

AN INTERVIEW WITH NADINE CRACRAFT

BARBARA TABACH

NOVEMBER 27, 2017

REMEMBERING 1 OCTOBER

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV LIBRARIES
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

PREFACE

Marriage and Family therapist Nadine Cracraft volunteered the day after the October 1 shooting.

She talks about being referred by the police department to contact the Circus Circus ballroom and then being assigned to Aria, where employees might come for counseling services. She describes how the "readiness factor" may have limited the number of people seeking assistance.

At the end of the week, Nadine also volunteered at a counseling booth set up at First Friday's monthly event downtown.

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV



Remembering 1 October

Use Agreement

Name of Narrator: NADINE CRAERAFT

Name of Interviewer: BARBARA TABACH

We, the above named, give to the Oral History Research Center of UNLV, the recorded interview(s) initiated on 11-27-2017 as an unrestricted gift, to be used for such scholarly and educational purposes as shall be determined, and transfer to the University of Nevada Las Vegas, legal title and all literary property rights including copyright. This gift does not preclude the right of the interviewer, as a representative of UNLV, to use the recordings and related materials for scholarly pursuits. There will be no compensation for any interviews.

I understand that my interview will be made available to researchers and may be quoted from, published, distributed, placed on the Internet or broadcast in any medium that the Oral History Research Center and UNLV Libraries deem appropriate including future forms of electronic and digital media.

Nadine Craecraft 11-27-2017
Signature of Narrator Date

Barbara Tabach 11-27-2017
Signature of Interviewer Date

Library Special Collections
4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 457010, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-7070
(702) 895-2222

This is Barbara Tabach. Today is November 27th, 2017. I'm sitting in the office of Nadine Cracraft.

Nadine, just state your name and spell that for us, would you please?

Nadine Cracraft; N-A-D-I-N-E, C-R-A-C-R-A-F, as in Frank, T, as in Tom.

What kind of work are you in? Talk about your profession just in general.

The kind of profession that I'm in is as a marriage and family therapist; that's my license. But you're in my office, Barbara, and you can see I see children as well. And I don't do just marriage and family; I see a lot of individuals; I see kids; I see adolescents; I see geriatrics. I will tell you, because I think it's relevant, prior to this I worked twenty-two years for the State of Nevada in early intervention, which is serving special needs infants through three. That is relevant because my hunch is, if I were still working there and had not retired, some of my families would have been talking about this crisis on the Strip and these shootings and I would have done my best to intervene as my role as a development—well, I was called a Psychological Developmental Counselor, was my title. Who knows what that means?

Explain that a little bit further. How would you have you been talking to that group?

In early intervention we go to the home sometimes twice a month, sometimes once a month, sometimes every week, not often, and we are responsible to make sure that services, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech, genetics, orthopedics, the parents are made aware of their rights to those things and help them get those set up at times and sometimes talk to physicians and doctors and support them with their special needs child. The child could be like any other situation, mild to severe, severe to the point of death. My hunch is that—I probably had a caseload of about fourteen families—in fourteen families there was going to be somebody that wanted to talk to me about that. Now, I might be working with their child at that time, sitting

on the floor with them, moving their little arms and legs and whatever, but my hunch is that would come up.

The shooting of October One was—the ripple effect—

Indeed.

—of people is immense. So as we talk about your profession, just give me a little bit maybe about your background. How did you come to this profession? How did you make that choice? How did you get to Las Vegas? Can you tell me a bit of that story?

It started in Mississippi when I was about twenty-seven. I had sworn I would never go back for a master's degree and that I would never teach school and I decided that I was ready to go back to school. So I went to University of Southern Mississippi where my husband was teaching. He had just received his Ph.D. in adaptive physical education at the University of Utah and was offered a job in Mississippi, so off we went. I decided I'd go into the counseling department; it was called Community Counseling at that time. I was very borderline in my grades, and so they put me on provisional status. I was not the best student. They said I needed to get B's in my first two classes in order to keep in the program. My husband who was teaching there said, "I would recommend that you get A's." So I did. I was a lot older. I was more mature. So I continued in the program, finished, got my master's degree.

I taught special ed for a year and told my supervisor who was a tremendous mentor for me—her impact on me, as long as I am clear, she will be in my head and my heart—I told her that I really liked working for her, but I really did not like teaching school. I didn't know it at the time, but she really liked me and so she said, "Give me a few days and I'll get back to you." I was teaching in Columbia, Mississippi. We lived in Hattiesburg. Columbia was about thirty-five miles away. She came back and she said, "If you will go back to school this summer and get the

class on how to do the Wechsler Scale, which is an intelligence testing scale, you'll become a Title 20 social worker. I'll just put you in my budget. And you basically will be my gofer. You will do what I tell you to do when I tell you to do it, but you won't be teaching." And I thought, *sounds terrific*.

So I did that with her; I did psychological testing for special ed students and a lot of social working there, a lot of making sure that teachers were getting their forms done correctly. I did some other testing; I did some developmental testing and what have you.

About four years after that she was given an opportunity to go to Hattiesburg Public Schools and be the special ed director there. She said, "I want you to come with me." And so I left and I became a Title 20 social worker there although my actual title—I was a social worker, but my title was Homebound Teacher. So I would go into people's homes. I had two girls with scoliosis. I had a little boy that couldn't go to school because he just could not be around any risk of disease. I would go in and I would teach them and that kind of teaching was fun. I did not do testing for her, but I did a lot of working with teachers and students that needed assistance.

Then about four years after that I was given an opportunity to be a special ed director at a small county school district and I didn't want to go because I didn't want to leave my mentor. I remember sitting across from her, tears coming down my cheeks. "I can't leave you; I just can't leave you." She threw the Kleenex box at me. I'm not kidding, she threw it at me and she said, "I have groomed you for this job. You get yourself together and you take that job." End of deal. So I did that.

I still had this degree in community counseling. So really I ran this small district special ed program and you just did everything. You dealt with crazy parents. You dealt with wonderful parents. You dealt with children. You dealt with principals. You made sure all children were

evaluated appropriately. A tremendous amount of paperwork. You made sure the state had everything; you did the budget.

Then my husband—do you want more of my history as we're not in Las Vegas yet?

Go ahead. Let's see how you get to Vegas.

Then while my husband received his PT degree, I stayed and worked. Our two kids were in college, so I had the only money coming in. He already had a Ph.D., a master's and a bachelor's, and he went back for his second bachelor's in physical therapy and he went to Florida A&M. So we kind of commuted and saw each other quite frequently, more than we anticipated, but being away was hard. He came back and worked two years at University of Mississippi and had an opportunity to go to Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans. He wanted to do that because he wanted to have that opportunity to see what the physical therapists did at a major hospital. So we moved to New Orleans and we rented a house in what's called River Ridge. I wanted to work, so I found a job at the Jewish Community Center there, working for a wonderful gal, and we did sex abuse prevention programs; I wrote the book on it—I'm very proud of that book; I still have it; I haven't given it up—on the script. We went into schools as pairs and taught the children about how to protect themselves from sexual abuse.

That's great.

It was very, very fun work.

About what year was that?

I'm terrible at years. I should have brought my husband. We moved in probably 1972 because we were in Coalville, Utah, and I did a little teaching in Coalville, Utah.

I'm just curious about what year you wrote that book.

I can get that for you. Let me make a list of different information that we need. We left New

Orleans. Joe really thought he'd be going back to the University of Southern Mississippi and I knew he wasn't. I didn't know what was going to happen, but I told him. He said, "Oh, yes, I'm going back." He had done his two years and he received an offer to work in Des Moines, Iowa, at the University of Osteopathic Medicine as an instructor in physical therapy, so we moved there.

You lived in Des Moines...?

Four years. He had a wonderful experience there. I did a lot of things, but job-wise I worked for what was called The Youth Law Center and The Youth Law Center was a legal firm that legally defended kids who had been sexually abused and delinquent. So we had lawyers in our office and we had two social workers and our job was basically case management although we did have to go to court; I maybe testified once in four years. But it was a fun experience. I really enjoyed that experience and made some good social friends and really enjoyed the kids and some of them were tough. I mean, some of these youngsters had been brutally assaulted.

Through most of your career would you say that you've dealt with a lot of difficult cases?

I have and I just recognized that recently. We were there four years and we came out to visit our son who was living in Las Vegas. He was working at Angel Park, I think. He's in the golf industry. There was a job opening here at the community college to direct the physical therapy assistant program. Joe said, "If I go and do that interview, we can write this off." He said, "Don't worry, we're never going to move to Las Vegas because they're going to ask me how much I need and they're not going to pay me my fee." So he gave them a price and came back, "Don't worry."

So we went on home. We saw her son and his fiancé-to-be and saw the town. I'd say maybe five days later he said, "Nadine, you're not going to believe this. They'll pay me what I want." I said, "Oh my gosh, we've got to go." This was in our best interest financially and it was

a step up for him although some people didn't perceive it that way because it was physical therapy assistant rather than physical therapy. So he ran that program for twenty years or so, twenty-two years.

I, in the meantime, was looking for a job and the first job I got was the one at early intervention. I put in my resume and the state hired me. It was a part-time job. One of the women had had a baby and she wanted to split her job. I had one of the very few part-time jobs from the state and I also had benefits, which probably shouldn't go on this tape. I worked twenty-five hours a week. Like I said, I was there quite a while when I retired.

But during that time I had sent my resume in—now, remember I wasn't going to be a therapist—to Family Child Treatment, which was a therapy group, and still is, that deals with abused children and their families. Deborah Young who was the coordinator, the director there, called me and said, "You really have an interesting resume. You've been a lot of places and done a lot of things." I said, "That's true." She said, "We would like to talk to you." I said, "Okay." So I interviewed with her and the clinical director, Dan Dixler, and we talked. He was a very light-hearted man, joked a lot and that kind of thing. After about a half-hour he said, "You want to be a therapist?" Barbara, I'll never know why I did this. I went, "Sure." He said, "Well, you have to take some classes." There were four classes I had to take, which were legit except for one, which was Child Development, and I challenged that and I won my challenge, so I took three classes. Because I was not introduced to family therapy, which had evolved during this time since I was twenty-seven—Cloé Madanes and these professional psychiatrists and psychologists came on the scene—I really needed that one, but, quite frankly, I didn't learn a whole lot. I really had to learn on the job, but I had good teachers. I was an intern and then I worked for family and child therapy and I was there about seven years. A friend of mine who

was a licensed social worker, [NAME], decided we would go in private practice and I haven't looked back.

Wonderful. When did Vegas feel like home? Or does it? Maybe I'm making an assumption.

Does it feel like home?

Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I don't know. The first day we went to the temple, to Ner Tamid, they were doing the Hanukkah bazaar. We walked in and Phyllis Lewis and Mary Fox were in a booth and Joe and I just walked up and said, "Can we help?" They both looked at Joe and they said, "You help, too?" And he said, "Well, sure." We had done a lot of volunteer work at our temples before. Well, they put us right to work. During that time Phyllis said, "We are beginning havurahs; are you interested?" I said, "Sure, I'm interested." Think of two lovely people. Think of two welcoming people, Phyllis and Mary, may she rest in peace. I don't know if you knew her.

No.

Oh, she was a corker. I don't think there was a lot of disillusionment. The summers were pretty hot to get used to, but now I'm colder natured than I was. I don't think there was a long adjustment period because I had moved around some, so it wasn't like it was anything new.

You indicate that your childhood, you grew up in California.

In Sacramento. I was born in Modesto and I moved to Sacramento when I was two. My freshman year I was at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo and my father died that year, so I came back to Sacramento to be with my mom after I finished out that year—I was eighteen—and went to Sac State and finished.

Since '91 when you arrived in Nevada, you've seen a lot of changes. We'll probably add a little bit of that in a bit here. Just to give us context of time, here you are all these years later and the shooting happens. Do you remember where you were October first and how

you learned the news of the shooting at Mandalay and Route 91?

It was Sunday and I want to say either we heard it on the news Sunday morning or I saw it in the Review-Journal on Sunday, but I believe I was at my home. I feel like Las Vegas is a pretty violent place. I kind of feel the planet is a violent place. But Las Vegas, with its temptations and its potential and high percentage of addictions and what have you, I think of it as at more risk. That may not be true, but that's my perception. I was just like, *wow*. But I been telling my husband, "We are an accident waiting to happen." I was not surprised. I was not at all surprised. Saddened, just so saddened, but not surprised.

After that how did you get involved in volunteering?

I kept saying, "You've got skills; you're not a kid; you've got some good skills." I kept thinking about Sunday. On Monday I think we went to breakfast and he went to play golf and I went someplace. I drove to the police station and I just said, "I've got to do something." This isn't resting. I could have said that and then it kind of dropped, but it kept on my mind and on my heart. I said, "I'm a therapist and I don't want to be a bother, but if I can help, I will." It was blocked off, so you couldn't go into the station; they had a policeman there. They all were men or I would have said policewoman.

Which police station did you go to?

Was it on Rancho or Martin Luther King? I saw a pastor coming out and I roll down the window and I said, "Have you been helping?" He had pastor. He said, "Yes, I've been here all night. I'm going to go home and get some rest. I'm exhausted." I said, "Well, I'm going to see what I can do to volunteer." He said, "Well, you're needed." I told him I was a therapist. So the policeman came back and he said, "Go to Circus Circus and go to Ballroom B."

So I went to Circus Circus and I went to Ballroom B. There were not a lot of therapists

there; I was in the first four. I was sent to the Aria and we were available to see people at the Aria. One young man came in and shook my hand and he said, "I really don't need your help. I just want to shake your hand and say thank you to you for being available because I know you're not getting paid and I think you're really honoring people by doing this." He was very articulate and we talked maybe five minutes at the most.

Then that day I saw what I would call the first—I don't like the word victim—but the first survivor. This was a young man; he was in his early twenties. He had emigrated from Mexico on his own at the age of fifteen. Much of his family was still back in Mexico and he had made a life for himself and he was working at the Aria. He was not at the concert, but he and his friends went to Carrot Top. He had been feeling a little blue and they went to Carrot Top. They wanted to go to a comedy show. When they came out they saw what had happened—actually, they saw it as it was happening and they could hear the pop, pop, pop. He said knowing now where he was and where the shooter was, if he had turned probably forty-five degrees, he would have seen the man. His issue was he could hear the pop, pop, pop and it wouldn't go away. So we talked about PTSD and what that meant. He asked me if it would ever go away, and I said I would never make a promise I couldn't keep, but I was optimistic because he was very clear and he was level-headed. He saw the total picture that I was optimistic. I gave him my card and I said, "If you need help and you can't find it—" Because the casinos were providing help for their employees; I'm talking about impressive help.

So you're providing help for—

Aria.

—for Aria employees.

Yes. They kind of assigned us. They said, "Do you want to do the employees or do you want to

do families that are staying at the Aria?" And I said, "It doesn't matter." The other woman said, "I want the families." It didn't matter to me.

I told him to call me and I told him that I would make sure that he got help. Now, what I didn't do and I regret, Barbara, I didn't tell him I would get him free help, because I would have. I don't know how I would have worked that out, but if I had to do it myself, I would have done it myself. That was Monday.

Tuesday somebody called me and said, "Go to Mandalay Bay." And so I went to Mandalay Bay and I don't believe I saw anybody that day and I don't think I saw anybody on Wednesday or Thursday. There was a big sign. Not many of us saw many people. As people would walk by the door, I'd stand by the door and I'd smile at people. I didn't want to be really aggressive because my hunch was they weren't ready. I think there's a readiness factor and I think in the next year or two more people will pop up because things will start to really integrate into their emotional system and their neurological system, and that's opinion, not a fact, and there's a difference.

Yes. I know there's research being done on that.

Oh, much research. Friday night was First Friday and I received a call from a woman that I met when I was interning and she taught at the university and she said, "A girl named Alex is getting together a center at First Friday." The art thing down wherever it is.

Off Charleston.

Yes, yes. The Art Factory. "And she's going to have free services; if you can make it, be there at..." It said be there at five and parking and not knowing where I'm going, I was there a quarter to four-ish and I met the woman. This young woman who was a therapist had got a room, had somebody provide dividers so we could speak to people. Zappos had enough food for, oh my

gosh, two hundred people, all kinds of snacks and water and fresh fruit and cookies. She had flowers and candles. I don't know how she did all this. It was just amazing. She may do another one December first—I'm going to call her—and if she does, I will go to that one.

She'd be a good person to participate in this.

She would be.

Alex is her name?

I have her name. I may not have her whole name, but I have her...It was October first.

So Friday would have been the sixth. Maybe you can give me her contact information afterwards. Put in on your list.

So I went and I helped set up. The press came by and I happened to be there and I said, "This really isn't fair. I could talk to you about this, but you need to talk to Alex because she's the one that really put this together." And I think there's something to be said about credit. She walked in about five minutes later and I just kind of disappeared.

I saw one woman there and that was probably my most profound experience. She was a nurse in the ER at Sunrise. Her partner had brought her in and made her go to talk to someone. I think her partner also was a nurse, but I'm not sure. I saw the partner from afar, but I did not meet her. This woman was I would say in her mid-twenties and she was beyond grief, mourning beyond mourning. She was in a position where she was making life and death decisions as a nurse and she knew that if there had been enough staff that people who died would have lived, and so she was the one saying, "Okay, we'll see this one; somebody help this one; I'm helping this one."

What kind of training does anyone have for that?

And I just listened and I validated her, which is sort of my style. I said, "I couldn't imagine." I

said I would not tell her I understood her situation because no one could understand that situation. Even if I had been in the same situation, I'm a different person than she is, so to understand hers, that's very "perceptuous" and that's a philosophy.

Right. As a therapist you're volunteering your time and you're listening. Is it different than when somebody contracts with you? Do you know what I'm saying?

Yes, yes, because usually they have not had this kind of immediate experience with such tragedy and chaos when they come to me. Those kinds of situations, the immediacy has already been dealt with in another context. So if someone calls me and they say, "My brother-in-law was shot and killed," it's usually two weeks down the road whereas this young woman, it was a couple of days. I could sit with her as long as I wanted to, but I also tried to take a cue from her when she had had enough, because this is heart-wrenching. So I basically listened to everything that she had to say and she talked about the blood and she talked about the gore and she talked about people's body parts all over and doing the best she could and all the while just sobbing, just sobbing.

Now, it just so happens there's a follow-up to this. I had parked my car in what I thought was a good spot. Well, it wasn't because it got blocked in. I left at eleven. I was there from four to eleven and they were closing down and I couldn't get out. So I'm waiting for somebody to come move their car and I see her and her partner. I just kind of moved myself back. They were holding hands. They were smiling. They were laughing. I thought, *that's a good thing to see*.

Now, you may be thinking—and I want to clarify this—that I took a great deal of pride in this. No, no. Whether I did a good job or not, this is not the issue because I don't know if I did. But to see that she had been able to grasp some positives in the First Friday experience—they had a drink in their hand; they were laughing—it talks about recovery and that there is the

possibility of recovery. Now, she may have gone home and the next day been in disaster. I gave her my card.

But at least you saw some resiliency or that she was able to find some joy that day.

Yes. That's a good word. I like that word *resiliency*. My hunch is that the hospitals are covering those people, basically.

That was Monday and I went back on Tuesday to the Aria. They sent me to the Aria and I saw one young woman who worked at the Aria and who was just frightened. She was just frightened that she could be harmed; again, that posttraumatic stress that comes with an event like that that there could be other shooters out there.

Was she down on the Strip that night?

She was working that night in the Aria. From what I gathered she may have seen some families at that time. She wasn't clear about that. She was more interested in talking about what was going on with her. Again, my philosophy is if that's what somebody wants to talk about, that's where I go. I'm not a big question asker. I'm more a validator. Sometimes when you validate somebody, they hear you in a certain way and they realize what they've said and they come back and they start talking about it and clarifying it for themselves and for you, verifying it. Again, I gave her my card.

The people that will struggle getting help may be people that nobody knows about, first responders that didn't report in, policemen that didn't report in, people that drove people to the hospital who still may struggle with it and may not know what to do with it. Those were the people that I saw.

Now, in my private practice a few people wanted to talk about it, but it was not a big topic.

Did that surprise you?

Yes and no. There were a few people who did bring it up that I wasn't surprised. I had a nurse—she's not a practicing nurse, per se—and we talked about it a lot because she has been in the ER, but she's a senior citizen now. So we did talk about it a lot. But most of the people I'm seeing right now are very into their own issues and the time with me is limited and they're paying, and so they're going to focus on themselves and I didn't ask. People who know me—unless they're new—there's some things I need to know about you. Tell me what you want me to know, and then I kind of fill in the gaps. Like I need to know who's married to whom and how many and that kind of thing. So in a way, yes, and in a way it just shows they were focused on themselves, which is healthy and, yet, not healthy.

There's a micro and a macro way of looking at that for sure. I can see that that's a quandary or a conundrum that get into and I'm sure that will come up in this project as we do more interviews.

Oh, absolutely.

I think I shared with you before I started recording that one of the people that I have spoken to about—give me the letters. E-M...?

EMDR.

Yes. Can you tell me—

Oh, shoot. Eye, bland, desensitization...

I've looked up what that means. I can look it up again.

It is a technique. Do you know what it is?

She explained about the tracking.

Tracking, yes. It is designed to affect neurological effects of PTSD and trauma and depression

and it is used for anxiety, too. It's used for mental health issues. But very frequent use at the VA for posttraumatic stress. During that process the facilitator is talking to the person and trying to bring out some emotions. But it's a very simple process. There's no hands on. You can also do snaps. You can do claps. I was trained a long time ago. I don't use it anymore. So I would be sitting in front of you and I would say, "Follow my finger with your eyes; keep your head toward me."

Then you move your eyes following the finger.

Then there was a neurological issue. Like I said, it used to be when I did it, it was considered kind of way out. My friends said, "You're going to use that?" I tried it a few times.

It will be interesting because with the understanding of posttraumatic stress as we improve in understanding that to see what works.

I've had two major cases of posttraumatic stress; one was an Israeli soldier. That was when I was an intern and my office was half this size and there was a siren and he hit the floor and he was ready to shoot. So that was really a good lesson. Great guy, great guy. He needed more help. I really wasn't experienced enough, so we sent him to a really experienced person. The other was a stewardess, an attendant who was in an almost fatal air crash. I was able to work with her, but I did not use EMDR.

So trauma like that in a community—here we are not enough quite two months out—what's your professional assessment as a member of the community when you look at that?

The Vegas Strong signs are out there, the bracelets, those little reminders. Are those good?

Will people keep talking? You mentioned already you think that emotionally people will probably want to talk more later as time goes on.

There was a big article in the paper. It was either Saturday or Sunday and it listed all the victims

and the children that they had left. It was quite lengthy. I thought the timing was interesting, being a holiday weekend and kind of a first for many families. I don't know if they thought about that, but it did occur to me as a reminder that there will be many people who are missing someone who is very important at their holiday and the holidays to come forth. I said to a lot of my family and friends that don't live here, "Las Vegas may be Sin City, but it's not wimpy city. We're not a wimpy community and the people came together fast and furious."

I know what you're talking about is we've had this fast and furious, so what happens now? I think there will be people who are more closely involved that will never forget, ever. I will never forget those four people as long as my mind is clear, and particularly that nurse; I don't think I will ever forget her. I think things like this tend to lose their impact in time. I'm thinking personally. You're going to have the death of a person close to you and initially you're just so scattered and so bereft and can't imagine your life without them and sometimes relieved if they're elderly or if they were ill, but still that longing and that yearning and that wanting to be connected. It also changes. So the loss is still there. I still feel the loss of my mother. I always will. It will be two years in May. I feel very close to her. But there's less pain and angst and less active mourning. So if I transfer that to the community at large—and I think what I'm saying is true for many people, not all people, but many people because I've met people in here whose parents died twenty years ago and they're not together at all.

They're still grieving.

Oh, seriously grieving. But I think overall for the community, some of that real gut-wrenching pain will ebb for the community. Now, for some of the people that actually lost family members, I'd say it's a flip of the coin; some of them will never recover. There will be children who will never know their parents.

Such violence, which then always brings us to the topic of guns. It's always a difficult question even to phrase without trying to stress an opinion. When you think of your own opinion of guns, if you don't mind sharing, did it sway you one way or the other from whatever that original thought about guns?

I have guns in my playroom. I don't know if you noticed my playroom.

No, I didn't.

Kids like to play with them. They'll say, "Are these real?" And I'll say, "They're pretend." So they'll shoot me because...And little kids don't know about death that if you shoot someone, they don't get up if you shoot them in the right place. Around the age of seven or eight you start to get an idea about death.

No, it didn't change my opinion. Because this gentleman had a past and somehow it was neglected when he went to buy guns or it was ignored, that is infuriating. If we're going to have guns and it looks like we are, then we need to have stipulations in place. And if it takes more than six months to get a gun until you're checked out, yes.

By the way, you brought up something that's really important in how the community does overall. This was a violent act and this is different from losing a family member by a natural death or an illness. I put them in entirely different categories because that's violent.

Yes, a violent loss.

It's just different. But, no, it didn't. It just made me want people who sell guns to be extraordinarily careful. Then we had the mosque; five hundred people in that mosque were shot just a few days ago.

That was in Egypt, right?

Yes, in Egypt. Then we had the Texas church. I haven't charted them, but it seems like they're

more frequent.

It does, doesn't it?

I don't know that that's true, but it seems like it.

Could that possibly be because we're more sensitive to it now because it happened in our hometown?

I thought about that as well. But I'm pretty sensitive about that because I never know when someone is going to walk in here and a person that they knew or they loved or they hated was killed.

How would you describe your overall spirituality? You mentioned you're Jewish. You've lived in the South. Just by nature of being Jewish, knowing the history and all of that, how does this impact who you are and how you see these things?

My Jewishness?

Yes.

When I was a youth, I was involved in the youth movement and I met a man; he is a very well-known rabbi. He is now deceased. His name was Joe Glaser. I was about sixteen when I met him and we had a very special connection. This was involved in the youth movement. I only saw him maybe twice, but we had a couple of really good talks. My dad was a very sickly man and I knew that he would die young, and I didn't talk to Rabbi Glaser about that. I always had the knowledge that I would lose someone before either my dad or I were ready. I remember talking to him one time, asking why; why things happened? I'll never forget his words, Barbara. He said that he didn't know that it was our prerogative to know why things happened. He said, "That's really a hard answer to what you're asking me, but God is not obligated to give us a reason why." For some reason—I was sixteen; I'm seventy-two now—that has stayed with me. I think that

kind of helps define my spirituality.

That's impactful.

Why someone lived and why someone died? Not our prerogative. So people who come in my office and say, "I know I did something bad; I know I did something bad to deserve..." Whatever. I'll say, "Well, I have to tell you that I don't know that. I'm clear that you know that; that you feel you must have done something. But I will be honest..." I used to not say that, but now I'm older and I'm different, my style is different and I'm different. I say, "I don't know that for sure. I'm not sure that it's our prerogative to always know why." Now, I do leave God out of it. I see the woman sitting in that chair who called me every name in the book when I said that. That was not acceptable. I think it depends. If you're raised a traditional Catholic or Episcopalian or whatever, you do feel that you will be punished if you've done that and you believe that; it is in your core just as much as my philosophy is in my core.

That's interesting for sure. One last area to think about. There were the pop-up memorials that happened and then I don't know where or how much discussion about a more permanent memorial. What role might that play and has that played in this whole episode?

I think people set up memorials to serve themselves. I think it feels like the right thing for them to do whether they had anybody involved or not because a lot of the people that sat at the memorials knew no one at the concert. They just did it because they felt it was the right thing, the conscientious thing, the responsible thing, the spiritual thing, the ethical thing to do. I think people do those because this is something they want to do or feel like they should do and that's the purpose that it serves.

Now, a permanent memorial, that's really different and I haven't really thought about that. That's an interesting question. If I were running the show, and I'm not, I would bring the

survivors and their families together and I would talk to them about a permanent memorial and I would talk to them about what they wanted, did they want one and what they wanted it to look like so that it would have meaning for them. Yes, we are a community—I get that—and it will impact the community, but it's different for them. I want their input. Maybe there would be a family that wouldn't want their loved one's name on that. I'm sure they would have to get permission, anyway. Someone might say to them or look down on them for that. I'm not in the judgment business.

Every person reacts differently. It's your business is because everybody does. Like you've already said, people mourn differently and it's all individual.

It is.

Who and when you need to talk to and about and all of that.

Right. I think you're right in talking about the impact on the community. I think that's very important. That's sociology. And we need that information. It's harder for me to look at it globally because I'm so individually oriented.

Even pointing out what happened just a few days ago in Egypt, that's a staggering number.

We don't have episodes in our history except for September Eleventh or Oklahoma City that we have those kinds of numbers tally up and fifty-eight was huge.

Huge, absolutely huge. I was surprised there weren't more. I think the people that got out alive should be kissing the ground and I'm not a "should" person, but, oh my gosh, they are so fortunate to be alive. How they deal with that is another very interesting subject. *I am blessed. I'm chosen. I'm lucky.* And other words you can think of.

That's great. I really appreciate your thoughts. Anything else that we didn't cover that you think maybe we should include?

I know what I would like to do. If people start coming in with issues, new people—I haven't even had any calls because I would take those people first. I have a waiting list right now, but I would get them in. Or if it starts getting more, the subject of the shooting comes up more, I'm going to keep track on that and give you a date and number count.

That would be very nice.

It may be absolutely useless, but you never know.

You don't know.

Yes, you don't know.

We're curious.

Yes. Like you said, it's in the puzzle piece stage. The pieces are all over this big board and you're trying to weave them in. Also, if I have anybody who was directly involved or knew somebody who was directly involved, I'll let you know.

I appreciate the reports.

I'll give that information to you. I'll just email it to you or call and leave you a message.

That would be great. Thank you.

I hope this was helpful.

I think tremendously. Each interview adds a personal layer to understanding. I don't even know if we can ever understand; that's a wrong word. But to just viewing it and grasping the ramifications of what happened that day.

Somebody who had a family member, I could see them listening to us and saying, "The two of you don't have a clue. You're very nice ladies, but you don't have a clue." And I would say,

"You're right."

Absolutely.

We will never have that type of situation integrated into our persona; even it happened to us, we wouldn't have that. But I enjoy talking with you.

This is great. Thank you very, very much.

[End of recorded interview]