

Interview on Addiction with Liza, a survivor

Hello, my name is Josie and I would like to welcome you back to trauma talks rising from the ashes. A podcast series brought to you by the UB School of Social Work Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care. This series provides an opportunity for individuals to share their witness of how strength and resiliency have allowed them to rise from the ashes. Trauma talks follows people who have worked both in the field of trauma as well as those who have experienced trauma. Here we will reflect on how trauma informed care can assist those who have experienced traumatic events to embrace a new life of wholeness, hope, strength, courage, safety, trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. Today I am here with Liza. Liza is going to share with us her story and experiences with addiction. Liza currently works at Evergreen as a retention support assistant. On behalf of the institute we would like to thank you Liza for being here today and sharing your story with us. So now, I'm going to turn it over to Liza to begin with giving you the audience a little bit about her story.

1:18 **Liza:** Thank you, thank you for having me. My name is Liza I am 49 years old. Port Rican Hispanic woman raised in New York City originally. I was raised by my grandmother. Both my parents were actively drug users at the time so my grandmother raised me and my brother. I was joke with my kids. That we come from a long line, we don't come from a long line of aristocrats. We come from a long line of addicts. I've had uncles that have struggled with addiction. My grandfather died from alcoholism so. It's pretty much something that has been around our family the whole time. I moved here to Buffalo when I was 19 with my second child. And at first I mean I struggled with addiction for 15 years, but at first I kind a got into the business where I was just selling drugs for money. And eventually it got to the point I became my best costumer. It was a slow start for me and it was just kind of weekends kind of partying type of thing for me and then eventually I started almost done everything. I've done cocaine, and pills, and but my real rock bottom was with the heroin and crack cocaine. I ended up leaving my children with family members. And that's kind of was where my bottom started and it just became an everyday thing for me. It was just I lived to use and use to live was pretty much how I lived my life. Every waking moment was about um using drugs. I never really believed there was a way out for me I've talked before about how my dreams and aspirations were to die high. You know I always, both my parents, my father died in 1984 uh he had AIDS when he died. My mother passed away in 2000 she was HIV positive. I myself have been HIV positive for 22 years and that was one of my consequences from using IV drugs, heroin, so. Although there were many I have been to prison a couple of times. I've been to rehabs I don't know how many times. I've done methadone maintenance programs and nothing ever seemed to work for me. I don't know it was it was a struggle it became it got to the point where I didn't care about nothing or no body. I didn't care about myself. I kind of became comfortable in in the way I was living. Being homeless not eating for days, wearing the same clothes for days on end, not having somewhere to shower, not having anywhere to call home. I've been in recovery for 18 years and which is awesome.

4:22 **Josie:** That is awesome.

4:22 **Liza:** And even that has been a struggle in the beginning. I was on parole at the time. I knew when I got out of prison I knew that I didn't tell myself that I wanted to stop getting high, but I told myself that I didn't want to go back to prison. But when I got out and on parole eventually I mean I went back to the same neighborhood, same people, doing the same things, and I ended up using again so. I went to rehab after reporting to parole and took myself to detox. I went to an extensive 90 day treatment program. From there the was still on parole and the offer to go to a halfway house and I was trying to come back to Buffalo at the time to a halfway house. And, I remember my parole officer telling me. "If I found a halfway house on the moon" he would allow me to go there. But I could not come back to Buffalo. So I ended up in Niagara Falls in a halfway house and I mean I guess it's the best thing. I wish I remembered his name and knew where he was at because he actually did me a favor actually taking me out of that environment and, and putting me in something different where. Even in the halfway house I was able to like relearn things. Like everyday simple things like making my bed. Learning how to just be responsible, just simple things like that, that I kind of lost track of when I was out there on the street. So I'm really grateful to him. Yeah, I mean I made a decision to stay up there in Niagara Falls and worked different kind of jobs, because I'm part time, I'm a convicted felon, so although I have experience, once we I have had the experience we are going through the application in an interviews going great and they get to that question have you ever been convicted of a felony and everything changes for the worst. But I don't know. I just kept pushing forward and, and pushing through. I was able to build me a one of the requirements was for me to build a 12 steps narcotics anonymous meetings, which is something that I still do today. Even though I really didn't trust them. I really didn't believe that all these people could actually be clean that was like unheard of to me. To have so many addicts in one room together and nobody be using. I don't know, I just kept going there and doing some of the things that were required of me. Something just changed along the way. I started making decision about going to school and I got a really good job at a supermarket and got an injury and couldn't go back. So I made a decision to go back to college. Which sometimes I don't know how I survived that. I mean literally on many days I remember walking across campus and just crying like literally crying and hating myself because this was something I could have done when I was younger and kind of let fall by the way side. I told myself you know you survived the streets and prison, I think you can survive Buff State. So I kind of persevered and pushed forward and pushed through and I was able to graduate in May. Right before I graduated, I was blessed with a job at Evergreen as one of the peers there. My job there is, I tell people; I get paid to give people experience, strength, and hope, that's what I do. I tell people my story, I help link them to services, but I find that when I am able to give them that shared life experience that it gives people hope. You know and, and they tend to come back for services. There are so many people out there whether it's Hep C or HIV or just regular primary care that don't come in for medical care. Mind you I went to school for marketing so my degree is in marketing, I don't know. I have been at Evergreen for 18 months now and along the way there was this opportunity through the AIDs Institute in New York State where they want to recognize peers. Because they find, and It's all part of the ending the epidemic for 2020 that they find that peers play a big part in getting people into treatment and keeping them into treatment. I was able to I did a lot of work in the last year. Lots of trainings and traveling and I'm not complaining about the traveling, going all over the place Syracuse, New York, Albany, and taking different courses and trainings where now I'm certified as a peer through the state so that's kind of nice. Also through the LTI mentoring training program the Leadership Training Institute I'm a training mentor

for people. I have 3 mentees where I have 3 women that are HIV positive. And it's just kind of showing them how to set goals and helping them along the way to reach their goals. Along with that I've just been asked and signed on to be a spokes model with the HIV stops with me campaign which is very exciting for me. You might see my face on a bus somewhere or a billboard and that's gonna be nice. Yeah so I'm doing that, I don't know it's that's just a little kind of my story of where I've been and where I'm at today.

9:49 **Josie:** Absolutely. Thank you so much that is incredible to hear. And where it all started and where you are now. So as you've been talking I can tell that some of the things you have experienced maybe sometimes you might have benefited is how important it is to be tuned in to certain values, certain principles. And the 5 principles of trauma informed care are safety, choice, trust, collaboration, and empowerment. What trauma informed care does is it asks individuals and services providers to stop asking what is wrong with the person and move toward asking what has happened to this person. And Falloot and Harris talk a lot about those 5 guiding principles as being the tools that service providers can use to provide a more trauma informed practice and a more trauma informed environment. So, I'm curious to know about your experiences with those 5 values. So start with safety. And so I'm curious in your experience in a lot of systems, you're in the criminal justice system, you're in several different rehab and detox systems, and also the medical system in terms of dealing with HIV status. So I'm curious to know within some of those, what part did safety play in allowing you to be able to seek help?

11:27 **Liza:** That was a big part more so with the HIV piece for me actually Evergreen used to be considered it used to be called AIDS community services. So were talking about 20 years ago that I walked into the door so. Because it took a while before I was even, I remember being diagnosed through the needle exchange program at Columbus hospital at the time on Niagara Street in Buffalo here. I remember hearing the news and getting up and leaving. And, and the woman telling me no we have some things to discuss and my answer was there is nothing to discuss. Because for me at that time people died that's it. You got diagnosed you're gonna die so there was nothing to discuss. For me going into get treatment it took me awhile to be able to feel safe to disclose even to someone in a medical profession. Because my thing was because the stigma that is behind that. There was stigma already being a drug addict, and using drugs, and being a felon all that. People tend to not trust you, people don't want you around them. And, and to have that, and to have been around when the epidemic first started in the 80's and to see what happened. It was scary for me. So it was something I held on to you know until, eventually it was I needed to get treatment. I took a leap of faith and, and I walked into medical facility. I said listen I am HIV positive and I need treatment. It was just kind of something I did on the blind that eventually needed to be done or I really was going to die. But it plays a big part for me. Even still for me today I think maybe 5 years ago and I went to see an eye doctor and there was this minor thing he needed to do with my eye. And because I didn't put my status on my paperwork because I wanted to discuss it with him in person he was very, the animosity that he showed against me. And I'm thinking really still today? You know and it's still happening, it's still happening. You know I've kind of grown to have a thick skin I'm at the point in my life, you know I'm 49 years old I really don't care what you say about me or what you think. I realize the people that matter and the people that are important are the onset that are in my life. So I'm willing to give someone some education if they need it but. I

think for me and I see with other people that this safety that's a big thing because there are still people hurting people because there drug addicts or their homeless or because they are HIV positive. So.

14:21 **Josie:** Absolutely, and safety definitely plays directly into the second principle being trust. And you've spoken to that a bit in terms of other individuals not trusting you because of your history or because of your status. I'm also curious what your experience was trusting some of those service providers that you interacted with? Whether that was your parole officer whether that was staff at the halfway house. I'm wondering did how did you know you could trust those providers?

15:02 **Liza:** With the providers and the half way houses and that we got to the point just with the laws of confidentiality and that kind of was my, my security blanket was I need to speak to them and divulge this information. And if it got out of here I knew I had something to fight with because of the confidentiality laws and now HIPPA and all of that. But it took a long time just from being in the streets. I come from not trusting anybody and every day watching my back only because of the things I had been doing on the street. So to come into a prison system you don't trust anybody and that's the culture. You don't trust anybody. If somebody is being really nice to you or giving you food or something in the prison system they're gonna want a piece of you, you know. I remember walking in for the first time into Bedford Hills and it's a maximum prison for women and being terrified and not just kind of staying to myself until I ran into a long lost cousin in there. Then I felt a little safer because she took me under her wing because she was a pro at it I guess. But that you know that wasn't her first time in there, but really learning the ropes and learning what to do and what not to do. And what was allowed on the street. In the halfway house all through I think it was a process. I think it was a process of me changing? I had to change who I was in order to allow people in and just open up. And the fact that I've learned that I don't trust people because I didn't really trust myself. That was the reality of it. Once I started doing something different with my life and living a different way it just became easier to open up and trust people. And now it's like, it's ok I have a sense of security. I don't know if it's because my life has changed and my life has shifted? I've been blessed enough to have my children back in my life, and watch my daughter graduate high school and graduate college and be there for all of that. My daughter walked watch her walk down the aisle and grandchildren and yeah so it has all been a process. Still relationships are kinda hard with the opposite sex only because that, that's a, always a hard area and there are always trust issues there. But at the end of the day I know that it doesn't really matter whether it does or it doesn't work out like I'm a good person, I have a good heart, I'm living a different life. So I'm worthy, I'm loveable, so eventually I believe in a higher power in my life and In God He is going to place the right person in my life. It has definitely been a process. I had a doctor one time at ECME and I forget his name but I remember you know because medication has gotten a lot simpler with one pill a day from where I used to take 13 pills a day and they kind of played Russian roulette with the pills. Well let's try this cocktail and no that's not working and let's try this and it's combinations and I remember having this new doctor and he walked in and he had boat shoes, khakis, a Hawaiian shirt and a scrub hat on. And I thought to myself Jesus I'm gonna die because he just looked cause he just looked, first impression was just like holy cow they just let anyone work here was my thought. And but I come to find out he was a great doctor what he did he was an expert. It could just be little things like that that there is always that defense mechanism that I have from being in the street that doesn't go anywhere

you know it's always there. In that definite moment of urgency, it will pop up, it will pop up, but yeah, it was definitely a process. To get there.

19:35 **Josie:** To go from like you said living in a circumstance where you didn't have a lot of trust in yourself, much less other people, so to really break down those walls to be able to be vulnerable both to who you are and to other people that is a long journey. It sounds like it's been really amazing. With a lot of very eccentric doctors and great people

20:03 **Liza:** yeah, but I think also just looking back even before the drugs there was trust issues because my parents didn't raise me so I, I literally grew up thinking I wasn't good enough because my own parents didn't want me. So just not trusting anyone would ever be there for me. You know I still have this fear in the back of my mind that when my time comes to pass on I will die alone. And it's just that little voice in the back of my head I have to turn off sometimes. Yeah that comes from way back when.

20:39 **Josie:** Absolutely Right, those are like you said. Those don't necessarily dissipate they don't just disappear. So the next principle is choice and I'm curious about how you did and didn't experience in choice and input when it came to your treatment? So whether that was, I know you said you went to a few different rehabs and you also spend time at the halfway house did you feel you were given a choice or an ability to influence your course of treatment?

21:24 **Liza:** No not in the beginning. In prison I was given medication. Although I was aware of what I was on when I was out and I informed them they were. Well no this is what you are getting and this is what you take type of thing. Coming home it kind of got a little better. In a rehab you only have so much say you unknown they have nurses there. At least in the rehab they made sure that I went to my medical appointments. They even made it a point that I was told about a support group that was in Niagara Falls once a week and they would allow me to go from rehab to that support group which was kind of nice. I don't know I think that more now because I am more knowledge. I know I have the right to speak up. Culture kind of plays a part too. As a Latina woman, I remember my grandmother telling me I needed to learn how to iron for my husband because have to iron his boxer shorts. I am here to tell you I have not been married yet. I have never been married and I remember thinking I'll never be married, but being raised in a way that is submissive to our husband and you do what they say. You know the man's always been the authority figure so to be given male doctors. I almost felt like I didn't have a right to speak up for myself. I think it may be just a learned thing. Where now I'm at the point that I don't care what you say I'm going to speak up for myself, because I've got more I have more education, I have more knowledge, more experience, and maybe it's because maybe the field that I'm in too maybe from the courses for this peer thing I've learned about you have to be your own voice and learning how to advocate for yourself. And don't be scared to speak up when something is wrong or something is not working. Just because it's a medical provider or someone in charge does not necessarily mean that it's going to work for me because everybody is different. Like at Evergreen we tend to meet people where they are. I think that's the piece that the education piece and the knowledge piece has allowed me to be more voisterous.

23:59 **Josie:** Absolutely.

24:02 **Liza:** The fact that I don't want to get comfortable in any situation where I want to settle. It's something I have always done. I've always settled for less and never thought I would be anything or anybody. SO I have this goal and this vision where I want to push forward. Thus the peer certification, the LTI, the HIV stops with me campaign, and so I'm trying to get involved things that has almost given me this high point of freedom. So it's really interesting to watch myself

24:36 **Josie:** Grow leaps and bounds.

24:43 **Liza:** It's been something

24:43 **Josie:** Absolutely. It's so interesting what I hear you saying. There wasn't a tremendous amount of choice in your treatment and even so like you said you were already something of a disadvantage having not necessarily been acculturated to demanding choice or even expecting it. Right? And it was not provided readily. So it was really a double whammy there in making choice a not very prominent part until you learned what you deserve as a consumer, as a peer, and as a person.

25:25 **Liza:** Yeah even not knowing that I had the power of choice. I was in a physically abusive relationship with my son's father for years where today it's, it's different. Again like I said I don't have to settle, I have the power to get up and leave. And if it gets really bad I have 911 and they can help me too. You know? I was raised you don't call the police. You know my mother instilled that in me. If people come looking for me you don't know where I am because of the lifestyle she led. So you didn't talk to the police. You didn't confide in them. Now I would call the police in a minute I don't care. So Yeah

26:13 **Josie:** Absolutely, that you just mentioned your son and your kids. I'm curious in terms of the next principle which is collaboration. You've mentioned you've been able to reconnect with family and I know that you are still currently very involved in your recovery. You still attend NA meetings and really foster that for yourself. And collaboration has to do with team work. Using providers and family around you and so I'm wondering how the involvement of family went they came back in in your recovery and in your continued dedication to growth and health.

26:54 **Liza:** My middle daughter did not know about my HIV status until she was about 16. My step daughter is 17 and I just divulged to her. My older daughter is 30 and she's known since she was young and my son is 32 and he's known for a while also. I don't think that was an issue the HIV it was the more of staying clean piece and recovery piece. It's been a process because it was repetitive to the in and out of jails and the prisons and the, I'll stay clean for a while and then I fall back. And that was always my pattern, so it took time for them to I think once they seen it and it wasn't me talking about what I was doing and me becoming more family oriented. And not kind of just little by little inching my way back into their lives. I wouldn't be able to do it by myself. Like I know that this is not something I can do by myself. My recovery I cannot do by myself, my health I cannot do by myself. I have a brother and it's just me and him, a lot of the elders in my family has passed on I've got a couple uncles and a couple aunts and a ton of cousins but everybody knows and everybody is so supportive. I have a cousin in New York City and she's like "I'm your biggest fan" like you know she always lights up when I tell her what I'm doing or what I'm into or you know and comes down from New York by the bus load for achievements and stuff like that. And it's nice I've always felt, even as a child, felt alone even with such a

big family and always felt alone in a crowd of people almost like I didn't belong now they call me DJ Cali because I like to take control. My nieces and nephews have been calling me that for years and I finally figured out what it meant.

29:11 **Josie:** I've never heard that

29:11 **Liza:** Yeah DJ Cali is in the house. And I was like why do you keep saying that and cause you are always trying to control everything. But it's been about getting more family oriented in family dinners and Thanksgiving. And I remember my first Thanksgiving and when we bought our home and standing in the corner and just watching everybody just been there and feeling I'm so grateful to be alive today and clean and recovery and to be able to witness, I'm a part today I'm a part of their lives. Today they are calling me saying mommy what do you think and what about this? And what about that? I need you for this and, and it's nice. Cause I remember when my brother told me one time that he used to drive passed me on the west side of Buffalo cause he didn't want to acknowledge me or even see how I was living. So it has been very important. I have built a network of people in recovery that have been oh my God. They have been instrumental things are shifting in my relationship and there is something in me that cries for love still. Even just with just a man that negative stuff creeps up especially in that area they've been so instrumental in doing holding me down and allowing me to be open and free and allowing me to talk whatever especially on those days if I feel like using, they are not many, but they pop up. where to hell with this what's the point and to be able to tell somebody listen this is where I'm at and they be like girl you crazy we going to the meeting and were going to hang out and we'll go to a recovery dance and they stick close to me and they hold on to me that's what we do. People at work oh my God they know my story for the first time in my life. I have a job and the fact that I'm a convicted felon and I'm HIV positive and that got me in the door, that's amazing! Like I don't have to worry about what I talk about. I am free to be me. And that has been amazing. I have never worked anywhere like that. There is a sense of freedom when I walk in that building and it's just, I love it, I love it, so where I'm at today I wouldn't change it for anywhere in the world.

31:48 **Josie:** Oh I bet that's beautiful I can only imagine what an asset you are to people that then come into Evergreen with their own stories and are then able to connect and it's normalized and their supported and they get that community. Great. The last principle is empowerment. I know you mentioned that when you were staying in the halfway house especially. That you were just starting to just relearn how to do some things for yourself. It sounded like you started to feel that autonomy and that ability again. I can do these daily skills. I'm wondering do you remember what that process was like or things that helped to foster that for you?

32:36 **Liza:** I didn't, at first in the beginning it was more like people just telling me what to do right? I spend some almost 6 months in that halfway house and I went to supportive living which is more independent. You know where there wasn't anybody really telling me what to do or when to do it. Everything we have talked about in my life has just been a process like I really don't know when things changed or when, it's not even so much as I said I think I'm going to stick this out. I'm going to stay here. I remember being in the halfway house and I remember walking into the halfway house walking into rehab and saying you know January 3rd 1999 I'll be done with parole and I'm going to get high. So I was

kind of faking it to make it was really what I was doing in the beginning. I don't know it's almost like somebody turned on the light for me finally. and I can see for the first time in my life I was actually living life I was waking up, I was cooking breakfast, making bed, oh I got laundry, I had chores, I was keeping my schedule, all those little things I learned where still today they are helpful to me. And there just and people will say oh my God those are just basic everyday things, but I lost that. I lost basic living skills. I lost that, it wasn't that I wasn't taught to me you know that I lost it along the way and it was relearning everything. So. It's just been kind of interesting to me. I kind of have this drive and I kind of explain it like, I remember being at my lowest of the low and still having that drive to get out there and do whatever I needed to do to get that one more fix. Right? That's a job in itself. Even though you aren't getting paid for it, it's job. You get up you hit the streets you do what you have to do it's an everyday all day all night ongoing thing right? So somehow I've taken that that drive that passion that I had for the drug and I turned it to the positive side. Where I use that drive and that passion to surround my positive people with people that are doing positive things. Where people are I want to do that, I want to do that, like I want to do that, like even with this campaign. I remember watching even when it first started people that went out there and people said I'm HIV positive we need better medical care and we want people to acknowledge us and we need this and we want this and fighting for what they want. I remember thinking oh I wish I could do that. Like I didn't have the nerve to do that. Like I didn't have the push or the drive or it was hard, it was hard as a kid you know. My grandma raised us on social services and she did a hell of a job she always made sure we had everything we needed. We always had food on the table we always had clothes she had drive she had passion she took care of her family. Even my mother and her in own way family was first. You know even though she didn't raise us there were times where you know she showed up and every Easter we went to the circus. You know there were things that we always did that were constant with her. I think it's the addict in me. I need to be wowed! I think so and people laugh at me when I say that. But I need real excitement I need I need that high off of life. That's almost what it's like for me.

36:33 **Josie:** Yeah.

36:35 **Liza:** It's a high off of life. I took a trip with my daughter. My daughter graduated from college and the other one was turning 16 and I said let's do a girls trip let's take a cruise. We took a cruise and we go snorkeling. I don't know how to swim, I can't swim. So I you know and God plays a big part in my life. I believe in God, I don't go to church, I've never read the Bible, but there has to be a higher power working in my life. I'm still here to talk about some things so there has to be. So we were going to go snorkeling and you know were at the ledge and he wants us to jump in off this cliff and I'm like did he just say jump? And she was like don't do it just back out. I said Oh hell no. I did not come all the way to Cozumel to quit now right? I remember thinking I'm just going to go for I want to do those things that I've never done before that I've always dreamed about or that I've heard other people talk about. So I'm like ok. I said a quick prayer I said ok God. I know you didn't bring me all the way to Cozumel to let me die. I'm going in. and I jumped in and, and you know they give you the vest and all that. It's, it's just the little things in life it's, it's so amazing you know and we just did a second cruise and I don't know I don't know I just I'm just I just have this drive to live my life it's almost like I'm trying to catch up on missed time I wasted 15, 20 years of my life. I'm 49 years old I'm gonna be 50 next month. Like I'm so excited

people are like oh you tell your age. I was like hell yeah! I'm look at me. I have 7 grandkids I look great you know. Um but I never dreamed that I would live past 35. So I've got a second chance at life and you know I'm going to ride this thing out and there's a lot things out there to do and a lot of places and people that are willing to help and there's just stuff out there and I'm just seeking it. The way I used to seek the drug I'm just seeking my life now. So

38:48 **Josie:** Yeah, it seems like really soak in that positive and that empowerment not from not just people but experiences and the emotions and the energy around you. That's awesome.

39:03 **Liza:** Yeah.

39:03 **Josie:** Cool. So for a last question there may be some people who are listening who are either facing addiction or facing an HIV status in some way or some people maybe who are providers for those folks that are in recovery or trying to get there or dealing with a positive HIV status. So do you have any final words on why you feel these principles we've talked about are so important?

(39:35) **Liza:** I was told a long time ago I needed to find one person who believed in me. And someone who would stand by me no matter what. And I've been able to find a few one persons in my life so if there are people that are struggling with the HIV status like there are so many of us out here that are willing to help. And you would be surprised like there are so many people out here showing love and are willing to help with whether it's trying to find the right doctor, or housing, or trying to um disclose to family members there are so many services and it's all about it's kind of like just stepping out on a leap of faith and just being willing to cause at the end of the day, no one can take our lives but there's so much hope out there we just gotta go out there and grab it. Because it's out there for us. People in recovery, I know people in recovery that struggle and fortunately relapse is not a part of my story, but relapse does have the same thing you cannot stay clean by ourselves. We have to I think it all goes hand and hand. It's about people who identify with us with what we've been through and what we are feeling, with what we're not feeling. And latching on to those people the positive ones allowing others to show us the way. That's what it is. It's about allowing us and that's what's hard allowing others to show us the way. Cause we've been doing this alone for so long. But to try to let people know they are not alone. You know and for a provider, don't give up like don't give up on people. There's always hope. Like if someone like me can make it like anybody can make it. You know I know people who have been homeless and, and drug addiction for 20-30 years. And they are clean now you know. And, and so don't give up on them. I heard a medical provider stating about somebody else oh they're a lost cause. No weren't not a lost cause because that can be your child or that can be somebody's family member or whatever. I mean were all just human beings I think we all to look out for each other and take care of each other. But I know that whoever it is. Whether you are struggling or you're in the field or you know you're a student at UB, reach out, reach out to people you see struggling, reach out. I don't care if it's the bum on the street if it's just a hello. You don't know what impact you make on people. It can just be a simple conversation with people and that can make a big difference in their lives so you know I don't judge, I don't try and take advantage of people I try to help I don't let people walk all over me but I try to help to the best of my ability. And it's just showing people some hope no matter what they may be.

42:44 **Josie:** That's beautiful. Thank you. Oh behalf of the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care. I'd like to thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us today and share your story and your witness of strength and resiliency. It's been a pleasure.

43:00 **Liza:** Thank you.