

Female: Okay. Put that there. So it's recording now just so _____.
_____.

Interviewer: Oh, yeah. _____.

Interviewee 1: It's so cute. A powerful thing, huh?

Interviewer: So we're just gonna ask you some quick just basic demographic questions before we get started here. What's your date of birth?

Interviewee 1: 10/31/'41.

Interviewer: And where were you born?

Interviewee 1: Nome, Alaska.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee 1: That was the only hospital around.

Interviewer: And where did you grow up?

Interviewee 1: Here. Unalakleet.

Interviewer: And how long have you lived here for?

Interviewee 1: 75 years less 14.

Interviewer: Okay.

[Laughter]

Female: 61.

Interviewee 1: Went to North Dakota for 14 years.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what was your first language you learned?

Interviewee 1: English, but my parents spoke their language and I could understand both. I could speak our language, but it's more English than Inupiaq.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And your current marital status? Are you single, married, separated, or —

Interviewee 1: _____ –

[Laughter]

I would say – *[laughs]* we're married.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. 53 years.

Female: Wow.

Interviewer: Wow. What is the highest grade of school you completed?

Interviewee 1: Associate.

Interviewer: Associate's? Okay.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. That was for – I had 12 more credits to get a secretarial bachelor's, but I quit. *[Chuckles]*

Interviewer: How many people live here, including yourself?

Interviewee 1: Here in our house now?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Just Jim and I and a dog and a cat.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: That's our kids.

Female: Yeah. Very cute dog and cat.

Interviewer: Where do you want to live your remaining years?

Interviewee 1: Here.

Interviewer: And your mailing address?

Interviewee 1: PO Box 258, Unalakleet, 99684. And for online, 258 James Street.

[Laughter]

They say it's not a address; I said, "That's where I get my stuff from."

Interviewer: And so everyone was nominated by an elder committee that decided that you were a elder who is aging well, and so we kinda wanna know what does that mean to you, to be an elder?

Interviewee 1: For all my life, I just was taught to work since before they said it's a child abuse for working.

[Laughter]

Yeah. Work followed my folks everywhere they went. Everywhere they went, subsistent fishing, and my dad was – he was a laborer for anything like firefighting, and my mom ended up working as a housekeeper. But her brother, Tony, worked at the tugboats and her sister, Mary, worked as a cook for children's services or hospital, or someplace where there's a crowd, she would cook. And they didn't make much, but they made ends meet, and then they did a lot of subsistence and we still subsist. We got fish drying in the back.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. And the garden – everybody has a garden since I could remember. Any space you can get. That missionary that came, first one, he showed everybody how to make gardens and they'd make lot of potatoes and turnips and carrots and anything in the garden that you can grow 'cause it's such a short period of time to grow anything.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: But, when they start growing, it goes 24 hours a day, so we catch up with everybody else.

[Laughter]

Interviewer: So how do you know if somebody's an elder or not?

Interviewee 1: Well, there's a 80-year-old; she's still going out fishing. I don't know.

[Laughter]

Well, some of them get – they get sick from cancer or some kind of sickness that they can't control, so those that need help are – you know, they help them. Sickness makes 'em **old**. _____ we get arthritis and that doesn't stop us, though. Just keep going.

Interviewer: Okay. So how do you think you became an elder?

Interviewee 1: When I look in the mirror.

[Laughter]

I don't feel like I'm old, unless I look in the mirror. *[Laughs]*

Interviewer: So how does it feel for you to be seen as an elder within your community?

Interviewee 1: Well, you get the doors opened for you and carry the box from the post office, even if it's light as a feather. *[Chuckles]* Stop and can't even take a walk and exercise – somebody picks you up – so –

[Laughter]

– you have to go out of town to exercise.

[Laughter]

Female: _____.

Interviewee 2: We go out of town to exercise.

Female: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: What do you think aging well or good means? And what does it mean to you?

Interviewee 1: The diet, you know, your food, and you sit around mostly when you get older, so you have to curb your food. You don't eat like when you're 20 years old. Gotta get smaller. Smaller portions. And no drinking. No drugs, unless they're for doctor's prescriptions. Working, moving around. If you don't move around when your arthritis hurts, it hurts more, so you have to move around all the time. Yeah.

Interviewer: So how did you learn about aging well and who did you learn that from?

Interviewee 1: Experience. Yeah. Ourselves. So that's what our folks did. That's how they look when they're this age. *[Chuckles]* You get a lot of easy back problems when you're older 'cause your bones start getting brittle and you get more limber and your knees get weak and you're easy to fall. Even if you exercise, your cells in your, you know, body, start losing their cells, so it's – get some wrinkles on.

[Laughter]

Interviewer: So what is your day-to-day life like? An average day from wake up until you go to bed.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. First thing is our coffee and our breakfast. And then going checking the post office and going online – I can't go without going online. I gotta go online.

[Laughter]

_____ your paycheck _____ is it here now? _____
_____?

[Laughter]

It's easier here online to get Amazon, cheaper stuff. Walmart used to be good, but they cut that out for mailing out, so it's Amazon. Costco is good, but they're expensive. And Fred Meyers is hard to get in there, so local stores give you elder discounts, so, on every Wednesday, you go AC. At UNC, you can get discount everyday.

Interviewer: Oh, nice.

Interviewee 1: But your income is not like when you're working, so you have to budget all the time. I have a list of how much I can spend and, when grandson says, "I need to come from North Dakota," I say, "Okay. Mileage?"

[Laughter]

"Mileage."

Female: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: So things like that come up, so they think Grandpa and Grandma got lots of money 'cause **we're sitting here**.

[Laughter]

But it's good, good to help them.

Interviewer: How do you think aging has changed your relationships with your family, your friends, and your community?

Interviewee 1: They seem to be on their own, the younger ones. They care and they text and they call. And hardly any visit, so they're busy with their families and their girlfriends and their boyfriends, and they come and make a big fuss for an hour. Then they're gone. You don't see 'em for another six months, unless you go to Anchorage, and the ones in Anchorage, they say, "Oh, boy, a good meal. We can go to **cattle** company _____ –

[Laughter]

That's why they come and see us – they can go out.

[Laughter]

They take advantage of us being elder and rich.

[Laughter]

But we can wait till the next payday to pay it off.

[Laughter]

How is that? Dad? Does it sound good – does it sound like a –

Interviewee 2: **Sounds** all right.

[Laughter]

All but the rich part.

[Laughter]

One thing we don't do – we never drink. Never took any dope at all, other than this dope. And what we got, we bought and paid for over time. And then they see it; we're rich. And that's not true. I got the truck out there – it's a '89 – and the car's an '09 – we bought it just coming up here, to come up here with stuff.

Interviewee 1: And we budget **in much** our income.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: We don't go overboard with, you know, borrowing money from the bank. Don't borrow from **Citi Bank**–

Interviewee 2: And I don't know how to use computers.

Interviewee 1: – Citibank 'cause they are so expensive.

[Laughter]

Female: **Good thing** sometimes.

Interviewee 1: You know Citibank? We wanna pay our bill off, so they charge us \$1,000.00 to pay it off. My goodness. No Citibank.

Interviewer: What helps you to age well?

Interviewee 1: Just working, living. The food we eat and going to church, believing in God, worshipping him. Simple things. Yeah. Simple. Very simple.

Try to tell our kids, but it goes in one ear and out the other, so we just watch 'em. “See? See what I told you?” [Chuckles] But it works later on, you know. They listen later and they're doing good. Yeah. Yeah. And we have four great-grandkids now, got six grandkids. Yeah. One of our sons died – he commit suicide when he was 22 and it was a girl thing, but we brought him here. He's buried over there; he was happy. I could feel his spirit be happy

when he came here. But it's one of those things – you can't see the future.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee 1: We have our troubles but they work out. Yeah. And our daughter's doing good – she's over at OCS. She has a husband that does contracting or finishing houses and plumbing. Yeah. Electrical. Anything to –

Interviewer: Mechanical contractor.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. And our son works over there at clinic. Our grandkids are doing good. The one that's in Anchorage is – we use him as a son instead of grandson. Yeah. He's gonna get married pretty soon. So our family's doing good.

[Laughter]

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Interviewee 2: He said – when she'd ask, “When you going to get married?” She said, “She gonna get married in a year-and-a-half.”

Interviewee 1: Yeah, his fiancé. When he's alone with us, he can joke. “When you getting married, Carmen?” “Well, she's gonna get married, not me.”

[Laughter]

But it's good to have family that you know that they're gonna do good. Yeah. And the ones that are not, we keep encouraging them and, finally, when they make their own minds, it's worthwhile, caring for them.

[End of Audio]

Interviewer: So why do you think some ages – some elders age well and others do not?

Interviewee 1: Their former lifestyle when they were younger. I seen some of my friends have too much drinking and they seem to age faster when they drink alcohol or do drugs. And their health goes down – seems like that alcohol, it's not good with arthritis. It just puts you down real fast.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. But some of them, they finish school but they don't use their education. That's what my mom stressed to me, that you have to get your education because, when you are looking for a job, you will be competing with those that have education, and you have to use your education to work because you can't work for subsistence

all the time. You have to get some commercial – you have to get commercial payment.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: So how can you tell that an elder is aging well? Can you give me an example of that?

Interviewee 1: Just by – you see them, you know, going around, the ones that have no – some of them lose their kids – they leave town – and they have a hard time going out, even going to the post office.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: But some of them don't listen, like our neighbor – he had a hip replacement and, you know, you have to stay out of work for six weeks or so. Right away, he goes and go sailing, and then now his hip – they took the hip replacement out and he's – he never listens, you know. They never listen. Like my dad had tumor and all he's worried about his things at home – “They going to take my things?” – so he died because the tumor got bigger and it was too late. So they don't listen to the medical group.

And you have only one primary clinic here and some of them don't like the small villages – “You never treat me right because you don't like me and you treat that one better.” So it's communication problem. It's not – you know, they help over there. They help a lot, but you have to communicate with them. And so they go to Anchorage and spend more money without the government helping them, so not listening. Not listening to – because they want it to be like long – it's “A long time ago, it used to be like this,” but it's not like that anymore, so they don't listen to regulations and laws and things like that. Yeah. It's the older ones that do that, you know. The younger ones are okay. But, oh, stubborn.

[Laughter]

Interviewer: So how can you tell that an elder is aging poorly?

Interviewee 1: Yeah. They need to go – well, they need to listen to the doctor to say if – if you need another specialist to see you, you must go see them, but they don't, so it's not listening to the medical. 'Cause, when you get old, you get all these medical problems. And they have everything – X-rays and mammograms, scanners, everything you can see – but, sometimes, when there's no communication, then if it's cancer and they miss their appointment, you know how cancer grows? It grows real fast, so there needs to be a better communication with the elders for the clinic, sometimes.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: So that's not all the time; it's sometimes. So it's communication. They need more communication. Yeah. They all speak English real good and they speak our own language, but they all are – they're not all illiterate. They can understand if you keep pulling on them.

[Laughter]

Interviewer: Right. So what does a person need to do to age well, do you think?

Interviewee 1: Keep busy. Get your education. Use it and choose – hi, **Onik**, sit back here. That's our great-grandson.

Interviewer: Hi.

Interviewee 1: And let's see. To age well. There's places that can help, like NVU helps and the church helps, and even the Baptists, if you need help with a repair in your house, you just have to give **him** your name way ahead of time, about six months ahead of time, and they have a group come up and they can fix your porch or your lighting or your windows. We had our windows fixed one time – that porch one out there – and the Baptists came and Jim said, “Oh, I am so happy you came,” so he helped to put it up. He said, “Well, I'm done with **Fran Bigman**'s window.” Jim said, “**Fran Bigman** lives down there.”

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: And we put that one in whenever it came by.

Female: Yeah. Oh.

Interviewee 1: So there's help even if you have no help from the kids.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. *[Side conversation]* So you can eat your doughnut and your milk. Are you hungry? **No?** Okay. Yeah, it's – sometimes, it's hard. If we didn't have our son helping us next door, we would be very helpless, so he helps us. He helps us all the time. He don't even let – drunk people come in here – comes over, and then they're mad at us a lot of time – “Why didn't you let us stay there?” *[Laughs]* Yeah. But Jimmy helps. He does his own thing over there; we just leave him alone. Just text him when we need help and he comes over. Yeah. Takes care of our dog and cat when we go for medical in Anchorage. Yeah.

But, without his help – and our daughter, she lives over there, but she's too busy sometimes 'cause she's raising **her** granddaughter. But we make it. I got him a wheelchair so we can go to Anchorage. I don't need that wheelchair, but, when we went to Anchorage, yeah, we need that wheelchair.

[Laughter]

Before he had his knee replacement, oh, that was – **trying to** – then he wouldn't get his knee replaced because he thought he's gonna be under for four hours, but doctor he saw said, “Well, I do it for 45 minutes,” so **went and** got it done.

Interviewer: Wow.

Female: Quick. Yeah.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Dr. **Cavanoff**.

Interviewee 2: Real quick. I said, “Do it.”

[Laughter]

Interviewee 1: Dr. Cavanoff.

Interviewee 2: It was bone-on-bone.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Oh.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. You couldn't even walk outside the door. Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Four days after the operation, I was walking with a walker and could walk quite a ways.

Interviewer: Nice.

Female: That's good.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. But it's you're 20 and you'll never get old, but it's there already, just like that. *[Laughs]* Yeah, when you're young, you think, “Oh, we will never age,” but it seems like, overnight, you just – you're there already. *[Chuckles]* Time – you see the babies grow. They grow real fast, so that means you age real fast.

Female: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Yep. So. We like this little house 'cause, when we go to our grandson's, we gotta go all the way down to the bathroom. **_Of course by then_**, it's too late, so –

[Laughter]

We like it here. Short ways. And kitchen is over here and refrigerator and freezer are near. **Go on the _Fourwheeler_** – sometimes, you go **in** post office **in a four-wheeler**.

[Laughter]

Female: Yeah.

Interviewer: Or I can't drive it now.

Interviewee 1: And everything is close to us. Neighbors need help, we help them. My cousin over there, he's very illiterate. Very, very – don't – you just about have to live with him to help him with his paperwork.
[Chuckles] He's a good one to interview.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: Well, he'll cuss you out at about 30 questions.

Interviewee 1: *[Laughs]* “You're just trying to cheat me.” *[Laughs]* He's just so frustrating, but I go help him with his bills. He's got seven life insurances. “What'd you got the seven life – ” he said, “I stopped this one. They owe me \$50,000.00.” I said, “They don't owe you nothing unless you die first and they will give it to your wife.”

[Laughter]

I couldn't explain it to him so I told Jim, “Go talk to Eliot. He's got seven life insurances and he thinks he can get paid.” Yeah.

Interviewee 2: I explained it to him. I said, “The only way you gonna get that money,” I said, “they're betting you're gonna live and you're betting you're gonna die.” I said, “When you die, they win. Then they'll give you the money – ” or, “You win. They'll give you the money. Not you, your wife.”

Female: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Said, “You gotta die first.” “How come?” I said, “You gotta die. It's whole life insurance.”

Interviewee 1: Yeah. Yep.

Interviewer: So do you think elders in your community are aging well?

Interviewee 1: Yeah. If they don't break their shoulder or their –

[Laughter]

It depends on how clumsy they are.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: She's not _____. _____.

Female: No. Mm-mmm.

Interviewee 1: Otherwise, you know, if they have a good nurse that gives 'em a shot every ten days, it's fine. *[Laughs]* I've seen elders that – you know, this community helps – they help –

Interviewee 2: They help us. They do.

Interviewee 1: – each other. So they might be far apart, doing their stuff, but, when a funeral comes or somebody needs help, like they run out of oil, they chip in. And we have a sewing circle here that's connected with Covenant Church, and we have an auction every year, after we make our things. We make anywhere from, _____ the years, \$12,000.00 to \$30,000.00 for the auction. These guys are crazy; they bid so high. Yeah.

And then they help the one-parent kids. They give 'em Christmas gift, and the elders. There's quite a few – 75 elders and 75 one-parent kids – so they get something at Christmastime. Or if they need help with – coffins are so expensive. They get the lumber from the store and donate it and then the sewing circle have the lining and the pillow for them and they have volunteers who make the coffins and the crosses, so they're real helpful here in the community. Yeah. You know, you got cell phones and phones and they communicate all the time.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. And if you need more fish, they bring you more fish. Sometimes, you don't want it; they bring it anyways.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: Yeah. The problem is you can't refuse it, though.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: _____ – *[laughs]*

Interviewer: Guess that's a good problem to have, though, huh? Too much fish.

[Crosstalk]

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Interviewer: So is it different to age today than it was 20 years ago?

Interviewee 1: I think you have more help than 20 years ago. Like cataract surgery's different than when my folks had it. They had to have those **marble** glasses, my mom and dad, and now they have it different. They put the lens in there **or they** – yeah.

Interviewee 2: About a 20-minute operation. Less.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. And medication is easier to get. My dad was like Eliot – he's the last – what do you call that? – the last Mohican that –

[Laughter]

They were related, yeah, those two. But my mom worked in the hospital, so she had – **I don't know** – she went up to the third grade, but she had more common sense. She had a lot of common sense. And she could see the future for all of us. Yeah.

Interviewer: So why do you think some others move away?

Interviewee 1: It seems like it's easier for – well, this town is so political. They could open up – you got corporation land way up to **Swerboski**. The city is political. NVU is political. If you build a house now on corporation land, it's for you only. You can't give it to your next person in your family. The house stays there and you die and then it goes back to the corporation. It's so political here, just absolutely. That's why it's, you know, it's hard to expand here in Unalakleet. People leave their houses and you can't do anything with them because it's theirs.

Interviewee 2: _____.

Interviewee 1: There's no city ordinance to remove it and have it sold or – it just stays with that person and that person dies, and then there it is. There's whole bunch of space down here over on **land part of it**. They won't give it up because of sentimental reasons. Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Their parents lived there.

Interviewee 1: And there's so many kids. You go to wherever – everybody's – they have so many kids. Where are they gonna go? _____.
Yeah.

Interviewee 2: They're staying with their parents and the parents get old enough, they take off and let the kids have the house 'cause there's no place for 'em to build.

Interviewee 1: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 2: There's one, two, three abandoned houses right here. I can see out the window.

Interviewee 1: And that's just –

Interviewee 2: And they've been sitting there for 30 years.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. It's just here.

Interviewee 2: There's nobody in 'em.

Interviewee 1: You can see the ones over there.

Interviewer: So how do you think aging is different here compared to a city like Anchorage?

Interviewee 1: Yeah, I'd rather age here than – it's so expensive, even to go in there, especially in the summertime. You know, the hotels are more expensive in the summertime, so I try to make ours in April and October, so we don't go during the summer, unless we have an accident. And they're so expensive. You can stay with your grandkids or kids, but we don't like to getting – you know, being involved with their life. And then, if they live in **Eagle river**, then you have to cab down to or ask for – I don't like to ask for a ride. I just take a cab. Or we don't like to drive. I can drive, but he won't drive, so he won't trust me driving in Anchorage.

[Laughter]

He say I go too fast.

[Laughter]

But I get there faster, right?

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: I'll tell you _____. We _____ together go up to the bible camp up there. You know where that is? Up past North River?

Female: _____ **been there once.**

Interviewee 2: And if we take off together, she'll be there ten minutes before me. But she don't drive fast.

Child: **Papa** drives **even** faster.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. Anyway, yeah, I would rather live here. It's less expensive, even if we have to go to Anchorage, even with the \$500.00. Sometimes, we get our mileage – we can go in for \$10.00. Yeah, so it's less expensive to stay here than in Anchorage. And if we were there and if we had a house, but it would be okay with no place to stay there.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: So do you have any advice for people in the community who want to age well?

Interviewee 1: Yeah. Be active. Listen to your doctor. If you don't like the medicine, flush it down the toilet.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk]

You don't have to tell the doctor.

Interviewee 2: That's her mother.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 1: So, yeah, be active and have a garden in the back. It's growing good. My son digs it and I mess with it and we go berry-picking and go up the mountains with the four-wheeler. Get stuck sometimes.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: **Springtime.**

Interviewee 1: Yeah. Go fishing. Just go – basketball. Watching **the kids** play basketball. Anything to keep out of the house and know what's going on in the community. That way, we know who's getting married, who's getting a divorce, who went on medevac. *[Laughs]* Some of the things are pretty – I don't know – so never think anybody would die, but, you know, they die, so things happen so fast. Accidents. Accidents happen. People are so busy, they – but, yeah, being active and eating well. Exercising. You don't have to exercise hard; just walk a little ways. And then it really helps even going upstairs and downstairs, and we did that with his leg and it makes a difference.

Interviewee 2: No therapists here.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. It's hard for – I don't know – to have appointment for it, _____ –

Interviewee 2: They don't do what they should do over at the clinic.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: I have to wait on everything.

Interviewee 1: But we go around it and it works. His medical and his medicine – we work with the Norton Sound, so that's the only place we can go, so either take me or I'm gonna – **no** –

[Laughter]

No, they take care of us. They take care of everybody. So just have to communicate with 'em.

Interviewee 2: Yeah. Yeah. _____ **helps** too.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. Active. Being active. *[Side conversation]* Going to see your great-grandson once in a while, huh? Yeah.

Child: _____.

Interviewee 1: Moving around. Doing stuff, even it's little – you get tired easier when you're old, so we make sure – “Oh, _____. Put the **phone down** _____. I'm gonna take a nap.” *[Laughs]* So naps are good. Yeah.

Interviewee 2: One things that's really changed from back in the '80s, '70s, '80s and stuff here, it wasn't unheard of to go visit somebody at 3:00 in the morning. Now there's not – they don't visit as much as they used to.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. Even down the street, _____.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Even me, _____ –

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: You have kids walking down the road **or** texting, and they're texting the one right next to 'em, walking. They don't know how to talk anymore.

Interviewee 1: Okay. Yeah. _____. Yeah. It's so different now, so a lot of vehicles. We used to walk all the time. Now you gotta just go on a boat and go. Yeah. We used to walk up the hill. Mm-hmm. Yeah. Anyway.

Interviewer: So how – oh, sorry. Go ahead.

Interviewee 1: Huh?

Interviewer: Go ahead. Sorry.

Interviewee 1: Oh, I forgot what I'm saying.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: That's one thing that happens too – you lose your train of thought.

Interviewee 1: [Laughs]

Interviewer: So how do you feel about sharing what you know with the youth?
What are your benefits _____ –

Interviewee 1: Get your education. And when you choose your courses, choose the stuff that you'd like to do all your life 'cause it's hard to get a job when you don't have the experience that, like if somebody took political science, there's no political science teaching here, and they wanna live here, so you have to go some other place. Choose your courses well. Make sure you get all of them 'cause sometimes the counselors get messed up on what you're taking; you have to make sure you're taking the course that you're on. And then find a job. You can't start – they like to start from the top now, so you have to start from the bottom and even if you're a clerk, you got your foot in the door. And then there's always an opening – somebody quits or somebody dies or some – you can put your name for that and maybe you'll get, maybe you won't, but always keep your communication with work openings, job openings, and then try for them. Sometimes you make it, sometimes you don't, but keep trying.

And then it's working all the time. You have to – you can't – it's better if you depend on yourself, rather than have your parents – it gets to be just like a round table. No more corners. You don't feel bad anymore when you ask money from your parents. It's no more conscience. So, pretty soon, you're 40 years old – it's too late. But it's good to get your education early, after high school. If you wanna take a year break, that's fine, but there's not only college. There's vocational. You can take vocational courses and finish, finish your education, so you can go to work and then you can help your parents, rather than helping you. Or, you know, if you fall in love, find somebody, sometimes it's the right person, sometimes it's the wrong one. [Laughs] But just keep sober. No overdoing. If you overdo anything, it's not good for you. Overeating, overdrinking, over-everything is – that's a **warning**, when you overdo your stuff, so.

That's about all I can think of. You gotta work.

[Laughter]

In my mind, work.

Interviewer: So, when you share that information with the youth, what do you think the benefits of that are of you sharing that information?

Interviewee 1: Oh, like when you retired, make sure you go into a company where there's a good retirement, good benefits, health benefits, 'cause

nowadays you need health benefits to help you with your health and your secondary health. And then it helps you later on with your Medicare, and lot of them on Medicaid, but Medicare helps you with like if you have a broken back or broken leg or anything. It helps curb the expense. And even if you pay little bit off from that, you know, it's not \$22,000.00. Gotta make sure that you're going into the right company. Yeah. It's good to work in the cannery for the summer, but, you know, it's not yearly job; it's a seasonal.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee 1: That's fine if they help along, even if you have commercial license to fish. It's just for a week or three, four days. It helps you with the income, but you need to have a steady job and work well with your supervisor. There's people all the time that you don't get along with. Some of the young people quit because they don't get along with that one. You don't have to quit because of that. Don't you know how to fight back? *[Laughs]*

So, yeah, it's taking care of your health too and believe in God and what you believe in, so everybody's different, **so** getting along with other people and helping. It's good to have friends too, if your folks are not there or your relatives are not there. Good to have friends. It seemed like sometimes they helped more than your own flesh and blood. Yeah. So some people just stay in one – they don't communicate and it's hard to get help when they need help, so it's good to have friends. Right, **_Onik_**?

Child: Some mean friends and some good friends.

Interviewee 1: Right. Yeah.

Interviewer: So it sounds like you have a lot of good **advice** there. Is there any challenges when you're trying to give this advice to the youth or...

Interviewee 1: Mm-hmm. I don't know. They seem to listen, but they're too busy. They gotta do something, so it goes in one ear and out the other, and they're on their way. But, later on, it might help them.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. **_Always_** say something. When you feel it's not right, say something to them, whether they like it or not. And then they'll open their mind later. Yeah. 'Cause they have their own troubles. They're trying to make – trying to go through, but stay away from drugs and alcohol. That's the most important because that really puts **you** way over there on left field.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Worst thing that ever happened to the United States – when we was growing up, it was a land of “we can”; now it's a land of “give me.”

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Everybody wants “Give me. Give me. Give me.” Not just **in village**. That's all over the United States, but it's _____ –

Interviewee 1: Probably in the world too.

Interviewee 2: – the last three generations **just** about. It's the “give me” generations.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 2: They think everything should be free. “He's making \$1,000.00. Give me \$300.00 and he can live on \$700.00 and I can live on that \$300.00.” That's exactly the way it's going.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 2: Well.

Interviewee 1: Yeah.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Anyway, that's – I don't know. We like being old.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: Yeah. And you gotta remember that what God giveth, God can take away.

Interviewee 1: If we think back, some people **like**, “Oh, wish I was 16 again.” No way.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: No way.

[Laughter]

No. Been there, done that. Don't wanna do it again.

Interviewee 1: I think one life is good enough.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Don't need to do it again. *[Laughs]* You can teach your 20-year-olds. *[Laughs]* Yeah.

Interviewer: So what motivates you to share these experiences with the youth, do you think?

Interviewee 1: Just so they can hear what an elder goes through and it's a short life. It just goes so fast. And there's opportunities you can take or not take, and there's lot of regrets that you wish you had done it better, but life goes on, so you have to keep going. I don't remind them – youth what we're going through because they _____, but at least hear what the elders say. Before TV and radios came on, people used to gather and talk, and the young ones used to listen and see what's going on, but now there's a different kind of communication. You can go Facebook or you can see them on the screen, but that's not same as _____. Yeah. Yeah. Time changes. They think it's getting better, but I think we're going to space. *[Laughs]* Yeah.

Interviewee 2: That invention was the worst invention they ever made – them cell phones. That one's 2010 and it's a smartphone. I say, “Hello,” “Goodbye.” That's it. No text. Nothing. They can leave a voicemail, but nothing else. And I don't know how to open a voicemail. She has to open it.

Interviewee 1: Not me.

[Laughter]

Not me. I got it. I _____.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewer: So what is the most important thing that you **want to** share with the youth?

Interviewee 1: Finish your education. Know what your courses and the type of job you wanna work with all your life. It's, **a lot of times**, you work at something you like or, if you don't like it, then you're not happy. So get an education. **You do** vocational college. And don't lose communication with your folks because they're the only one there. They're your only family. And make friends. Make friends that – choose your friends. Choose your friends very carefully. It really makes a difference when you go with the wrong friends, **you** go the wrong way, because they can be so convincing to go along with them. So make sure you choose your friends who are doing well with their – try to make their own living 'cause everybody **likes to** be responsible for their own **things**. And you lose respect for yourself when you no longer can help somebody. Yeah.

Interviewer: So do you feel the health care services in your community and region can help you age well?

Interviewee 1: If you communicate with them. Sometimes, they don't make the – like if you have a appointment to see the specialist in Nome or Anchorage, they don't make it right away. I don't know what their problem is at the reception, but they need a better reception. I know they got three of them over there, but I don't know. I don't know – we can't see what they do, why it taking so long to make that appointment. And I know they have other 15 communities they have to tend to, but the appointment shouldn't take that long, especially if you have cancer.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee 1: You know, sometimes they miss their appointment – there's no communication – so they need better communication with their front desk. And then – I don't know – we have two PAs here and they tried the doctors, but Nome don't like Unalakleet. They – Norton Sound. They have directors there. They choose what they want in the communities, but, if a person from Unalakleet can be on the board at Nome, it would make a difference, but – I don't know – Nome is – they're all political, but they – to have a better clinic over here or in each village, it's the front desk, front desk that needs to communicate with the – you have to see the health aide first or the PA before you go to the Nome hospital or the Anchorage hospital and sometimes to Seattle. But the front desk there is a block for our clinic. And we have a suggestion box over there, but – I don't know – I never use it. If I did, it would be terrible.

[Laughter]

You don't wanna hear what I would say.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: **I'll give you one** for instance, what happened in Unalakleet that I know about. One white guy had a heart attack. Medevac-ed to Nome. Nome hospital will not see white people. They had to re-take him into Anchorage, to Providence Hospital. So, there to there, nothing, and then for three – two-and-a-half hours at least wasted, just going up there and taking him into –

Interviewee 1: Oh, it depends on who you see over here. Yeah. They have their own decisions there. Even if you see the PA, they have their own – can't tell 'em what to do. You just gotta follow along. So, yeah. But it's the communicating with the front desk first and make sure you get the right – “Why am I hurting so hard in here? Why am I hurting?” So I don't know why you have to go Nome for some times, but he lucked out, going to see with his heart. They

Medevac-ed him to Anchorage, instead of going to Nome. Yeah. But it's the communicating over here. Again, communicating. Yeah.

I don't know. It's so – if you're not a relative, you don't get seen right away. If they don't like you as a friend, you're on the bottom of the list. So I won't say that to them, but that's the way I look at it. Yeah.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee 1: Yeah. So we must be on the middle part.

[Laughter]

Yeah.

Interviewer: So does your view of aging well and your own health affect whether you'd go see the doctor or not?

Interviewee 1: Me, I take over-the-counter vitamins. Him, he takes everything that has to fix him. His heart – he had a...

Interviewee 2: Stent.

Interviewee 1: A stent in '04. Then he has that rheumatoid arthritis. You can see his hands. He's gotta have medication for that. And then his – smoked a lot, so now he's gotta have a lung medication. I'm the one that's healthy; he's the one that needs help.

Interviewee 2: I'm older than she is. She's 20 years younger.

Interviewee 1: *[Laughs]* No, I'm three years younger than him.

[Laughter]

I tell _____ –

Interviewee 2: When she tells people she's 20 years younger, they believe her.

Interviewee 1: *[Laughs]* Yeah. Yeah. I don't have any problem. If I do, it's just for a short – like my gallbladder. I'm supposed to have it removed, but I'm not gonna because I like my **seal** _oil____.

[Laughter]

Interviewer: So is there anything about aging or being an elder that you wanna tell us that I haven't asked about yet?

Interviewee 1: Oh. Oh, gee. Have to go to the bathroom more often.

[Laughter]

Gotta be –

Interviewee 2: Yeah, you go past the bathroom and the door's open –

Interviewee 1: Yeah, you can't –

Interviewee 2: – **you** go in.

Interviewee 1: Invite you for dinner. “How long is it gonna be? Oh, that's good, but I gotta leave early,” you know?

[Laughter]

So, no, we're happy with our aging. Well, I am. I don't know; he'd like to be 20 years old. *[Laughs]*

Interviewee 2: Uh-uh.

Interviewee 1: He goes after the skirts, you know.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: Go after what?

Interviewee 1: He goes after the nurses with skirts.

[Laughter]

He forgets he's old. Yeah. But, too bad, he gotta come home to me.

[Laughter]

I need his money.

[Laughter]

Interviewee 2: **She looks** _____. She said, “Daddy, you got paid today.”

[Laughter]

Like, “Oh, yeah. You can have it. I ain't gonna get it anyhow. I ain't gonna get on that computer. Uh-uh.”

Interviewee 1: Yeah. We do well. Just have some kid come bug us once in a while. He just moved from North Dakota. Right? You moved from North Dakota. With his dad. And his dad is our oldest grandson. And he's our – not the oldest great-grandson, huh? **Roan** is older than you?

Child: I'm **much** younger.

Interviewee 1: Roan is eight and you're seven. Okay.

Child: I wish you never make that up.

Interviewer: So do you have any questions for us?

Interviewee 1: No.

Interviewer: No? All right. Did we have any more questions?

Male: No. Thank you. Appreciate it.

Interviewer: Thank you.

Interviewee 1: Okay. I didn't know we're gonna have three parties. She called and – two people called.

Female: Give you one as well.

Interviewee 2: Wow.

Female: _____.

Interviewee 2: Thank you.

Interviewee 1: Oh, boy. It's our favorite cracker. [Laughs]

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Woops.

Female: Okay, this is just a “thank you” card for Amazon.

Interviewee 2: Wow _____ –

[End of Audio]