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SPEAKERS

Jimmy Carper, Vanessa Edwards

J

Jimmy Carper 00:07

The following program contains language or images of the brain or a sensitive nature which may be considered objectionable by some listener discretion is advised. Oh yes, you've tuned into after hours queer radio with attitude right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of after hours is ready to bring you news interviews, dialogue and music geared for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people and their friends. Hear it after hours, we may be diverse, but we have one thing in common. We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets. That means standing up for yourself taking responsibility for your own life, and being proud of who you are. Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age job or frame of mind. That's okay, we're here for you too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of after hours.

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02:07

Hello, Houston

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Jimmy Carper 02:07

and college station and welcome to the March 11 episode of after hours. I'm Jimmy Carper, the producer of the show, and this is the show that always I mean, we may have kind of all kinds of different people from all kinds of walks of life. And you don't have to like us. We only expect one thing. That's right, our ESP CT. Now for a little, little few things. Before we get into the show, I want to say hi to the tee man, and Ronald and Gary, our friendly Gay Christian, who's been listening to us for years and years and years and especially hello to melody and Melba, who may be listening in Now two things tonight. We've got this this is the Music Month. Yes, Vanessa music. And I'm sorry, I've got you on Vanessa. There you go.

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03:07

I wasn't sure if I was on or not sorry.

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Jimmy Carper 03:11

Yes, it's music month because Monday night at chances at eight o'clock. Dudley Saunders is going to be live in person and he is the one that you heard at the very beginning of the show that did the acapella number. Yes. By the waters of Babylon, I drove my car. The second piece of music was a new piece by by the music bear, and it was called home. It's off of his CD called Music bear. And the CD is available at low bow right now. I was over there recently. So about a half dozen of them they're

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actually kind of a favorite hanging out of a lot of the Tasker

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Jimmy Carper 03:56

oh yeah for good reason. I love elope materia materia you can hang out and just you know it's it's a meeting

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04:07

it's very informal Yes, it's it's a good place to go if you're not really into I guess the bar scene with a cigarette smoke and drinking and

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now it gets to me after a while to let me tell you that

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it's a good social meeting place in place, you get a chance to kind of sit around and permit some of the periodicals and the books that they've got their

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Jimmy Carper 04:28

whole library. You can just sit and read abuse books, it's wonderful.

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04:32

Coffee shops are all the rage. That is.

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Jimmy Carper 04:36

The second thing is is I have tickets available for the Gay Men's Chorus. They are performing this month on the 25th and the 26th. That Saturday night and Sunday afternoon at the Jewish Community Center, down down there and I've got pairs of tickets to give away tonight. And as a matter of fact, big ROI doesn't even know this because I haven't said anything to him. But we're gonna give a pair of tickets away right now, right now to the second caller at 713526573852 6k p f t, that's the Gay Men's Chorus performing this March 25. Saturday night, or, and oh my, we have an engineer here doing stuff. Or Sunday afternoon at 3pm at the Jewish Community Center. So I'm giving away tickets right now. 7135265738526 KPFT. Ah,

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05:45

now, see that myself. I've got a friend of mine from the Counseling Center Operations board and really, it's one of the members of the Neiman's course they

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Jimmy Carper 05:53

are so good and such a professional professional group. Well, hi, Janessa.

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05:59

Hey, Greg, if I didn't do the formal introduction, I was kind of running a little bit late. I was out there chatting. And of course, I did want to mention a couple of things. I guess before we get into the full swing, just a couple more announcements. We've got a couple of transgender themed events, I guess, if you will, coming up good. One of them is currently going on. It's a photo exhibit that is currently going on at the Erie city Ironworks, and horses here. It's actually 1302 Nan's. It's in the warehouse, okay. Okay. And it's basically an exhibit from Marianne pathl. Alan, and I don't know if you're familiar at all, whether or not she's actually kind of the MO I don't know, she's not the official, probably the unofficial documentary of the transgender community, and the transgender movement in, in photograph, and she's actually got quite a body of work. So she produced a book, oh, some years back called transformations. And she's currently on working on her second book, which is basically documenting the political movement of the transgender community. So she has a photo exhibit right now, which is covering a lot of stuff that's very international in scope. It's basically a pastiche of her entire body of work. Wow. And that's kind of It's a neat little thing. Actually, she had her reception tonight. And it wasn't able to make that because I was over BRB, so tickets, but it will be going on through April 3. And I did want to mention that to everyone. And if you're going within the next week, still playing right now is walking the dead. It is a play by unhinged productions, which is a nonprofit. Again, lesbian themed movie or movie company Theatre Company, well, maybe movie company eventually. But it is going on at the atomic Cafe, which is a 1320 nians, which is right down the street down the street. Very convenient. And I believe ticket prices on that are \$15 and it will be playing until March 18. And that's when the play closes. But if you're in the mood for something you can like kill two birds with one stone right there.

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Jimmy Carper 08:17

Yeah, and what happened to mention something you just kind of slid right over that slid over that they were at the BRB tonight selling tickets. Now what was that all about? Ah, the

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tickets that were going on sale tonight is the actual raffle that the caucus is putting on for the Millennium march on Washington. And we have tickets for that. Currently, there are plenty of tickets left. But what this is is a four day three night package to Washington DC. For the Millennium March we pay for the airfare we pay for the stay there at the Marriott on the Mall in Washington. And it's \$5 benefiting the Houston gay and lesbian Political Caucus. Well, I bought

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Jimmy Carper 08:57

mine last night because Louis is going on, which is that's why you were at their friendly little weekend. Let us entertain you and we've probably got about 1000 folks in for that. It's I

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09:09

met people from all over the country tonight.

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Jimmy Carper 09:11

I even signed up with Seattle. I signed up for it. I didn't get to go to today to any of the festivities. I was there last night and I'll be there tomorrow because tomorrow's the big show at Rich's to not to be missed. It's wonderful.

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I wish I could go to that. Unfortunately, I've got precinct duties on I guess it's Tuesday, Super Tuesday.

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Jimmy Carper 09:32

Anyway, we wanted to say hi and welcome to everyone from out of town here for

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09:37

currently and we really appreciate y'all coming down here to Houston and visiting us so we always always love entertaining. Not only the folks here in town, but the folks that come in from Atlanta. We love showing them Houston welcome

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Jimmy Carper 09:50

and let's see I don't have a whole lot of dirt yet because you know, I wasn't there to I guess I wasn't there long enough last night. But let's see I did buy my ticket. Get four, from the raffle from Shawn Carter, who was president of the caucus, of course, he told me that if I want, I had to give it to him. But you know,

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10:12

well, if he wins, he'll have to give it to you or someone else. He's not going to win. No. The officers, if we do win with the tickets that we purchase, we're basically assigning them to someone else. And it's not for us, you know, it's kind of for everyone else. And we do want to encourage you all to participate, because number one, the proceeds are for the caucus. And it's a good cause. And number two, this is an excellent point on getting the Millennium March and having everything paid for Yeah. \$5. Now,

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Jimmy Carper 10:41

there's another event coming up.

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Yes, absolutely. Thank you. A great segue. And Janet. Oh, God, Jessica. Jessica Redman is here. She is the official spokesperson for the unity committee. Oh, good, which is covering the upcoming unity banquet.

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11:00

Yeah, come on, jump in here.

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11:02

Hello, everybody. I'm Jessica Redman V unity banquets coming up. We're going to be coming up April 8, it's going to be held at Westchase. Hilton at 7pm. Tickets are \$38. And this year's event will be the best we've ever had. We've got a very special night lined up for everybody.

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Jimmy Carper 11:18

What what, tell us about it, because because I painted these before, and it's they've been wonderful, right?

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11:25

It's bigger and better than ever. This year, we'll have a comedian. We'll have a sit down dinner, wow, we'll have a cocktail reception. We will have door prizes, we will also be giving away a silent auction all during the night where we can raise money for the new transgender community center. Good. And that's located over off of Westheimer



J Jimmy Carper 11:43

Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait back up here back up here. The new transgender community center



11:49

Yes, we now have a home. We're not the homeless wanders anymore. We've got a really brand new facility over there behind Susan Anderson, ah, and we are actually have a home to actually have our meetings and so forth on a regular basis where we can actually basically conduct business professionally, quickly and all the time. So we're a kind of a constant resource for the library.



J Jimmy Carper 12:15

Now is that let me let me see. Let me get some background on this is the space in the back? Wasn't that originally taken up by cross sheets across wrestlers are anonymous,



12:28

right. And that's what Unity is all about. If you recall our broadcast last year, at this time, we had our post unity banquet broadcast here on KPFT. And what we did basically what the Unity committee stands for it is the governing body, so to speak, of all of the gender communities here in Houston. Now there are five, there are five gender communities HCDA,



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helping cross dressers. Right, exactly. But that's, I knew I had that that's



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fine. We are an acting board, which we basically are representatives from all the five groups, yeah, meet on a regular basis. And what we do is put together events like the Unity bank, with biggest event of the year, and we'll have probably 225 girls there and that event, and it's gonna be a big night, you might have some



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guys there are

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a lot of girls who have dates. So yeah, it's a great time for everybody. And it celebrates unity in our community we've got which is a very rare thing, where you've got all five gender communities working together. Yeah. It's not very much done anywhere else besides Houston. That's one of the reasons I'm here because it's still a wonderful opportunity to actually grow our community work together. This city has one of the largest active memberships in the country. Wow. Even more than our friends on the bay so we're pretty excited about that.

J Jimmy Carper 13:59
Boy when you when you know there are other communities in Dallas and San Antonio and Austin so Texas must really be out there

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we are on the cutting edge. Yeah. With third coast is definitely leading the way this

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is about time. That's right.

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So Unity banquet April

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8 7pm West Chase Hilton. Big right time, as I say we'll have a sit down dinner comedian, but we have a cocktail reception door prizes, the whole nine yards. Okay now and DJ and dancing as well. Now

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hold on, hold on, how do I get a ticket?

14:32
Well, any member that needed to come in, I can tell you a ticket. Okay. And we have our own

email address, which will also be available to as well as to the email address. This



14:43

is houston_unity@hotmail.com That's easy. Say it again. houston_unity@hotmail.com Thank you, dear.



14:57

You're welcome. That's wonderful. And you can get hold of was there \$38 A ticket but well worth the money? Oh, yeah,



15:02

it's going for a good cause.



J Jimmy Carper 15:04

That's exactly right. It's the for the first Houston transgender community center. All right. Thanks, Steph. Thank you. Yes, yes. Good for you. Okay. Okay. Vanessa, where are you taking me now? Oh, well, where do you want to go? Um, game. already. I've been on a whirlwind trip. We're only 22 minutes into the show.



15:29

Actually, what I was going to cover next and just briefly, I've got the members of cats here with us today. All right. Unity, awareness. Transgender support. I believe I got that right. With me today is Sarah Jane. Coronal. Melanie black. Chris Duffy, in Harris, Donna Douglas. And also I think Sheila Appleton. I'm not sure I can't see her. But she may be on the Is she on the microphone? No, she's not on the microphone. Well, we've actually got a good a sizable portion of the Kampfgruppe good, very new group that started here in in the Houston area, I should say it's not in Houston. It's actually based down in resort County in Galveston Park. Actually, let me go and turn this over to Chris. And let her do the honors of a little bit about this new group,



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please. Oh, thanks.



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Now we're located down in the Rosario Galveston County area. And we just kind of formed a group down there because geez, we were having to travel like, sometimes 150 mile round trip to get up to the tents meeting and stuff. And so we kind of formed a group down there and,

and, anyway, actually, I'm

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Jimmy Carper 16:53

glad to have you on the air because we've talked about cat for weeks now. Because we we found flyers and and so it's nice to have real life people from the hotel, tell us about it, you know, words can just go so far out a piece of paper.

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Yeah, a lot of the things that we're thinking about doing is trying to reach out to the community down there, do a lot of pictures kind of ground, grassroots education and things like that, get some books and to the libraries, the community community libraries down there. And trying to make as much educational material readily available to the general public, as as we can. Because, you know, I, I grew up in Alvin. And and I originally tried to transduce transition down there in the Elven High School. And, you know, a lot of us that grew up in areas, rural areas, Santa Fe, and Alvin Manville places like that. We've faced a lot of discrimination. A lot of some of us have been beaten. Some of us have gone through horrendous things. And the community down there is a lot more closed minded than it is up in the Montrose Yeah.

J

Jimmy Carper 18:22

So I've always said, it's easy to be queer in the Montrose you know?

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18:26

Yeah, absolutely. And for love the transgenders down there, when you're first starting out and learning how to adapt to your new gender identity, it can be pretty difficult. If you're isolated out there feel isolated in the country in the sticks. It can be really difficult. It can be difficult to know how and where to reach out. We, if I can, I'd like to give out our number and things, please do. Please do. Um, the number is area code. 409-762-2243. And if you give me that again, okay. It's very code 409-762-2243. And also, if you want to email us, it's T G help. That yahoo.com That's easy. Yeah. And we also have an 800. Well, a toll free number. It's 1-801-315-6764. And like I said, you know, I was talking to be Roy earlier. I I was living in Galveston for some time about three years ago. And I used to kind of sort of pick up this station down there in Galveston when you could Yes, right. And actually, this was kind of where I first heard about the transgender community, right here on 90.1. And I would call up here and ask to be put on hold long distance. So I could just listen. And growing up out there, I really growing up, I believe that I was the only transgender person in this entire area, you know, probably Texas is what I thought. And, you know, come to find out down there and Galveston, we made a joke that it's something in the water. There's, there's like, yeah, there's me. There's, like five other cast members there in Alvin alone. And I think the population of Alvin is like something like 20,000. So there's quite a few of us out there as just trying to reach out. And

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that is the tough part. Yeah.

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Yeah. And it's not like the truth is, we can't send things out to the newspapers, we've tried that. They don't publish things like that. So that's why we're here tonight. You should get those flyers and round. Yeah. Every time we come up here, we try to bring some and drop them off at the different bookstores and things like that. So

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I've got to admit one thing, this is a very new group, a lot of people I don't think realize, it's not an easy process, just beginning a group from scratch. No. And what they've been able to do in the short time that they've been together is pretty much just been phenomenal to me, they have really organized this, they have been working on a bylaws this week. They've got informational packets that they've sent out and organized. It's just they've got the website up and running. That's something that we've had problems with, with tax for quite some time. It's, it's something that, hey,

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we got the I think we got the originator of that we're here tonight.

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For the Unity committee,

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I tell you what, it's been really a breath of fresh air to see them come on board, and actually get active and do so many things. They've been incredible.

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Wow. And done a lot in a short period of

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time. So it's, it's wonderful.

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Well, let's hear some more from CATS members.

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Well, a lot of the things that we want to talk about here tonight is the isolation that you can feel especially out there. And you know, a lot of us, you know, the act of wheeling yourself to conform to an identity that some direct opposition to your, the innate person you know, yourself to be, is a very abusive coping mechanism that we've used to survive. And I love that, it seems that to be able to just cope, a lot of us turn, turn our feelings inward, or reach to things like drugs and alcohol, sometimes it's work and we do really, really, really well. Or sometimes we wind up homeless. And we, whenever we get together at the meetings, we try to talk about what's going on in our personal lives, and be there for each other. One that there was a tense member that had taken her life a few months back. And then last month, we did an intervention with a cat's member. That was suicidal. And when the last cats meeting, we had someone there that had just tried to commit suicide. So it's almost like stepping into a different world out there. You know, one of our cats members as she was transitioning, she was telling me that she had little kids following her around and laughing at her people. People just aren't as aware as they are up here. And we try to address a lot of the issues that we face, emotionally and work on that.

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Vanessa Edwards 24:48

One of the things that your group has done is a lot of outreach. In fact, actually, this subject is really segwaying quite well into what our subject is for tonight. Eat, which is covering depression, and what you've done out there with the interventions. And with the compiling of information and the one on one approach to the memberships. This is something that really, really, actually struck a positive nerve. And within the community, how do you see this? I guess progressing down there with cats? And do you plan on, I guess, taking this into other avenues beyond just the cats group? Well,

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actually, you know, just sitting around talking with each other. It would be nice if, you know, cats kind of came from tats. And maybe we'll have bats out there somewhere. Yeah, and it would be nice to the people who are drive, we've got a member that drives a very long way to get to the Katzman meetings and, and it would be nice if they kept on these groups kept on branching out. A lot of the things that we're doing is coming up with pamphlets and things, addressing the issues of suicide. And about becoming your authentic self. A lot of the times it seems like the public is has this idea that transsexualism is about, you know, sexuality. And yeah, that's a part of it, you know, that's in there, because that's a part of being a human. But, you know, it has, it's more to do with just discovering your authentic self, who you are really inside and learning to deal with all the things that come up through transition, some people have, it seems that some people I've talked to they kind of have the feeling that whenever the transition ends, whenever you get the surgery. And it seems like, whenever, at least for me, I'll speak for myself whenever I began to transition. And finally, after a lifetime of suppressing, you know, looking at how I'm going to transition and working on this, I love other issues start come

up. You know, how it was like really first, for the first time trying to discover myself, and what do I really like? You know, where is my voice? How can I speak up for myself? How can I be true to myself. And these are the things that we really talk about in the cat's maybe meetings. And the way they generally go, we kind of have a wrap up about the business meeting and what we're planning on kind of throw some ideas around. And then we get on with a meeting. Something that we've been doing recently is having what we're, we've dubbed the cat's roundtable where about twice a month, we get together to for about 72 hours, drink lots and lots of coffee and eat lots and lots of chips. And come up with just sitting around brainstorming and coming up with different ideas. Today, because they we've we've got we've got two people that brought computers and more than a couple of people there at Alvin, sleeping over on pallets and things like that. And we're just staying up to all hours of the night talking about what we can do. How can we help? How can we be of service to especially the the main point of cats is to reach out, be there support the transgender who is still struggling with shame, fear and guilt, their own internalized transphobia? Cutting for just a second?

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Vanessa Edwards 29:28

I want to see if I can direct this staying on the subject. How How many of your members have actually had bouts of the serious depression to the point of needing the intervention? And can some of these members if they are here, speak about this and what they did to get beyond it, what they were feeling, etc.

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Sure. Most of our members have dealt with that.

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Yeah, my name is Arizona Douglas and I'm the secretary treasurer of cats. And I'm a resident expert on depression. Basically, the reason that I wanted so much to start a support group was to reach out and maybe, perhaps, actuality, save someone else's life. Transitioning is so hard, it's all but impossible. It's a road that no one can walk alone. It's taken its toll on me personally. And transgenders in general have basically the same storyline, they suppress their whole adult life, to the point where you cannot take it anymore. And when we share our stories, we find that many of us either get on the brink of attempting or attempt suicide. And when I was at that point, I didn't know who to contact, how to contact, I was frantically looking through the Yellow Pages under anything suicide prevention, whatever. When you are at that point of suicide, if you have no one to reach to, it can be deadly. Me I do suffer from major clinical depression. And I also have a social anxiety disorder. You have no idea how incredibly hard it is for me to be here tonight talking on the microphone. And we need you to be here. The thing is, is I put my own self and my own life aside, because as many other members can relate to the hardships that we went through, there's one more important thing in my life than my life. And that's to do something better than myself, something better than myself is to reach out and save another. And when we first started this, I felt like I was hit in the head and shanghaied aboard. I thought it was going to be in movies and dinners and hugs. I thought it would be out of my home, which is where the meetings. It's coffee champs. It turns out that basically like we're political, and social and emotional,



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are the things you need to be this sounds like,



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Yeah, this is more than what I bargained for, it is really quite overwhelming. And I'm holding on to this whole thing by shoestring. As we went through these first six meetings, which six meetings to six months time goes by fast, we're so surprised that we drew so many members. And these are people with and a lot of people are at the beginning point of transition things where they're at the point of desperately needing help, looking, please help me please someone guide me. And believe it or not, to my amazement, we've helped inadvertently save lives already. And



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it's those first few months that are so vital to having support there for you, as those are the toughest ones. And Kyrgyzstan is so right, what they've done with their group is they've been able to actually intervene, save lives. And quite honestly, for those of us who have been around for a long time, showing us some things we should have done a long time ago that they've already put together. There may



J Jimmy Carper 34:04

be different, different problems for people who don't live in a large city. And maybe that's what you're not thinking of. I don't know where this feedback is coming from. I'm sorry.



V Vanessa Edwards 34:18

I kind of had a little bit of something similar to that before I moved to Houston, growing up in Corpus Christi, very isolated down there, and so I can well relate and take if anything, it was even further from urban centers such as Houston, the way Galveston is, at least it's an hour's drive. But when you live 200 miles from virtually any city of any big size, or there's places out in West Texas that are even further remote than that, that you can just imagine number one, just the social isolation of living out there. But then if you couple that with the fact that they are different from the few people that they do have around them, they're in him, suddenly they are, they might as well be living on Mars or Pluto, because it's just so so desperately lonely out there. And so difficult to find anyone that can even remotely relate to your situation. A lot of places just don't have the kind of structure to be able to have this knowledge or to be able to deal with it.



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Hi, I'm Sergeant Connell and the hearing all this, you know, I was born and raised in Brooklyn,

New York. I can tell you, I can tell you. Yeah. I can tell you though, the isolation even there was tremendous, you know, I contemplated to it not only contemplated, I actually almost did at the age of 12 years old. And it was, thank God but Christine Jorgensen. I am the old lady of the group. But I, I did not transition until I was in my late 50s. And at 12 years old, Christine Jorgensen came back from overseas when she had done the surgery. And if it hadn't been for her, because I felt I was the only one alive like this. And she came back and I knew there was somebody else. We think



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she's, I don't think she saved a lot of lives.



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She did. She did. And, and, and for myself. I transitioned up in Huntsville, Texas. See, it's not always down south. Wow. You have in Huntsville. Yes. And, you know, it was lonely. In fact, what happened there, I had gotten to a point again, of suicide. And the only thing that helped me was that, as Chris had mentioned, before, some of us step turn to other things like alcohol and whatnot. And at one time, I had done that. And I knew of a support group in Houston, down in Montrose. And I was so depressed, and I got in my vehicle, I drove to Houston, down to that group. And I believe it's truly a thing of my God, I walked into that place, and there was a woman in there, and she worked with a transsexual, and she was able to put me in touch with tax eventually. And so for this last three years, I've been never more happy in my life, except this past about a month or so since Karen committed suicide I, I have not cried more than, than I have during this time. And it's led me to want to do more. That's why this has been so wonderful to be able to be part of this group. And to be able to be part of an intervention and to be able to be sharing and having, like Melanie did most of this work on this suicide pamphlet that hopefully we'll be getting out here real soon. You know, it's given me the courage to walk into libraries and and look up all the different books that are on transsexuals or transgendered and start sticking in our pamphlets in those books. Hopefully, that maybe somebody that is worth while. Wonderful. I did they open up their book. And here's this pamphlet, it gives them a place maybe because I didn't know where to go. Oh, that's exactly right. I didn't know where to go. I was. Since I've been the smallest child. I didn't know where to go. And it wasn't until my late 50s. I finally found help.



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Just real quickly, before we go on, I want to ask one a poll the members here. How many of you state your name and state whether or not you did or did not? How many of you have considered and or attempted suicide?



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I'm sorry, Jane call again. And I not only have considered it, I attempted on two occasions.



39:05

I'm Melanie black. And while I haven't made an attempt, I have seriously considered it several times.



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And again, I'm Cara Stoddard Douglas and I did try in April of 98. And I have the marks on my arm to prove.



39:26

And again, I'm Chris Duffy. And truthfully, I had written out a note. I had decided how I was going to do it and everything and as I got home, thank God for Michelle Meyers. She contacted me that night, and we talked for hours and hours and if it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be here. I would not be here I was in that very cold and focused place where I, I was feeling nothing. I was feeling nothing but useless. I didn't want to be. I thought I would be a freak, and a pink MooMoo or something I didn't know. But I thought that I would be unemployable. I thought people would, wherever I went, people would laugh at me. And I didn't want to live that way. At the time. I was married at a step, kid a job. And whenever I started dealing with that, I lost all of it. I lost everything. I lost my job, my home, my family, my car. It seemed like all in the manner of about a month and a half. And it was at that time that I, I really, I had made the decision to do it. And thank God



40:56

minute was the job to it seems like a triggering mechanism is when everything's falling apart when you can't tolerate it anymore. You start to come on nerves, you let your spouse know, you try to do little subtle things. Personally with Chris Sam with me, our jobs became aware and they conveniently found a way to end about that time. We have compared notes that that is basically a last straw. It's it's a trigger point. I'd like to interject one thing, please. All this devastation we're talking about everybody within this the sound of my voice have been hearing all these negative