

Interviewee: Ginger Navickas  
Interviewer: Emma Garaban and Brittney Pond  
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**Abstract:** Ginger Navickas was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1945. As a Worcester native, Ginger has been a strong member of the community. Attending various schools throughout Worcester, she became well versed in the variety of neighborhoods. In her line of work, Ginger is celebrated for her continual involvement in the YWCA and Daybreak. Although she is now retired, Ginger continues to volunteer for programs like Arts Worcester and Worcester League of Women Voters. Through her work, Ginger shows how human connection is a key component in making change.

**EG:** Alright, so Brittney and I are in a seminar right now called Women & Nonviolence and part of the seminar is to collect oral histories for the Worcester Women's Oral History Project.

**GN:** Wonderful.

**EG:** And so we're having these interviews with a variety of women that have done great things in Worcester and then we're going to transcribe them and present them within the next few weeks I think, I think it's the beginning of May so we will let you know about that. Basically that's what this project is, so we want to take this time to hear all about your life, and you can share whatever you want with us, so I guess we want to start with your childhood. Where are you from? You know, what was your upbringing life?

**GN:** Oh, so you want the total person?

**EG:** Basically, yeah. [laughter]

**GN:** Alright, sounds good. Alright, so let me begin by saying that I was born in 1945. That makes me 71 years old. And I was born and raised in Worcester, Mass, and have probably lived in every neighborhood of the city which is I think a great advantage in understanding how the neighborhoods work and really the scope of the society of Worcester.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** Anyway, I was born to working-class parents that I see as very bright and capable but raised in family settings that were not college focused and that was too bad because it was a different time, it was post-war. But anyway, my parents were married and they lived on the corner of

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Park Avenue and Pleasant Street or Highland Street, so right next to Elm Park, which was great because we lived in a two decker on the first floor and I went to school at Lee Street School and that was an important consideration because in the old days, if you were poor as we were—my father worked in Norton Company as a laborer and my mother was a stay at home mom, which was the tradition—and she and my father determined that if we were going to move on or up we needed to go to one of the better grammar schools. And that's when they made the decision that the bulk of my father's income would be location, location which I think was very forward thinking of them at the time, otherwise we would have ended up in a poorer district in a poorer school and their thinking as we talked as adults later on, was that it was important to position your family and your children in an advantageous way to let them see more of the world that they would have if they were in the smaller area. So that was—and I thank them for that every day. So, anyway, that was my upbringing. Went to Lee Street School, I was the middle child, my brother is four years older than I am and my sister is six years younger than I am. When I was 11 years old, my father who was a gambler, won \$8,000 at the track. Came home one night, and the rest is history. We moved across the city and bought our first on Shattuck Street which was right behind Hahnemann Hospital, which was another chapter in my life and a very important one. Green Hill was really my backyard and in those days children were just sent out and told to come home when it got dark, another advantage to growing up in the time that I did. But the other part of that was my mother as ultimately my mentor, my mother was a victim, I think, of the times that she was in and very conflicted as my parents were about roles and responsibilities for women and she was bright and capable and was really felt confined by the mores of the day.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** And she wanted very much to spread out and she would work occasionally in different positions and I think as I look back now, my father kind of sabotaged those attempts because he was torn by his vision of being a man who could take care of his family and that his wife should not have to work. But during that time, we experienced the things that influenced society dead on and they were the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Movement, the Vietnam War, all of those amazing things have occurred in my lifetime and they actually determined my family's journey including mine. And my brother became the first conscientious objector to the Vietnam War in Massachusetts and was sent to prison for a couple of years which certainly changed his life. My parents who were ultimately divorced after 26 years of marriage, because of the changing times and because my mother had determined that in order for her to have her own life, she would have to be single and that's what she did. And my sister Susan benefitted I think from my generation and my brother's because when she was in Burncoat Junior High she did a walk out in the 60s to allow girls to be able to wear pants to school in junior high if you could imagine.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** So, big doings.

**EG:** Yeah.

**GN:** So, fast forward I went to North High School the original North High School which is across from Worcester Art Museum and when I went there and as a sophomore from Burncoat Junior High, we went to the afternoon sessions because there were not enough schools so they had to double up and that was a good thing for me because it meant I worked in the morning in a thing called the Snack Mobile, they used to travel to factories giving hamburgers and that kind of things. It was a great experience. And a good working experience. Graduated from North High School in 1963 which was a tumultuous time in this country and had made almost no plans to go to school. Everyone else had but I had not and I was busy working after school in my junior and senior year downtown so let me think about what happened. So, I went down to the Cape that summer and worked for the summertime and was supposed to—I had enrolled in nursing school in Boston and I was supposed to save money for that purpose and didn't. So I had to have that delayed and that was the determiner for my life because then I met my husband-to-be and he was 25 and had been in the Navy and was working as a mechanic a Volkswagen mechanic which was a big deal in those days. Anyways I moved out and moved into my apartment, I met him and we married after knowing each other for maybe five months and I tell people I got married at 18 and we didn't even have to, so we didn't have our daughter until we were married five years which was a good thing. I think it helped us navigate our time. And anyways, we were so busy being mature, responsible and saving money for a house and being married which we thought was important relationship. I think it helped us avoid a lot of the pitfalls that our friends faced which were lots of drugs and a lot of independent opportunity which didn't necessarily translate well ultimately for a lot of our friends. Anyway, so we had our daughter and again times were changing and I was very affected by that. I started going to school at Quinsig when it was on the original Quinsigamond [Community College] until it moved to where it is now and I was going nights and also taking classes at Clark [University]. I was working in the Worcester Youth Center, Worcester Youth Guidance Center just before Tiffany was conceived actually and I had decided that I was going to devote my life to autistic children and it was the first autistic preschool in New England and it was a federal grant that had sponsored it and was a wonderful program so that had been my plan. The federal funds were cut out, [President Richard] Nixon came to power and things started to shift around and then we had our baby. So, things were a little bit different. And then at the point when she was maybe two years old I went to the YWCA – that's not true, three years old. I went to YWCA of Central Mass because I was living in Leiseter on Pond and I felt that it was a very isolating way to raise my daughter so I approached them with the Creative Play Program and this is way back before childcare and even before most nursery schools and the idea was that it was a playgroup so parents could bring their kid and we would have a structured playgroup, but then the mothers would also be able to interact and we also had the facility which had a pool and it was a really wonderful thing. Anyway, they bought the idea so I used to load my things up in my car and bring Tiffany in and we did that I think it started at three days a week and then it was four. So, that was my beginning at the YWCA and

then as she got a little bit older and I was able to put her in nursery school, just before she started kindergarten which we thought in those days was a wonderful thing and then I started at the YWCA with my I think it was my first job as director of their summer camp which was a day camp and a residential and I was in charge of the day camp. After that, I was asked if I wanted to be the—this is the good old days—I was asked if I wanted to be the coordinator of the Job Corps Program and the Job Corps Program was significant at the time, you've heard about it now but it's really a very liberal bit of what it used to be but it was under the Johnson Administration and very important particularly for women and the theory was to take the people out of pockets of poverty – how it was described, especially in Southern states where there was no employment, huge dropout rate and to have young people from the age of 16 to 21 enroll in Job Corps and Job Corps was around the United States and on army bases where they would be able to learn a skill and then instead of going back to the area they came from they would deploy literally to cities where they were more likely to be able to work and the YWCA of the USA had a contract with the government and our Residents Programs were the places that women were sent to live there and then our job with my administrator was to place them in jobs and the carrot for the employer was Job Corps would pay them for the first six months, but if they did a good job and we got them in a good place as far as employees, then they would hire them and the rest would hopefully be good history. And that worked probably for about 75% of the people. So that was my beginning at the YWCA and an understanding of the complexity of poverty and the impact on women and girls and not having an opportunity to see the world as a possibility for growth and a place that was so hindered by being poor and uneducated. And I paid attention to that. Of course I was in a fertile place because the YWCA of Central Mass is all about the empowerment of women and the elimination of racism so how I had been fortunate enough also through a woman's book group before I did the creative play now that I think of it that used to meet at the YWCA so I had a chance to see what the organization was about and I knew it spoke to me. The other people in the group went off and did wonderful things with their lives and some of us are still in touch with each other, but after this stint with the coordinator of the Job Corps Program, the resident's director at the YWCA retired and she was in her 70s so I was already familiar with the residents because one whole floor had been Job Corps and I was, I worked with her and I knew how the program worked and during that time things were changing nationally and the residences were becoming transitional housing and they were also starting to address a different society and a different population especially because now we were dealing with women in recovery, women with mental illness, women who were displaced, women who were getting divorced and had very little means to make a change in their lives and needed a temporary place, it was temporary housing. So, the YWCA itself is noted for paying attention to the changes in society for women and being able to respond to their needs and I think we're also known for identifying possible things that are going to occur and trying to bring the organization and our expertise to support and encourage women. So, I was also at that time in the 70s, so I was transitional housing director and also ran the building itself which was exciting because I had operations I didn't know much about and learned and kind of social work. Meanwhile I was still going to school as I could taking courses here and there, but never able to enroll full time

because at this time I got divorced and the reason for that I think would probably be as a result of both the relationship, but again the times I was living in.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** I saw so much work to be done and so many things that I became passionate about and I was married to a good man who had very, very low expectations as to what life should look like and was very mired in wanting to remain in his comfort zone and also for a more male view of what life needed to look like. So in some ways mirrored my mother's and father's relationship, but on a different level. So, we divorced and I became a single mother during this time too and that also was such a learning experience for me because it gave me again an education about what it is to be yearning to move into life the best way you can and to be making a difference, but also understanding that I have this amazing responsibility to this child so both as a role model but also as a nurturer. So that occurred and I continued at the YWCA and at the time I started to look around into the community to see where else I would be able to participate and I became a board member at Faith House which was a treatment facility, a six-month treatment facility for substance abuse for women and I also in 1976 became a part of Daybreak which had just started with Beth Herr and Betsy Stanco. Betsy was a faculty member at Clark University and Beth was an attorney and as I wrote Isabelle—is it Isabelle?

**BP:** Yes.

**EG:** Yes, yes it is.

**GN:** So maybe a handful of us maybe five women from the community used to meet over a store on Main Street and Betsy and Beth left to their lives and the five of us or so remained and we decided that what we needed to do was incorporate and also move on with our volunteer program and make it a non-profit which would allow us to grow and we also had to hire an executive director so all this was happening in the second wave of feminism and it was a national, it was a national happening. So many cities Worcester, Boston, Springfield, Northhampton of course and all places were at the beginning of establishing programs that would respond and it was I think initially led by rape crisis programs and then what was called battered women programs at the time. It was a huge change in this country and this community and in the beginning I think a lot of social change that I would like to think has become permanent as far as views and values at this point. So, we started moving along with Daybreak, I remained on the board until we purchased our first shelter and that was significant for all programs because initially when Daybreak was founded it was really—people thought of us as a coven. The regular society thought that because we were secretive and our security was in our secretiveness because we had very little money, this was before we came incorporated and if we were housing someone who had been fleeing we had to do that secretly so that the perpetrator who maybe in pursuit of this family or this woman would not know where to find her. So what we used to do in the old days was have apartment and then when that would become more well known we would have to up an

move to another apartment until that was identified. So it was a sea change for domestic violence programs to decide that, “Wait a minute, we aren’t we buying into this idea that we have to be on the run, that we can’t set down our roots, and say we’re here, we’re staying here, we’re here for you, and we insist that the rest of the community recognize the need for this and support us.” That was a huge movement and very hard and difficult for the original advocates because it was scary stuff.

**EG:** Yeah.

**GN:** And the reason that there was that kind of feeling was because we did not have the buy-in that we do today from prosecution and police and community administration. That was just not the case. What was happening with them was still this old fashioned idea that so-called family violence which of course was not really family violence, it was always a perpetrator causing violence in the house, or making it. It was felt that it was something between the people involved—the relationship—and did not merit outside intervention. But that of course started to change as we established ourselves and became really more of someone to have to be dealt with and so programs like Daybreak all started with hotlines and shelters and to this day, people will talk about the Shelter Program etc. but it’s very important to note that that was the beginning and the evolution of services is what is so significant because we were able to work from that. In 1984 I believe we bought a shelter and I remember we started in ‘76 and incorporated in ‘78. We bought the shelter I believe in ’84 which was this big old house and we had no money and this was very telling, we went to a couple of banks to get a mortgage and the house, the house had maybe eight bedrooms, maybe more, and it was in the city and we needed a mortgage of \$80,000 and we had a board of maybe 12 people if that. And we were not able to get it and until we went to Worcester Five Cents Savings Bank which is no longer around and we met with the mortgage loan officer, a guy. I can’t remember his name, Dino, Dino Tayda and he came into the room and I was Vice Present at the time of the board and another woman by the name of Ruth Rovezzi who is now the Director of DYS in Massachusetts, the deputy commissioner, and we told him what it was and we also told him our limitation that we couldn’t, it had to be on the quiet, it couldn’t be in the papers and could not be able to be submitted and passed in the traditional way because we didn’t want it to be able to be found. And he listened to us and gave us the mortgage and because of that we made him our first male board member of Daybreak.

**EG:** Wow.

**GN:** And of course from that point on we ended up having males and females etc., but at the time it was strictly a women’s thing. So that was the beginning of the community having to step up to the plate and recognize and participate. So that happened and then we started to realize we needed to do other services because the majority of women really did not see going into shelter as an option in the community, but if you could give them support services, counseling, court advocacy, and a number of other supportive services, then they would be more likely to feel as if they were supported enough to have to make changes that were so very difficult. And that was

also a very difficult part of educating people. Making a change when you had little to no resources driven by both fear and retribution is a tough place to be in. And making change we came to realize too—and it became our mantra—change is a process, not an event. So, again, all of those things were things that we learned in this movement—because it was called a movement—and we came to apply that in our process of serving the people who needed our services and also paying attention to what individual needs were showing up and trying to design a response system that would be helpful to them. So I left the board and continued with my work and in those old days because there were no extended places for single women, they would often come to my transitional housing program so I kept engaged with Daybreak and other programs with that. But in 1997 Daybreak itself had gone through many changes—again as so many of the programs had across the country—and it was really, it was a hard-fought difficult time for the battered women’s service movement because you had ardent advocates for women, many gay women were involved in the establishment of these programs and there was this political push and pull about going mainstream if you will that it seemed a betrayal to our roots and to invite many in who were seen as, as the enemy by many as a class. There was a lot of pain through the growth of the program, but the cold hard facts were you can’t provide services for the majority of people who were seeking our services at the time were heterosexual women. You can’t provide services without money, without resources, without cooperation of the larger community so that was I think the definer of how we moved out and I can’t emphasize enough at the time it was kind of hard for people to understand that it for many people was heartbreaking to see that, that inner sanctum I guess having to be changed and exposed, but it had to be.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** And it was also and what many of us included—tried to emphasize—was how are we going to change the world and the attitude and beliefs of women who were being subjected to this kind of life without educating and insisting that the community participate and you can’t do that if you’re closed community. So anyway, we made our way and in 1997 I believe Daybreak approached the YWCA and I think it was Sharon O’Mara originally who was our executive director and then after that person, Linda Cavaioli who was the wonder woman of the community to merge with the YWCA because they were struggling as many stand-alone agencies were struggling that were grassroots, trying to with their limited resources provide the services, but also have to manage personnel and all sorts of things, they were just not equipped to do it financially. So the idea, and this happened nationally, a lot of rape crisis programs and battered women’s programs went to larger organizations, very often the YWCA because of our great reputation and, and wanted to merge. Well, we worked that merger out and I was delighted of course to be part of that because I had an affiliation with Daybreak, so I was asked to be the Director of a new department and that would be the Daybreak Department and anyway that occurred. It took about nine months for it to happen. Again it was a lot of shake up in the community about what was happening to Daybreak. It’s merging with this larger organization even though it was respected it was still seen as mainstream, would lose its identity and lose its sensitivity and also its friendliness if you will. And I felt, I felt this flack quite strongly because a

number of these people who were feeling this and declaring it were friends of mine, people I had known for years. But I felt very strongly about this being the only way for Daybreak to survive and also I saw it as the opportunity to open it up and use YWCA which was an established and recognized organization and it was powerful because it was big, to use the leverage of that organization to insist that the community participate and that was the beginning of big community change I think. And it was helped by the fact that nationally, VOWA and it was a cops grant that first came out that required if you were get any money, if the police, the district attorney, prosecution, or victim services, which would be Daybreak, were to get money, they had to put together a grant that showed how they were going to work together. Now, until that time we did our thing, the police did their thing, still filled with their prejudice, we still filled our prejudice and prosecutions with theirs. So we had to come together and I still remember the day that we had to come together to talk about how the grant was going to go and the city of Worcester, Donna McGrath and Jill [...] fashioned this cops grants and the police of course cooperated because they were going to get a big amount of money and a couple of police officers out of it easily and prosecutions was going to be able to get some and we were going to be able to hire two advocates at least maybe three. So, we came up with what we call the WIN Program, which was Worcester Intervention Network, which was ended up being a model for the state and when we had our meeting we had it on our grounds and it was like the granolas meet the military.

**EG:** Oh my god.

**GN:** So the police pull and their car with their full uniforms on.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** Three of them, who were going to be a part of the domestic violence which had not existed until then. So their job through the grant was the domestic violence unit that would investigate all issues, all cases of domestic violence that occurred in the city. And whether they intervened themselves or were there other police officers, they would be the nucleus for that. And they would have to work with us and then ultimately if we were going to prosecute the perpetrator then a prosecutor had to be involved so the Das [District Attorneys] came in in suits and we came in in our little long dresses and offered up oranges and tea and it was very interesting because we came in as separate, clearly, clearly seeing ourselves as separate entities. By the end of a couple of meetings it was so clear that this was a perfect group to make the changes that were necessary and we came to understand, and this was so valuable for me as a person and for us as an organization, that we of course saw ourselves pure as the driven snow, but we all came to the table with skewed views, different perspectives, and different beliefs and frankly values so what we found was this is just trying. We understand very well we think what is going on in the life of a victim of domestic violence and the obstacles and the barriers that are there for change to occur, for safety and well being and a better life and the police come at it from law enforcement, so we're the social workers. We take the long view and we see the intricacies of a



time and support and need and we're prepared and designed to do that understanding that you take a few steps, you fall back. This happens, something else comes up that you didn't realize.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** So, we were able to I think explain what we do and how we do it and how would benefit law enforcement because no one that goes into law enforcement wants to be a social worker. They like to go in and do the job and move on.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** And domestic violence is messy and goes on and on and on and on, and they have little patience for and what they don't like or didn't like and they explained to us was that they had to keep returning and we were helpful in helping them understand why that occurs and how we could as a group make it different. Police were frustrated with prosecution because they felt the prosecutions didn't do their job, if you will, and prosecution was able to explain their obstacles and issues in trying to prosecute people. So anyways, we came together with the WIN program, we got an office at the police department – unheard of, that was a little dicey initially because I think they thought of us as temporary guests and as soon as this thing got under way they wouldn't have to deal with us, but we're still there and that was in 1997. So it was a sea change and what it meant was that we weren't—we didn't have our eyes on the stars, we were actually hard-working advocates who believed in what we were doing. We saw the police as hard-working police officers trying to do the best they could do given what their job is. And that we were the perfect hand-off so that we could fall and walk on the cases and provide resources in a way that was an advantage to us because in those old days we had to wait for people to reach out to us. This way we could identify and our MO [modus operandi] for making calls was how we understand was a police incident, not that Mary Sue called the police, and so that way we could at least start the in-road if you would about services available. These are things that we can offer, take some time to think about it, we're located here, here and here. That was another advantage by the way when we opened things up because people didn't understand where they could reach us and so that was that was a huge change and Daybreak grew from that and we became, I think, much more sophisticated in our understanding of how to engage the community. We worked very hard at that. We understood that education was the key to long-term change so there was a great emphasis on our community education component. We made ourselves available and it was I think a very successful plan and I think that we see the results aren't perfect—of course not and by the way, we all, our regimes change.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** You know I'm no longer there.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** But, my successor, Amarely Oliver, is doing it and she's probably doing it differently, but based on the history, she's also continuing to bring it forward and also continuing to cultivate those relationships with people who were people I knew. They're retired, they're gone now, so the continuity of these efforts is key to keeping the community involved and educated and that has been very successful. So as far as my own future was concerned, during that time, part of my job as the leader of the pack if you will, also Battered Women's Resources in Leominster approached us because they had seen Daybreak become successfully integrated into the larger organization and they were floundering too. So they approached us so that became the domestic violence services department and Daybreak and battered women's resources slowly faded into that department, but currently Daybreak, currently domestic violence covers [...] these in Central Mass and it's a large area. So between the two areas, it's really quite, quite busy. But during that time, part of my job, which I loved—I've always told people that I've had the best career and best job of anybody in the world really and come to know so many marvelous people. But during that time I would go to CASA, which is a court appointed special advocate for neglected and abused children and did their trainings of volunteers. We would come and talk to them about the issue of domestic violence, how it might look to them as an advocate and what was actually going on rather than being so judgmental that they didn't understand the difficulty that that mother or parent was having and we also did that with other organizations. I also visited other community organizations just to let them know where we were because we knew that domestic violence impacts at least one out of five women.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** So if it, if it isn't the three of us, I'm sure the three of us know a few women who have been affected by that or those women know family members or friends so it was also important to go out and tell our story and make sure our resources were recognized and accessed. So during that time, I would think, "Oh this is a wonderful organization, when I retire, I'm going to see if I can participate in this organization." So I was all set to retire when I was 66, five years ago, and I already had my little list of special places and they are Arts Worcester, which is a wonderful organization on Main South that supports emerging and established artists in Worcester and Worcester County Area and Jewish Health Care Hospice, which is a small but vital organization that provides support services obviously for the death and dying and their families and CASA, which was my first of course because that was my first my first exposure, League of Women Voters, and Planned Parenthood. So eventually I got involved either on a board level or volunteer. CASA I do guardian [...] and I'm a volunteer and I have a supervisor who I love.

**EG:** Yeah.

**GN:** And Jewish Health Care Hospice same thing, I end up being gallery watcher and help with events at the Arts Worcester and it's all quite a balance. And then Planned Parenthood, of course, is very important to me and it's very important to me too whenever I can to emphasize to

people's view of planned parenthood that it is really about reproductive and sexual health for many women but the emphasis is being able to take control of our own bodies and understand them and operate with them in the most efficient way, in the most thinking way that we can in order to define our lives and that abortion is a very small part of what we do. But that, of course, is out there all the time and people just think that that's what we do. And I feel very strongly about my role on the advisory committee to make sure that people understand how important it is and also for women my age if you can imagine people think of it for women your age, or 16 and up, not so. And just so that I can get rid of that myth, we women are still active and are alive and we need both support and information about how best to conduct our lives in that way too. So anyway, that's my spiel for Planned Parenthood. So those are the organizations I'm a part of, but they're all connected to my belief that individuals, when they can, based on their passion and their opportunity because not everybody has the time that I now have to figure out where you can make significant impact and assist your community and ultimately the world that you're living in and that has been fortunately for me, my history, and my time and I've been very fortunate that I've been able to do that and I think there are pieces to it including my singledom, if you will. I never remarried, this is rather personal, but I think it's significant and again women, men and women, people in this country, many of us, have such an opportunity to make our own choices and as you get older you realize how important that is and also what that does for you and for me I had decided in my middle of my life having had other relationships since my marriage, that for me, I think marriage is a marvelous thing when it works and it's the choice of people.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** But for me, it's confining. For me, I feel it is confining and that was, that's an important discovery. So that I don't go through life willy nilly marrying and divorcing etc. and hurting people.

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** So, the joke with my immediate friends and family when I started dating in mid-life was that you need to know that I don't want to get married and I don't want to live with someone full-time. So if that's what you're looking for, I'm not your girl. And it's actually been a help for me so that I can determine what I get involved in and what my time element is and it's not that I don't think that people should live without love and intimacy because I think it's wonderful and as it happens, I have a wonderful relationship with a guy who is very understanding of this and it works for us. So that's very nice, but it's not my primary interest or responsibility. That's because to me, if you're married to someone, they are your primary responsibility and you are theirs. The other things are very important but you know that's something that you need to be looking at because why else commit yourself to another person in that way. That's just my view. So I think that that's been an advantage for me. That I am single, I remain single, that gives me the opportunity for the scope of stuff that I love to do and when I decide to do it. I don't necessarily have to check with someone, which I like.

**EG:** Wow.

**GN:** So that's it, that's the story.

**EG:** That's the story.

**BP:** Woo.

**EG:** Wow.

**EG:** That's great, do you have anything...

**BP:** I only have one question. Throughout all of your work, what has been inspiring to you? Cause that's a hard question, but...

**GN:** Well, the people I meet—the people I've met, and the people I meet. That has always inspired me and I've been in positions in my career that I can get up close and personal. I have never been in an administrative role even with domestic violence services and other things I've done that has kept me apart. So I think the inspiration is the one that I find I recognize human beings as complex and the more I came to know more people, it was such a help for me to be a thoughtful advocate when I stopped being cavalier about my expectations on another person. And just being amazed at the unique possibilities that people have, but also that for some people, certain achievements if you will or certain things in their lives are the way that they want them to be. And to be respectful of that and also probably to recognize that corny as this sounds, to everything there's a season and during certain times in our lives, whether it's as a student or as a single person or married or mom...

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** Or whatever.

**EG:** Yeah.

**GN:** ...there's certain attention that has to be paid to certain things, but life moves right along so what pre-occupied you at a certain time has changed and now you're at a different place and you need to be paying attention to that. So that's all to say that the people aspect has taught me that never say never, and change is a process.

**EG:** Yeah.

**GN:** And also, what I feel lights my fire and what works for me in my life, I have had the luxury of being able to determine and not all people have that and they have to often work within certain confines so anyway, it's been the people and I think that I've been so lucky to grow up in the time that I have because the sisterhood is powerful, is probably embedded in the two of you, but it was, it was pretty new for our generation who came from the mothers and fathers that I have described to you and we were in the wave of it literally and to find other women as my sisters, which I still feel to this day, has been such an important and empowering thing. When I was growing up, there was clearly a division that girls were supposed to be friends when they were little girls, but when they started to develop into young women, their attention was supposed to be for boys and their girlfriends were supposed to be second...

**EG:** Right.

**GN:** ...in their life. Seems so old-fashioned to say that, but that was really the mentality and there was a kind of invisible thread in those days that if you didn't toe the stereotypical mark, you would be ostracized in different ways and for a kid, that's scary business to be marginalized. So much of that has changed and the inclusiveness and the respect for people being the unique individuals they are is just amazing that I've lived long enough to see it. It's really a thrill for me.

**EG:** Awesome.

**BP:** I don't have anything else unless you do. That was great.

**EG:** Yeah that was great, I think we're good.