

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00:24:57.840 --> 00:25:09.510

Marcellus Morris: I don't know what's that going to lead to long term for him, not having faith in the police, you know I'm saying what are the effects because he went from one to be the police.

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00:25:10.770 --> 00:25:17.100

Marcellus Morris: To now possibly want to be the act. Now the activists, but you know saying take to the streets.

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00:25:19.410 --> 00:25:24.390

Marcellus Morris: It is what it is. We don't know what what's going to happen. The biggest thing is we don't know what's going to happen for the future.

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00:25:24.810 --> 00:25:36.090

Marcellus Morris: Because America right now is at a real real turning point. So we can either turn left turn right, try to figure it out. So that's why I stayed in it. I get for those people.

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00:25:37.500 --> 00:25:39.330

Yeah yeah yeah

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00:25:41.190 --> 00:25:59.880

Juilee Decker: Oh, then the next question. Question for is about groups and you've touched on this a little bit, but the specific question is, how has the pandemic affected the groups that you're a part of and you can take this in any direction. It can be any groups that you are

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00:26:01.020 --> 00:26:03.660

Juilee Decker: Connected to. So what is your thought on that.

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00:26:05.310 --> 00:26:13.980

Marcellus Morris: Different group. So I'm a part of us. I kind of started my own group called Ray for life and that's my groups build on.

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00:26:14.790 --> 00:26:23.070

Marcellus Morris: On that group and we just individuals they want

change in the community. Some of them know sometimes I can't pay him. Sometimes I can pay him but they still rock out

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00:26:23.940 --> 00:26:28.050

Marcellus Morris: There. Tell me what things they want to show up to and what things they don't want to show up to

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00:26:28.860 --> 00:26:36.000

Marcellus Morris: Know a lot of them don't like to police at all you know saying so they don't want to show to know police functions on meetings and stuff like that but I'm

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00:26:36.720 --> 00:26:49.860

Marcellus Morris: 53 YEARS OLD DAYS, WE DON'T HAVE police. So we met a better get to know some of them. So when something happened. We can weaken. Now we can go to them with the information. Hopefully they'll do something about it.

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00:26:51.270 --> 00:26:51.600

Marcellus Morris: Oh,

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00:26:52.680 --> 00:27:00.600

Marcellus Morris: So, you know, different groups restored of justice is one of my biggest groups healing circles. That's one of the biggest things that I have push

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00:27:01.080 --> 00:27:04.920

Marcellus Morris: And try to get inside the community because we have these healing circles.

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00:27:05.880 --> 00:27:12.150

Marcellus Morris: stuff comes out and I'm saying that you really get to know the person, the person gets to know you and and that becomes a safe place.

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00:27:12.600 --> 00:27:26.010

Marcellus Morris: And if you can develop those type of healing circles with they can affect the whole community. So I'm just trying to get the buy in from the different entities on and now everything that through zoom. So it's a little more complex.

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00:27:27.270 --> 00:27:34.950

Marcellus Morris: Our population. We don't really like zoom the computers and stuff like that. You don't saying, yeah, yeah. Oh no, gotta deal with a lot of that.

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00:27:36.210 --> 00:27:39.510

Marcellus Morris: Biggest group. I'll part of this is the human race, you know,

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00:27:40.530 --> 00:27:53.310

Marcellus Morris: Really when we start separating ourselves with different groups. That's how did all this division comes about. And I'm saying, we can just keep the focus on. We all humans that have bring some of that that man is now. No, I'm saying, and that differential

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00:27:54.390 --> 00:28:03.120

Marcellus Morris: Mean we can't speak about these times and COVID and Black Lives Matter without without speaking about Trump and divisiveness of what he has caused

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00:28:03.570 --> 00:28:16.950

Marcellus Morris: Us to say he's building a bigger hole for us to get out of and one on the same hand he's bringing out some people's true feelings on on both sides and

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00:28:17.760 --> 00:28:26.490

Marcellus Morris: Somehow, it has to be immediate and hopefully we can get over the selection get over this this race ride that seemed like ruin us away and

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00:28:27.090 --> 00:28:35.580

Marcellus Morris: Move on to some sort of peace and resolution now for us, we've not seen before, you know, the kids that we won't leave behind, eventually, hopefully.

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00:28:36.000 --> 00:28:48.450

Marcellus Morris: We want to leave behind a better place not have such a divisive place because it's a red we hear glasses here Latinos is here, white people here Indian here all human. We are here.

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00:28:49.680 --> 00:28:49.920

Marcellus Morris: Yeah.

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00:28:53.190 --> 00:28:55.830

Juilee Decker: Question, question five says

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00:28:56.910 --> 00:29:08.250

Juilee Decker: What word and it can be two words or whatever, would you use to describe your feeling at the beginning of the pandemic and then what word would you use to describe it now.

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00:29:15.540 --> 00:29:18.300

Marcellus Morris: In the beginning, what would be a horrible.

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00:29:20.730 --> 00:29:21.720

Marcellus Morris: At the end of it.

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00:29:23.550 --> 00:29:26.760

Marcellus Morris: At the end right now today today.

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00:29:29.010 --> 00:29:33.750

Marcellus Morris: And maybe it's just because my blessings, or whatever the case may be hopeful.

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00:29:40.470 --> 00:29:41.310

Juilee Decker: I understand that.

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00:29:43.980 --> 00:29:49.980

Juilee Decker: Question six is, is there anything else you would like to share about your code story.

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00:29:53.100 --> 00:30:05.520

Marcellus Morris: One part of the story. I left out when I lost that building. I was on homeless because I have a good relationship with my baby mother and they took the office family. So I would kind of living in the office and much

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00:30:07.110 --> 00:30:17.220

Marcellus Morris: So for being out there homeless. The other homes, people can see in the prejudices of the virus. I mean, the simple thing is going to 711 trying to charge your phone.

267

00:30:18.570 --> 00:30:21.450

Marcellus Morris: Almost became an incident where they wanted to call the police.

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00:30:22.590 --> 00:30:29.250

Marcellus Morris: Going to the bathroom in the restaurant was like, you know, going to the bank with a loaded gun.

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00:30:31.470 --> 00:30:38.820

Marcellus Morris: And just knowing that type of all being around in those type of situations and being homeless and

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00:30:39.390 --> 00:30:44.550

Marcellus Morris: You know some of the people knew what I was going through it and being that I'm in this area so much know

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00:30:45.480 --> 00:30:54.810

Marcellus Morris: They know so I have relationships with some of the prior. They may be addicted or whatever. So I was in the mix with them, no say in a show me the ropes, like here.

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00:30:55.140 --> 00:31:07.140

Marcellus Morris: Is the building, you can sleep right here and banners by here. So when I was in that situation. I figured out how to make that situation better by getting the generated by having people next door. ONE ON ONE OF WATER la

273

00:31:08.160 --> 00:31:13.830

Marcellus Morris: I was driving. So I was able to take us to get something to eat food whatever case like that we needed for the day.

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00:31:14.400 --> 00:31:26.760

Marcellus Morris: But eventually, when you're around addicts and that type of homeless homelessness and addiction and mental health. I think all go hand in hand. And when you were in that type of environment. I figured out that some people don't want like

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00:31:28.320 --> 00:31:38.280

Marcellus Morris: Like the first thing that got missing was to generate in the generator brings light to a situation, but afterwards, I will

ask that they wanted to be in that darkness.

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00:31:39.420 --> 00:31:52.380

Marcellus Morris: That's why they want to get rid of the light is still my people, to this day, you know I'm saying, I mean, I still pull up on I'll give them \$1 here to me or someone I get free food. I'll take right to the situations are known to you.

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00:31:53.100 --> 00:31:56.460

Marcellus Morris: And now, my dad taught me a valuable lesson.

Emily judge people

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00:31:57.720 --> 00:32:11.610

Marcellus Morris: You know, you have to have for the two down here. And as I said in the beginning God continue to bless me because nobody really would have known that I was homeless by move, but except for the homeless people motorcycle. So again, don't

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00:32:12.690 --> 00:32:18.390

Marcellus Morris: have fellowship with someone like Conrad is stuck in the streets. Can I still try to reach back

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00:32:19.140 --> 00:32:19.530

Yeah.

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00:32:21.420 --> 00:32:34.020

Juilee Decker: I like the word he is there. Marcellus just now. The word fellowship. I like, I like that word. That's a, that's a, that's a good way to describe. That's a one word to use to describe what you just explained to me.

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00:32:35.100 --> 00:32:39.030

Juilee Decker: I appreciate that. Is there anything else you would like to say

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00:32:39.510 --> 00:32:45.840

Marcellus Morris: No, I appreciate it. Hopefully, you know, we can continue to dialogue and be in touch with each other and build from there.

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00:32:46.260 --> 00:32:47.340

Juilee Decker: I would love that. Thank you.