

HOST 1: [SIGHS] That is truly disgusting.

HOST 2: Scary, and this is on the cover of *The Voice*. And this is all we have on it. So I'm sure we'll be bringing you more about this.

HOST 1: You bet.

HOST 2: And there's lots of people that are going to be looking at this very closely and trying to work to get it laughed at and out of here as quickly as possible. We've got some music coming up. One of my favorite groups were in town-- what-- last summer.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: Let me see and I'll tell you which one because I don't know the number. Two or 14, what does this say? Two is a sad one and 14 is kind of an activist song. Do you think--

WOMAN: 14.

HOST 2: Think 14?

WOMAN: 14.

HOST 2: OK, number 14 then.

HOST 1: OK, do you want to-- you want to intro this?

HOST 2: Yeah. This is--

HOST 1: Because this is a great group.

HOST 2: This is a group that I just love to death and I saw them at Houston Community College last fall, I guess. And they were great in concert. The group is Sweet Honey in the Rock, and the song is "Women Should be a Priority".

WOMAN: I love that song.

HOST 1: Here we go.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

OK, that was--

HOST 2: Julia Fordham.

HOST 1: Doing--

HOST 2: "Porcelain."

HOST 1: Oh, OK.

HOST 2: "Porcelain."

HOST 1: "Porcelain" and coming up at 2:15 we are going to be running that tape on AIDS caregiving. It's a four part series. We're into week two. And as soon as she gets here we're going to have an interview with Tranay Chardon who has been here many times before. But until then, how about our favorite local, Pink.

HOST 2: Yay.

HOST 1: And a great song, great song for the community that it's just turned out to be my favorite on this album. And boy, it's really a good one too. You can find it at your favorite goodie record store. And it's called "Give and Take".

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Whoa, OK. That was our own Diverse Works-- no, Diverse House. [LAUGHING]

HOST 2: Diverse House. Diverse Work--

HOST 1: OK, that's-- that's the other place. No, that's Diverse House headed up by Tranay Chardon. And I don't know, Tranay must be on the road trying to get here or something cause he's running late, she's running late. And she's a female impersonator.

HOST 2: I know.

HOST 1: OK.

HOST 2: But you said that like just to cover all bases.

HOST 1: Well--

HOST 2: Depending on what she's wearing tonight.

HOST 1: That's right. That's right. And if Tranay doesn't make it tonight, we'll have Tranay here next week because Tranay is a good friend of *After Hours* and has provided lots of great music for us and we'll--

HOST 2: Including that which we love.

HOST 1: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

HOST 2: OK, next week-- next weekend, there's some hip and hot and cool happening things next weekend. You know what they are? They are--

HOST 1: What?

HOST 2: I'm about to tell you.

HOST 1: OK. Tell me. Tell me.

HOST 2: I had to pause for effect there.

HOST 1: Oh, OK.

HOST 2: Dun dun dun dun dun. Take a walk on the wild side with--

HOST 1: Yes.

HOST 2: --FIST

HOST 1: [SCREAMS]

HOST 2: F-- F-I-S-T. And you know, it doesn't say what FIST-- FIST stands for.

HOST 1: Oh, gosh. Let's see.

HOST 2: Females.

HOST 1: Yes.

HOST 2: In-- interested?

HOST 1: In something trouble.

HOST 2: Interested in sexual trouble?

HOST 1: Interested in-- something like that, yeah.

HOST 2: Oh my goodness.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: FIST, a women's only S&M bondage and discipline leather club. The only requirement is an interest. Call--

HOST 1: Whoa.

HOST 2: 5282127 and yes, I'll say that again, 5282127. And somebody from this group, I think a couple of people are going to be on next weekend.

HOST 1: Next week, yes.

HOST 2: And talk about--

HOST 1: With Jewel.

HOST 2: --what the heck this is all about. So--

HOST 1: It's-- well, just what you said.

HOST 2: Yeah, and I'm really glad they're going to come on and talk about it. Because they're trying to promote their group and get a wider appeal, you should-- I guess, you could say.

HOST 1: Well, you know, there's-- there's-- there's a lot of interest--

HOST 2: We talk about, yeah--

HOST 1: --in the men's community. But you know, why not the women's community.

HOST 2: Well, there's a lot of interest in the women's community. It's just not very organized up until now. And the women have kind of, you know, been add ons with the men's group.

HOST 1: Oh.

HOST 2: And a lot of women don't like to be, you know, just an offshoot of a men's group, or a part--

HOST 1: Well, National Leather Association is like for--

HOST 2: Everybody.

HOST 1: --everybody, I mean, gay, straight--

HOST 2: Hetero, homo--

HOST 1: --male

HOST 2: --male, female.

HOST 1: Yes. Yeah.

HOST 2: Yeah.

HOST 1: You-- you name it.

HOST 2: As a matter of fact--

HOST 1: And they have some wonderful, wonderful shows.

HOST 2: Well, most of the NLA membership, as far as-- most of the female NLA membership is straight or bisexual women, mostly straight.

HOST 1: Oh, I don't know. There's a woman named Dottie who's a member of NLA.

HOST 2: Oh, well, that's true. Dottie's a NLA member.

HOST 1: Whoa, she's a hot woman.

HOST 2: Dottie's been a member of other groups. Dottie's gorgeous.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: There's-- she's been a member of other group. She's even started her own group.

HOST 1: Oh, really.

HOST 2: Yeah, and that has been-- that's in the past, and that's something that, you know, is not a constant and ongoing thing.

HOST 1: Oh, OK. OK.

HOST 2: So as people move and as relationships change, she might say, things like that.

HOST 1: Oh, yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

HOST 1: OK, well, you are listening to *After Hours*, a continuing tradition--

HOST 2: On KPFK Houston.

HOST 1: 90.1 FM, world radio for the-- for the sheeple.

HOST 2: For the sheeple?

HOST 1: Yeah, after midnight, it's world radio for the sheeple.

HOST 2: For the sheeple.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: For the sheeple.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: OK, you know what I have in front of me? Can you tell from there? Can you see it?

HOST 1: Oh, *Deneuve*.

HOST 2: *Deneuve*, got to love this magazine. It feels so glossy in my hands.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: It's kind of warm. It kind of gets steamy just from me holding it. Listen, can hear that?

HOST 1: That's for you, Jewel.

HOST 2: That's-- that's for you, Jewel. That's paper rattling. You know how I feel about that. Lesbo File, I have two favorite parts of this magazine, Dyke Drama and Lesbo File.

HOST 1: OK.

HOST 2: Dyke drama is a little fiction blurb for the most part. And Lesbo File is rumor, rumor, rumor.

HOST 1: Oh.

HOST 2: And gossip.

HOST 1: Yes, we love it.

HOST 2: Gossip, oh.

HOST 1: Give me that gossip, girlfriend.

HOST 2: OK. Basically, they got the films down-- the thumbs down on Femme to Femme, I'll just briefly say that.

HOST 1: No kidding, What's the deal?

HOST 2: The deal just is we're waiting it's says, OK, kids, we're waiting to see how this whole Femme to Femme thing would pan out before we pass judgment on this Lipstick Lesbian Girl group. We had reservations from the beginning.

HOST 1: Why?

HOST 2: The name, the fact that Femme to Femme was put together by men. They did a layout for Playboy.

HOST 1: Oh, yeah.

HOST 2: All this sounds like the tired old tale of boys getting off on girls doing it for themselves. But if you know Lesbo File, you know, we're, you know, blah, blah, blah. Here's the judgment thumbs down. No matter what you think of the music, there's no getting past the fact that they don't control what they produce. Two lesbians in the band directed some choice words at Playboy, telling dyke heartthrob Frank in the Advocate, everything that Playboy perceives Femme to Femme is being for, we're against. What a surprise how they-- how taken they were with their interviewer. They seem to just think that Frank was just the best. They talked about her breasts and they went off on her and said all this wonderful stuff. Anyway, that's in on the Femme To femme thing.

HOST 1: Oh, OK.

HOST 2: Except for the two out of five membership-- two out of the five women in the group are lesbians.

HOST 1: And one is a bisexual.

HOST 2: Right.

HOST 1: And the other two--

HOST 2: --are cool.

HOST 1: --are cool, yeah. I mean, they're Femme to Femme.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

HOST 2: Yeah, we love them. They do really well here. So the music is great. We love the music and we wish them well.

HOST 1: So they're just not politically correct, is that it?

HOST 2: That's evidently what this particular Lesbo File offer has to say.

HOST 1: Well, you know what I think about politically correct [POP SOUND]

HOST 2: Tell us, tell us what you have to say.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: Now, this, this is some good information too. This is gossip, gossip, gossip. And this is all there is.

HOST 1: Oh, I need it.

HOST 2: Let me specify. The hottest rumored couple around these parts is Pulitzer prize winning author Alice Walker and singer Tracy Chapman.

HOST 1: No.

HOST 2: Yes. Yes, the two become quite chummy over the last year making the rounds together. Walker has attended Chapman's concerts and soccer matches. Tracy makes an appearance in Alice's collaboration with the Palmer Warrior Marx and attended a premiere with the author. Artistic collaboration, friendship, or something more.

HOST 1: Well, now that's gossip, gossip, gossip, in *Deneuve*.

HOST 2: That's-- that's very gossipy. The next thing we have is--

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: They're doing a governor survey. Who's the hottest governor around? And who do you think they pick?

HOST 1: Oh, we know.

HOST 2: We know. Our choice for the hottest governor is that da da da

HOST 1: Da da da da da.

HOST 2: No contest. It's the divine Ann Richard from Texas.

HOST 1: You bet. You bet.

HOST 2: Our most eligible bachelor is divorced, a recovering alcoholic, learn how to drive a for motorcycle for 60th birthday, and takes guff from no one.

HOST 1: That's right, baby.

HOST 2: The gov showed up on the tonight show and dumbed down to Jay Leno's level affecting that Turkey-- that quirky Texan act she's perfected by now but what caught our attention were Mrs. Richards comments on singer Dolly Parton alarming as how, yes, Dolly had been to the governor's mansion.

HOST 1: Yes.

HOST 2: We're buddies, said the governor.

HOST 1: Oh, yeah.

HOST 2: We share the same secrets which we will not share with you.

HOST 1: [SCREAMS] You're kidding. Oh, that's hot.

HOST 2: Can't you just see that's the ultimate butch femme couple?

HOST 1: No kidding.

HOST 2: Oh. Oh.

HOST 1: Talk about role playing, girlfriend.

HOST 2: Yes. Yes. Well, you know they have this-- they go on to talk about Dolly and her close friend, Judy Ogle, telling the TV guide, we've done everything together but not that yet.

HOST 1: Whew.

HOST 2: Yeah, the Doll also said, she's been involved to various degrees with women and men. So for the record, she's married to Carl Dean whom she apparently sees, oh, a few times a year dot, dot, dot.

HOST 1: Oh.

HOST 2: Oh, and they talk about Tom and Roseanne's other young woman friend. And let's see. They talk about Madonna. And let's see, Cindy Crawford played out a few fantasies for a pictorial in *Rolling Stone* including some shots in drag. The shots found Cindy in a suit sporting stubble, a cigarette, and oh, extra padding, if you know what we mean.

HOST 1: We know what you mean.

HOST 2: And she talks about her shaving partner k.d. Lang.

HOST 1: Shaving partner?

HOST 2: And she was there with her. Did you see that article with-- where was that?*Vanity*-- *Vanity Fair* with Cindy Crawford and k.d. Lang. k.d. Lang was in a--

HOST 1: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

HOST 2: --in a chair.

HOST 1: Oh, yeah.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

HOST 2: Yeah, saw that like that. So anyway, oh, there's much more of this. I mean, there's like three pages. So go out and grab yourself this magazine, buy it. It's really-- Lesbo File, of course, is my favorite part.

HOST 1: I see.

HOST 2: And I will always, every month, be bringing you *Deneuve* Lesbo File. You can count on me for due lesbian gossip. Because you know, *Murder at the Nightwood Bar* being made into a movie. Dolly Parton and the governor doing it is good gossip. So we got that all kinds of ways.

HOST 1: OK, well coming up at 2:15 will be AIDS caregiving part two. And that'll run approximately 45 minutes. This is a great four part series that we're proud to bring you. And it comes from Jewel, the jeweled woman.

HOST 2: The bejeweled one.

HOST 1: From Bearing Care Center.

HOST 2: Jewelry.

HOST 1: Yes, provided to us by them. And right now, earlier we played Gabrielle doing Dreams which was donated to *After Hours* by the originator of *After Hours*, Buddy Johnston, who put this show together back on-- the first show with September 6, 1987.

HOST 2: Wow.

HOST 1: Yeah.

HOST 2: '87?

HOST 1: '87, yeah. Yeah, we're coming up close, next month will be the 350th show of *After Hours*.

HOST 2: Wow.

HOST 1: Yeah, I'm pretty excited about that. And-- but he did something else that-- that's a signature thing that he did. You may remember the song "Coming Out of Hiding" by Pamela. Stanley.

HOST 2: I love it.

HOST 1: Yeah, well she-- oh, oh, wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I see somebody at the door. We're going to do the coming out of-- "Coming Out of Hiding" probably next week because Tranay is here. And--

HOST 2: Yay.

HOST 1: Tranay, honey. OK, we're going to-- we're going to have to do you tonight and do you next week too. Because--

HOST 2: Will you get any flack because of that?

TRANAY: No, no, no. I was-- just I did a show.

HOST 1: Yeah.

TRANAY: I just went to Midtown Spa.

HOST 1: Yeah.

TRANAY: I was doing at Midtown. Hi, everybody.

HOST 1: Hey, Tranay.

TRANAY: I'd like to say thank you to the staff and management at Midtown Spa, my manager, Tim Rogers, Esquire, and also my other manager, Mark Wells. They're on the way to Galveston. Misty Valdez and they dropped me off.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

HOST 1: Misty Valdez is a great entertainer.

TRANAY: They came from Galveston to see me here at. We did a show at the Midtown Spa. We were celebrating their spring-- their spring fest.

HOST 1: OK.

TRANAY: And so we did-- I just got through performing over there. And I said, hello to Mark, I'm assuming he's working the desk, Max-- Oh, God, Jim, Dennis, the assistant manager, you know. And coincidentally, everybody needs to go over there because it's really a nice place. They really do some great things. They have male strippers on Thursdays, you know.

HOST 1: No kidding.

TRANAY: Yeah, they have male strippers on Thursday. We do a whole bunch of stuff up there.

HOST 1: So it's kind of more of an entertainment complex these days.

TRANAY: It's-- look it up, honey. This is the '90s, honey.

HOST 1: OK, I got to tell you right now that we're doing a four part series tape on AIDS caregiving but we got to start the tape at 2:15.

TRANAY: OK.

HOST 1: So talk fast, girl, and come back next week.

TRANAY: Let's see.

HOST 1: Well, can you come back next week?

TRANAY: Yeah, I can.

HOST 1: OK, good.

TRANAY: I'd like to say hello to the girls of my group, Diverse House--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

HOST 1: Oh, yeah, we played Diverse House.

TRANAY: Oh, did you? And Brenda. June the 12th, we're going to be at-- we're going to sing for gay pride. So we want each and every one of y'all to come out, hey. We want you all to come out and support us. Our new single is going to be release that day. We're going to do--

HOST 1: Really?

TRANAY: Yeah, "Love to Love You, Baby."

HOST 1: I am really looking forward to that.

TRANAY: Oh, god. And let's see, our album-- album is entitled *Get Off and Dance*. It's on DPIC records which is my own label. And we just really need the support from the-- from the gay community. And all of our young audience listeners out there, we want you to remember that there's someone out there that's on your side.

HOST 1: That's right.

TRANAY: And we want each and every one of you to know that whatever you're going through, honey, we've already been through it. So don't be afraid to call and ask, honey, for some help.

HOST 1: I was talking a little bit earlier. I did a number by Gabrielle called "Dreams."

TRANAY: Oh, "Dreams".

HOST 1: Yeah. And--

TRANAY: I love that.

HOST 1: And I know-- and I know that that's kind of-- that's kind of your wish for the gay community.

TRANAY: Well, yeah.

HOST 1: Don't ever give them up.

TRANAY: No. No, honey, because see people will talk you down. I was put through that. You know, people will talk you down. They'll tell you what you can't do. And I've learned something. There's nothing you can't do. Anything you want to be, but you, first of all, you have to have drive, you have to have determination. You have to want I-T, it.

HOST 1: Yeah.

TRANAY: You have to want it bad enough. Whatever you want to be, you have to want it bad enough to say, I'm going to do it no matter what the consequences are. I sing for my supper. I mean, I struggle and I mean, that's what I want to do. I love singing. I love performing. And this is what I do. And I give it my all. You know, sometimes, I go broke. You know, but hey, you know, the satisfaction I get is when somebody says, you know, oh, Tranay, I really enjoyed your show or you really did this, or you did that, or that song you did you know remind me of my lover when we were together, you know, and stuff like that.

HOST 1: Oh, that's nice.

TRANAY: You know, so as long as I get-- as long as I know that I'm doing something to help someone because see I'm a storyteller, I like to communicate through my songs. So that's really my way of giving back. Because I'm not a politician. You know, I talk a lot. [LAUGHTER]

Yeah, but there are great things happening. Houston is starting to look up. I hope to bring-- I hope to bring with my record company and bring with my group to bring dance music to a venue here. And start bring-- because it wasn't exposed here. We don't have it, you know, most of it came from New York and the east coast.

HOST 1: That's right. That's exactly right.

TRANAY: I want to bring it down here so some of the record companies or people could see that there's a lot of different types of talent, that we're diversified people.

HOST 1: And why not we've got Houston as a mecca, a hub city for the for rap.

TRANAY: Yes, it is. It is. And it's-- but people are forgetting that there's a thing there called dance music. And the nightclub scene has always been hot. And it's such a pity that none of the other groups or nobody else decided to put a group together and try to come out. I mean, we should have more of Martha Wash's.

HOST 1: Oh, yeah.

TRANAY: We should have more Sylvester's coming up after this.

HOST 1: We don't have a Sylvester anymore.

TRANAY: Well, I'm here. I'm here. I'm his protege.

HOST 1: OK.

TRANAY: I'm going to take off-- take over where he's left off at and thank the lord for that. Yeah. I'm so proud to just be alive and thank the lord for letting me do the things that I do. Thanks to Boy Bar. So you're still at Boy Bar.

HOST 1: That's OK. That's every Wednesday night, isn't it?

TRANAY: Yeah, and I like to say, oh, John, I hope you get better. He got the flu. But the boss Jeanie, she was the head of code for a while. We're doing great over there. Everything is OK. I'm get ready to go back on the road again.

HOST 1: OK, now, I heard that. I heard that last fall. And I announced it. And--

TRANAY: I was still here. Well--

HOST 1: And you did go out of town, girl.

TRANAY: I did. I did a few dates. I was in [INAUDIBLE] just recently to do the-- I did a preview of the songs that I'm doing. So really it's like a test tour. I'm really going out to see because I had lost back of the audience. A lot of the younger generation don't know who I am so-- and I wanted to kind of go back out there. You know, most groups release a record and then they tour to promote the record. I'm touring first so everybody can see who I am first. And then when I release the record they'll say, oh, that's the guy that sings in drag. That way they'll know who I am and they'll get an idea of what--

HOST 1: Now, now, wait a minute now, I know you just said, that's the guy who sings in drag.

TRANAY: And I hate that word.

HOST 1: I know. I know. We talked about this last time you were here. It's female impersonation.

TRANAY: Right, well, to be honest, I guess, I'll be considered-- let's say androgynous.

HOST 1: Yes.

ALEX: Like the Cure, Boy George.

HOST 1: Yeah.

TRANAY: What's the guy-- [? Depeche Mode. ?]

HOST 1: There you go.

TRANAY: Who else?

HOST 1: There's so many.

TRANAY: Everybody's trying to call him the next Rupaul. And I really-- I--

HOST 1: Oh, no, no, no. I got to pull my quote here.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

TRANAY: You know, if you categorize me, you know, Rupaul, he's good. I'm not going to say anything negative about Rupaul. But I have a little bit more to offer the gay community and the record business, the record industry.

HOST 1: I think so too.

TRANAY: The record industry, I've studied music. I have my background in music, back up singing, my songwriting ability. I want to show them that, you know, I'm not the girl the best with, baby. '94 is going to be my year, baby.

HOST 1: Good.

TRANAY: I'm coming to tear the radio waves up.

HOST 1: Well, I'm ready for it. I have been ready for it for a long time because I've seen you-- I've seen you perform-- oh gosh, how long ago was it?

TRANAY: Well, let's see Alto was together then.

HOST 1: Alto, and you did this-- you did a great show in a parking lot.

TRANAY: Yes.

HOST 1: Yes.

TRANAY: From Midtown's Pub.

HOST 1: Yes.

TRANAY: On the 4th of July we raised money. You know, matter of fact, we donated some money to a lot of our charities.

HOST 1: That was a great show.

TRANAY: Yeah, I do that. I proud of that. And I think everybody else should do that more. We should we should help each other more. Our community needs a lot of help but we need to help each other.

HOST 1: That's right.

TRANAY: We need to stop putting each other down and turning our heads. We need to help each other. We really do. It's important. It's really important.

HOST 1: OK. Can you come back next week and we can talk more?

TRANAY: Yes, I will. Yeah, because I will bring the girls.

HOST 1: OK.

TRANAY: Because [INAUDIBLE] she's going to be free and we're going to be able to sit here together--

HOST 1: Oh, good.

TRANAY: Cause we got so much to talk about.

HOST 1: Oh, good. Good. Good.

TRANAY: We got more things to talk about, believe it or not. Some good things have happened.

HOST 1: OK.

TRANAY: Some great things have happened.

HOST 1: Well, I'm happy to hear it. OK, I'll see you next week then.

TRANAY: I love you.

HOST 1: OK. Love you.

TRANAY: Y'all take care.

HOST 1: OK, now I want to bring you AIDS caregiving. It's a 45 minute tape. This is the second week. It's caregiving at its best. And we'll see you right around 3 o'clock.

PRESENTER: People like you and me are drawn to AIDS caregiving for many different reasons. The most obvious one is someone I love needs me. You're drawn in because your lover, or your son, or your best friend, your husband, or your mother has the HIV virus which has progressed into AIDS. Probably, the second most common response to why do you do this work is that someone you were close to died of AIDS. You may or may not have been that person's caregiver but his or her death struck you so deeply that you were moved to do something.

Many people come to this work simply out of a more general need to show that I care, or to make a difference. People who can't simply stand by as the pandemic takes the lives of so many. One other large category of caregivers are those people who feel a need to pay back. Somebody helped me and I need to pass it on. This is true, for example, of many people who were substance abusers in the past and who are helped to get their lives back on track again.

Let's briefly examine these motivations. We spoke with Alice Core, who delivers hot meals to people confined to their homes. She said, she'd been wanting to do some community work when she noticed a church bulletin asking for volunteer drivers. She's followed by Alex Martinez who volunteered because he just had to do something.

ALICE: I knew nobody with the disease. And I was kind of unsure. I mean, I just started going to the church also. I wasn't really sure how I was going to feel about it. But once I started doing it, almost immediately I knew how much I was helping people and I really wanted to continue doing it. I was just bringing in the basics of life. I was bringing the people food each day. And you know, some people when they open the door they say, oh, I haven't been out all day and yet they're only opening their door to the hallway. And that's considered getting out for them. So they need the service that I'm bringing to them.

But I need to help them. I just have a need within myself. I've always had a desire to do some sort of community service work. And it's taken me a long time to start but it's so rewarding. It's-- it's so satisfying. I feel it's a very small gesture that I do. I look at other people who do so much more and I think, wow, they have so much more of themselves to give. I'm just starting to learn how to give to other people.

ALEX: I lost my friend from grammar school and I lost my friend from high school, one of my friends from high school, and people that I had worked with for years at Pacific Bell, and people that I'd gone out with, and people that I had relationships with. After a few years, I got to a point of saying to myself will either I jump out a window, or I do something about this, you know. I take an action. And that's when I went to the Shanti Project.

And I thought, I can't go and lick envelopes because that's not going to do it for me. I have to go to the forefront. I have to go to the one-to-one emotional support, be there in the field, and do it in hospitals, and all that stuff. And I had gone through that with my friends in a lot of ways. That's why I did it. To come up with some sort of meaning for it. I needed to find meaning for myself about AIDS.

PRESENTER: Alice's need to give herself to other people translates into providing a much needed service. People in need get a hot meal on a daily basis. Alex's story is typical of people who find themselves losing friends or a family member to the disease. Earlier, we heard CJ Describe some of her work with homeless people and substance abusers. The reason she's so committed to this work, and does such a good job at it, is because she's very well acquainted with life on the street.

CJ: Somebody did it for me. Somebody sat on me. When I cleaned up, they didn't have recovery places like they have now. You had to have like either a good job that was going to put you in rehab, some kind of private insurance, or something like that. And none of that was available when I began to clean up. And somebody came and got me and babysitted me for 24 hours. I couldn't do anything. I couldn't even go in the bathroom more than 5 minutes. They were right there. And they drove me crazy.

But I can look back on that now and say, thank you, thank you. And that's what it takes. You know, she put up with my lies, me taking things, me-- oh, crises, I'm sick, whatever I could think of I did to get away from helping myself. So I know that it takes more individuals that understand that kind of thing in order to help the people that we come across.

PRESENTER: Alice, Alex, and CJ, as well as every other caregiver we spoke with, expressed the need to be helpful, to make a difference. What underlies that motivation? Some caregivers describe their lives before their caregiving experience as self-serving, competitive, or utilitarian. They knew something was missing. Others were drawn to the work because they saw it as a way to deepen compassion, to learn about loss and dying, or as part of a political commitment, or a spiritual path.

The more experienced caregivers all agreed that their definition of what makes a difference shifted over time. For the doctors and nurses in the hospitals, caregiving is deeply tied to improving and restoring physical health. As we know with recurring infections, improvements are often only temporary. For other caregivers who provide the many kinds of practical and emotional support services, making a difference is measured by how much they can contribute to a person's physical comfort, peace of mind, and ease of living.

But if the disease progresses, people with AIDS may not respond as we the caregivers would like them to respond. Chronic pain or persistent depression may cause the person with AIDS to respond with anger or withdrawal, rather than appreciation. Making a difference begins to pale as a motivation in the face of overloads of people to see, organizations to contend with, or deaths to grieve.

From what I've seen, AIDS caregiving is a crucible. It tests what you're made of. When the going gets tough, you need to be able to tap into a deeper motivation than making a difference, or showing you care. The long hours, the heartbreak, the frustration, the grief, and the wounds that get opened with each new loss, these demand that you be made of sturdier stuff. And this is what I've seen happen. The work itself can be transforming. It better be, otherwise, very few of us would last long doing it. Caregivers may change, grow, and develop. The baser metal, so to speak, which are introduced into this crucible of caregiving slowly start to show traces of gold.

The way to begin a caring relationship is to recognize that caregiving is a two way street. That it works best when there's a kind of partnership formed where both people give and receive. When we realize that, we move in ways that are quite different from everyday interactions. We realize that we're often so concerned with being useful to others, or so concerned about our own agendas, that we don't take the time to really hear what the other person's priorities are.