

JH: Okay, so it is great to be with you Grace. Thank you so much for talking with me again, after a decade, close to a decade.

GD: Thanks for having me again.

JH: Well, it's kind of difficult to ask somebody to sum up 10 years. But can you give me some idea of, kind of lead me through a little bit of the highlights of the last decade? And you feel free to work forward or backward, whatever is easiest.

GD: Okay, I graduated high school. I went to community college in my home county, and I transferred to UC Davis, kind of during Covid. So, I got to experience both, like online and in person. Yeah. So, you know, moved out, lived with roommates, but, you know, kind of more like young adult there graduated and then moved back home. I gained a cat on the way, and then we lost one of our family cats. But those are probably the like, biggest things that happened in my life?

JH: Well, that's a lot. That's a lot of big enough, yeah, so you What did you study at UC Davis? Great school.

GD: Yes, I studied clinical nutrition.

JH: Ah, so this makes sense, because I was listening to your first interview, and I was rereading the transcript, and you predicted then that you would, you would study nutrition, that you were really into food, and that you had been a vegetarian since you were, I don't know how old, but very young.

GD: Yes, still vegetarian, still love food. Did study nutrition that hasn't changed over the past 10 years.

JH: What are your professional plans? Do you know what you want to do... with clinical nutrition? I'm hoping to become a dietitian. I have to study and take a big, scary test, and, somehow, I made it through college. I'm not the best test taker. Lots of anxiety there, so I'll eventually get through it. But right now, I've settled working with Kaiser. I work in the health education department here in Marin. I also help out with outpatient nutritional services, and then we also have a medical weight management program in Kaiser, so doing, like, wearing a lot of different hats, doing a ton of different things, but, you know, making connections and co-workers and, yeah, very cool. Do you like it?

GD: I actually do. It's really nice. Yeah.

JH: And good, I'm glad. And Kaiser's really a wonderful company to land with. So, congratulations. And when did you move home?

GD: I finished school in March of '23 and then I moved home, I think it was around June of 23 and then I went almost straight into a dietetic internship. So, I had, I forget how many

hours that was, I want to say 900 hours of internship. Things going between a clinical rotation, a management rotation, and then a food service rotation. So, my clinical rotation was at Kaiser, so that's kind of how I made the connection there. Oh, cool. Got my foot in the door. Excellent.

JH: Yeah, excellent. And when do you when do you take the big, scary test.

GD: I haven't scheduled it yet. I'm just like feeling out the studying and getting it going there.

JH: Yeah, it's like boards or qualifying exams of some licensing or something. Yeah, is there some kind of, like cram course you can do or...

GD: Luckily, there's a lot of different, there's apps that you can use, there's different websites. There's one specific lady who teaches, like a like a crash course on, you know, what is in the exam and what to predict. But, so, I've been luckily using those,

JH: Yeah, excellent, yeah, it's good to have some tools.

GH: Yeah, definitely.

JH: How did you like college? Otherwise, what was, how was it for you? UC Davis is big. Yeah, I actually really liked it. I'm more of an introvert at heart. I push myself to do things and be extroverted. But during covid, I actually was okay being online and being, you know more, not in the big classroom. I think my high school experience helped. Since I did the independent study, I was used to, kind of, you know, already working at home and, like, at my own pace, because some of the classes were, you know, asynchronous. So, I think it was, like, more gradual and easy for me, and then I was okay being at home, because it was a good excuse to tell friends like, oh, I can't, like, covid is happening. I can't do anything. No one can do anything. So, I'd like to school and my little like, workout YouTube videos and cook food and watch TV. But then once we actually went back in person, it was kind of nice getting that experience. Because I had had friends who were like, Oh, this sucks. Like, you know, your college experiences nothing. It's not normal. I'm like, Oh, I'm fine with it. But then when we went back in person, I kind of got like, the taste of, like, what college is really about, or, you know, so it was kind of cool being in like, the big lecture halls. And, you know, seeing everyone, it was kind of, you know, a huge difference from the covid times. But I feel like I did pretty well. I made some good friends that I'm still friends with outside of college and Davis, yeah, beautiful campus. Smells like home indeed, but I had a bike up there, so I was biking from my apartment to campus. I think each way it was like two and a half miles. Definitely, the weather during the summer, very hot. So, I was like, biking in like 80 to 90-degree weather. Holy. But, yeah, no, it was definitely. It was an experience, but I liked it. And then I like the little like downtown. I still have some friends who live up there, so I go back up and visit. And it's not that far away from home, which is what I liked. I like being able to, if needed, come back home for the weekend or even that evening, if there was an emergency with the family or whatever. Luckily, there wasn't, but it's only maybe, like an hour and a half drive on average. So, it was nice being that close home, not super close.

JH: So, it's interesting to hear you talk about being an introvert, because I think this is something that I noticed with my own students, and I've become much more, I think, sensitive to and aware about you're finding Covid not to be difficult in a sense. I mean, obviously it's difficult because it was a worldwide pandemic, but the being home or the being in the Zoom box didn't bother you. You felt comfortable...

GD: Yeah, definitely, even when I actually, like, got covid for the first time, and this was back when the regulations were, stay isolated for 10 days. And then right as I finished my 10th day, they announced, like, oh, five days now. So my roommate, who was sick at the same time, they were like, I'm out of here. Like, you know, day nine, I have no symptoms. And I was like, Okay, I'm just gonna wait till day 10, like, because we had one roommate who wasn't sick, so she was in, like, the main living room. She was very nice, she cooked, she brought food, and then I'm just, like, in my room, you know, getting waited on food coming to me my teas here. But you know, I even in my decently small room, I was okay, you know, I had my laptop to do work, and also, somehow I didn't get really bad symptoms. I had a sore lower back, and then, I think, a sore throat, or something like that. But I was still working out and doing like workout YouTube videos during my covid time. I was calling and FaceTiming like friends and family. I, you know, I was very fortunate not to have major symptoms and able to, you know, just stay in my room for 10 days. But I did okay, and I didn't feel cooped up or trapped, which I think other people, you know, it definitely staying in one place for 10 days is scary.

JH: Did you have classes that were synchronous online?

GD: Well, definitely interesting. I think one of my main memories is we had to do our orientation for Davis on Zoom, so we were put into cohorts, and I was a few who was actually participating in orientation over zoom, so I would have my camera on. There were maybe three other people who had their cameras on. Totally bad for our orientation leader who was trying hard, um, but yeah, so that just kind of, I feel like in most classes, cameras were not on um. And you know, it's definitely very interesting, like, even now with work meetings, there's ones that we have our cameras on, and then there's the larger ones where, you know, not many people have their camera on, and then the speaker is just, you know, talking to darkness.

JH: You've been home for how long? You moved home when?

GD: Three, three, almost three-ish years.

JH: Oh, okay.

JH: And so, how is that transition? Because you're with your friends, you're out in the world. You know, some people would feel like, 'Oh, God, I'm home,' but I think it sounds like you like being home.

GD: Yeah, do miss living alone or with a roommate with my other cat, just because, like, independence was cool. It was also, like, funny, since I went off to college, Camille was at

home, and then when I came home, Camille basically left for college, like that fall, I believe. So, we kind of did, like a switcheroo of keeping the parents company. But, you know, it's, it's nice being home like it's cool being back around mom and dad and, you know, around all of the animals. It definitely was a transition, because I brought back our youngest cat, Kirby. She turns four in March. I brought her into the home, and I was a little needed some time to settle in and have the other cats, you know, get used to her. Their relationships are okay now, okay, wow, they don't love each other, but I wouldn't say they like hate each other.

JH: How many cats? Three...

GH: Yes. So, we have angel who's on my lap, Beatrice. I got in Beatrice, but we call her BB. We got her in 2016 so probably after we first met and filmed, but yeah, because she's turning 10 this year, and then KIRBY I got while away at college. Oh, wow. Okay, three cats, one dog, and then my sister snake.

JH: Tell me about birth parent and birth family stuff, when we talked years ago about it, and I was asking you, you know, is it something you thought much about and and at the time, both you and Camille were similar in that you had a, as I remember, you had a close group of friends. You had been involved in kind of Chinese and Asian cultural activities with from the time you were a little kid, your parents had gotten you with this group. They were friends with the parents, and so I wonder how that thinking has evolved over the past decade. If it's something you think about, if it's something that you've really just isn't particularly relevant or material the older you get, or however it goes through your head.

GD: I would say I probably feel the same way of you know, I'm not going to go searching for my birth family, but if, somehow, they were to show up, you know, I meet them and like, definitely, like, want to meet them, but I'm not going to go searching for them. I like thought about this recently, because I did have a foster family and still close with the Asian baby group, but one of my friends in there, Lily, she got to meet her foster because we're from the same orphanage. We overlapped for like, a few days, I believe, which is funny. She came in as I was getting adopted, but she got to meet her foster mom and mine, because I guess a lot of them live in the same apartment complex, but I was thinking recently. I was like, it would be cool to go meet my foster family, but they're also probably old potentially have passed. By now. But also, again, I don't think I have plans to go to China anytime soon. Yeah, it's definitely not on the top of my list. Unfortunately for them, I think I would rather go to Japan first to see all the Japan things. I'm definitely very like content. And I think probably having our Asian baby group kind of helped me, you know, feel grounded growing up and like now still and kind of like I have the community. We are all still very close. I hang out with all of them a lot.

JH: I'm asking everyone, too about how you are thinking, if you are thinking about yourself in relation to the current immigration really discussion debate that we're having now in the United States. Is it something that you're paying attention to? Does it seem at all relevant to you as someone who was born in another country but grew up in this one or does it seem

like that's something kind of outside the experience my experience as an international adoptee,

GD: I think...I read the news enough and stay up to date, but I also don't try to get into it super, because I don't want to Get into a spiral of sadness. But I think it's interesting growing up in like Marin in the Bay Area, because, you know, it's more liberal, and I feel more safe and protected then maybe, you know, other people in other states and other areas. I It would be very interesting, because, you know, technically, [I] got my citizenship just because I was adopted and I got it as a baby. I don't know, you know, there's adults who have to get it, have to take a test and have interviews and stuff. I feel very fortunate just to have been given it to as a baby. I think it's very interesting. Yeah, it would be really interesting if I had to get deported back to China because I would not survive. I don't know how I would. I can't speak the language. As a vegetarian, I would struggle. You know, being away from friends and family, I definitely feel for you know, everyone who has been going through, what's been going on, yeah, but here in the Bay Area, I haven't really totally worried, but we also haven't had as large of, like an ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] presence as other areas.

There was talk of it, I think, around Halloween, where they were maybe going to be sent to the Bay. And I had, like, that slight thought, like, ever so quickly, where I was like, am I going to be, like, out in San Francisco in my Halloween costume, and am I going to get, like, picked up by ice in my Halloween costume? Like, is that going to be a possibility? Like, do I actually have to, like, think about worrying about that, which is definitely a weird thought that someone would have, but that's, you know, what's going on in the world right now. I also think that a lot of my friends that I have here in the Bay are white, and I at well, after more recent events, that doesn't matter as much, but back in Halloween, I was thinking, like, okay, like, majority of my friends are white, potentially, if, like, we were to come across ice, Maybe I would get more protected and like, looked past because I'm in like, a majority white group, it could be a possibility, like, you never know.

And then also, because the Bay Area is hosting the Super Bowl this weekend, there has, you know, ICE is going to be present down at Levi's Stadium. So, I was thinking, not that I'm going down that way at all, because the traffic will be horrible, but I'm like, thinking, like, okay, where am I going to be in the city this weekend? So definitely, I've had like, small thoughts just to, like, have the bases covered, I guess, and to not like, you know, just think I'm safe because I live in the Bay Area and because of who I'm hanging out with. Yeah.