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00:01 David Allison

Well, Carolyn, thanks so much for coming in this morning. I'd love for you to just start by introducing yourself and sharing a little bit more about yourself.

00:11 Carolyn Love

Okay. Well, thanks for the invitation. Because like I said, this really gave me an opportunity to walk through my mind, but more importantly, to walk through my heart, to really understand how I got here.

00:24 Carolyn Love

I am originally from Gary, Indiana. And most people know Gary, either from Michael Jackson, or The Music Man, either one of those. (Laughter)

00:35 Carolyn Love

But my parents were from Mound Bayou Mississippi, and Mound Bayou Mississippi. And the reason why I spend a moment on this is because Mound Bayou Mississippi, was named the jewel of the Mississippi Delta by President Theodore Roosevelt, because Mound Bayou was founded in 1887, by Isaiah Montgomery, and it was the first all black, independent town in the United States.

01:10 David Allison

Amazing.

01:11 Carolyn Love

Yeah, it was. And so you didn't have black codes in Mound Bayou; you had all black shops, It was grocery stores, hospitals, and the community supported that. And everyone shared. So I share that because it was such a great space, and they were independent. And that still exists to this day, even though the population has shrunk. It still stands on that ground of independence and self-sufficiency. So that's the environment that my parents grew up in. And when, you know, the migration from the South to the North, when that happened, they brought those same ways of thinking and believing with them.

01:57 Carolyn Love

So when I stopped and thought about it, it's like I am who I am, because they were who they were.

02:06 Carolyn Love

So that was great.

02:11 David Allison

Sorry, just a quick question. Were they working in steel in Gary or something different?

02:16 Carolyn Love

Thanks for that question. Because when you look at the migration from south to north, they made a stop in St. Louis, before they came into Gary; but in theory, you're absolutely correct, because US Steel was one of the larger employers in that area, the Bud Plant, you know. You go to Philly, you're gonna find Inland Steel, all of those factories. So that's where my father worked; and then my mother was a nurse. So one thing that working in the mill did for men who just had a high school education, it was able to lift them up into a position, because factory work at that point, you made a decent salary. We weren't rich, by no means, but at least we had a comfortable way of being and a comfortable lifestyle. And like I said, I remember one time my mother telling me that in Mound Bayou, when, you know, the conditions were difficult, it was during the Depression, you know, people didn't have much to eat. She said my grandfather and some other men would get in a horse-drawn cart and people would throw whatever in there they had, because that's how I learned the concept of gleaning, if you remember that from the Bible. So my mother said that, they did that, and they would take it to the families that may have been hardest hit by a poor crop season, and they would share. So I was raised in this environment where, you know, everybody can make it if everybody's willing to give a little bit, if everybody's willing to share. Yeah, so it was the steel mill where he was.

04:14 Carolyn Love

It was really interesting how people supported each other. And like I said, the opportunity to vote was there. So now fast forward, here I am in Gary, Indiana, age 15. And we lived in a lot of different places. I remember when I was young, my sister remembers it, but she remembers us being in an apartment and really trying to make things work. I remember the first house that we bought, well, it was the only house that we had, and it was right across the street from the school.

04:52 Courtney Love

And my father told me when I got older, the reason why he did that was in Mound Bayou. It was segregated. Yes, it was an all black community, but they had to walk so many miles to school, they couldn't get to school, they had to wait for the planting season because they picked cotton.

05:10 Carolyn Love

So he said, I never wanted my children to have to walk a long distance to school, but thank you could have put us a few blocks away. (Laughter) You know, so we can walk with our boyfriends, you know, but that's the mind of a child

05:26 Carolyn Love

So we could stroll down the street, you know, like other kids, but you know, that wasn't in the plan. But when we moved into our neighborhood, we had white neighbors. Within a year or so, it was an all black community. And I didn't fully understand it, until I started going places and seeing things. And at age 15, I can remember saying, I am going to end racism in my lifetime. Because racism, as it was then, in my mind, as it is today, it was illogical. I could not understand the ideology of racism, because why would someone dislike someone, just because they have a different hue in their skin? I just couldn't understand it. So, you know, I think that put me on a path but I kind of took some crazy routes. When I stop and think about all the things that I've done, it has still been rooted in that philosophy of equity, and saying, I cannot dislike you, nor will I tolerate you mistreating someone, simply because of their racial or ethnic identity.

06:39 Carolyn Love

So that really is a little bit about me. I know you asked about boards and stuff. I don't know if you want me to answer that now?

06:49 David Allison

No, I loved for you to share maybe your story of coming from Gary to Colorado. Kind of what transpired between? I think you left it off at about age 15, you have a sister and you know, that sort of thing. Where did you go from there?

07:07 Carolyn Love

Okay, so I wanted to go to an HBCU, an historically black college. And that was Spelman, but we really couldn't afford it. Plus, Indiana has some really good schools. And then you got any university, Ball State, Purdue, and my mother said, you know, there's no reason for you to go out of state. We've got some really good schools here. So I graduated from Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana, home of Larry Bird, yay. And this is true. After I graduated, I worked in Gary for about a year. And I began to see the community shift. Because when I grew up, none of my friends did drugs. And then I mean, I can even say that for the people that I didn't know, well, that that just wasn't our culture. All of a sudden drugs came into Gary, and a friend of mine died of an overdose. And I thought that's not who he was. It just wasn't. And I know people change. And I can remember being in the bedroom with my mom sitting on the bed. It's like, I need to get out of here. I don't know where I'm gonna go. She said, "you have an uncle in Denver. Why don't you go out there and visit with him?" I said, "Okay, I'm gonna go out there for a minute and I'll be right back." Those are my exact words. I'm gonna be there for a minute. Came out here....

08:38 Carolyn Love

Got a job...got married. Everything just started happening. And I remember being on the phone with my mother saying sell my car, now all this was a little beat up Chevy that was on his last leg. Anyway, I said take it down to the corner and sell it. She sold it for \$400 and sent me the money and that's kind of what started my life here.

09:02 Carolyn Love

That's how I got here.

09:04 David Allison

Love it, love it. Was Indiana State University started as a teacher's college, but it's probably a University by then, is that right?

09:15 Carolyn Love

Yeah. It was always Indiana, I didn't think Indiana State - Ball State was a Teacher's College. Okay, but I didn't think Indiana State was.

09:24 David Allison

Okay. Yeah.

09:27 Carolyn Love

Yeah, I don't know. I just don't remember it having that origin, but it very well could be. But Indiana State University. I went there.

09:42 Carolyn Love

Dr. King was assassinated on April 4 1968.

09:47 Carolyn Love

I graduated in June of 1968. And two or three weeks later, I was on Indiana State University's campus because my thinking was, I want to graduate in three years.

10:00 Carolyn Love

You know, I liked school, but it was like, I really wanted to start my life, I want to do something different. In Gary, you had to either go into steel mill, go into teaching, or be like a social worker. And I worked in a social work office that year that I was in Gary and I did not like it. So I wanted something more.

10:27 Carolyn Love

Indiana State, at that point in time, was racially divided. There were areas I could not go. And even when we were on campus, we had the East ballroom and the West ballroom.

10:42 Carolyn Love

The East ballroom, white students were there, and anything other than white, and it was just that stark, you couldn't use the room.

10:54 Carolyn Love

We had professors that told us straight up, "C is probably the best you're gonna get out of this class". And there was, you know, Dr. Hammond was there, who's the sociology professor and he tried to help as many students as he could, and he did a wonderful job with it. But it's just, you know, when you stop and think about what was happening in the 60s and 70s, we went through all of that. I spearheaded an activity to remove our dorm director, because I felt that she was prejudiced.

11:39 Carolyn Love

The lesson that I learned from that was white people don't get fired for supporting systems of racism, they just get promoted. And that's what happened with her. They brought in a new director who was younger, and I guess they thought, could handle us radical students. And I will never forget, she asked to meet with me, I may have asked to meet with her. But yeah, she asked to meet with me, and when she opened the door, I said, Well, hi. You know, I'm Carolyn Ross. She said, "I know who you are. I've read all about you." And that's when I thought, hmm, they're organized. So all of those lessons and all those things that people said to me, it was like you never walk in a room, and never be unprepared. Always know what you're gonna do and how you're gonna show up.

12:37 David Allison

Wow, wow

12:39 Carolyn Love

Yeah. So it was a good lesson.

12:40 David Allison

It feels, too, like, you know, I'm from Terre Haute. I was born there in 1979 and I can tell you, it has a culturally feel of a very, you know, kind of a racist background and you can feel it in the town. It's, you didn't grow up when I was growing up in the 80s and have that sense to it. Divided and prejudiced?

13:09 Carolyn Love

Yeah, very prejudiced. When I got to my senior year, man, my roommate, it was gonna be about two or three of us. We wanted to rent this apartment; we saw it in the paper. We went to see it. We called, "Yes. It's available." This is a difficult story. I'll never forget this man who's smoking a cigar, met us at the front door. And we said, well, you know, we called and we talked to you and we want to rent and he said, "it's not available. Sorry, it is rented." It was like, No, I don't know what was wrong with me. But I said, "No, it's not. We just called you. We just talked to you." And he said, "It is rented. I've reserved it to rent." And I looked at him as like, Oh, that's a lie. But there is nothing I can do. So I went back to the dorm. And I was able to work in a dorm as a resident assistant. It probably all worked out for me financially, but the fact that that could happen. And that's what it was like. So when you know, because we were kind of involved with some of the turmoil that was going on on campuses. When I graduated, after three, three and a half years from college, my parents and my grandparents came to my college graduation.

14:29 Carolyn Love

And, you know, you walk across the stage and you shake the President's hand. So, my turn to walk across the stage and Alan Rankin was the president, and I said, Dr. Rankin, I think you should acknowledge the fact that this is the largest class of African Americans to graduate from this university and it wasn't easy. And my mother, looking at this, my mother told me later on, "Carolyn, I was just praying, you would not start a rebellion". And when you paused, even my grandfather said, "Please God, just let her walk. Just take the diploma and walk across the stage. Don't start nothing, just walk across the stage" and I just couldn't do it. I tried, but I just couldn't do it. (Laughter)

15:22 David Allison

I love that story.

15:24 Carolyn Love

Yeah, well, he didn't make the announcement. He didn't say anything. But I promise, I stood there talking to him, because he needed to know that with everything, black students are capable of graduating from an institution.

15:41 Carolyn Love

And that we did it. I mean, we did it. Despite this. We did it. But not he didn't say anything. And my mother said, "Carolyn, I just....", but that same night, I packed up everything, and drove it that night and went back to Gary. It's like, I've got to get out of here. And my parents took me; we had everything that I owned, packed up in those cars, and we headed back to Gary. And to this day, I won't go into.....I've been back for things, but I wouldn't drive in Terre Haute at night. Not on 41, If you remember, Turkey Run

16:20 David Allison

Yeah.

16:24 Carolyn Love

I won't do that att night, to this day.

16:29 David Allison

So tell me a bit more about, as you came to Denver, kind of what were some of the differences or you know, what, what was it like coming to Colorado versus Gary, Terre Haute in your experience?

16:44 Carolyn Love

Well, that's really interesting. Gary is an all black town, Terre Haute was an all white town. And we dealt with the issues of being in a town. Plus, you know, there were lynchings in Indiana. I didn't know at the time, but there were also a lynching in Colorado. But when I moved out here, the first place that I went to, really, was the Urban League, because those were the systems that I was familiar with, the Urban League and the NAACP, to see if I can get assistance with trying to find a job and to see what the culture was. And my greatest shock was that Denver was not a very diverse place. It just wasn't. Because I stayed in Gary, long enough to vote for Mayor Richard Gordon Hatcher, who was the first black mayor of Gary, Indiana. And that was when Carl Stokes, all those people came in. African Americans leading major cities. Yes. After I voted for him, I got on a plane and came out here.

17:52 Carolyn Love

So I just.... It was like I had my uncle and I started making friends with his friends. But it was, where do black people hang out here? And you know, you go to Five Points. So that was the biggest shift that I saw. And then trying to connect with the church.. So it took me a few rounds to find a church and I finally landed at Shorter, the Shorter AME Church, African Methodist Episcopal Church. Yeah. So that's where I am now. But, Scott's United Methodist Church, I went there for a while.

18:39 Carolyn Love

But I think that was the biggest shock to me.

18:43 David Allison

Gotta find a community.

18:45 Carolyn Love

Yeah, the good news is, I think, that Denver has a very rich black community. Well, I shouldn't say that. I think people are aware of it. And they do notice it. So it's how you kind of get into that community. And you get welcomed. And at that point, you know, when you're single, no children, no, nothing. You know, it's a little bit easier to navigate and to move around. But I felt the Urban League was really good here. It was very strong here. So is the NAACP, but the presence of it in Gary, it just felt a little bit different because Indiana, I've always said, is geographically mislocated. It belongs by Mississippi, Colorado, while it has had its issues, to me, our organization that should look different, but we still have a core, we still you know, so there were things going on here in Colorado, in Denver specifically.

19:51 David Allison

That's great. And so, as you said, you met your husband here, got married. And so was that shortly after you arrived or what have you, you got a job when you came, you got involved in the organization's church, that sort of thing?

20:11 Carolyn Love

Yeah, yeah, I wandered. Yes, I ultimately got a job. Ultimately, married. Because I was married twice. Edward is my first husband, David is my second husband. And my daughter, Leslie, is from my first marriage. So it was settling down and I was fortunate because I, you know, was able to get a job with the state. At that time, they had behavior modification consultants, and those consultants will go out; before I think it was housebuilders (??), (inaudible) or something like that, I don't fully remember. But it was where you had to provide an education to special needs students, those students who were physically or mentally challenged. So what we did in Colorado, is we set up learning centers for them and that was before we started mainstreaming them into the public school system. That was the time that I kind of came in. So I consulted with teachers to help them use behavior modification as a tool to work with some of the students who may have some behavioral problems, or as a tool to teach some particular skills. Yeah, so I think I did that for two or three years and the grant ran out; that was through the state, it was funded through the state. And then after that, I worked in retail with JC Penney's and went through there. At that point in time, a lot of corporations had management training programs, where they were bringing in people and training them, you know, so I did that with Penney's.

22:13 Carolyn Love

And then, that was right after I got a divorce. So as a single mother with a small child, I did okay at Penney's, but the hours.... because that was just when Penney's and other retailers. Well, I'm really dating myself here. But, there were times where retailers wasn't open on Sundays. You know, so it's been a long time now, but Penney's had been..... It was a 24. Not a 24/7 operation, but pretty busy. Pretty busy. Yes, Saturdays and Sundays, it was open and, and that just wasn't conducive. But again, I remember when your regional director of Penney's would always come around and you had to do a dog

and pony show about what your sales were, all that stuff. So when he came to me, and he's meeting with me, "Well, Carolyn, what is it that you want to do?"

23:21 Carolyn Love

I said, "I want to be President of Penney's"

23:25 Carolyn Love

And he said, What? And I said, "I want to be president of Penneys." I think I can do that, you know?

23:33 David Allison

What was his response?

23:35 Carolyn Love

His response was, "you know, I kind of like that."

23:38 Carolyn Love

It really kind of threw him off guard. Yeah, it was like, but how does one do that? I mean, you know, I think I can do that.

23:46 Carolyn Love

And he just said, I like your ambition. So you kinda have to be careful what you pray for. (Laughter) Because then after that, they offered me a job to move to New York,, because that's where I could really kind of get there. But by that time,with everything else as a single parent. It's like I couldn't. I didn't have an infrastructure in New York to move there. It would be difficult, trying to find childcare, trying to find schools. So I had to decline that offer. And I thought, it is what it is. There's something about here.

24:23 Carolyn Love

So, when I left Penney's, I went into banking and banking in Colorado at that time was very conservative.

24:32 Carolyn Love

And I joined an organization. It was called Mile High Urban Bankers and it was a consortium of bankers. It was predominantly African American, but it was for bankers of color, so we can mutually support. So at that time, United Bank was United Bank. We had Colorado National Bank, that was where I worked.

24:54 Carolyn Love

The affiliated banking systems came into being, you know, so it was really a good organization to help us. But I had difficulty moving up in that. So I remember, I had been there for seven years, eight years, and I mean, I really had different responsibilities, I felt I was doing well. But every time there was an officer promotion, I never got it. So what I did, it was myself and another young woman who had been there, less than two years, was made an officer, She was white.

25:41 Carolyn Love

So I said, This is it.

25:45 Carolyn Love

I wrote a letter. And I wrote it to the head of the banking division and I explained, I've been here for now, 10 years, someone with less seniority has done this, a white woman, this is unfair, I am leaving the organization.

26:10 Carolyn Love

So I gave it to my direct supervisor, and I shared with her what I was going to do. And she said, "if you send this letter, you will never get another job in banking." I said, Okay. Because I'm Bozo. You know, banking isn't for people of color right now. anyway, So I said, Okay. And after that, after I sent that, people started wanting to meet with me, and I said, "you need to know what you're doing to people." So my legacy there was to tell them, but I couldn't go back into that environment. I just couldn't, I didn't want to, I didn't want to try to make it work. It just wasn't for me. So I left banking and went over to the Denver Chamber, and ran the Small Business Development Center there, and then ultimately moved into a Vice President of Community Development and ran the Denver Metro Chamber Foundation after Joanna left that position. So, and that was a good position until politics kind of played into it again. And that was when, I think, I can't believe I'm saying this, but that probably was the lowest ebb of my career, in my life. Because I thought I was doing all the right things and doing them in all the right ways. But when I left the Chamber, I have to be honest, my spirit was just wounded. And I remember telling someone, I'm just going to rest for a while.

28:00 Carolyn Love

I know what poverty looks like and I know how to survive through it. So that's kind of what I did. I said, I can make this work. And I just took some time off just to kind of heal my spirit flat and say you're an okay person.. Sometimes systems are just not there for something different to happen.

28:31 David Allison

How did you do that? That seems like such a hard moment to be with you also as a single mother, still at this point.

28:43 Carolyn Love

David and I had gotten married by then.

28:46 David Allison

Okay But having this difficulty, the political situation, things just against you at the Chamber, what gives you the fortitude, the strength to do that?

28:59 Carolyn Love

Faith, because I do believe that a god exists. And I believe that you lean in on your faith, first and foremost.

29:12 Carolyn Love

I learned when I was at the Chamber, but I didn't understand then how to use it. I believe that everyone has a gift. I believe that David has a gift. I have a gift. You know, people are naturally born with a gift. And my gift is the gift of encouragement. And I saw how encouraging others, even when you have no energy, is an okay thing to do. The other thing is I did a lot of just self reflecting and saying, Let me hold up the mirror to myself and be honest with who you are. I never bought into the stuff that people were saying, but I know I needed to work on my spirit, my soul. So I did, you know?

30:03 Carolyn Love

And it just, it just brought me through it. That's all I can say is that just through prayer and, and I remember my pastor, (inaudible), I can always tell when you get in trouble because you're coming into my office. (Laughter)

30:21 Carolyn Love

Yeah, that's true. And more important. He said, "You're at Bible study" He said, "I can tell things like, all right, because you're always showing up in Bible study. And I had not noticed that, but he had, and it was true. So I think that it probably, really was a big piece of it, and then being with people saying, you know, you're okay and there's nothing wrong with you. Because if you're not careful, you can internalize that. And you can't believe, "what's wrong with me?" Did I say this right thing? And I have to be honest, there was probably a little bit of that in there. But then I came to like, Nah, there was nothing wrong with me. (Laughter)

31:11 Carolyn Love

There was nothing wrong with me.

31:14 David Allison

Yea, but walking through that self reflection piece to get there, and to talk to the people that you need to talk to, and just do that work. That's difficult.

31:27 Carolyn Love

Yeah, let me see. But, David, I must admit, David, was a loving husband. I tell everyone, when I'm describing David, we have the term, gentleman. But David was the epitome of that David was a gentle man. And he just, he just knew how to always keep me anchored. And that was his gift to me, the way that he could anchor me, because I very rarely did I see him flustered. But David grew up in a different environment. He grew up in Geneva, Ohio, which was an all white community. So he learned how to navigate and negotiate white systems, being around white people. I grew up in Gary, Indiana, all black town. So my orientation was different. And we had two different approaches to life, which was interesting, because sometimes it would cause some tension. But as David's and my marriage evolved, it seemed like he became more radical. (Laughter)

32:43 David Allison

That's great.

32:49 Carolyn Love

And, I became a little calmer, a little calmer So it was just interesting to see the effect that we had on each other. And I think over time, and it's something I'm still working on, to learn how to think in language things, perhaps, to really make a difference.

33:11 Carolyn Loe

And to make sure that my voice is heard. But not necessarily beat someone up....unless it's necessary.

33:17 David Allison

I was going to say, sometimes it's necessary

33:24 Carolyn Love

Yeah, I tell everybody, I keep an evil twin sister in my hip pocket. I don't want to meet her. But if it's necessary, she can come out. (Laughter)

33:36 David Allison

Yeah. I love that.

33:38 David Allison

So, tell me, as you were having this moment, you know, working through some of those pieces, what was the next thing for you after that?

33:51 Carolyn Love

The next thing for me, is I started working at an organization; it was the Rocky Mountain Regional Affiliate of the National Minority Supplier Development Council.

34:04 David Allison

Whoo, that's a lot of words.

34:05 Carolyn Love

It is, and I ran the Rocky Mountain Regional affiliate, which that title was even longer, and it was focused on supplier diversity.

34:19 Carolyn Love

And it seems so odd now, when you look at the attacks on DEI, you know, but a lot of money, Government money, and private money is spent, you know, building things. If you stop and think about it, the government doesn't manufacture anything, it doesn't build. The government is a government. It's a governing body. So it outsources everything.

34:46 Carolyn Love.

And it outsources to corporations. At that point in time, if this is a multimillion dollar project, this should be something going to minority entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, so I ran the Rocky Mountain Regional Affiliate to try to really help minority suppliers get contracts, to really have viable supplier diversity programs. So that's really what I did until I started my master's program. And that was when I just couldn't do a master's and work. And then the other thing that started happening to me is my

parents were older now. So I lost my father while I was in that position; I lost my favorite uncle, you know, like, and then, I think it was right after I left, my mother passed away. So it just was too much for me emotionally, to still run, because I was there for six years. And I was weary and I remember with my uncle, and yeah, my uncle....I had a stepfather and my dad; and as I was saying, I was blessed with two fathers, because my step dad loved me as if I was his biological child.

36:16 David Allison

That's lovely.

36:17 Carolyn Love.

He really was, and my dad loved me dearly. And he was the one who got me in church. Most people's impressions are that men don't go to church; for both my mother and father, they had two different denominations. But still, they were black churches. So I literally grew up in the church.

36:38 Carolyn Love

But losing all of them, my stepfather, and my favorite uncle, my dad, literally within weeks of one another. And with my stepfather, it was just all of a sudden; he just had a heart attack, and he just died. He wasn't sick, he just died. And then right after that, my father. And then a year or so later, my mother. So that was when I said, it really was in quick succession. My brother had multiple sclerosis. We, as a family, lived with that for 23 years. And I remember when Fred was first diagnosed, he went to a wheelchair fairly quickly after his diagnosis. And my sister and I were sitting there saying, you know, this is just too much. We need to put him in an institution; at that time, Fred was only 30. My mother said, "Absolutely not. He will not go into an institution and I will take care of him"

37:44 Carolyn Love

Okay, and my mother said, and in a way," Y'all can either help me with this, or I will do it by myself." And my sister lived in Michigan. I lived out here in Colorado,

37:52 David Allison

They were in Gary still?

37:54 Carolyn Love

Yeah, they were in Gary. So I went back to Gary, my sister and I worked out a rotation. And I went back and took care of him until 23 years later, he died less than a year after my mother, probably a year after my mother died. So it was a lot. But from that I really learned a lot, first of all, about the disability community.

38:24 Carolyn Love

I learned about how race and disability, there is a confluence there of those two things, and how there's a difference in how the healthcare system works with people of color. And I became then aware of health equity, because it was not an equal system. And my brother, I learned that through him, I learned how to take care of someone who was ill. So when David was diagnosed, and he required care, it's like, he's not going anywhere. He'll stay here. So I took care of him.

39:03 Carolyn Love

Then when David was diagnosed, they thought he would live three or four months, David lived for four years and I took care of him. And at that time, I had my consultancy going so when I could consult, I did. And I thought, again, I have been without money.

39:23 Carolyn Love

Because cancer is one of the most expensive illnesses you can have. It will drain whatever resources, it will drain everything, if you want to help your loved one stay alive, and David had good insurance. So it all worked out. Because as is said in the Bible, and I can't remember, it might be in Ephesians or Philippians, but Paul says I know what it is like to have plenty. And I know what it's like to have a little so right now if I lost everything, I know

40:00 Carolyn Love

Oh, because I know what it's like to just have a little bit and to have fun with that little bit that I have. And I know what it's like to have a lot because I've been able to travel, you know, I've gone to Africa six times and I've gone to Europe.

40:16 Carolyn Love

So I know what it's like to have a lot. And either way, I'm content

40:28 David Allison

We haven't talked much about Broomfield (Laughter)

40:33 David Allison

Really, this is a beautiful conversation, and I so appreciate you. Just before we move on to the next business, hearing your stories is encouragement to me. And you said you have the gift of encouragement and I can feel that, your story is encouraging.

40:55 Carolyn Love

Thank you. Yeah, so Broomfield. What is it that you want?

41:00 David Allison

So, you came to Broomfield in the 1980s. Is that right?

41:07 Carolyn Love

I came to Broomfield, yeah, I did, 1984 to be exact.

41:11 David Allison

Okay.

41:13 Carolyn Love

Yeah, I did. And see, David lived here, because David worked for IBM in Niwot..

41:21 David Allison

Ah, yes.

41:23 Carolyn Love

You know, I think it's still there, the IBM plant is still up there. Yeah, that's where he was. He was in the lab. So when he and I got married, I don't know if you remember, if you're old enough to remember, this TV show was called Green Acres.

41:40 David Allison

Yeah, it was where "farm living is the life for me" and the whole thing.

41:44 Carolyn Love

Yeah. the wife wasn't real.... she wasn't rolling with it, (Laughter) but she did it because she loved her husband.. But that was me. When Dave and I got married, I lived down in Aurora. He lived here in Broomfield and had been living here in Broomfield for a while And he said, "Well, we can move to Broomfield." Broom - what?

42:04 Carolyn Love

I knew Boulder. But I didn't know anything between Denver and Boulder. He said, Broomfield. It literally was like that Green Acres show. I said, you're plucking me out of Aurora where there's culture, there's all kinds of things, to go to Broomfield. So I came and Broomfield, for me, was a challenge, because by that time, my daughter was 11 years old.

42:40 Carolyn Love

And she went to middle school here, for Broomfield did not, at that time, it was Broomfield Heights Middle School, Broomfield did not know how to embrace diversity. It just didn't.

42:55 Carolyn Love

Leslie made friends. But when Leslie went to Broomfield Heights Middle School, she would be sitting at the cafeteria by herself, none of the white students would sit with her. She met up with Angie Stottlemeyer and she and Angie became friends. But it was not easy. And I think there were a number of things that I remember, and I didn't know all of what Leslie went through, until actually, I was working on my dissertation and she was part of a focus group. And it was like, "you went,,,", "that happened?" But I've learned because I've talked to other parents. Sometimes children don't want their parents to know what they're experiencing, but I knew something was happening. And I talked to the damn principal. But to give you an example of the environment, because I am a person, you know, just like when I came in here, I noticed your pictures, you know, because it says something about you, or whoever's in this office...

43:57 David Allison

Not my office.

42:55 Carolyn Love

But yeah, it's someone's, because I kept looking at this and wondering if they did it if their kid did it, you know, so that's what catches my eyes. What, what's in the space, because what's in the space will tell

you..... books on roads and railroads. So I remember being in the school for something, Broomfield Heights Middle School, 98% white, 99% white, there was this picture of a black girl with a cigarette hanging out of her mouth. And I don't remember, so I'm kinda paraphrasing, but "you don't want to look like this. So you don't want to be this."

44:46 Carolyn Love

You know, I talked to David about it. At that time. I was friends with Dr. (inaudible) up at CU and I said that's not something that should be in that school. So help me figure out how to bring up this stuff. And I had a conversation with them. You don't put a picture like that up, because pictures, they're informal messages that you send to people. So that to me, was what that culture was like there, so much so that when Leslie finished middle school, I said, "she's going to Denver for high school." And that's where she went. She went to Manual High School that has a rich history. And what was interesting was when our neighbor because at the time that David and I moved into where we are right now, well, it still is true. All our neighbors are white, everybody on our street .Louis was behind us; he was the only other African American and he's behind Nick's house.

45:59 Carolyn Love

But, one of my neighbors said, "I can't believe you're leaving this great school system and putting your daughter in Denver."

46:07 Carolyn Love

And, "Yes, I am." "Well, you know, they have gangs there and she's gonna be in danger" Nah, because I will walk through Five Points and be out of the club late at night and come in or go to a production and it didn't bother me. I didn't lock my doors. but in Broomfield, I lock my doors. I really do. It feels different to me. So fast forward now.

46:40 Carolyn Love

Everybody now has grandchildren and stuff. When my neighbor's grandkids started going to school, they tried to enroll them somewhere...Broadlands, Anthem... I can't remember where the kids were born. At any rate, she came, she said, "I can't believe how they treated us. They felt like they were better than us. They look down on us as if we were not as good as them." I said, "Well, "remember Leslie going to Denver?" So that's how I knew the culture in Broomfield is changing. And I know I'm skipping ahead here, but it's almost like Broomfield, you asked the question of, "If there was one thing Broomfield could change, what would that be?"

47:39 Carolyn Love

And I thought, I can't answer the question like that.

47:43 Carolyn Love

But, Let me try it this way. If Cindy and her family experienced that, in trying to put their children in a school, that tells me that we're beginning to, to isolate based on socioeconomic status,that we're creating a community of haves and have nots. And that, if we're not intentional, that we're going to build communities, we're going to build communities that are not receptive to people, regardless of their

racial and ethnic identity. They can be all white, but we will, we will build communities where people will not treat other people equally, and with dignity and respect.

48:41 Carolyn Love

It will be stratified and separated, and I started thinking about that a few years ago, when Cindy was telling me about what her grandchildren were experiencing. And I sometimes will ask myself, if the decision to make Broomfield a City and County, if that decision sat with us today, would that pass?

49:08 David Allison

Interesting. Yeah, it's a good question.

49:11 Carolyn Love

You know, because of the political environment in Broomfield, as well as the statewide political environment. I wondered if politically it would pass.

49:24 Carolyn Love

You know, because we've got some communities here now that I don't even know if they want to be part of Broomfield.

49:33 David Allison

I have heard people talk about themselves, "I'm from Anthem". They don't say I'm from Broomfield, I'm from this place, I'm from that place.

49:41 Carolyn Love

Yeah. So it won't mean much then, because they're not from Broomfield. So that to me, when I think about it, I can't answer the question of what to change. But I'm hoping that our city planners and designers and our City Council and others are thinking about how we can make sure that Broomfield in total remains a community.

50:11 David Allison

Right. Absolutely, and that's, that's important. It's important.

49:41 Carolyn Love

It is. Yeah, it is very important. Because then to take that to its next logical conclusion, if we're not careful, then what's going to happen, like for the area that I live in, 20,30 years from now, it might be filled with people of color.

50:40 Carolyn Love

And that will be "the other."

50:44

And then, other people, it'll just be, because, I've seen this happen, we'll rename the neighborhood, give it something, a wonderful title, a wonderful name. North LacAmora, or, you know, West, whatever, whatever.

51:04 David Allison

There's gentrification kind of thing that happens,

51:09 Carolyn Love

That gentrification, you know, and whenever we want to raise, I think, just looking at it, whenever we want to raise the status of a neighborhood, we rename it with something, you know, "RiNo" Really? It's Five Points. Oh, no. (Laughter) LoDo.... (Laughter)

51:29 Carolyn Love

You know, when I was in New York, they said, "Soho", I said, you know, and I've heard of Soho, but I didn't know that was Southwestern Street.

51:40 Carolyn Love

Really. And I think that could happen to Broomfield. And I believe it may already have started.

51:50 David Allison

Well, you're 100%. Right. It's that sense of words matter and make a difference. Absolutely,.

52:04 David Allison

A little bit more about some of your work in Broomfield, I know you've been on library board for a number of years and you've done some other work in the town.

52:13 David Allison

You can also share a little bit more about Kabaya (??), which I know you've described the name before and why it's important. And I'd love to hear that, to have that recorded as hard as you can. Yeah. So

52:28 Carolyn Love

Yeah. So I'll do the volunteer work first, because one of the things that I said I know I've been in this building is because I think we met upstairs at one time before the building was built over on Spader.

52:46 David Allison

Oh, yeah...the new Health and Human Services

52:49 Carolyn Love

Yeah, yeah. Well, not George DiCiero, that's the city and county. But on Spader Way. What's that building? It was just built next to Health and Human Services.

52:46 David Allison

HHS building? Yeah.

53:08 Carolyn Love

Yeah. It seems like I was on that board. Yeah, cuz Deborah Otter or something like that. I don't remember the name of the person. But anyway, so I did serve on that.

53:22 Carolyn Love

That was several years ago. And I was not reappointed.

53:30 Carolyn Love

And that was....so, I'll leave that there. And then I get on the Library Board. I think I filled someone's term, and then stepped in because I was an alternate. That's what it was. That's how they turned. I was alternate, and then stepped into a permanent position. I can remember but I talked to Kathryn Lynip about this. She says she doesn't remember this happening, so I may have misread it. But I really thought I read in a Broomfield Enterprise, where a book of Toni Morrison's was going to be taken out of the library.

54:07 Carolyn Love

Yeah, and that was Kathryn who said, I don't remember anything like that. And unfortunately, I didn't save it. I didn't clip it and save it. But I remember thinking that I have an opportunity to sit on a library board. So make sure no books are taken out of the library. So that really was my whole impetus for wanting to serve on the library board that was even before all of this consternation about removing books started. And my position remains the same, that books should be available. And parents can discern what books they want their child to read, but everyone should have access to books. So that's that and it's been an interesting journey being on the library board. And outside of that, I've not been involved with anything in terms of Kapaya. Kapaya is an African term that means leadership. Kappa means leader. And I wanted a culturally responsive name for my business. Because culture is important.

55:22 Carolyn Love

I've not professionally done any work in Broomfield most of my work, interestingly enough, is either in Denver, Longmont, Boulder, and the town of Erie....

I really want to work

55:40 David Allison

Okay

55:42 Carolyn Love

because I just completed a project with the town of Erie last year and all of it is around equity and inclusion. I am a leadership and organization development consultant, because my PhD is from Antioch University, if you're familiar with that, in Yellow Springs, Ohio, the Mayberry?

56:00 Carolyn Love

I call it the Mayberry of Ohio, probably the only progressive place, spot you're going to find in Ohio.

56:08 Carolyn Love

Yeah, it is. So that and it's been interesting, working in the space of equity, and just watching everything unfold.

56:25 Carolyn Love

And really developing techniques and helping others develop techniques, how can we have difficult conversations, where we hold on to the humanity of both parties.

56:43 Carolyn Love

And I'm gonna have to read this to you because it really struck me. Because when I went to the UN, I learned a lot. But then the person I was with, Etta, and she said here, here's the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Well, I was expecting it to be this big, huge book. It isn't. It's like this little small pamphlet, but the first article, and the Universal Declaration, right, and I gotta read this to you, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason, and conscious and should act towards one another, in a spirit of brotherhood." For me, that captures my essence, it really does.

57:48 Carolyn Love

I really want to work with organizations that are truly committed to seeing how we can create a workplace, create a society where everyone could thrive, and grow and go beyond surviving, really thrive, and live out their dream for their life. And to me that's, that's possible. It's ambitious, but it's possible. And I think you do it at the one-on-one level, you know, like I've seen us do here in Broomfield, you do it at the organizational level. That's why I'm involved with the library. And you can do it at the societal level. And that's why I'm an Election Judge, at least that was for the last election. I don't know if they don't hire me, or let me volunteer again. Because public policy, even though all policy is local, all policy affects the quality of our lives. So that really, is how I guided. So I've worked with the town of Erie...

59:00 Carolyn Love

I've worked with the City and County of Denver, worked with the city of Boulder, the county of Boulder, because we have to figure out ways to honor each other's humanity.

59:15 David Allison

Absolutely. Absolutely. Seeing you, and actually we met at the Museum of Nature and Science. And that was another example of doing that sort of work that is hard and difficult and emotional. But it's also absolutely essential to building what you just described there, which is that sense of common humanity, shared desire to move forward in equity, in purpose. Love it

59:46 Carolyn Love

Yeah, and not weaponized language. I want to work with organizations, because even now, I'm even shifting, approaching things to start helping people say, Well, here's how maybe you could think about language in this. When you're confronted with a conflictual situation, let's not throw arrows at each other, but how can we lower the temperature and just be in conversation? To where we can hear one another?

1:00:24 David Allison

What are some examples of that? I'd love to just hear how that works with those situations when people are using those words that escalate, instead of bringing it down? How do you get from one place to the, to a place where you can really talk to each other, that sort of thing?

1:00:51 Carolyn Love

I think first of all, you have to be grounded in who you are. And you have to, you have to develop the muscle of saying, regardless of how David comes at me, I'm not going to come back to him in the same way. Because that's the easiest thing to do. To pull my evil twin sister out of my hip pocket and come at you with full force, literally, is the easiest thing that I could do. And it's the most damaging to building relationships, and building, building a beloved community.

1:01:27 Carolyn Love

So I encourage people to get grounded first and really let your curiosity take over. "I'm hearing what you're saying." "What's leading you to that conclusion?" Or, "I have observed you as a very intelligent and compassionate person. But right now, you're not there, what's going on with you?" So that you can, through asking questions, get them to kind of come back into reality again.

1:02:02 Carolyn Love

Yeah. And does it require a lot of you? Yes. but it depends on what you're going to send her. And right now, at my stage of life, I want to send her love and community.

1:02:20 Carolyn Love

So if I've got to bend over a little bit to get there, I'm willing to do it. Because my runway is getting short now. I got more years behind me than what I have ahead of me. And my goal was to end racism in my lifetime. So I don't have time to be dinking around. And then, too, it's who do you feel..... I remember facilitating some workshops at Broomfield United Methodist Church.

1:02:51 Carolyn Love

I remember this one guy in particular, who was just really obnoxious. And I started noticing, I'm spending a lot of time with this person, and then the light bulb came on. That's not who you want; you will never convince that person. Don't invest the time there. Go with this group here, where you can learn and share and grow together. And if he comes along fine, but if he doesn't, then that's okay, too. So start with those individuals who are saying, we want to learn, we want to do better, okay, then we can be in conversation.

1:03:33 David Allison

Their hearts are ready.

1:03:35 Carolyn Love

Their heart is ready. And their mind is ready. So yeah, you can move forward. So, those are some things, and then determine when something is said, is this something that I need to address right now?

1:03:48 Carolyn Love

Do I have the emotional energy to do it? Or should I wait a day or two later and say, you know, I hear what you're saying, I don't know if I can have this conversation right now. Can we agree to talk in a couple of days, so you can calm yourself down and go back to it in a couple of days?

1:04:08 David Allison

Timing matters for that for sure. You mentioned the beloved community and that was a dream for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1:04:21 David Allison

Is that kind of where we take in that kind of idea, built on that in a different way? Or how do you envision the beloved community?

1:04:32 Carolyn Love

Yeah, I remember reading King's book, "Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?" And he mentioned it there and really, "beloved community", it even goes, it is dated back further than Dr. King. It has a theological implication as well. So it just resonated with me, not only from the theology of it, but from Dr. King and how he spoke about it.

1:05:05 Carolyn Love

You know, it's like the African term Ubuntu. I am, because of you. And now when I look at things from that global perspective, I am just as impacted by what's happening in Gaza as by someone, Palestinian or a Jewish individual, I don't fully understand it. And I'm not gonna say that I am walking in their shoes. I know, as a mother....I know that there's just some things that I know. And I have empathy there. You know? So, I guess for me, it's how do we get to that place of the beloved community? How does Broomfield create this beloved community where we're saying, "I'm willing..."

And I'll give you an example. Yesterday, I was going to King Soopers. And on my way from where I parked my car, walking towards it, there was this woman, and it looked like she had a cane, and her back was on the ground. And it looked like she was trying to negotiate her physical space with trying to bend over. I didn't know who this woman was, and I just stopped. I said, Do you need help? Do you need me to help you? And by that time, the man whose car she was leaning against, he got in his car. And it was like, come on, she needed to move from that space because if he moved, she was gonna collapse. And he signaled me, an okay sign, saying she's okay. You know, they, he didn't know her. I didn't know her. But that to me is "beloved community." When you are a stranger, you just say, Can I help? It only took me 10 seconds to do that. She said, No, I'm okay. I just need to get my bearings. And she could go.

1:06:59 David Allison

It's just taking the time.

1:07:02 Carolyn Love

My neighbor on both sides.... but I always tell Nick and Susan, "when y'all move, I'm moving," because Nick will come over and shovel snow. Dan has come over with his son.

1:07:15 Carolyn Love

If Nick doesn't see me in a few days, he's gonna just knock on my door. "Just want to make sure that you're okay". That's, that's that's community.

1:07:25 David Allison

Absolutely.

1:07:26 Carolyn Love

And that, so that to me, is “beloved community.”

1:07:35 David Allison

Yeah. What else do we miss? What did we not talk about, that we need to talk about?

1:07:41 Carolyn Love

Well, another volunteer and.... I mentioned this to you when we were walking up. I'm on the board of ACLU. So you can see the types of organizations I connect with. And one of your questions is like, what activities do you do? And that was such an interesting question to me because it's like, really, when I look at my activities, they're focused around, beloved community. So I'm a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. It's the oldest African American Greek lettered Organization for Women, founded in 1908. January the 15th, to be exact.

1:08:23 Carolyn Love

I'm a member of Coterie. Coterie is a study group of African-American women, there's 20 women. It's over 100 years old. And we come together to study. This year we're studying the implications of COVID on religion, on the workplace, you know, on entertainment. So we study and then we share our knowledge with the community. And we typically, well we might do something different this year, but we typically will host a luncheon that we pay for. And we invite, we buy table tents, like I buy a table every year. And I invite people to come and hear what we learn.

1:09:15 David Allison

Yes, yeah.

1:09:16 Carolyn Love

Because I'm a black feminist. And one of the tenets of black feminists is you share your knowledge with the community, you don't keep it to yourself.

1:09:26 Carolyn Love

And knowledge is one of the ways that we can create social change. So, I am a member of Coterie, a member of NAACP of Boulder County and doing their activities. February 1st kicks off Black History Month. I'll be up at the Center for African American Studies celebrating that. So when I look at the types of things that I do, they're all centered on African American community. The exception is y'all have done some great things here. The arts and culture in Broomfield, I think, is really good.

1:10:00 Carolyn Love

Um, and you've brought in some really good artists, some really good spoken words and all good, great authors, you know. So that's the other thing that keeps me engaged here, is the arts community. That, I hope that we continue to develop into more

1:10:18 David Allison

Absolutely. keep developing. Yeah.

1:10:20 Carolyn Love

Yeah.Yeah

1:10:24 David Allison

Wonderful. Well, thank you so much, Dr. Carolyn Love. I appreciate your time today and appreciate you.

1:10:31 Carolyn Love

I appreciate you too. And I keep forgetting about the museum.

1:10:35 David Allison

Yes. (laughter) Feels like a long time ago. Anything before COVID, feels like....

1:10:41 Carolyn Love

Yeah, yeah, it is. Well, thank you for your time. And thank you for this heavenly opportunity for moments of reflection.