

Omari Amili's From Crime to the Classroom: How Education Changes Lives

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[Music]

00:18

hello my name is dolly boyd

00:20

i'm the manager here at the city of

00:21

moses lake museum and art center

00:24

today we'd like to present to you our

00:27

very first

00:28

virtual online speakers series with

00:31

omari emily

00:32

who recently presented via zoom his talk

00:36

from crime to classroom how education

00:39

changes lives

00:40

this event was made possible by our

00:42

partnership with humanities washington

00:45

we would like to begin by acknowledging

00:48

that we presented this program

00:50

from the traditional lands of the sink i

00:52

use

00:53

colombia moses and monopom people

00:59

the presentation you're about to enjoy

01:01

is part of humanity's

01:03

washington speakers bureau series

01:06

they are a non-profit organization

01:08
dedicated to sparking conversation
01:10
and critical thinking they have support
01:12
from the national endowment for
01:14
humanities
01:15
the washington secretary of state the
01:17
thomas s foley institute for public
01:19
policy and public service at washington
01:22
state university
01:23
and many private donors we thank them
01:26
sincerely
01:27
for their help in bringing this to you
01:31
omari earned a master's degree in
01:33
interdisciplinary studies from the
01:35
university of washington tacoma
01:37
where his research focused on the
01:39
benefits of college education for
01:41
formerly incarcerated people
01:44
in 2018 he was named a distinguished
01:46
alumni by pierce college and has been
01:48
featured in the seattle times and the
01:50
news tribune
01:51
amelia is an author and community leader
01:54
who has worked with south seattle

01:56
college
01:56
the aclu of washington and civil
01:59
survival
02:00
we hope you enjoy from climb to
02:03
classroom how education
02:04
changes lives
02:09
i'm hoping that right now everyone is
02:11
seeing
02:12
on their screen a presentation on prezi
02:16
where it says meet the speaker mass
02:18
incarceration
02:20
issues related to re-entry identity and
02:24
societal
02:24
impacts figgn
02:28
the impact of post-secondary education
02:31
learning and growing local developments
02:33
and moving forward
02:35
so these are all of the different topics
02:37
that i'm going to discuss with you guys
02:39
today
02:39
and we're going to get started with meet
02:41
the speaker
02:44
first i always start out letting people

02:45
know my educational background
02:48
so like i said my name is omari emily i
02:50
earned an associate of arts and human
02:52
services from pierce college
02:54
um back in 2011 after that i transferred
02:57
to the university of washington tacoma
03:00
where i earned two bachelor's degrees
03:02
one in psychology
03:03
and one in what's called
03:04
interdisciplinary arts and sciences with
03:07
a concentration
03:08
on self and society and then i also
03:11
earned a master of arts and
03:13
interdisciplinary studies from
03:14
the university of washington tacoma so
03:17
that's my educational background
03:19
um you know somebody like me for a lot
03:22
of people
03:23
you know you hear the list of okay this
03:25
person has four college degrees and this
03:27
is an educated person but for me
03:29
like honestly the odds were completely
03:31
stacked against me and i was never

03:33
supposed to be here
03:34
so what i'm going to discuss with you
03:36
guys today
03:37
is my upbringing and the impacts of that
03:40
upbringing
03:41
and in ways in which that i defied the
03:43
odds in terms of my personal story
03:46
because when i talk about from crimes to
03:48
the classroom how education changes
03:50
lives
03:50
this isn't just something that i read
03:52
about in school it's not just a topic
03:54
that interests me
03:55
but it's actually something that i've
03:56
lived through so i always start out by
03:59
sharing my
04:00
story so let's go ahead and take a look
04:02
at my upbringing and the impacts of that
04:04
upbringing i was born
04:14
[Music]
04:15
third 1985 and who was coming in the
04:18
black neighborhood
04:19
but you know they were both doing pretty

04:20

well my mom worked my dad worked

04:23

i just got a message that said my

04:24

connection's unstable dolly can you give

04:26

me a thumbs up if you can still hear me

04:28

okay

04:31

okay so i

04:34

my family was doing good when i was

04:41

first born you know my mom was working

04:43

my dad was working we had food on the

04:45

table no financial concerns we weren't

04:46

living in poverty i would say we were um

04:48

doing pretty well but there's something

04:50

that took place in the mid

04:54

80s that began to wreak havoc through

04:56

the black community and some of you may

04:58

know that that is crack cocaine

05:01

pain flooded the black community and my

05:04

family

05:04

was able to avoid that so

05:10

my mom and dad they fell victim to this

05:12

and within five years of my birth

05:14

the strong two-parent household ended up

05:16

being completely devastated my parents

05:18
got divorced
05:19
and when they got divorced my dad
05:21
decided he's gonna be a transient
05:23
he never wanted to pay child support a
05:25
day in his life so
05:27
although he worked he worked um as a
05:30
counselor
05:30
he worked in education he did a lot of
05:32
good stuff with his life prior to this
05:35
but he decided when him and my mom got
05:37
divorced i'm never going to work another
05:39
day in my life
05:40
i'll never allow my paychecks to be
05:42
seized from me
05:43
for any purpose you know so that was a
05:45
conscious decision that he made
05:47
and so he lived life homeless with no
05:50
income you don't have anywhere to live
05:52
you don't really have um the resources
05:54
to be a provider for your children
05:56
so there will be times that i end up
05:58
with my dad
06:00
sometimes with my mom's permission other

06:02
times without my mom's permission where
06:03
he basically
06:04
just came in you it's hard to call it
06:06
kidnap because he was my father and i
06:08
feel like they really had equal rights
06:10
but he really would just come take us
06:12
and
06:12
like have no intentions on bringing us
06:14
back but when we're with him
06:17
he has nowhere to live so it might be
06:20
freezing cold pouring
06:21
down rain you know we're talking about
06:23
the pacific northwest so we might have
06:25
to just ride the bus
06:26
from one end of the route to the other
06:28
end of the route to stay warm or just to
06:29
have somewhere to be
06:31
where we're out of the rain we might
06:32
have to go inside of a
06:34
pizza restaurant and ask were there any
06:36
mistakes made or
06:38
were there any orders that someone
06:39
didn't pick up that you guys might

06:41
possibly be able to give us so that we
06:42
could eat
06:43
there were times that we would have to
06:45
go knock on friends doors and see can we
06:47
spend the night and a lot of times we
06:49
got told no
06:50
because my dad was an alcoholic in an
06:52
addict
06:53
like you know he would get into it with
06:55
people a lot so there were times
06:56
where the the best option we could find
06:58
was to sleep in one of his friends cars
07:00
like they're like no you guys can't come
07:02
in the house
07:02
but you can sleep outside in the cars
07:08
but with my dad it was a very um i would
07:11
say traumatic experience for the most
07:13
part
07:13
my dad was a great man he loved his kids
07:15
it's very weird how someone can
07:18
love their kids so much want the best
07:20
for them
07:21
but make decisions that just make it

07:23

where they're they can't be a provider

07:25

they can't be a caretaker they can't do

07:27

anything that really is a part of his

07:29

role so that's what it's like when i'm

07:31

with my dad once my parents get divorced

07:34

my mom on the other hand she ended up

07:37

remarrying someone else who was an

07:38

addiction someone else who had a crack

07:39

cocaine a dish

07:44

and we moved to portland oregon and they

07:47

got married

07:48

and every single house that we were

07:50

living in became a crack house a drug

07:52

house where

07:53

there's non-stop traffic from drug users

07:56

drug dealers and this brought problems

07:58

to my house such as drive-by shootings

08:00

you know there's gang activity

08:02

at the house that i live in when i'm a

08:04

little kid i have no say over where i

08:06

live at i didn't get to choose my

08:08

environment

08:09

but there's bullets flying through this

08:10
house that i live in
08:12
and then i had to deal with situations
08:14
where um
08:15
you know the the police kicking in the
08:17
door in the middle of the night for a
08:18
drug bust they're trying to get the bad
08:20
guys right they're trying to get the
08:21
drug dealers the gang members the people
08:23
who never belong there but they don't
08:26
care that there's little kids in the
08:27
house when this is how
08:30
so
08:33
me and my sisters we're still witnessing
08:35
this we're still experiencing this
08:37
and this is traumatizing us so you heard
08:39
what it's like
08:40
with my mom you heard what it's like
08:42
when i'm with my dad so
08:43
kids they have this experience
08:54
right because they're required to go to
08:58
schools
08:58
but for me
09:02
when i went to school all it did was add

09:04
some trauma
09:05
my school was not a place that i could
09:06
go to escape trauma school was a place
09:09
where i went for my trauma to be
09:10
exacerbated
09:11
so when i show up in class and i can't
09:14
quite sit still in my seat so i'm
09:16
standing up at times that i shouldn't
09:18
or i might be blurting out or i might
09:27
the inattentive not focused on what and
09:29
i got the unstable message again i
09:31
really hope you guys can hear me
09:33
but i would constantly constantly get
09:34
suspended and nobody cared to ask
09:37
like omari what time you go to bed at
09:39
last night where'd you sleep at last
09:41
night what were you fed
09:42
you know like is there anything that
09:44
might be out of your control
09:46
that is contributing to these behavior
09:47
problems that you're displaying in the
09:48
classroom
09:49
i seem to me like no one cared no one

09:51
ever asked
09:52
and like when you're a teacher with the
09:55
class with 20 to 30 young kids in it
09:58
your only option really is to remove
10:00
these
10:01
so-called bad apples from the
10:03
environments that you could teach the
10:04
other kids like
10:05
i truly was disruptive to these other
10:08
kids learning
10:09
so like what what tools does the teacher
10:12
have at their disposal some
10:13
some teachers are really great at
10:15
engaging
10:16
kids who are like that like but that is
10:18
special and it's very rare
10:20
you know that you can engage a kid like
10:23
that rather than having to remove them
10:25
from the environment
10:26
so for me most of the time i'm just
10:29
getting kicked out of class and
10:30
i'm getting what i'm learning through
10:32
this is that i'm not as good as my peers

10:35
i'm not even worthy to sit in the
10:39
same room as them like they're better
10:42
than me
10:43
you know
10:48
there's something wrong with me i'm just
10:49
i'm always in trouble and i know for a
10:51
fact i just watched this other kid do
10:53
the same exact thing that got me in
10:54
trouble
10:55
and he didn't get in trouble you know so
10:57
this really just killed my confidence
10:59
that killed my self-esteem
11:01
and i began to hate school at a young
11:03
age
11:04
and this made me start skipping i
11:05
started skipping school
11:07
and running the streets and hustling
11:08
probably in about the fourth grade
11:10
you know so i'm really really young and
11:12
instead of being at school
11:14
i'm out in the streets committing crimes
11:16
like i'm going inside of eddie bauer or
11:18
a banana republic with an empty backpack

11:21
and
11:21
filling it up with clothes and running
11:23
out with a full backpack
11:24
and i'm going and i'm telling people
11:27
that
11:28
i'm collecting donations for a
11:29
basketball tournament for a non-profit
11:31
organization that
11:32
doesn't really exist and you know these
11:35
things that i was doing
11:36
it started out of necessity it started
11:38
because i was living in poverty i'm poor
11:41
my parents aren't quite meeting my needs
11:43
you know i get to see other kids dress
11:45
nice and things like that but it just
11:48
wasn't my situation so
11:50
these values were taught to me at a
11:52
young age
11:53
and my behaviors when it came to crime
11:55
started out of necessity i'm trying to
11:57
fill these unmet needs
11:59
but eventually it turned into greed it
12:01
turned into something completely

12:03
different like
12:04
no longer do i not have enough money to
12:06
eat
12:07
no longer do i not have shoes on my feet
12:09
i already stole the shoes
12:11
i already conned people out of money but
12:13
i want more and i want more and i want
12:15
more
12:16
so what it turned into it started out a
12:18
necessity but it turned into greed
12:20
whereas now this insatiable desire where
12:23
i'm
12:24
constantly chasing material things i'm
12:26
constantly stealing i'm constantly
12:28
just doing negative behaviors and i'm
12:31
following around my older cousins you
12:32
know like i said i started doing
12:34
stuff in fourth grade i had cousins
12:36
though who were in middle school
12:38
who were older than me and no matter
12:40
what they were doing
12:41
i would have followed them to go do that
12:43
so like if they were going to

12:44
the ymca to play basketball then i'm at
12:47
the ymca to play basketball
12:49
if they were going to commit some crimes
12:52
and steal from stores then i'm at the
12:54
store and i'm stealing right along with
12:55
them i was really following what my
12:57
older cousins were doing
12:59
and you know as i got
13:14
the little petty theft ski when i was
13:17
probably about
13:18
16 years old was when i first started
13:20
hearing about it and that was the first
13:22
time i ever got involved i had cashed a
13:23
bad check at a check cashing place
13:26
and that was the first time i ever saw
13:27
over a thousand dollars in my life
13:29
and when i did this it created like this
13:32
new addiction to money like once i went
13:35
from being
13:36
and i the most i've ever had was a
13:38
couple hundred dollars from scamming
13:40
people
13:40
so now i have a couple thousand dollars

13:42
in my pocket
13:44
i'm like this is the way i need to do
13:45
more of this but i actually that ended
13:47
up being
13:48
the only time i ever did that like i
13:50
never had another opportunity to cash a
13:51
bad check at a check cashing place with
13:54
an inside connection and things like
13:56
that but a couple years down the road
13:58
i'm hearing more and more about these
14:00
bank fraud schemes that involve atm
14:02
cards
14:02
where you don't have to go in and cash
14:05
to that check
14:06
you just have to meet somebody who has a
14:10
bank account who is just as money hungry
14:12
as you are
14:13
and you buy checks from one of them buy
14:15
the atm card from another one
14:17
and when you combine them money pops out
14:20
so
14:20
i had a real young age i
14:25
found a way to make a whole lot of money

14:27
like what really got me into this like
14:29
right just jumped right in like this is
14:31
going to be a lifestyle for me
14:32
i saw my cousin who grew up the same way
14:34
i did just as poor
14:36
began driving a mercedes-benz and when i
14:39
saw that he was driving the
14:40
mercedes-benz i'm like where do i sign
14:42
up at whatever it is that you were doing
14:44
i need to do what you're doing because i
14:45
know how you grew up
14:48
and you now have a mercedes-benz i want
14:50
one too so
14:51
i ended up having what i thought was a
14:53
good run i thought i turned my fortunes
14:56
around
14:57
i thought i went from poverty to success
14:59
because now
15:01
i have thousands of dollars in my pocket
15:04
about myself multiple mercedes benzes i
15:07
had
15:07
bmw 745 on 22-inch rims when i'm really
15:11
young like

15:12
i'm not even old enough to buy alcohol
15:14
yet but i'm buying cars that are costing
15:16
me an outrageous amount of money i'm
15:17
getting a lot of girls i'm having all
15:19
the clothes and material things i could
15:20
ever imagine
15:22
and growing up you know growing up by
15:24
someone who grew up without grew up
15:29
grew up in poverty this is our
15:31
definition of success
15:32
this is like what we're aspiring to
15:34
achieve we're aspiring
15:35
to get money in these material things it
15:37
didn't matter to me
15:38
that i got it in a legal way like for me
15:41
i felt like i was the man and that i was
15:43
successful
15:44
but little did i know this path to
15:46
success
15:47
that i thought i was going down was
15:50
actually a path to destruction
15:52
i was destroying my life more than i
15:54
could have ever imagined

15:56
every single time i went and i wrote
15:58
another bad check or i
16:00
did another transaction i'm committing
16:02
another felony
16:04
there's a lot of people who grew up how
16:05
i did and they had to turn to crime to
16:07
support themselves
16:08
they might have turned to selling drugs
16:10
and you can sell drugs every single day
16:13
and that one time you get caught by an
16:15
undercover that's the one felony
16:27
[Music]
16:31
for a long period of time so if i had to
16:34
estimate
16:35
i would say i committed pro it wouldn't
16:38
be unrealistic to say i actually was
16:39
guilty of a thousand felonies
16:42
like
16:43
[Music]
16:48
it sounds crazy thing 365 days in a year
16:51
and i'm committing multiple felonies
16:53
every single day
16:54
every single transaction so when this

16:56
stuff finally catches up to me
16:59
like i'm not just it's not like the drug
17:01
dealer who got caught by an undercover
17:03
one time
17:04
i found out that i had a warrant for my
17:06
arrest for 30 felonies at one time
17:09
so i had never been in trouble before i
17:13
had never been caught in anything that i
17:15
had done so
17:16
i'm like okay this might be my first
17:17
time in jail i don't want to run i had
17:19
a couple kids by this time so i turned
17:21
myself in i decided i'm gonna turn
17:22
myself in
17:23
and i'm gonna face this whatever the
17:25
consequences may be
17:27
like i've i honestly felt like it
17:29
wouldn't be a major consequence because
17:30
i had never been in trouble before and
17:32
that's what a lot of people were telling
17:33
me
17:33
so i thought i was going to walk into
17:35
that courtroom that day when i turned

17:37
myself
17:37
in and i thought i was going to walk
17:39
right back out and just have to come to
17:41
court another day
17:42
but what ends up happening is i'm
17:44
labeled a flight risk i'm labeled like a
17:46
threat to society
17:48
and i'm hit with a six-figure bail and
17:51
then i'm stuck now
17:53
so i spent the next eight and a half
17:55
months sitting in the pierce county jail
17:57
you know being told that i'm looking at
17:59
decades in prison
18:01
not a year not two years not some county
18:04
time but
18:04
decades in prison and i'm 21 years old
18:07
at this time
18:09
and i really just didn't understand i
18:11
knew what i was doing was wrong but i'm
18:13
like
18:13
damn cage in prison what are you talking
18:16
about like i was writing some bad checks
18:18
and

18:18
why are you talking about
18:21
[Music]
18:22
decades in prison but like what they
18:25
wanted me for
18:26
but they wanted to convict me of and
18:28
charge me with was leading organized
18:30
crime
18:31
so as if i was like some mafia crime
18:33
boss so they looked at it
18:35
not as this is some kid who grew up poor
18:37
who found a little
18:39
hustle that he can do that involved a
18:40
obeying they wanted to make an example
18:42
out of me
18:43
but fortunately they they didn't have
18:46
probable cause they didn't have
18:48
what it would have took to charge me
18:49
with leading organized crime
18:51
but i still wasn't they still wanted to
18:53
make an example out of me so now the
18:55
decades are
18:56
out of the window once they couldn't
18:58
charge me with any organized crime

19:00
there's no way for me to do decades in
19:02
prison now
19:03
my maximum is now seven years for
19:05
identity theft in the first
19:06
degree and the prosecutor decided that
19:09
look
19:10
i'm still not going to offer a plea
19:12
bargain i'm not going to offer to drop
19:14
not one of these 30 felonies
19:15
because this guy is guilty of far more
19:18
than this like i'm sure
19:20
that that's not what they told me i'm
19:21
sure that had to be their line of
19:23
thinking because
19:24
this is just not how the criminal
19:25
justice system works when you go through
19:28
the criminal justice system
19:29
if you are charged with multiple
19:31
felonies the whole
19:33
idea of a plea bargain is we're gonna
19:35
drop some of these charges
19:37
so that we don't have to go to trial it
19:38
saves the state money

19:40
and for the person taking the plea
19:41
bargain it makes it where they might
19:43
serve a little bit less time
19:45
they end up with a better outcome but
19:46
for me there's no plea bargain being
19:48
offered
19:49
so after eight and a half months i'm
19:51
told by my lawyer
19:53
the best way out of this situation
19:55
you're gonna have to just plead guilty
19:57
as charged to all 30 felonies they
19:59
charged you with
20:00
and when he told me this it didn't make
20:03
sense to me because i could have done
20:04
that from the very first day like
20:06
when you go to your arraignment they ask
20:08
you how do you plea do you play innocent
20:09
do you plead guilty you know um
20:12
and like i could have i didn't have to
20:13
sit in the county jail for eight and a
20:15
half months being
20:16
fearful of all these decades in prison
20:18
and all this and i could have did this

20:19
from the first day
20:20
but he convinced me that it was my best
20:23
option because
20:25
if i if i did this he might be able to
20:28
get me a drug offender sentencing
20:30
alternative
20:31
so at my center i went ahead and agreed
20:33
to do this
20:34
and my sentencing the prosecutor is
20:36
recommending that i serve seven years in
20:38
prison the maximum for
20:40
the maximum amount of time that they can
20:41
give me but my lawyer is fighting for a
20:44
drug offender sentencing alternative
20:46
and keep in mind these are not drug like
20:48
i wasn't charged with drug crimes
20:50
but my lawyer convinced the judge
20:53
that every dime that i met there were no
20:55
luxury cars
20:57
there was no luxury lifestyle every dime
21:00
that this guy made and went up his nose
21:02
and cocaine
21:03
i had actually never done cocaine the

21:05
day in my life
21:07
but it was what it was at the time
21:11
like my lawyer won in that courtroom he
21:14
convinced the judge
21:16
that i was a drug addict and i did what
21:18
i did out of being a drug addict
21:20
and for me like people ask me sometime
21:23
like do you feel like you played the
21:24
system do you feel like you have regrets
21:26
i'm like yeah the system kind of did get
21:28
played but at the same time
21:30
prosecutors make these deals all the
21:32
time
21:33
like there can be a they drop charges
21:36
they offer people drug offenders
21:38
sentient alternatives to take please so
21:40
i didn't feel like i was doing something
21:41
super wrong because it was my first time
21:43
ever
21:44
in jail and i believe in second chances
21:46
i believe that
21:47
a 21 year old person who came from a
21:50
very traumatic background

21:52
should not be going to spend decades in
21:53
prison or even seven years in prison
21:55
their very first time
21:57
for non-violent crimes that were
21:59
financially motivated so
22:01
yes the system kind of got played but
22:04
at the end of the day i ended up with a
22:06
sentence of three years in prison
22:08
in three years of probation so i felt
22:10
like my first time in jail
22:13
okay this is the i couldn't
22:16
[Music]
22:19
come like but it's also in my life
22:22
so that's when we go to the turnaround i
22:25
served my
22:26
time on 36 months you get good times
22:28
non-violent i served my time
22:30
i got out at 23 years old i was 23
22:33
i had a ged i didn't have any real work
22:36
experience
22:38
i didn't have any role models i wasn't a
22:39
part of any programs
22:41
i i the odds were stacked against me i

22:43
had nothing going for myself
22:45
and one of the reasons that they give
22:47
people these drug offender sentencing
22:49
alternatives
22:50
is because yes it came with the three
22:51
years in prison but the three years of
22:53
probation is constantly hanging over
22:55
my head where if i make a mistake that
22:58
three years of probation converts to
23:00
prison time
23:01
so it's it's kind of like uh we'll give
23:03
you a break up front
23:05
you better get out and do the right
23:07
thing type of deal and that's exactly
23:09
what i did
23:10
i got out of prison and i figured that
23:12
look i don't want to go back to that
23:14
life of crime
23:15
so what can i do what i'm going to do is
23:18
i'm going to get a job
23:19
because that's what people do when they
23:20
don't commit crimes when they're
23:23
out here living a positive life they go

23:25

to work and that's how they make a

23:26

living and that's what i want to show my

23:27

kids

23:28

but i told you i was 23 with no work

23:31

experience with 30 felonies on my record

23:33

a black man in america

23:35

what were my what were my options for

23:37

employment at that time

23:39

i looked around i got denied a lot

23:42

application after application after

23:44

application

23:45

and i'm just i can't find a job and then

23:47

eventually i do i found a job at the old

23:49

country buffet

23:51

at the lakewood town center where i'm

23:53

doing work like um

23:54

keeping the milk machines full and

23:57

cleaning up messes where people were

23:59

getting their food

24:00

and running dishes back and forth and

24:03

it only took me a few shifts before i

24:05

realized

24:06

i was like look working here at the old

24:08
country buffet for one this is i'm
24:10
trapped in
24:11
poverty if this is the out for me the
24:14
out for me is still me being trapped in
24:16
poverty
24:17
poverty was the major cause of my
24:19
behavior before
24:21
so i cannot the solution to my problem
24:24
cannot be the same problem that got me
24:26
here you know
24:27
and so i i did not want to stay in a
24:30
dead-end poverty trap
24:31
job so i decided what can i really do
24:34
with myself
24:35
if i'm going to be qualified to do the
24:37
type of employment
24:38
that like the successful people want to
24:40
do that it's not it's not like a
24:42
teenager or a kid who's trying to get
24:44
work experience or someone french
25:00
can i get to a point where i was the way
25:03
i was
25:03
a major a major part of that was miss

25:05
education
25:06
so maybe since i have a
25:11
community college maybe i can actually
25:13
go there and make something of myself
25:16
so i enrolled up here as college
25:19
um i wanted to be a drug and alcohol
25:21
counselor
25:22
but i still had 30 felonies on my record
25:24
i was scared to apply
25:26
through the state to become licensed so
25:28
even though i earned my degree
25:30
to be a drug and alcohol camps i earned
25:32
the education
25:34
i never got the training hours i was
25:36
never licensed and i never had any
25:38
possibility to work in that field
25:39
because of that
25:40
so i ended up um transferring like
25:43
when i earned my degree i learned that
25:45
it was a direct transfer agreement
25:47
degree
25:48
so that means that the university of
25:49
washington has an agreement where

25:52
if you earn this degree this dta degree
25:55
and you have a certain gpa you are
25:57
admitted to the school like
25:59
it's automatic this is we have an
26:00
agreement this is just the way it works
26:02
because you met these qualifications you
26:05
are admitted to our school
26:06
so i ended up um even though i wasn't
26:09
going to be a drug and alcohol counselor
26:11
i ended up with a path where i can
26:12
continue my education
26:14
and the whole time like my
26:18
confidence my self-esteem
26:24
being boosted i'm actually learning that
26:26
i have value
26:28
i'm doing student jobs on victory events
26:29
and conflict services i worked in the
26:31
advancement office and when i worked in
26:33
advancement
26:34
people placed credit cards in my hand to
26:37
call and pay
26:38
bills you know and it's like for me
26:45
this is like validation that i have

26:47
value that the things that i was in the
26:49
past
26:49
i don't have to always be this way i
26:51
could be somebody different
26:53
i can re-earn the trust of people and i
26:56
can re-earn the trust of myself and i
26:57
can find some value and self-esteem
27:00
so i ended up just having major impacts
27:02
on my identity
27:03
my values
27:07
my behavior it's hard to live and
27:09
assumed your whole day so like i'm
27:11
if i'm not in class i'm doing my work
27:14
study job my student job
27:16
if i'm not doing that i'm having to do
27:17
my reading or my assignments or writing
27:19
papers
27:20
before you know it the day's over and
27:21
i'm burnt out i'm ready to go to bed
27:23
and this became my lifestyle so that
27:26
negative lifestyle
27:27
was replaced with that of a college
27:29
student and it was the best thing that

27:31

has ever happened

27:37

i'm talking about like my mom just

27:39

become a drunken alcoholic and she used

27:40

to brag about how her son already was a

27:42

drug and alcohol counselor like

27:43

she believed in me so much and just knew

27:45

i was going to accomplish my goals and

27:47

it's like i never did anything that

27:49

could have made her proud like that

27:50

before you know so it was

27:52

it was an amazing experience and

27:55

you know after my bachelor's degrees at

27:57

uw tacoma i went up with my master's

27:59

since graduating with my master's i did

28:02

i worked at south seattle college as a

28:03

faculty member and a case manager

28:06

i was teaching life skills for people

28:08

who were

28:13

criminal justice system at that the in

28:15

ashley's office i had to

28:16

go get a badge that said department of

28:18

correct washington state department of

28:20

corrections

28:24
it went from an inmate id card to a
28:26
badge a contractor's badge with these
28:28
guys so
28:29
like it's just like i came full circle
28:32
and now i'm using my experiences to give
28:34
back to other people
28:35
who are once in a similar who who i was
28:38
once in a similar place where they're at
28:40
now
28:40
so when i share my story and share my
28:43
experiences
28:44
they can it's actually it can be real to
28:46
them because there's a real human being
28:47
in front of them who's done it like
28:49
before
28:50
i i i never knew anyone like at the time
28:52
that i graduated i never knew anyone who
28:54
even had a ged and went to the
28:56
university of washington i didn't know
28:57
it was a possibility
28:59
but as i went along you know and started
29:02
sharing my story i started meeting more
29:04
and more people who are similar to me

29:05
more and more people who
29:06
climbed out of a negative situation and
29:08
they made something positive people like
29:10
tara simmons who um is a friend of mine
29:13
who
29:15
she's been incarcerated a couple times i
29:17
believe most recently
29:19
she she got out went to seattle u law
29:21
school graduated at the top of her class
29:24
and became an attorney and she is now i
29:27
don't i don't know if anyone who is on
29:28
here is in kitsap county
29:30
but you might have saw her on your
29:32
ballot running for state representative
29:34
this is someone who was in prison got
29:37
out became an attorney
29:38
and now she is running to be an elected
29:40
official and she
29:41
smashed the primary election so when it
29:44
comes down to it
29:45
she's going to win and she is formally
29:47
incarcerated
29:48
with felonies on her record and she's

29:51
somebody who has been
29:52
in prison but yet here she is going to
29:55
become one of our state lawmakers so
29:57
i'm just meeting with the circles that
29:59
i've been in the networks that i've been
30:01
exposed to
30:02
have just expanded my own
30:11
possibilities for myself in a major way
30:13
you know i've worked for the aclu of
30:14
washington as a juvenile judge i've
30:16
worked as a faculty college
30:17
i've um been a keynote speaker at
30:20
several conferences
30:21
part of the humanities watching
30:22
basically the person sitting here in
30:24
front of you talking to you today like
30:26
i'm not this is not supposed to be
30:28
reality
30:29
like like i say the odds were stacked
30:31
against me and i never knew it was
30:33
possible
30:34
so that's my story and i want to pause
30:37
for a second

30:39
i'm going to hit stop screen share just
30:41
in case we have any questions from
30:44
anybody um so i see that we did have one
30:48
question here says
30:49
were you in a mostly white school
30:53
i don't know if you're talking about
30:55
like elementary school
30:56
middle school high school age but i want
30:59
to
31:02
very diverse schools when i was younger
31:05
but i went to over 15 schools growing up
31:08
so it wasn't just elementary school
31:12
it wasn't the mostly white school
31:15
ever that i went to very diverse i went
31:17
to bailey gaston elementary in seattle
31:19
that was a very diverse school
31:20
went to martin luther king and boise
31:22
eliot in portland very diverse schools
31:24
um
31:24
but i was still i was just constantly
31:26
getting in trouble um and it wasn't
31:28
necessarily about race it was more about
31:29
the trauma that i

31:30
experienced and it is correct there's a
31:32
lot of other people who went through
31:33
similar things
31:34
but the trauma that i experienced it
31:37
looked a lot like
31:38
adhd in the classroom like
31:44
there's a lot of kids who get
31:45
misdiagnosed with trauma in the past it
31:47
can look a lot like it
31:49
but thank you for that question do we
31:50
have any other questions about my story
31:53
you can type it in the q a or you can
31:56
type in the q a that you would like to
31:58
speak verbally
31:59
and i can go ahead and click and allow
32:01
the talk button and we can take your
32:02
question that way
32:12
give it a i'll just hold up hold for a
32:14
second and i'll move on
32:15
[Music]
32:24
with my parents and family today
32:27
unfortunately
32:28
my mother my father and my stepdad all

32:31
passed away
32:31
during my time in college so right
32:34
before i graduated from pierce college
32:36
with my associates
32:38
my associate's degree my stepdad passed
32:40
away
32:41
that was the first time as an adult that
32:43
i had to deal with the close death like
32:45
that where i'm actually
32:46
one of the people who has to plan a
32:48
funeral but i still had to keep pushing
32:50
and earn my degree and not use his death
32:53
as an excuse to fail and then when i
32:55
went on to the university of washington
32:57
tacoma
32:58
um my very first year there spring
33:00
quarter my mom passed away this is
33:03
about le this is less than a year after
33:05
my step dad died
33:07
my mom died so that was really tough on
33:09
me but once so once again i had
33:12
every reason to just give up or like
33:15
go down a negative path or turn to you

33:18
know just
33:19
use an excuse to look i don't have to
33:20
try anymore but
33:22
instead i use used as my motivation to
33:24
succeed i wanted to break generational
33:26
cycles like
33:27
just make sure that i um did them proud
33:30
if they're looking down
33:31
down and they like say when people pass
33:34
away they really can't look over their
33:35
loved ones
33:37
i wanted them to see that their death
33:39
didn't cause me to self-destruct
33:41
but it just it pushed me further to
33:43
succeed
33:44
my dad he ended up um passing away
33:47
right before he passed away my first
33:49
quarter of grad school at uw tacoma
33:52
my very first quarter while i'm
33:54
adjusting to grad school after undergrad
33:57
is in this major there's so much more
33:59
reading so much more right
34:05
but i had to plan him that like right

34:07
before i graduated my master's
34:09
my big sister died so i i
34:13
took a lot of losses during my time in
34:17
college
34:17
but when they were still here with
34:25
the relationship was amazing you know
34:27
they got to see me walk across the stage
34:29
and that was a very proud moment for
34:30
them
34:31
um because they never got to see me
34:32
graduate from high school
34:34
when i graduated with my bachelor's my
34:36
dad was there my mom she had already
34:37
passed but my dad was there so he got to
34:39
see me graduate with my bachelor's
34:41
but by the time i graduated with my
34:43
master's they weren't here anymore so
34:45
but the relationship was great um
34:48
there's no
34:54
i mean they're beautiful a lot of times
34:57
people point that um
34:58
people have problems like that right and
35:00
they're like these are bad people

35:02
but my mom and my dad were never bad
35:04
people they had big hearts they were
35:06
helpful
35:07
they just addiction dominates your life
35:10
and unfortunately
35:11
it can be at the expense of your own
35:13
children you know there are people who
35:15
their urges
35:16
to get high really outweigh you know
35:20
their parenting skills like you just and
35:23
it's beyond your control that's why i
35:25
i don't know if anyone believes in like
35:26
the 12 steps but one of the first things
35:28
is admitting that you're
35:30
powerless over this substance you know
35:32
and
35:33
that was the situation with my
35:37
parents they were they were powerless so
35:39
my mom went to treat me she tried to
35:40
quit multiple times you know um
35:42
it just didn't work out and the
35:43
lifestyle their addiction did it was a
35:45
major cause of the early deaths

35:47
um in my education
35:50
you know the educational path that i
35:52
took the fact that i went to school to
35:54
be a drug and alcohol counselor
35:56
that helped me make a lot of sense out
35:58
of my upbringing
35:59
that helped me like really understand a
36:02
lot more
36:03
like what they were experiencing while
36:05
i'm going through all this trauma
36:06
they're experiencing a lot too and
36:08
there's no help for them
36:09
you know there's nobody who is like
36:12
people used to always ask me
36:14
when you were a kid what would have made
36:15
the difference for you what could have
36:17
been done different to save you and i
36:18
always tell them
36:20
there was no helping me without helping
36:22
my parents
36:23
you know my parents had to be helped in
36:25
order for me to be helped
36:28
so i hope that answered that question do

36:30

we have any

36:31

other questions comments or feedback

36:33

before i move up we don't

36:34

okay go ahead dolly

36:39

you can't hear me

36:42

um so

36:46

i do you wanna mute yourself real quick

36:53

i i really have no clue what you're

36:54

saying

37:06

okay

37:16

you oh i have to unmute you okay

37:31

sorry about that i was trying to unmute

37:33

myself but yeah i gave you the control

37:35

so

37:36

for sure so um i just wondered

37:39

if you would speak a moment about the

37:42

for-profit system the for-profit prison

37:45

system in america

37:47

um and and maybe uh also

37:50

a sort of a second part on that how do

37:53

we

37:54

what do you think are some steps that we

37:56

can take to create that

37:57
prison to education pipeline um
38:01
or or even just cut the prison part out
38:03
and you know
38:04
get more more kids from uh
38:07
you know uh vulnerable backgrounds like
38:10
yours um
38:11
into formally
38:14
for sure so as far as for-profit prisons
38:18
they're they're one of the worst things
38:20
in existence however
38:22
they're a very minor part of the inc
38:27
restoration issue so america is the mass
38:30
incarceration capital of the world we
38:32
have over 23
38:33
2.3 million people incarcerated here
38:36
but private prisons are a very small
38:39
number of that
38:40
um but they are still a major problem
38:42
because their whole incentive is to make
38:43
money
38:44
but i actually see every prison whether
38:46
it's a state prison a
38:47
privately owned whatever as a for-profit

38:49
prison because in our print
38:53
here in washington state we have
38:55
individuals who are working for
38:57
commercial companies creating their
38:58
products
38:59
you know creating furniture for stores
39:02
that are going to go turn around and
39:03
sell this furniture
39:04
or even if it's for the state creating
39:06
license plates
39:07
at the state then turn around and sell
39:12
money off of so i feel like prison
39:15
period incarceration period it's been
39:18
prisons or not like it's about creating
39:19
jobs there's a lot of times where um
39:21
i believe small towns may have had
39:23
options to
39:24
can we build a college or can we build a
39:26
prison which one is it gonna be
39:28
and they decided to build a prison and
39:29
that prison created a lot of jobs in
39:31
their community and it's
39:32
there's a lot of money flowing through

39:34
there so i believe that there's a lot of
39:36
money
39:36
tied to incarceration period even if
39:38
it's not a for-profit prison so
39:41
i don't ever want to give people the
39:42
idea that for-profit prisons are not a
39:44
problem
39:45
but the number of people in those
39:47
for-profit prisons is
39:48
nothing compared to like state and
39:54
federal
39:56
and also um the second part of your
39:58
question
39:59
well there are multiple facets to your
40:00
question you asked about creating a
40:02
pipeline from um
40:04
prison to education right so there's
40:07
edu there's programs out here like
40:09
there's a program called the post-prison
40:10
education program that actually
40:12
goes in and makes connections with
40:14
people while they're in prison and walks
40:16
them through the steps of enrolling

40:17
provides laptops and things like that
40:19
for them when they get out
40:20
there's a formerly incarcerated
40:22
professor at the university of
40:23
washington tacoma named chris beasley
40:25
who was working on building a prison to
40:28
uw
40:29
pipeline so instagram
40:35
about connecting with people before they
40:37
even get out making sure that
40:39
um and just you know making this path as
40:41
easy as possible so
40:42
this pipeline that you talk about is
40:44
it's in motion
40:45
and there are so many people who have
40:47
already gone through it without
40:48
having the official name or function you
40:51
know there's a lot of people like me
40:53
who have gotten out of prison and they
40:55
found herself on the college campus
40:57
whether
40:58
they stopped at the associate's degree
40:59
level where they earned a bachelor's

41:01
whether they earned a master's or
41:03
whether they became an attorney with the
41:05
jd or they earned their phd like i'm
41:08
talking i know
41:09
individuals who are scientists at like
41:12
prestigious universities who serve 10
41:14
years in prison for drug crimes you know
41:16
people who are um there's a guy who
41:20
was a mayor in mississippi who just
41:24
earned his doctorate degree
41:25
but he served time for murder he got out
41:27
of prison
41:32
and goddess doctor degrees there's just
41:34
so many people who are define the odds
41:37
for me it's all about changing the
41:38
narrative i should have a shirt on right
41:39
now that says change the narrative
41:41
that's what i'm all about is changing
41:43
the narrative and introducing new
41:45
possibilities so i spend a lot of time
41:47
going inside of youth prisons adult
41:49
prisons
41:50
um men's prisons men's prisons

41:53
just sharing my story and sharing with
41:55
them the possibility that
41:56
education is an option it's not for
41:58
everybody you know it's not going to be
42:01
the path that everybody wants to take
42:03
it's just it's not going to get
42:04
everybody to their goals
42:06
but if if it's something that you want
42:08
it's an option for you and there's a lot
42:10
of organization called
42:11
unlu that is helping people who want to
42:14
go into tech careers after prison
42:16
[Music]
42:19
university beyond bars that is actually
42:22
going inside the prison and teaching
42:23
college classes inside of there i
42:25
actually was in washington dc
42:26
advocating to restore pell grants for
42:28
people inside of prisons where
42:30
they do not have to get out first before
42:32
they can start their education because
42:33
statistics say that people who receive
42:36
education while they're in prison

42:38
have a much slower chance of
42:40
recidivating when they get ill
42:41
it's way less likely that they go back
42:43
to crime if they were able to get an
42:45
education and acquire a skill
42:47
i feel like i'm missing a part of your
42:48
question like there was another part of
42:50
it that i didn't answer
42:55
i just unmuted you again i hope
42:58
i'll stop unmuting myself i'll stop
43:00
muting myself
43:03
um you know i i was a high school
43:07
teacher
43:07
for 11 years and so i've been on the
43:10
other side of that
43:11
equation where you know i do have a
43:13
disruptive kid
43:14
and you got to get them out because
43:17
yeah you can't do anything until you
43:19
deal with the situation
43:21
um and it's very frustrating on both
43:23
sides and
43:24
you know i i think what i was trying to

43:27

get out maybe was

43:29

um you know a lot of that um

43:32

that school the prison pipeline it

43:34

starts so early

43:37

and you know i didn't know if you had

43:39

wanted to speak to

43:41

anything that can be done you know just

43:44

educating teachers

43:45

or you know just yeah

43:48

yeah so one of the things that's going

43:50

on in a lot of schools right now um

43:52

i'm not sure if you're familiar with

43:53

like restorative justice circles where

43:55

like

43:56

peacemaking healing circles they go by

43:58

several different names but

44:00

the idea is you'll get the teachers in a

44:03

circle with students and ministers maybe

44:05

parents

44:06

and they're all just letting it all out

44:07

you know letting out their frustrations

44:09

and

44:10

letting them like they're kind of human

44:11
not because to the kids they've never
44:13
seen the teachers in this phone
44:19
situation and a lot of times the
44:21
teachers they're just kind of meeting on
44:22
the same level
44:23
as people who are engaged in a conflict
44:25
that can be healthy right
44:26
and like a lot of teachers leave these
44:28
circles like oh my god i had no idea
44:30
that this child was experiencing this
44:33
and i actually feel like because
44:37
if i knew my response to them would have
44:41
been
44:41
so much different you know
44:45
i have a lot more compassion a lot more
44:48
patience or
44:49
just tried to do it a
44:53
little bit of a different way it says my
44:55
connections unstable again i hope you
44:56
can hear me but right now
44:58
i'm contracted with pierce county
44:59
juvenile court to offer a diversion
45:01
program so there's some kids

45:02
african-american males who got in
45:04
trouble for whatever reason it could
45:05
have been shoplifting it could have been
45:07
some
45:07
something that happened at school they
45:08
got in trouble for whatever reason
45:10
but instead of them sending these kids
45:12
to jail these kids are going to be
45:14
meeting with me
45:15
over zoom to talk about their goals and
45:17
their barriers and
45:19
like just getting to know each other and
45:21
how can i be a resource for you and help
45:23
you be successful in school
45:25
or if like you're already a senior and
45:28
you recognize
45:29
that this wasn't the path for me how can
45:31
i help you find other options for
45:32
completing your edge so
45:34
like there's a lot of different curious
45:37
dictionaries that are looking into
45:38
things like this in the pierce county
45:39
juvenile court they reached out to me

45:41
you know like so they were already this
45:42
was already their mindset like
45:44
we want to put these young black boys
45:46
from the positive black men from similar
45:48
black
45:49
similar backgrounds that can help them
45:52
navigate a path rather than just
45:54
punishment punishment punishment
45:56
you know because honestly punishment
45:57
just does not solve anything
46:00
i feel like it always creates more
46:01
problems so between those restored
46:04
and restorative justice is a word that's
46:06
used a lot i prefer to use the word
46:08
transformative
46:09
because i feel like if we just restore
46:11
things that's mean that means we're
46:13
going back to where we were
46:14
we didn't actually solve the underlying
46:17
root issues that led
46:18
to the problems to begin with so i
46:21
prefer the term transformative justice
46:23
where

46:23
we go through this transformative
46:25
process where
46:26
the kids are not just
46:30
made whole but they're transformed their
46:33
values are changing their behaviors are
46:35
changing
46:35
and the teachers as well you know i i
46:38
was a keynote speaker at this past i
46:39
don't know if when you were teaching if
46:41
you ever went to the becca conference
46:42
but there's a lot of teachers who go to
46:44
the becca conference and you know just
46:45
hearing stories like mine you know by
46:47
going to these conferences
46:53
from people who won the end and they
46:55
actually shown they were brilliant like
46:56
i doubt i have a lot of teachers who
46:58
thought i was brilliant you know
46:59
but i i obviously had some type
47:04
of intelligent i was not stupid like i
47:06
thought i was or
47:07
you know like i accepted i obviously had
47:11
some sort of potential

47:13
and to be quite honest like i'm kind of
47:16
anti
47:16
the current k-12 system that we have
47:18
right now
47:19
i feel like brown versus board of
47:22
education
47:23
did a lot of damage to black kids like
47:26
if it's celebrating this
47:30
this is
47:40
black kids and white kids in the saints
47:42
no longer educated in white schools
47:44
and these are schools that were designed
47:46
with their exclusion in mind and once we
47:48
were allowed in no adaptations were made
47:50
it's still the same exact system
47:51
and there's just so many problems and
47:53
flaws in the ways that it was designed
47:55
that it just does not reach certain
47:56
types of learners
47:58
so i'm like the k-12 i feel like it
48:00
needs to be dismantled and
48:01
recreated i feel like coleman is a
48:04
perfect opportunity for that because

48:05
there's a lot of adaptations
48:08
being made right now you know and i feel
48:11
like there's a lot of kids being left
48:12
behind that just hopping on the computer
48:14
is not going to work for them
48:15
so we have to hopefully there's a lot of
48:18
thinking a lot of innovation going on
48:20
um it looks like we might have had
48:22
something else in the qa here
48:24
i got another question did i respond did
48:27
i fully answer you before i move on to
48:29
the next question yeah that's great
48:30
thank you
48:31
okay so the question here was are you in
48:34
touch with your original attorney is he
48:35
aware of how you turned your life
48:37
around you know i actually
48:41
had reached out to him i cannot remember
48:43
why i reached out to him
48:45
but i did reach out to him and tell him
48:47
yeah i was in college and about to
48:48
earn a degree and things like that i
48:50
think i knew what was it

48:52

i cannot remember why i talked to the

48:54

man but i did talk to him he doesn't

48:56

know

48:57

i don't think he knows i have a master's

48:58

degree and all the good work that i've

49:00

done since but they knew that i got out

49:01

and went to college

49:03

um the prosecuting attorney i hope she

49:06

knows

49:07

you know i really hope that the

49:09

prosecutor

49:10

recognizes that this young man whose

49:13

life

49:13

she wanted to do her best to throw away

49:17

like really had value and really did not

49:20

deserve to be thrown away

49:22

and really got out and is making an

49:24

impact in the lives of

49:26

other people who you know may be

49:27

stopping them from ending up in my shoe

49:29

i really hope

49:30

and pray that the prosecutors who wanted

49:32

to give me decades in prison

49:35
who wanted even to give me seven years i
49:37
hope they realized that
49:38
by the time they wanted me to be getting
49:40
out i was already helping to change
49:42
lives
49:43
you know i i really hope that and i
49:45
actually i've been
49:46
i've ended up doing some things i never
49:48
would have imagined i actually
49:50
moderated a judicial and prosecutorial
49:53
candidate for
49:54
them so in paris county there were
49:56
people running to be
49:58
judges and people running to be the
50:00
prosecutor and i actually got to be the
50:02
person
50:02
questioning them i'm the moderator so i
50:05
got to come up with the list of
50:06
questions and i'm questioning them
50:08
while the whole audience like gets to
50:10
watch me at like
50:12
one of the the outgoing guy mark
50:14
lindquist he ended up

50:15
he didn't win but like he was on this
50:18
panel and i actually
50:19
got to ask it was just it was just a
50:21
crazy experience to
50:23
come from where i come from and these
50:25
guys are now trying to convince me why
50:27
they are worthy of their position that
50:29
they're running for you know it's just
50:30
it's it's it blows i still don't
50:33
get some of the experiences that i had
50:35
it blows my mind every day
50:37
you know to realize where i am that
50:40
sounds really gratifying
50:43
and i also my principal when i did the
50:45
keynote at the becca conference
50:47
a woman who was my teacher at an
50:50
alternative school
50:52
bought five copies of my autobiography
50:54
from me
50:55
and she gave one to a woman named pat
50:57
sanders who was the principal
51:00
at my elementary school that i used to
51:02
just

51:03
always get suspended i remember spending
51:05
so much time in her office
51:07
and like she might think i'm dead or in
51:09
jail because the way i behave but for
51:11
her to be given a copy of my book
51:13
she might not she might not remember me
51:15
but she might because of certain
51:16
experiences that we had
51:18
so it's just there's a lot of things
51:20
that have come full circle
51:21
and i i hate that i used our whole time
51:24
on my story because like we have three
51:26
minutes left and
51:27
i haven't even gotten into um the
51:30
presentation at all but
51:32
i hope that this has been beneficial for
51:34
everybody
51:35
you guys have enjoyed hearing my story
51:37
and i guess at this point with three
51:39
minutes left i should probably just take
51:40
questions if there are some or what do
51:41
you think dolly
51:43
yeah i think if anyone has any last

51:45

questions that they'd like answered

51:48

um we you know if you've got more to say

51:51

we could have you back for part two that

51:53

would be awesome for sure we can

51:54

definitely

51:55

do a part two humanities washington

51:57

allows three times per year

51:59

i hope you've seen the entire list of

52:01

impressive speakers that they have

52:03

but um i would definitely be willing to

52:05

do this with you again

52:06

oh yeah one thing i do when i did just

52:08

recently release another children's book

52:10

called skin deep

52:11

you can find that on amazon if you type

52:13

in skin deep omari emily matter of fact

52:15

i kinda wanna i'm gonna share my screen

52:17

with you guys again

52:18

just really quick and show you

52:21

my website omariamilly.com

52:26

so this is where you will want to go if

52:29

you want to stay up to date with what's

52:30

happening

52:31
with omari so i have my website here
52:34
it has on my books around here so you'll
52:36
be able to click a link
52:38
to get
52:42
my books that are for sale so i have
52:44
this one that just came out skinny but i
52:46
also have my
52:47
autobiography transforming societies
52:48
failure and another children's book
52:50
called in search of role models
52:51
if you're ever interested in having me
52:53
come out and speak or do a workshop or a
52:55
seminar
52:56
there's a servicing services page on
53:00
here with booking info where
53:02
you can fill out a form here and i can
53:04
come out i can come to your events it
53:05
doesn't really matter where you are
53:06
all right there is a cost associate
53:08
associate i used to do this stuff
53:10
all for free at first but then i
53:12
realized i'll never be able to survive
53:14
that way so there

53:15
is typically a cost involved unless you
53:17
do it through humanities washington
53:19
which um will allow any non-profit or
53:23
organ museums libraries whoever else to
53:25
host me for free
53:27
and i think i saw it
53:31
another question in the chat box
53:33
pictures just a thanks
53:35
a very beneficial thanks wonderful oh
53:38
yes
53:38
yeah so it's my pleasure my pleasures
53:43
go ahead darling oh i was just gonna say
53:46
in closing here that
53:48
um we'll be emailing everyone a survey
53:51
and humanities washington would really
53:53
appreciate it if you would fill that out
53:54
and
53:55
it gives our speaker some wonderful
53:57
feedback
53:59
that he can use going forward
54:02
in humanities washington needs that
54:04
feedback as well
54:10
thank you very much for being with us

54:12
virtually tonight
54:14
and um sharing your story it's an
54:17
amazing story
54:18
i i think um one thing that we
54:21
all need to learn is more empathy and
54:23
more compassion and
54:25
when we hear stories of what other
54:28
people
54:29
have been through we can all help build
54:31
that so we appreciate it and thank you
54:34
very much
54:40
yeah any thank you for holding me down
54:42
no
54:43
no problem all right thank you
54:46
yeah you guys have a great night you too
54:49
thank you i'm going to
54:52
stop
English (auto-generated)