



Library podcast

Youth Incarceration in Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander Communities

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[00:00:36] I'm Brandon. I'm from FIGHT which stands for formerly incarcerated group healing together. We want to introduce you and tell you about the part that's how this all came together. Seattle Public Library reached out to fight in January to partner on projects that would further the libraries go and work with the community and community led programming. It was decided to do a youth panel to help bring experiences into the court to help bring experiences into the conversation around incarceration in order to plan the panel fight.

[00:01:20] Reached out to parasol.

[00:01:23] Thanks for coming tonight represent parasol in the house and it stands for Pacific Rim Solidarity Network a group that fights has worked closely in the past together with Orloff and Andy members of fight but also members and founders of API CHP as well as my May Deborah and the library and tests from the Seattle Public Library. They worked to reach out to the youth in the community currently going through the criminal justice system. A few other people helped make this event possible. Members a parasol who have been sponsoring and supporting API CMG which stands for Asian Pacific Islander culture awareness group. Those are the folks that are inside the facilities and supporting groups and asked them to write letters and the letters. Some of you are I think we all have but there on the table in the back over here so feel free to take some home and also that booklets in the back to as you see. We also want to thank everyone who has supported this event from outreach to child care to live streaming photography.

[00:02:40] Food and transportation as well as the Seattle Public Library for supporting this event. I'm a passive user.

[00:02:49] Hi. Thank you for coming. Sorry again that we got a late start for all our panelists. Q My name's Sara. I'm with the Pacific Rim Solidarity Network. So planning this event has been a really beautiful thing. It came together and honestly just a few weeks we've just been meeting in coffee shops around Seattle and mostly just a bunch of us dedicated and on unpaid time. I just want to share something really important to me which is that over the course of our meeting it has become

increasingly clear just every week as you're meeting that the voices of people not socialized male are missing from this panel and I just want to honor and respect that although these voices are not on this panel. Here we are still honoring the experiences of women transgender and on binary folks who are locked up and facing time as well as everybody who is affected by incarcerated family members. And we're actually already planning a second panel or a second event. We want to do because we know those voices aren't here and they need to be heard. So please reach out to us if you want to be involved with that.

[00:03:48] So I just want to reiterate what Sara just said and thank you everybody for common to hear this issue. This like really really close to us. My name is Andy Pacific car and back in nineteen ninety two I was able to form the API CHP in kind of correction center and back then it was just a distant dream for young Asian Pacific Islanders to have a forum to be heard with the unique needs of being you know in a system that was culturally unaware back then when it first started. I had no idea. That over 20 years ago that it would still be up and going strong and some time after I left and it started died down a lot. I was fortunate enough to take this over during his journey and bring it halfway to what. I mean more than halfway to what it is today you know. I mean he just like did amazing job and we're just happy to be out here into the community now to do the same work that we keep that we've been doing since we made our first mistakes. And so from APEC. Back to the community now I work for the YMCA for a program called Alive and Free with. I work with some of these youth to try to help them to stay away from prison and follow the path. Also a real quick so I don't take up too much time I'd like to acknowledge that we have Fran McGarry. She's a probation officer for King County on probation and we have Clare Thorton and Greg Dalton. Greg works a screen printing apprenticeship for these youth and Clare as a prosecutor for the juvenile justice system that we work with. So I just wanted to acknowledge that there's some of the city employees that care about these youth and everyone in this room has to say so that's it. Thank you.

[00:05:57] Oh excuse me one thing.

[00:06:00] It's a little tradition of mine is that I brought a chair up here for I'm waiting on somebody to get here and so I always bring this chair up here for my brother's dad left behind because one day they're going to come back and claim this seat. Thank you.

[00:06:22] Well first I want to thank everybody for coming us.

[00:06:25] I think for me just it was a journey when I started my when I started my time in prison as a 15 year old. I mean it was a long hard journey but through what Andy started in there what we were able to grow and build into API COAG along with fight along with parasol into the group that we are today and being socially conscious about the world and society and how it works

[00:06:55] Against us. Yeah I'm just happy to be here be in this space and it is such an honour to speak in front of a crowd and tell my story and tell the story those men in there and the most important thing for us in our collective is that we amplify the voices of the men and women that don't have a voice in there that we amplify the voices of the youth that typically adults and institutions don't

listen to until it's too late and yeah it's important that we're here and having this conversation I want to say this is that. When we talk about racism usually it's looked at as a black and white thing and I when the reason why we're here is because we know that racism is a black and white thing however racism trickles down and impacts communities that are poor communities that are marginalized communities that are without privileges.

[00:07:55] And it's important for me given all the men that I've seen come through the system young men like this 18 19 years old 17 years old come through the system like there's something wrong there's some wrong and we always internalize the idea that it's something we did wrong or something our parents did wrong.

[00:08:13] How did how did we adjust well enough why didn't we assimilate well enough to capture the the quote unquote American dream right.

[00:08:22] And yet it's something that a lot of us in there internalize so come in come into some consciousness and understanding the systems that are work that are at work that bring us to where that we came that we were brought to whether it is Brandon many Andi myself or Cootie or any other formerly incarcerated API man.

[00:08:44] We wanted a talk about this issue.

[00:08:48] We wanted to have a conversation around this issue and bring these views and let let them. It's not us speaking we want them to speak we want it we want you guys to hear their story and their experience so we can be taken initiatives to be preventative

[00:09:03] Take initiatives to have alternatives and community based solutions rather than our default solution is just locking up kids.

[00:09:14] It seemed like as adults when we can't figure nothing out when it comes to problematic kids. The first option we have is lock them up and I think I think I've said this many many times. Before is when that's the only option we have.

[00:09:31] Shame on us as adults how we punish us who we are.

[00:09:39] So shame on us when we don't have other options or think of other alternatives when it comes to kids and their lives and their future.

[00:09:48] You already all right.

[00:09:53] Great job.

[00:09:59] I'm sharing you guys with another formerly incarcerated brother down in Long Beach. He was part of the original API. They're saying hi to you.

[00:10:12] Ok. So as I said I work for the YMCA and the live in free program and woods and you think C.C. YJ and we work with at a table with a bunch of people in the community resources education probation law enforcement the courts and we try to give these guys some choices and better a better path to follow. And also you know to help them deal with the issues of racism and the lack of cultural awareness and being stereotyped in that you know Asian Pacific Islanders aren't model minorities all the time. You know that we're sometimes poor and disenfranchised too. So anyways Our first panelist is saw Wes. He's from the Marshallese islands and the second one is Peterson tabu. Also from the Marshall Islands and our third youth is Fernando Rodrigues and he's from the island of Los Angeles. We just wanted to point out

[00:11:24] To point out the fact that this is the issue across all racial lines.

[00:11:34] I just want I just want the audience to be mindful that these these you far system impacted there currently have pending cases or on probation and otherwise home monitoring and home monitoring and we want to be sensitive around those issues. And you know we've asked them. Know I just feel super super privileged that they're willing to take that risk and willing to speak to us until and tell their stories. And I think yeah I appreciate you guys being here. Let's let's let's give the youth around the

[00:12:14] How you guys feeling. Yeah okay.

[00:12:20] Before we're gonna start with Fernando Fernando is a widow.

[00:12:24] Like I said this project has been going on for a long time and one of the things that we did as you guys seen with all the flyers we collected a lot of letters from the men inside that that women as young men that are doing a lot of years in prison. And we compiled those letters and some of these letters we want read and Fernando's gonna do a lot of reading and I think just to amplify that voice into channel channel those voices to another young man out here that wants to speak truth to power and voice of that NPC Fernando.

[00:12:59] You ready. What's the first letter you read.

[00:13:03] I read a letter by John Pat. He's locked up in the hall. Hi. My name is Fernando.

[00:13:09] I was on my way out combat.

[00:13:12] My name's Fernando not an API but I share the experience of being locked up. Now we'll be reading a letter written by a member of the API cultural awareness group call them day Hello my name is John pate and I'm writing this letter in opposition of new juvenile detention center that is being built in King County. I have currently been incarcerated for over 20 years and recognize that locking up juveniles at such a young age has traumatic effects on their lives growing up as a youth. I was fortunate enough to have to not have any run ins with the juvenile system but I have plenty of

friends who had Marley experience with Raymond Hall detention center was when I got arrested and charged as an adult for which I am currently serving a sentence of over 200 years. I'm opposing the building of this juvenile center because this isn't the way or answer to a justice issue. There are currently more juvenile detention centers than there are adult prisons and locking up kids was brain has yet to fully develop. Is sending the wrong message.

[00:14:12] There are only two options when a kid gets locked up one to continue on the path they're currently on and get worse or two to realize and recognize the mistake and change majority of the juveniles and youth I've encountered could care less about this letter. Instead they continue on their way worse path of destroying not only their lives but that of their family and the community. So instead of building juvenile detention centers build the education center with the purpose of educating them of their mistakes and how to recognize and change it. As education center with performing life coaches youth advisors teachers child physiologist and physiologists locking up kids can have long less than negative effects and create internal internationalization trauma that can be pressed on passed on for generations. I'm living proof that juvenile detention is not the answer and has been a very long journey that I have traveled to get where I'm at. It has not been easy. Imagine where all the kids can do and become if given the chance with proper guidance and education no more use jail.

[00:15:15] Thank you from. We're gonna go down the panel and ask you guys to tell us a little bit about yourself. Name. I guess you don't have to say your name but you said we ought to introduce it. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

[00:15:35] Yeah. Well you already know my name. We're from the Marshall Islands. I came here when I was about 9 years old 10 and I go to West Auburn. I'm 18 years old. Yeah.

[00:15:57] Yeah. Without it.

[00:16:02] Yes I was born and raised born in Marshall Valley. I came here when I was twelve.

[00:16:12] Oh well yeah. I've been having trouble around the system at a younger age about 13 and 14 I got locked up for possession of a far caused me some trouble for not finding better pass instead of doing more positive things getting myself more into negative things which I didn't find no benefit in at all. Several problems that caused me to face more things in court and all that stuff.

[00:16:49] How old were you when you first came in contact with the police and why. Why was it when you first came in contact. I was about in sixth grade.

[00:17:01] Just because the part our town where I met in Auburn there's a lot of older Marshallese kids is more that gives him more trouble and I guess when they saw me that they knew I was Maurice leave for some reason. And then they stopped and they were just like asking me a question about you know who I am who I rode with or at when I was 13.

[00:17:29] I was just walking down the block. I mean my neighbor stopped me for no reason. He started explain all the questions and trying to get inside my trying to make me mad.

[00:17:45] First on my can't count to police I starting as well I was making the unwise choice and at the time I run the wrong crew and I guess they had some command bus with the people I was with. They see me on board that same group. So they started coming after me too. Unfortunately I was unable to get away but they approached me and I got arrested. That's where all the cases started building up.

[00:18:14] You can start you can start with this question. It is hot. How how did this change how you view the public's I stop thinking twice.

[00:18:26] Well when I was some way saddened me if somewhere saddened me all right I go to my own media and call the police. What's the reason they tried to get me.

[00:18:36] Why go to them here. What about you.

[00:18:45] I just thought like they weren't the one who was trying to help us like they were just trying to get us not trying to help.

[00:18:58] You wanna say something. Yeah. We tried. From what I've seen is that they weren't incarcerated. Instead of having us do better they just want to lock us up in cases and keep us away.

[00:19:09] Of finding better pass to expand our minds into a better when you were locked up.

[00:19:19] How long were you locked up. For like two weeks. Now you basically locked up now. Tell that story to oh and I've been a housewife for like six month almost 7 and currently has the ankle bracelet on and it has strict guidelines.

[00:19:42] So he's had to get special permission to come here at night. So this is part of his incarceration so I'd like everyone in the room to acknowledge the fact that all of these young men though they've been in contact with the juvenile justice system is a testament to the strides they're making to change their lives by being involved in something of this nature.

[00:20:08] What are what are the feelings you remember most from being locked up.

[00:20:16] I wish him well like I was a lonely hopeless you know like there's not that much space.

[00:20:25] You know you can't think you can't think about nothing else except you know your family your loved ones. What did you do when you were feeling lonely and hopeless.

[00:20:37] I would just always say like pace around the room and just sit down.

[00:20:44] I really I mostly do read books. Said How long did you do.

[00:20:51] During my three months I just got out of housewares a couple months ago just got off house arrest.

[00:20:58] You know what. What feelings do you remember most from being locked up and lonely I miss my family.

[00:21:06] Well what did you do about it. Did you miss your family reading book.

[00:21:12] Think I sometimes I cry when I was there.

[00:21:20] You know Europe if you want to answer any questions or interject it's optional for you.

[00:21:31] If not you don't have to answer it. I mean for all you guys up here you guys don't feel comfortable actually.

[00:21:38] You don't have to answer.

[00:21:42] How were you treated when he was inside. Peterson somewhat stable or cool

[00:21:51] While some of our not for a sound. When I get a headache. When I've got a headache and I for medicine David like I

[00:22:01] It's been passed to. Do. They haven't bring my medicine.

[00:22:10] How were you treated when you were inside.

[00:22:12] Yeah I was to staff someone the staff was cool. Some of them was not. Like that. Some do like they will bring me up too.

[00:22:23] Do we do. Waiting for court. And then like when people are getting allowed or some or they think it's me that I'm talking. You like oh yeah bring it back down he's not having this court today. You know move it move it to another day and then I have to wait for a whole week or so.

[00:22:44] You get treated unfairly but by both. There's some that of course I'm not but you always got to be watched now who's around says as well. Got nothing to do opinions is stuck in the zone where all you think about is the same shit over and over again just you being in there with no chance of getting out.

[00:23:06] Let me ask you this question Fernando do you feel like there were any adults you can ask for help.

[00:23:12] Not there's no support from them. And then anything you can say can just reflect more worse on you.

[00:23:18] Well what was it that you needed. What was it that you needed help with that they weren't able to help you with Somalia's knowledge and how could it avoid being in the first place like a method to try or

[00:23:31] Find different ways to do different things instead of doing what I was doing.

[00:23:35] Well how about you guys.

[00:23:38] What would staff try to help you with understanding stuff. You guys had trouble with English and stuff more than you'd like. Culturally aware that to your some of your needs not. Then a. Move

[00:23:54] That arrives I see we need a. If you'd like visit a problem understanding sometimes. Like

[00:24:04] That. Not really because. You. Understand

[00:24:10] Let me ask you the same question Bill do you feel like there are any adults that you can ask for help when you words.

[00:24:19] Nah because i try to ask them this one time too because I was trying to call my mom. That letter nobody.

[00:24:28] The phone wasn't working and he kept telling me the same thing keep telling me the same thing and he was like well it's probably some technical problem some technical problem. And the only reason my mom knew this because I think. My. Attorney was someone called it.

[00:24:43] And yeah that's right she came down Peterson.

[00:24:50] Did you feel like there were any adults that could help you to help us on some some Mm hmm. What was it. What was it that you need help with. Hitting your head. Have they ever addressed that inside when you was inside when. They told you. Did you go to any nurse or medical or you just of headaches.

[00:25:16] Yeah we actually can now go to the nurse. Do you lie way after lunch. All right. Mm hmm. Danny already passed dead

[00:25:28] What was. I mean when you guys were locked up when you guys were locked up and going through your trials or going through your proceedings what was the what was what was the fear you had most was it doing time other. Other juveniles that were in there with you guys

[00:25:49] Or something else.

[00:25:52] Being taken away from my family. Yeah seeing like one day sentence me I'm a mom is right to see that happen. And then I just seeing her cry I know that yeah that's not cool. I see wants to ask a question Did anyone discuss with you any program you can get into instead of doing time now while trying to get in to this program called w way why she sent you to me

[00:26:32] But I can't get in guys. They won't let you in. What would a felony charge. China turn my life around right now. I feel like I can't get a second chance.

[00:26:48] What was the question. Did you when you was facing your trial proceedings or whatever did you want to ask you about any alternatives are offering you alternatives to being locked up.

[00:27:01] Not at the moment when I was locked up. No they were just all trying to feed they we're still trying to press more charges on me instead of finding ways to give my charges and get away and focus more like a finishing school or find a better way to make up credits the time for their missed out. It would just still adding up more time. We're trying to make it even more. When they were trying to reduce my bail they would just like rise it up higher so I wouldn't get out.

[00:27:34] Did they offer you any alternative.

[00:27:39] Well the day when I got out like months months most later when the prosecutor finally tried to negotiate and then they dropped me. You don't want to do it again.

[00:27:55] How.

[00:27:59] What were your interactions with other youth like.

[00:28:04] Some are cool some you can get to know some can relate to what you're facing and build up a connection. But if some more from. A Roman what other type of girls or a guy somehow was going on the zombie beef automatically going in there and their problems could start at any time a guard like loses the attention of you and fight and go on immediately.

[00:28:27] How was your interactions with other other kids. I

[00:28:32] Gotta look out for each. So people could have missed me. Yeah. Like when people mess with me. It's like surviving. He's gotta get into cool. We got this call me a psycho P.I.. You gotta find your ways. Marshallese leaves you court we me some more will go to guy to protect each other.

[00:29:03] So you thought that you thought that everybody was asking tough or had to be tough to protect and defend themselves.

[00:29:14] Yeah me. You don't do that.

[00:29:18] Somebody like take away your lines or for good work. Let me ask this Where did Where did Where did you learn that from. Like did you learn that in there or elsewhere in there when I was like What about you. What was your interactions like with other kids.

[00:29:40] Yeah. Some was cool.

[00:29:43] Some was cool like but when you first come in they look at you like they try to stare you down like you're trying to make you trying to make you scared. So I guess you got to you know act look in all right. Just be tough so they don't try to mess with you. All right.

[00:30:07] How I do think.

[00:30:14] How does that relate to your your culture or your ethnic identity. When you say that when you say that you have to be tough. Right. And you spoke about like people gravitate towards each other. Depending on the intensity that you have. How does that relate to that.

[00:30:37] When you went in with did you.

[00:30:38] It would be like straight up. I'm from the Marshall Islands and these are my friends and this is who I hang around with.

[00:30:51] When I went in I was just like you know just thinking about when I'm going to get out. But then you know. I see like different groups you know people sitting at this place people sitting at this place you know. But there was only there there's only like some islanders that was in there. So I try to you know let them know that I'm you know an islander too. And they do all call me. You know we just linked up and it was all cool. You will do different type of blues on

[00:31:25] The message you feel like you're coming from a diverse. So let's say like Hispanics or blacks if depending on how the situation is going it's from the inside. Against cultures and everything. Do they be cool with you or will they be against you in all our cultures. If you come in the right way and you're able to speak to all them and all of them. Mess with you then you guys can get along just fine but it's not. And they feel like you're like three or four come reckless. Then what.

[00:31:59] What did that teach.

[00:32:00] What what what did that experience is that it's cool to get to know all sorts of culture because everyone different.

[00:32:07] You can learn from different types of groups multiple things do you feel like your time.

[00:32:16] Just a question for all of you guys. Do you feel like your time being locked up helped you.

[00:32:21] Yeah well it helped me realize what could happen if I don't stick to what I really want to accomplish in life and start on my left. Wait there. Has spend a whole lot of time. Just wasting it in the inside. Instead of being on the outside and like accomplishing goals that really matter to me. And I

[00:32:41] Have that freedom and I get that freedom taken away from you. How how how did that hurt you. It hurts because you realize there's so much people cared about you until you realize. That you have so much potential for you to not realize that on time. And draw that the guard was. Dead due did any of the staff

[00:33:03] Or people that you had to deal with on a day to day basis help you like look for other goals and stuff. I mean did they. Like

[00:33:13] Try to point you in a different direction where I was in there were just don't shade or miss what you but you will now let me just tell you what to do. Did you feel like your time being in a healthy year scene seeing how some of the kids like. This dude I met is named Buggy

[00:33:44] Siegel. He was telling me that he's doing like 25 to life. It was just crazy use like he was telling me he was inciting for a year and then he's he doesn't know how the outside look like no more. And when his mom calls him it's like it's like that's it's free time. That's how you can feel like he's home and. Like. When he was telling me he wished he was outside. You know. How is a privilege to be outside in order which is why I said

[00:34:16] How did it hurt you. Just knowing and like. Just knowing

[00:34:24] How my mom is going for you because mom my brother went through the same thing. And I was with my mom when she was going to do that you know going into court. And seeing her cry

[00:34:36] And all right. And then when I went to court. When they took me to court I saw right there where she was sitting and I was right there sitting on the same place where my brother was sitting. She was crying begging for me to come out. It was just so sad. Whereas you know where's your brother Oh you got deported back on Marshall Island. To

[00:35:02] Peterson what about you. What what helped you be locked up and what have you given me a lot to make me see they

[00:35:11] Learn from our mistakes. Chinatown turned my life around. But at the same time. Why hurt me the most. See my momma cry being taken away from my family.

[00:35:28] Beg you. I think I think I could assume that all you guys are close to your family your moms and brothers and sisters. And Pops so you can pretty much say that being apart from your family was kind of hard. I know for me it was I think for a lot of us that our system impacted. That's probably one of the hardest things.

[00:35:50] Being away from your family when you couldn't be with your family and you were sad about it. You was heard about it what were you able to do. Were you able to talk to their. No. Way. You. Can't trust them. With

[00:36:11] Any sort of information because at the same time you don't know if they're really going to hold that information to themselves or use it in a way to affect you. You talked about other other kids this the air because you can't even talk to the guards in general so you can't talk to them.

[00:36:28] Depends who you can trust in this as well. You've got something here. If you let me assess if you can't talk to somebody. If somebody was available to talk to someone you trust and someone who could share those hard feelings with would you guys talk to somebody about it.

[00:36:48] In those situations it would help get all that off your chest because you got so much work to do.

[00:36:54] We need to release was your family able to visit you. Was it who you once or was I like

[00:37:06] I would just like they can't they can't give you a shake they can't shake your hand or hug you you know they have to see you across you know what I mean. Yeah and then the guards just watching you like. Like crazy like you guys call a drug dealer. And. It was just my brother my little brother my mom

[00:37:30] And then like when the time was out when the time was out they were just like yes some time ago you had to go right now. I know

[00:37:40] It was crazy. How did I make you feel. Not being able to hug your mom or shake hands with her and hug your little brother. I see you disrespecting kids like

[00:37:51] Humiliating my mom was going to bring me some drugs or some would say you know like after being checked and checked and check again just to come inside you is crazy.

[00:38:02] Know that was the only good thing you got here. What. What about you. Will you get you get this when he was inside. My mom is a martial artist

[00:38:13] Not my sister. Gotta go to work. So see we call to the phone.

[00:38:20] So your only outlet in there when it came to your family stuff was through the phone. How much would it that cost money or that process would cost money. How much of that cost lives.

[00:38:35] It doesn't sound like it when you call it called their phone. They pick it up and they say it on the phone.

[00:38:41] What was it. Was it. I mean. I mean I know I know those situations is bad but was that kind of something good that you was able to take out of it and being able to talk to your sister and your family. Is that just a little bit

[00:39:02] You recline all that. Begging me changed my life. I'm not trying to change it. I can't get a second chance. I'll try to go to the UK anyway. I can't get anywhere on it.

[00:39:18] What about you. Then you get business when you've got one but since Tom

[00:39:24] Couldn't hold them it can be weird because you'd be watched all the time and you could only talk about some things or else they would feel like you guys are like trying to get out of line. I'm talking about some other stuff you know. That would be cool. I got a visit from my father and my auntie. Just pour out. Can you be able to touch her and if she try to touch me. Still to come in on the spot just push me away. Sit me down. Yeah. How did that make you feel. I couldn't get close. I'm already far enough from them and I still gotta be further

[00:40:02] Who is. Who is hurt most by you got me locked up.

[00:40:07] I was your mama. You're

[00:40:13] Why you think what you think about me.

[00:40:19] Because like she was she was like mostly the one that took care of me my buddies. And. Like. She already went to. What I. What I'm putting her through I know I guess she went through that with my older brother and she did it again. It's just like it's like everything is

[00:40:42] Going backward. No. Everything it's just a cycle.

[00:40:49] What about you. It was her most like you've been locked up. I always tell my mom you guys. See me and remind me not to go back to jail. Every time. She told me that she cry. Here. Are some so my parents because they went to show having to raise me up in. The tribal society and still

[00:41:12] Not listen and have to make that mistake and just watch me go to that. I know that made a. Hurt

[00:41:23] This question for you. When you saw your body you said earlier that you saw your brother being locked up. How did that make you feel and how did that form your opinion about jails and the police. And maybe. It just made me feel like you know I was mad because I was mad. At the point that he was doing that. But then

[00:41:57] Also I was mad at the police because the way they did they didn't. They came in the house and he's like do in the morning knocking so hard. And then my mom came in and then there were just like disrespecting it. You know telling her that she's lying. No. She's not. She's not doing good raising

her son you know saying all these disrespectful shit and you know it's just not gonna do nothing about it. You know I could talk to them say or not this and that but

[00:42:30] Thank you for sharing. Do

[00:42:37] You have. Do you guys have family. Risks or have been deported because of

[00:42:42] A criminal position or being in prison. You do too. Yes. You do. What did what did what did that do to your family. How did that impact your family. It made it a star. Having more emotional problems and realizing that they need to fear things here in America because you never know if they're going to be able to stay around or if they're gonna be deported or

[00:43:09] Just get arrested for any reason that police may feel like they need to arrest them for oh who was it in the family.

[00:43:16] You don't mind.

[00:43:17] It was my uncle of a female that I guess he had a problem with. Lots of police saying that he assaulted her and he wasn't even in the area at the moment. But when the police got there he had recently got there before them. So they just went along where she said because he was he was just getting there and they just took him.

[00:43:36] What about you Yeah. Family that's at risk. I mean you did because your brother was deported right. Yeah. How did what happened to your family after that. Basically what you're saying

[00:43:48] How my parents there was just telling them other siblings like my older brother they're like. Be careful. Driving you know you don't know when they're going to catch up and catch up on you and you know deport you you know.

[00:44:03] And because my brother my brother when he was in the cell the deportation. I don't know the place where they deport people. He was saying that an old lady old lady was being deported because she was driving without a license without a license and a mom which is she she scares you like. You know. Going through her mind. Who were the adults you guys looked up to when you haven't grown up

[00:44:36] Both in my prayers. Most of my father because. He's a hard work man even though he has a problem. Does that mean. So he needs his intestines removed and going through that. Having to go to the hospital three days a week. He doesn't give up still face the way he's doing. Works hard and never gives up. And I look up to that because he's a hard working man and never gives up no matter what he's going through. Was my dad

[00:45:03] But not a best way he passed when I was 12. I guess I'm home.

[00:45:10] What do you mean by that. What do you mean by that. Well you're your own man. And I don't have any dos look

[00:45:21] What about you. Well a woman when I was at the islands it was mostly my mom because. My dad was off somewhere doing it so that. You know

[00:45:34] My mom was working mostly like overnights.

[00:45:36] You know make sure making sure that there is food on the table. And then we came down here. You know she still do.

[00:45:43] She's still the hard working woman she is. But. You know I got out on the streets and. There was older older guys that I. Look up to

[00:45:54] You know telling me Oh yeah you should do this you know this is the way this is the way you know.

[00:46:00] And then I guess that's messed my way. Yeah.

[00:46:05] Given that given that you guys didn't have any at some point didn't have any male role models to look up to. That is a question for you too. Hoo. Hoo hoo. How did you look up to for your example. Did you follow and the May. Was. Trying to be like handing

[00:46:33] Help kids to keep kids out of trouble.

[00:46:38] What what about beforehand. What about the homeless. Or as to what

[00:46:43] Makes them do is being told what should he do. Rodney. Soundbite

[00:46:54] What bugs you Bill. Yeah. I guess I see. I would say I lived up to my buddy. You know. Like. How. You would want to know people. And then. I'll

[00:47:09] Know it. He looked like you know he was running or you know he was running me and then like I wanted that you know I wanted to be an issue. I wanted to do the same thing you would do.

[00:47:26] What do you consider your family.

[00:47:30] Keep it real to Milo by this group. But it's me. Right. There's no you're not. But. That. Probably. Was. A

[00:47:45] Man. We've got this convoy built. To look out for each other. My dad found. All. Right. With gang members by really way. He's pointing out those trying to look out for each other. You couldn't you couldn't find that nowhere else but you only you only thought that you guys could look out for

each other and you couldn't go to a. School or the community center or somewhere doggy like a kid you could you help us out and look out for us

[00:48:21] Guys. Some brand new Chinese star Sun. So are other races. Hmm. So I just pick my own car. Martin Lee's stick with him. What would you consider your family. For

[00:48:44] The same reasons.

[00:48:45] Yeah and also the ones that keep you real with me. When I'm down that way when I'm up there open you know they never go behind your back. To Ortiz you know talking talking down to you. And also you know mom my mom and my little brother and. My family

[00:49:11] Besides me. Besides besides your family your mom

[00:49:18] Andy or even myself.

[00:49:21] Are there any adults that you trust that you could feel like there's a solidarity that has your back when you're up with you right there.

[00:49:34] No.

[00:49:36] Yeah.

[00:49:41] What about you then. Well you your family.

[00:49:44] Well I mean Grace raised up in the environment I was raised up in Alaska. Oh geez. I know that from what they represent. Yeah. They've always helped me from my father. Help me God. Stay focused on what I need to accomplish.

[00:50:00] Never give up on me. Always kept it real. How now whatever it is if I'm down or I'm up still the rock will never change. It's either going to go off or some of the time I wanted to ask this question just remember when we was going through this process you're talking about one of the worst things that could one of the worst things of being locked up what

[00:50:27] Happened with other people's calls. Oh you

[00:50:33] Know So you just wash them and then you never know who weirdos. Not everybody in there is like the type that would be fresh dope.

[00:50:45] You know you just gotta take a magnet.

[00:50:50] If they had stage they someone didn't do it. No no. I just want to go which is potentially not only what we're about.

[00:50:56] You know just tell us tell us.

[00:51:01] You. I was looking through the box that they gave me and then I'm looking at the underwear I'm like well I did but it is obvious and I was like Well I'm not wearing this you know like you got to we already watched it. How am I doing Dougie staying on.

[00:51:17] He's like he's been clean. I was like no pants. You don't like.

[00:51:21] There's not that many pants that I mean t shirts. This is crazy.

[00:51:26] Is not his big room you know to like sagging there's no eye to hold it up or do it. Piers

[00:51:32] I was small I was like No I'm not going to wear it what lot of us you say the same thing. Let me ask this.

[00:51:41] I mean I know how I felt when I had to do it. And you could speak the same thing but how did that make you feel as a person as a young kid I you would be having to wear other people's eyes makes you feel like you cheated Agnetha just like somebody that they can just do do whatever they want with you.

[00:52:01] You don't have to follow because they say so I know you like a dress a dog you know a dress you up for you. They don't give you new clothes and not

[00:52:14] Options. Why would you want to make you

[00:52:23] Us Feel out my. Uh why do you think they why do you think they lock up kids I guess to show them that. Either they get locked up or authorize a suit to make you see like

[00:52:49] That if you continue doing bad things at the option that you guys just being locked up. I guess to bring fear into you so you don't do what you do. So they incarcerate you. So your mindset can be fought over fear because that's where you're going to end up.

[00:53:08] You lose it.

[00:53:17] Ok. So I answer this question. Start with you first. Say what he said. What do you think they're building more jails to lock up more kids. I would say guys like

[00:53:34] Most of the time when they would like like this like real experience.

[00:53:40] Mostly they'd be stopping us and then for some reason they would say oh yeah you guys are trespassing.

[00:53:45] Even though it's like some road and then they're like oh yeah they call up the juveniles saying oh we're going to bring these kids in and they're like oh no we're full. So I know they're being rude as well or they're probably saying oh that is no B.S. You know that's nothing. But I feel like they're just building more juvenile jail because I guess they don't want to. Know she has windows and you see go on the right path.

[00:54:18] That's up some first year they pulled it out just lucked out.

[00:54:24] Keep me kind of give me a minute. You guys can answer this. What kind of lesson is that. What does that what does that teach you also that reveals a lack of care. What what what kind of lesson is that teach.

[00:54:43] One of the letters are really that was sent from one of the one of the inmates that was saying how they built the new Jew basically predict predicting our future kids future.

[00:54:58] You know so I was like Yeah that's great. That's right. Would you say

[00:55:13] What could we do better as adults. People that have

[00:55:18] To make those decisions. What. How could we learn from you guys. What could we do better other than good jails.

[00:55:28] Fine guys. I think like find ways to

[00:55:32] Put their minds. This is something to focus on what they could accomplish if they do successful things instead of letting them not give proper knowledge or or as it does give the young adults knowledge of what orders the adults know and how that could help them and lead them to the path where they can succeed in. And do more positive things and that will help them in the future instead of holding them back

[00:56:00] Same day but they go build a foster house because I see a lot of kids instead of building a new jail.

[00:56:09] I see a lot of kids on the outside can't go Oh good they can't go on they that house they're family we got to do something.

[00:56:23] Awesome. So you know I think that I mean I feel like it's up to the kids you know whether you build a place for them to go

[00:56:44] It's up to them. They want to go and they lied.

[00:56:48] I guess they don't. He's got to reach out to them and actually like like get into it you know like

[00:56:56] Be in their shoes.

[00:56:58] Reality if you see how these and then try to see if they can point me to the right track.

[00:57:09] I'm on my ass. Ask you guys this line of questioning individually. Where once a person if. You have

[00:57:19] You can be anything you want to be and you had all the help and all the resources in the world.

[00:57:26] To allow you to. What would that be.

[00:57:30] I'm trying to deal I had. Why you why you're trying to be like. So far you've been helping and helping me with a lot of stuff I'm here

[00:57:45] You help me out with this make me see a lot of that makes me want to change my life. All these days going on with me. What do so my family laugh and cry all day so I'm trying to make them proud.

[00:58:10] What about what about what about your ideas about being a businessman for.

[00:58:16] For me to be alive to be alive. I've got. My whole company to support the kids on it. What. What do you think is keeping you from being a businessman like his court day in court.

[00:58:35] Or what about you. Of it and you could be anything you want to be an entrepreneur. You're the only one

[00:58:49] To not make them all business. You know what. So it sucks. If I have to shoot you under way

[00:59:00] Right now. So I got families like brothers and cousins that knows to do a haircut and get tattoos like tribal tattoos and all that.

[00:59:13] And me and my cousin we were collaborating languages you know brainstorming and just thinking about it. And then he was like shoot why don't we just like have like a place where. It's like

[00:59:24] Part of it is tattoo and then the other part is barbershop. You know why people could be waiting in line and then you look on the other side like I want to tattoo

[00:59:35] Really. What are you learning to do right now. What about that. What do you mean. What do you what are you going to school tomorrow right. Oh I'm learning business and financing. No I'm talking about after school. I have 3. 0 0 0

[01:00:04] Screen Printing yet.

[01:00:10] Forgot to bring your design if I may. If you make a bunch of money from this.

[01:00:15] This is a barbershop visit. What do you gonna do. What do you got it. When are you going to do with the money.

[01:00:21] These do.

[01:00:24] I always say to Obama momma create you know buy my mom a house you know and everything that she wants.

[01:00:32] Because you know she gave me everything I wanted and then to live life go back to the island and just chill in the yacht.

[01:00:41] What what about you. You can be anything you want to be. I would be an engineer and give the opportunity give internships to young adults if they want to get involved in construction or find the path to be an engineer so it can help out the community by making new places that

[01:00:59] That provide help so benefit what's what's prevent you from doing that right now.

[01:01:10] Staying on track.

[01:01:12] Just find a ways to get cause studying to be an engineer and get to that let's prevent you from your dreams and goals are always saying my record.

[01:01:27] You can tell your little brother or someone younger than you anything what would you tell them.

[01:01:35] I would just stick on their own track and instead stick to the positive things and not get influenced by people that want to turn negative things to you but instead follow your dreams and accomplish what you want but stay dedicated and focus to do what you really want to do.

[01:01:54] Got to make your mama proud.

[01:02:02] She's going. You don't wanna hold you down no matter what you always had to be oh man just don't be don't be listening to other kids in out you know like seeing how their view just because they do these things they're amazing look cool or something like that I'll be like that you know just be your own self

[01:02:32] Be your own leader. Yeah.

[01:02:35] Do you do any of you guys have anything else to add that you want everybody in this room. But just remember this podcast.

[01:02:43] It is livestream.

[01:02:44] So there could be thousands upon thousands of people watching this. I should probably shouldn't have said that. I need to speak to the world and tell tell.

[01:02:55] No we want to know about you. We want to learn from you and I think it's important that we're having this conversation continue to center the youth around these movements around how we allocate resources and what programs we feel and how we talk to our young young men and women and I can speak speak to the world but I would say

[01:03:19] Give help give help and in any format that help can be given and to stay connected as a community and not be racism no matter effective.

[01:03:28] Everyone's a human being. Everyone deserves to be treated fairly in every possible way.

[01:03:37] I want to say something about that one. That's

[01:03:45] You know dedicated to also.

[01:03:54] What about you. So if there is any like young man watching right now I'm saying like

[01:04:04] I know most of these guys they'd be trying to act tough in order for the females you know I don't know why females want to go for it. The guys that always gangbang or that you know they think is cute being locked up in order don't do that. That's not cute. That's really sad.

[01:04:22] That's right. That's right.

[01:04:24] I think I think I think if you guys allow if you guys allowed Could we take one question from the audience that OK with you guys.

[01:04:35] This one is just one question. Is it OK with you guys over there. Yeah yeah OK. Anybody got

[01:04:51] Anybody. Is there anything about your education or going back. To life at a certain time certain times in schools a delight to raise schools or some people like to do certain things

[01:05:10] Or are some some kids let's encourage you to do other things but it really just depends what you really want to end up doing. Like if you want to follow on the path or go do things that don't benefit you then yeah you will you will go do stuff that you don't want to do. And sometimes. That

happens you can start doing things that really don't benefit your life. Start skipping school and all that all shows how your education. But it all really just depends on. How

[01:05:40] Focused you want to be. All right. There's a question there's one question. I'll. Get. The. Same. Idea. And. I think. That's. Been. Coming. Up

[01:05:55] Since my dad passed away. I gotta go I gotta go outside get a job. I have my mom out all my family members swear to me. I got a grab for that money where. His request is the question asked so he can see. What's going on

[01:06:19] In terms of school. I want to school on the culture of the school K12 or after. What you feel like you didn't get that kind of news.

[01:06:36] I think it's not what wasn't used but I think is what was presented for the student to be used is that some schools should help out students more staying focus or even the counselors and being more interactive not students doing how he's feeling how what he's thinking about doing what himself or the stuff that he's doing on the assets so that it won't affect him I was doing in school.

[01:07:01] We know that that help. Let's take a last question back there

[01:07:07] You guys. We do stay at standard trouble and know that

[01:07:18] Work with people more like Ed. Yeah

[01:07:23] My t o me is cool. You're not just saying that because he's here

[01:07:34] For you. So given your experience with the justice system and all that you've experience and you know what. Helen madness that's been right. What would you tell these three young guys

[01:07:50] To avoid something like that. I think I think the most important thing that changed my life even in while I was incarcerated is that

[01:08:05] I began to know my work. No matter. What system I was subjected to no matter who was collab believe was against me or who wasn't for me. I began to see my own worth and I began to look in the mirror and be like. I'm a person that has community I'm a person that has a family I'm a person that has value that people that love me and begin to see my own humanity and what I could contribute not just to myself but to the rest of the world.

[01:08:38] And I think for a lot of I think for a lot of young men and women that comes from our communities that up against these systems up against these policies of these institutions they begin to internalize that they don't have nowhere that this society is not fit for them. This school is not fit for them and God does not care about them and their lives could be disposable. And I think you guys are super dope and you guys came to that realization soon before it was too late. You guys are beginning

to see what impact you could have on. These folks and your family and your community and just not just realize that your actions not just affect yourself but a lot of people. So kind of take that and determine how you're going to affect those around you because every morning you guys are leaders.

[01:09:34] But I want to.

[01:09:36] Before we close. Loretta has had us has some to say. Because the library person SPL give it up.

[01:09:50] I'm still trying to get them to pay me for the hashtag more than two thousand ninety.

[01:09:59] Yeah.

[01:10:00] Thank you so much for coming here. Coming tonight and being with us and making this possible. And as a library so what one of the long story short we've been trying to appeal that library is not just book Sweet Love. We love reading but so does this what's possible because this week we have this committee the Work Committee. And what makes us think is OK a library. This is a huge institution. We have 60 million dollars year. This is our budget may end. But then the way we have done traditionally is what we always waiting in in the building is someone to come and ask for help. We want to change that part and we would like to learn and grow with the community what they're doing what they're struggling what they're on what their wish list looked like.

[01:10:54] And this community listening project started it back in 2015 and yet again. So

[01:11:04] It's not just books. And we are really trying to learn from the community. I think that's the most important part. And again thank you so much.

[01:11:12] I know it's been really honor to work with you and Andy and all of them and those brave young folks.

[01:11:19] And so before we have someone called out of order I just want to say that no this is for a lot of us in this collect APEC Asia by parasol. This is an important matter to us and we're trying to resist certain forces of society and especially for me some important is something that speaks to my heart when it comes to youth and the way we treat our youth.

[01:11:53] I think it's at the top of my list of the things that are important.

[01:11:57] Aside from this event aside from this panda I actually care about these young men and I care about their future and where they end up and how they go.

[01:12:06] I can ask them I text. I try to text them all the time. But how are you doing. What are you guys up to. Better not be at that girl's house. But no it's something that I'm invested in.

[01:12:20] And it's important for us as a community that we honor that that we honor that these young men have been brave to come up here and share their stories. And by honoring that by honoring that I think it's important that we don't leave this room about this. Don't don't we're not here just to share a story. That's why we're not just here just to be enthralled by the experience. It's difficult to get at that while always on a roller coaster be real. But I think you know take these stories take these experiences and go out to your sections of the community and speak about speak of the answer you get this wrong it's

[01:13:01] Just wrong and you're not doing it.

[01:13:02] Some about it there's something wrong with you but that's what I want everybody to take away from this again.

[01:13:10] And we're going to continue to have these conversations.

[01:13:14] We're going to try to do a panel. We think we want to speak to go to those things to win. I appreciate the library.

[01:13:25] My white family my parasol family and the men of API COAG that written the letters that are a part of this just because they're not here and sit in these chairs with us.

[01:13:37] And you said that she was here for a reason. We're trying to liberate everybody. So thank you thank everybody for coming. Let's give this young man

[01:13:54] Before we go so wonderful and amazing borders.

[01:13:59] Well it does not seem like bugging him. Oh by the way I just wanted to say

[01:14:10] I know everything. I just want to thank all of you. Rocking out. I wrote it down. It's going to be a lot easier. But I just want to let you know. That

[01:14:24] What he is doing is your power. That should be your power. You should know. And like saying your actions are not just like the rest of us. And you talk about information crashes and it is cause you shared it tonight and you're liberating us from our freedom. Our president thought like feeling our present. So like thank you like Satan wants you to read it take it all like yourself and like you say you were like once you see that you'll be able to. And

[01:15:03] Walk my way there. Also my like like I just want to see you grow. I know I just I guess

[01:15:11] That's something for all of us. You're not the only ones that go. Out. There. And so. I. Know. It's a beautiful thing right. And I say thank you to all of. Us. Mark

[01:15:37] Half a day. That's hello into more earthy no Hadza I am Pacific Islander gal and my siblings are my Micronesian islands. That's so beautiful.

[01:15:52] I wanted to just share first. Yes. Thank you. Thank you all for being here. Thank you for your stories. Thank you for your vulnerability. Thank you for. Yeah. Speaking truth to power. And we're also reminding us like

[01:16:08] When we talk when we talk about this in social justice spaces and activism spaces and in the right in the ways and we're saying oh no one is disposable but we're forgetting the folks inside right.

[01:16:18] We're forgetting the young people inside forgetting our communities of color black brown indigenous P.I. folks inside. So I just want to say like abundance my guy my AC which means like heaps and heaps of compassion. Thank you.

[01:16:38] As a parent as a Pacific Islander as a person of community I know we have so much responsibility and like to be able to show up for y'all to thank you. And I also want to say that YOLO you all are worthy of healing and we know that these systems aren't made for us.

[01:17:09] So I just wanted to invite everyone to take a collective breath together. And like including y'all like because this is this is real and this is heavy and this is just it's real. All right. So this was still like a collective inhale. One more

[01:17:34] Thank you. That also helps my nerves. Thanks for joy.

[01:17:42] Yeah I wanted to share. I was asked to share a cultural offering and I've been learning and doing a lot of work around reclamation of language and culture in particular around being tomorrow.

[01:17:54] And what that means and I was doing a lot of reflecting.

[01:17:57] It's funny because some of my friends here know that when I'm called the do speeches I'm usually writing it in right again and already brainstorming in the space.

[01:18:06] But I felt that it was really important to be able to listen to your stories and like to be present for that. And then this is what I was called to do. And I think ancestors are always ever present right.

[01:18:18] And ancestors that want to be harmonious with us being here and this chant it's a lullaby. I want to share is called it cool my. And it's. The color is actually a shell that I don't have with me today.

[01:18:38] But a lot of folks across the Pacific are you shells as I. I like to call the ancestors in but this chant particularly is calling ancestors home. What are the tools in which we're using to call our ancestors home. And it made me think a lot about what are the tools that we're using in community to

bring our young folks that are in the inside home. What are the pathways that we're creating to be able to welcome your home.

[01:19:05] What are the pathways to like destroy this process abolish prisons right. So when I think this that is my offering to think about the ways in which there is so much work to do and to honor the ancestors of people before us and to not forget folks inside and then a quick plug.

[01:19:29] I am the courier network organizer with API hire. I do a lot of queer and trans PRC organizing and we do snack and chats but one of the ideas I've been having is to be able to come together collectively to start writing letters to folks inside detention centers. You know

[01:19:49] Yeah come talk to me after this if you want to be involved in that.

[01:20:13] Why Be cool man. In easy cool Lululemon. Game that man Ning tells me he says oh me. Go. Read my me. My

[01:21:05] Routines. Why me. Lulu. Lulu. Mommy. EE cool Louis. Me. Why. Be cool. Be cool my homie. He fooled me. Why.

[01:21:46] Be cool man.

[01:21:52] No he's cool. No. No.

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