

Crystal Sandoval – interview conducted on 8-8-2023

Wed, Nov 01, 2023 2:59PM • 58:21

Marty Dormish 00:05

So I am here today on Tuesday, August 8th, 2023, with my friend Crystal, who has generously agreed to do an interview with me. So, my name is Marty Dormish, and I am conducting, I believe this is my fourth interview, fourth of 10 or 12, with some of my friends who come to the Refuge Cafe and who are live in the Broomfield community. And so, Crystal, thank you for taking time to talk with me.

Crystal Sandoval 00:43

No problem.

Marty Dormish 00:50

So, let's just start with the basics. First of all, you can go by Crystal for the purposes of this interview, or you can share your full name or whatever you feel comfortable with.

Crystal Sandoval 00:57

Crystal is fine.

Marty Dormish 00:59

Okay, so, Crystal, can you tell me just about your life or any general biographical details that you would like for people to know about you?

Crystal Sandoval 01:13

When I was younger?

Marty Dormish 01:17

It could be from anywhere when you were younger or...

Crystal Sandoval 01:18

Oh, okay. I've been married twice.

Marty Dormish 01:21

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 01:22

The first one, he found I was pregnant with Christopher. So, he took, he took off on me.

Marty Dormish 01:35

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 01:36

And we've been, like, writing letters back and forth. He was the name, I said, for his new [? Jean?].

Marty Dormish 01:46

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 01:43

And I, I didn't create with him, so I named my son Christopher Thomas Morton.

Marty Dormish 01:49

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 01:50

And then, finally, I got rid of him. And then, I got married second time, and this guy was a druggie and, and he just got out of prison. And I told him, it's me or the drugs. So, I guess he picked me because he didn't do no drugs after we got together after we got married.

Marty Dormish 02:20

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 02:21

Just weed, weed and drinking. And so, we've been together for 20, got married for 21 years. And then, he passed away. And for the last part of his life, I went through a lot of problems with it.

Marty Dormish 02:42

This was when he was sick, or?

Crystal Sandoval 02:43

Yeah, when he was sick, because I would go to work in my day job, and I'm over there taking, taking him to the doctors, traveling all the way to Denver from Lafayette, and just, it's, it's something every day.

Marty Dormish 03:00

Yeah.

Crystal Sandoval 03:01

And the last five days of his life really got to me, because this guy wouldn't settle down. He knew every time I um...

Marty Dormish 03:17

Can you share his first name?

Crystal Sandoval 03:20

His real name is Albert.

Marty Dormish 03:23

Albert. Thank you.

Crystal Sandoval 03:24

Sandoval. But he likes to go by Ben because, when he was younger, his mom and dad left him at the hospital because, and then, he found that his real dad's name is Albert, and he don't want to have nothing to do with it, so he changed his name to Ben.

Marty Dormish 03:44

Okay, so we should call him Ben?

Crystal Sandoval 03:45

Ben.

Marty Dormish 03:4

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 03:46

So, so, anytime I put Ben to bed, I go, okay, maybe I can take a little break. And then, I go sit on the couch, and I close my eyes and open my eyes, there he is, walking again. He wouldn't settle down. And I asked him, "What are you looking for?" And he said, "I'm looking for the door." "What door are you looking for? You know, what are you looking for?" He said, "I'm looking for a door." And I'm like, "What door?" and it really got me really confused. And then, and then, he fell. He was on hospice, and the third time he fell I thought, each time that he fell, I called hospice, and they come out and check him out. So the last time he fell, they said, "Do you want us to take him to our center? We got a center he can go, and we can watch him there." I'm like, "Thank God, please yes!" So I can least get a rest because I was up with him for like four days . . .

Marty Dormish:

Mmm-hmm.

Crystal Sandoval: . . .

just because he wouldn't relax, he won't lay down, all day and all night. So, so, when he finally went to the center and I went to go see him, he was still kind of like, but they came and gave him a shot and kind of, like, relaxed him.

Marty Dormish 05:28

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 05:31

And, okay, so the next day I went there, and I told his friend where he's gonna be, and so his friend came and visit, and visit Ben, and Ben, Ben was in and out of stages. So one time he woke up, and he like, "It's so beautiful. You need to come with me, Crystal," and I like, "No." I go, I didn't know what to say. And then he went, and he was, like, in a different, other world. Like, I asked, "What're you talking about?" He said, "He wants you to go with him." I'm, I'm like, "I'm not going, I'm not ready to go yet." And it puzzled me, I'm like, "What is beautiful? What's he looking for?" It didn't dawn on me until the day he died that he was looking for the Heaven. The Heaven door.

Marty Dormish 06:42

Yeah.

Crystal Sandoval 06:43

And so, I like, okay, so the next day I ran, because he wasn't doing nothing, just laying there and I like, well, I need to go do other things, you know. So the next day I went there, and he goes, "I just want to go home Crystal," and I, "Well go home, go home." And so, so I'm at home, and I was talking to his preacher, his, his boss was an ex-preacher, but he got out the preacher business and went to a janitor job, and he was talking to me, he said, "You know what he really was looking for, Crystal?" And I like, "No," and he's like, "He's looking for the Heaven, the Heaven door. He was looking for a door to go in. Y tell him to go home, so we'll see." And I go, okay. So the next morning I was gonna get up early, to go out to go see him. He's in Boulder, and I'm in Lafayette. And I like, okay. I get up early, I make my coffee, I make breakfast, and then, somebody came at the door, asked me questions about Ben. And I was talking to them for a little bit, and then I go, oh I need to get going. And it was 7:05. My phone rang, and they told me he just passed.

Marty Dormish 08:26

Wow.

Crystal Sandoval 08:27

And I went, man, if that person didn't come to my door, I could've been there when he passed away. But maybe it was lucky I didn't go. And I was, and so I called my sister, and so, we went to go get, go see him together for the last time. And, and, so I guess I was shocked because two days after, it was my 55th birthday, and I didn't realize it was my birthday, and I was like, I guess I was still in shock. but I knew he was going to go. But I was still in shock.

Marty Dormish 09:16

Mmm-hmm.

Crystal Sandoval:

So . . .

Marty Dormish:

That's quite a story.

Crystal Sandoval 09:17

Yeah.

Marty Dormish 09:18

So, that was about six years ago?

Crystal Sandoval 09:19

Seven years.

Marty Dormish 09:20

Seven years ago. Okay. And so, where did you grow up?

Crystal Sandoval 09:27

I grew up, okay, I was born in Delta, Colorado. We lived there until, like, I was seven years old.

Marty Dormish 09:37

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 09:38

So my mom, she's, she's wanting to go to college to be a teacher. And so she, so, we moved to Boulder, Colorado. She went to the university over there. And she passed, she, the student, GED classes. And so, we grew there, I grew up there until I was like 16, 17, something like that. And so, my dad had a friend that lived in Missouri, and so my dad went out and visited him. He came out and he like, okay, I bought, I got a place, I want to buy this place, I want to move there. And so he moved all of us over here, over there.

Marty Dormish 10:35

Where in Missouri?

Crystal Sandoval 10:36

In Missouri.

Marty Dormish 10:37

What, where in Missouri?

Crystal Sandoval 10:38

It was called Quitman.

Marty Dormish 10:39

Quitman?

Crystal Sandoval 10:40

Quitman.

Marty Dormish 10:41

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 10:42

Q-U-I-T-M-A-N. Quitman.

Marrty Dormish 10:47

Okay.

Crystal Sandoval 10:48

And it was like, only 65 people live there.

Marrty Dormish 10:54

That's pretty small.

Crystal Sandoval 10:55

I was like, What? And I go, where are we gonna go school and all this?" And we had to drive like 10 miles to go to school. And I didn't know how to drive, so I took the school bus. And I graduate there, and I think it was only like, 30 people graduate. I mean, like, no, maybe about 20 people graduate from my class. It was a small class.

Marrty Dormish 11:31

So how'd you find your way back to Colorado?

Crystal Sandoval 11:33

So, so, I after, and then after that, my dad died. And I was working at a nursing home and one day I came home, my dad was like, was down and out, and I like, "What's going on?" He's like, "I can't afford my medicine." I just got paid, so I just turned around, signed my name, and handed the check to my dad. He said, "You don't have to do that." I go, "Why? You're my dad and I take care of you."

He said, "Well I asked your sister and I asked you brother, I asked the rest of the family if they can help me. They said they couldn't help me."

I go, "Here, take my check and go get medicine."

Well, two weeks later he passed away. And so when he passed away, everybody was like, I was like really down and out because I'm his, I was his girl. He told me all kinds of things - how to plant grass, how to do this, how to do that, how to do, he was like, we liked working as a team.

And so when he passed, everybody was like joking around and all that. I didn't feel like joking around or nothing.

And that was, I just took off and I went crying in my room. And my sister goes, "What is wrong?" "I don't know what your all laughing about, you know." Here I am 19, I don't know too much. But like really is, because 19 you're just getting up there, right?

And so because I, I didn't date, I didn't, so my sister says, It's okay, don't worry about it. Everybody's just joking around. They're good memories. Like oh, okay, good memories.

And so I, so I went in there and enjoyed it and all that.

Then so the (inaudible) came everybody left and it was just me, my mom, my brother, and my baby sister at home.

14:25

And so, I went to work. My sister finished her, her school.

And when she graduated, my brother came out and he go, "Do you want to babysitting?"

"I don't know. I don't want to see the kids."

So he asked my baby sister and she said, Yeah I'll go do it". So she went and I, how am I going to get back to Colorado?

So my sister was having problems. She had eight kids. And I go, "Can I get, can I go over there and help you with the kids?"

Marty 15:17

So you had a different sister who was in Colorado too?

Chrystal 15:21

Right, I had three sisters and two brothers.

Marty 15:27

Okay. And where was she in Colorado?

Crystal 15:32

She was in Denver.

So I went there and then...so I watched the kids play while she was messing around.

Because she was with her and...but I was helping her, like, cooking. It take 10 pounds a potato to feed the kids.

Marty 16:04

The whole family.

Crystal 16:06

One night.

Marty 16:06

That's a lot.

Crystal 16:06

She was getting over \$2,000 in food stamps.

Marty 16:11

Wow.

Crystal 16:11

And by the end of two weeks, after- in one week, one week before she get food stamps, she was running out of food. So...I, like, okay, you got eight kids, you going to have to feed these guys. And, and see, oh, I know. I don't know what to do. So we're just making popcorn, anything we can find. And we went to the food bank, and I live(?) and and so, so she finally met somebody. And he came in and and so I like, "Okay, maybe I can get a job and see if I can help more." So, when I found a job, one day, I was trying to get home and I met this guy, Christopher's dad, Richard. And, we got hooked together, was dating. And he was buying me all kinds of things, he was doing all kinds of things, working. And the day we said, "I do," he did 190 on me, and he went crazy on me.

Marty 17:37

So, how old were you then?

Crystal 17:40

22? 23, because then I got pregnant. And when I was 24, I had Chris.

Marty 17:53

So that's how you got back to Colorado, and then you ended up in Lafayette, which is where you were with Ben?

Crystal 18:01

Well, so I lived in Denver still, and I was living in low income housing. And that was a little problem there, too. But that was another story. So I, one day, I was home. My phone rang. It was my friend, Susan Joe. I was like, "So, what's up?" She like, "Oh, nothing. I'm going to get out tomorrow." I go, "Oh. Okay." And so she said, "I have a problem. I get this guy, he wants to find his brother." I'm like "Okay, let me talk to her. So, he gave me his name and his phone number. And, and so I like okay, well, I'll go see if I can find him. So, I let the phone number in his name there. It said Ben Sandoval, and then his phone number. And I like, "I'm not going to call find this guy. This is not me." And I said no, and it was bugging me. It was like eating at me. No, I don't want to do it. But I said, "Fine." I grabbed the paper, and I like, "Okay, let's go find this guy." I was babysitting two kids and like, okay, so all three, so all four of us, me, Christopher, and the two kids, all walked down there. And I got to the store, and I was

getting ready to knock, but he opened the door, and he like, "Oh hey, how are you?" I like, "Are you Ben Sandoval?" And he go, "Yeah." I like, "Your brother wanted me to come and check you out because he hasn't heard from you for two months." He's like, "Oh, okay. Well, I can't because my car is broke down. I can't go out. I was like, "Okay, well, I got a car if you want to, on your days off, you can come, and we can, I can take you there."

Marrty 20:26

So, you can visit your friend to, who are there?

Crystal 20:31

No, she was out.

Marrty 20:32

Oh, she was out.

Crystal 20:33

And so he came on Saturday. We went there to visit his brother, came back in. So Ben go, "You want to come in?" And I'm like "No, no thank you, I'll pass." And he go, "Okay." The next morning my mom called and she go, "What are you doing today?" I'm like, "I'm not doing anything." No, this was on Monday. I like, "Nothing, why?" She go, "I want you to come and help me take my car to your brother's shop." Because he was a mechanic. And so I go, "Okay, no problem." So I got there, and I took her car and tow it to my brother's shop, and then realized it was only like a block away from where Ben lived. And I like, "Wait a minute." So I like, I go, "Maybe I go see if I can find him." So I went to go see if I can find him. So I went and I found him. He was coming around with a van. There was somebody who was driving him in a van. And he go, "Hey, girl, come over." So I like, "Oh my god, okay, I'm almost there." So I went there and was talking, and his van and his friend left. And he got a part for his car, so he can work on it. So he was working on his car, and I like, "Well, I need, I need to go see my mom's car is ready." And he go, "Okay, I'll be right here if you need me, if you want to come talk to me again." And I went, and my mom's car's not ready yet. So like, I don't want to stay here around the shop. So I went back and talked to Ben. And all of a sudden, we were moving in together because he was getting ready to get kicked out of where he lived. He didn't have much, so he asked me to help him move. So I went in his room, went in his apartment. He only had like two pans, two bowls, two plates, and a bunch of his clothes, that's all he had. And so, like...

Marrty 23:00

So, you two had your love.

Crystal 23:04

And so, no, not yet.

Marrty 23:07

Not yet.

Crystal 23:14

And so, he came to live with me, and he says he's really fallen in love with me. And I'm like, "Really?" I didn't really love this guy. But I love him, but I wasn't in love with him.

Marty 23:28

Okay. And how old were you at this point?

Crystal 23:30

32?

Marty 23:35

32. Okay, and this was in Denver? Yeah, no.

Crystal 23:40

Yeah. Yeah, 32 because Christopher was eight.

Marty 23:45

Okay, so, um, so let's fast forward at this point.

Crystal 23:52

Okay, my time is up?

Marty 23:56

So, those are the stories of your relationships that you had and how you found your way back to Colorado. So from the point when Ben passed away, and by the way, what was his condition that he died from?

Crystal 24:10

Yeah, he had hepatitis C, diabetes, and COPD? Or CO-

Marty 24:17

COPD?

Crystal 24:19

Right.

Marty 24:20

Okay. So, upper respiratory breathing condition. Yeah. Okay. So he passed away. And this was six years ago.

Crystal 24:34

Seven.

Marty 24:35

Seven years ago. And that was when you lived in Lafayette?

Crystal 24:40

Yes.

Marrty 24:41

Okay. And so then tell me about your connection to Broomfield. What brought you to Broomfield? How long have you been connected to Broomfield?

Crystal 24:49

So when I was living in Lafayette, they had a house, and I found out my husband, we'd already been there for like 20 years, and then my, then I found out my husband took out a second loan for 40, 40 years.

Marrty 25:17

A 40 year loan. A second mortgage.

Crystal 25:19

Well, it's the first one, but I don't know how, I don't know how that goes. So it was, it's 40 years. I'm like, By the time I get done paying for this, I'll be in my nineties. I don't want to pay this all my life. And so, but in the meantime, my refrigerator was broken. I didn't have no dryer, washer and dryer, things were leaking, I was ___ milling with a house. The backyard was old _____. I like, "I can't do this, I need to get out of this." And so next summer, I just like, "Okay, let everything fall apart." The dishwasher, everything was falling apart, and we got through the winter. And so it was, like, spring, and then I'm like, "I can't do this. I can't take this under. I can't afford rent, and I can't afford buying new appliances and all this." So like, I sold my house. I go, "I need to get away from here because I know I don't want to live 40 years in his house. I don't want to make payments." I already lived 20 years there. I don't want to live another 40 more years there.

Marrty 26:51

So, you sold the house...

Crystal 26:53

So when everything was falling apart, and I couldn't get it. So yeah, so, so I sold my house and and so I didn't have nowhere to go, I like, because, the rent. So me, my cat, my son, and my brother went and lived with my sister. And that was a big mistake. But my brother, he say, since he's handicap, he decided to go to a nursing home. And so my sister and her husband like, "We're gonna move this house into this apartment, but you have to pay 1300, while we pay 600. I go "Why? Because there's two of you and there's two of us. That's not, that's not even," and so me and Chris was talking, and we like, "No, we're not gonna move in with you guys." So we decided to pack up, and so we lived in the street for a little bit. A friend of his, of Christopher, at work, come and said, "Why don't you go live with us for little bit, stay with us for a little bit, and about that time I got scammed. I lost my bank account, I lost this, I lost that. And so, it was six months there, and, and so they go, "But you have to pay us rent." Well, at that time, I lost my job for a little bit. And, and, they told me, "Well, you guys can't live here

anymore.” And you know, and so, so, me and Christopher go, okay, we’ll pack our stuff. And then we was at the King Soopers, and one of the guys there, I don’t remember his name, he passed away.

Marrty 29:25

Oh, Randy?

Crystal 29:26

Yeah, Randy. He, he tell us.

Marrty 29:31

So it was Randy, Randy Snyder.

Crystal 29:33

“Why don’t you go to the Refuge?” And I was like, “What’s the Refuge?” And he was trying to explain it to me and how to get here. It took me a couple of days to figure out what this place is. I’m like, “I don’t know, I’ve never been there before. I only lived in Broomfield for like seven months. And so I find it and I’ve been here since.

Marrty 29:59

Okay. So you heard about the refuge from Randy Snyder, who was one of our friends and guests here at the Refuge Cafe. And he was, he was great. He was one of our early, kind of, Refuge Cafe guests, and he was an electrician and helped us with a lot of things around our facility, but he passed away several years ago. How ____ when he was unhoused in Broomfield. But so you connected with the Refuge Cafe and then how long have you been working in Broomfield? Because I know you’ve been employed here for a long time.

Crystal 30:36

Well, I started working in Broomfield in 2020: 19.

Marrty 30:48

2019, before the pandemic.

Crystal 30:50

Right. And then, when, when 2020 came, they went and asked everybody in the facility, “What will you do if you have COVID?” And I was like, “Stay home? Take care of it? You know, I don’t know. I don’t know how that’s gonna be, I don’t know.” And so April 1, I came into work and my boss he goes, “Crystal, I need to talk to you.” And I go, “Okay, no problem.” He said, “Remember, whenever I go around and ask you, ‘What will you do if you have COVID?’” And I like, “Yeah.” They go, “What’d you say?” and I’m like, “I go home and take care of it. I don’t know. I don’t know how bad it’s gonna be. I don’t know how bad it is. And so he go, “Well, I have to let you go because what I heard is not what you told me.” And I’m like, “What did I, what did I say, what’d you hear?” He said, “That you will come to work and spread it all over the building.” I’m like, “That’s not right. I’m not that way.” He said, “Well, I have to let you go.” And he pulled two or three people in like this, and they said, “Yeah, that’s what we heard, too. That she was gonna spread it around.” I was like, “That’s not me, all right? It’s not, you

know me from ____." And so he said, "Well, I'm gonna have to let you go." He said, "You changed a lot since you lost your husband." And I said, "No, I did not change. No, I did not." He said, "Well, go find help, then come back. And then after you get help, then come back, and then you can get back to work." And I like, "You serious?" He gave me my check and everything. And I like, "Okay." So this was when I was living with those, that family here in Broomfield, and I couldn't afford the rent and pay them, and they should understand. So I'm trying not (?) to look, I'm trying to find help. So I went, and, and I got help. And the doctor go, "What are you here for?" And I go, "Let's go call my boss and ask him." So he called my boss, and he go, "Oh, okay." He said, "Are you suicidal?" and I like, "No." Do I act like that to him? I was, like, laughing, happy. And he said, "Well, we'll just do this for a couple weeks. And then I'll call your boss and say you're fine." And I'm like, "Okay." So I'm not employed, and I'm trying to find a job, and I couldn't find nothing. And so I, so I, funny, the week came, and he called ____, and he told ____ that I'm better, and that I can come back to work again. He said, okay, I can come back. He says, "I can't put you on days. I had to put you on nights, like another night person. He said, "You have to go at nights." So I like, "Well, nights." I've been here for like three years now.

Marrty 34:51

And what is your role at that job? What do you do?

Crystal 34:53

I'm a certified nursing assistant.

Marrty 34:55

Nurse assistant? CNA?

Crystal 35:03

Yes.

Marrty 35:02

At a local rehab facility?

Crystal 35:05

Broomfield, well, it was Broomfield skill. And we have, _____ a door (?).

Marrty 35:14

Okay. So you've been there for a while, and then you have the night shift, and you're in charge of how many people?

Crystal 35:23

For this, we can get over 35 people. But I think we're down, four, five?

Marrty 35:34

And how many people work that shift with you?

Crystal 35:38

Up to 10. There's three CNAs and two nurses.

35:46

Okay, so you work hard, in your job?

Crystal 35:48

Yes, I would give people showers. And they would come to bed. And they would change them up for the night. I'd answer their calls and see what they want. Sometimes, they want something like water. And so sometimes when I work, like last Sunday, like last Saturday, there's a problem at work, and so they send the employees home, midnight, and they replace (?), so between midnight and six o'clock in the morning, I was by myself. I had to go change everybody

36:39

at make sure they're all nice and safe and all that. And so I was busy, busy.

36:47

And so the next day, Sunday, Apple schoolwork and I claim that's coming in.

36:58

You guys, I want to find out. I don't want to I don't want

37:03

I'm

37:05

sorry, you still employed there? Yeah.

37:10

I just took a day off a well deserved day off. That's good.

37:14

So so that's a important part of your life, because you've been working full time for a long time. Well, I've been seen, I started see me when I was 19 when my dad was like, and when you die.

37:32

I worked couple more months, and I couldn't handle on it. So I like I need to create. I can't I can't do this because another person died and die. And every time somebody died is putting more care because I miss my dad at the time.

37:51

And so So I quit. And I that's when they asked my sister can I come to call? Well, let me let me get out of here, please. And so I was a charactor. And I kind of miss been working with people. So I did home care.

38:12

Home Care for a little bit.

38:14

And so up and around between 19 and what might as now. It's been over 30 years. I've been a CNA and you're 62 Yeah, okay. Well, when I first started, we didn't need to be the license.

38:33

But now obviously you do. Yeah.

38:37

So shifting gears, can you talk about your living situation for the last five years or so?

38:46

Tell us about that. So you've been working? For most of those five years, you've been working full time. Where have you lived?

38:54

Well, first, okay, five years.

39:01

Again, so

39:03

five years,

39:05

I guess I guess, my sister and then Chris was spread in on the street.

39:14

So what do you mean by on the street? In my car? I live in my car, okay.

39:20

By yourself or me and my son and my three cats. Okay.

39:26

And so you've you've been living in your vehicle for how many winters?

39:34

Three, almost. Three. Okay, so you've, I think made it to three winters. So basically since the pandemic,

39:42

yeah.

39:44

And what's that like to have to work full time while living in your vehicle? At first it wasn't really bad.

39:53

But now I'm getting older. And

39:58

my jobs getting hotter.

40:00

It is

40:04

it seemed like

40:07

at once where I just had to get out of the car and go take a walk or something tired looking at the car.

40:16

And I know because we're does to my son. And he's working too. Yeah, he's working too.

40:24

Sometimes I

40:26

sometimes just drag me up the wall. But like when we had to park cars for like, go lay on the bench and all that.

40:37

And I like okay, I stuck in the car because I had to wash the car. Make sure the cats are okay and all that

40:47

and try to sleep.

40:50

I can sleep pretty good and Kern so why haven't gotten an apartment?

40:58

Because I'm looking for this big car

41:02

without some money for deposit, so you don't have enough for a deposit yet. Yeah, it's in the paint. I just can't get a bank card I think

41:13

and I owe or three times. And so our this last segment should be here Thursday. And how how do your cats fit into that situation

41:32

my question is I think have had the cats and having three cats has that made it harder to find a place? Yes. Why is that because most cat most places Take two. Okay. And so you have three cats and you're you're very connected to them? Yes.

41:53

Would you do like my family like my kids? So the thought of giving one of them up so that you can move into an apartment is not an option for you?

42:05

Because

42:07

my old cat is 18

42:11

and my other cat is 60 and my boy

42:16

no way I'm gonna get rid of him

42:19

he's eight Yeah. So you're in your car and you've been there for three winters what what is like an average day like living in your car

42:36

well we started to charge

42:40

when you park in safe Park yeah in the same parking area at myth a church and then

42:51

so we would take out there about six 630 If we don't if I'm not working

42:59

and then we then I go get coffee sometime Chris we're get hot chocolate

43:10

or like donuts and some like that and then

43:16

we'll go to the park

43:19

and finished sleeping

43:22

and then

43:24

when is beverage open they would come here at about view

43:32

take a shower eat

43:38

because it relax

43:42

at least a year but no no my kids

43:47

my cats

43:50

and

43:55

this sometimes they look crazy. Sometimes they don't but

44:00

they just love the moment this is a tough one. But

44:07

that's Chris for Katie

44:10

and so

44:13

my 18 year old sitting she's boss and so she thinks she only

44:20

first thing to do is plot from her life

44:23

and and she tried to boss other cats around

44:29

and so

44:31

she got three legs

44:34

and so she

44:39

booger

44:42

What are your cat's names?

44:44

Angel is date you know? Then shallow she's 16 and then ashes My name my eight year old boy.

44:56

So what are some challenges that you've encountered?

45:00

from living in your vehicle and just being in this area while you're trying to kind of make ends meet

45:08

running out of room in the car

45:14

like it's buy clothes and then close through stuff and then some food

45:21

and do you have a storage unit

45:29

How about any any impressions? Like what's it like to be in the Brookfield community while you're in your vehicle?

45:42

Most people aren't powers cast up us once in a while because there's a warrant out there for

45:52

our license plates because name is Christopher Brown or something like that. So sometimes it's tough is Chris Raj pull out his wallet and put that he's not the person I'm looking for. So there's a mix up somewhere at the DMV with the license plate number being attached to another person right. And so

46:15

the last cup that stopped but she got Why don't you put your initials in the license plate

46:23

I go into there

46:26

and she just took off behind

46:29

we had to pay extra for add a middle name because first middle name in I don't know nothing about that. So I like oh, wait till 12 When we go by kids license we can go and talk to him about that.

46:47

Like initials.

46:50

So what do you think are some common misconceptions about people who are experiencing homelessness that general people who may be housed might have

47:13

when I met Park, I keep an eye on everything. And

47:19

and that one day I LA's were like down

47:28

Rick rich Yeah.

47:33

I I was noticing it and it bothered me all night because I went home I went to work and and then when I got back, it was still there and it was still bothering me so I went check it out

47:53

so crystal found one of our friends Rick who was also living in his vehicle and he passed away in his car Crystal was the one who discovered his body and then called a friend of ours who called some of us and then the authorities eventually came and recovered his body and so it was that traumatic

48:16

and I think some of us speculated how many other people had walked by

48:23

rich in his car without stopping so what I did now as I watch everybody

48:33

is around

48:35

one type of a white boy who was parked in the car and it was their

48:40

most time and she never got out go the bathroom or nothing for like six hours now like

48:48

this is pretty strange. And so you guys open till I came to Thailand and I go

48:57

can you go are you because him have been willing all in her car and I went to the bathroom have everything all the windows covered? And she calls go home she's fine. She's just

49:12

resting.

49:15

But you were concerned because you know other people that are in similar situations any kind of help look out for them. Like you did for for rich? Yeah.

49:25

Watch her by what they drive. And then when I see him in the park and been there for a long time, I like

49:34

I go take a walk. When I see him moved in. I like okay.

49:41

It just I guess it's my nature. Your caregiver. Yeah, yeah. You take care of people for your profession. And then when you're not working to get paid.

49:53

Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you would like people to know about you or your life or

50:00

anything because this will go into the Brookfield archives? No? Well, I can talk about how my mom passed away.

50:07

Okay. Okay.

50:11

A week before my mom passed away,

50:15

okay.

50:17

My mom fell and she

50:20

broke her hip.

50:22

So she was in a nursing home. And, and so we went there and they go, Well, we're gonna have to

50:33

wait. I'm a CNA.

50:37

I can take care of my mom.

50:39

I don't want her in rushing home. Because she was in rehab.

50:45

And she was doing good.

50:47

And they go, what can you for

50:50

having a home, we have 24 hour care. And some I like

50:59

my surgical career. And I like give us five minutes. My sister from Las Vegas, she came out to visit my mom, because she or she fell and broke her hip. So you go way by say and help you with mom, you can work. And you can help kind of helped me pay me a little bit here and there for taking care of mom.

51:27

Because I don't want to live in Las Vegas. No one.

51:31

I sure the work. So I went and talked to him. And they they agreed to let my mom come home since she would have to refer care.

51:43

So everyone's following it my sister a break from a mom when I'm not working. And then her husband

51:57

is from Mexico. And somehow he's he got away from Mexico. He jumped to my name

52:09

is so

52:13

so he got all right. You live in Colorado, and

52:18

Nevada know me by heart. So he turned his face back back to Colorado and work with us. And so they was living was it was

52:31

my brother, my mom, my sister and her husband upstairs from the two bedroom house.

52:38

Me my husband and my son live downstairs

52:44

with two bedroom downstairs.

52:47

But then gets had a kitchen.

52:50

And so

52:53

so

52:56

her husband and my husband never got along.

53:00

And so

53:03

it was like for four years they've been living with us.

53:09

I mean this is trying to fight keep these guys kept fighting.

53:14

And

53:16

so we for my mom

53:22

passed away

53:26

she my sister

53:29

kind of overdose on one of her pain pills. Cuz she thought she took it but she said because I took it again. She was like loopy. I mean really, look be crazy. And so I call her husband I need calm and get your wife and take her to the hospital. She's making bola surreal. She'd meet a slob now all over the place. She got sorry, oh, the floor melts, everything is on. You need to come and get your way is already there at work.

54:06

Do your wife is not doing good.

54:11

And so Harry is at six o'clock he came home

54:16

and she was like really?

54:20

And so I was up watching my mom and her until he got home.

54:26

And

54:29

so he go I'm home now.

54:33

I'm gonna put mom to bed. So I went and put mom to bed and then

54:41

and so I okay mom's bed if you need me Call me.

54:47

And so I so i

54:54

So, so I heard them go slap. And so I like what they did

55:00

Tell me the left, stay took her to the hospital, found out my sister overdose on her medicine. And she was almost dying.

55:12

So the next morning my mom asked me, where's my mom? Because she's in the hospital. She said, You go Yes, she is. She's in the hospital mom. See, go? Something's wrong.

55:26

No, nothing's wrong, mom. She's just cope. I didn't know what to tell my mom. And so.

55:35

So it was Thanksgiving. Somehow my sister got out

55:43

that night. My brother in law

55:49

he called I Can I go can you just stay at mom's house?

55:54

While I still until take care of mom.

55:59

And he and he, okay. I didn't know my husband. Call him back. And I said his him and her is kicked out.

56:11

And so the day my mom died, I said to commandment she go

56:17

as you go on.

56:20

Don't give her took care of mom when you was at work.

56:25

And go okay, she go you kick me out for no reason why I didn't kick out nobody.

56:32

In a big old night was there about that? And so it's a hard your mom died and my mother and her husband? Yeah. And, and so I think okay.

56:49

So they probably came up late. I helped them find a place where they can park and,

56:56

and

57:00

they're pretty sure they appreciate me finding places. And I touch some of the stuff in my house.

57:09

monsoons, my mom day, my husband turned around till my sister and her has

57:17

about two, three weeks later, he told my sister and her husband, come get through as your crap out of my house. Or it's gonna be out on the street because you said they didn't get along. Thanks. You

57:32

know, I told him he can have it. They can keep it here. Well, how long are you gonna take for it?

57:41

Until they can find a place. So they came and they've got this stuff and

57:48

it was a big mess. That sounds like it was not a fun time. No, so the last

57:54

since 13

57:57

years 2013

58:00

My life's been

58:03

up and down, up and down and down.

58:06

Kind of Rocky.

58:08

Thank you for taking time to share with us.

58:14

It's been almost an hour.

58:17

Yeah, thank you for your time crystal. No problem.