

Oral History

Debbie and Justin

July 13, 2020

Justin: How are you doing today?

Debbie: I'm good, how are you?

Justin: I'm doing pretty good. Have you heard anything from your doctor, or is that tomorrow?

Debbie: It's tomorrow.

Justin: Tomorrow, ok. I thought so.

Debbie: And I actually probably won't know anything tomorrow, I probably won't know anything until at least Wednesday or Thursday.

Justin: Ok, I just wanted to touch base about that and see if you heard anything. Yeah. Did you have a pretty good weekend?

Debbie: Yeah, it was pretty quiet. I didn't do a whole lot. I went over to my sister's house last night and she had a friend of hers that she used to work with daughter is in a, some kind of pitching...she plays fast pitch softball and she was in Atlanta for some something, so they came to Shawn's to spend the night last night so I went over to have dinner with them.

Justin: Oh, ok. That sounds like fun.

Debbie: But that was about, that was about it for the weekend. It was a pretty boring weekend, actually.

Justin: Oh, I hear ya! So, we're at the homestretch for the questions. This is the last official question that I have from the narrative to go over with you. So, are you ready to do it?

Debbie: Yes, sir.

Justin: Ok, excellent. Alright, so last week we ended with lessons you've learned about living through difficult times and the final question is going to be, "what would you like to pass on to future generations?"

Debbie: Well. I think the biggest thing for me is to live life to the fullest every day because life is short. Even if you live to be 100, life is short. And work is, it should be you work to live, not live to work. Because very few companies anymore really care about their employees and I hate to say that, but that's been my experience over the years that there's very few anymore that care about their people. So you think you're, you know, you work hard, and you think they're going to appreciate it but they never do.

Justin: Yeah.

Debbie: So, speaking from someone who worked very hard all their life and when I needed them the most, they were gone.

Justin: Yeah.

Debbie: I think that's the biggest, you know...and make your priorities, make sure your priorities are set correctly. I guess that's the most important thing to learn from me. And listen to your body, that's another thing.

Justin: Mhmm.

Debbie: It tells you if you just pay attention.

Justin: Oh yeah, because you said you discovered...you know you were insistent with your doctors about some of the issues you were faced with. So yeah, that's absol... that's very prudent to share.

Debbie: Yeah, you have to take...You have to take your own healthcare in your own hands. You have to, you know, keep records yourself. I mean I have a spreadsheet that I keep of all of the

surgeries you've had, all the medicines I've been on, and like if I had a reaction to them or you know, if anything weird that happened with that particular medicine or whatever.

Justin: Mhmm. I think that's a really good idea.

Debbie: I think it's very important for you to keep track of your own. Don't expect a doctor to keep track of everything. A lot of them do, but if you change doctors, or if they retire, there's just so many things that could happen that if you don't have it yourself, you know, it's good to have good records of your healthcare.

Justin: Ok, that's really good. Cause you know, I know that in Athens they recently had some of the doctors under one parent company hospital, they changed, and when they got their new software, everybody kind of had to fill everything back out and it seemed like they did lose a little bit of information in their about some of the history. So that would be an excellent idea to keep up with that sort of thing.

Debbie: Yep, it's proven of the years for me...and you know, when you move, and you know and things happen, you know. That you aren't really...of course we moved a lot when we were first married because Phil was in the Navy, so we moved quite a bit, so I learned kind of do that at even though the Navy kept track of, you had the records that went with you, from the Navy perspective, it still wasn't thorough enough for me. So I just like to have all that...plus it makes it easy when you go to a different doctor and they make you fill out a thousand forms. If you've got all that data either on our phone or a spreadsheet of some kind, it makes it so much easier to fill out that stuff. You'd be surprised, I mean. I sat down with my mom and dad and tried to fill out their forms and they don't remember. I mean they don't remember when they had this or that or this or that. I mean, it makes it really hard when you try to fill out some of those forms that the doctors want.

Justin: Well, it's very important for self-care and it helps you, helps your doctor make sure they can, you know, prescribe the best things for you and the best methods of care. So yeah, that's a great idea.

Debbie: And if you don't tell the doctors the truth. We have troubles with my mom doing that. She'll go in and she'll have ten thousand things she's been complaining about and she'll get in there, "Oh, I'm fine. No, I'm just fine." It's like, "mom, that's not what you told me yesterday." So, it's makes a difference because they can't treat you if you don't tell them the truth.

Justin: Yeah.

Debbie: And if you don't have a doctor you can trust, find one you can. You know, momma will do the same thing, she'll be like, "well I don't really trust that doctor." Well, let's find another one. You know, because if you don't trust them, you're not going to do what they're telling you. And so, what's the point?

Justin: Yeah, exactly.

Debbie: I mean, oh I'm gotta listen to them sometimes.

Justin: Pick and choose, you know.

Debbie: Yeah.

Justin: Ok. So anything else you think that you...other than you know, how you prioritize your time, and self-care, is there anything else you think you'd be willing to share or other ideas you think to share that would be important to future generations?

Debbie: Well, you know. Maybe I should at least say this, I feel like I have to say this. You know, I'm a Christian and so I feel like that is very important in life...is to, you know, learn and study and make sure you understand. You know, make sure you accept Jesus as your savior. It's

kind of, it gives you peace when you lose somebody you love, and you know you're going to see them again.

Justin: Mhmm.

Debbie: There's a lot of peace in that. It doesn't make you miss them any less, but at least knowing that you'll see them again is a treasure, I guess.

Justin: Yeah. It gives you hope you would say?

Debbie: Yeah.

Justin: Ok.

Debbie: It gives you something to look forward to for a future.

Justin: Mhmm. Well, that was the last question that we have to go over, and I think you answered it absolutely just brilliantly. I guess...do you want me to schedule you for next Monday so we can go over some of the details about the project and how we'll be publishing this and I can also just check up on you and find out how your appointment went.

Debbie: Ok, yeah that's good. I can do Monday. And actually, technically I'm retired. I...they didn't make me work my last two weeks. I mean, I worked last week, but we decided today that they're going to move on without me and I'm happy about that.

Justin: Ok, so you're no longer doing the part-time job.

Debbie: Nope, I'm done.

Justin: Oh ok. Alright, that's awesome. Do you have any plans to fill that time with anything, or what do you think you're gonna be doing?

Debbie: To be honest, this week is not a good time for me to think about what I'm doing. This week is a really hard week because it will be a year Thursday night, Friday morning that Phil passed away and then our anniversary is Sunday. So I kind of made my mind up that I didn't

know if I was going to go to church on Sunday because I was like, “I don’t know if I can stand up there in choir, I just don’t know if I can do it or not.” And so, this week I got an email that said I’m a backup singer on Sunday. So I said, “well I guess god is telling me I need to get my butt in church, so I’ll be there on Sunday.”

Justin: Right, there you go.

Debbie: So I got the answer to that question. Because I’ve been waiting so long to do this, the backup singer, you know, it’s just one of those things. So it’s for Sunday, so I’ll be a backup singer on Sunday.

Justin: I love that. I think that is a beautiful interpretation. I really do, that’s awesome.

Debbie: You know, I think you get answers if you just pray about them and pay attention. I think you get answers to your questions. Sometimes it’s not the answer you want, you know. Or the answer you thought it was going to be, or. But I do believe you get answers and I do believe you get signs that kind of give you...I mean, like the things with my dogs, when I first got the little one home, I hadn’t had a puppy in a long time and I started to think, “oh my gosh, what have I done?” You know. And I started having a little bit of second thoughts and then I started looking at their paperwork and their birthdays and how the fell, remember I told you about that, it was like, I...that was just a sign for me and these dogs were meant to be mine and I never thought about it anymore after that. So I think you get confirmation in different ways that you’re doing the right thing or that you’re not doing the right thing.

Justin: Yeah.

Debbie: I mean I’ve not regretted once selling the condo. You know, I’m not, I feel very peaceful about that.

Justin: yeah.

Debbie: And I know that's what Phil wanted me to do and it's done and over with and I don't have to worry about it anymore.

Justin: Ok, that's good.

Debbie: So, what are you up to this summer? You doing anything fun?

Justin: So, we snuck away for a quick little weekend about three weeks ago before the corona virus broke out all over Florida again. So, we did get that in, but between work and school and this internship, I'm probably not going to be doing a whole, whole lot. I think if things are kind of calmed down in December, we may take our belated five-year wedding anniversary trip to Disney and do the little Star Wars area because I'm kind of dying to do that. And maybe visit Key West if it's open. That kind of was the plan but, it may, it may have to wait til later on. We don't really know yet.

Debbie: Yeah, that's one thing you have to learn through this corona virus, is if you're a planner, you're gonna have to step back and go, "Well..."

Justin: Yeah, it's definitely been a little more fly by the seat of your pants lately.

Debbie: And see, that's my sister up one side and down the other. That's the way she lives her life: by the seat of her pants. So this corona virus hasn't bothered her at all. Me, it bothers me because I'm a planner.

Justin: Yeah.

Debbie: I don't feel like I can plan past today.

Justin: I'm in the same boat with you, trust me. Right there with you. But yeah, hopefully we'll be able to do something you know, and we're kind of keeping our hopes up about it. If we're able to do it, great. If we have to put it off a little longer, it will be alright. We're just gonna deal with it.

Debbie: Yeah. That's speaking...that's about the way things have to be these days, right?

Justin: Yeah. So, do you want me to call you on Monday or do you think you'd still would be in a place where you would want to be bothered?

Debbie: Yeah, Monday is fine.

Justin: Monday will be fine?

Debbie: Yeah.

Justin: Ok. Let's shoot for one pm and I'll touch base with you and let you know how the project is going and give you any additional information about how it will be when it gets uploaded so, you can take a look at it. We're probably going to be emailing you the disclosure I went over with you verbally that you agreed to. We're probably going to email you that form and see if you can print it out or either digitally sign it. I'm trying to find the details on that. And just send that back to me so we can actually have like a hard copy as well.

Debbie: Ok.

Justin: So just kind of look out for it in your inbox for that.

Debbie: I can print it and sign it and copy it back and send it back to you in email.

Justin: Oh, absolutely excellent. I'll get that to you as soon as possible, then. And if you need anything between now and Monday, just give me a holler. I definitely hope you have a good week and just hang in there. I know it might get a little tough, but I know you got it, you're a very strong person and I think you're going to be ok, ok?

Debbie: Alrighty, we'll touch base with you later, Justin.

Justin: Alright Debbie, thank you.

Debbie: Bye, bye.