

Camille Davis Transcript 2026

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00:00:02.980 --> 00:00:04.980

JH: Okay, and we're set.

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00:00:05.200 --> 00:00:12.939

JH: So, Camille, it is so great to see you after all these years. Thank you for being willing to talk with me again.

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00:00:13.350 --> 00:00:14.010

CD: Okay.

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00:00:14.010 --> 00:00:16.899

JH: Tell us now how old you are.

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00:00:17.210 --> 00:00:20.000

CD: Okay, so now I am 23.

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00:00:20.240 --> 00:00:21.000

JH: Mmm.

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00:00:21.000 --> 00:00:21.790

CD: Yep.

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00:00:21.790 --> 00:00:25.680

JH: And, where, where do you live?

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00:00:26.330 --> 00:00:37.279

CD: Right now, I am living in Long Beach. I'm down here for school, I go to CSULB, and I'm studying for my BFA in Interior Design, so that's why I came down here, yeah.

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00:00:37.280 --> 00:00:51.400

JH: Oh, very cool, okay. And so tell me about that. How did you decide on interior design? And I know we've had, like, a decade, and it's a lot to say, catch me up on the decade, but catch me up on the decade.

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00:00:51.400 --> 00:00:58.090

CD: Yeah, I guess it's... started with, I've always kind of had a passion for interior design, or like.

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00:00:58.090 --> 00:01:14.219

CD: At least, definitely the arts, because my mom was an illustrator, so growing up, it was very... a very creative household of, like, always encouraging you to draw and do fine arts from her, but then also, my dad is a general contractor, you know, so he was constantly, like...

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00:01:14.340 --> 00:01:18.719

CD: building things, always building things for us. Like, I even remember, you know.

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00:01:18.820 --> 00:01:37.309

CD: a birthday present he gave to me was, like, we built my, like, a little barn for my toy horses. And, so I think just being in a very creative family that way has always been something that made me want to, pursue a path in the arts or anything like that.

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00:01:37.310 --> 00:01:41.560

CD: But I think when I was applying to college.

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00:01:41.560 --> 00:01:54.890

CD: in COVID time, honestly, and in high school. I had no idea what I wanted to major in, and when I was in high school, the first thing I just put on was sociology, because I feel like...

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00:01:54.960 --> 00:01:57.349

CD: it was just a really broad major, where, like...

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00:01:58.110 --> 00:02:07.780

CD: it was just something to put down, and I was like, I guess I'm interested enough in this, or could find interest in this. But then, once I started getting, like...

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00:02:08.000 --> 00:02:12.060

CD: acceptances and rejections back from schools, and I was like.

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00:02:12.900 --> 00:02:29.609

CD: I... my parents were like, you know, I got into Chapman and I really wanted to go, but it's a very expensive private school, and at the time, they were just like, you know, we don't have, like, the money to do that, so you should just go to community college, and I think that honestly was the best choice for me, because

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00:02:30.410 --> 00:02:49.139

CD: once I kind of got over this idea of, like, okay, I'm not gonna go to a four-year, I'm gonna go to, like, a community college, and I have a little bit more time to figure everything out, I really did sit with myself, and I was like, well, what do I actually want to do? Because when I looked into sociology, I was like, well, what I could do is really just, like, social work, and I don't think that's something I...

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00:02:49.450 --> 00:02:53.219

CD: I would want to do, because it seems like

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00:02:53.830 --> 00:02:55.880

CD: It seemed like a very,

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00:02:56.070 --> 00:03:06.079

CD: kind of unforgiving field in the sense that you put in so much work to really not get that much back, or that, like, you see so much, like, you want to do so much good in the world, but...

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00:03:06.430 --> 00:03:24.379

CD: In reality, the system's kind of rigged, so it's really hard for you to, like, help the people you want to help, and I thought that would make me a little bit sad working in a field like that. So, when I was in community college, I really did try to dig deep into, like, well, what is my passion, or what is something that I am good at?

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00:03:24.640 --> 00:03:32.820

CD: And I was just like, I think interior design would be something that's, like, a fun middle between my parents of, like.

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00:03:33.000 --> 00:03:44.360

CD: the artsy and fine arts side from my mom, and then also still, like, the building and the

construction for my dad. So that's kind of how I ended up here.

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00:03:44.360 --> 00:03:50.739

JH: Wow, that's so interesting, because it's interesting to hear you talk about this, because obviously I teach college students.

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00:03:51.310 --> 00:04:00.680

JH: So... and a lot of our students now, I'm in a four-year liberal arts, small, you know, undergraduate institution, but it's changing.

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00:04:00.960 --> 00:04:06.240

JH: And more and more of our students are coming as transfers from community colleges.

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00:04:06.240 --> 00:04:07.070

CD: Yeah.

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00:04:07.070 --> 00:04:16.269

JH: So, at first, it sounds like you had your heart set on a more traditional undergraduate experience.

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00:04:16.279 --> 00:04:17.109

CD: did, yeah.

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00:04:17.149 --> 00:04:22.550

JH: And... as you... As your mind shifted.

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00:04:22.830 --> 00:04:29.260

JH: I mean, did you... were you, like, upset with your parents at all at the beginning of all of that, and then it...

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00:04:29.840 --> 00:04:34.590

JH: Or did you feel like, I get where they're coming from, I'm gonna try and make an adjustment?

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00:04:35.020 --> 00:04:37.080

CD: I think that...

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00:04:37.340 --> 00:04:53.290

CD: I was more so upset, and I think also there's, like, a factor of embarrassment as well, because especially in the area that I grew up, is, like, a predominantly affluent area where everyone has...

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00:04:53.640 --> 00:05:05.790

CD: a college coach. Like, I had friends who, you know, paid for someone to help them, like, get into their colleges and pick their colleges and write their essays, and... or they all went to SAT prep, and so...

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00:05:06.090 --> 00:05:16.890

CD: I was just, you know, kind of in this pond of big fish, I guess, it felt like. Like, everyone had these resources to be able to go and, like, get into top schools, and...

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00:05:16.890 --> 00:05:28.830

CD: So it felt a little bit embarrassing if you were the person who said, like, oh, I'm gonna go to community college when you're surrounded by people who are going to, like, UCLA, UC Berkeley, or, like, things like that. And so I think I was a little bit...

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00:05:29.310 --> 00:05:31.820

CD: frustrated and embarrassed at first that I couldn't...

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00:05:32.350 --> 00:05:45.170

CD: kind of get to go to school and be like, oh my gosh, I got into this, I'm going to go here, and, you know, but then, you know, after realizing, like, it is just truly the more financially stable option, and like...

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00:05:45.710 --> 00:05:52.270

CD: and then also really being real with myself that I was like, I don't even know what sociology is, and, like, I...

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00:05:52.700 --> 00:06:04.199

CD: you know, and I don't think this is truly my passion. I was like, no, I'm just gonna make the most that I can out of going to community college, and it honestly was probably the best decision I could have made.

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00:06:04.680 --> 00:06:23.870

JH: So when you got to community college, did you see that they have an interior design program, and you thought, oh, that sounds interesting? Or had you already begun to think, what else do I like? I'm not... I've thrown a dart at a dartboard and picked sociology, but I realized

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00:06:23.870 --> 00:06:30.920

JH: I don't even know what I was picking. So, how did... how did the idea of interior design come to you?

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00:06:31.670 --> 00:06:34.640

CD: I... Honestly

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00:06:35.610 --> 00:06:52.759

CD: I... the summer before I started community college, I spent one day where I was like, you're not allowed to look at your phone at all, and all you get to do... and you don't get to talk to anyone either. So, and you just have to sit and pretty much write, like.

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00:06:52.760 --> 00:07:05.120

CD: what your interests are, and then I also didn't want to be able to talk to people, because I didn't want other people's opinions to influence, what I was gonna do, and so during that day, I just...

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00:07:05.840 --> 00:07:11.330

CD: sat there and wrote, like, all these different interests that I have, and then I was, like, just...

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00:07:11.810 --> 00:07:18.180

CD: from there, it was like, okay, well, like, what was interesting, and it's what are you good at? Because I knew...

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00:07:18.300 --> 00:07:19.500

CD: you know...

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00:07:19.620 --> 00:07:29.040

CD: I didn't really want to go into the medical field, because I'm not a super strong student in that sense, like, with math or science, and so I...

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00:07:29.090 --> 00:07:44.549

CD: I knew, like, if I had chosen that path, I'd probably be miserable, because it'd be really, really hard, and I was like, could I do it? Probably, maybe. Well, I should say maybe. But do I really want to put myself through that? And I was like, no, I really don't.

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00:07:44.640 --> 00:07:53.459

CD: want to, like... kind of like a fish trying to climb a tree. Like, I was like, what are you good at, and what do you like? And that's when...

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00:07:53.460 --> 00:08:08.520

CD: all the arts and stuff started coming out, and then I think fine arts, I did definitely have an interest in, but it did scare me because it's not a super stable income, and I think I have too much anxiety, honestly, to not be in a profession that has, like.

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00:08:08.660 --> 00:08:21.600

CD: some sort of, you know, like, a firm that you can work for, or a clear way you can build a career in it, and so... then I was like, okay, construction, like, I like building with my dad, but, you know, I don't want to necessarily...

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00:08:21.800 --> 00:08:29.700

CD: be doing the manual labor that is that, because I see him do it, and it's really hard, it's really hard on your body. And so...

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00:08:30.050 --> 00:08:47.469

CD: that's when, you know, architecture and design and all... and those ideas started swirling, and then I just kind of emerged from my room and was like, guys, I'm gonna... I'm declaring my major, it's interior design now, and then, since that was the summer before I went into community college, I just had known, like.

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00:08:48.090 --> 00:09:06.600

CD: I'm gonna go to community college, get these two years out of the way, I'm gonna finish all the classes I have to do to go to CSULB, because CSULB was one of the top-ranked schools in our state for interior design. So, I had decided, like, that's my school, and we're gonna get there, and how are we gonna get there? So...

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00:09:06.660 --> 00:09:09.070

CD: That was... that was how that went.

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00:09:09.070 --> 00:09:19.120

JH: That is awesome. Was it your idea to lock yourself in the room and separate yourself from the phone and other people's points of view? Yeah, yeah.

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00:09:19.120 --> 00:09:36.800

CD: Yeah, I think it was, because I think I was so burnt out at that point with hearing everyone else's college stories and college experiences, and where they got accepted to, or I was like, I just don't... I just don't want to hear this anymore, I don't want to hear it anymore, I don't want to think about it,

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00:09:36.850 --> 00:09:42.210

CD: like, I just want this truly to be, like, from me and no one else, like, and...

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00:09:43.130 --> 00:09:44.900

CD: And that's just how...

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00:09:45.030 --> 00:09:53.009

CD: I think it happened. And so it's interesting that once you made that decision to really kind of listen to yourself.

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00:09:53.080 --> 00:09:55.730

JH: you... Then.

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00:09:56.620 --> 00:10:12.389

JH: realized, oh, there's this school that is fantastic. That is my goal school, which I thought was my goal school, is not my goal school. Sociology, which I thought was my goal, is not my goal.

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00:10:13.360 --> 00:10:18.979

JH: So, I... it's funny, because I've been having these discussions with my daughter, who's a college student right now.

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00:10:19.430 --> 00:10:22.869

JH: a lot of what I say to her is, you have an inner voice. 72

00:10:23.340 --> 00:10:30.659

JH: It's talking to you, and what gets in our way is our head. Our head is saying, should, should, should, should

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00:10:31.010 --> 00:10:40.090

JH: and shouldn't, and it's drowning out that inner voice, and it sounds to me like what you did was give yourself some time to listen to your inner voice.

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00:10:40.500 --> 00:10:41.120

CD: Yeah.

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00:10:41.120 --> 00:10:41.790

JH: Yeah.

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00:10:41.790 --> 00:10:43.570

CD: Any... sorry.

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00:10:43.890 --> 00:10:45.360

CD: Oh, no, you go, you go.

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00:10:45.460 --> 00:10:49.129

JH: Well, how do you... I don't want to stop you. What were you going to say? And you think.

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00:10:49.320 --> 00:10:55.330

CD: Oh, I think it did help that, like, one of my favorite teachers in high school did tell me, like.

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00:10:55.420 --> 00:11:14.290

CD: it doesn't matter what you do in life, as long as you're the best at it, you'll succeed. Or, like, one of the best, you'll succeed. And so, when I heard that, I was kind of like, you know what, he's right. Like, as long as you're in the top, like, 10% of whatever you're doing,

you're gonna be successful. So it doesn't really matter if people think, like, well, you should go to medical school because that's a...

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00:11:14.290 --> 00:11:18.299

CD: you know, a super secure job and everything, it's like...

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00:11:18.500 --> 00:11:30.949

CD: as long as you're doing the best at... like, you're the best in whatever you're doing, it doesn't matter, so that's why I was like, okay, I gotta play to my strengths, and, like, not my weaknesses, and so I was like, well, my strengths are art, so...

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00:11:31.100 --> 00:11:37.750

CD: that's what... and I was like, well, I guess we just have to be the best in it, so... here we go, and then that's how I started that journey.

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00:11:38.090 --> 00:11:48.439

JH: Oh, that's so awesome. And do you... do you have, like, an... is it too early for a professional ambition? Do you want to go work for a design firm? Do you want to...

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00:11:48.860 --> 00:11:55.430

JH: have your own firm, do you want to... you know, I don't know how you envision your career beginning.

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00:11:55.680 --> 00:12:10.920

CD: Yeah, I mean, right now, I actually am interning at a high-end residential firm in West Hollywood. So, yeah, I do that 2 days a week, and it's really cool, like, this, this designer I'm working with, she's been in the field for, you know, like, 20 years, and...

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00:12:10.920 --> 00:12:29.319

CD: she's... even one of her projects is being featured right now in Architectural Digest, which is, you know, a pretty... you know, I think that's a pretty big honor as, like, a designer. So that's awesome that I've... I have gotten to see, like, where my career could go, but with that internship, it has taught me that I'm, like.

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00:12:29.320 --> 00:12:35.710

CD: I really think I want to have my own firm, I think that's really my goal, like, and hopefully after I graduate, I...

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00:12:35.880 --> 00:12:53.659

CD: I might go work for, like, a commercial firm for a little bit, because I think I would be interested in seeing how commercial works in comparison to residential. But I think I know that in the end, I really want to have my own firm, and I want to work for myself. I think that would feel more fulfilling than working for someone else, so...

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00:12:53.660 --> 00:12:58.840

JH: Oh, that's so great. Do they... are there business courses that go along with all of this, or...

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00:12:59.960 --> 00:13:04.890

CD: wish they had more business courses. I think they give you a lot of,

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00:13:05.300 --> 00:13:07.639

CD: Like, public speaking type of.

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00:13:07.640 --> 00:13:08.280

JH: Of course.

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00:13:08.280 --> 00:13:15.339

CD: or presentation courses, but nothing that really dives super into, like, how the business runs,

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00:13:15.660 --> 00:13:20.369

CD: I know a lot of people are, like, doing minors in business as well, but...

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00:13:20.940 --> 00:13:31.120

CD: I... I haven't pursued that, so I think I'm kind of like, I'll just learn out in the field, like, I'll learn from my internship the do's and don'ts of, like.

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00:13:31.490 --> 00:13:35.639

CD: A business, and then try it myself, and... Well, do you have your...

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00:13:35.640 --> 00:13:41.540

JH: We've done his. Exactly, you have your dad, who runs his own business, so...

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00:13:41.950 --> 00:13:45.089

JH: You know, you've got... you've got somebody to ask about it, so...

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00:13:45.090 --> 00:13:45.760

CD: Yeah.

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00:13:45.760 --> 00:13:53.980

JH: Well, I think it's such a cool and interesting way that you... that you figured this out. How was it to tell your

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00:13:54.240 --> 00:13:59.879

JH: high school friends, when you emerged and made your decision.

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00:14:00.160 --> 00:14:16.759

CD: I think, okay, I think my high school friends are super, super supportive, and honestly, when I told them, they were like, that is so cool, because I feel like a lot of people don't know that interior design is actually a profession, and they don't really know...

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00:14:16.930 --> 00:14:17.970

CD: a, like...

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00:14:18.370 --> 00:14:26.819

CD: you can actually study that, or that you actually do have to study that. Like, I... I try to describe it as, like.

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00:14:26.890 --> 00:14:41.529

CD: if doctors are architects, interior designers are like nurses, where you don't have to go to as much schooling, but you still do have to go to schooling to call yourself a nurse, or to call yourself an interior designer. As for interior decorators, are like...

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00:14:41.640 --> 00:14:57.780

CD: people who could just be, like, wellness coaches, where you don't have to have any formal education to do that, you can just go ahead and do it. So, I think everyone was super excited for me, and honestly also agreed with me that they were like, no, I think that really

matches you, and I think that's gonna be...

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00:14:57.990 --> 00:15:03.980

CD: truly something that you love. So... so my friends were all very supportive of it, and I think...

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00:15:04.430 --> 00:15:07.769

CD: I think it was good, though, that I waited until after I had

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00:15:08.120 --> 00:15:13.170

CD: graduated high school to make that decision, because then it's more so...

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00:15:13.230 --> 00:15:31.800

CD: I think the looks or the reactions you get from the classmates that don't really know you, who would probably hear that and be like... you'd get a look, or you'd get something that made you feel like, oh, maybe I shouldn't do it, or I'm doing... I'm going down the wrong path, but no, everyone that I have in my life is very supportive, so they were excited for me.

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00:15:31.950 --> 00:15:33.050

JH: Oh, that's great.

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00:15:33.050 --> 00:15:33.390

CD: Yeah.

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00:15:33.390 --> 00:15:39.380

JH: It sounds like, to some extent, also, you've kind of made a decision about getting out of the...

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00:15:39.980 --> 00:15:41.540

JH: the college.

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00:15:41.540 --> 00:15:45.319

CD: prep rat race that I just...

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00:15:45.320 --> 00:15:48.439

JH: C, especially for,

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00:15:48.660 --> 00:16:07.530

JH: students who are really determined, or parents of students who are determined, the kid is going to go to an elite school, that they're... I was just on Instagram, and there are all of these reels with admissions counselors from these elite institutions, and they're describing what

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00:16:07.670 --> 00:16:10.449

JH: You know, if you want to set yourself apart.

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00:16:10.750 --> 00:16:27.519

JH: you can't just be the president of the this, and the president of the... and they're listing all these amazing things. No, that's not good enough. You have to start your own business, or blah... and they're talking about people who are 17 years old. Yes. And I'm just listening to it, thinking.

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00:16:27.520 --> 00:16:31.110

JH: when did all of this become so insane? So...

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00:16:31.110 --> 00:16:41.770

CD: Yes, it is so insane. And then I think the funniest part is that I'm like, no one cares. Like, after you graduate, no one cares where you went, no one ca- like...

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00:16:42.580 --> 00:16:43.150

CD: So...

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00:16:43.150 --> 00:16:47.080

JH: It's very true, and no one cares what your grades were.

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00:16:47.380 --> 00:16:47.710

CD: No.

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00:16:47.710 --> 00:16:56.109

JH: I mean, they're relevant if you're gonna go into a graduate program, or... but the things that seem so important,

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00:16:56.530 --> 00:17:02.920

JH: Nobody really ever asks about. And the things that... that... that really are important, like.

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00:17:02.950 --> 00:17:16.759

JH: am I doing something that is truly interesting to me, and that I can be good at, or great at? Those things are really the things that matter. So, how far through the program are you now?

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00:17:17.069 --> 00:17:27.759

CD: I am... my first day is tomorrow of my spring semester, and I have 3 more semesters left, so I have just, like, this spring semester, and then one more year.

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00:17:27.760 --> 00:17:30.219

JH: Awesome. Great.

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00:17:30.540 --> 00:17:32.120

JH: So,

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00:17:32.320 --> 00:17:45.840

JH: Tell me... the last piece of this I'd be interested in hearing more about is... is growing up in a very affluent community, and how was that? You know, if you are comfortable talking a little

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00:17:46.260 --> 00:17:58.309

JH: Or about what that was like to, be surrounded by really pretty intense affluence, and how did it make you think about things?

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00:17:58.760 --> 00:18:09.570

CD: Yeah, I guess when I first was growing up, that's all you know, so you think it's pretty regular, but my parents would always tell us, like, you live in Marin, and Marin is a bubble, and so...

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00:18:09.660 --> 00:18:19.829

CD: I definitely was aware that that was not how it was across the entire, like, United States or the world, but I didn't really know what it looked like

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00:18:20.380 --> 00:18:32.379

CD: On the day-to-day, I guess, like, outside of... outside of it, because, like, I just knew it as a concept in my head, that, like, okay, this isn't normal everywhere, but this is my reality, and this is my normal.

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00:18:32.380 --> 00:18:41.309

CD: And then it really wasn't until I got down to Long Beach where I was like, oh, wow, like, this is what regular people live like, you know, and this is how it is in most places.

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00:18:41.510 --> 00:18:48.890

CD: But I think growing up around that level of affluence was... honestly...

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00:18:49.790 --> 00:18:55.949

CD: a huge... it was a huge blessing, I think, because you become...

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00:18:56.240 --> 00:19:04.040

CD: very aware of, like, how much you... you already have. Like, cause if you... are...

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00:19:04.300 --> 00:19:16.470

CD: friends with someone who goes on, like, all these trips every single year, or they have... their parents can pay for all these things for them, I think you feel a lot more grateful for what you have, because just seeing

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00:19:16.900 --> 00:19:30.319

CD: kind of, like, what they would complain about, you know? Like, oh my gosh, I don't have the newest iPad, or they won't buy me a phone, like, the newest phone, and stuff like that. I think you get somewhat of a perspective in that sense of, like.

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00:19:30.460 --> 00:19:38.209

CD: you really don't need that to be happy, though. Like, as long as you have this, this, and this, like, it's... it's fine, you know?

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00:19:38.640 --> 00:19:41.929

CD: And... I guess it...

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00:19:42.080 --> 00:19:47.229

CD: Can be, like, you can be a little bit jealous of, like, what other people have, but...

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00:19:48.360 --> 00:19:56.210

CD: I don't know, I think it was, like, a... just because you have money doesn't make it... means that you'll be happy, you know? And...

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00:19:57.360 --> 00:20:13.379

CD: I think that was the biggest lesson that I learned from it, and I think it also does open up, though, I say it's, like, blessings as well, because it opens up opportunities that you would never have had, had you not known these people, too, because,

148

00:20:14.250 --> 00:20:16.909

CD: I would kind of get, you know, like.

149

00:20:16.970 --> 00:20:36.390

CD: free coaching from them through, like, oh, what is your SAT prep telling you to do? Okay, like, I'll try to do that. Or, like, what is your counselor telling you to do? Okay, I'll try to do that. So you kind of get, like, their information that they're paying, like, a lot of money for for free, and I think that's also, like.

150

00:20:36.390 --> 00:20:41.479

CD: Where I'm like, no, it is, like, a blessing to be around people like that, and also...

151

00:20:41.830 --> 00:20:46.219

CD: their mindsets, too, I think, are completely different. Like, the way that...

152

00:20:46.980 --> 00:20:50.849

CD: really, like, affluent people tend to think. You know, they...

153

00:20:50.980 --> 00:21:02.250

CD: it's crazy, because they really won't take no for an answer. Like, if they want something, you know, they'll get it, and they'll find a way to get it, and I think, you know, that kind of mindset,

154

00:21:02.860 --> 00:21:15.040

CD: is at least good in moderation, you know, of, like, just because someone says no doesn't mean you should just, like, give up and roll over, like, you should still keep trying for what you want.

155

00:21:15.500 --> 00:21:25.480

CD: So that's why I think, like, it was good to grow up around it, to see what it's like, and see the pros and the cons, and then get the benefits of being around people with that level of money.

156

00:21:26.120 --> 00:21:30.009

CD: But then also not being as affluent as them.

157

00:21:30.220 --> 00:21:35.110

CD: It gives you a law perspective, and it makes you very grateful for what you do have, so... That's...

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00:21:35.110 --> 00:21:35.660

JH: Wow.

159

00:21:35.660 --> 00:21:38.420

CD: I don't know if that made sense, but...

160

00:21:38.420 --> 00:21:45.310

JH: No, it actually made perfect sense. It's like you took... you sort of... You took the...

161

00:21:45.770 --> 00:21:48.050

JH: You took the best of what...

162

00:21:48.770 --> 00:21:58.860

JH: of what you were seeing, and rather than interpreting it as, I... I can't measure up, you felt it as.

163

00:21:59.740 --> 00:22:16.669

JH: hey, I've learned that there's... I understand what it is to actually be happy, and I know, literally, you can't buy it. On the other hand, I see that a life of affluence can expose you to

things that can be useful.

164

00:22:17.360 --> 00:22:17.700

CD: Yeah.

165

00:22:17.700 --> 00:22:23.220

JH: And... and a perspective of, I can go out into the world and

166

00:22:23.930 --> 00:22:31.859

JH: and not take no for an answer, that can also be useful. So it's like you kind of... I can... you kind of took the things that really...

167

00:22:32.010 --> 00:22:42.130

JH: helpful to you, but you didn't internalize... you know, I could... I could see how another person with a different temperament than yours might internalize a sense of.

168

00:22:42.290 --> 00:22:45.389

JH: I don't measure up, I don't have the same things.

169

00:22:45.790 --> 00:22:49.359

JH: that's not what happened with you, and I think that's, you know.

170

00:22:49.540 --> 00:22:56.480

JH: great. I also... I went to a wealthy, college that my...

171

00:22:56.910 --> 00:23:13.630

JH: I borrowed, and my mother's... my mother's entire teaching salary went to paying for it. It was also 40 years ago, so it was expensive by those terms, but nothing like these terms. And I remember my parents sitting me down and saying, now.

172

00:23:14.280 --> 00:23:16.429

JH: You're not going to be able to do

173

00:23:16.870 --> 00:23:30.009

JH: a lot of things that these other girls can do, and you're... and kind of giving me a talk

about what to expect. And I do remember, like, spring break came, and friends from college were going, like, to Rome for a week, or whatever.

174

00:23:30.010 --> 00:23:30.370

CD: Nope.

175

00:23:30.370 --> 00:23:35.070

JH: And I was going home and getting on the Long Island Railroad for my secretarial job for that.

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00:23:35.070 --> 00:23:35.570

CD: Exactly.

177

00:23:35.570 --> 00:23:37.780

JH: Exactly, yeah.

178

00:23:38.100 --> 00:23:52.419

CD: I know. It's... it's so... I guess, though, I can look back with it, too, with a lot more appreciation, too, because now when... like I said, like, I'm in Long Beach, and, like, you see so... you see so many different communities here in Long Beach, but I'm like.

179

00:23:52.460 --> 00:24:06.039

CD: I do say I'm very blessed that I got to grow up there, because just by being in that area, it's like, well, my community college is a top community college in the state, just because I'm around so many wealthy people. Or...

180

00:24:06.070 --> 00:24:15.929

CD: My... my high school that's a public high school, is honestly probably better than private schools in other areas, just because the people here are so rich, and like...

181

00:24:16.030 --> 00:24:25.189

CD: for example, it's like, whoa, I had a diving team, I had a diving well, like, at my community college, like, and those were all things where I was like.

182

00:24:25.210 --> 00:24:40.579

CD: those are community college levels, or just, like, public school levels, but just because

you're in such a rich area and people, like, pay for that, like, I got to access those things that so many more people I know would not have access to those things,

183

00:24:40.730 --> 00:24:56.510

CD: just because I live there, and that's why I'm like, I am so... I am so blessed for that, or for those opportunities, or, like, even scholarships, like, there are so many kind people in our community who give scholarships so that you can go do things, and... and so that's why I'm like, no, it's really, like.

184

00:24:56.810 --> 00:25:02.699

CD: I could say, like, it's annoying to hear these people talk about, you know, oh my gosh, my...

185

00:25:02.920 --> 00:25:17.020

CD: my Sonoma... like, it was sad when the fires in Sonoma happened and everything, but you'd hear people talk about their second house in Sonoma, their vacation house that burnt down, and how awful that was. And that is awful, but it's also like, you still have another

186

00:25:17.020 --> 00:25:26.030

CD: mansion here, and you know, and so I can see how people would get very jaded by seeing that level of wealth and being like, that's kind of disgusting, but then, at the same time.

187

00:25:26.200 --> 00:25:33.150

CD: There's so many other wealthy people that are doing such amazing things in your community for people who don't have access to it, and they...

188

00:25:33.290 --> 00:25:43.099

CD: like, they level up everyone's standard of living, just... just for, like, you know, those people who don't have the money to do it. So, that's why it still just, like, is a blessing to have that.

189

00:25:43.460 --> 00:25:47.689

JH: Yeah, it's very, really interesting to hear you talk about this and reflect on it.

190

00:25:48.200 --> 00:26:04.780

JH: Let me ask you about some of the things, just update some of the things we talked about

initially when you were 13. I asked you about, your identity as an adoptee and as a Chinese person, and you had friends, as I remember, who were also adoptees.

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00:26:04.780 --> 00:26:05.280

CD: Yeah.

192

00:26:05.280 --> 00:26:18.209

JH: Yeah, you had sort of had some... bit of a crew of people, who you were buddies with, and at the time, I asked you about birth parents or biological family, and you were like.

193

00:26:19.260 --> 00:26:31.699

JH: it's not really something I give a whole lot of thought to, and I wonder, has that changed over the decade? Have... is it something you've reflected on, or is it something that you continue to feel like

194

00:26:31.850 --> 00:26:34.759

JH: You know, it's... it's how I started, but it...

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00:26:34.870 --> 00:26:37.779

JH: How you start is... does not determine everything.

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00:26:38.090 --> 00:26:44.500

CD: I think I still feel like... it...

197

00:26:44.860 --> 00:26:51.240

CD: it isn't something that I feel like I'm missing in my life. Like, meeting my birth parents, I don't feel like...

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00:26:51.910 --> 00:26:52.900

CD: is...

199

00:26:53.260 --> 00:26:59.909

CD: a experience that I'm necessarily missing out on, or that I really want to do. I think a little bit...

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00:27:00.300 --> 00:27:10.469

CD: of that mindset does come from the fact that, like, you really couldn't, like, even if I really wanted to meet my birth parents, there's just no way it could happen, so...

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00:27:10.640 --> 00:27:19.599

CD: I think maybe I am just holding myself back from wanting those things, because I know it's not a reality that can happen, but at the same time, I just...

202

00:27:19.920 --> 00:27:26.149

CD: I do feel very strongly that, like, my parents are the people who raised me, and...

203

00:27:26.440 --> 00:27:35.119

CD: that's really all I need. I don't need to meet these birth parents, because I don't really know what else they'd really add to my life.

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00:27:35.510 --> 00:27:52.590

CD: Especially because also, being kind of realistic now, it's like, I don't even... like, I couldn't even talk to them, like, I don't... I'm trying to learn Mandarin, but it's nowhere near a level of, like, a conversation that if you met your birth parents, you'd be able to have that kind of, level of intricacy, but...

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00:27:52.670 --> 00:28:02.129

CD: So yeah, I don't think... I don't think my opinion has really changed, like, I'm perfectly happy with knowing who I know, and I don't feel like I'm missing out on anything.

206

00:28:02.470 --> 00:28:14.619

JH: And you do have an older sister. I do. Yes, yes. So, how's she doing? And I remember at the time I asked you what it's like to have an older sister. What's the positive? What's the negative? And you were like.

207

00:28:14.620 --> 00:28:24.100

JH: You had some positive things, and then you were like, well, the negative, I... sometimes I think she gets mad that I do the things she likes to do, like Irish dancing.

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00:28:24.100 --> 00:28:24.919

CD: That is very...

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00:28:24.920 --> 00:28:28.140

JH: At the time, you were, you were, you were cute. You, yeah.

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00:28:28.460 --> 00:28:31.620

JH: Yeah. So how, how, how...

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00:28:31.620 --> 00:28:33.750

CD: I gotta listen to that again.

212

00:28:34.090 --> 00:28:42.260

JH: Yeah, it was very cute. It was, it was, you know, I'm the younger sister who's kind of very influenced by my older sister.

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00:28:42.260 --> 00:28:42.740

CD: at that time.

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00:28:42.740 --> 00:28:50.690

JH: And so what's... what's... how is she, and how have the years been, as the two of you have moved along?

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00:28:51.040 --> 00:28:52.620

CD: Yeah,

216

00:28:52.820 --> 00:28:59.630

CD: Having a sister's the best thing ever, having an older sister, too, even better, because they get to make all the mistakes.

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00:28:59.670 --> 00:29:16.739

CD: That, you know, first, and then tell you what to avoid, and it does always feel like you just have a built-in best friend that's always going to be there, and always has to help dig you out of the problems that you created, and it's so wonderful. I think we definitely had

218

00:29:16.850 --> 00:29:28.179

CD: grown apart when she went to college, because during those years, it's just, you know,

she's not in the house, and we're not really talking at all. But then when...

219

00:29:28.660 --> 00:29:37.490

CD: And I think it's also, like, that awkward time of, like, well, she's in college and doing her own thing, and you're kind of still trying to figure out who you are, because you're in, like.

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00:29:38.210 --> 00:29:53.230

CD: middle school, high school, which is, like, that awkward kind of puberty age where it's just, like, you don't know what's going on, you don't know who you are. I mean, I still don't know who I am, but at least now, I think, once I hit community college and I got into, like, more of my adult years in, like, my 20s.

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00:29:53.450 --> 00:30:04.860

CD: That's when we really started reconnecting again, because it's like, now we're both kind of in the same worlds and, like, playing levels of, like, we're both in college, we're both pretty adult, like.

222

00:30:05.200 --> 00:30:21.450

CD: we can kind of do the same things as each other, so age doesn't really have as much of a factor, and then we did just build, like, a very much, like, stronger friendship and, like, sisterhood, I guess, after... after col... after her college experience and through mine, so...

223

00:30:22.030 --> 00:30:26.370

JH: Yeah, you kind of go through that late adolescent period where there's...

224

00:30:26.520 --> 00:30:32.000

JH: You're in different phases. Yeah. And then there's more common ground again.

225

00:30:32.000 --> 00:30:42.339

CD: Yeah, and I'm sure I was not pleasant to be around, also, during that time. She always says I was very sassy, and I'm like, oh, I'm sure I was. I apologize.

226

00:30:43.190 --> 00:30:46.589

JH: That's kind of... I think that's very normal for that age.

227

00:30:46.590 --> 00:30:56.409

CD: Yeah, yeah. But I could get it. She doesn't want to be around it, and I shouldn't subject her to it, so... But we're good now. We are... we're really strong now, and I think that's...

228

00:30:56.740 --> 00:31:09.030

CD: honestly, another thing that's... I'm so lucky to have, because I know a lot of people are really not close with their siblings, and I think that's so sad, because like I said, I feel like it's a... it's an automatic built-in best friend that, like...

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00:31:09.450 --> 00:31:19.829

CD: you just have, like, you inconvenience, because they inconvenience you, but you always got each other's back, and I'm like, that's so lucky to have, you know, so...

230

00:31:20.220 --> 00:31:21.970

JH: Oh, that's so awesome, that's great.

231

00:31:21.970 --> 00:31:22.600

CD: now.

232

00:31:23.140 --> 00:31:40.330

JH: Well, what have we... we've talked about a lot, and I feel like we've... we've... it's just been so great and interesting to hear you talk about everything you've been doing and reflecting on your decisions over the last years. Is there anything we have not discussed that you'd like to discuss

233

00:31:40.910 --> 00:31:42.540

JH: Kind of put out there.

234

00:31:43.360 --> 00:31:49.960

CD: Mmm... I'm... I feel like we... we covered...

235

00:31:50.150 --> 00:31:57.560

CD: We covered so much, honestly. Even though you were like, it's a decade of time, and I'm like, I'm sure there's so much more to talk about, like...

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00:31:57.900 --> 00:32:04.219

CD: I feel like most of it... was covered? .

237

00:32:06.120 --> 00:32:22.229

JH: I do have... I will ask you one final question I've kind of been asking everyone, and that is, we're now living in this kind of moment of pretty intense political stress. Yeah, and

238

00:32:22.800 --> 00:32:29.589

JH: especially around issues of identity and immigration, and I wonder if that's something that you...

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00:32:30.400 --> 00:32:32.719

JH: Feel, in any way is...

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00:32:33.200 --> 00:32:45.560

JH: connected to your experience as being... as being, an adoptee from another country? Or does it feel kind of distant and off on the horizon and really not

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00:32:46.760 --> 00:32:47.360

JH: kind of.

242

00:32:48.640 --> 00:32:51.220

JH: Relevant, yeah, present for you.

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00:32:51.700 --> 00:33:02.939

CD: Yeah, I think had I stayed, and that's another... this is where I'm like, oh, I realize how much privilege I had when I was living in somewhere like Marin, because,

244

00:33:03.210 --> 00:33:22.860

CD: if I was still living in Marin, I probably wouldn't really bat an eye around the idea of, like, ICE, or anything, or the fear of being deported, because in Marin, it's super white, and it's super liberal, and

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00:33:23.290 --> 00:33:38.409

CD: you know, like, even in our town, they pour a ton of money into, like, Black Lives Matter training for their police officers, and I think that is super wonderful, and everyone, you know, everywhere should be doing stuff like that. But I think the fear of being an immigrant would

not

246

00:33:38.720 --> 00:33:44.419

CD: was... would have not really existed for me if I was... when I was still in Marin, because

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00:33:44.760 --> 00:33:58.500

CD: there wasn't a need to be afraid of it, because it wouldn't happen there. As for when I stepped out, and I'm in Long Beach now, you know, it's...

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00:33:58.730 --> 00:34:05.180

CD: Not uncommon to... To, like, even drive by a,

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00:34:05.360 --> 00:34:12.980

CD: it was a car wash that was just, like, on the news that it had a huge ICE raid in it, and they're just...

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00:34:13.210 --> 00:34:29.090

CD: Going in, arresting people, and deporting people, and even if, you know, you have your papers, it doesn't matter, because they'll still detain you until you can prove it, and some, you know, we've heard really unlucky stories of people who

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00:34:29.380 --> 00:34:38.349

CD: are even deported regardless if they have their citizenship or not, because they just don't care. And, I think after...

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00:34:38.580 --> 00:34:52.819

CD: living down here, I'm like, oh, that is much more of a reality, that, like, I'm really not safe. Like, even with a citizenship, it doesn't make you safe from, not at least being profiled. Like, at very least, like, you could still be profiled just because

253

00:34:53.090 --> 00:35:07.899

CD: you're Asian, or whatever, and, like, I know right now I'm also living, on a street where we have... I'm living in Cambodiatown in Long Beach, so a lot of my neighbors are Cambodian, or also Hispanic, and

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00:35:08.470 --> 00:35:09.930

CD: It is...

255

00:35:10.300 --> 00:35:30.059

CD: you know, not uncommon for, like, police to come by to just kind of, I think, intimidate and scare people. And even though it's like, yeah, I have a citizenship, I kind of know I'm not invincible, though, to them still, like, pulling you over, or asking you, or interrogating you, for whatever, and I think that's, a lot that

256

00:35:30.170 --> 00:35:39.969

CD: like, scarier of a reality. And that's why I do feel like, oh my gosh, I was so lucky to live in Marin, where I never had a... I never had to fear something like that, but, you know, that's...

257

00:35:40.160 --> 00:35:44.310

CD: This is the reality of, like, the world we're in right now, so... Yeah.

258

00:35:44.730 --> 00:35:49.750

JH: Do you feel like you need to, you know, carry your passport around, or anything like that?

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00:35:49.950 --> 00:35:52.839

CD: I've definitely thought about it, because...

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00:35:53.190 --> 00:36:08.630

CD: especially on my last trip home, I had to switch my health insurance, and I had to check that box that says that you were not born in the United States, and then go through that work of finding the paperwork that has your citizenship ID and everything, which

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00:36:08.820 --> 00:36:15.429

CD: I didn't even know that was... or, like, I didn't really know I had that paper, to be honest. But...

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00:36:15.610 --> 00:36:23.240

CD: after that, I was like, shoot, like, maybe I really should be carrying this around with me, or at least have that number written down,

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00:36:24.230 --> 00:36:34.980

CD: But also, I feared to the fact that I could easily just, like, lose that, and I... I think, you know, I think, I'm probably better off just...

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00:36:35.210 --> 00:36:40.339

CD: having that information in my head, rather than the physical copies of it.

265

00:36:41.260 --> 00:36:44.049

CD: Because I'll probably actually lose it if I can't.

266

00:36:44.050 --> 00:36:44.590

JH: Yeah.

267

00:36:45.620 --> 00:36:51.580

JH: I totally get it. It's like, my daughter's at college, and she has a certificate of citizenship, I think is what you're talking about.

268

00:36:51.580 --> 00:36:52.490

CD: Yeah, yes.

269

00:36:52.490 --> 00:37:12.330

JH: And I have it in a lockbox. You know, and there's also this big note on it that says you cannot reproduce this, you cannot... so it's like, okay, I could make copies of it for her, and she could carry them around, but what if she got in trouble for having a copy? So, you know, it is... it's... it's...

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00:37:12.720 --> 00:37:30.860

JH: I've... I've talked to... I just did another interview with another participant in the project who's updating her interview, and she said she's thinking a lot about this and trying to... trying to figure out whether she should, you know, get a passport card, which you can get for your wallet, or... Oh, yes.

271

00:37:30.880 --> 00:37:40.180

JH: But I just am asking, because it's interesting to hear how, you know, all of you are... are reflecting on this current moment, and whether it feels...

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00:37:41.060 --> 00:37:46.960

JH: like it impacts you or not, and so far, the answer has been yes, you know.

273

00:37:46.960 --> 00:37:56.320

CD: Yeah. I mean, I think, yeah, like I said, it matters where you are, because would it impact me in Marin? No, but here? Yes, absolutely, and...

274

00:37:57.060 --> 00:38:08.010

CD: I mean, I think that also goes for, like, during COVID, where there was a lot of, like, there's Asian hate, but that wasn't... like, when I was in Marin, I really wasn't worried about any Asian hate.

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00:38:08.010 --> 00:38:19.159

CD: And then, when you get out into the world, and you're like, oh, no, that does exist, and you leave your bubble, and you're like, okay, that's something that, like, yeah, you have to think about a little bit.

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00:38:19.210 --> 00:38:24.220

CD: A little bit more, yeah.

277

00:38:24.890 --> 00:38:30.530

JH: Well, maybe we can end this by saying that, we both hope

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00:38:30.810 --> 00:38:34.720

JH: The world becomes a more welcoming place very soon.

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00:38:34.720 --> 00:38:36.540

CD: How sad?

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00:38:36.800 --> 00:38:37.250

CD: Yes.

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00:38:37.250 --> 00:38:39.440

JH: : Yeah, 100% agree.

282

00:38:39.960 --> 00:38:48.459

JH: Well, I want to thank you so much for taking the time to talk. It's really wonderful to see you and to catch up, and

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00:38:48.800 --> 00:38:53.599

JH: I'm gonna stop recording now, and I'll stay on so we can wrap up a couple of things.

284

00:38:53.990 --> 00:38:55.360

CD: Okay, perfect.

285

00:38:56.470 --> 00:38:57.030

JH: Okay.

286

00:38:57.460 --> 00:39:02.169

JH: Let me figure out how to stop recording, hang on one sec.