

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society Oral History

Interviewee: Lisa Kaichen (LK)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Lisa recalls her father, Noel Gottesman, who perished in the 1956 TWA United Air Disaster

Date of Interview: June 30, 2016

Method of Interview: Face to face

Transcriber: Dannie Derryberry

Date of Transcription: August 3, 2019

Transcription Reviewer: Sue Priest, Tom Martin

Keys: 1956 TWA United air disaster

TM: Today is June 30th, 2016. This is a Grand Canyon Historical Society oral history interview. We're at the South Rim, Grand Canyon National Park at the Museum Collection. My name is Tom Martin and with me here is Lisa Gottesman. Help me with your name.

LK: My name now is Lisa Kaichen, but my name was Lisa Gottesman.

TM: Thank you. How is it that you're here today?

LK: I'm here because it's the 60th anniversary of the plane crash that killed my father when I was 5 years old.

TM: Okay. Did you have any siblings?

LK: Yes, I have a brother and at the time of the crash he was 18 months old.

TM: Okay. What was your mother's name?

LK: Her name was Elizabeth McGuire and my dad called her Mickey.

TM: How did they meet?

LK: Well, they met, actually, on a blind date when they were with different... Actually it wasn't a blind date, they were with other people on a date. So the partners kind of...they liked the person that the other person had come with. It was kind of an interesting story in that she grew up in a Catholic family and he was Jewish. It was quite a problem for both families when they got together. I think she thought he was a dashing young ROTC guy at the time. It was at Western Michigan University where they met, but then he went on to go to Notre Dame and was working on a PhD. I'm not entirely sure if he finished his PhD but he went on to Notre Dame University and was studying mathematics and working on a PhD. When he died he was called the lead mathematical analyst at Bendix Corporation. He died when he was only 30 years old, so quite an achievement at a young age.

TM: Where did they meet, your mom and your dad?

LK: Western Michigan University.

TM: Sorry. And so this was at...

LK: In Kalamazoo, Michigan.

TM: ...at a party or...

LK: I don't know exactly but I know they were on a double date and they were attracted to the other person's date so they got together.

TM: All right. Do you know what year they were married?

LK: I can tell you cause I wear the ring that was my father's ring. I don't know if I can read this little teeny writing. I might need to put on my reading glasses. I believe it was around 1946 and I was born in '51. Let's see if I can read what the ring says. (pause) Mickey to Noel, February 14th, and I don't think it has a year. But I'm pretty sure it was 194-... Here it is 2-14-, hmm, '44 I think that says.

TM: That's precious.

LK: So, yeah.

TM: So if you were going to teach me about your father and his values and your mother and her values what would you tell me?

LK: Obviously the fact that they got together. I think they both believed in love and they both were independent enough that they were willing to defy cultural norms and endure their parents' displeasure. I think that they really loved each other very, very much. In fact, I still have love letters that he wrote to her and I have nude photographs that he took of her so that was (laughs)... I haven't figured quite what to do with those but I thought maybe I'd make a piece of art or something now that they're both long gone.

TM: What were they like?

LK: My parents like as people?

TM: Yeah. Were they in civic organizations, did they sing, did they...

LK: Well, again, my dad died when I was only 5 so it's pretty hard to know too much. I know that he remained culturally Jewish and she remained culturally Catholic. He was an only child and his parents... His dad owned a store called American Unclaimed Freight. I used to go there often when I was young and it was great. I guess it was unclaimed freight but it was everything you could imagine, from linoleum to work boots. Used to give me scraps of material and wallpaper books and stuff like that so I had a lot of fun with the things. And actually it was my birth, I think, that really brought their families back. That they wanted...the grandchild brought them back. Value wise, I know he played golf. I have some pictures of him playing golf with his buddies. I have baby movies of being on the campus of Notre Dame and my mom posing with me and that kind of stuff. I'm not sure how old we were when we moved to Detroit. I was born in Indiana where he was going to school. He was teaching at Notre Dame as well. Then we moved to Detroit and lived there for a few years. I was a pretty spoiled little girl that had wonderful... We celebrated Christmas and Easter. Even though we might go to Passover Dinner or whatever, we had the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus and that kind of thing. Lots of good memories, warm memories of him. I remember, I haven't found it and I'd like to find it, he made a tape for me of his voice singing to me and I would love to find that. If I do I certainly would share that with the Historical Society.

TM: Oh, that would be precious.

LK: Yeah. And he brought me different things. I have a pendant that he brought me from a trip and I have a Navajo doll that he brought me from another trip.

TM: Tell me about those trips. For business or...?

LK: Well, he traveled a fair amount with business. Yeah. I assume it was out west here. You know, again, I don't know a lot but he did fly on business and I believe these things were brought to me from Arizona, I think. But again, I don't know for sure.

TM: Was he flying to California and back? Because the plane would land in Winslow and I'm sure there were people selling items there while you waited for refueling to happen.

LK: That might have been. Yeah.

TM: So he could have picked them up there.

LK: So he could have.

TM: If he had no business in Arizona but he was traveling further to the West Coast and then back.

LK: Right. Right. And I don't know, again, a little child doesn't know much about their parents' work lives.

TM: Right, right.

LK: So that's kind of what I know about them. I know they were very much in love. I remember her sitting on his lap and stuff like that.

TM: Nice.

LK: Yeah, yeah.

TM: Yeah, wonderful. When your little brother came along was that pretty seamless for you?

LK: It was pretty seamless, yes. I was glad to have a little brother and...

TM: That's a reflection of good parenting.

LK: Yeah, yeah, definitely. I do remember asking him who was his favorite and he kind of said, "You know, I don't have a favorite child," and I said, "Well, I think you know me better so I'm probably your favorite." (both laugh) And I think he said yeah.

TM: That's cute. Wonderful.

LK: Yeah, yeah.

TM: So you were 5 years old. Do you remember how you heard of the accident?

LK: I remember a lot of talk about the plane is missing and then the plane is lost. I remember that we had been planning to get him at the airport. I don't know whether there was a call or what but I remember there was a lot of conversation about that. A lot of people coming to the house and my not feeling particular concern because at that age when something is missing or lost, you know, you find it. Then I remember around that whole time the people that came to the house were many and were neighbors and all kinds of stuff. The pediatrician came and I remember being very scared that he came and hiding

because I thought he might give me a shot. That was kind of my way of thinking about some of these things. I don't recall going to a funeral. I don't think I was included. I think I was excluded. I do recall going to the grave on a regular basis cause my father did have... Evidently enough of him was found that there is a grave, in a Jewish cemetery, and we would go there pretty regularly for a number of years and bring flowers and that kind of thing. His parents, my grandparents, went every single Sunday and they took lawn chairs unless it was winter and too cold. They went and spent their Sunday afternoon sitting in lawn chairs at his grave.

TM: Their only son.

LK: Their only son and only child.

TM: Only child. Yeah.

LK: Yeah, yeah.

TM: And what happened to your mother?

LK: She, again, from a child's perspective, she didn't talk about it a whole lot. Probably she didn't want to worry us. Ultimately she began dating and stuff like that. She did get a settlement from I'm not sure who. I think it was from the suit, I don't know if it was United or whatever. She set up college funds for my brother and I. So we had that and that was good. She did remarry when I was 9 to John Kaichen who's my father now. I kind of look at it as my first father and my second father, not as stepfather. As a first father and second father. He adopted both David and I and then they had another child, so I have a younger sister as well. I think one of the things that was hard was that it wasn't really something that was talked about. I think that was kind of that era largely, but I do recall in school and stuff I didn't know anyone else who didn't have a father. I remember kind of the trauma of like Father's Day at school or something like that and it was like what am I gonna do? Everybody's making something for their dad or a card and I don't have one. I kind of think that part of those kind of experiences led me to become a social worker as a adult to always identify with the underdog. Almost to an extreme I always identify with the underdog or see people who are very sensitive to the needs of people.

TM: Who's left out.

LK: Who's left out, exactly, and try to include them. An irony about the whole thing was after I got married, when I was 40, and that's a whole story, too. I didn't get married until I was 40. Okay, I'll tell you a little bit about my career path. I went to boarding school for a part of high school and I skipped my senior year because I felt I didn't need to know more. I just went to night school for civics and summer school for whatever else it was I needed and graduated a year early. Then I went on to college at the University of Detroit and majored in social work and worked with prisoners and autistic children. Then I went to University of Michigan and got a Master's degree in social work, specializing in community administration planning and evaluation. I think all this, to me, kind of harkens back to losing a parent because I think that making change, making a difference, using my time well... My time on this earth has always been very important to me. I think an awareness of when my father died at 30, when I turned 30 it was sort of like, wow, this is as far as he made it. How are you going to live your life almost for two? So that whatever I do is a measure of his having invested in me, even though if it was only for five years.

At any rate, I did that and I've had a very successful career. Still working. I worked with runaway youth and I was an executive director at age 24. So I really kind of was an achiever. Then ran a statewide children's advocacy organization, and then started my... Well, I set up a children's trust fund for the State of Michigan, and I was in People Magazine, and I was regularly testifying to the legislature and on TV a

lot. I'm saying that not to brag but to say it was part of the thing of living my life for two, for somebody who couldn't make it that far.

Now my brother, unfortunately, had a different kind of track. He became a drug addict. He sold drugs and he went to prison. I've always attributed some of that to this whole incident, too. I always felt like David needed to sort of feed himself and drugs were the means that he took, where I kind of needed to feed others. I was very independent. My first daughter I adopted as a single mom, and I didn't get married till I was 40. I saw myself as very independent. In fact, I was telling someone earlier, the last little vestiges that I had after my college fund was spent I called my FU Fund so that nobody could ever, no man or whatever would tie me down. I was very independent and I used the last of it for buying a house when I was, I wasn't even 30 yet.

TM: Nice.

LK: Yeah. So I've had a good life in that regard. But I am still, part of why I wanted to come out here was I know there's still healing that needs to be done. I know there was never really a time of grieving and anything that was very private. I'm telling you stuff I've probably never told anybody. I recognize, now that I'm 65, that this is stuff that still weighs on me. That I'm glad to have the opportunity to meet other people at this and to sort of figure out some of this legacy stuff and delighted that the Historical Society wants to do something. A lot of my skills are in that area so hopefully they'll be tapped.

TM: This is my sixth interview and the similarities, what you've just told me is in every interview.

LK: Right. I'm not surprised.

TM: This is a lifetime journey of healing that you will take with you to the end.

LK: Right.

TM: If I may be so bold to say so.

LK: Right, right. That's something I may want to do something with as I think about it. I feel like I've had a lot of experiences with grief, starting with my father. Something that was very ironic is I mentioned I got married at age 40, but my husband died when I was 45 and I had a 4-year old and a 12-year old at the time. So it was almost like I got to relive all of this.

TM: It was what happened to your mom.

LK: Yeah, exactly, but I think I felt like I got to do it right. Okay? So I got to be very honest with my kids about the whole thing. With my younger daughter we started a little journal about her memories of Daddy and it was just really... She had memories of like we stopped and looked at an owl in a tree, or Daddy drank milk out of the jug. Her memories. She still cherishes that little book. I kind of wish that I had done that cause even as you were asking me earlier, a lot of that was sort of smoothed over. So I did handle it differently. We're very open about it. The photographs and all I have of my father are in photo albums and I do have baby movies, so I have those. But a lot of his stuff, for me to bring stuff, it was in suitcases in the storage unit. It wasn't part of my life. I guess with my kids I've really tried to make their father be a part of their everyday life. I think I also, again...

That was a very healing experience for me, too, because I felt like I had a choice of crumbling or walking through the flames. I walked through the flames and I made more money the year after he died than I'd ever made in my life or never made since. But it was just, it was a motivator for me. I do think one of the

reasons I didn't get married till I was 40 was that I wanted to be very independent, didn't want to really trust somebody fully. Didn't want to worry about people leaving. It was kind of easier not to get too close and you never had to run that risk. As I've gotten older I've gotten more insight into those kinds of feelings and saw that I've translated into work. I've created a life-book for foster children because I know that they needed to put their pieces of their life together. I want to do that for other groups of people, too, because I do feel so many people live fragmented lives. Particularly when there's a loss or a divorce or an incarceration or a death. So many of those things we don't integrate. We just compartmentalize and put into a box and open it now and then, very now and then cause we don't want to feel that pain. But I don't think we're a whole person or an integrated person until we do make this puzzle whole. I feel that's part of what I'm doing right now, doing this, coming out here.

TM: Did you ever talk to your mom about what she went through?

LK: A little bit, not a whole lot because, again, I felt even as a small child that I needed to protect her. That I needed to not make her sad, that I needed to make things nice and just be a good girl. I'm sure that it impacted her greatly. It was the love of her life. Again, I have the remnants of that with their love letters and stuff like that, which is very nice. On that line, too, with the loss of a parent, and I'm sure you've talked to other people now that have that, too, I cherished any little piece of him that I could find. I still have his bedroom set and it's been my daughter's bedroom set. I have actually the tie he has on in this picture. I have a couple of his things. I remember very sneakily get... My grandparents kept a lot of his stuff until they died. He had his golf bag and I got the pennies out of his golf bag and, you know, stuff like that because just wanted to keep that intact. It's kind of funny, and I would look for synchronicity in things. I realized at one point that I had a boyfriend whose inflections were the same as my father's. I think that's what attracted me to him because he had those inflections. My husband now is named Leon, and I never really thought about it but Leon spelled backwards is Noel. It's like do, do, do, do, you know. Maybe some of these things are meant to be.

Since I came out on this trip... Well, actually I should just tell you a little bit how I came out on the trip, or why I came out on this trip. I did make a quick trip through the Grand Canyon. I had a boyfriend when I was like 21. We were on a camping trip and we looked at one lookout. I was so freaked out that I said "I can't stay here. Let's go to Bryce." So we did. I really was fantasizing of whether my father was still alive, whether he was living with the Indians somewhere, all kinds of things like that.

Another thing that was pretty profound that happened in my 30s is I did something called holotropic breathwork. I don't know if you've ever heard of that, but it's a means that shamans and stuff like that use to enter an altered state. So I did this. You do it in a group usually, but it uses music and breathing. There's sounds of drumming and that kind of stuff, and then the therapist is like coaching you in your breathing. When I did that I had no idea what it was gonna do. What I had been told about this, that I thought was kind of interesting, is that we all operate on like 75 rpm, for those of us that remember records, and that this really helps you slow down and really access things that you couldn't access otherwise. Kind of an alternative to LSD, that kind of thing. So I did it and I had a very, very profound experience where at first I thought I was a rock and then I thought, no, I'm not a rock, I'm a scarab and then I thought I could hear something and it was like angels singing. I really felt my father's presence and kind of a voice saying "You couldn't be there for me," oh, I heard the drone of a plane, too, and he said "You know, you couldn't be there for me but others were." I had a vision of Native American like spirit women walking. I don't know what they were doing, accompanying him to another life or whatever, but it gave me solace. It gave me solace that there's something beyond this, and it gave me solace that there's connections through generations and centuries and souls and all kinds of stuff that is beyond our understanding. So I did that.

But really it wasn't until the advent of the internet and computers and all this kind of stuff being so popular that I Googled his name a couple times and found things that he'd written and that kind of thing. But also found some stuff about the crash and learned more about that. That kind of gave me more questions and stuff. There was one site, and I'm not sure who it was or what it was anymore, but I commented on how helpful it was to see pictures of the site and to learn more about it just on this website. I forget exactly what happened but they put me in touch with another person who had lost her father when she was 4. She lives in Oregon now and she had kind of a worse experience than I did in that her parents...she didn't even really understand her father was dead for years, or I don't know how long but... So I felt lucky in that regard and I felt like I'd had a much happier life all in all and that things had gone well for me. So I did kind of learn more. I think she's the one that told me about Ian and the National Park Service and stuff like that. So that led to my learning. I had never heard that there had been anything before. I didn't know there was a thing. So I was very glad to have an opportunity to connect with people and to learn a little more. When I learned about this opportunity for the 60th anniversary... I actually haven't told a lot of people it's the 60th, I just said I'm coming out for a commemoration. I don't want people to know I'm as old as I am. (both laugh) It was interesting, as I told people I was coming out here I put a little thing on Facebook and people were responding. My next door neighbors when I was a little girl when he died both responded on Facebook.

TM: Oh, my gosh.

LK: One remembered that my dad had built a sandbox and put all of our neighborhood kids' names on it. Things like that.

TM: That's neat.

LK: Everybody wishing well and wishing healing vibes and stuff. I think that is the thing. I feel like I'm gonna leave here a fuller person with maybe some of those puzzle pieces figured out and mashing them into place. There'll probably still be a few missing spaces but I think I'm gonna be able to move forward.

TM: That sounds like a much better healing journey than when you were 21 or 22.

LK: Right. Right, right. And I've loved seeing the Grand Canyon. As I said, I hadn't really been here before. I told my husband today, I said "It's sad for me to think that I may leave and may not be back." Who knows? There's lots of places in the world I want to see. I'll spend another day probably seeing these places, maybe saying goodbye in all kinds of levels.

TM: Yeah. Absolutely.

LK: Yeah. Yeah.

TM: Is your brother still in jail?

LK: No.

TM: Has he passed away?

LK: Nope. He has leukemia, though. He was gonna come with me but then he decided he wasn't up to it and couldn't afford it, so he stayed back. But I bought a book for him and I want to get him some other souvenirs. I took some pictures and I'll share this whole experience with him.

TM: You got a plaque for him.

LK: Yep, yep, yep.

TM: Great. Okay. Siblings holding their lives together hasn't always been successful in these, what I've learned. Suicide, alcoholism, drugs.

LK: Right, right. And that's one of the pieces that I feel like I may be wanting to do more stuff with in terms of children's reactions to sudden death and tragic death. Because from just the little bit of talking I've been doing to people or the little bit of writing I've done with this person online, it sounds like some people, I don't want to say make the most out of it, but they kind of do. That they go forward in very healthy and successful ways, which I would say about myself. All in all I feel like, as I said, I've lived for two. I've really been very resilient and really made contributions. I have a legacy to leave but I also am hearing other people, particularly with alcohol and drugs and stuff like that. It makes me think about PTSD and how maybe that stuff has never really been dealt with even in the fields of psychology and social work and all that, and that maybe there is some work to be done in some of this through stories and through art and through reflections. All kinds of things. I think that there's lessons to be learned from this.

We had a little group meeting earlier than this where we were talking about perhaps the establishment of a foundation or some kind of thing. Somebody talked about we need to look at the lessons learned. The lessons learned in terms of the history in aviation and protecting sites and all those kind of very practical things, but also the lessons learned about human beings and impact on family and how people can move forward in healthier ways. I think that now that many of us are entering the, I don't know what you call it, the third act of our lives or whatever, hopefully the best acts, who knows, that we can really work together and kind of figure some of this stuff out and find a way to share it.

TM: It is a new century and we do understand debriefing, grief counseling, follow up. There are some changes now.

LK: Umm hmm, umm hmm. Right.

TM: But one of the things I wrote down on my notes here and put a little box around was the word independent, because that's the one thing I've heard repeatedly from the daughters of the people who passed away...

LK: Interesting.

TM: ...was "We didn't have Dad so we learned how to do it ourselves."

LK: Right.

TM: "We changed the tires, we painted the house. When a tree fell down we cut it up. We weren't good at it but we were empowered by that independent... We didn't like it..." It's interesting for me, it made a series of very powerful women who would come out of this, which is pretty neat.

LK: Right. I think so. Now, what did you find about men?

TM: The guys I should say maybe didn't do as well. Everybody's still grieving,

LK: Even after 60 years?

TM: Oh, absolutely.

LK: Did that surprise you?

TM: Controlling. Men were controlling, micromanaging. That could be helpful in their business. A lot of them were very successful, some not so. Some committed suicide, some were into drugs and alcohol.

LK: Did you see women going into drugs and alcohol, too, or not really?

TM: Maybe one, but I've only done five or six of these interviews. And they weren't here, this was a family member telling me about it didn't go so well. It hurt everyone but in our society it seems like the guys don't have the outreach, talk about control and support, right, at least somebody to cry on their shoulder. The guys don't do that and so that was...

LK: Right. Are the women crying during their interviews with you?

TM: There's a box of tissues right there.

LK: Right. How about the men?

TM: I cry a little bit. I try not to.

LK: Cause I could see you tearing up a little bit.

TM: I mean, these are amazing stories.

LK: Do some of the men cry?

TM: Yeah. The World War II bomber pilot at the very end of the interview cried. He said he had never cried over the loss of his brother. The 'just put it away and move forward with your lives' seems to have come out of this quite a bit, as in 1956 that's what... The clergy would have come over and say "Just forget about it and move forward," or family members, etcetera. It seems as though, and help me out with this cause if I was gonna paraphrase this it sounds like Mickey was very fortunate in that just three years after she lost Noel she met...

LK: John.

TM: ...John. The success stories I've heard, if you could call them 'success', in quotes, is when the remaining spouse met someone that really cared. One of the families taught me that Dad had lost his wife. Eventually he met someone and they were just waiting behind the door, just waiting for the child to call out Mom and she was right there. She just really worked hard to make that connection and then adopted the children and they were able to bond. I think that was a big part of healing for the children that that happened with, but it didn't happen with everyone and that was tragic.

LK: Right, right. That's what I've gathered from being here. That a number of people, their family remained dysfunctional or got more dysfunctional or whatever. That's very sad because I guess I had hoped and thought that a lot of people would be with me/like me and maybe stuffing it, which was not good. Stuffing the grief so that we wouldn't make others sad. I think there is sort of a sorority or fraternity of people who've had an experience like losing a parent, or people who've lost a child or whatever, it's a different thing than many people experience. It really is.

TM: One of the things that Dana Yang taught me yesterday, we did an interview with him and his sister and his mother, Etta, who is here today, is a wonderful, wonderful woman, he said "At one point I realized that the death of my father was responsible for the FAA which saved tens of thousands of lives."

LK: Right. Right.

TM: Did you ever connect that way, did you ever connect those dots?

LK: Yes. Yes, I did. And the fact...

TM: Was that helpful?

LK: ...that I feel safe. I still get scared flying, but then I tell myself lightning's not gonna strike twice. There was just a turbulence coming out here and I was like, oh, boy. (laughs) Sort of watch over me, too.

TM: Umm hmm. I think a lot of people that go through a tragedy, a loss of a parent, don't have that sense of...

LK: Right. Of some good coming out of it.

TM: ...a higher moral change in consciousness of the country that resulted in much more robust safety standards.

LK: Right. I think that's true. And I think that it would be good if that was shared more with people, that that had happened. And I think we need to... I just lived through Hurricane Katrina. That's another interesting kind of side piece. Hurricane Katrina happened a few years ago and, again, when people were talking about how silent things were out at the site, I thought about that that Hurricane Katrina was just you could hear shutters banging and everything was brown and it wasn't colorful anymore. I took some photographs just in the few days after the city reopened over in the 9th Ward. I remember I found a lady's shoe that was like a party shoe, like a high heel, and laying in the dust. There was clothing in the trees and all kinds of stuff. But again, I think even in some ways my experience of losing a father, gave me strength to step forward in that. In my independence I started something called The Unified Nonprofits of Greater New Orleans and I also started a, I don't know what we'd want to call it, but sort of an incubator for displaced nonprofits. Where people who no longer had meeting rooms and board rooms and training libraries or even a copy machine or fax machine, I started that so the people could come use that. You know, stepped forward. Then a very remarkable thing that, again, ties into some of this is I was asked by a group in Japan if there were some orphaned children from Hurricane Katrina that I'd like to take to an international grief camp. Now that dredged up a lot of stuff for me.

TM: I bet.

LK: I took two African-American boys to an international grief camp in Japan for two summers. That was like six weeks each summer. I was a basket case before I got on the plane. I actually went to a hypnotist to (laughs) help me get on that thing. The hypnotist talked to me about rational fears and irrational fears and that I was having irrational fears because it did bring out all the stuff about losing a parent. But I was like these boys have both lost their moms and one was with her while she was drowning hanging onto the curtain rod in their house. I just thought I had to be strong for these boys and so I did and I went to Japan. This is interesting, too, while we were in Japan, as a social worker I was concerned that they didn't have like professionals (laughs) dealing with these kids. They really were using college students to get kids to talk. There were children from 18 nations that had lost parents in everything from the tsunamis to the

AIDS crisis to Afghan children and Iraqi children. The only other American children had lost their parents, or a parent, in the World Trade Center. So it was a very, very profound experience.

The whole therapeutic model was sharing stories. As an oral historian that will interest you. That was it and it was understanding that you weren't alone. That the kids, we sat in circles, and maybe we need to do this with the adults that are here now, but we sat in circles and each child told what had happened. There are sort of survivor's guilt and stuff like that in that. Like an Indonesian boy, why he had gone to the drugstore for his mom and when he came back the house was gone and she was gone and all that kind of stuff. Just the kids listening to each other and learning that they all had these same kinds of feelings, even though the circumstances were different. It was interesting. The Iraqi children were not crying because they were saying "Our parents are martyrs and we should be happy for them going to heaven." All the Westernized kids and that kind of stuff are very, very sad. A lot of the Japanese kids had lost their parents to suicides. It was really a very remarkable, life-changing experience for me to go, and I'm so glad I did. It's interesting, that was 10 years ago so I haven't thought a whole lot about that other than it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. I've made friends all over the world now and I'm still very close to these two boys. One is now a journalist for the Times Picayune and it's a thrill to know that he's done so well.

TM: Cool.

LK: There's all these lessons about children and grief and sudden tragic loss and that kind of thing. There's still work to be done I think in this whole arena.

TM: Absolutely, certainly. So 50 years from now, somebody's gonna listen to this tape. What else do you want them to know?

LK: I guess (pause) sort of courage, be courageous. That whatever bad happens to you may have happened to someone else, or something similar. And be open, don't close it off. Welcome people to hold you and hug you and listen to you. Just kind of be brave, step forward. Grief is not gonna... wallowing in it is not gonna get you anywhere (laughs). Go forward in strength and do what I felt I'm doing for my father is living well. That's an important message, live your best life. So that's what I'd want them to know.

TM: Well, you've done an amazing job.

LK: Thank you.

TM: You've been wonderful. Thank you. Just think about how much you've done for so many others...

LK: Thank you.

TM: ...through your father. That's wonderful. And your mother, of course.

LK: Yeah. Yeah.

TM: That's a wonderful thing. Well, thank you.

LK: You're welcome.