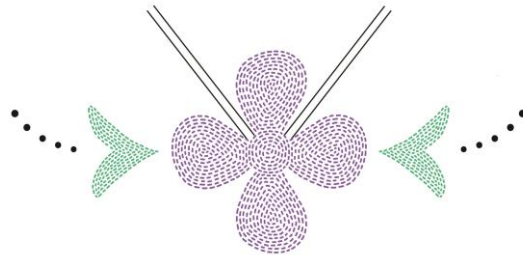


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Best Western Tower
Quesnel, British Columbia**



PUBLIC

Wednesday October 3, 2018

**Statement - Volume 498
Brent Cletheroe,
In relation to Shirley Cletheroe**

Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay

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NOTE

Where not required by other statute, redactions to this public transcript have been made pursuant to Rule 55 of the Commission's *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, which provides for "the discretion to redact private information of a sensitive nature where it is not material to the evidence to be given before distributing the information to the Parties. The National Inquiry will consider the public interest in releasing this type of information against the potential harmful impact on the individual whose personal information is at issue."

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Statement Gatherer: Kerrie Reay

Documents submitted with testimony: none.

1 Quesnel, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 3:19
3 p.m.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay, this is Kerrie Reay.
5 I am a statement-taker with the National Inquiry into
6 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and today
7 is October the 3rd, 2018, and we are in Quesnel, British
8 Columbia and the time is 3:19. Today, I am speaking with
9 Brent Cletheroe. That's 'C' as in Charlie, L-E-T-H-E-R-O-E,
10 of the Tahltan First Nation. Brent is here to share his
11 statement for his mother, who is Shirley Cletheroe, C-L-E-
12 T-H-E-R-O-E, who went missing in June of 2006 from the Fort
13 St. John, BC area. Brent is also here to share a statement
14 on his vision for the future as well. Also present in the
15 room is Bonnie George, a statement-taker, and for the
16 record, Brent, you're here voluntarily and you understand
17 that you are being videotaped and audio taped?

18 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yes.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Thank you. And so
20 Brent, when you are ready, please, you can start wherever
21 you would like.

22 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** First and foremost, I
23 want to thank everybody involved with the Inquiry and with
24 all the First Nations groups represented, government
25 officials, and everybody who is looking into this issue. I

Statement - Public
Brent Cletheroe
(Shirley Cletheroe)

2

1 think it's a very important issue and it's a defining
2 moment in Canadian history, and so I am honoured to be here
3 today. And just to kind of frame what I want to say today,
4 I think at the beginning, I'll -- I'll talk a little bit
5 just about my political views and -- and different ways
6 that I see the situation, and then I want to share my -- my
7 personal story of my mother's disappearance, and I'll begin
8 with the weekend of, so when it -- when it occurred, and
9 then I will -- it'll unravel to the -- probably the origin
10 and the backstory of -- of all the things associated to --
11 to how it happened.

12 So first and foremost, I -- I was discussing
13 with the ladies at the beginning to try to unpack a lot of
14 the -- the feelings and emotions that I have around the
15 sociopolitical conversation around stereotypes and social
16 stigmas around missing and murdered Indigenous women's --
17 the movement in general. I spoke at a Sisters in Spirit
18 conference in Peace River, Alberta, and my mother's story
19 is unique in that she, although being an alcoholic, didn't
20 have, I guess, a -- wasn't living on the streets or wasn't
21 involved in the sex trade, wasn't, I guess, easily swept
22 under the rug or -- or -- or easily neglected or easily
23 categorized or compartmentalized like so many other women,
24 I think, that are involved in this whole process. And --
25 and that, to me, is -- is -- it's offensive and it's

1 harmful to -- to -- first to touch on that, so that, you
2 know, I'm not -- I don't get overly emotional based on
3 things that are out of my control, out of my influence.
4 And I think that that's important and so I can just focus
5 on the emotional well-being and the healing aspect of -- of
6 what I'm going to say today.

7 I think it's important that I talk about
8 from Stephen Harper apologizing to First Nations to Justin
9 Trudeau and -- and some of the promises that he's made, I
10 believe, are very hypocritical and -- and that I never
11 believed in from the beginning of his campaign, that --
12 that I believe First Nations, we will have been duped. But
13 again, it's -- it's all a government framework regardless
14 of Liberal, Conservative viewpoints of the issue. I'm just
15 glad that it's -- it's being looked at, it's -- it's being
16 addressed. And so I identify as a Conservative, I identify
17 as a -- as a Christian, identify as a First Nations male,
18 and I -- I do believe that, without the way they are going
19 into the details of the things that I find very offensive
20 and -- and challenging about this whole issue, I think that
21 human beings in general can rise above compartmentalizing
22 each other.

23 And -- and, you know, I don't want to attach
24 this to what I find very elementary, basic ideas like
25 racism, different things will not define what I want to say

Statement - Public
Brent Cletheroe
(Shirley Cletheroe)

4

1 today. I think that love conquers all and that, through
2 all of this being discussed and eventually categorized and
3 eventually filed away, that everything that I say today, I
4 think, will ultimately be a -- a fact and to be the truth,
5 not a truth or just another voice in the conglomeration.
6 But I think -- and I do believe in unity and I do believe
7 that all of this will combine to become something very
8 powerful.

9 But I believe that my voice -- I really want
10 today to be individual. I want it to be unique and special
11 based on the fact that what I say today, I think I want to
12 be framed or background with an absolute truth. I don't
13 want there to be versions of the truth or versions of my
14 personal truth or the way other people may see the issue,
15 but basically the facts and strong words that everything
16 gets, at the end of what I have to say, placed in -- in one
17 category. And that is that, even 100 years from now, if
18 somebody was to look at this, that it would be a very as-a-
19 matter-of-fact statement of the way I see the world and --
20 and the way I think. People can relate to who we're
21 looking at everything from a very black-and-white
22 perspective, very straightforward kind of a way, instead of
23 it being not poetic or just romantic or, again, emotionally
24 driven. But -- but I just think that there is a -- a -- a
25 major problem in our country, and -- and with, you know,

1 just humanity in general at this stage of history in our
2 country, and I think that this is really going to shed
3 light or bring that truth to the surface.

4 And so all that being said, I just want to
5 talk about my mother, Shirley Cletheroe. She was a very
6 beautiful human being, very real, very in-your-face, very -
7 - at times described as a firecracker and a -- a wolverine.
8 My dad was over six feet tall and close to 300 pounds, and
9 a very abusive home that I grew up in, alcoholic home. My
10 mom held her own. My mom was a very strong person, very --
11 very as-a-matter-of-fact. So I think that's where I'm
12 coming from today. I think that's a great way to describe
13 what I have to say, because how she raised me affects
14 everything I'm going to say and -- and -- and influences
15 everything I'm going to say and -- and helped develop the
16 personality that I have.

17 And so my mom always told me and my siblings
18 we were very special and we could make a difference in the
19 world and never allowed somebody to be little or, again,
20 categorize us or marginalize us or put us into stereotypes
21 and -- and different things, and -- and was, like,
22 basically against this idea of -- of racism or weakness in
23 a -- portrayed as -- as whatever is dysfunctional in your
24 life, whatever is vulnerable. And -- and it -- it actually
25 just makes you stronger. It's not something that you need

1 to shy away from or be embarrassed about.

2 And so I think a lot of First Nations people
3 in the earliest stages of them developing their
4 personality, becoming who they will be in -- in -- in their
5 adolescence onward, feel an overwhelming shame for being
6 First Nations. They feel an overwhelming, for some reason,
7 I think it's a generational curse, just a lot of the hurts
8 and -- and how I see that as a strength. I don't see that
9 as a -- a shameful thing. But choosing -- choosing to be
10 Native, I think, is very important, whether you are or not.
11 I think a lot of people don't even know, because of how
12 watered down, I mean, their culture may seem. But that --
13 that defining moment of choosing to be First Nations and
14 face the world as somebody who is First Nations is very
15 important, and when you -- when you have that awakening to
16 not merge with the culture that may be European or the
17 military-industrial complex doesn't become your -- your
18 flag. I mean, you are marching to the beat of a different
19 drum, which is a traditional drum, which is a Native aspect
20 of -- of your culture that you identify with, is very
21 important in developing who you will be in life.

22 As a -- a -- I guess a proud way to look at
23 being First Nations is as a warrior and as a -- as somebody
24 who can overcome. Because one thing that I do identify
25 with as a First Nations, regardless of shame and -- and

1 cultural bias and -- and some stigmatic stereotypes or --
2 or racism in general, I believe, can never destroy, is that
3 being a First Nations person is -- is something that --
4 that makes -- makes you -- it -- it's something that can
5 never die. It's something that can never be eliminated
6 from the ground.

7 The blood that cries out from the systematic
8 institutional racism and -- and hate and -- and, you know,
9 the government and governmental, I would say, genocide of
10 culture and of our people only testifies of our strength
11 that we're still here and that we are being identified and
12 that we can't be pushed aside and can't be neglected and --
13 and swept under the rug of our history, and -- and we never
14 will be. And I think that's because of our ties to the
15 land. And -- and so our ties to the land and the Creator
16 or God-given authority that was given to us here, we can't
17 be eliminated, can't be exterminated.

18 And so I think that, with that -- with that
19 idea of who we are, it -- it -- it's empowering to be First
20 Nations. And so I think that's important in this
21 conversation, that we begin to promote some different ideas
22 like that, than how we are victims and we need to be
23 blanketed or -- or -- or coddled or -- or comforted because
24 we are victims and we'll always be victims. I don't
25 receive that narrative. I don't believe that. I believe

1 that, eventually, we're going to shake off the chains of
2 oppression, and the backstory of who we are is -- is
3 written by people that didn't see us in the -- in the right
4 light. So this is an opportunity for First Nations people
5 to stand up in this generation and -- and not speak their
6 truth, but speak the truth that -- that who we are and who
7 we always will be will be powerful and a force to be
8 reckoned with.

9 And so self-government and -- and different
10 conversations around this issue are -- are not only a
11 necessity, but a -- an eventual long-term mutual agreement
12 that -- that I think the -- the powers that be or the
13 government -- governments of the world, and we think of
14 community in general of the human race, that -- that we are
15 becoming more connected every single day to the rest of the
16 world through the Internet and so forth as a global -- as a
17 global governance, you know, for the people partnering
18 around the world, that First Nations people will always be
19 independent and a very unique part of that conversation.

20 And -- and so, all that being said, I
21 believe I've been on a very -- a very hard journey with a
22 very healthy outcome through -- I've been through. So
23 beginning to talk about the weekend of my mother's
24 disappearance, growing up, again, from this -- this
25 perspective of -- of -- of a mother who -- who didn't

1 coddle us, who didn't, you know, necessarily promise us
2 that life would be easy, but that if you had clothes on
3 your back and food on the table and a roof over your head,
4 you know, you -- you were blessed and that you should never
5 complain with what life dishes you out. That you should
6 make your way in the world and your life will be what you
7 make of it. And I think that that is such a beautiful
8 concept, and it's not only a -- a survival mentality but a
9 thriving mentality, because what I -- what makes my heart
10 bleed about other people, not just First Nations, but any
11 human being that has a defeated backstory, has a defeated
12 mentality, that has a very ...

13 Being a -- being an Apostolic Pentecostal
14 minister, you know, sometimes I speak in Scripture or
15 somebody would speak from inspirational quotes or would
16 speak from -- from influential people in history. Now, a
17 lot of times, I -- I speak these principles in the Word of
18 God in -- in the Bible because they mean so much to me and
19 -- and they frame what I'm trying to say better than I
20 could ever say it. And I think that the Bible says that --
21 that God's "strength is made perfect in weakness." And so
22 I believe that -- that, just because a person is broken,
23 just because a person is -- feels defeated or they are
24 right now, doesn't mean they can't.

25 With -- the most powerful thing on the

1 planet is an idea, in my opinion. Not guns, not fighting,
2 not muscles or strength or, again, I think something that's
3 -- that's very, very common in this issue is -- is a -- is
4 a man domineering over a woman or -- or that -- that woman
5 is weak in any way, shape, or form because she is not
6 physically at the same, I guess, level and God-given way
7 that -- that -- men are created different than women. That
8 that -- that that was a strength in itself. There's
9 something beautiful in how women being effeminate or being
10 the weaker vessel, sometimes we see that physically, that
11 -- that there is something stronger in many other ways.
12 And -- and to equalize men and women is actually -- it's
13 foolishness, in my opinion. It's ignorance, because you're
14 -- you can't make something -- it's just -- it's just not a
15 very intelligent comparison at all, because they're
16 beautiful in their own way, so.

17 All that being saying -- said, is that with
18 -- with the strength that I believe will come to every
19 person will be unique. It won't be -- it won't be a
20 blanket statement that, you know, an apology to every
21 single person is going to somehow bring this healing. It's
22 -- it's actually specifically to women and it's
23 specifically to men, it's specifically to children, and
24 it's specifically to, I believe, that -- that -- how they
25 see themselves, that -- that defining moment they chose to

1 be Aboriginal and -- and how they -- they chose to face the
2 world with that, you know, as a broken wing or as soaring
3 like an eagle.

4 And so -- so I think that that's ignorance,
5 first and foremost, that people can start to get somewhere
6 with not just pulling themselves up by their bootstraps and
7 -- and trying to push on. I mean, that's -- that's --
8 that's ignorance too. It's this idea that -- that I
9 believe, once a family structure is identified as healthy,
10 as proper, as normal, they -- a lot of people don't like
11 those terminologies, but where human beings, regardless of
12 the colour of their skin or their cultural background or
13 what dysfunctional things may occur in their upbringing,
14 the bottom line is, globally speaking, that every -- every
15 human being on the planet hurts and -- and suffers and --
16 and experiences joy in overcoming different, you know,
17 aspects of that dysfunction and -- and can -- can all come
18 into agreement with is that there -- there must be a best-
19 case scenario.

20 We see the worst-case scenario daily. We
21 see the statistics. We see the, you know, MCFD and -- and
22 social structure of foster care, different things being
23 represented very highly, 70 percent or something of -- of
24 children in care are Aboriginal, the jails, such and so
25 forth. And everything we're trying to do is put a Band-Aid

1 and solve problems and things that we -- we see as a
2 problem.

3 But we never, ever focus on the opposite,
4 which is proactive, which is identifying strengths,
5 identifying what is the best-case scenario. You know, what
6 -- where -- where can a person thrive and -- and benefit
7 with that aspect from that perspective of -- of -- of,
8 despite my weaknesses, despite my flaws, despite the
9 dysfunction, I can be strong. I have an identity. Who I
10 am is very important to the world. And -- and -- and
11 therefore, my existence matters.

12 That right there is the core of -- of
13 everything good that will ever come out of this Inquiry or
14 out of this, I guess, movement or -- or -- or national
15 attention that's given to this issue, is that people have
16 to think they matter. They have to think that they have a
17 spiritual value or -- or a -- or an eternal value. And so,
18 based on my Christian beliefs, I think a lot of people can
19 turn to God or to a benevolent and all-knowing being of --
20 that can help them, empower them. To have that identity
21 that they do have dignity despite of their sins, despite of
22 their shortcomings and the dysfunction that has occurred in
23 life.

24 And every person bleeds the same colour.
25 Every person experiences pain and -- and also joy and hope.

1 And -- and so, all of those things being said, that growing
2 up in a -- in a post-Christian culture, I think that, at
3 one time, there was these values in my mother's life
4 especially, you know, going to church or being a good
5 person and different things like that, that have dissolved.
6 And -- and I'm not here to preach a sermon, but -- but I do
7 think that that gives you the -- the 70's and 80's ideas
8 and -- and concepts around some of the things my mother
9 believed. She was a Christian, she went to church for two
10 years very, very faithfully, and -- and I remember growing
11 up as a -- as a young man that she told me to respect women
12 and to be a gentleman.

13 And that one thing my mother always said was
14 that, you are the oldest, you are the -- the chosen one.
15 You know, you have to blaze the trail, you have to be an
16 example. You can't be selfish and do what you want to do.
17 You can't throw your life away because you are essentially
18 throwing your family away. Your brothers and your sisters
19 look up to you. And at times, it -- it -- it kept me from
20 doing very shameful things and very selfish things, because
21 I knew that I would have to be held accountable to my
22 mother and to my father, to my brothers and sisters. And I
23 remember times being on drugs and -- and looking in the
24 eyes of my little brothers, who were, like, ten years old,
25 you know, and they're old enough to know, kind of, what's

1 going on. And to feel like, is this -- is this who I'm
2 supposed to be?

3 And I think it's important to talk about the
4 addictions and the -- the hurts, habits, and hangups or
5 whatever may be, eating disorder or -- or abuse or -- or
6 all of it. I just want to call it the, you know, the
7 negative effects of -- of just navigating this broken,
8 sinful world. I think that's why we have a broken system,
9 that's why we have broken institutions that -- that have
10 made this -- this issue worse and not better, is because
11 the answer is not physical. It's not financial. It's not
12 something that you can write a cheque for. And as long as
13 people keep identifying this and saying, No, no, no, let's
14 go back to identity, who are you? You know, who -- who
15 will you be and who are you becoming? Why -- why do you --
16 why do you want to be here? I think if that suicide will
17 tell the story, and -- and the -- the statistics based
18 around a type of a negative identity or -- or a shameful
19 purpose that -- that people feel they identify with, this
20 is who I am, but I'm embarrassed of it, they choose to end
21 their life because it's not -- it's not the life they want
22 to live.

23 And so all these -- all these questions and
24 these -- these social issues and these spiritual --
25 spiritual decisions should frame this conversation. Not --

1 not the political stuff and who's in office and not what
2 happened in the past. The past is the enemy of the future,
3 in my opinion, and -- and looking to the past to teach us
4 about the future is -- is, you know, is like buying shoes
5 that are too small for you, because it just doesn't make
6 sense. But -- but to say to yourself, who do I want to be,
7 who -- who do I want First Nations to be, and, you know, in
8 the future, and will I be ashamed to be First Nations ten
9 years from now, 100 years from now? If I'm not ashamed to
10 be First Nations now, then I'd better make sure that I have
11 an input or stand. And I am a warrior and I am strong so
12 that, in 100 years, somebody's not ashamed of being First
13 Nations.

14 Then so I think that a lot of this is -- it
15 is very important to -- to face the hurt and to face the --
16 the shameful part of your identity and your background, the
17 dysfunction. Once that is dealt with and you have the
18 strength to speak openly and publicly and can share what it
19 feels like to be a -- a survivor, you know, ongoing raging
20 battle, and so -- and you're in the trenches of -- of
21 social opinion and -- and all of these different things,
22 you can -- you can emerge victorious by -- by simply taking
23 the good and the bad and the ugly and -- and embracing that
24 -- that you can still thrive and -- and be healthy and be
25 -- have some self-respect and -- and self-confidence and

1 dignity on your choices tomorrow and your choices now.

2 You know, now is more important than the
3 past or the future. Now invents the future. And so living
4 in the now, having dignity now, changing everything that
5 you think about yourself right now is -- is this huge
6 opportunity to -- to change, to grow, to -- to be a -- to
7 choose to be empowered. To be a champion, you know, to --
8 to, again, be victorious or be a warrior. Because the
9 social -- the social pain, some of the things that have
10 been felt over hundreds of years, are not going to change
11 overnight. They're not going to get better, a lot of times
12 that we feel in our lifetime.

13 You've maybe seen great, sweeping change,
14 and -- and -- and sometimes you feel that whatever you've
15 been through is best forgotten for that reason, that you
16 think, well, it's insignificant, I'm nobody, I -- I'm never
17 going to be recognized or significantly be given a voice.
18 And I -- and I think that that's defeating. So when you
19 basically say, you know, right now is the time, today is
20 the day, and, you know, I have just as much of authority as
21 anybody else, you know, and whether you're a Prime Minister
22 or you're a -- a -- you know, a -- a judge or a -- a -- you
23 see these institutions as not intimidating anymore, because
24 every person, every person has a voice. Every person, when
25 they -- when they choose to -- to embrace their dignity and

1 their identity and their story.

2 And basically, you'll see a lot of us First
3 Nations people, we'll make fun of or we'll try to laugh off
4 very dysfunctional things, because that's how they're
5 dealing with their dysfunction and that's how they're
6 dealing with their shame and pain. And I think that that's
7 belittling. Again, this ghettoization of -- of -- I
8 believe the reservations are -- are the ghettoization of
9 First Nations people, living isolated and shoved into a --
10 a foreign -- maybe a -- a remote place so that they're not
11 heard and they're not educated and they're not, you know,
12 they're -- they're -- they're -- they're given something,
13 but at the same time, it's -- it's like hush money, you
14 know? It's, like, exploitative and it's -- it's -- it's
15 corrupt, you know? It's -- it's a -- a broken system
16 throwing money at social issues. It's not in any way,
17 shape, or form going to bring any kind of hope to the
18 degradation and the -- and the -- the -- the beaten-down,
19 the downtrodden.

20 Real talk, of the -- the -- the -- the
21 condition of -- of some of the things that are happening in
22 our country, that -- that there were people who came here
23 that were immigrants from all over the world that worked
24 hard and -- and -- and so became, you know, had that
25 dignity and -- and became established in our country and

1 built the country to what it is. And so just because we
2 were here first doesn't mean that we have to have the same
3 true grit to -- to get nothing the government hands us, or
4 there are no crutches that are going to bring healing to
5 this -- this issue. This issue is -- is so much deeper.

6 It's -- it takes that want to. Got to have
7 the want to -- to get up. You have to have the want to --
8 to make a change and to be different and to stand out and
9 to have a voice. And so my mother put that into me, or
10 else I wouldn't be here today. My question is, how many
11 families and people chose not to speak to anybody about
12 what they went through because they could not fathom the
13 pain to verbalize some of the things they've been through?

14 And I think that, if somebody understood how
15 much hurt it takes just to be open, just to be real and
16 just to share your heart and speak some of the things that
17 have happened to every single person, these videotapes and
18 these recordings, and -- and -- they would be worth more
19 than gold, you know? Because they're so -- they're so
20 unique, because for every person that tells their story
21 represents thousands that have died and -- and never, ever
22 spoke what they went through or thought they could change
23 anything. And they weren't insignificant because, you
24 know, I can -- I can speak for them in that.

25 What is being addressed in this Inquiry, the

1 story of my mother, is -- it -- it -- I guess, like I said,
2 again, back in the beginning, cries out from the ground. It
3 -- it's -- it's a story that needs to be told, and it's so
4 much more powerful, and again, it's just an identity, you
5 know, of strength and not weakness because of what you've
6 been through and the things that are shameful, you know,
7 are like a -- are like a -- a shadow on what you're saying.
8 That -- that's actually not true. Everybody faces pain,
9 everybody goes through things, and -- and regardless of how
10 you deal with it, maybe, differently, everybody who goes
11 through it is empowered by every victim that's ever gone
12 through something. If you -- if you believe that, then --
13 then what you're saying is so important and you have got to
14 find the courage to share.

15 And so, you know, so if my mother put this
16 into me from birth that I was a trailblazer, that I was the
17 chosen one, and from chores to -- to -- I said I was going
18 to say and talk about the disappearance on the weekend of
19 my mother. I just am really beating around the bush
20 because I don't think I'm going to do that. I keep going
21 back to the beginning. Anyways, I'll just stay there,
22 because that's -- that's something that I need to build up
23 to, I think.

24 So when I was -- my mother was pregnant with
25 me when she met my dad, and so -- so my real father, you

1 know, biological father was -- he -- he's actually deceased
2 a couple years now. And so at five years old, I found out
3 that my biological dad and my, you know, my -- my dad
4 currently at the time wasn't my real dad by my -- my
5 stepdad giving me discipline and giving me a spanking. And
6 I was very upset and I was crying and said that I hated him
7 and I slammed the door and I was really throwing a tantrum.
8 And I hurt his feelings, and he said to my mother, you
9 know, that it -- it hurt his feelings, you know, that I was
10 saying I hated him and all this stuff.

11 And -- and my mom came flying in the room
12 and she set me straight. You know, even at five years old,
13 said he doesn't have to love you, he doesn't have to clothe
14 you, doesn't have to feed you. He chose you to be his son,
15 even though you're not. And you know, you have to
16 understand that. Anybody can be a father, but it takes a
17 real man to be a dad. And I was like, immediately,
18 immediately turned on a dime, even at five years old, you
19 know, to this responsibility of -- of being a -- a good
20 human being, because, you know, I had an example, and then
21 wrestled with, again, my identity, like why my real father
22 abandoned me, why he wasn't part of my life.

23 And so that -- this -- I'm talking about a
24 lot of issues that face First Nations men, so -- and I --
25 and I think, I don't know if I stated it at the beginning

1 of the video, I do believe that there was a be-all to end-
2 all answer to a lot of the social issues in Canada about
3 First Nations or any human being, regardless of the colour
4 of their skin or where they come from, is that there is a
5 best-case scenario of what a family structure was like.
6 And if our country does not value that, whatever is not
7 valued will not be valuable. We will discard what healthy,
8 proper childrearing and family looks like. We're
9 descending into chaos, and this will be, literally, the end
10 of our country. It's the end of the world if we start to
11 reidentify what family is, and the government can never be
12 family. The government institutions that exist, foster
13 care and the correctional facilities and -- and the way we
14 deal with human beings like cattle and -- and try to
15 categorize people, can never be family.

16 And -- and if we -- if we -- if we keep
17 looking to these institutions to solve these social
18 problems, we are going to, again, reap the whirlwind. So I
19 believe that -- that Family Day and, you know, this --
20 these holidays and different things need to be -- you know,
21 they need to be promoted in such a way that -- that men are
22 able to do things with their family, men are able to be a
23 provider, men are able to be a protector, men are enabled
24 to be that good human being that my dad was to me and made
25 those decisions. And the men who don't embrace those

1 responsibilities to the men that don't see themselves as
2 powerful or don't have a healthy identity and -- and are
3 selfish and making destructive choices need to understand
4 that they are destroying the country. They are destroying
5 themselves, their families or -- or their exes or their six
6 different kids with six different mothers that they don't
7 have any responsibility to because they'll get welfare or
8 they'll get child tax or they'll get something, I don't
9 have to look after my family. You have to understand that
10 you are the murderer, you are the rapist, you are the --
11 you are the destruction of -- of moral fabric and of every
12 family.

13 And if you kicked in the door in the middle
14 of the night and butchered somebody with an axe or a
15 chainsaw and you were some horrible person, if you cut
16 somebody's head off on a bus, a Greyhound, and you were
17 just released back into society as -- as somebody who'd
18 received enough counselling to become a good human being
19 again, that -- that -- that you're -- we're trying to tame
20 what's identified as a monster, what's identified as wrong,
21 what's identified as Heaven or Hell or consequences to our
22 action. And a slap on the wrist for these atrocities, you
23 know, you -- they're -- you run out of places to point your
24 finger, run out of institutions when you can't blame
25 everything on the government. Can't blame everything on

1 your father, who wasn't there, you know? And you have the
2 opportunity to be a father who is there.

3 And so how you see yourself and how you feel
4 empowered to finally be the person that stands up and --
5 and deals with all of Hell is where you camp out at the
6 gates of Hell to make a difference will determine whether
7 or not you go to Hell. I mean, I think a lot of people
8 believe in Hell as a place that's figurative or -- or, you
9 know, some people see it as literally on Planet Earth, you
10 know? I'm going through Hell. I feel the flames and
11 suffering every day with decisions that I've made and
12 things that I'm doing, and it's not getting better, it's
13 getting worse. And so if that's the case, then -- then why
14 don't you stand up and fight? The -- the only person that
15 you can change, the only person that you can actually make
16 a difference in their lives, and that's yourself.

17 And so I -- I think that, at five years old,
18 I decided, hey, you know what, I have somebody that will be
19 my example, will be my provider, my protector, and looks
20 after and loves my mother. You know, as -- as my
21 understanding was at five years old, and life's very
22 complicated. I chose to trust and I chose to let down my
23 guard and I chose to be moulded by -- I just know that I --
24 that I subconsciously just yielded to the fact that I was
25 like, you're my dad, you know. You're going to be my -- my

1 whole world, you know?

2 And I think that, when somebody doesn't have
3 to, doesn't mean they can't ever find that. I mean, that's
4 why God is called our Father, because regardless of if you
5 had a father -- obviously, there was a physical -- there
6 was a physical transaction that equalled you being able to
7 say that you had a father, even if that person wasn't your
8 dad and you were raised by your mom or by your grandmother
9 or -- or by your community, whatever you identify as your
10 family, we all have this idea that we can have a Heavenly
11 Father, somebody that -- that cares about us or -- or sees
12 something of worth or dignity in our lives.

13 And so, regardless if you're a man or a
14 woman, whether you're a child, whether you're a
15 grandparent, whether you are suffering, you know, in the
16 Sixties Scoop or -- or, you know, all of these different
17 atrocities of the past, you can -- you can say that. I am
18 loved and I am important and -- and I do have dignity and
19 -- and I can have self-worth and I can have a -- a -- even
20 if I don't have a -- a self-confidence, I can have a God
21 confidence. I can have a Creator confidence. I can have
22 this idea that I'm made for a purpose, I'm here for a
23 reason.

24 And -- and that's why I'm still talking
25 about family right now, because there's a lot of lies, in

1 my opinion, that are being promoted in -- in institutions
2 like educational facilities that are saying, you know,
3 there's this idea of evolution and that we're all just
4 animals and -- and we should conduct ourselves as such. If
5 you don't want people to murder each other and to, you
6 know, join a gang because they don't have a family and, you
7 know, to be a man of integrity and character and -- and
8 rear up a family that doesn't commit crimes and different
9 things and however you want to get your finger on the pulse
10 of what's right and wrong in the country, then you have to,
11 first and foremost, give them a -- an identity, something
12 to believe in that is -- places more self-worth on them
13 than something that was an accident.

14 I mean, that's what the Big Bang speaks of
15 and evolution and different things that are theories, that
16 are not proven, that are not science. These are all --
17 these are all ideas. And when I said that at the
18 beginning, too, that ideas are the most powerful thing in
19 the world, these ideas are propagated by our government and
20 by a global government, by a global idea that, if we tear
21 down family, then the government becomes the family, and if
22 there's one government, there's ultimately global control.
23 And this is also a Biblical idea. All that being said,
24 that if -- if we take, as First Nations people, and go back
25 to where there was never evolution, it was never -- even

1 though we had respect for creation and we respect a
2 Creator, evolution and all this garbage is so foreign to
3 our culture that we -- we should reject that openly at a --
4 at a -- at a unifying level. Because that is what's
5 actually destroying any hope of reconciliation or -- or a
6 commitment to -- to having a healthy family structure.
7 Because if we have no worth, then this will get worse.

8 We have only seen the beginning of history
9 repeating itself, whether it's, you know, even -- even, in
10 comparison, I guess, that any Mao or -- or -- or Stalin or
11 Communist, you know, even -- even the fascism and -- and
12 Germany and -- and World War II and -- and gas camps and --
13 and what happened to Jewish people. You know, we can go
14 back farther than that. There has always been -- the worst
15 possible atrocities you could ever imagine are all based on
16 the fact that these are not human beings, these are
17 animals, these are numbers, they're not -- they're not
18 actually spiritually important and individuals that have a
19 voice.

20 And so -- so the more we embrace, the more
21 we embrace, as First Nations people, in -- indeed, this
22 dysfunction narrative that we are broken, we're victims, we
23 need help and we need to be picked up and we need to be
24 helped up and -- and brushed off and everything, we're --
25 we're -- we're identifying that narrative. We're saying

1 that, like, hey, I'm just another person that needs the
2 government and I need something from somebody else. And as
3 long as we're looking to somebody else, we will never, ever
4 -- it will get drastically worse, because those people, the
5 saying comes to me, you know, don't bite the hand that
6 feeds you. Because the hand that feeds you can stop
7 feeding you, and when that happens, we eat each other.

8 And that's what's happening right now, that
9 there are ideas in First Nation culture like being an
10 apple, or you're, you know, you're red on the outside,
11 you're white on the inside. And some of them are
12 benefiting from -- how come a handful of people on the
13 reserve have businesses and -- and are the chief and
14 council and -- and have a good life and their -- their --
15 their kingdom is in squalor? There are so many broken
16 people that I minister to that are so -- that are so
17 dependent on -- on getting a cheque at a certain time, at a
18 certain place, that are so dependent, they're codependent
19 on -- on an institution that ultimately hates them and
20 never, ever represented them, never, ever. That tried to
21 exterminate them and now is wearing a different mask and
22 trying to feed them. It's like, I'm not a dog. I'm not on
23 a chain. I don't want anybody to -- to feed me.

24 But I mean, First Nations people will, if
25 they identify it as -- as a, you know, I would be a -- a

1 wolf, you know, not a -- not a domesticated animal. And so
2 this idea that we are a pack and we are strong and we can
3 more than survive, we can thrive, you know? We can be the
4 -- the -- the -- the king of the jungle, if this is the law
5 of the jungle. If it's kill or be killed, if it's the --
6 the survival of the fittest or whatever narrative that
7 Darwin or evolution or these institutions are feeding us,
8 it's -- it's -- all you have to say is, yeah, but I would
9 be the one on top. If that's the way it is, then I would
10 be the one that is also the most compassionate.

11 So I'm not going to identify as a victim.
12 I'm not going to identify as somebody that was broken and
13 needs to be fixed. I'll identify as somebody who is --
14 they say the winner of a war is the one that creates the
15 narrative, creates what they want history to reflect. I
16 think if First Nations people understand this, then they
17 would stop bickering with people who have no power over
18 them. Why are we asking to be validated? Why are we
19 asking to be healed? Give us more money, that will help us
20 to become, you know, obviously, whatever they want us to
21 be? Because they're paying us. They're paying us to be
22 what they want us to be.

23 And so when you receive payment for
24 something, you know, it's -- it's like prostitution. It's
25 just like constantly feed us more victimization or kind of

1 scenarios where, if we yield more of our rights, we get
2 more money, and if we, you know, bend over just a little
3 bit more backwards, then we'll get recognized and we'll --
4 that obviously doesn't make any sense. There should come a
5 point where we say, you know, I am who I am and I've been
6 through what I've been through and I -- I -- I've taken all
7 that I can take, you know, and -- and not have to give more
8 than I have to give. And that -- that is the answer, is to
9 -- to -- is to -- not to receive what is prepackaged, but
10 is to repackage whatever you've been through into something
11 that enables you and empowers you.

12 And at this point, it doesn't even matter.
13 There are people assuming that doorknob over there is their
14 higher power. You know, they're just, they -- I don't have
15 the power myself because I'm an addict and I can't stop
16 being an addict, so I have to believe in something else to
17 help me overcome my addiction. And it's like, if the
18 answer lied in us alone, we -- we wouldn't have any
19 problems. So it's crazy that there's a dual nature, that
20 we have to have -- be empowered and have an identity and be
21 strong, but if -- you cannot be strong yourself. That
22 is --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But -- yeah. I was just
24 going to say, sorry, I -- because I've -- didn't want to
25 interrupt. It comes back, I think, to what you were saying

1 at the beginning, which was, First Nations are not the ones
2 writing the narrative. It's -- it's the non-Indigenous
3 community. It's the people who are in power that are
4 writing the narrative. And so it's -- it becomes an
5 opportunity that First Nations need to write the narrative,
6 is what I think I hear you saying.

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Absolutely, and I --
8 and I think the narrative is not written or recorded or --
9 or -- or, you know, basically implemented in -- in -- in
10 court cases and different things to come out, to give the
11 right or wrong.

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

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, recognized,
14 socially accepted end of the story. I think what it is, is
15 the lives that are lived in integrity and the character of
16 the people that fought the battle and were involved and had
17 the courage to tell the story and -- and actually, were the
18 strongest one in their family, were the ones that were the
19 -- the patriarch.

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Or the matriarch. You
22 know, somebody had to stand. And I'm coming from a family
23 of very strong women. My grandmother and my mother, you
24 know, went through very horrific things, and -- and I think
25 that I -- I feel embarrassed to tell my story based on what

1 they faced. They didn't have the Internet, they didn't
2 have a cell phone, they didn't have the conveniences. They
3 didn't have push-button appliances. You know what I mean?
4 And yet they were the ones being kicked around and abused
5 and had no rights and -- and were, you know, choked off by
6 a system that -- that wanted to -- that wanted to
7 exterminate them, and they had, you know.

8 And -- and here we are now, saying, you
9 know, I feel discriminated against because I'm not hired
10 for a certain position or I'm not -- you know, which is
11 still, in my opinion, even worse, because it's a systematic
12 -- it's like when killing people becomes automated.

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

14 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Versus when somebody
15 has to do it with their bare hands, you know? And so it's
16 definitely the same on -- on many levels, but at the same
17 time, it's like, I've never had to sleep on the ground in a
18 cabin in the woods and try to make my, you know ...

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Are you speaking about
20 your mom and your grandmother?

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** My grandmother, yeah.
22 So then --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And just for the
24 Commissioners, your family, your mom's family is from
25 Telegraph Creek in northern British Columbia, so it's very

1 -- the wilderness --

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Well, I -- I think
3 that, yeah, so I want to say that my grandmother came from
4 the Yukon.

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

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And originally came
7 from the Yukon, and my mother was the youngest in her
8 siblings, and I have my Uncle [Uncle 1] and my Auntie [Aunt
9 1], my Auntie [Aunt 2], and my mother, so there's four of
10 them. That was my immediate family on my mother's side. I
11 think -- have two different dads, I think.

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

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so there seems to
14 be the -- the norm when it comes to a lot of First Nations
15 families, is there's a lot of, you know, there's jokes
16 oftentimes -- again, how First Nations people try to hide
17 their shame and their hurt and their pain -- that Father's
18 Day is the most confusing day on the reserve. These
19 different things, you know. And it's, like, the same with
20 a lot of minorities, that regardless, if you say, like,
21 Indian time, they'll say it's, like, Jamaican time or any
22 other. You know, there's a lot of excuses for our cultures
23 because we don't fit in a -- in a European mindset about
24 time and different things like that, that it's -- it's
25 shameful, so we have to make a joke about, you know, I'm

1 late because of this.

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

3 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I come to the point
4 where I say, you know what? If I show up, I show up. If
5 you don't validate me as important, then it won't bother
6 you, and if it is important, then you have to wait for me.
7 You need to wait for the Prime Minister. You need to wait
8 for a game. Then you'll wait for me. I'm important or I'm
9 not, and if I'm not, then life will move on without me.
10 But if people have an identity where they say, you know
11 what, I'm not punching a clock, I'm a business owner, you
12 know what I mean? I -- I show up when I need to and I do
13 my job to the best of my ability and I have contracts and
14 recurring customers because I'm good at what I do and they
15 don't mind.

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

17 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know? If I come
18 and go as I please, because I do what they've asked me to
19 do. And that way, I'm earning my living by having
20 integrity --

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

22 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- and being -- and
23 having character about my -- the quality of my -- my job
24 and -- and what I'm -- what I'm offering society.

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

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** But I'm -- I'm
2 important or I'm not, again. So if people don't see
3 themselves as important in how they interject their gifts
4 and talents and -- and abilities and things that they are
5 here to do? Really, everybody has a role to play and a
6 purpose in their life, getting back to this idea of a God
7 consciousness. Like, hey, you know, I'm important for this
8 reason. Nobody else can be who I am. Nobody else can do
9 what I do. And if you have that identity, then all of a
10 sudden, you're like, now I have to implement that into my
11 children.

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

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** It's so awesome that
14 you can pass that on and it becomes a strength. And that's
15 what heritage should be. Not like, oh, we -- we beat a
16 drum or we do this or that or the other. You know, that
17 identifies us. It's like, every culture on the planet
18 beats a drum, you know what I mean? And I'm not taking
19 away from that. I'm saying that's very important and you
20 can pass that on and you can. But if that's what
21 identifies you, if you forget how to play the song --

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Does that come back,
23 though, to your --

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- then you don't
25 exist.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Does that come back to
2 your comment earlier? I -- I don't know if we were on the
3 record or not at the time. Talking about how you feel that
4 the reserves have -- have created an isolation, because
5 when I hear you talking now, it -- it sounds more of an
6 urban feel and that it's about integrating. Is that what
7 I'm hearing you say?

8 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Absolutely. And --
9 and because I feel that that's -- this is the scary part,
10 is that would feed into, a lot of times, the way the
11 government would like to railroad the process and to just
12 rip up your roots and -- and try to put you somewhere
13 again, is a raping of the culture and of the -- and so that
14 the heritage and -- and -- and everybody. So that's why
15 this is such a slow process. Nobody wants to be uprooted
16 or torn out. But at the same time, it's like our identity
17 can't be reservations.

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

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** That's so funny.
20 That's like saying that our, you know, we're going to be
21 stuck in this room for the rest of our lives.

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

23 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And this is ours and
24 we -- and this is great, you know? This is our carpet,
25 this is our table.

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

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And you know, you're
3 my friends and we -- we -- we're prisoners. You know?

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** If this was your
6 existence, there is not a window in this room. Your --
7 your life is very sad, but it's yours and it's -- it's
8 amazing, you know, and it's -- it's everything, and then,
9 you know, it's decrepit. It -- it -- if -- I've been on
10 many reserves where there's -- it's in shambles. It's --
11 it's -- it's very dilapidated. And yet they're -- they're
12 -- but this is our, you know --

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

14 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- this is who we are.
15 We're this people and this -- our name is on the band
16 office and we're, you know, even though there's, like,
17 molestation and alcoholism and drug addiction and -- and --
18 and as far as you can see, broken vehicles on front lawns
19 and garbage piled up everywhere, you know? But, like, I'm
20 the king of this garbage heap, you know, is -- is this
21 identity. That -- it's not healthy. That's not normal and
22 that's not who we are.

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

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** It's like when -- when
25 white people drive down the highway and look at the

1 mountains and say, look at that, you know, that's amazing.
2 You know, it's like, that's mine. That's mine.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** That's my backyard.

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** That's mine, you know?
5 And it always has been, always will be.

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And -- and if this
8 highway overgrows with weeds and the cracks come through,
9 and life always will undo what man does, you know? Every
10 law and every RCMP officer that -- that has authority over
11 any First Nations person, when they look to the mountain,
12 they -- they -- they don't recognize that authority. And
13 there are men in government that wring their hands because
14 we just will not recognize that they're God's gift to
15 control us and to -- to push us around or tell us what to
16 do.

17 I hold different licenses, which I think are
18 taxes in disguise, you know, and they're constantly -- from
19 trying to tax us for the air that we breathe, this carbon
20 tax lie of -- of global warming and all this garbage, it's
21 just, like, constantly, they're coming at you with more
22 rules to tell you how to live your life. It doesn't matter
23 what colour your skin is to realize that, you know, mankind
24 is -- it will ultimately always be free unless we give up
25 our freedom. And I don't -- and as First Nations people, I

1 -- I think we are a symbol of freedom.

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

3 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** There -- as much as I
4 see in the United States and in -- in Canada and the -- the
5 manifest destiny that was given by -- by, you know,
6 obviously allowing, just like every human being has a free
7 will and God doesn't control everybody, you can do whatever
8 you want.

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

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You can commit murder,
11 you can do something good for humanity, you can do whatever
12 you want. You will ultimately be held accountable for your
13 actions, you know, in eternity, and -- and whether it's
14 going to jail for whatever you've done, there's
15 consequences to our actions. It's the same thing with God
16 allowing people in history to dominate, you know, and --
17 and to control different times of history who was the king
18 of the heap, again, like I said.

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

20 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** This idea that there's
21 different governments and -- and -- and you know, that's
22 why this -- this reconciliation stuff is actually
23 foolishness. That says, oh, we're going to go back and
24 make right everything that was wrong. Well, where do you
25 start? The Garden of Eden? And where -- where do you go

1 back? It becomes -- it becomes foolishness again. It's a
2 -- it's a fool's errand, you know what I mean? It's like,
3 so people have to understand. It's like, wait a second,
4 the only thing we can change is now and what we can change
5 right now is how, you know, we -- we integrate. And so if
6 we have power over that, if we have power over that and we
7 say to ourselves, okay, what would -- what would my palace
8 look like? What would my -- what would my subjects, you
9 know, which is maybe your little family, this idea that
10 you're the king of the castle, you know?

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

12 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And your wife is the
13 queen, and, you know, my children are -- are a -- a
14 princess and a prince, you know? They're important. My
15 dad -- I -- I grew up in, and I think this will help a lot
16 of people, I grew up with a dad that says, you know, when
17 you're -- my nickname was Big Lips. You know? My -- my
18 family has larger lips. They're (indiscernible) and
19 they're from Telegraph Creek and from the Yukon, and a lot
20 of people in my family have -- have big lips. Which is
21 actually, you know, kind of a -- a good thing. I found out
22 later in life that, you know, you know, there's a lot of, I
23 guess, it is -- is sought after. People actually use,
24 like, collagen and stuff, and they, like, you know, they
25 want big lips.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

2 MR. BRENT CLETHEROE: So -- so -- so
3 something that was, but in my home, it was, like, shameful.
4 You know, ugly, thinking of big lips. And so -- so I was
5 saying to my -- my sister [Sister 1], she was very dark,
6 and so my dad called her [Sister's nickname 1], you know,
7 or -- or [Sister's nickname 2] or something, and so.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Was your dad First
9 Nations?

10 MR. BRENT CLETHEROE: Yeah.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Your --

12 MR. BRENT CLETHEROE: Yeah.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- the dad that raised
14 you?

15 MR. BRENT CLETHEROE: Yeah.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

17 MR. BRENT CLETHEROE: I -- I want to get
18 there. You know, I love him and -- and I respect him and
19 -- and I want to honour him, and there has to be, I guess,
20 a progression of -- of how I tell the story that --

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

22 MR. BRENT CLETHEROE: -- builds all these
23 different characters as they walk onto the stage for the
24 finality or what happened in my mother's life, so. But --
25 but with being, I remember, like, being in high school and

1 -- and doing, in grade 8, like, a hundred-yard dash, and
2 then my dad was across the field in an apartment, drinking
3 a beer with my -- my cousin. That was his apartment and
4 they were there, you know, kind of rooting me on from afar.
5 And -- and there was dead silence before the starting
6 pistol went off, you know, and my dad could be heard across
7 the field saying, go, Big Lips! You know?

8 Fired the starting pistol, we all run, you
9 know, and I'm, like, third or fourth or something and I'm
10 there holding my knees and I'm breathing hard and -- and
11 these guys around me saying, what did that guy say? You
12 know, Big Lips or something? You know, and I'm just, like,
13 ashamed and horrified.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh.

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, my dad was
16 always joking and giving me a hard time, but -- but one
17 thing my wife said to me when my daughter was young, well,
18 she said, like, why do you have to call her, you know,
19 stinker or -- or, you know, why do you have to call her? I
20 was always, like, come here, you -- you little bozo, or
21 something, like, you stinker or you -- you know? And --
22 and she was like, you know, why can't you call her
23 princess? Why can't you call her, you know, something
24 good? And it really hit me then that I was like, you know
25 what, there's something so wrong with how people in our

1 culture raise their kids and how they see each other, and
2 you know, a lot of times, I've heard people call their
3 kids, like, you know, come here, you little S-H-I-T. You
4 know.

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

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And it's just like,
7 that's the future. That's the most important thing that
8 you will ever handle. It's the most valuable asset, our
9 future, and -- and you -- you see it as nothing. As -- as
10 worse than nothing. And so I was like, wow. If that
11 doesn't change, there's nothing, there is no hope. And so
12 -- so how do we do that?

13 And I think there's a lot of, like, youth
14 programs and different things that we try to promote about,
15 like, it's so sad that it's like, well, we have to write
16 off the Elders because they're done, you know? When --
17 when they're the most important part of everything else.

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

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** In First Nations
20 culture, we look to the Elders, you know? But this whole
21 reconciliation and making a change is like, by the time
22 that the implement ever comes into power or changes
23 anything, they're going to be dead. And it's like -- so
24 it's -- it's, again, a fool's errand, where we're always
25 like, well, if we write off these ones, we'll save these

1 ones. That's like saying, if I cut off one arm, I'll still
2 have another arm.

3 And we're -- the only answer from the
4 institutions, the only answer from social -- the social
5 construct of -- of whatever people is it that the -- the --
6 you know, they -- it's -- they -- they always say, like,
7 you know what they say. Well, who is they? You know, why
8 -- who is -- who is steering this -- this -- this country?
9 Who's steering the ship, you know? Is -- is the social
10 narrative, the social opinion, right, on any given day.

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

12 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You can -- it's like
13 the changing of the weather, the changing of people's
14 opinions. And so you can't build a life on -- on social
15 opinions. And that's why. That's why racism isn't
16 powerful. That's why. This stuff is -- doesn't really
17 exist. These are ideas that you either embrace or reject.
18 And so when you reject them and you say, it doesn't matter
19 what anybody says ...

20 When I was growing up, my nickname was -- I
21 upgraded from Big Lips to -- to Bad News. You know?
22 That's what my family said. You know, I'd show up with the
23 police and -- and I broke windows or got in trouble
24 stealing or something, and all my uncles and my aunties
25 would call me Bad News, you know. That's -- you got kicked

1 of school today, Bad News, what happened? You know. And
2 so -- and -- and I went from Bad News to preaching the Good
3 News, you know. God changed my name, changed my identity,
4 changed everything about me.

5 And so early in my life, I realized that --
6 I remember in the backyard one time, it was, like, a back
7 alley, actually, there was a man that came out, and -- and
8 I was shooting a -- a slingshot, just kind of randomly, and
9 -- and I guess you -- you get a -- you get a little boy
10 with a slingshot in the backyard, you know, he's obviously
11 committing a crime, he's doing something wrong. And
12 regardless, I think little boys, regardless of the colour
13 of their skin, can cause a lot of problems with a
14 slingshot, so. But he came out and said, hey, you little
15 wagon-burner, like, get off of my property. Like, get out
16 of here.

17 And I -- I was like, you know, I'm going to
18 tell my dad to punch you out, you know? My dad beats
19 people up all the time. That's part of my life. I see
20 violence all the time and my dad will beat you up, you
21 know? Because I don't like the way you're treating me.
22 And I went home. I was a young'un, six years old, maybe
23 seven. I told my dad. I said -- I said, well, what's a
24 wagon-burner? My dad was just enraged, you know? He was
25 enraged. Who the, you know, F told you that? And I told

1 him, over here. You know, and he went over there and dealt
2 with this guy. I don't know what happened, whether he even
3 got -- the guy probably left or something, but.

4 He had to -- he had to sit down and explain
5 to me what a wagon-burner is and tell me, you know, it's
6 cowboys and Indians and stuff and it's not, you know, it's
7 -- it's derogatory. It's -- it's actually a -- it's a
8 racist term, you know? It's -- don't ever let somebody
9 call you that. Those are fighting words, you know? And
10 that was always the kind -- my mom and dad would say, you
11 know, those are fighting words. If somebody -- somebody
12 tries to frame you into being a victim, those are fighting
13 words. You don't receive that.

14 And at the same time, I was always the
15 champion of the broken and of the hurting. My mother would
16 always say, you never -- you never treat somebody, you know
17 what I mean, that's different or everyone picks on, you --
18 you protect those people. You have to be -- and so there
19 was the -- it's -- it's -- as much as there was dysfunction
20 and problems and all that, there was so many beautiful,
21 beautiful ideas and things and concepts that were talked,
22 you know, into me to -- to -- the underdog. You know, my
23 mom always said, you always fight for the underdog, you
24 know? And I think that that's really, in this generation,
25 my responsibility. I think it's why I became a preacher.

1 You know, essentially, God called me from my mother's womb
2 to be a hero, a hero and a champion, to stand up in this
3 generation and help people that are vulnerable and
4 different things. And the only way you can do that is if
5 you don't see yourself as vulnerable.

6 But at the same time, you -- you don't --
7 you don't shirk back or be afraid. Part of the courage of
8 -- of not being vulnerable or being strong for somebody
9 else is allowing yourself to be vulnerable at different
10 times. And it's -- it's very -- it's a very, very -- it's
11 a paradox. It's very, very confusing that that person who
12 is very strong in one sense, that is a protector of others,
13 has to be very vulnerable and -- and have an underbelly and
14 -- and show it and humble themselves at times, because it
15 takes a bigger man to walk away from a fight than it does
16 just to fight everybody. Because if you fight everybody,
17 you -- you'll never win. Or you --

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Or the courage to come
19 here.

20 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yeah. You've got to
21 pick your battles.

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

23 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so I think that --
24 that what's amazing is -- is so, you know, when I found out
25 that my dad chose to be my dad and the difference between a

1 father and a dad, I think that's important to this whole
2 conversation, because the government's not my dad. And I
3 think, until -- until that gets told, you know, until it's
4 like, your mother is not your dad. Like, yeah, well, you
5 know, that's offensive to me because my mother raised me
6 and she was so strong and all this stuff. Yeah, but she
7 wasn't your dad, and until you acknowledge that, you're
8 going to be looking for a dad. And that's more dangerous
9 than acknowledging the fact that you've never had a dad.

10 And so a lot of people are very -- they're,
11 like, they're taking their identity from pop culture.
12 They're taking their identity from the government. They're
13 taking their identity from their reserve or from their
14 tribe or from their feathers and their drum and their
15 whatever, but it's like, that's important to somebody else
16 and somebody else told you that was your identity and you
17 received that as your identity. But you still have the
18 same problems you had before you chose that identity.

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

20 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And now you're looking
21 for a new identity. And I see -- I -- I -- what I love,
22 and it's a great example, and First Nations people should
23 really wise up to this and see this, is you see people who
24 love First Nations culture and they're -- and they're
25 Caucasian.

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

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** They're European. And
3 they're there and they'll -- you could pretty much get them
4 to walk off a bridge. They'll do anything to be a part of
5 the powwow and they want to wear the, you know, the -- the
6 regalia. They want to be involved. They -- they love it
7 because they see -- they see the freedom that being
8 Aboriginal represents, and -- and -- and they don't, you
9 know, and I think they do want to make a difference and
10 they want to change the -- the circumstances. But listen
11 to this. As much as they would shed their identity as
12 Caucasian people and say, you know, I'm German and I'm
13 Russian and I respect that, but I love First Nations
14 culture, you know, they, they -- it's like Chinese food is
15 not really Chinese food, you know? It's this North
16 American version of Chinese food.

17 You know, it's a -- regardless of what you
18 choose for your identity to be, you've got to be very
19 careful about what you release, because you can't -- unless
20 you release something, you can't pick something else up.
21 So in one sense, if you're going to a regalia and -- and
22 you want to be Aboriginal, you want to join the powwow, you
23 want to be involved as a -- as a Caucasian person, you
24 know, you -- you are, in some way, shape, or form, putting
25 down what you already are. And that -- and -- and again,

1 it -- it's, like, what releases us from this confusing
2 back-and-forth of what's more important is saying, I am
3 what I am.

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** At any given moment,
6 again, the power. Being empowered by the now. Being like,
7 no, I -- I don't feel ashamed to -- to not play a drum as a
8 -- as -- as a -- I don't -- if -- if I'm a First Nations
9 person and I don't choose to be traditional, that's not
10 shameful. And if I choose to be very traditional and I
11 choose to -- to make up my culture as I go because this is
12 what I think it was and -- and that's not shameful either.
13 Because people are like, I really don't know the songs. I
14 really don't know the colour of the regalia. I really
15 don't know, but I -- I'm -- I'm picking this up in the now.
16 This is what I want it to be. This is who I want to be.
17 That's great.

18 And so -- so at the end of the day, if you
19 are living a lie, if you don't believe in your identity
20 when push comes to shove, then you need to go back to the
21 drawing board of this idea of who your father is. Because
22 your father -- your father is your identity. That will
23 never, ever be different. That will never, ever change.
24 That is an eternal concept of all humanity, that your
25 father is who you are.

1 And if that -- if that is not the
2 -- not the conversation that's in the mainstream, it's --
3 it's shied away from, it's not talked about, what will
4 happen is people will -- they'll have a myriad of different
5 masks they wear and different identities that they want to
6 choose at any given different time. This is what masks
7 abuse. This is what masks -- if you want to know why a man
8 would choke a person that he claims to be his wife and --
9 and beat her and to -- to abuse his children and to be a
10 monster, it's because he doesn't have a father. He doesn't
11 have somebody that can spank him or be authority in his
12 life that -- he would never act like that if he had a
13 father. Because his father would punish him, his father
14 would be an authority in his life.

15 Somebody who -- who acts selfishly and
16 steals and has no honour, and -- even among thieves, even
17 on the most basic level of criminal activity in Canada. I
18 -- I used to steal and I used to hurt people. I was
19 involved with drugs and I was involved with -- with fist-
20 fighting and identifying as the -- I was strong because I
21 could hurt people. That's why I was strong. And -- and I
22 just realized, well, wait a second. How come I'm over here
23 trying to be the best dad or, sorry, the best big brother I
24 could be?

25 There was a conscience. I did have a God-

1 given conscience that God told me, you know, that -- that I
2 was wrong. I felt -- I felt wrong. I didn't feel like I
3 could look at my brothers again, being high on drugs,
4 saying, you know. I didn't feel strong. I didn't have a
5 good feeling in my stomach. I was ashamed to be who I was,
6 and I -- and so I had to recognize that. If you feel that
7 way, stop trying to make that identity strong. It's not
8 strong. It's wrong. It doesn't work, it never will. And
9 -- and if we keep telling victims that their victimization
10 and all their problems is -- is they -- they're -- they're
11 strong in that or they can stay where they are and it will
12 change their outcome or the result of their future, then
13 we're lying to them.

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Because if they do not
16 radically change their identity, even at -- and this is why
17 I said it's the most important part, no matter how hurt you
18 are or how much you've been abused and that, what's going
19 on in your life, that doesn't identify you. That doesn't
20 -- that's not your identity. Just because you -- just
21 because you, you know, just because you've done things that
22 are wrong doesn't mean that you are wrong as a person. And
23 that's what I'm trying to say, is -- is just because you, I
24 think, have been hurt, that doesn't make you a victim, you
25 know what I mean?

1 And -- and you -- you choose to hurt people,
2 hurt people. So if you are accountable to your actions,
3 you say, I'm hurting this person because I'm hurt, that
4 means, you know, I'm the problem. I'm the problem. So we
5 go back to this idea that my identity or why I'm doing this
6 or what -- what am I getting out of this, what is the --
7 the soul search, you know? And then basically go right
8 back to the beginning and say, well, who is my father? Who
9 is my father? You know, is he Darth Vader? You know?
10 "Luke, I'm your father." "No," you know?

11 My father climbed in the window of my mom's
12 house and -- and, you know, fornicated with my mom and had
13 no -- no emotional connection to me at all, you know? And
14 so does that mean that I'm worthless? So that -- that's
15 where these people are, is they're like so many people and,
16 like, I hurt people because I was hurt. I'm not a -- I'm
17 not a soul, I'm not a -- I'm an animal, you know? I'm not
18 -- there's no accountability. There's no -- nobody's going
19 to give you a spanking. Nobody is. You can put me in jail
20 for the rest of my life, you can't change. It's like
21 saying that you can take the Indian out of the bush, you
22 can't take the bush out of the Indian. It's like you can
23 take the dysfunction out of their life, that doesn't mean
24 it hasn't scarred this generation.

25 So how do we end dysfunction, have victory?

1 How do this dysfunction -- do we overcome? How do we
2 identify with the proper, healthy family structure that is
3 the platform to build on? Because right now, we're in
4 sinking sand. Everything we're building on, it's just --
5 it's not -- it's not really getting us anywhere, because as
6 fast as we build it, it's falling down, and I think that
7 that's what social programs do. It's like, hey, we've got
8 a youth centre. There's never been a youth centre in this
9 town. Right on. What did the youth centre do for us?
10 Nothing. That's where they sold drugs and, you know,
11 that's where -- that's where we played pool and that's
12 where we, you know. There was nobody there that we --
13 divinely inspired us to change our lives and be something
14 different.

15 So -- so all that -- that I'm saying is, if
16 we constantly create these safe spaces or youth centres or
17 youth programs or whatever, if that -- if that youth
18 coordinator is in the bar when you get there, then what is
19 the point? What is the point in having a youth program on
20 your reserve if the person who runs the youth program is a
21 stinking predator, you know? It's like, who is your
22 father? Who is the leader? Who -- who's in charge? And
23 if we start celebrating First Nations women, we're going to
24 understand that they will never be a father. They cannot
25 be a father. And even though they are the fabric, there

1 wouldn't even be First Nations people without mothers, they
2 are the origin of life, and so -- so -- you cannot be one
3 or the other.

4 And this is the problem with gender
5 confusion and all of this stuff that's being promoted as
6 choosing whatever you fluidly feel like any given time, is
7 again, the nail in the coffin. It's just erasing
8 identities and causing confusion. And the deeper we go
9 into pleasing people or trying to put, you know, A-B-C 1-2-
10 3 or whatever we identify you to here in this -- this whole
11 Inquiry, whatever, God, you know, validates that human
12 being. They're -- they're important. That person,
13 regardless of what they identify with.

14 I'm not judging anybody. You can do and be
15 whatever you want to be, whether it's a murderer, whether
16 it's a, you know, and how you see yourself. If you can --
17 if you can live in that lifestyle and it doesn't cause you
18 to commit suicide, if you can live in that lifestyle and
19 you can hold your head up high and -- and not force
20 everyone else to validate why you've chosen to live that
21 lifestyle, then -- then obviously, all the power to you,
22 right? Each to their own. But -- but if you're constantly
23 looking to be propped up because your identity is -- is
24 defective, it's -- it's not healthy, it's destructive, then
25 -- then you need to look and do that soul-searching again

1 on what you're -- what you're doing with your life. What
2 are you doing with yourself?

3 So all that being said, is -- is I would
4 love this to be framed. I think this is what I'm saying,
5 in a nutshell, before I continue on with my mom's story,
6 and I'll just get to what is obviously going to break my
7 heart. It's hard for me to talk about, is -- is that I
8 would say that if there was a title, if there was a purpose
9 to what I'm saying, it -- it's, who is your father? Who is
10 your father? At the youth centre, you know, who is your
11 father? And when you sit down with your grandmother and
12 your mother, who is your father? You know, when you sit
13 down with your friends in your apartment, right, who is
14 your father? Nobody here is your father, you know?

15 Everywhere that -- that men look for a
16 father, that women look for a father, they will find their
17 identity. As dark as it is, as dysfunctional as it is, if
18 you can say, I never knew my father and I need a father,
19 then you're on the path to choosing your destiny and your
20 identity. And until you identify the false fathers, that's
21 it right there in a nutshell. Because you look at all
22 these chiefs and -- and grand First Nations that we look to
23 as -- as strong leaders in the past and even now and into
24 our future, you know, the First Nations chiefs, being men
25 or female, you know, regardless.

1 Again, this is, though, becomes a political
2 position. We take away from this idea about who our father
3 is, and -- and we see, like, even in the United States and
4 how they were formed and how the First Nations interacted,
5 you know? A very toxic relationship there that bled into
6 Canada and everything else, I believe. They said, you
7 know, the -- the white father. You know, the President,
8 you know, the white father. You know, the -- that -- that
9 who is your leader is your father. And so what I'm saying
10 is, I think Justin Trudeau is not my father, you know? And
11 -- and regardless of -- of what the government institution
12 is that's involved. And if you're in a prison, the warden
13 is not your father, you know? Who is your father?

14 It's just this haunting question, and if
15 everyone will face it, and I think, like, literally, if
16 they were, like, you want to roll out? You want to roll
17 out a propaganda, you know, propaganda campaign to help
18 anybody on the planet? If you want to label it First
19 Nations or -- or women or -- or missing and murdered
20 Indigenous groups or, you know, men, or women, just roll
21 out a big banner that says, who is your father? And who --
22 and how -- who is not your father, you know? The
23 government doesn't have to put food on my back, clothes on
24 my table to protect me. You know? Anybody can be a
25 father, but a real man is your dad. He's your dad. He

1 loves you. He -- he's going to help you.

2 And -- and if we -- if we've got to stop
3 looking at these false fathers, social programs and -- and
4 welfare and foster care and, you know, handouts and -- and
5 you know ...

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What else? What else?

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I'll share -- I'll
8 share this and then I'm going to -- I'm going to man up,
9 tell my story. So -- so I was a youth coordinator for the
10 [First Nation 1], which is a phenomenal -- I think that
11 every -- every reserve has their problems, but this reserve
12 is very honourable and I would say that they are wonderful
13 in what they've accomplished and -- and what hand they've
14 been dealt and what they've been doing.

15 In Fort St. John, I grew up there, born and
16 raised, I eventually became a youth pastor, and I was asked
17 to become the -- the youth coordinator on the [First Nation
18 1]. And -- and I think they just created a -- a program so
19 they could get some money from the trust and then they
20 dissolved that program so they could do whatever they
21 wanted with the money, and I think that's a very common
22 process in -- in a lot of the First Nations communities and
23 should be flagged. It should be identified.

24 And again, because it's a misappropriation
25 of funds and I think that is the -- the nail in the coffin

1 of the whole conversation about how First Nations are being
2 dealt with by the government. That is obviously their plan
3 from the beginning. The government says, you know, show me
4 your leader, and it's like, we don't have a leader.

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What was the name of the
6 First Nation?

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** [First Nation 1],
8 yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** [First Nation 1].

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And again, I'm not --
11 I'm not -- it's not a -- a negative thing, but again, I
12 think it's just a mismanagement. You know, there are some
13 issues at the top, not just with this reserve but with
14 every reserve in Canada. The reserve system in general is
15 completely broken and they just keep -- it's hush money.
16 They just keep paying and paying and paying and trying to
17 have these settlements and -- and now shut up and --

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Keep going. Keep going.

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Okay. Because I think
20 it's challenging that -- that we -- anybody who pays you
21 owns you, essentially. And if you don't understand that,
22 then you obviously have never bought anything at the store
23 or you've never purchased, you know, clothing or whatever.
24 That person works for you. The customer's always right,
25 you know, this idea that, if you're a business owner, you

1 know the customer is not always right. At the end of the
2 day, it's the bottom line. It's --

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

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- whether you make a
5 profit. It's whether -- there is some real straight truth.
6 That's why I said, I don't care about your truth or what
7 you think is the truth. And I -- and I understand that's a
8 way to -- to change it from being a statement or something
9 very cold and -- and -- and sterile, but -- but the truth
10 is, the bottom line is, either you make a profit or you
11 don't make a profit. Either your business goes under or
12 it's successful, or either your government, you know, is --
13 is lynched or it -- or it serves the people. Okay?

14 So -- so there are some absolute truths that
15 -- that I need to keep propping up, because for some
16 reason, this is, like, the ignorance of this generation,
17 that people don't understand common sense and just the
18 general purpose of, like, why is everybody against the
19 father? You know, why is everyone against the -- the --
20 this idea of manhood and -- and being powerful or
21 aggressive or, you know, where mansplaining is like this
22 evil thing. It's like, no, somebody has to be in charge.
23 Somebody has to be the boss. And if we get that mixed up,
24 you know, if you tell an RCMP officer that you're the boss,
25 you're going to find yourself in handcuffs. You're going

1 to find yourself in jail. You're going to find out who's
2 the boss. And it's the same thing in the -- in all these
3 situations, is if -- if women want to be the boss or if
4 homosexuals want to be the boss or if somebody -- somebody
5 tries to supersede the father, supersede that -- that
6 authority, that final authority, what they find is very
7 harsh truths about life.

8 So -- so, like, if you have a -- I have a
9 cousin, his name is -- I won't use his real name, I guess.
10 He -- he -- he -- he was raised by my grandmother. And he
11 would always say something offensive or he would kick you
12 or he would do something and then he would run behind his
13 grandmother because he, you know, you could never -- he was
14 spoiled rotten, you know. And his dad was an alcoholic who
15 died an alcoholic and his mother was -- left him very
16 young, and -- and so he was left to his grandmother. And
17 the sad thing is, is that the kids that she raised, she
18 raised their kids as well. And so this is something that's
19 very common in a First Nations community and a lot of
20 communities. It's just dysfunctional, you know, and it so
21 -- so happened that my grandmother was the father. My
22 grandmother is the authority, my grandmother is the boss,
23 you know, whatever.

24 And so my -- my cousin hides behind my
25 grandmother, and I said, We'll get you later. This --

1 we'll line you up when she's not around and then we'll beat
2 you for every single time that you went behind your
3 grandmother, because -- because we're the authority. You
4 know what I mean? We are the aggressive male -- we are the
5 role model. We have to teach you that. And it's teaching
6 them dysfunctionally, teaching them the wrong way. And so,
7 because we didn't know, and so the thing was is, I was in
8 an abusive home, so it was like, I got beat, so then I
9 would beat my sisters and my brothers. If they didn't
10 listen to me, then I would beat them. And whoever had the
11 biggest stick is the winner.

12 And we think that this is very, oh, this is
13 very -- this is terrible. This -- the -- you know, that
14 makes you a terrible human being. It's like, no, whoever
15 has the most nuclear, you know, firearm -- or whoever has
16 the nuclear firepower is the -- is the world authority.
17 Whoever has the biggest stick is in charge. That's who is
18 the father. And that is what is -- is -- is absolute
19 truth, that there's a pecking order. There is a -- a
20 natural way that humanity operates, and the animal kingdom
21 and in -- in -- you know. And -- and that's not the right
22 way. I mean, obviously, violence and abuse are not the
23 right way. But a reverence and respect.

24 I wish -- I wish that I had a father that
25 said, don't -- don't make me discipline you, and loved me

1 more. You know, this -- this, you know, spanking your
2 children is taboo, you know. It's this idea that it's like
3 -- my kids, I -- if I have to spank them, I've got to spank
4 them, but I do everything in my power not to ever come to
5 that point. So our father is very merciful, you know?
6 That's what you want, a merciful father. But -- but
7 there's this vicious judgment that comes with a lash or the
8 belt and all this. Abusive. Maybe you got -- maybe you
9 got disciplined with a tire iron. I don't know.

10 That's -- that's what we see now, is this --
11 this depiction of a father, because nobody has a father.
12 Nobody has had a good father for so long, nobody knows what
13 a father is anymore. And I think that, when we understand
14 that the powerful men that abuse are a powerful, you know,
15 influence and they're trying to -- they're abusing it for
16 their own purpose and they're selfish and they're sleeping
17 around and just trying to sexually gratify themselves and
18 then the kids are the after result, it's not their
19 responsibility, you know?

20 And the women are left to be the strong ones
21 and they have to be the grandma and they have to be the --
22 the woman that feeds every kid in the neighbourhood and
23 every -- you know, all that kind of stuff. That's the --
24 that's not to be celebrated. That is -- that is
25 derogatory. That is detrimental. That is -- it's

1 beautiful in that at least they had somebody, you know what
2 I mean? And -- and that I understand, but we -- we're
3 almost at the stage now, we're so abused and -- and so used
4 to the cycle, we're like, man, my mother was a strong
5 person and she was a -- but she shouldn't have been. And
6 if we don't -- if we don't start there, it's amazing,
7 again, don't cut your hand off to -- to try to save your
8 arm. It's like, no, where are the fathers? Let's -- let's
9 get back to this place where, you know.

10 I identified with my dad being --
11 disciplining me as something I needed, and I hated it.
12 Every day, I think, when you're a kid, you don't
13 understand. That's why the immaturity of people don't
14 understand. Like, by -- if I -- if I made the comment
15 that, like, your life is dysfunctional if you don't have a
16 father, that's very offensive. Especially this generation.
17 And people would -- would spit in my face and be very angry
18 with me if I said that, but they don't know the value of a
19 father because they don't have one. If I told somebody,
20 like, can you imagine how wonderful it would be if we
21 didn't have a government and we did whatever we wanted to
22 do and we could -- there's no taxes and no -- you know?
23 No, you don't know that, because you're institutionally --
24 you know, you've never --

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** My life.

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- you've never
2 known --

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No. You can't know that.

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- life without a
5 government. So -- so again, it's like saying that, you
6 know, oh, I'm free because I'm First Nations and -- and
7 tipis and all this kind of stuff, and I said, wait.
8 Saying, the biggest argument or the biggest slap in the
9 face from -- from 90 percent of Canada to First Nations is,
10 like, you don't live in tipis anymore, you need to
11 integrate, you need to wake up. You need to -- you need to
12 grow up. You need to integrate and you need to -- you need
13 to, you know, man up. And so the men that are First
14 Nations, they are the answer, and if we protect our women
15 and celebrate our women and -- and the origin of life and
16 the beginning of -- of everything that -- that is the
17 fabric that actually -- think about this. Think about
18 this.

19 It's easy for a man to leave a family. But
20 the nurturing aspect that -- naturally to a woman, that she
21 just has to raise her kids and everybody else's kids, it's
22 so natural, is actually the strength that kept us where
23 they are. You know, because the men have dropped the ball.
24 The men are gone. The men have been very cowardly and
25 sacrificed what's most valuable. Again, back to saying,

1 come here, you little S-H-I-T, you know. Stinker, you
2 know. [Sister's nickname 2], Big Lips. There's no --
3 there's no -- but -- but I think that identity, knowing who
4 your father is, saying, hey, I'm going to be a good father,
5 you know?

6 And then a woman has to say, I'm not a
7 father, I need to find a father. And if I -- and then I --
8 I don't even mean husband. I don't even mean that you have
9 to have, you know, this significant other that -- that
10 fulfills you and -- and whatever. I'm saying that, like,
11 if my -- if my son doesn't have a father, who is his
12 father? I'm going to be his father. You've lost your son
13 because you can never be a father. That's like saying, you
14 know, if you -- if you change -- if you change water for
15 oxygen, you know, you're going to drown. You know what I
16 mean? You can't -- you can't change two things that are
17 completely different. And if women keep trying to be a
18 father, then they keep bearing sons that don't know
19 anything about being a father. They can't be a father.

20 So we're -- it's generational. And -- and
21 so it's slapping -- slapping you in the face, obvious. So
22 what should a -- what should a woman do in a situation
23 where you have a child and there is no father? You know,
24 and there's no dad? There is a father, but he's not being
25 a dad. Because you have to have a dad, whether it's an

1 older brother, whether it's a -- a program, somebody who,
2 in the community, you can look to that has character and
3 integrity, you know? That's why -- that's why electing
4 corrupt leaders is so bad, it's so negative. It's -- it's
5 the end of the world. If a chief is stealing money from
6 the reserve and he drives the nicest truck on the reserve,
7 that man is evil. That man is -- is the false father,
8 because every little boy on that reserve is looking up to
9 him and he doesn't care if they live or die.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So can I ask a question?
11 When you speak of children needing fathers and dads and
12 you're speaking about a generation, your generation and
13 future generations, those fathers that are not there, do
14 you see a connection to that -- to the residential school
15 system, where -- where children were taken from families
16 and then come back out into the world as adults with having
17 had no love and having had no guidance from their father?

18 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** That --

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Do you -- do you see that?
20 When you talk about intergeneration, do you see that as
21 part of the reasoning behind men not being able to be
22 fathers?

23 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I have to -- I have to
24 be careful with this, because again, every -- every
25 situation is unique.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

2 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: Every -- it's like a
3 diamond or a snowflake.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

5 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: Every -- every person
6 is very unique and -- and intricate and you can't just
7 smash them all by saying one blanket statement. That --
8 the government loves to do that. That's what we -- we wish
9 we could do, is just broad-stroke an issue and then go to
10 bed and say, we've changed the world, you know,
11 everything's fine.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

13 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: But I would say that
14 -- that going to prison or going to a residential school
15 gives you the same result, with somebody who's re-injected
16 into society that -- that missed the last ten years or five
17 years as their life came to a pause. And so it's the same
18 thing with addictions, you know?

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

20 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: Addictions is like a
21 prison in your mind, and -- and they -- you're -- you're
22 still 15, and you're 55. You know, we see elderly people
23 who are --

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm.

25 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: -- still trying to

1 party. They're just -- they're -- they're still -- they're
2 stuck in, you know, a prison of their mind. And so if you
3 -- if you dump people from one -- from one extreme to the
4 next, they -- society can be a prison. You know what I
5 mean?

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** It's like, whatever --
8 whatever, again, those social norms and the social
9 narrative or what everyone has agreed, everyone's voted
10 upon, this is popular. You know, this -- this is the hit
11 song, this is the whatever. All of that stuff is -- is
12 marching and -- and hurting people, right? Again, this is,
13 like, sociopolitical understanding that, how do you control
14 people? As a government, that's what they're trying to do,
15 right?

16 This whole thing is about -- not -- not
17 about reconciliation. I -- I don't really believe that the
18 white father, whoever is the Prime Minister, whoever is in
19 charge really cares about my story. I -- I don't believe
20 that. I believe that it's like, hey, we've got to do
21 something about this, because it's -- it's a -- this is a,
22 what do you call it, a smear campaign, you know? I think
23 they're just saying, like, this makes us look bad. How do
24 we -- how do we deal with this now? I mean, how do we come
25 out -- how do we come out smelling like roses after --

1 after this?

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and you're talking
3 about the government with this Inquiry?

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** The government, yeah.
5 Because -- because the residential schools, of course, is
6 government, okay? And unfortunately, it's Catholicism.
7 And this is important for me to say this, and I would go to
8 the grave saying this, and -- and it's very important to
9 me, as -- as much as the statement, who is the father,
10 right, would be the -- the -- probably everything I'm
11 talking about would be affected by that statement or -- or
12 titled by that statement. I would say that Catholicism is
13 not Christianity, and until people understand that, that
14 the origin of Catholicism is actually paganism and it's
15 actually worship of idols and it's actually never been
16 Christian.

17 One of the -- one of the slickest tricks
18 that the devil has pulled in -- in the last, you know,
19 whatever, 100 years of our country is -- is why would the
20 government merge with a religious group? You know what I
21 mean? That was supposedly going to do good things and --
22 and going to -- no. I -- I think, just as much as -- as
23 anything like -- like we're talking about, who is the
24 father? The Pope is not the father.

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

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yet they refer to
2 themselves, that -- that's what priests refer to themselves
3 as. Father this, father that. And the reason why there is
4 child abuse and molestation and things and it's coming to
5 light, it's been -- everybody's known it for hundreds of
6 years with this organization, is that because there is no
7 marriage, there's no family. The leader who is the father
8 is -- is -- he's childless, he's barren. He's a false
9 father. He's everybody's daddy, but he doesn't meet their
10 needs.

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

12 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** He doesn't love
13 nobody. And so you have these people who are -- got this
14 disgusting view of the world and -- and how they have
15 institutionalized people's birth to their death, how they
16 should be controlled, and the robes that they wear and the
17 lanterns they swing and the smoke of the incense, that's
18 blinding. A lot of people have said that's when First
19 Nations began to -- to smudge, is when they used to smudge
20 for body odours in their home. They just -- it was a
21 common-sense thing to do, is to burn something to -- to
22 make your house smell better. But it became a religious
23 thing when they saw the Europeans using it in such a pagan
24 fashion, which is not, you know, any more -- if you study
25 the Bible, the Christian, you know, practise.

1 It's -- is that, again, back to this false
2 father, it's like there's one guy in the Vatican there
3 who's in charge of everybody, and he's the -- the be-all
4 and the end-all and he's the -- he's the final say, but you
5 know, the -- the truth is that that's the same thing as,
6 like, a Prime Minister. Everybody else is supposed to be
7 the answer, the be-all-end-all to all these problems. It -
8 - it just can't happen that way. And what happens? I
9 mean, look. Look at the residential schools.

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

11 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Look at Catholicism
12 today. First Nations people absolutely are -- are
13 institutionalized by it. I've seen -- I've seen a lot of
14 First Nations communities that are just, like, very, very
15 Catholic, to -- to an extreme, and then I've seen some of
16 them absolutely despise anything called Christianity
17 because of the abuses of the Catholic Church. So again,
18 you have this -- this stigma, stigmatizing view of, like,
19 you know, what sin is and what righteousness is and
20 everything the Bible says is right or wrong is totally
21 destroyed by the -- the Catholic Church. And so -- so
22 that's what's happened, is the -- this idea that everything
23 that First Nations people are has been -- has been
24 shattered by -- by a bad example of a -- of a bad family or
25 a bad -- bad father.

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

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so a bad
3 government, bad -- so -- so I would say that the people who
4 went to residential schools and who were re-injected into
5 society and -- and basically were paralyzed, you know,
6 they're -- they're crippled, you know, by -- by that
7 experience, have to see and identify it as, again, like, as
8 a strength. This, like, you know what, but I'm still here.
9 It didn't defeat me. I'm not done. It's not over.

10 My grandmother received some money, you
11 know, because she was a residential survivor, and now my
12 grandmother doesn't really know who she is. I mean, she
13 has [private information] and she's -- and she's -- but --
14 but I would say this many times in my life. I wouldn't be
15 here if it wasn't for my grandmother. That -- you know,
16 what she'd been through, she was so strong. My grandmother
17 had a busted wrist, and you could see the bone protruding
18 out, the way it healed, because they just put some sticks
19 on it and tied it up, you know? And -- and so she was
20 tough as a bull moose, you know. My grandma was very
21 strong. And so on both sides of my family, the women were
22 the strongest, because the -- the men were nowhere to be
23 found.

24 And so this is generational. And -- and you
25 will see people touch on this, and they -- they see it as

1 an issue, but then they're like, you know, what do we do to
2 empower men? You know. And -- and it's like, wait a
3 second. So we have to have healthy fathers. So we have to
4 have leaders. We have to have men that are celebrated,
5 that have been in the trenches, that are meeting needs, and
6 -- and that's what I'm doing here today. If I would be
7 transparent, I have a selfish motive to be somebody's
8 father, to help somebody that hears this or sees this, that
9 they would be forever changed in knowing that -- that -- if
10 you scrap your identity, you're not a ghost. You know, you
11 don't -- you -- you can -- you can pick up a healthy --
12 healthy identity when you just find who your father is, and
13 then -- then you will get somewhere.

14 And literally, I think within two
15 generations, this is very arrogant and it's very, very
16 offensive, maybe, to some people, I think in less than two
17 generations, with a proper father figure, everything can be
18 corrected.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And the reason I -- the
20 reason I brought up residential schools, and -- and you
21 actually referred in terms to the coming out of residential
22 school crippled, if you come out of residential school as a
23 -- as a man, at 18, and you come out of residential school
24 as crippled emotionally --

25 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** M'hm?

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- mentally, and -- and
2 maybe even physically, how do you be that father that you
3 describe?

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Well, you immediately,
5 in that situation, look to somebody else to give you your
6 meds, to give you your food, to give you your --

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

8 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Because they are
9 kicked out of bed at a certain time and told to go to bed
10 at a certain time.

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

12 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Which is completely
13 foreign to First Nations culture. I mean, I don't -- my
14 mom's like, eat when you're hungry, sleep when you're
15 tired, you know? And -- and if you're late for school,
16 just go to school, you know? And you're not staying here.

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

18 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You've got to toe the
19 line, and so there was responsibilities, but it was very,
20 very, like, you're the captain of your own destiny. And I
21 -- I loved that. My mom was always like, well, if you
22 don't go to school, you're going to go to work. Like,
23 you've got to -- so there -- there was always options. It
24 was -- my mom was never like, this is what you do, this is
25 when you do it, this is when you're happy, this is when

1 you're sad, this is when -- you know? It was like, well,
2 everyone's drunk at your house at 3 AM and you can't sleep,
3 but you've got to go to school tomorrow. It's just like ...

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But have they been
5 crippled by the addictions that came from being at
6 residential school?

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Well, again, I think
8 it's --

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I'm just wondering about
10 the different generations. Because I -- I hear you talking
11 more about today's generations, and I'm trying to think
12 of --

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Well, if --

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- how that happened that
15 those men aren't there.

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** If you notice right
17 there, what I'm trying to say is -- is, whether it's a
18 residential school or a dysfunctional home, how you were
19 raised, how you were reared, how you were fed, how --

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- you were clothed,
22 how you were, I guess, told to conduct yourself.

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

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, my mom would
25 tell me to stand up straight all the time. It was just

1 like -- it was just like that was a capital offence at my
2 house. My mom would up and backhand me if I didn't stand
3 up straight.

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Because she wanted --
6 she was like, you don't know who you are, you know? And I
7 didn't know that when I was a kid, but all throughout high
8 school and in through my adolescence, it was like, oh,
9 you're arrogant. You know, you're -- you're a -- you're a,
10 you know, you're a -- you're a narcissist or something.
11 You know, you're -- you think you're so self-important.
12 You're so -- that is so beat down in society. The
13 government wants you to be completely, totally subservient.

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** They don't want you to
16 have an -- an opinion. They don't -- they sure don't want
17 you to have an identity unless it's a defeated one. They
18 do not want you to have dignity of self-worth and -- and to
19 stand up for what you believe in and what you are if it's
20 different at all.

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

22 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so -- so what I'm
23 saying is, is that's what residential school is. The
24 nakedness of the -- the institutionalized. It's like, hey,
25 let's steal some kids, let's throw them in here, we'll

1 militarize them and -- and basically treat them like
2 animals and we'll see what happens to them. Let's -- let's
3 loose them into society and, like, now go be normal after
4 we did all these horrible things to you. And then it's
5 like, you know, in your home, it's like, you know, rape and
6 -- and whatever. If there's molestation in your home,
7 abuse, physical abuse, alcohol abuse, all this kind of
8 stuff is going on.

9 And it's like, hey. Go get a job, mule. Go
10 change the world. Go, go, go and do something different.
11 When it's like, you broke my legs and told me to run a
12 marathon. You know what I mean? It -- it's like, what do
13 I do? And then ought to do, you look to your father. You
14 know? And I mean, over and over again, it's just the
15 answer. When those people hit the street from residential
16 school, the first thing they did was went into some kind of
17 subservient relationship, whether it was abusive or drug
18 addiction or welfare. It's like, who beats me now? Right?
19 And that's the thing. It's like, don't bite the hand that
20 feeds you. It's like, bite everybody or bite nobody. You
21 know what I mean? It's like, I'm going to become a
22 predator, I'm going to become a carnivore, or I'm going to
23 be fed when they feel like feeding me, and I'm not willing
24 to stand up for myself or be a human being. And so we --
25 we -- both answers are wrong.

1 So -- so I think that -- that those people
2 who are, if you are a man out of a residential school, I
3 pray to God that some of those men found the courage to be
4 a father and -- and compartmentalize. It's like coming out
5 of war, you know?

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** There are some people
8 who did very, very terrible things in -- in the heat of a
9 battle, and they say, well, I'll never let that -- I'll
10 never speak that, I'll never talk about that because I have
11 to be a father. I've got to go home and -- and love my
12 wife. I have to be a human being and I have to give back
13 to society. As these people came out of residential
14 schools --

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- they did one or two
17 things. They bit everybody or they bit nobody. Or they
18 became a father. And so I think that -- that we never
19 write people off, regardless of what they've been through.
20 I think there's a lot of heroes in residential school, a
21 lot of people who -- who rose up and became very powerful,
22 men and women, that -- that were like, oh, that was a part
23 of my life that I don't like talking about, but it doesn't
24 define me. You know? Then there were those that are like,
25 oh, that's why I'm here today and I'm in a bad way because

1 of that. And so no, you're in a bad way because you want
2 to be where you are by the choices you made.

3 And if people don't talk like that, this
4 generation's lost. This country's lost. Because people
5 have got to have a father and they've got to be accountable
6 to their father. That's what's -- that's what the number
7 one thing is, is like, you know, if we don't see ourselves
8 as children. And I don't say that in this, like, you know,
9 metaphorical way that it's just like, oh, you know, well,
10 we were all children at one time. We see children as
11 vulnerable. We value children. It's just a natural thing
12 about humans that we just, you know, whoa, the -- the
13 baby's going to fall. You know?

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Catch the baby.

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

17 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Even if it's not your
18 baby, it's like, we've got to, you know, protect the
19 babies. If you see yourself as a child of God, or -- or
20 you have a -- a Heavenly Father, you know, that's why it's
21 very beneficial, then you can be vulnerable. You can make
22 mistakes. You can grow and learn and -- and bump and, you
23 know, and -- your way through life. And -- and so -- so if
24 we see people as children, see ourselves as children,
25 there's a lot more forgiveness, there's a lot more -- you

1 know, if you -- as silly as it would sound, if you could
2 see a -- a young child in a court case or -- or speaking
3 for themselves or -- or a baby as a judge making a decision
4 in a situation, everything becomes very -- in abstract
5 ideas, everything's play. You know, it's -- it's a -- it's
6 a joke, you know? Everything's not really important.

7 And so I think that if people take
8 themselves less seriously, they can have a lot more healing
9 and a lot more -- is this, like, I think that -- that this
10 -- this childish way of looking at things is not an excuse
11 to make mistakes and to be a baby forever. You know,
12 there's this idea of, wait a second, a lot of people missed
13 their childhood because of drugs, because of abuse, because
14 of residential school. My grandmother's birthday's on
15 Christmas, and so she got two pieces of ribbon candy in
16 residential school, and she would share it with her friend,
17 who was the littlest girl there. And she got it the worst,
18 you know? She was beat the most and she was raped the
19 most. My grandma would give her a piece of her candy. She
20 got two.

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

22 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, on her
23 birthday, and one was Christmas, one was for her birthday.
24 And that being said, a lot of times, it is -- is -- there's
25 this idea of not taking yourself so seriously, about being

1 a child and -- and how you see healing, redemption,
2 purpose, and -- and looking for a father. You know, I need
3 a father. I'm vulnerable, I need help. Puts you back into
4 a very -- we've got to -- we've got to -- everyone has a
5 place in their inner being. I had to come out of here
6 because I was in there for a long time.

7 I think this will help a lot of people, too,
8 is that there's a place where no one can hurt you anymore,
9 nobody can abuse you, nobody can call you down, nobody can
10 -- can take your dignity. And that secret place, it's a
11 protective place within yourself, and it becomes your wall.
12 It becomes your womb. It's your everything, and -- and you
13 know, as -- as life rips you out of that place and you get
14 fired or you get, you know, sexually molested or something
15 happens to you, you retreat back into that place, and then
16 that place becomes your everything.

17 Like I said, if this was our whole world,
18 you know, we would just be like, oh, we've got it made.
19 But really, it's a prison. And so these people who have
20 found the strength of being protected in their secret
21 place, it -- it -- for them to come out of there, it's like
22 a rebirth. It's like I'm a baby again. I need to find my
23 daddy. I need to find protection. And unfortunately, you
24 know, it's like they embrace some negative idea of a false
25 father, and then when they retreat back into their secret

1 place and they get the courage to come out again and to be
2 embraced by some other false father. And a lot of women, a
3 lot of women are looking for their father, you know?

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** In -- in relationships
6 and things. All that being said is -- is if that -- that
7 rebirth, that -- that courage, that -- that way to step out
8 and say, I'm -- I'm going to find a healthy father, he has
9 to have accountability. Your father has to have
10 accountability. So that's the thing about it, is it's like
11 a -- somebody who's an authority of my life, but they have
12 no authority in their life, then you're guaranteed to have
13 a dysfunctional situation. And so I think that -- that men
14 who want to be accountable, who want to be fathers, they
15 have to have fathers.

16 And so there's this, again, now -- now, this
17 is what I call, like, a healthy institution, right? A
18 healthy institution is not a clean, sterile facility like a
19 hospital or, like, a government building or something
20 where, you know, the foster care or something like that is
21 the answer. I would say that proper institutionalizations
22 of healthy traditions would be that, if, you know, fathers
23 were accountable to -- to other fathers, you know, that
24 were called into correction and -- and made to toe the
25 line. You have to get a job.

1 You have to produce. You know, you have to.
2 If you don't replicate, you know, if you don't produce
3 somebody, even if it's not a physical error, you know,
4 you're not, you know -- there's no substitute for science,
5 you have to have someone to pass your heritage to. You
6 have to have somebody to -- and you see this in every
7 ministry in the correctional facilities and different
8 things, is they -- they really are offering to say, I want
9 to pass something along and I want to be important to the
10 process and I want to help young men go through the same
11 thing that I went to and so I want to be their father.
12 They're not saying that, but really, what they're saying
13 is, gangs are not your father. You know? And -- and the
14 RCMP, obviously, are not your father. The judge is not
15 your father. The Prime Minister is not your father. You
16 don't even know who your father is, maybe. So -- so now
17 what? You know, who is your father?

18 We have to keep going back to this and there
19 has to be accountability. So if I don't have a father, I
20 won't be able to father. And so we have to go right back
21 to this idea that, okay, wipe the slate clean, all sins are
22 forgiven, there is no right or wrong answer here, just your
23 courage to take your first step out of your secret place,
24 that -- that place where you were hurt, you know. This is
25 a -- a substitute. It will never be a father, I mean,

1 unless we have a -- find a way to authentically heal
2 families into this idea again of having a patriarch or
3 somebody that they -- protects them and provides their
4 needs. That we can say, listen, this guy right here, his
5 name is Brent Cletheroe. This is what he's been through.
6 This is who he's accountable to. He has a father. It's a
7 Heavenly Father, you know? This is his father. You know?

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

9 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** [Step-father] is my
10 dad and he -- he was not my biological father, but he
11 raised me, and I've looked him in the eyes and I told him
12 that everything, you know, from beating my mother to being
13 a, you know, an alcoholic, a drug addict, you know, being
14 in camp and -- and not, sometimes, being there for me, and
15 -- and, you know, my God, if you knew what he went through,
16 thank God that he gave me a shred or a scrap of what he
17 knew what being a father was so that I had a hope to be
18 what I am today. And I'm rebuilding that, you know, based
19 on what I know the Bible says to be a father.

20 So we can never say there is no example.
21 It's lost in history. It's -- the screwed-up situation is
22 what it is and it will always get worse, and we need to
23 accept that. That's -- that's the pathway to oblivion.
24 And if we embrace that as First Nations people, as human
25 beings in general, it's, well, cut your arm off and save

1 the other arm, you know, we're already halfway to Hell.
2 There's no -- there is no redemption. But if we say, now,
3 wait a second, if you can stand up here and tell me that
4 you won't hurt me, you won't take advantage of me, you'll
5 protect me, provide my needs, and you'll kick me in the
6 rear end to be like you, then you are my father. And it's
7 like, wow. Wow. It's like, hey, how you doing? You know?
8 And this is what I do for a living. It's -- it's -- I
9 become a disciple and then I make a disciple. And that's
10 what this is. We're talking about -- discipline is where
11 we're disciples. So we'll just --

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

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- erase the whole
14 Christian aspect of -- of, you know, what -- what -- I'm
15 not -- not preaching again. It's this idea of disciplines,
16 to discipline.

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

18 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You take a First
19 Nations man, regardless of how old he is, no matter how
20 young he is. Just because you're old now doesn't mean that
21 you get a -- a pass.

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

23 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Because you're an
24 Elder. You know, you can be drunk all day and -- and now
25 you're -- you're off the hook, you know? It's like, no,

1 you're a loser, and you need -- and you need to -- you need
2 to get up. So you could lose and not be a loser, you know
3 what I'm saying? You can win and not be a winner.

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I mean, there's --

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- there's this whole
8 thing that people, no matter -- no, I'll tell you this. No
9 matter how much good I do in the world, no matter how much
10 I struggle to do what's right in life and supply the needs
11 for my family and be a father to -- to as many people as I
12 can be, I never, ever -- my -- my self-worth and who I am
13 is -- is something I thought was, like, you know, this
14 confidence or this arrogance, you know? Or something that
15 people thought was --

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

17 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- offensive or -- or
18 -- it was always trying to get -- trying to beat it out of
19 me. The school system tried to beat it out of me. The --
20 the RCMP tried to beat it out of me. You know, you need to
21 sit down, you need to shut up, you need to do as you're
22 told, you need to stop talking out, you need to stop being
23 ADHD or whatever you're doing, just -- just be like
24 everyone else, you know? And I was like, no. Like, to my
25 death, like, I will be an individual. I will be heard. I

1 will be unique. I will be different. And -- and bring it
2 on, you know? What can you do to me that hasn't already
3 been done to me?

4 And if -- and if you can do that for the
5 good, see, that's why I keep saying that's, like, this
6 dysfunction empowers you. This hurt, this pain, if you
7 channel it to be a father and to look for a father, and if
8 you -- if -- if you spent your entire life broken and
9 dysfunctional, you're -- you're all -- you're -- you know,
10 you're -- you're now a senior, you're an Elder or
11 something, you know, and you have come out of the
12 residential school and you still are completely in chaos,
13 you're in addictions or whatever, there's no hope for you,
14 you know, you've been written off, it's like, if you spent
15 every waking moment looking for a father, the day that you
16 find a father will bring everything into context. It would
17 make sense. It would be the end of the story. It's the --
18 it's the happy ending.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The hope?

20 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** The hope. And that's
21 the thing, is if somebody has a father, you know, that --
22 that's the thing, is if you were looking for your identity,
23 you're searching for your father.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'mm.

25 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, when you

1 find him, he tells you who you are and where you're from
2 and how you can be proud of who you are and he dusts you
3 off and he -- he loves you back to the place. And then
4 just before he fades, because our fathers will always pass
5 on, they'll -- they're asleep. We -- we will also sleep
6 with our fathers. There will be a day that we have to
7 leave a lineage and a destiny and we hold that baby and we
8 hold that child and we hold that son, we hold that
9 daughter, and we say, guess what, I found your father. I'm
10 going to be that for you.

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

12 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And -- and then all of
13 a sudden, they don't have to search. See, that's the most
14 important thing. When I was talking about the beginning,
15 about families and -- and what is the best-case scenario,
16 what is the most healthy, it's when that baby never has to
17 wonder and search who their father is. And so they're
18 playing in the backyard and they're having fun and they're
19 -- they're loving life and they're enjoying things and they
20 have never wanted for anything.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Never (indiscernible)?

22 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** No one's ever hurt
23 them, they've been protected, and they have been kicked in
24 the rear end. They have been disciplined and they have
25 been trained and they have been told, you're somebody. You

1 hold your head up high and you do your job. You go to work
2 and you provide for your family. You know? And -- and
3 women are the same, you know? Nobody's off the hook here.

4 That's what's -- that's what's crazy, is
5 everybody's looking for somebody to blame. Everybody's
6 looking for somebody in this magical -- this magical
7 formula that's going to solve the problem, and the bottom
8 line is that it's like, look in the mirror. That's the
9 person that -- that is to blame. That is the person that
10 is not doing anything that they should be doing about this
11 whole thing. I believe that, you know, what you're doing,
12 you're writing down everything and -- and being part of the
13 process, is great. But -- but that -- you know, the
14 paperwork is not the father. You know?

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

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** But it's like -- it's
17 like, wait a second. Who is the father of my children?
18 You know, who is the -- it goes, all of a sudden, it's,
19 like, personal.

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** It's like if somebody
22 stood you up on national television and said, okay, have --
23 have you ever abused your children? Ever neglected them?
24 You ever been angry? Have you ever hit your children out
25 of anger?

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

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** On BC TV News, you
3 know? I'd be like --

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- oh, my God, like, I
6 don't know what to say right now. I'd say, I've been a
7 father to the best of my ability and I will not shirk and
8 be ashamed of how I have done my very best to just be a
9 protection and provision to them, and what I went through
10 and what I've lived in my life, they will never experience,
11 because I'm shielding them from that. And whatever little
12 bleed-over there will be, we are a product of our
13 environment, we ought to nip that in the bud.

14 I've got to stop cycles and things in my
15 life. It'd be Mother's Day and I would just punch holes in
16 the wall, I'd be so wrecked. I wouldn't know what day is -
17 - what way is up, I -- which way is down. And I went to
18 counselling and I had to leave my job because I was on, you
19 know, 30 days of counselling, and I got fired over it. It
20 was crazy. It was like, you know, I -- I took 30 days out
21 for counselling because I was kicking and you can't at
22 work, I was going into the saws. I didn't care if I went
23 in the saws. I was so, just -- the lights on where nobody
24 was home, you know? And my -- my foreman said, hey, man,
25 you -- you know, if I was you, I wouldn't be here. You

1 just lost your mom.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And roughly when was that?

3 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** 2007, 2006. You know,
4 right at the time when my mom went missing, but that, for
5 me, was years later. See, this -- this makes perfect
6 sense, this for everybody went through something that I'm
7 going through, and everybody that's going to talk on this
8 camera has -- has had an experience, and is that -- you
9 know. I -- like, four years later, I'm married, you know,
10 and everything, and -- and -- and moving on. You know,
11 good things are happening while I'm stable, I'm not
12 blaming, I'm not -- you know, I'm not -- I'm -- this is
13 healthy. Everything in my life is good.

14 My foreman calls me in the office and he
15 says, hey, man, you were late this morning and if you don't
16 pull up your socks, you're going to get fired. I said,
17 I've been late three times in six and a half years. I
18 don't know where you're getting information, but that's
19 hardly grounds for termination. No, you take it up with
20 the union, you know? I've -- I've -- I'm doing my job.
21 You know, I like my job, I want to be here, I -- I don't --
22 I -- I don't think that being late three times in six and a
23 half years is this big track record for me, you know,
24 getting fired. I said, you know, you -- where are you
25 getting information? You're building a case here to fire

1 me, you don't have a leg to stand on.

2 He said to me, that's not what the computer
3 says. The computer says you got a lot of absences and
4 stuff, and so we're watching you. That next Monday, I was
5 late. My alarm didn't go off, and I was just, what's going
6 on? My alarm works every time, and now, because I'm, you
7 know, in trouble, my alarm didn't go off? I was like, this
8 is destiny. Something's wrong here. Whatever. I go into
9 work and I kind of laughed. I said, hey, man, I know I'm
10 in trouble, you know, because -- but you know, being late
11 three times in six and a half years and then being late
12 today after you gave me a hard time, you know, is just --
13 I'll take a suspension or something, but don't --

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- fire me, type deal.
16 But the guy said, no, you're done, you're out of here,
17 clean out your locker. Fired me. And I went on EI and I'm
18 trying to pay my bills, I'm in a panic and I'm in the shame
19 of losing my job and everything, and while I'm trying to
20 explain to my wife, I don't know, you know? I'm not that
21 late all the time. I don't know what happened. And I get
22 a phone call from the union, and they said, you know what,
23 the computer flagged those lates and absences when you were
24 counselling, when you were out of work for a month and you
25 were supposed to be in counselling and all that. And so

1 they threw the book at you because of that. We want you to
2 come back to work.

3 I said, okay, and -- and one of the old-
4 timers at the mill said, hey, don't go back unless they
5 backpay you, bro. They owe you two months' pay because
6 they shouldn't have fired you unjustly. That's -- that's
7 crazy. And I said, well, okay, so I said, well, I'm not
8 coming back unless I get backpay. And they're like, we're
9 not going to backpay you, we just want you to come back and
10 do your job. I said -- I said, you know, you'll just find
11 another reason to fire me now. This is just a -- this is a
12 bad situation. You know? You walked me out of that mill
13 and shamed me in front of everybody there and fired me for
14 something I didn't even do wrong, and above and beyond
15 that, it's for the disappearance of my mother. Like, that
16 is something that's just horrific, and then you're telling
17 me, well, just -- we'll just go along like nothing
18 happened.

19 And so there was an issue and they -- they
20 had to pay me out. They had to pay me out, I think it was
21 a week's pay for every year of service, so I think it was
22 six or eight week's pay or something, and then I ended up
23 being able to -- to buy a house and some things and move on
24 with my life, but talk about, like, ripping my -- my
25 mother's rotten corpse, you know what I mean, out of the

1 ground and, like, shaking it in my face. Like, that's --
2 and it's just, like, over and over. That's how I feel.

3 Like my mother, you know, I -- my -- my wife
4 was saying to me, you know, how come you don't cry, you
5 know, when you're talking about your mom, and how can you
6 go through something like that? I would be losing it all
7 the time. I'd just be a mess. And I told her, I said, you
8 know, that God's given me comfort and given me closure, you
9 know, that God spoke to my -- my life and He said to me, He
10 said, you know, your mother is in my hands and it's none of
11 your business. Because I was very concerned whether she
12 went to Heaven or Hell or what. You know, as a preacher
13 and as a, you know, I was just like, what -- you know,
14 something that I'm -- everyone wrestles with this in
15 different ways, you know? And I wrestle with my identity
16 and, you know, my father, you know, and everything that I'm
17 trying to be. I needed to -- you have to put this
18 somewhere. It has to be filed somewhere in your life. It
19 doesn't just --

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so the people who
22 don't have a place to file it, no wonder they can't even
23 make ends meet. They can't even get out of bed because
24 they're stuck, you know. It's a temporary insanity that
25 becomes a lifetime. It's just like, what do you do with

1 this chaos? And so I was like, I'm not going to drive down
2 the street, and every time I see somebody that looks like
3 my mom, I'm going to pull over, you know? I'm not
4 wondering every time the phone rings if she's going to be
5 my long-lost mom that's come back and she's, you know, been
6 on some crazy adventure or something, you know? Like, what
7 -- what am I going to do? And -- and there's no headstone
8 to visit. There's no closure. There's no end to this
9 nightmare. And -- and when God spoke to me, He said, she's
10 in my hands, it's none of your business. You know? I'm
11 God, I'm in control, I've got this figured out.

12 My mom always used to tell me, as I was --
13 beautiful here, I just kind of keep moving on with the
14 story, that with my mother, in my adolescence, and I got
15 kicked out of every store in Fort St. John. I had a school
16 file as big as a -- as thick as a dictionary, and
17 counsellors have always asked me, well, what's wrong with
18 you? You know, what's the matter with you? Does your
19 parents beat you, do they starve you? I said, yeah, they
20 do, I never ate today. Really, really? I said, no, I'm
21 just playing with you. Because he was trying to
22 psychoanalyze me, you're trying to -- and that's why I told
23 my story before I started this, because I wanted to be in
24 control and I didn't want somebody to tell me what -- what
25 they wanted me to say or whatever.

1 And so it was the same thing with the
2 counsellors, you know? I'd always get this, like, head-
3 shrinking. You know, oh, are you abused, are you -- are
4 you, you know, sexually abused, like, what happened to you,
5 or something? And I would play along with it and then the
6 bells and whistles would go off and they'd be like, oh, we
7 nailed him, we can categorize him, we know what his problem
8 is. And I'd say I'm -- none of that's happening, that's
9 not me. Stop trying to push me in these categories and
10 trying to make me be what you think I am. That's not what
11 I am. And -- and so they would be frustrated with me, you
12 know, we can't figure this kid out. Like, he's -- he's
13 always being kicked out of school and he doesn't go the --
14 he's not being herded. How do we get him to -- to go in
15 the right direction?

16 And so I remember one counsellor, his name
17 was [L.S.]. He told me one time, he said, Brent, what do
18 you want? That was the most refreshing, that was the most
19 -- that was the craziest thing I'd ever heard in my life at
20 that moment, when I was in grade 4 or 5 or something.
21 Because he spoke to me like an adult. He asked me a
22 legitimate question. He didn't try to psychoanalyze me, he
23 didn't try to pigeonhole me into saying what they wanted me
24 to say, you know. He just said, what do you want? He's
25 like, you've got everybody just, you know, dangling, like,

1 hanging by a string. Like, you -- the whole school is
2 looking at you like, what is the -- everybody wants -- you
3 know, I'm getting paid to sit here and talk to you about
4 your -- your mind, you know, what -- the way you -- the way
5 you see life, what's happening here. And he was just like,
6 yeah, so what do you want?

7 And I said, I want to be -- I want to be
8 respected. I want to be talked to like an adult. You
9 know? I was like, my -- my parents pay taxes, it's the
10 salary of these teachers. You know, they work for me,
11 that's how I see it. You know, I don't see it as, like, I
12 have to do what I'm told. Like -- like, I was -- never
13 failed a grade in my life, you know, and some -- I -- I
14 passed grade 7 in three months or something because I was
15 in Alberta. I got kicked out of every school in BC in my
16 school district and I had to go to Alberta to go to school
17 with my uncle, and he was very, very military and kind of
18 tried to straighten me out, you know?

19 All that being said, I'm -- I'm sitting here
20 talking to this counsellor, and I just said, you know, I
21 just want to be -- I want to be able to go for a walk. You
22 know, I'm done my work. I want to go to the bathroom. Oh,
23 no, you have to sit here with all the other people who are
24 not done their work yet, and without poking them or
25 laughing or joking or something. You know? I'm just like,

1 I need to go for a walk. I'm going nuts, you know, I need
2 to be -- so that was the beginning of this whole thing with
3 ADHD and stuff that had never been mentioned. Nobody knew
4 anything about that, and it was just like, oh, and I -- and
5 I think that's just an excuse to medicate people and -- and
6 try to stop them from being a -- a leader, stop from --
7 them from being -- having a personality or whatever. And
8 so I think that, basically, I was a class clown or I was
9 something that was dangerous, you know. I was a loose
10 cannon if -- if they didn't get me to -- to kind of do what
11 they wanted me to do.

12 But I told him, I said, you know, I -- I
13 need -- I need somebody just to acknowledge the fact that I
14 have a brain and that I need to, you know, and I want to
15 kind of negotiate what I'm doing here, you know? And so he
16 was like, okay, that's fair enough. And so I used to have
17 a -- there was a bicycle wheel under a desk, and I could --
18 I could sit there and I was on -- I was on suspension, in-
19 school suspension, and I would sit in this, like, in the
20 idiot room, you know, where they hide all the bad kids, and
21 -- and I would sit there and -- and I would be writing down
22 what I needed to do. My -- and they said, you know what,
23 Brent? Like, I used to tap a lot, I used to make noise,
24 and they said -- I couldn't sit still, and so they were
25 always like, you know, what's wrong with you, type deal.

1 And -- and they -- and then I said, you know, if I could
2 just pedal this bike, you know what I mean, I could change
3 the world. Like, I could -- I can concentrate, you know,
4 on -- on what I'm doing. And they're like, well, you can't
5 have this bike in class or everybody will want one in the
6 school and it's not going to work, so you have to find a
7 way to -- to harness your energy and -- and stuff. And so
8 I started, like, moving my leg. My leg would always be
9 vibrating, it was always bouncing. And as I got older, I
10 think I -- I think now I'm just kind of more laid-back, you
11 know? I don't have the energy I used to have to expel in
12 -- in an excess kind of way of just wasting it, but.

13 Yeah, so -- so when he said that to me, it
14 changed the way I see the world and stuff, and everything
15 my mom told me was confirmed, you know? And the
16 institutions and -- and the -- the police would tell me,
17 you know, like, one time, I was in the back of a police car
18 with handcuffs on with some pretty big-time guys and we
19 were going to jail. It was -- we were doing at least two
20 years, probably. And I thought, oh, Lord, I'm -- I'm in --
21 I'm in for it now. And so I prayed a simple prayer. I
22 said, God, if You're out there, you know, and You care
23 about me. You know, I made a mistake. I'm in trouble. I
24 need your help. You know? And that's what I prayed. I
25 said -- and all of a sudden, the -- the RCMP officer pulled

1 over, got out on the street, took off my handcuffs, you
2 know. I -- right after I prayed this prayer, you know. I
3 started rubbing my wrists in total shock and disbelief. He
4 said, you're running with the wrong crowd, get out of here.

5 And I said, I'm special? There's something
6 about me that's different, you know? They -- they see,
7 because I didn't have a criminal record. You know, I'm
8 running around with these guys that have got records as
9 long as their arm, these are really big, heavy guys, and
10 he's like, you know what I've seen? I want to make a
11 difference in your life. You know, I would say that that
12 was a person that, in my life, probably saved me from that,
13 or I would never be making this video. I'd probably be
14 dead.

15 And so I -- I had a teacher. His name was
16 [D.C.], and he was in the alternate program. So I hit
17 grade 8 for about two months and then I got kicked out.
18 You know, this is my story. I was fighting and -- and
19 getting kicked out all the time, and I ended up in the Key
20 Learning Centre. So I'm the guinea pig, you know. This is
21 a new program. These stuff -- this stuff is common now.
22 You know, alternate education is common now. But this
23 time, it was, like, radical and nobody was doing it. And
24 so --

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What year was that, sir?

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Ah ...

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What time was that?

3 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I graduated '98, so I
4 don't know.

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** This was, like, '94 or
7 something? I don't know, '93? But -- but I end up in the
8 Key Learning Centre and it's the alternative program, and I
9 said, oh, they're going to alter a Native, you know? The
10 alternative program, alter this Native, you know? But I --
11 I went in there, and you know, it was crazy. They were,
12 like, come as you go, learn at your own pace, you know.

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

14 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Do whatever you want.
15 And I said, something's wrong here. You know, there's no
16 father here. You can do whatever you want here.
17 Something's wrong. And then I began to understand that
18 they want you to fall through the cracks. They just want
19 to take you out of the regular system, where you're
20 bothering people, and put you in the dummy class or
21 whatever and just let you fade away. That's -- that's what
22 happens. Everybody goes and most of them, they just drop
23 out or they just go away.

24 And so I thank God for a man like [D.C.],
25 who pulled me aside and said, hey, everybody is against

1 you. They think that you're an idiot, they think that you
2 are dysfunctional, they think that you can't make it, and
3 I'm here to try to prove them wrong, because I believe in
4 what I'm doing. I'm trying to help you. So I'm not your
5 enemy, I'm not against you. What he was saying was, like,
6 let me try to be your father.

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

8 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, let me try
9 to help you. And -- and my dad was always in camp, and
10 when I hit 14, my mother was looking at my chin. You know,
11 I was bigger than her. And my dad always told me that -- I
12 guess the mistake that my dad made, he said, you're the man
13 of the house. You know? I'm six years old, and you're the
14 man of the house, you've got to look after your mom and
15 your sister. So I was -- I went hunting with my dad, blood
16 up to my elbows, you know, in moosemeat, and everything.
17 Hunting and camping and fishing. And -- and my dad was my
18 hero. So when my -- when my mom, when my -- my dad was in
19 camp, then I would have to be the protector, you know?

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I was -- and it's
22 dysfunctional. I was raising my brothers and sisters.
23 That's not right, you know, that's not right. I don't
24 expect my daughter, she's 10, my son's 3, to feed him and
25 clothe him, to look after him. And -- but at that time,

1 you know, my mom would be passed out on the floor and I
2 would have to make noodles and keep the house going and
3 don't answer the phone, don't open the door. Ask any First
4 Nations person, they'll tell you that's --

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

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- there's some rules,
7 and it's like, if there's white people around, it's, you
8 know, cover your bruises. You know? Try to -- you have to
9 play functional in certain situations. And so, you know,
10 while this was happening in my life, you know, I don't ever
11 want to paint my parents as being some terrible people.
12 There was house parties and there was alcoholism and there
13 was one time I stole my dad's beer. For, like, two or
14 three weeks, I kept stealing beer from my dad, and I'd put
15 it in a -- and I was young. I was, like, ten years old or
16 something. And I put it in wrapping paper and I gave my
17 dad beer for Christmas, you know. That's what I know he
18 loved and that's what he liked. I thought I was doing
19 good. And I got beat up and I got a spanking over that.
20 She says, you know, that's -- your dad -- that's your dad's
21 beer, you gave it back to him, you know? What are you
22 doing, you know? But -- but really, they were -- I think
23 they were embarrassed that I knew what was most important
24 to him, what he wanted.

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

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so I look back at
2 some of that stuff and I'm like, man, that's crazy, you
3 know? Like, that -- that even children, a lot of times,
4 they don't know they're dysfunctional. They don't know
5 that something's wrong. I would be at school and I would
6 tell stories about, you know, getting beat or something. I
7 remember even being up to when I came into the church and
8 when I started trying to live right and trying to get up
9 out of the ditches and stuff. I was 18 years or 20 years
10 old, all saying, oh, yeah, you know, and my dad would me by
11 the throat or throw me across the room or something, people
12 were just dead silent. So uncomfortable. They just -- and
13 I'm thinking, man, when I tell this story with all my
14 friends, they all start laughing, and everybody -- you
15 know, they -- because they've been there. They understand.
16 And I was like, whoa. People started crying when I'm
17 talking about how I grew up. Something's wrong, you know?
18 This ain't right, something's different, you know? And so
19 I think this is how we have to get into the mind of
20 somebody that's dysfunctional. They don't know they're
21 dysfunctional.

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

23 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** So when they're
24 dysfunctional with somebody else, there's consequences,
25 they're like, what? What's going on? Where were you when

1 this happened to me? Don't tell me the rules are different
2 now, that -- that, you know, the generations change or
3 somebody else sees this as wrong, you know, well, you
4 weren't there for me, so why should I have to honour your
5 rules or your? So -- so where is the -- where is the
6 initiative, where is the motive to be a father? You know,
7 where is the -- there has to be a carrot on a stick.

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

9 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Like, that's -- that's
10 what this is all about, is if there's going -- who is the
11 father, and if you're going to be a father, what is the
12 value? What is the benefit of being a father? You know,
13 and if the government creates an incentive, which I don't
14 think they will. I think they want to break people down
15 and they want to break demographics and people and splinter
16 them and keep them weak and they want bigger government,
17 not smaller government.

18 Because if you had fathers, there would be
19 no government. A father is a government. He's -- he's the
20 -- he's the king of his castle, you know? But -- but
21 that's getting more and more where you can't boat without,
22 you know, a license, you can't wear -- can't ride a bike
23 without a helmet. I mean, it's getting to the point where
24 kids are going to wear helmets on playgrounds. I mean,
25 it's just -- it's ridiculous. They're regulating people to

1 becoming, you know, pretty much animals, and so you can't
2 think for yourself. You can't do anything for yourself.
3 But if you get the First Nations, who are already warriors,
4 who have already survived the best that the government can
5 throw at you for --

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- you know, trying to
8 subjugate you or control you, if -- if somebody ever
9 watches this video that doesn't have a family or doesn't
10 have a father, you know, they'll -- they'll wake up.
11 They'll be -- they'll be a -- they'll come to this most
12 powerful idea. Again, I said that ideas are the most
13 powerful thing --

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- on the planet. Is
16 -- they'll be like, wait a second, I do have dignity. I am
17 somebody. I can shake the chains off. I can -- I can
18 change the world. I can do something different.

19 And so with -- with my -- with my mother,
20 you know, I said that, when she was -- one time, it's a
21 horrific story, [*two lines redacted pursuant to Rule 55*].
22 And you know, and I was old enough to do something about
23 it, and I thought, you know, but I was so paralyzed with
24 fear and shame and I -- you know, I'm like, this is my
25 hero. You know, what am I going to do? I can't fight my

1 hero. Like, I can't. But I've got to stick up for my mom.
2 Could you imagine? My soul was ripped right in half and I
3 didn't know what to do. People -- people live like this
4 all the time, and not just First Nations people.

5 Like, it's like, you know, nobody -- nobody
6 addresses this stuff. We don't talk about it. It's like,
7 oh, again, like, they didn't feed you, or were you abused,
8 or? I'm like, no. It's deeper than that. It's deeper
9 than that, you know? I want to be addressed not for my
10 dysfunctions, not for my problems, you know? I want to be
11 addressed for my strengths, you know? That's -- that's how
12 you -- that's how -- the answer -- the answer is not
13 addressing the victimization of the First Nations. The
14 answer is empowering them.

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

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** To be great regardless
17 of what they did to you, and seeing value in that person,
18 you know? And -- and I think that that's -- if they're
19 like, wait a second, you know what? If I have a shred of
20 dignity, if I have even -- even a small percentage of self-
21 confidence and -- and you know, I have somebody with
22 dignity, you know, that's my father, and -- and gives me
23 time to get on my feet and stuff like that, and -- and
24 kicks me in the rear end, not to stay down, and you know, I
25 tell people, there's a difference between basically -- a

1 difference between basically -- oh, yeah. Failing and
2 being a failure, is -- is falling and not getting up.

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

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know what I mean?
5 Because everybody fails, but if you get up --

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- and -- and you keep
8 -- and the just man falls seven times, but yet he will
9 arise. And this idea's like, no matter if you're a
10 complete failure, no matter how much of a failure you are
11 at whatever astronomical level, that you just really
12 condemn yourself, like, I'm everything I'm -- you know, I'm
13 -- I'm -- I don't validate my worth, I'm worthless. Yeah,
14 but -- but if you just get up, you become the most powerful
15 person on the planet, because what's you've overcome is --
16 is --

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is that how you felt?

18 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- is something that
19 nobody else can face.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is that how you felt that
21 -- that moment you were describing [*one line redacted*
22 *pursuant to Rule 55*]? Is -- is that -- is that how you were
23 feeling then?

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Watch this. And this
25 is the most terrible part of -- of all of that, is -- is

1 that, in that moment, I had to be a protector. I had to be
2 enabled. I had to be -- I had to be complacent. You know,
3 what do you call it, an accomplice, you know? [*Thee lines*
4 *redacted pursuant to Rule 55*]. You know, you're my hero,
5 you're my example. And there's my mom, who's just like,
6 you're the man of the house, you're my sonny boy, you know?
7 You're -- you're my oldest, you're my chosen one, you know?
8 You're there for me when your dad's not there. You're, you
9 know, and -- and then -- and -- but it was always -- it was
10 always rectified. You know, it's just none of your
11 business. You know, it's -- it's not -- it's not your
12 problem. You know what I mean? Don't -- don't take it
13 upon yourself.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But you did that day?

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** That day, I stood
16 there, like all other people do. If somebody fired a gun
17 in this room, you'd be dead still. You wouldn't even
18 blink. Because when horrific things happen, people do
19 fight or flight or they freeze, and a lot of times, when
20 you're in an abusive situation, you've got nowhere to run.
21 That's your family. That's your mom and dad. You can't
22 run away from somebody that feeds you and clothes you.
23 You're not going to do that.

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

25 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And you're not going

1 to fight them, because you don't -- you don't have the
2 power. You're like, they're the ones that beat me on a
3 regular basis. I'm not going to be able to overpower them.
4 So you only have one other option.

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Did you love them?

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yeah. And -- and
7 love --

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah. Those are your
9 parents.

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- love is action.
11 Love is -- love is unconditional, you know?

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

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And I think that's
14 beautiful about my mom, and she said, you know what, my
15 drinking and everything that I do, you know, as long as you
16 have more than I was given, that was the validation, you
17 know?

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

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Food on your back,
20 clothes on the table, roof over your head, you've got
21 nothing to complain about, and then I can do my drinking
22 and -- because she didn't even have that.

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

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so -- because of
25 drinking. And so I guess, again, you have this

1 rationalization. You've got this, basically, trying to
2 make sense of your addictions and whatever you're going
3 through.

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** So you know, and I --
6 I want to put my mom in the best light and my parents in
7 the best light, because my dad shot -- taught me how to --
8 how to hunt and how to fight and how to spit, how to be a
9 man. You know, how to carry myself and -- and to be
10 confident, you know, and -- and skills and different
11 things, and you know, a lot of people don't have that, and
12 my original, my -- my biological father, he missed out on
13 that. He didn't --

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** He wasn't that for me.
16 And so instead of me being like, oh, you know, he didn't
17 value me, you know, it must be that I'm not valuable, I
18 said, this guy comes right out of the woodwork to be my
19 dad.

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I must be -- I must be
22 a diamond in the rough, you know? He's -- he's choosing me
23 when he doesn't have to. My mom told me, she said, you can
24 hate your biological dad if you want to and you can go
25 after him for money and you can try to get something out of

1 him, it would be like blood from a stone. She said, the
2 truth is, he's a child himself, and she said, you're more
3 mature than your dad. And now you understand why he's
4 never been there for you and you want to pity him and not
5 hate him. And I was like, you know, my mom was so wise.

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

7 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And she was so real.

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

9 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I'd watch a horror
10 movie and I'd be afraid, she just grabbed me by the scruff
11 and dragged me up to the TV and said, go shut it off, then.
12 You're scared, you don't want to watch it. Well, I want to
13 watch it. Well, then, shut up, then, because it's not
14 real. Okay, you know? Like, crying in the dark.

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

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, oh, leave
17 the door open. My mom would drag me in the -- in the
18 bathroom, push me in the bathroom and shut the door. The
19 light's on the outside in the bathroom in the apartment,
20 you know? Aaahh, beating on the door. This is horrific,
21 this is -- this is terrible. Then she -- I had this little
22 police car that had lights on it, and she said, now look
23 around with that car. What do you see in there? And I'm
24 just screaming, I'm tormented, this is crazy. I said,
25 well, I see a toilet, I see a bathtub. She said, you see,

1 it's the same in the dark as it is in the light. Turn on
2 the light, there's nothing in there. Nothing to be afraid
3 of. Go to bed. All right.

4 I didn't -- I didn't have a chance to
5 process it. It was like, don't -- don't be stupid. That
6 was my mom's whole thing. It was just like, smack, don't
7 be stupid. You know, you -- and it was all -- it was all
8 the time, it was just this common sense, and -- and so that
9 night, I went to bed with the door shut, you know?

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

11 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And -- and my mom was
12 very strong, and she -- she didn't have time, she didn't
13 have time to -- to coddle me. And I remember at my
14 adolescence and when I got to the worst part of my journey,
15 I guess, becoming who I was supposed to be, and -- and I
16 was getting strung out on LSD and some different things and
17 experimented with drugs and I was an alcoholic. By the
18 time I was 12 years old, I was smoking and drinking, you
19 know, whatever my mom was smoking and drinking, and running
20 out and car-hopping and checking doors and trying to steal
21 people's stuff and trying to get, you know, and -- and
22 drinking my dad's beer, you know? Instead of giving it
23 back to him for Christmas, I just started drinking it, you
24 know? But doing my own thing, and -- and I got to the
25 place where I didn't recognize myself in the mirror. You

1 know, pretty scary place when you lose your identity. You
2 lose your --

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

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- all sorts of --
5 sense of even direction of where you are. You know?

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** That's still a young
7 teenager?

8 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yeah, about 16 or 17,
9 when I -- I got freaked out on drugs. Like, I was just --
10 I was completely lost. And my mom told me, she said -- she
11 said, if you do cocaine, hard drugs, she says, if you -- if
12 you become like that, she said, you'll be a write-off. You
13 won't be welcome in my house, I'm not going to feed you,
14 you can't sleep here, and I don't care if you die in the
15 street, she said, because I've got four other brothers and
16 sisters to raise here, and if you won't be the -- you're
17 not going to be the chosen one, you're not going to be --
18 you're not going to blaze a trail, then you won't -- then
19 you're not going to be here. And it was shocking, because
20 my mom used to hit me with anything she could get her hands
21 on.

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

23 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** When Dad was in camp,
24 I had a couple scars on my head. My mom hit me with a
25 frying pan one time. She said, do the dishes, and she went

1 to the bar, and I was playing Nintendo, I was 12 years old,
2 and I said, I forgot about it. She came home at 3 in the
3 morning, I was still playing Nintendo, and she said, did
4 you do the dishes? I said no, and she's throwing a
5 terrible fit and kept asking me the same question over and
6 over. You know, did you do the dishes? I said no and she
7 just grabbed me by the hair and was -- had me in the sink,
8 saying, did you do dishes? I said, yeah, I did the dishes.
9 Then she just hit me with this frying pan and the blood
10 came down. And, like, a lot of stuff that -- that happened
11 with that time of my life and growing up this way, it was
12 like, when my mom said something, she was dead serious.

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

14 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** There was no playing
15 games. She -- she did -- there was absolutely no -- I
16 don't want to say grace, because it was never like that.
17 It was like, do whatever you have to do, do whatever you
18 want to do, in the parameters of whatever, you know, I've
19 -- I've said in the rules or whatever. But it was like,
20 man, if my mom took after me with a mop handle or something
21 that she could get her hands on, you know? But I was 15.
22 I just used to throw a blanket over my mom and hug her, you
23 know? I just used to push her around. She wasn't powerful
24 anymore, she wasn't my authority. She wasn't my father.

25 And I feel bad because I used to push my mom

1 down when she was drunk. She'd try to attack me or
2 something and I'd just push her down, and I disrespected
3 her, you know, so many times that way and stuff, and you
4 know, I felt so bad when she was gone. Now you -- that's
5 all you think about. You don't first think about the good
6 things. You don't think about all the -- the -- you know,
7 it comes later. It comes later, when you appreciate what
8 your mom did for you, but it's always like, I wish I would
9 have said this and I -- I wish I would have done that.

10 And so I'm like, that time my mom told me,
11 she was like, you know, if you make me a grandmother before
12 I'm 50, I'm going to neuter you, you know I'm going to. So
13 there was all of this, this -- this dysfunction, but there
14 was all of this -- there's this beautiful -- I just loved
15 it, what she did instill in my life.

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

17 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know? So -- so
18 pure. Like, it was just like a matter of fact again. How
19 you frame everything, how you see things --

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

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- is -- is so
22 important. And -- and so she said, you know, I'll write
23 you off if you don't -- if you don't smarten up type deal,
24 and so I just -- I couldn't just go into this oblivion and
25 recklessly abandon all these principles. I used to see my

1 friends and they'd just be, like, partying on drugs and
2 doing whatever and having six different girlfriends or
3 whatever, but I was like, why do I have to have integrity?
4 Why do I have to be a gentleman? Why do I have to be --
5 I've got to, you know, I've got to -- I have to -- I have
6 to be something for my mom and I've got to be something for
7 my brothers and sisters. I've got to -- I've got to -- my
8 dad would just, you know, again, if you discipline me, you
9 know right or wrong.

10 I used to -- my -- my mom used to say, I
11 said, yeah, but my friends, they can run around all night,
12 they can do this, they can do that. She -- yeah, but they
13 don't have a father. They don't have a dad. My mom --
14 yeah, Mom's, you know, and -- and the moms letting them run
15 all -- all over, and she said, you'll see those are the
16 ones in jail, those are the ones that are going to be dead.
17 She said, and you're not going to be like that, you're
18 going to be different, because you're going to stay home
19 with your mom. You're going to stay here and you're going
20 to do what I say. You're going to listen to your dad and
21 you're going to follow the rules and you're going to be
22 something, you know?

23 And I said, okay, and -- and so I -- at the
24 time, I was upset, because I wasn't allowed to hang around
25 with this one, I wasn't allowed to go with that family,

1 that family was, you know. I would hang out with them
2 anyways, and everything my mom said would be true, you
3 know? Everything she said. They won't -- they won't be
4 your friends, they'll stab you in the back, you know?
5 They'll -- they'll rob you blind, you know, whatever. You
6 need to be aware that what I'm saying is true.

7 One thing my mom always said, and this is
8 real haunting, resolves my story, my mom, she said, you
9 should listen to me, because someday, I'm not going to be
10 here. And I would always say, wow, you know, when she's
11 old and grey, that's what she means, you know? She's going
12 to go on and -- and you need to listen to what I say. But
13 she used to be mad. She used to say, no, listen to me,
14 someday, I'm not going to be here and you're going to have
15 to remember what I said. I said, okay, Mom, you know?
16 Whatever, you know? I've got years, you know? When you're
17 young, you think you've got forever, and I was like, yeah.
18 You'll always be old and you'll tell my grandkids all the
19 same stuff and, well, you know, we'll hash it out then.

20 And so, from about 18 to 20, that's when I
21 got into church. This is a good story right here. You
22 guys will like this, I know. My mom -- so -- so I was
23 going to church and I was drunk on Friday and there was
24 church on Sunday, and I was trying to -- I was trying to
25 get it figured out, and there was this thing in Fort St.

1 John was on the radio, and it was a -- a model invitation
2 out, and so in Banff National -- in -- in the Banff Springs
3 Hotel, they had this -- this national campaign for models
4 and -- and agencies that were looking for new talent, and
5 they were looking in northern communities and different
6 places all over Canada to go to the cultural centre, which
7 was, like, a theatre kind of a space, and then you went in
8 there, because I wanted to do this thing to see if I was,
9 like, you know, could be a model, type deal.

10 And I went in there, me and my buddy, and --
11 and we were always competitive, you know, the young Native
12 guys, you know, we were trying to -- trying to be studs or
13 whatever, you know? We were always constantly trying to
14 compete with each other. He said, no, let's go to this
15 thing here, you know, and I'm going to go get -- become a
16 model and you won't even get in. You know, he was giving
17 me a hard time. And when we went there, he actually was
18 rejected and I -- they asked me to stay. And then, you
19 know, he was mad at me, and I was, well, I'm just going to
20 stay and see what this is about.

21 So they said that you made it past the first
22 round to go to Banff Springs Hotel and -- and to be --
23 there will be a bunch of agencies there and stuff like
24 that. And I thought, man, this is great. And it'll be
25 about \$700 in total in travel and for me to pay the

1 registration fee and all this stuff to -- to march in front
2 of these -- to be on the catwalk in front of all these
3 agencies and stuff.

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And I really thought,
6 like, this is it, like, this is my ticket, you know? This
7 is something that's going to change my life. And so I told
8 my mom and stuff, and -- and I knew this guy, he was a
9 really nice guy, he was a Christian guy in our community,
10 and he was a father. You know, he was a -- somebody who
11 was a senior guy in my life that saw that I was trying to
12 go to church and he was being in my life, and he -- and I
13 knew he could lend me that money. I knew he could and I
14 knew he believed that I -- I was a -- a good young man, I
15 would pay him back, you know? And at that time, \$700 was
16 like \$7,000, you know?

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm?

18 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And I was like, well,
19 he will never lend me that much money, this is crazy. But
20 I said, if he does it, I know it's God's will. You know,
21 this is the destiny, this is something that will happen.
22 And I told him, I said, I really do believe that this is
23 something God wants me to do, I think it would be something
24 for my future, and -- and he said, you know what? I -- you
25 have a good job and -- and you -- I was working in a lumber

1 yard, I think, or something like that. And he said, I -- I
2 know you're a man of integrity, I know you'll pay me back,
3 I know your family really well, and I'm willing to take
4 this risk you. I want to -- I'll give you the money.

5 I couldn't believe it. I said, man, I'm
6 going on this trip, this is something else. And -- and so
7 I found a ride with another guy who was going. He was
8 going down there, I think, just to go snowboarding or
9 something, and so they dropped me off at this conference,
10 and I stayed in a room with a king-size bed and you could
11 open the balcony and it was like you could touch the
12 mountains.

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

14 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know? Me and my
15 family have spent Christmas there since then, and it's a
16 beautiful place. And so I was in there and there's armour
17 in the hallways and --

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm?

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- and it's
20 phenomenal. And so they had this big thing about, you
21 know, basically training, you know, how you walk on the
22 catwalk and how you approach and you had to have a certain
23 portfolio and pictures and everything, so I had all that.
24 And then the day came when I had to walk in front of
25 everybody, and I did, and I ended up getting two callbacks.

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh.

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** So out of, like, 1,200
3 people, I think it was, there was only eight people or
4 something that got callbacks, and I got two of them. And
5 it was amazing, it was crazy. People were coming up to me
6 and they were just, like, what -- how did -- you know, how
7 did that happen, you know? This is awesome. And -- and I
8 was like, oh, so I must have done it, like, this must be
9 it.

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

11 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And there was a guy
12 who had a bulldog, and he walked on the catwalk and he got
13 a callback, and he came up to me and I -- I recognized him
14 because he had the dog. He was the only guy that had the
15 -- the dog. And I said, man, that was cool and your dog's
16 really nice and stuff.

17 And he said, you know, when I do this, I --
18 I march in protest, he said, of this event. And I -- and I
19 said, why? He said, you got two callbacks, right? I said,
20 yeah. He said, you're pretty excited, right? I said,
21 yeah. He said, I want you to know what this is really
22 about. I just want to educate you, he said. You can do
23 whatever you want, it's your life, but he said, I have a
24 friend who came here, who got the most callbacks anyone's
25 ever gotten in this event. He's had something like eight

1 callbacks or something and he was offered this million-
2 dollar contract with this magazine and everything and he
3 was really, really kind of had the tiger by the tail. He
4 was a big deal, and he became, you know, famous, basically,
5 overnight to do what you're doing. And -- and he was here,
6 he stood here and we -- we did it together, you know? And
7 -- and I was happy for him. I didn't get a callback at
8 that time, but he got all these callbacks.

9 And he said he went to this party and it was
10 a talent party, it was, like, this big celebration of who
11 was going to be in the magazine and -- and all these new --
12 the new talent. And somebody had drugged his drink and
13 then he was raped by, like, five men and they put \$20,000
14 cash on his dresser. This is the story he told me. He
15 said, I just want you to know, man, they'll get you on
16 drugs. They'll want you to be thin and -- and to have
17 certain -- it's very controlling, he said.

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

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** This is very -- this
20 is not a very good industry. You be careful. Don't be
21 ignorant. I said, okay, because I had prayed if it was
22 God's will. And the whole time that I was at this
23 conference, I stayed in this big room and I felt like a
24 king. Like, I was like, this is great, and it validated my
25 identity, validated that strength. I thought I was special

1 and I was important, but I had to maintain my -- my
2 integrity.

3 There was girls there, they were, like, 13,
4 and they looked like they were 25, you know? And there was
5 a MuchMusic dance party and stuff and everything and there
6 was a bunch of people. It was, like, underage drinking and
7 a lot of things going on there, which was my scene before,
8 but now I'm trying to change my life, and I've got these,
9 like, little girls, essentially, knocking on my door, you
10 know, but I'm trying to -- I'm trying to hold it together,
11 you know? I said, God, I'm coming up here, and I said,
12 this is Your will, I'm going to try to, you know, do it
13 right. I'm not going to -- I'm not going to indulge and --
14 and fall to the temptation of -- of doing what I usually do
15 or what I always used to do. And so -- so I stuck it out
16 and did the right thing.

17 And so when I found out what this guy told
18 me, he's like, this is a distraction from what I felt, from
19 what God's call was in my life and what I should be doing.
20 I came home and I knew that I wasn't going to pursue it.
21 And so they had already called my mom and said that they
22 put \$2,500 already put in my account and I had an -- an
23 agent in Vancouver and I was going to go stay in this --
24 this, like -- like, a halfway house, I guess, for, like,
25 new talent and all this stuff.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm?

2 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: It was Miami Sands as
3 a -- they shot Saved by the Bell and Dawson's Creek.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: M'hm?

5 MR. BRENT CLEtherOE: And they wanted me to
6 take some acting courses and stuff, and there was another
7 one that was a runway agency, it was for modelling, like,
8 clothes and stuff. And I told my mom when I got home, I
9 said, I'm not going to do it. And she just got mad at me
10 and she started, like, you know -- this (indiscernible)
11 when I first started going to church. I was, like, 18 or
12 19 and -- hey, I was 19, 19. She told me, like, this is
13 your big ticket, like, you've got to do this, like, this is
14 something you need to do, and I said, no, Mom.

15 I said -- I said, you told me that Jesus was
16 the most important thing, you know, in the world and life
17 and -- and you know, I think that this is the dark path,
18 you know? And I'm -- and I -- I said, like, I -- I think
19 God is calling me to be a preacher. And she started
20 crying. And she started hitting me and she said, you'd
21 better go all the way with this if you're going to do this,
22 if you're going to sacrifice this, you'd better not, you
23 know, steer away from what you're doing. You'd better go
24 all the way with this. I said, I will, Mom.

25 And so she was always proud of me, you know,

1 and -- and what I was doing, choosing going into ministry
2 and stuff. And so at this time, I was 20 years old. My
3 mother really went into, like, a depression, I think, so
4 she -- we lived in, like, these chicken coops. It was,
5 like, a -- a -- Green Acres, it was called, and townhouses,
6 and -- and the reason we lived there is we had a big family
7 without a lot of money, so there was, like, upstairs,
8 downstairs, we could make bedrooms everywhere, you know?

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

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so it kind of
11 worked for us. And I was in the basement and I was living
12 there, but they said, like, soon as you graduate, you've
13 got to move out. You know, that was it. And so during
14 this whole time, we would be fighting. My mom would be
15 fighting, I'd be fighting with my dad, and I'd be fighting
16 with my dad and my mom said, leave him alone, I'd be
17 fighting my mom, my dad would say, leave him alone, you
18 know. But it was very -- like, if I sat here, my dad would
19 sit there, and then I would have to sit over here and he'd
20 sit over there, you know. He was in charge. He was the
21 boss. And so there was a lot of conflict because I was --
22 I guess I grew up, you know?

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

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so when I -- when
25 I graduated, one time, me and my mom were arguing, and she

1 was like, you know, one -- one week, my dad would kick me
2 out, the next week, my mom would kick me out, and then they
3 would say, you know, don't -- don't kick him out, type
4 deal. And I -- I remember I -- my -- my friend was coming
5 to pick me up because we'd gotten an apartment, and so one
6 -- one night, my mom was -- and I forgot to tell my mom.
7 It was, like, a week, you know, I was going to tell her
8 that I was moving out and stuff and I was -- there's a
9 point in your life when you're just like, you come here to
10 eat, come here to sleep --

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

12 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- you come here to
13 shower, and you're never home, you're never there. And so
14 my mom was always mad at me that I wasn't home a lot, and
15 -- and so I didn't get to tell her that I was moving out.
16 And so that night, he was coming, and I was -- I was like,
17 oh, yeah, I forgot to tell my parents I'm moving out
18 tonight. And I got in this big argument with my mom, and
19 she's like, you've got to get out of here, you know, you're
20 kicked out or whatever, and I said, fine, then I'm out of
21 here, and I said, my rides are here. So I started packing
22 stuff up and she started crying, you know?

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh.

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** She was like, I didn't
25 mean that, you know, you don't have to go, and I -- and I

1 said, sorry, Mom, I was going to tell you, I feel bad. And
2 so it was kind of a hard -- hard goodbye, but I moved out.
3 My mom always used to say, no news is good news, you know?
4 If I didn't call for something or I didn't need something
5 or, you know, then obviously, I was doing good, you know?
6 There was times I'd come home and I just remember when I
7 was a kid, I used to complain about her hamburger soup all
8 the time.

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

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** She'd say, one of
11 these days -- you turn up your nose to good food, you know,
12 saying, one of these days, you're going to wish, you'll
13 just -- you'll beg for my -- my hamburger soup, you know?
14 I said, oh, it's dog food, you know, I want pizza, I want
15 this and that or the other. And sure enough, when I moved
16 out, I would come home and say, Mom, make some bannock, you
17 know, make some hamburger soup, please. I've been eating
18 so much takeout I can't take it, you know? I -- and I was
19 -- I was living on -- I was living on peanut butter and
20 jam, you know? I was like, come on, just make me
21 something.

22 And so even though I was, like, 20 years
23 old, you know, 21 years old, my mom was, come lay with me,
24 son, you know? I would lay with her on the couch, you
25 know, when nobody's around. You know, I was embarrassed, a

1 full-grown man, you know? My mom said, I don't care, you
2 know, you can come lay with your mom, you know. And so
3 when I was about -- you know, this is me pursuing the
4 ministry now and going to church and --

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

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- and I'm always
7 zealous and telling my parent, you're going to Hell and
8 everybody's going to Hell and trying to invite people to
9 church, and now I'm just -- I would -- people would cross
10 the street when I was walking down the road because they
11 knew I was going to invite them to church, you know? Small
12 town, everybody used to call me, you know, Father Brent,
13 you know? That was because I would be -- I would be drunk
14 on Friday, in church on Sunday. I'll be at a party and
15 they say, man, quit talking about God when you're drunk,
16 you know? Stop, like, you're a hypocrite, you know? And
17 so I was struggling to get it all together.

18 But when I got it together, this was a
19 conversion in this Pentecostal church. I got the Holy
20 Ghost, speaking with tongues, I was baptized in Jesus's
21 name. And like somebody flicked a light switch, I didn't
22 drink, smoke, or swear, and my life just changed radically
23 overnight. It was scary. My parents didn't even know me.
24 They said, who are you? This is crazy, you know? You're
25 in college. Like, there's something weird, you know? Then

1 my dad said, sit down, have a beer with me, son. I said,
2 Dad, I don't -- I don't drink. I said, I wasted so much of
3 my life that way, you know? I said, you take a beer, you
4 put it in a Christian's hand, you put it in a sinner's
5 hand, you ask somebody which one's a -- which one's a
6 Christian? You know, I --

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

8 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- I got to represent
9 what I believe. And I -- and I -- and God comes before my
10 family. And that was something they just, like, they were
11 just crazy, they couldn't understand that. They thought
12 I'd, like, shave my head and -- and go to a monastery or
13 something, it was crazy. But --

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** How old were you, about?
15 Sorry.

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I would say I was
17 about 25.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Twenty-five?

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Twenty-four.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Twenty-four or 25.

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And so my mom went
22 missing when I was 26, and so at this time, you know, my --
23 I basically kind of had this standoffish relationship with
24 my family because my dad would always be like, hey, your
25 uncle's in town, you know, want to go to -- go golfing on a

1 Sunday morning?

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

3 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** You know, you should
4 come with us. They haven't seen me for a while and
5 everything. I said, well, Dad, you know when church is
6 done, I'll be there, and that's my priority. You know,
7 pursuing the ministry is my focus. It's -- it's my
8 conviction, you know, it's something I do.

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

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** He would just tell me
11 off and call me down, but I would get on to church and then
12 I would come rushing over to my mom's house, maybe they're
13 having a beer after they went golfing. And my dad tore
14 into me a little bit in front of everybody and said, oh,
15 you're at church, and all this kind of stuff, and basically
16 was embarrassed, you know, that I didn't go -- I didn't
17 honour my family and go --

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right.

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- golfing with them
20 and stuff. And all of a sudden, my dad's silent, you know,
21 and my uncle stood up. He said, [Step-father], and he came
22 walking over. My dad's name is [Step-father]. And my
23 uncle [Uncle 2], he -- he came and put a big hug on me and
24 he said -- he said, I wish my kids would go to church. I
25 wish one of my kids was a preacher. And he gave me a hug.

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

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And my dad, too, the
3 whole family, you know? He came and he said, I'm so sorry,
4 son. You know? You know, I'm so proud of you, and stuff.
5 But it was -- if I was a crackhead, my dad wouldn't care.
6 But I was a Christian, and that was like, you know, it was
7 radical. It was different, and that was the problem, is
8 like -- a lot of times, in First Nations communities, it's
9 like, if you're dysfunctional, then you're accepted. If
10 you -- if you become sober, well, you -- you think you're
11 something better. Well, because you -- everyone's
12 convicted. Everyone's -- everyone's uncomfortable because
13 you're not laughing off your dysfunction, because you're
14 like, guys, this is -- this is scary.

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

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** This is wrong. This
17 is, you know? And you become the odd man out, and so my
18 father recognized that he had to change how he saw me.
19 Because if -- if you live right long enough, then you have
20 to acknowledge it.

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

22 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And that's -- I think
23 that's the beautiful thing. Like, if you choose to be a
24 father, if you -- if you take the responsibility and the
25 accountability and the character, integrity building and

1 the -- the long grow that it takes to try to un-tarnish
2 your name, you know? And overnight, you can have the
3 authority, overnight, you can decide to be empowered and
4 have an identity that's going to be -- change the world,
5 but then you've got to start to work. You've got to get on
6 that long road, start walking one step at a time. "A
7 journey of 1,000 miles begins with one step." You've got
8 to do the work. But someday, everybody -- everybody was
9 against me, too. You know, everybody says, oh, you're a
10 hypocrite and you're -- you're a joke and you're never
11 going to be -- you're always going to be the same, you
12 know, you're not going to be different. Everybody wants to
13 tempt you, like, oh, hey, you know, have a beer with me,
14 you know? Come on, sit down. It's like when you smoke
15 cigarettes and you're addicted to nicotine, when you want
16 to quit, everybody wants to give you a smoke.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Nobody wants to see your
18 success.

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yeah. And then when
20 you -- you know, when you -- when you're in the -- when
21 you're in the throes of the addiction, they want to spit on
22 you, you know?

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

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** When you're digging in
25 the couch for change to try to buy a pack of smokes, you

1 know, or you're smoking butts, you know, it's a shameful
2 thing. But when you want to quit, man, everybody wants to
3 give you a smoke.

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

5 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And -- and my mom used
6 to say, she worked in a kitchen, and she said there used to
7 be crabs in a pot, the chef would put them in to boil, and
8 they'd all start crawling out. My mom, she was a -- a prep
9 cook, and she came around the chef, she said, the crabs are
10 coming out. You know, they're all crawling out. He said,
11 Shirley, don't worry about them crabs, because the other
12 ones will pull them back in.

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

14 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And she said, that's
15 just like the world. She said, that's just like addictions
16 and all that stuff. She used to educate me with these kind
17 of stories.

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

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And I found them to be
20 true. I thought, man, I'm trying to change my life and
21 everybody -- everybody wants to take me out. Everybody
22 wants to do something, you know? Girls were trying to
23 tempt me, you know. Everybody was trying to tarnish the --
24 what I was trying to do.

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

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And then it was odd,
2 it was contempt. Then it's overnight, everybody hates you.

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

4 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Everybody's against
5 you and your own family won't spit on you, they want
6 nothing to do with you. And you're walking this road by
7 yourself and you're alone, and so you have to be strong
8 enough, you know, at that point to realize that, you know,
9 I have to go all the way with this thing.

10 And so, that being said, that was a
11 beautiful part of the story, is, like I always used to, I
12 was working in a saw mill. So my dad always used to be
13 embarrassed of me and the church and stuff, but this time,
14 he embraced the fact. He's like, obviously, he's going to
15 go all the way with this thing. And so he -- he changed
16 the way he saw me, and he would tell people, my sonny boy,
17 he's a preacher, you know? My son, he's a preacher. And
18 -- and I said, Dad, come to church, I want to preach. He's
19 like, I -- I don't want to go to church, you know?
20 Finally, him and my mom, they came one time. They hear me
21 preach one of the first times I preached, and my mom, she
22 stood up, and she was a Christian before, and so she raised
23 her hands. She was crying, you know, in the presence of
24 the Lord, and my dad stood there. When he stood up for me,
25 he was proud, you know, that I preached. And I sang a song

1 and I preached, and everything there was good.

2 And so while this is all going on, the
3 dynamics have changed, you know? They're celebrating my
4 conviction to be a minister or whatever. What happened
5 was, my -- my mom and dad -- so -- so I was delivering
6 pizza. I was doing everything I could to make sure that
7 Sunday was my priority. You know, I had to be in church.

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

9 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I couldn't take a job
10 in camp. When you grow up in a northern community, there's
11 a lot of good money out there to get a job.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah, yeah.

13 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** To go work in the bush
14 and everything.

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

16 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And my dad would
17 always get mad. My dad would always get mad at me because
18 I wouldn't take a job that -- that interfered with church.
19 And so he said, oh, that stupid church and everything, you
20 need to come with me out in the pipeline, and all this kind
21 of stuff. And I said, Dad, you know, you've got to back up
22 a little bit. When I was 18, it was the same thing. Like,
23 my buddy, he dropped out of high school, the guy that I
24 moved in with, the guy that I first got my first place.

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

1 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** My mom was crying when
2 I moved out. He was working on the rigs and he dropped out
3 of school in grade 10 and he wanted me to work with him on
4 the rigs. Man, he says, stop pushing carts at Safeway, you
5 know, like a clown. You need to come out here and get --
6 you know, I've got two sleds, I've got a truck, I've got
7 all this money, you know? And every -- all -- a big TV and
8 all this kind of stuff. And I said, no, I said, I've got
9 to graduate, you know? I said, no one in the history of my
10 family since they lived in tipis have ever graduated, on
11 both sides of my mom and dad's family. I said, I want to
12 be the guy. I want to be the -- you know, that -- that
13 gets a grade 12. Which is, you know, really nothing
14 compared to, you know, education, but to me, it was this
15 big -- this goal I was going to reach.

16 And so [D.C.] and -- and I had a principal,
17 his name was [A.B.], and these guys, they were just, like,
18 rooting for me, you know?

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

20 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And I'd get in fights
21 at school and they'd -- I'd be in in-school, but I was
22 hanging on. Like, I -- I want to -- I want to graduate,
23 you know? And I took my provisional exam courses. My mom
24 would always say, like, don't take these dummy classes they
25 want to push you into. You know, you get your -- you get

1 your, you know, biology, you know, 10, 11, and 12 so you
2 graduate properly. You need to, like, and -- get
3 (indiscernible) or something, a certain kind of diploma,
4 not a good enough diploma. You know, no.

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

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** I want you to get a
7 real diploma. And I said, okay, Mom.

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

9 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And that's how she
10 was. She was like, you're going to do it, you want to do
11 it right. And so when I graduated, I had a lineup of
12 teachers that were shaking my hand off, you know? Saying,
13 we knew you could do it and we believed in you and stuff.
14 And I -- I won a bursary for \$1,000 to go to college. It
15 was great. I went to the -- for about three months and
16 then I cashed it in and got drunk. I was on welfare and I
17 was a mess, and -- and God changed all that, you know?

18 And so here I am, 25 and 26 years old, and
19 so my mom and dad were, like, basically, you know, you're
20 -- you're -- this church and stuff is a joke, you know? My
21 dad was still giving me a hard time about working and
22 everything, being a man, and going to get a real job. And
23 I told them, I said, God will provide my -- my needs, Dad,
24 you'll see. And then I got a job at the mill, and I was
25 making, like, 25 bucks an hour or something like that. And

1 all of a sudden, I was, you know, a single guy, so I, you
2 know, I had a nice car and everything, you know, I was -- I
3 was kind of -- everything was lining up for me and my dad
4 was so proud of me, you know. He says, you're right, son,
5 you know, you stuck it out and God did provide for you.
6 Obviously, He did, you know?

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

8 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** And it was years of
9 ridicule and giving me a hard time and then finally, it all
10 came together for me, you know? And so I was working at a
11 saw mill and I come home and my dad would say, come here,
12 son, let me smell you. You know, he used to work in a saw
13 mill, he loved the smell of fresh cut wood, and my mom
14 would be there.

15 And one day I came home -- well, to my mom's
16 house. I had my own apartment, but I came to my mom's
17 house, and she was doing dishes, and the sun was coming
18 through the window. It was a beautiful afternoon. And she
19 was quiet. My mom was never quiet, you know? My mom would
20 always tell you, how was your day, have something to eat,
21 sit down, you know? And she's -- I'm going to talk to her.
22 So she was a talker, you know, and my mom would always be
23 talking. When I got there, she was quiet, and I thought --
24 I got in, I say, hey, Mom. Nothing, you know? And I said
25 -- said, what are you doing? Clinking the glasses, she was

1 doing the dishes, and she said, oh, nothing, she said. I'm
2 just talking to the Lord, she says. Shock, you know? I
3 mean, what is it, what do you mean, you know? And I came
4 over, I -- I hugged her around the waist and I kind of
5 looked at her and -- and there was tears coming down her
6 face. I said, what's going on, Mom? She said, oh, I was
7 talking to the Lord, she said.

8 And my -- my brother, [Brother 1], he's my
9 youngest brother and he was born premature, and when he was
10 born premature, they had to send him to Edmonton and they
11 were going to pull the plug on him if his lungs didn't
12 develop, and my mom tells a story that she was, like, you
13 know, pulling her hair out, just begging God to save her
14 son, you know? Don't -- don't let my son die. When she
15 went to Edmonton, my grandmother told her, she said, if --
16 if that little boy lives, he's going to be the biggest one
17 out of all of them. And -- and God spared my brother's
18 life, and he's the biggest one out of all of us today. And
19 she said that, at that -- that night, that God spoke to her
20 and said, if -- if I save your son, you have to serve Me,
21 you know? You have to get back on -- on the right track
22 with Me, type of deal.

23 And so that -- that afternoon, I said to
24 Mom, I asked, what's going on? And she said, you know, I
25 was talking to the Lord and He said that I've got to come

1 true on my promise that I made to Him when -- you know,
2 when [Brother 1] was born. And she said, you know, I need
3 to -- I need to make it right with Him, you know? And so I
4 was -- I thought it was good news, you know? And so I
5 prayed with her and -- and, you know, and -- and this was
6 literally, like, about a month before she went missing.

7 And so I used to pick her up. She used to
8 call me, she'd be at a party drinking somewhere in a fire
9 pit somewhere in somebody's backyard and listen to all of
10 her country music and then get drunk. She'd want me to
11 two-step with her, you know, all the time she's drunk, you
12 know? And I was embarrassed at my mom for so many years.
13 Embarrassed. I used to have friends, I'd bring them to
14 school, I'd -- I'd go home and I'd go the long way around.
15 Yeah, I didn't want people to know where I lived, you know?
16 I was embarrassed. There were a lot of times I was
17 embarrassed of the addictions and of the poverty and my
18 mom's on welfare, my dad's in the woods and he doesn't care
19 if we live or die, he's all strung out on drugs or
20 something, you know? My mom would have to make ends meet.
21 And -- and so, you know, I was always embarrassed at my
22 mom.

23 There just came a point where I was like, I
24 don't care. I love my mom, you know? And I told her, Mom,
25 I'll pick you up wherever you are, you call me. And so I

1 would be my mom's chauffeur. She would call me in the
2 Condell Hotel in the bar, she'd call me, come and get me,
3 sonny boy, I'm done. And I'd go pick her up, spill her in
4 the car, spill her out the car, and then she'd straighten
5 me out.

6 First, I said that I -- you know, I tell
7 people this, that -- that when people have addictions and
8 when they're alcoholics, there's always three levels. And
9 it's they're -- they're laughing, then they're crying, and
10 then they're hitting you. That's kind of how it goes.
11 They're laughing, then they're crying, and then they're
12 angry and they just want to fight somebody. And -- so
13 often, I just learned how to navigate those stages and I'd
14 have to get my mom home before she was going to explode,
15 you know? But I got her home and -- and so many times, I
16 would do that, and I started.

17 My -- my brother-in-law, now, who was my
18 pastor at the church, and he had a younger sister, and she
19 was moving out from New Brunswick, and they kept telling
20 me, they said, oh, you're going to marry my sister, you
21 know, so they were bugging me at the church, and I thought,
22 man, she's, like, seven years younger than me. Last time I
23 seen her, she was just a little kid, you know? I don't
24 even know just who she is now. But she showed up in Fort
25 St. John, I said, my goodness, she's just gorgeous, you

1 know? And I said, man, I think this is what God's doing,
2 you know? And so I remember calling her dad, and my cell
3 phone was shaking, you know? I said, I -- I love your
4 daughter, you know, I want -- I want to ask you of her hand
5 in marriage, you know? And he said, are you sure? I said
6 -- I said, sir, I said, I got a good job, I work in a saw
7 mill, you know? I -- I got my own place and I -- you know,
8 I'm doing really good in the church. I lead the song
9 service, I play drums, you know, I'm pursuing the ministry,
10 you know? And -- and he said, no, no, he said, you're a
11 great young man. He said, I'm not worried about you, he
12 said, my daughter's crazy. He said, are you sure you want
13 to marry her, you know? And he was joking, and -- and so
14 he gave me his blessing, I was going to get married.

15 But before all that, right before my mom
16 went missing, she met my girlfriend. And my mom always
17 hated my girlfriends. My mom would just tell them off on
18 the phone, don't you call here for my son again, hang up on
19 them. She was always very, very rude to people and I hated
20 that. I said, Mom, I've been lining up this girl for two
21 weeks, don't -- don't scare her off, you know, I like her.
22 But my mom said no, she said, I seen your wife before. She
23 said, I seen her in a dream. She's just like me, she's
24 short like me, she's got dark hair, it's about this long.
25 She said, I seen a silhouette of her. I can't quite see

1 her face, but, she said, I had dreams about your wife.
2 I'll know her when I see her. That's how my mom was all
3 the time. And so I hated introducing my girlfriends to my
4 mom, and I knew that was just a fighting situation, so.

5 I was out and about with my girlfriend one
6 day, we were having a date, and my mom called me. So this
7 is the first time I introduced my -- my white girlfriend to
8 my Native mom, who's drunk, who I know is going to try to
9 fight her or something crazy, so I said, well, we've got to
10 go get my mom, and this is going to be a thing. She's
11 like, I love you, you know? I want to -- I want to spend
12 the rest of my life with you or something, I don't care,
13 you know, whatever. Going out with your mom, you know,
14 let's go -- let's go do it, let's go pick her up.

15 So -- so we went to this party and picked up
16 my mom and she got in the car and my girlfriend was like,
17 oh, hey, you sit in the front and I'll sit in the back.
18 And my mom said, no, I'll -- I'll sit in the back, you sit
19 in the front. I said, something's horribly wrong. I think
20 my mom's going to kill her, you know? My mom's going to
21 strangle her from behind or something. I said, what's
22 going on? So I'm on pins and needles, I don't know what's
23 going to happen. She's sitting in the back seat of the car
24 and she's just dead silent. I said, she is mad. Like, Mom
25 always went to freak out, my mom's never quiet. I don't

1 know why she's not already telling her off and she's all
2 quiet. And my mom said, so you're my daughter-in-law, she
3 said. I started laughing and my girlfriend says, like,
4 what is going on? You know, for -- there's not even a how
5 you doing or what's your name or -- it's just like, you're
6 the one, eh?

7 And so we get out of the car and my mom goes
8 in the house and, you know, she doesn't say anything. I
9 get in the car and -- and my -- my girlfriend's like, what
10 was that about? I said, I don't know. I said, I don't
11 know. She said, you know, your mom reached out and took my
12 hand when I was sitting in the front. She held my hand all
13 the way home. I said, really? I said, yeah -- she said,
14 yeah.

15 And it was that -- it was that same week
16 that I was home alone one night, it was about midnight, and
17 I was getting ready for bed and the phone rang. And I
18 answered the phone and it was my mom. And she was
19 intoxicated, she was drinking. I said, hey, Mom, how are
20 you doing? She said, oh, good. She said, I'm just calling
21 you to tell you I love you. Which she had never done in
22 the history of my life. I said, well, I love you too, Mom,
23 do you want me to come get you? Are you -- are you at the
24 bar or what? And she said, no, no. She said, I'm just
25 calling to tell you that I love you. I said, I love you

1 too, Mom. I said, are you sure you don't want me to come
2 to the house or something, visit with you? She said, no,
3 no. She said, that girl you're dating, she said, is she
4 stubborn like your mom? I said, yeah, she is. She said,
5 that's the one you want to marry. I said, okay, Mom. And
6 she said, I love you. I said, I love you too, Mom. She
7 said no, I love you. I said, okay, Mom, and she -- and
8 then she hung up.

9 And that was the last time I ever heard her
10 voice. It was like she knew, you know? It was like she --
11 she came -- just called telling me. And so my auntie was
12 -- lived a couple blocks away from my mom's house, and my
13 dad was in camp and my mom would go and stay with my auntie
14 when my dad was in camp. And there was a guy across the
15 street, his name was [name redacted], and he has a history
16 of violence against women. He, I guess, has it in his
17 police file, a story where he picked up a -- a Native lady
18 and she was a prostitute and he took her in the woods and
19 raped her and he smashed her head with a big rock and he
20 tried to kill her and she crawled to the road and told the
21 RCMP what he did, and they didn't believe her. I guess
22 there was something, they didn't investigate it because of
23 her, you know, lot in life.

24 And so this guy had a history of being a
25 weirdo, but he was, like, a -- I never met him in my life,

1 but he was, like, a friend of the family. They knew who he
2 was, like, a friend of a friend or something. He was
3 having a barbecue at his house, and right across the road
4 from my auntie's house, they went over there and they were
5 drinking and there were some people there and they were
6 all, I guess, asked for a statement of what happened that
7 night. But I guess the story goes that my mom was there
8 with my auntie and then my mom started fighting with this
9 guy, I guess, and -- the guy who owned the house, and he --
10 she was telling him on. Like I said, my mom's a wolverine,
11 my mom's like a firecracker. My mom used to fight with my
12 daddy, and he was really big, you know? She was not afraid
13 of anybody.

14 And so I guess this guy offended her. My
15 mom was always mad at somebody. If my mom didn't like you,
16 you knew right away. She would not beat around the bush
17 about stuff. And so for some reason, she was nose to nose
18 with this guy, screaming and arguing. My auntie had left,
19 I guess. I don't know what happened, but my auntie wasn't
20 there, and everyone in the -- everyone in the statement, in
21 their stories, said there was a big, explosive argument and
22 then they don't know anything that happened after that.
23 And my mom didn't come home the next day, which was very
24 shocking. That would have never happened. And my auntie
25 knew right away something was terribly wrong.

1 And the guy detailed the trunk of his car,
2 had it professionally detailed, and he redid all the
3 drywall in his basement and he covered a rug, replaced the
4 rug in the basement of his house the same weekend. And
5 while all this is going on, my auntie, like, from 7:00 in
6 the morning, you know, is calling the police and saying, my
7 sister has been murdered. Like, my sister is in -- like,
8 locked up in that house against her own free will. Like,
9 there's something terribly wrong and you need to come, come
10 and investigate this situation. The RCMP said, oh, she
11 probably just went to a different party, you have nothing
12 to worry about, a person has to be missing for 48 hours
13 before we investigate. And she said, like, this is a
14 murder. Like, this is something you need to -- well, we'll
15 send a car by, you know. They never did.

16 And you know, I'm talking hour by hour, day
17 by day, my auntie -- my auntie is, like, very, very
18 belligerent and very, very -- she'll cuss you out. My --
19 my auntie's very vile. She's very, very unladylike. I
20 don't know what you want to call her, but she was tearing
21 them a new -- there was -- she was tearing a strip off the
22 police. You know, obviously --

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What's her name?

24 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- maybe that's why --
25 [Aunt 2]. *[Eight lines redacted - ongoing investigation].*

1 And so she's freaking out hysterical, and they just, I
2 guess, thought she was crazy or they wouldn't listen to
3 her, but again, this is the RCMP negligence I was talking
4 about. And basically, this is, well, it's just another
5 Native lady, essentially, is what my auntie was getting,
6 you know, from -- that's what she felt like she was being
7 treated like.

8 And so, you know, we're all in -- all in
9 shock, you know? Monday comes, Friday comes, and I'm
10 getting phone calls from my sisters and my brothers and
11 they're saying, Mom's gone, like, Mom's missing and we
12 can't find her. I said, oh, she, you know -- and I'm in
13 denial. The first thing that hits me like a freight train
14 is, like, oh, she's somewhere. Maybe she -- you know, I'm
15 going to start saying, oh, she went up north, you know?
16 Maybe she drove with somebody up north, she went to
17 Telegraph Creek or she went -- she's had a breakdown, she's
18 going to go get drunk, she's going to go party, you know,
19 she's running away from the family or something. She --
20 and I'm just thinking, like, nothing. And I guess I would
21 say, like, I froze again. I didn't -- I didn't care. I
22 didn't want to care. I just kept on pretending like it
23 wasn't true and -- and I didn't talk to anybody about it.
24 I just went to work and just kept on with my life and --
25 and I wouldn't answer the phone.

1 Everybody's freaking out, my Auntie [Aunt 1]
2 is calling the police, Auntie [Aunt 1] is -- is very -- she
3 was, I would say she was the one in our family that had it
4 together the most. She didn't drink or anything. And
5 she's -- she went to the police and she was just like, they
6 had to drag her out of there. Like, she wouldn't leave.
7 She says, you've got to go, you've got to find out who
8 killed my sister. Like, what is going on, like, what's
9 happening? And -- and then who's doing what and what are
10 you going to do about it? Where's -- where's the
11 statement? Like, who do -- who -- who is doing the
12 investigation and what's going on? And it was always the
13 same thing. Well, you know, we'll let you know. Oh, it's
14 been passed to another investigator now in Prince George, a
15 homicide unit, or now it's this person or that person, and
16 they just kept on changing the subject. They would just,
17 you know, you would call that person and they would know
18 nothing about it, and they were, okay, well, we'll get back
19 to you when we get that case in our hands and all this kind
20 of stuff, and -- and you know, nobody was doing anything.

21 And the -- and the sad thing was, everybody
22 in town knew what the police didn't know, you know, and I
23 think multiple people punched this guy out, broke his --
24 oh, my cousin, he went across the street, and he wasn't in
25 -- in -- he wasn't in the ministry, so he -- he hit this

1 guy and -- and dealt with him the way he felt. And I had
2 friends calling me and they said, Brent, we understand that
3 you go to church now and all that, they said, but you just
4 tell us the go-ahead and we'll go and kick the door off the
5 hinges and pull this guy's fingernails, he'll tell us where
6 your mom is. Because I used to run with some bad guys and
7 they all felt really bad for me. And I -- again, I was,
8 like, fought all of the temptation. Just, I said, no,
9 that's not the right thing to do. The truth will come out.
10 You know, I don't need to -- I don't need you to do that,
11 and I appreciate your concern, you know? The story goes, I
12 guess my dad bumped into him in a bar in Fort Nelson and
13 half-killed him, and I guess they had to pull him off him.

14 *[Fourteen lines redacted - ongoing*
15 *investigation]*. So okay.

16 And I really had to come to grips with the
17 fact, the one thing my mom said. You know, that she wasn't
18 always going to be here. She used to tell me, she -- sonny
19 boy, when I'm gone, she said, you have to live for your
20 family. Because I was the chosen one and I used to drive
21 my sister around wherever. My sister would call me, drop
22 of a hat. Hey, money, I want to go shopping, take me here,
23 take me there, drive me everywhere. I had to look after
24 her and I would always drive my sister around. And that
25 was funny that, when I got married, my mom always used to

1 say, you know, when you get married, then your wife has to
2 come first. Your family has to come first. You have to
3 tell your sister and everybody else that they -- they
4 aren't the priority anymore. And I remember telling my
5 sister that and she was real angry, you know? Oh, she was
6 mad, because I wouldn't just go and pick her up and give
7 her money anymore, you know? I had my own family.

8 And -- and so, like I said, I got that
9 closure when God told me that she was in His hands and --
10 and it was none of my business, you know, at this point.
11 And then I didn't have to look for her anymore. I didn't
12 have to feel like she was going to pop up or I was going to
13 have this, you know, nightmare the rest of my life. But my
14 aunties, you know, they didn't. Like, they got a psychic
15 and they tried to find a place, and I think it was the
16 Kiskatinaw Bridge, actually, they believe that that's where
17 the guy threw my mom over or something like that. That's
18 what the psychic told them, and I don't validate that, I
19 don't believe that, but it's definitely not far-fetched.
20 And they -- they looked, I think, a lot of different
21 places. They would go and walk in fields and the woods and
22 different places, and they used to say, hey, you need to
23 come, you know. I said, even if they find my mom, I don't
24 want to see her. I don't want to see her like that. And
25 so I -- I didn't want to have nothing to do with that. I

1 just wasn't strong enough, you know? I didn't -- I
2 admitted it. I was just like, I'm not -- I didn't look for
3 her one day.

4 I didn't even -- I -- when she went missing,
5 I used to hate myself because I didn't care, I didn't try,
6 I didn't do something. But to this day, I think that I
7 would do it again. That was -- that, for me, was the right
8 thing to do, because if I wasn't going to go and -- and
9 shoot this guy or do something about it, you know, then.
10 You know, it's to this day that sometimes I think, well,
11 what if she was in that basement, you know, tied up or
12 something? I could have saved her, you know, I could have
13 done something. And it's so hard, because it's like,
14 that's not my problem, you know? It's not my -- it's not
15 fair. Not fair to do that to yourself. Whatever happened,
16 you know, I -- I think I'm justified before God in -- in
17 that life is what it is. And I never asked to be Native, I
18 never asked to be abused, I never asked to be
19 dysfunctional, I never asked to be born to somebody who
20 didn't want me, and I didn't ask to have a mom that went
21 missing. And so it's not something that I need to -- need
22 to beat myself up about. It's life and it is what it is.
23 And I just thank God that I had the strength to talk about
24 it and to be real about, you know, life and -- and stuff,
25 because I can't help anybody else if I can't look at the

1 ugliest part of who I am and see something good.

2 And I know a lot of people that, who go to
3 our church and who are part of our ministry in Quesnel and
4 it's called Lifeline and we help people with addictions and
5 different things, that I'm not just some perfect person
6 that never had any problems and stuff. And people say, you
7 don't even look Native, you know, or something, and I -- I
8 say, you know, it doesn't matter what you look like. It
9 doesn't matter if you're Native or not. Everybody has --
10 everybody suffers, you know. But when I'm real and I'm
11 open, it's actually -- it's -- it helped so many people
12 that I feel it's an obligation to have the courage to tell
13 your story.

14 And so all that being said, I'm trying to
15 run away from this responsibility that I feel I have to --
16 to write a book. I'm not a really sit-down kind of a
17 concentrated person. I'm always running around, helping
18 people do things, and busy. But I've got to sit down and
19 write a book. It's called, *Missing Mother, Finding*
20 *Closure*. And I think that if I was approached by a -- a
21 First Nations publishing company and they said that -- that
22 if I would ever write this thing, that they -- it would be
23 a big deal, that they wanted me to -- to write a book with
24 them so that would be in First Nations studies all across
25 Canada, that they would have it in high schools and stuff

1 and they'd love our story, you know? Because she wasn't
2 just some, you know, and -- and I hate to say this and it
3 breaks my heart, but some of the people just write off
4 somebody who is on a street level or somebody who is --

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

6 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- in the throes of
7 addictions or that has some kind of a stereotype associated
8 to their story. And it's generational, and so it's a --
9 it's just a broken record, you know? And they don't --
10 that doesn't have -- resonate the same way as somebody who
11 is just a unique individual. And the -- this idea that she
12 knew, this idea that the last thing she told me, that,
13 like, she knew, and -- and the way the story's told and who
14 I am now and -- and everything up from the beginning to the
15 ending is -- is very unique. I think it's a very special
16 story. That's why I didn't want it to be categorized or
17 filed away with just the fact that it's a unified effort to
18 change, you know, the -- the problem. Because I'm not a
19 problem. I've been through -- you know what I've been
20 through is -- is more than a problem. It's more than a
21 problem, and -- and it's not going to go away any time
22 soon.

23 And as long as people have free will, there
24 will be -- there will be tragedy and there will be murder,
25 there will be chaos and there will be, you know, these

1 social issues. But if we can find our father, you know, in
2 the storm, then we can -- then we'll be protected and we'll
3 be okay and we'll be provided for. We'll -- we can come
4 out of this, you know? And the answer is -- is -- to -- to
5 finding your father is -- is, you know, if you can be a
6 father. You know, that's -- that's the first step for a
7 lot of these -- a lot of these men that aren't -- that
8 don't have the power --

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

10 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- to change, you
11 know? Is -- is accepting the responsibility to be a
12 father. And I think that's the pathway to finding your
13 father. And so that's what I -- I would say that, through
14 my whole story, was, anybody can be a father, but it takes
15 a real man to be a dad. There are false fathers and there
16 are false paths, false doctrine, you know? The Catholicism
17 aspect and all of that, it's --

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

19 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** It's -- again, it's a
20 mask. It's a false hope. And there is a -- there is a
21 real Christian Church, there is a real Jesus Christ, and
22 there is a real Judgment and Heaven and Hell. I believe
23 that. And -- and so that's why I'm living the way I'm
24 living to tell everybody about it, but -- but you know, if
25 that message doesn't resonate with somebody, even if they

1 could ever find a father, you know --

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** M'hm?

3 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** -- that would be the
4 hope to whatever door opens, because we have a Heavenly
5 Father and he has a way of laying a -- a trail, blazing a
6 trail, you know? He's the chosen one, and if we choose to
7 be chosen, then we'll find our father. I would say I'm
8 finished. I think that it should be public and I -- I
9 think that this is a great -- think this is a -- this is a
10 phenomenal opportunity, and I want to thank you guys for
11 being here. And the emotional toll it takes on you guys to
12 do what you're doing, my hat's off to you, and keep up the
13 good work.

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

15 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Fighting the good
16 fight.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** I just want to acknowledge
18 the courage for you as a young Indigenous man to come here
19 before -- before a camera, a tape recorder, and people that
20 you don't know to share.

21 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Thank you.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** What you did today takes a
23 -- a phenomenal amount of courage. It -- I'll get you,
24 then -- we'll do this off-camera if you would like to be
25 public, which is what you had said at the beginning, and so

1 we'll --

2 **MR. BRENT CLETHEROE:** Yes.

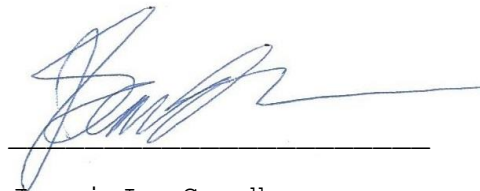
3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** -- sign this off the
4 camera. So it's 6:28 and I'll turn -- I'll turn it off.

5 --- Upon adjourning at 6:28 p.m.

6

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jessi L. Sandham', is written over a horizontal line.

Jessi L. Sandham

November 9, 2018