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Interview with Pamela Hayes

Pamela Hayes

Heather Oriana Petrocelli

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Carole Pope/Our New Beginnings Oral History Project

Narrator: Pamela Hayes (PH)

Interviewer: Heather Oriana Petrocelli (HP)

Location: Portland State University Library, Portland, Oregon

Date: November 14, 2016

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Audited by Carolee Harrison, December 16-19, 2016

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HP: This is Heather Oriana Petrocelli interviewing Pamela Hayes on November 14th, 2016 in Portland, Oregon at Portland State University.

Pamela, do I have your permission to record you for the Carole Pope Oral History Project?

PH: Yes.

HP: Would you please state your full name, date, and place of birth?

PH: Pamela Hayes. My date of birth is 07/15/1966 and my place of birth is Portland, OR.

HP: Ah, a native!

PH: Yeah.

HP: Could you please tell me how you first came to know Our New Beginnings or Carole Pope?

PH: I first came to know Carole—I was court-ordered to go to her program in 1984? Yeah. I was not happy, but I was an outpatient and through that I had to go to group meetings two times a week and they would help me get an apartment. They put us in a little... whatchamacallit, help?

HP: Like a safe house?

PH: Temporary place to live, yeah.

HP: Our New Beginnings did?

PH: Yes, yes and then they were helping the outpatients get an apartment. So, she did that and we would go to group and we had Grey [Wolfe] as a counselor there.

HP: So you know Grey Wolfe.

PH: Yes.

HP: So, just to back up, do you have memories of how the court order came down? Like were you in court and they were like “We will be sending you to... ?”

PH: Yes, they said, “This is your alternative; we’re going to send you to Our New Beginnings.” And it was just open right before that time.

HP: So they presented it as an incarceration alternative.

PH: Yes. [laughing]

HP: When you were given the alternative, were you like “Absolutely!”?

PH: Yeah, yeah. I’d rather not go to jail so... [laughing] Yeah, I was open to it and I really liked the program. I loved the staff, Laurie [Ellett], Carole. Carole was great; she was just very sweet and warmhearted and she cared about everybody, all of us. We all are still friends to this day. Everyone, well most of us that had made it through that, are still friends to this day and we keep in contact.

HP: Do you have memories of how—so, you get entangled with the law to wind up at a court, right. You get the choice of going to incarceration or going to Our New Beginnings. Do you know how they made the determination between inpatient and outpatient?

PH: Inpatient was mostly for the people that had a drug problem or had kids. That’s what that was kept for, because it was a house, you know, not a big house. So that was kept for mostly kids, people with kids, or had a drug problem and I had neither yet, so. I was on outpatient and lasted for a while. I went to the program, really enjoyed it, learned a lot. We had group programs, I mean group counseling, every week, a couple times a week. During that time, it was during the eighties so there were several serial killers out at that time, and I didn’t care. [laughing] I was like fearless. But in the group, one week five girls were there and the next, following week, five girls were missing, were killed. And that had a huge impact on me, on all of us because it could have been us.

HP: Were they—was it one person that killed all five or were they individually—

PH: They didn’t know that at the time, but I believe it was.

HP: When that happened, and it was devastating to people working there, clients, everything, were there any policy changes or do you have any memories of anything that they tried to do to stop or educate or help the women?

PH: No, I don't remember. I don't think they—I mean of course they educated us, but it didn't... I don't know. A lot of the times the house was such a comfortable house that the outpatient people would hang out there. We knew the inpatient people from, you know, the former life. [laughing] So we would just go to the house and hang out. Laurie was the, I don't know what her title was, but she worked there, she would hang out. We would all hang out after her work; we were so involved with each other, in order not to go back to the streets. However that did not always work. [laughing] In my case, I went back. But that was due to—I had problems because I could not go home to my mom; she would not take me, let me go back home. I had a roommate through the apartment they gave me but you know, we had a little issue and so I eventually got back into prostitution. It's a problem because it's not a good thing to do, but you get addicted to the money.

06:44.9

HP: Do you mind telling a little bit of your story, like how did wind up at that court where you got a court mandate to either go to jail or go to Our New Beginnings?

PH: When I was fifteen—I was sexually abused a couple times when I was younger. I never told my mom because she would tell me from when I was younger that she didn't want me around, she wished she didn't have me and all that every day. And then I was sexually abused a couple times and I didn't have a dad around and I never told her I was abused. She raised me in church, but she was very distant in my family; my brothers and sisters were all a lot older than me and they were very distant. So it was like I was by myself. When any of us graduated from high school, we were kicked out. It didn't matter; we had to leave the house. I moved in with my sister at fifteen because I couldn't live with my mom. I just started hanging out downtown and I moved around to different friends' houses just to survive. And then I met these pimps downtown and you know, it went from there. I was curious and basically it was survival. Somebody showed interest in me and you know, I wanted to do something that was different. Not that it was fun, but... And then, eventually I had been, throughout different things, to different states and I eventually stopped in California. This time I was by myself because the person, the pimp, I was with had several people and I convinced him to let me go by myself to L.A. and he did. But I had a plan; I was done with the whole thing. So I went to L.A. and he came there looking for me and said "What's going on?" and I said "I'm not doing this no more," and you know, had to fight against him for a minute. I had met my ex-husband there and got pregnant and got married but he was abusive. I stayed with him because I didn't want to get divorced and I didn't know what to look for in a man. So. [laughing] You know, nobody ever taught me, so I picked him [pause] and stayed with him because I thought marriage was you're

supposed to stay together forever. My mom had been divorced five times. I didn't want to repeat that. [laughing] I just tried to stay, no matter what. I thought "I can take the abuse, but I want my kids to have a dad." Because that was another issue: I didn't have a dad. But of course that didn't work because he would brainwash my kids against me, from when they were little. And I still didn't see until they were a little bit older that it was just terrible. I eventually filed for divorce and when we did get divorced the judge—nobody would help me; I could get no help. And he was a Black man. That has a lot to do with it because it was shocking to me. He had my daughter write a letter to the courts, lying, and the judge believed a letter; there was no investigation even though I requested one. I had gone down to the courts a few times and said "You're not investigating my—" and had gotten kicked out. They had completely taken my kids and gave them to him, given them to the abuser. And I threw a fit, but nobody was there to help me. Nobody. So I had to fight and fight and fight. Finally my son left the house because it was too crazy and came back to my house. He got in trouble with the law [laughing] and so I was stuck in California with him, dealing with that, and you know my daughter and me have had a hard relationship, because daughters and dads are closer. But he had left, he left the state, went to Virginia and was on drugs. [laughing] And she still won't talk to me. You know, I just came here for healing, came back to Oregon to just reflect on my life and say "Okay, this will not ever, ever, ever happen again to me in my life," where I go into these bad relationships. Why? Where does it start? I had to go reflect from when I was a child and figure out where it came from, where it started, and go through therapy and I started going to school. When I started going to school—I started going to school in the worst, in the midst of—I had a plan when I was leaving my husband but... I registered for school, I had gotten a job, and my plan was to make money and save up so I can leave. That the more I do, the better I am. You know, I had to keep my mind distracted. So, I signed up for legal, to be a paralegal. I wanted to help people because throughout my situation, my divorce, I was not getting help. I noticed that the judges and the whole system had not—they don't realize the effects domestic violence and sexual abuse, any kind of sexual abuse, has on women and children. That was my mission, was to go to school to teach judges what effects that have had on women and children so they can rule differently in family courts. Because I was shocked! When that judge told me I couldn't see my kids, I was like Wow. Finding out, during my school process—I had moved here, this was in California where I started school. Then I moved to Portland. Started to go to PCC [Portland Community College]. They wouldn't let me finish my paralegal degree. I was very, very close but they wouldn't take my credits. So I said "Okay, Portland State will, so I'll just get a Bachelor's degree! I'm not gonna start over!" [laughing] So I'm working on my criminal justice degree here and thus I want to help, I want to do something; I've always wanted to do something like Carole did, open up a home and help women that, you know, have that—work in... sexual...

16:12.6

HP: For your degree, we had talked about it before we started the interview, a lot of the women who had gone through Our Beginnings do social work, but you went criminal justice because of the, for lack of better terms, the ignorance from the bench?

PH: Yes.

HP: So, how far are you into your degree right now?

PH: Oh I have next term and I'm done.

HP: And when you graduate, how do you implement that degree into actually effecting change in the world, for the judges?

PH: A couple terms ago, one of my professors had told me to go talk to the judges, so I did! [laughing] I didn't actually talk to a judge; I talked to their secretary. And I asked them: "Does Oregon have something where the judges go to have somebody teaching them about domestic violence?" And they said, "Yeah, they do. They have to go to it every few months and get certified, recertified." And I said okay. My case happened in California and I don't know, I don't know about Oregon's, how their cases are in family court, how they rule. But I would like to help somehow in the legal field, like even if I had a home, you know, like Carole's. I've always wanted to do that because I've dealt with domestic violence homes in California and here! Because I've had problems, my son has issues, anger issues. I've had problems with him. I had one home here tell me because it's not an "intimate relationship," they couldn't help me. I said, "How much more intimate do you want? This is my son that has the same anger issues." They couldn't do anything. I had to leave California at one point and come here because he was becoming abusive and they didn't get that.

HP: Has he gotten help since?

PH: No, because... I tried to get him help in California and they wanted him to say he was a victim. I said, "He's not going to say he was a victim because he doesn't know he was a victim; it's his normal!" And the lady got mad at me! That was the only way you could go in the program; you have to admit you're a victim. We got into an argument over the phone and they never called back. It used to be a very good program in L.A... but—that's why I want to do my own program.

HP: Do you want to do it here or in California?

PH: I don't want to go back to California. Probably here.

HP: Just to piece together and just so I can kind of make a mental picture of it, basically you were assigned to Our New Beginnings in '84?

PH: [affirmative]

HP: When did you move to L.A.?

PH: I moved to L.A. in '88.

HP: So, tell me if I'm wrong: you had a rough childhood—

PH: Yes.

HP: You wound up on the streets, you, I'm assuming, get arrested, go before a judge—

PH: Yes, a few times.

HP: The judge tells you that you go in to face time or you go to Our New Beginnings. We're going to dive in deeper into the Our New Beginnings time, but what you said was that you did get some help but you still wound up back on the streets after Our New Beginnings.

PH: Yeah.

HP: Did you go back to Our New Beginnings? Like did you only have one time there or did you go there...

PH: I went back there for a short time but after the last time I just left for California and stayed there.

HP: That's when you left.

PH: Yeah.

HP: Then you were married. What year did you get married?

PH: In '90.

HP: And when did you get divorced?

PH: 2006.

HP: Oh, okay.

PH: Yeah.

HP: That's a long time.

PH: Yeah.

HP: And when did you move back here for the schooling?

PH: I moved back here 2011, no, '12. Yeah.

HP: Now you're a term away from graduating.

PH: Yes.

HP: That's exciting; congratulations!

PH: Yes, thank you.

HP: Going back to the Our New Beginnings things, we'll ask a bunch of questions about that, but one overall question I have is that part of it clearly worked for you and part of it clearly didn't work for you. Could you talk a bit about what worked and what didn't work? What I mean is in the sense that it got you off the streets because they mandated it, but then you wound up back on the streets so clearly there weren't enough resources or *something*?

21:42.1

PH: It wasn't that there wasn't enough resources. I was going to school, I was enrolled in school even. It was that I wasn't done. It was me. It wasn't—the program was great; they would help you with anything, *anything*, and they did. But I was not done. [laughing] And that's the bottom line. I was just not done. It's a hard lifestyle to leave, even though that sounds crazy, but you get addicted to the money and some women fall in love with the men, the pimps. They want it that way. It's hard even though it seems easy. It's like a form of addiction. The program, Our New Beginnings, was excellent. What I liked about it the most is that Carole used people who had been through things in life. Not necessarily they had a degree, but they had experience and they understood. [laughing] And that's what I liked.

Also, when I was out there there was one policeman, Harry Jackson. He was the best because he would sit there and talk to you, he would take you on rides and say "Look, this is where you're gonna end up dead," and take you down these alleys and take you on these little drives

and show you where they take prostitutes and kill them. He did that with me and then he came back and I remember we were in the parking lot of Denny's and he said, "If I call your mom, will she let you come home?" And I said, "You can try, but no, she won't." And he said, "Well I'm gonna try," so I said okay. [laughing] He did and no, she did not. That really, really hurt me because I was like, "Mom, this is a policeman, you know I'm not gonna lie to him. This man really, really cares." And he did. He was one man who cared. He told me also about Carole's program.

HP: Did he tell you before it became a court mandate?

PH: Yeah.

HP: So you knew about it while you were on the streets; there was a police officer discussing it.

PH: Yeah.

HP: Was he discussing it as kind of a good place to consider checking yourself in?

PH: Yes, true.

HP: What did you think when you heard him talk about that?

PH: I thought it was an option.

HP: This might be a strange question, but was Our New Beginnings a known place in the community—I mean, is that the wrong way of saying that like the community of people who are working on the streets? It's like, was it a known—

PH: Yeah. [laughing] Because it just had opened and everybody was there. I mean you knew everybody from being out on the street. So it's like either they came in and left, or came in and stayed, you know, or stayed for a while and then left. Or graduated. You know, yes, it was very well known. It was a very well-respected program.

HP: Did you ever see Carole? Did she ever do outreach at your—

PH: Oh yeah, all the time! She was there every day.

HP: I meant like outreach to the prostitutes on the streets, did she actually come out, did you ever see her before you went into Our New Beginnings?

PH: No, I did not.

HP: Did you ever hear of her doing—did you ever hear anything about that?

PH: No.

HP: Okay, just curious.

PH: I did not.

HP: So going back to Our New Beginnings, so you were outpatient. Do you have a memory of your first—of walking in there for the first time?

PH: Yes, it was [pause] awkward. [laughing] Because it was! I mean I did it because I had to. Yeah, but then I walked in there and I was like, “Oh, I know you!” I know Laurie, you know, and a lot of people! It’s funny. You were quickly at ease. It was very helpful. Then, you know, when you look back when you get older, you look back and you’re like, “She had the best.” There’s nothing—I’ve never seen anything like that, *anywhere*! And I don’t understand why it ever shut down because it never should have.

HP: Did news reach you—you would have been in L.A. by then—did news reach you that it had shut down?

PH: Yeah, yeah I still keep in contact with a lot of the—

HP: The people? Yeah.

PH: ...from there.

0:27.12

HP: Can you—you had said that when you entered—was Laurie a patient at Our New Beginnings or was she working at Our New Beginnings?

PH: She was working there.

HP: Was she specializing with the prostitution—like a recovery group, or?

PH: No...

HP: No?

PH: Not yet. She did do that later, but she was—I don't remember her title but I remember her sitting at this desk right by the door. **Mary Dean**, I think she was one of the specialists.

HP: **Mary Dean** was someone working there?

PH: Yeah.

HP: And then you had mentioned that Grey Wolfe was your counselor?

PH: Yes.

HP: Could talk a little bit about Grey and what she means or meant to you?

PH: Oh Grey was great. Grey would sit in on all our group counsels, our weekly meetings, and she would also do private counsel times with us. She was the best. She was excellent. She would help us get down to why we were in that place at that time, if you wanted to. I mean, you have to be the one to want to change. I wasn't ready for that. [laughing]

HP: But would you say or how would you say that some of the things you learned from Grey and Carole and Laurie and other people who were running Our New Beginnings—like maybe in that moment in time you were going to wind up back on the street because *you* weren't ready yet, but did you carry some of those tools that you learned throughout?

PH: Oh most definitely, most definitely. Because in my situation, I mean I just was in survival mode, because I didn't know what to do when I got into an argument with my roommate. I didn't know what to do. I don't like to ask people for help, for anything, so I just did what I knew best and went into survival mode. [laughing] I said, "Okay, well, I'll just go back and make some money," you know instead of—I had had a job and was going to school and everything and just left. At one point, Laurie—I had went to Eugene with Laurie when she was going to University of Oregon and tried to stay with her. [laughing] I just was... I don't know. I didn't have it out of my system yet.

HP: Yeah. So, for Our New Beginnings, you had said that you were given the alternative to go there, you were outpatient, but you had a roommate. Was it an entire apartment building that was dedicated?

PH: No.

HP: Or was it around town?

PH: Yeah, it was around town. I don't know how they worked it, but they got us an apartment after we stayed in the shelter for, you know, a couple nights and then our apartment came through and we had to share it, but yeah.

HP: From your experience, was that something they did for all the outpatients?

PH: Yeah, if they didn't have anywhere to live.

HP: Okay. Easy question: how long were you an outpatient at Our New Beginnings?

PH: [pause]

HP: Maybe not an easy question. [laughing]

PH: A year?

HP: A year, okay. And what did a typical—I know that there was probably evolution in the program to get you from a Point A to a Point B, but what did a typical week look like as an outpatient person at Our New Beginnings?

PH: Well, Carole had a plan [laughing] where you had to have a job or going to school; you had to be doing something productive and report that. If you weren't, then, you know, you were gonna have a problem because Carole didn't play. [laughing] I kept all that going but, you know, it didn't work.

HP: Did Our New Beginnings help you get the job and/or help you enroll in school?

PH: Yes, they helped with everything.

HP: So did you feel supported during that program as outpatient?

PH: Yeah! And my roommate was a program participant too, so we were supportive of each other. We both signed up for school, we both went and got a job, and we both were, you know, very supportive of each other.

HP: Did you notice—maybe you have no idea about this part, but did they look at people's backgrounds or former—were you randomly assigned or did they try to match people?

PH: They tried to match you, yeah.

HP: Did they do a good match?

PH: Oh, yeah!

HP: Are you still in communication with your roommate?

PH: No. [laughing]

HP: That's lovely.

PH: Yeah, yeah.

HP: So, you had to have a job and/or go to school. It sounds like you chose to do *both*?

PH: Yeah.

HP: Where did you work?

PH: I've worked, I think, at McDonald's.

HP: And where were you taking classes?

PH: Northwest Business College. It used to be downtown but it's closed, a long time ago.
[laughing]

HP: Do you know if Carole had connections with that college to get people in or did you just go of your own volition?

PH: I know she had a lot of connections because she had a lot of resources that were helpful. So I'm sure she did, yeah.

HP: What are your memories of her as a human? Specifically like if you were to explain her, use adjectives to describe her?

PH: Wow. Very sensitive and caring and loving. But at the same time, I mean she cared so much that you know, she'd give you the discipline. Like she'd say "If you *don't* do this, *this* will happen." [laughing] And that's the way life works, and that was good, but she was very loving. She'd be kind of soft sometimes. [laughing]

HP: Kind of hard others?

PH: Yeah.

HP: I guess the question I'm basically trying to ask about the outpatient versus inpatient was: going through the program, did it feel like there was any like designation, distinction? Like was it treated differently or did it just happen to be that the women that had children or had drug issues, had a closer eye on them and the other women got to go live in the apartments?

PH: Yeah.

HP: Or was it like "Well, I'm outpatient, I don't have as much access to tools or structure in the program?"

PH: No, we had access. We would go out in the house and hang out, you know, as long as we wanted to. We were welcome to do that. The girls at the house, the live-ins, we would go take their kids places! [laughing] It was like a family, you know, because you get that trauma bond through all of you going through something together, and we have that, and we all did things together and we all—I don't think we felt any like "Oh, you get more, you're around more." [laughing] I don't think that was ever felt.

HP: And Carole was involved in everybody's... ?

PH: Oh, yeah. She was very closely involved.

HP: So, when it gets towards—I know that women graduated from the program, did women also graduate from the outpatient program the same as the inpatient program? Do you remember something... ?

PH: Yeah, they did graduate out of the outpatient.

HP: Did you make it through graduation?

PH: No, I had left before that.

HP: Did Carole or anyone from Our New Beginnings ever do any outreach to you after you left?

PH: No. I mean, they tried, but I was gone and they knew where I was. [laughing] Because like I said, we all knew each other and there was somebody I contacted, but it was on the wrong side of the help. So, yeah, they knew where I was; they knew I had went back. I knew they were always there. I knew Our New Beginnings was always going to be there if I needed to go back. But, you know, I met my ex-husband, got pregnant and got stuck there. [laughing]

0:37:05.3

HP: Maybe this wasn't something you had access to while you going through your time there, but did you ever have any idea about funding and how Our New Beginnings sustained itself and that sort of—like how it... you had mentioned that Carole was clearly very connected.

PH: Yeah.

HP: But did you ever see any of it, how it ran, like was that visible to the women who were part of it?

PH: Yeah, it was very visible. She had grants and there was community agencies that would help her and stuff. So she had a lot of help. A lot.

HP: Did you ever see that police officer again?

PH: Oh, [pause] yes. He's retired now from Portland Police, but I always—I haven't seen him recently, but I would like to.

HP: Still around in Portland?

PH: Yeah. I don't know where he—he doesn't work as a Portland Police officer, but I would like to see him. Tell him thank you because he made a big impact on my life. He's somebody I'll never forget.

HP: For Our New Beginnings and—well, actually I have a physical, like physical space—if you close your eyes, can you see Our New Beginnings and the building in your head and could you describe a little bit of what you saw?

PH: Purple! [laughing] A Victorian house and inside it was all purple because that was Carole's favorite color. [laughing] It was a cute, little, homey home. It had all the rooms upstairs for the in-house patients and then we had our big Carole's office was in the downstairs in the bottom and Laurie's and Mary's were in the front. And then we had a big group room. I think it was in the basement, where we had our group room. It was nice and had a little place for the kids to play.

HP: Were there a lot of kids there?

PH: Yeah.

HP: Did you go to—I know I’ve heard from more than one person that some of the parties were rather infamous; Carole liked throwing parties. Did you go to any of those parties?

PH: Uh-huh!

HP: Good times?

PH: Oh yeah, it was very fun.

HP: For the apartment that they helped you get, what area was it in?

PH: Northwest. It was near where Carole’s place was. It was on 19th and Irving.

HP: Your apartment was?

PH: Mhm.

HP: Do you know where Our New Beginnings was?

PH: It was very close to there. [laughing]

HP: Yeah I know it was somewhere over there.

PH: In the Northwest! Yeah, very close to there. In the twenties...23rd? I don’t remember.

HP: I should have it memorized by now; I know it’s over there.

PH: Yeah.

HP: Have you been back? Have you driven by the building since you moved back?

PH: No.

HP: It’s still there, yeah. Not purple anymore.

PH: [smiling ruefully] I know.

HP: So what memories of Our New Beginnings, and/or Carole, are strongest for you in 2016?

PH: The fact that she cared and the fact that she used people that had experience and understood, and we knew that. We could look at them and say, “Oh, you’ve been through this, so you get it.” Not like “Oh, I just have a degree!” [laughing] Not that that’s a bad thing, but, you know, if you have no experience in understanding, you can have a total disconnect with helping somebody. And that’s what stood out the most. People would look at Carole and sometimes think she’s mean because she does have a gruff exterior. [laughing] But she wasn’t;

she was like a big ole teddy bear. She was really sweet. She really had a loving heart and they just didn't get to know her. And she had to prove herself too because Carole came out of prison with this idea.

HP: Was she open about her past to women?

PH: Yeah! Oh yeah. She wanted us to know.

HP: So you're doing Criminal Justice here [at Portland State]. I don't want to put words in your mouth but do you consider her a mentor in your...

PH: Definitely, definitely. Her and Laurie, yeah. Most definitely. I've always wanted to do what Carole did, especially the older I've gotten. I've seen different programs. I even went through advocacy for domestic violence for a program here in Portland. And I didn't like it. [laughing] Because, you know, I just was spoiled. Carole had a good program.

HP: So you have the privilege of having seen a program that existed, for easy math, in like the eighties.

PH: Yeah.

HP: And you're now trying to look to create something like that in, whatever, 2016 right?

PH: Yeah.

HP: Do you think that we could, with—so I know that I'm saying this from a place where I don't know a lot about how policy and criminal justice works behind the scenes, right?

PH: Mhm.

HP: That's not my world. Do you think a place like Our New Beginnings *could* exist today?

PH: Yes, I do. It needs to exist. [laughing] Because there's so—I mean, jail is not the answer. That's not going to help nobody. The criminal justice system does not treat people right. Especially in that world, in the sexual worker's world. They just treat them bad and jail is not the place for them to do anything. All's they're going to do is go in there, learn more, and go back. They need somewhere to learn different alternatives, like Carole taught us: you can go to school, you can get a job. Yeah, that's not making the money you had but, you know, it's building your life and it's making a change and you can help others make that change. That's what I want to do is present people, especially now, because it's so different. I mean back then it was on the streets; now it's on the internet. And it's just totally different. But along with that goes domestic violence; they go hand in hand. And sexual abuse. I think they just need knowledge and yeah, I think they do need a program like that.

HP: What do mean by it's no longer on the streets, it's on the internet? Can you just tell me a little more about that?

PH: I mean prostitution is on the internet, moreso—I mean back in the eighties, it was you walked the streets. Now it's on the internet, where you have, I don't know, I don't even know how it works. [laughing] But there's a page you, I don't know, you set up meetings.

HP: I have more of a place-based question in the sense of, you grew up in Portland, you lived here through '88-ish, then you were gone for a while and you come back. How does Portland feel, seem; what are your impressions of Portland then and now?

PH: Totally different. [laughing] They've totally remodeled the whole city and it was weird coming back, because I remember my Portland and I wanted that back, but it's new and different. They still have a lot of the same issues, but it's stuff they need to get into... the criminal justice—I never got into that field, because I knew I didn't want to because I'm against the system; I don't like the system. [laughing] But I want to be on the side of helping people.

HP: Yes, so I was going to ask you, I wanted to get into your schooling.

PH: Okay.

HP: So you were going to do the paralegal, they wouldn't take your credits from L.A., so you basically were like, "I gotta figure out how to not lose all that work I put in."

PH: Yeah.

HP: So, I understand you want to help and that you had been on the one side and you've seen, with your son and your ex, and you've gone through all those things where the law often was not helpful. How did you come to just choose Criminal Justice here at PSU [Portland State University]?

PH: Basically because there's no legal program. I really want to become a lawyer, but there's no paralegal, no kind of legal. There's a Pre-Law here, a minor, but other than... Criminal Justice is it, as far as legal, as a major. So that's how. It was between that and Social Work, but I chose this because it's closer to legal and, you know, my focus back then was on legal, going to law school, but I don't think I'm going to do that. [laughing]

0:48.37

HP: Since you're only a single term away from your degree, how would you characterize what you've encountered in the Criminal Justice program?

PH: [pause] Wow. [pause] [laughing]

HP: I am really trying to ask you, was it disillusioning? Did it get you fired up to continue the work in a different way?

PH: Well, okay. I lived in L.A., like I said, so that was a good example of the criminal justice system. [laughing] Because, as you know, they're not the best. But that taught me a lot, just living in L.A. and watching the L.A.P.D. [Los Angeles Police Department] and the sheriffs. Now,

and it taught me the different perspectives of the criminal justice teachers here. And some don't have... I thought coming into it they would have a like a pro-police perspective. They don't all have that, and that was fascinating to me because I came in at like, you know, like I've seen some stuff, just by living in L.A. and you guys probably haven't seen that as bad here. But I still want to learn, you know and see what they say. But it was a good program.

HP: Yeah. You had said just a moment ago, you had said that, at one point, being a lawyer was a goal, but then you kind of like laughed and said, "Not anymore." Why? What happened?

PH: Oh, it's just the money and the time to go to law school. I love the law, it's fascinating to me. But yeah, just the money and the time to go to law school. I don't want to... I'm torn right now, because I am getting ready to graduate, I'm torn on "Do I want to get my master's or do I just want to work?" You know, I'm kind of going through that. But I don't think—if I were to pursue *anything*, it'd probably be legal, but that's the most expensive. [laughing] And a lot of hard, hard work. And I have a disability, so that kind of—it's been hard on me the last couple terms. So, I think I'm gonna... I don't know, because I really... every time I take a legal class I'm like, "Oh I love this class!" But I don't know.

HP: If you had your magic wand and you could open up your 2016 version of Our New Beginnings, what would be your priorities as far as programs?

PH: I would make it for sex workers and I would implement domestic violence and I would have people that have been through that. [laughing] I already know people who would work for me. And I would definitely have a counselor, probably a trauma therapist. That would probably be the most professional person I would have, that has been to school, yeah. And a drug therapist, you know. I just want to show them that they have other options and it's dangerous. It's scary. I mean the world is crazy enough. [laughing] I couldn't imagine, now, doing *anything* like that. Back then it was a lot different... and I was fearless, but not now. Now it's a lot different too because it's an immigration thing: they take the kids and you know, use them for sex trades. They need help, you know, so I would open up a portion of my house for people that come over the border, if they're still allowed to. [laughing] You know, help them because that's just terrible to me, how all these kids—I mean, *little* kids that don't know what they're doing; they're so innocent. It just breaks my heart.

54:22

HP: With the knowledge that you have, do you ever feel surprised that people who are living—as we discussed, Portland has changed a lot since, you know, the eighties to now. Do you ever find you have a feeling of surprise that people don't realize what's going on under their noses, in a sense?

PH: Definitely, yeah.

HP: How would you propose for more outreach for people to *get* what's going on in the... [pause] I don't want to say sex slaves, but like the immigration, however you just said that, but...

PH: Well, I would go, I don't know, to the borders to do that. Like go all across the borders. I don't know; that's kind of different. I've taken a few classes on it and read some interesting books to kind of keep myself updated on that because it's changed so much. I would go work with other programs. There's an excellent program in New York, I can't remember the name of it, but this lady, I know she wrote a book, it's called *Girls Like Us* [Rachel Lloyd, 2011, Harper Books]. And she's done a lot of work through Congress to change laws for it, so I would want to work with her and do the same as she's done but here and just make it so they can get help. I don't know, I'd have to do some further research, but it's just terrible what's going on. And people don't have *any* clue, not a clue at all. And it's so sad.

HP: With your love of law, the degree that you have, and the past that you have, have you ever considered doing legislative work in Oregon to change laws?

PH: Yeah! Oh I would love to. [laughing] When I first got here, I have an old thing on my record from 1987 and in... oh gosh, I don't even remember what year, my ex-husband sent me to jail in, I don't remember what year, but it was 2000-something. That was for spousal abuse, okay, it's been expunged in California. But it won't fully be expunged until 2017. So therefore, Oregon will not expunge my thing from 1987. From 1987! And that was a felony. So I was like, I went to the D.A.'s [district attorney] office because I did file for expunge. I asked him first, I said: "Please just tell me, is there anything that will stop this?" And they said no. I told them, you know, about my prior thing and they said no. Paid for it, everything. They didn't expunge it because of that. [laughing] I went up there and said: "You don't want anybody to do anything! You don't want anybody—I'm trying to go to school, further my life, and you guys wanna keep people held down. Why can't you just take that off my record? The thing in California is expunged! And you're still holding onto this. This is going to hold me up from going into the field I want." And they said "What do you wanna do, change the law?" and I said yes I do! [laughing] So yeah, however *that* works, because I think it's ridiculous. And I think it's ridiculous I got fired from a job because of that.

HP: Because somehow they found the record from thirty years ago?

PH: [agreement] I didn't know they could go back as far as they can, want to, here. I didn't even know that was on my record! That's how I found out about it. The job I had, which is right over here at Green Line Market, a company bought them out so we had to go through reapplication and re-background checks. I didn't put that on my background thing because I thought that had been expunged because I had written a letter years ago to my judge and asked her to expunge it. And they said, "No, you lied on your application and you didn't put the charge." I said I didn't know there was a charge! So I went down to the courthouse looking for the letter in my file. Wasn't there. They said—and the judge had retired—they said the only

place it could have been, in her personal files, and there's no way I can get to it. And that's when I started school, started to finish it. Because I was like "That makes no sense," that you can hold onto something from 1987 when everything, well, only there was only that one thing, is expunged. And that should have never went on my record anyway. [laughing] That was backwards, but—you know, I could have sued L.A.P.D. for that.

HP: So just so there's like a silver lining for me: so it will go away in 2017 though?

PH: Yes.

HP: In Oregon too?

PH: Yeah, I'm going to call my lawyer in L.A. in January and say "What month will this be officially off my record?" And then when they tell me I'm going down to expunge it.

HP: This might be a novice question, how much of a financial burden is it to try to do something like that? Or are there enough...

PH: Oh that's a big financial burden, because it costs like two hundred dollars to expunge it. And more, because there's two different fees: one fee you can get waived if your income is low enough, the other fee you have to pay. But the fee I had to pay was two hundred and something. The other fee I got waived, but I don't have that just to throw away! That's why I asked them first: "Is there anything that will stop me from getting this expunged?" And I was mad!

HP: A couple more questions. What do you think is important for the Portland community to know or understand about Our New Beginnings or Carole Pope?

PH: Well, Our New Beginnings would have never been here without Carole Pope, and it's helped so many people. I mean, you know we still keep in contact today. She just had a great impact on people and she taught us to help others. She was just like a mom and really cared for us. And everyone on her staff cared for us. That's how she put that program together and it was something I'll never forget. I've looked at different programs throughout my life; there's nothing like it. Nothing.

HP: You already said that something like that could exist again, so you don't need to have Carole to make Our New Beginnings exist. What is it that so many programs are getting wrong? What's the nugget they're getting wrong that Our New Beginnings got so right, in your opinion?

PH: I think they're using a degree. A degree is good, but you need people that know what it's like, who have been there. And that's what people connect to. [laughing] If you don't understand what I'm telling you and you know, what I'm going through, I'm gonna have a hard time talking to you. If you just say, "Oh this is out of a book, from my understanding," I can't talk to you because if you don't know, if you haven't been there, that's hard to relate; you can't have empathy. If you've been there you have empathy. If you just read a book, people are more cold and distant and they judge you more.

HP: That's the thing you've noted, you've noted that for a lot of the other programs are going for degrees and you know, initials, acronyms after names, as opposed to Carole, who took someone like Laurie, who went from being a patient to being a provider.

PH: Right.

HP: In some of your darker days in L.A., when you were married to the abusive man, did you ever think of Carole?

PH: Oh yeah. Always.

HP: Did you ever consider reaching out?

PH: Yeah, I did reach out to Laurie, actually. When my daughter was a year old I came home and stayed with Laurie because I was going to leave, but then I came back. I stayed with her for about a month. [laughing] She helped me a lot. We were in the process of doing stuff but then I made the mistake and called him. [laughing] And that was it. I had signed up for welfare, I mean everything, but I made the mistake and called him. And then I went back and never came back. But Carole always made sure we knew: "You guys need anything, anytime in your life, call." We always had access.

HP: Did you hear when she died?

PH: Yeah. I was here. I was here when she died. Yeah, that was sad.

HP: Just quickly for a time thing, when you came back for Laurie was Our New Beginnings already gone? When you came back to the...

PH: No.

HP: It was still going?

PH: It was in... because when did it end?

HP: '91?

PH: Yeah it was still going.

HP: Still going?

PH: Yeah.

HP: Because you said you have friends and have connections still from that time, when Our New Beginnings closed, you said you had heard about it, did you hear any ramifications of what it felt for people in your extended community?

PH: No, because at that time I was in California kind of involved in my own world and I didn't really keep into contact with these people until I came back. I mean I did, but not really, until much later. I would come back, like when I came back. I came to Laurie's house in '90 and then

when I left her house, I didn't get into contact until we got Facebook. [laughing] Pretty much! Then I started looking up everybody and yeah.

HP: No, that's true, because social media totally changes that kind of landscape of communication and staying in touch.

PH: It sure does. Yeah, and now I see them all the time. A lot of them. Some have died...

HP: Did your relationship with your mother ever improve?

PH: No. When I had my kids I did call her and say I'm sorry for everything I've ever done. And, you know, I came and visited her a couple times, but my mother never really wanted me, and she made that quite clear. She had passed away in '99 and even then I felt kind of guilty, you know, for being bad. So she found out she had cancer and she told me over the phone when I was in California, and I said "Well I'm going to come and take care of you." She said no. And that just crushed me. I was like "I want to take care of you!" But she didn't want me to, so I was like "Well, you still haven't changed." So, I mean I tried, but if your parents don't want you, they don't want you.

1:09:22

HP: Do you have a good relationship with any of your siblings?

PH: No. My brothers, they're much older, my oldest brother is eighteen, so he was pretty much gone when I was two and my next brother is ten years older. He protected me when I was little; he's the only one. And my sister, we have a strange, weird... where she hates me relationship. I always want—I don't know where I come from because I want a close family. I guess I'm just different than them because they all go their separate ways and forget that we grew up together. [laughing]

HP: Family is difficult.

PH: They won't accept my kids, or my sister won't. Everyone else will. She won't, at all. She used to be a cop. [laughing] I mean, I'm just saying, I've seen some bits of racism with her.

HP: Oh, oh, it's a racist thing? That she won't accept your kids.

PH: Yeah, yeah!

HP: Because they're biracial.

PH: I believe it is, because of different comments she's made. That wasn't a problem with the rest of my family though. [laughing]

HP: Here's a free question: do you have any final questions or anything you want to say about Carole, Grey Wolfe, Laurie, Our New Beginnings, your own story?

PH: No. Well, yeah. I'm thankful for Carole, thankful for all of them. Because you know, really, she put in me the passion to want to do the same thing. You know, I'm thankful for her help, for having that idea and realizing no, jail doesn't help nobody; it's just an endless cycle and it's silly. You know when there's treatment available, get that. That's what works. You have to go and figure out where it started, not going to jail. It's an endless cycle. But yeah, she kind of helped with my purpose in life, to figure it out. Because I always used to say "I wanna be like Carole and do what Carole does!" So yeah, I'm thankful. Throughout my life I've compared everything to her program and I've always said if I could do that, I would do it different and not—you know, I'd do it like Carole. I've always programmed it after her. Because I've seen their way doesn't work.

HP: That *was* supposed to be the last question, but since you're friends with Laurie, and I know Laurie does a lot of work, will you two work together at some point to do something?

PH: We might, I don't know. I haven't talked to her about that yet because she's very busy. [laughing]

HP: She's rather amazing.

PH: Yeah, yeah. But I mean I'm quite sure we will do something. If I were to do something like Carole we would definitely work together because I would use her program. She has a drug rehab program. So yeah we would definitely do that!

HP: Well from my side of the table, it's like a level of poetic justice.

PH: [laughing] I know. Yeah, that would be funny.

HP: Well, if you have nothing else, I thank you so much for taking the time to tell your story.

PH: Yeah, it's actually the first time I ever have.

HP: Wow.

PH: Besides a paper I wrote, but yeah.

HP: Thank you.

PH: Thank you.

[Concludes at 1:14:10]