

## Oral History

Amy, Dale and Justin

July 8, 2020

**Justin:** Good morning.

**Amy:** How are you?

**Justin:** I'm doing pretty good. Just a reminder, is it ok for me to be recording the call today?

**Amy:** Sure, that will be fine.

**Justin:** Ok, cool just wanted to make sure. Did you guys have a pretty good week so far?

**Amy:** We have. We have. We went out and I did my trimming of my roses and got any bugs that were in my flowers. So, I accomplished something. Other than that, we're doing ok. We are being fed and we are doing what we need to do and I've got my stuff done for his insulin and that's good. And the stuff done for his Brilinta.

**Justin:** Oh, I'm so glad to hear that.

**Amy:** Yes, and I think.... Yeah, I have two applications coming. One for his insulin and one for his Brilinta. And I have to be filling them out and sending them back and wait the lillycares.com, I think she told me it could be free. I'm excited about that.

**Justin:** Well that's really good. I'm so glad to hear that.

**Amy:** So we got that done. Now we need to get it filled out and sent back.

**Justin:** Ok. So do you know when you'll be getting the paper work?

**Amy:** She said right around the end of the week. I told her right away on Monday when I talked to Kimberly. Got those things to call and I did. So my husband isn't on the line, I don't know what happened to him. But he must be still sleeping.

**Justin:** Well, if I could still be asleep, I might still be asleep myself. I don't blame him at all.

**Amy:** You don't blame him at all.

**Justin:** I don't blame him at all.

**Amy:** We'll let him sleep then.

**Justin:** We'll let him sleep, I got you. So today we'll cover some more of the questions that I'm supposed to ask for the narrative. So far we've went over what was the happiest times, what were the difficult times. We've talked about what made you smile and happy recently. We've also talked about a time of your life when everything seemed to change. So today, what has changed for you in the last few months?

**Amy:** What has changed for me the last few months? I have been chained to my home. No, I shouldn't say chained. It's not for me to just stay and sit around and read or do whatever I needed to do. But it's been ok because I had things to do around here and we could still get out and take a drive and have a treat once in a while and so that has changed our lives this...these last few months have changed our lives. But it could be for the better because we learned more about each other and it could be better because you can find things to do and be content in what you have.

**Justin:** So when you say you learned more about each other, that's pretty big feat considering you guys have been together for so long. So what kind of stuff did you learn about each other?

**Amy:** Well, we could be together more in this situation and understand each other better. And he had his stroke too, and it was kind of hard because he deteriorated a little bit through that, too. And remembering different things, you know, and we just had to adjust to that, too. It was ok. It was okay. We can work things out and help each other, you know, through it all. I don't know, feel like you...because I didn't get out to work, that's why...he just...and then...later when I wanted to go out to work he just after his stroke he just didn't really want me to go out and...so I

felt like he was more dependent on me, you know. Going through what he did in February with his stroke.

**Justin:** So that happened right before the pandemic kind of broke out, then?

**Amy:** Yeah, it did. Well, then and during, you know, there was some things going on before that, but more so, it was before we had to stay in and... So it's an adjustment for both of us in both ways and we worked through it and got through it and we're still getting through it. We're still being careful on what we're doing and wearing masks when we go out and he prefers sitting in the car, so we just....and that's ok with me too because I don't want him exposed him to anything out there that will be catching. I'm just thankful for that and he's content in doing whatever he's doing so that's good. Do things that wouldn't be, I don't know how to explain it, but he's just really content sitting there and sleeping. And I just praise god that he doesn't have any pain and that he can just walk and keep going and sit down and eat and doing different things. So I'm happy to be able to help him with anything else he needs help with, like reminding him to take medications and getting them lined up. But he does a lot of things by himself, I just thank the lord for that.

**Justin:** What's his mobility like? Is he still pretty mobile?

**Amy:** Oh yeah, he has his walker. He has one of these stand-up walkers rather than one of those where you bend over. The kids got him that at Christmas time because it was more stable than a cane and you walk sideways kind of with a cane. So, they got an upright, mobile one. I don't know if you've seen them or not. But he's in...it's been really helping him and he really enjoys that. That way he can walk around and use that and be more stable. And he uses that in the house too, and he uses it outside. We load it up when we go and he uses it to get anywhere we have to go. And if not, I just taking him in the store last week was the first time he'd be in a grocery store

and we were out and about and he just needed to get out. He came and I followed him and he followed me. We got a few things picked up and he was helpful that way, too. Other than that, we're doing what we need to do each day and we're getting meals in and that helps.

**Justin:** So the Meals on Wheels people come in Monday through Friday, right?

**Amy:** Yes, yes.

**Justin:** Ok. Uhm, I was wanting to ask you guys if you would mind and it doesn't have to be today because I know it's kind of short notice, but if you guys could maybe have the person who comes to deliver, if they could maybe take some pictures of some photographs you guys may have taken throughout the years. Pictures of you guys as kids and teenagers and so on, throughout your life. Whatever you may have available that isn't too much of a hassle to dig up for me, I would love to be able to incorporate some photos of you guys through the years within what we're going to publish.

**Amy:** Ok.

**Justin:** So maybe the person who does the meals on wheels can you know, take some photographs of your photos and email it to me, or text it to me, either one. That would be really nice if we could do that, if you were willing to share that with us.

**Amy:** Ok, and how far back? Way back? Our first grandchild?

**Justin:** You can go even further back. I'd love to see you guys you know, as a young couple together. Whatever you want to share with me, I'm more than willing to...I'd be happy to see it.

**Amy:** Ok, I'll get them dug out and I'll get them to her. How many pictures do you want?

**Justin:** However, many you want. It doesn't have to be a whole lot, just touch on little part of your life with it and you know wedding photos and...anything, it doesn't have to be a big event.

Just you guys being yourselves. Anything like that. Is Kim the person that does your ...that delivers the meals on wheels or is it someone else?

**Amy:** No, it's Linda. She's the head of the place, but I could call. If Linda doesn't want to do it I could call Kimberly and maybe she could come over. Or maybe I could drop 'em off. Whichever works for them. If you want them to be done like today or tomorrow?

**Justin:** Oh no, it's no rush. Don't feel the need to go in there and just start digging through stuff, you're good. The project isn't done until the end of the month, so if you could just maybe get them to me one day next week and that would be great. I could actually email Kim today and see if she could communicate that to one of the people that's doing the routs, so they're kind of aware of why I'm asking for. But yeah, one day next week would be great.

**Amy:** Ok, I'll get them marked and get them to them. One way or the other.

**Justin:** Ok, that would be great. I really do appreciate that. Like I said, they can do something just as simple as take a photo...use their camera phone and take a picture of them and send it to me. It doesn't have to be anything really complicated. But yeah, maybe one day next week we could work on having those, so don't rush yourself into getting into that.

**Amy:** ok, ok. It don't take me long, I can get her done. We're supposed to have the library here is having a shredder there and I've got some stuff I need to be shredding, too. I've gone through that and I remember where everything is and we can get them out for you.

**Justin:** Ok, ok. I can definitely, I can either...you got caller ID, right?

**Amy:** Have...?

**Justin:** Like do you have my phone number? Like when I call you do you have my phone number?

**Amy:** Yes, I do. I see your number on my cell phone, too. Yeah, I see your number coming up and your name on it when you call.

**Justin:** Ok. Now, are you comfortable with texting them to me? Because if you're comfortable with texting them to me, you don't have to worry...

**Amy:** Yeah, I can text you. Whatever works, you know?

**Justin:** The photos?

**Amy:** That I'm not so sure if I can do that.

**Justin:** Oh ok, and that's fine, that's fine. I didn't know if your camera phone did that or not. That's fine. I will email Kim today and have her put a bug in the ear of the person who does the meals on wheels so they'll know why I'm asking for it and they won't think it's something crazy going on. But I'll definitely email Kim today. She's been really nice and I think you guys are very fortunate to be working with her and I'm sure you guys really enjoy her help.

**Amy:** Yeah, we do. She's been a wonderful person to be able to, you know, just visit with and working with us, getting this lined up for our medication, too. She's been working hard on it and I just really appreciate her. We don't even mind her coming or I can bring the pictures there. Whichever works out for her. If you want to visit with her about it, that will be fine.

**Justin:** Yeah, I'll communicate with her about that today and see what she wants to do and the next time I talk to you guys I'll let you know what she thought would be best.

**Amy:** Ok, uh huh. Because it doesn't make any difference to us, I can...either way. She can come here or I can go bring them to her, too.

**Justin:** Do you enjoy going through your old photos?

**Amy:** Goodness, yes. I received a call from my granddaughter last night and she sent me two pictures of her little ones, last night and I really enjoy you know, pictures and I don't mind going

through them. Our daughter had got a lot of them just lined up so she put them in a photo album, so I got them right there.

**Justin:** Oh, ok.

**Amy:** Yep. From our everything on up to not too long ago. So we can get them, whichever pictures we can get as our lives went up in South Dakota made me homesick because we took our kids always out there for our vacations and camped out there. It was always fun to see Mount Rushmore.

**Justin:** I bet that was neat.

**Amy:** Yeah, it was. We enjoyed that very much. To see that and see all of the South Dakota people. But makes you homesick when you see it, just hoping everything will work out and they can still have those faces up there. So we remember. It means more to older people than to the younger generation, I think they're not so much on that. Taking care of things like that. But other than that, we're enjoying the beautiful sun and had a little rain, so got my garden and got beans on my bean plants. Had my first tomato yesterday. Had a tomato sandwich.

**Justin:** Oh nice. Do you put salt, pepper, and mayo on it?

**Amy:** Yes. Definitely.

**Justin:** That's the only way to eat it.

**Amy:** That's right, that's right. Definitely. I had it and it was good. I enjoyed that.

**Justin:** I had to give away a lot of tomatoes because I had so many growing.

**Amy:** Really?

**Justin:** Mhmm. We planted three plants and they were three or four inches tall when we planted them and now they're over...well they've collapsed a little now because they're so weighed down, but they got taller than me and I'm six foot tall.

**Amy:** My goodness.

**Justin:** Yeah, they definitely took off. We were happy about that.

**Amy:** Did you plant them in the soil or...

**Justin:** I planted them...I put a little bit of garden soil down because it's Georgia and mostly it's just clay out there, but I did mix in a little garden soil with it and fertilized it every couple of weeks until it started blooming real good. Just watered it every day and it just took off.

**Amy:** Well, that's wonderful. Yes, that's great.

**Justin:** Nothing that I planted from seeds came up, though. So, that didn't work out at all. But the things I planted as seedlings, they've been pretty good so far. Yep. So I'll ask one more question from my list of narrative questions and we'll see how much time we'll have left after that. So are there new things in your life that weren't there, or you didn't notice prior to the pandemic?

**Amy:** New things? Yeah. I had to have our well taken up and you mean as far as that kind of thing or what?

**Justin:** I guess things that have affected...that coincided with effects of the pandemic. So are there things you didn't notice about your life or about your day to day life that you didn't notice before the pandemic and having to be locked in and doing more isolation.

**Amy:** Well, there's things I noticed that I could sit and relax and read books, I'd never did that before. I never read books before, and so I had if that's a change, that's a change for me because I never enjoyed reading. And just being able to sit down and read a book and I enjoyed that much. And I guess I had time to do it. Before I just never took the time to do it and maybe that was it. And so you had more time to do different things because you couldn't get out and you

couldn't leave and you had to stay here and you had to do something so that was one of the things that I noticed I could do, you know.

**Justin:** So you picked up a new hobby?

**Amy:** Yeah, I guess I did pick up a new hobby. That's true, that's very true. And I...different things I guess you plan more on your meals, you plan more on the meals that aren't delivered you just think about it more and gives you more time to prepare different things and because otherwise it's always been a fast thing and you know you're here and you go out and work or do anything but right now you know, you're in and you're by your house and its just different things you had to adjust to. And you do them. Just like your housework your laundry, it's all different. You do it when you have the time and getting up and getting out of bed. You have more time. You just have to just say ok, I'm going to have to relax and I'm going to have to stay here I don't have to get up and get somewhere and do something. I guess I was more active that way, and it slowed me down a little bit and that was my adjustment.

**Justin:** So when you say it slowed you down, what do you mean?

**Amy:** Well you just take your time doing things. Where you had to hurry up and get stuff done, like, daily life things. Daily activities. You just slowed down doing those kind of things and enjoy them more, like before.

**Justin:** Just being more purposeful with it?

**Amy:** Yes. Definitely more purposeful. Just being here and enjoying life and just enjoying each other for a change. Slow down. Slow down. Smell the roses, right?

**Justin:** Exactly. And trim them and do whatever else they need.

**Amy:** There you go. There you go.

**Justin:** So how do you think you dealt with the isolation aspect of it? Do you feel like overall you had a good experience? Like, do you... you kind of give me this you know, feeling that you handled it pretty positively. How do you think you were affected by the isolation of the quarantine and the shelter in place?

**Amy:** Well, you know, you have to put your mind to it. You know, it's something you had to do. It wasn't really something I wanted to do, you know. Like when the kids came down, we sat outside, and they sat six feet from us. Those kind of things, they were an adjustment. I didn't like it. I did not like it. I wanted to be able to have them inside my home and enjoy their fellowship instead of having to...and they did it because they wanted the protection for us, not to get them you know, not to be ill about it. And I know that was an adjustment. As far as just staying in, you just put your mind to it. This is the life it's going to be right now, and hoping that it won't be forever and ever and ever. That you can be able to go out and really not fear and just being able to go out and do the things you normally had done before with freedom without having to...I shouldn't say fear because you shouldn't have fear in your life...but not to run into somebody that you think might have to get it, the virus. I knew I had to protect myself because I'm a caregiver and I had to be here for my husband, and I know he said he prayed for me when I went out because he didn't want anything to happen and have me to get it. You know, that kind of thing was disappointing in that kind of situation. That you could be right there with somebody and you couldn't hug them or shake their hands if they came and visit. You just had to be careful and that wasn't me, you have to get out and do and you have to be with people. You know, and I think that's a real adjustment.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Amy:** We made it through, we're getting positive about it. No need to fear, we got the lord and we have to just hang on to that and just say ok, you got our protection. You got our protecting. And keep going and keep going, that's what we need to do.

**Justin:** Exactly. Keep going and keep going. I love that.

**Amy:** I guess that's what I have to do. But that's I guess my only adjustment, it's not letting people in. I mean, I would let them in, because I have no fear of getting it, I just felt like I had my lord and savior's protection on me and I claimed psalms 91 over my children and everybody and I just had that peace about it all. So that's the only thing I could count on was that, you know. Other than that, we're in here. Still in here until we feel real comfortable and have the freedom of getting out. And we do, we do. It's just you have to be a little careful because what they're telling you, you know. As far as what you have in your body, like Dale has a lot of things going on in body and we have to protect that. And he's content with that and he's been real good with that, too. And I'm thankful for that, too. I don't think there's anything else I can think of that would be of anything. I guess I've always been one of these that an organizational person to get things done and do things the way I would like to do them. But we need to sit back and relax and say, ok, its ok. Other than that, we're hanging in there.

**Justin:** Well, I will say this. Your positivity is its just really inspiring. When I talk to you, I just really enjoy it. I love the way you carry yourself and how you stay so upbeat, it's just really good to hear that. I'm so happy that you have been able to find the bright spot, you know like, you mention that you spent more time learning about your husband and you have been married for, how many years now?

**Amy:** 62 years, now.

**Justin:** 62 years and you can still find out new things about each other. That's awesome and you picked up new hobbies. That's just really inspiring and you know, that's the kind of answers you gave me. You just made me feel really good about the situation that we're kind of currently in and I think that is just important to share with people who, you know, despite everything that has been going on, you can still find positivity in there and that's really good.

**Amy:** Well, you have to. Otherwise you can get yourself down and depressed and you need to have that upbeat because, otherwise, you and sit here and sit here and feel sorry for myself. But I'm not that type of person. I need to be upbeat and keep going and keep going. That's my personality and I'm thankful for that. I really am. It was a god given talent, I guess. Or god gave it. Or you can say it or it wouldn't be mine I guess. I don't know how anyone could say they could get through this. I know our daughter came down, she was needing to get out of her state. She came down to visit and it was harder on her because as a fact they're younger and she had her husband in the house because he had to stay home and work and she had her two boys in the house because they had to go to school at home. So she had an out that she could go to work, but it was getting her so she decided to come see mom and dad and her son was with her. Some people, you know, have that and that was her out of getting a positive look on things. Different people have different strokes. Younger people it was hard for them. She was family so she had to stay and help them out. Of course she was, your job and different situations, that wasn't ours, so we just be home and relaxed and do what we need to do and be content. You have to be content, there's no other way. You have to be here and do what you need to do to get through it all. So yeah. Other than that, we're hanging in there.

**Justin:** So if we...I'm gonna go ahead and email Kimberly today and find out whether or not she would mind helping me out with the photos. And then I will probably make an appointment with you guys on...are you guys free 9 o'clock in the morning on Monday?

**Amy:** let me see. We should be, I don't have anything down for Mondays. That's on the 13<sup>th</sup>, right?

**Justin:** Yes, ma'am.

**Amy:** Right, that should work out Justin.

**Justin:** Ok, I'll be giving you guys a call back this coming Monday at 9. And if you guys need anything, feel free to give me a holler and I'll be in touch with Kimberly to find out how she wants to go about the photo things. So just between now and next week, in your free time, if you got it, just kind of brose through some of your old photos and see what you'd be willing to share with me and I'll be willing to take whatever you guys want to share with me.

**Amy:** Ok, sounds like a fun deal ok.

**Justin:** Ok, and enjoy flipping through those photos, I'm sure that will be really fun.

**Amy:** Ok, you enjoy the rest of your day and the rest of your week and we'll talk to you on Monday.

**Justin:** Tell Dale I hope he feels ok, today, ok.

**Amy:** Ok, I will tell him, Justin. Thank you so much. Appreciate you.

**Justin:** Alright, bye, bye.

**Amy:** Bye.