

1 GVP52, Maria Hamilton

2 D: Tell me a little bit about yourself.

3 M: I'm Maria Hamilton. I'm the mother of Dontre Hamilton. My son was thirty-one years old
4 and Dontre was murdered at Red Arrow Park, April 30th, 2014. It was broad daylight. There
5 were over a hundred witnesses to the actual shooting. The Michael Bell Law had just passed
6 seven days prior to Dontre being killed. And the governor had signed onto it. The Milwaukee
7 Police Department detectives did all the interviews, the investigation and we were told once the
8 DNC got there, they actually took over that point. But eighty percent of the case and all the
9 interviews were done by the Milwaukee Police Department when there should've been two
10 outside agencies that wasn't affiliated with the police department, to do the investigation.

11 D: And they didn't.

12 M: It didn't happen. And the two officers that was over the DNC investigation were actually
13 retired Milwaukee police officers. And one was receiving a pension of thirty-five hundred dollars
14 a month and the other one was receiving forty-five hundred dollars a month. There were many
15 other investigators at the DNC that could have stepped in and took this over or have them to apt
16 themselves out. But that did not happen. The video footage from Starbucks was rendered to the
17 Milwaukee Police Department and that video never surfaced as well.

18 D: To date?

19 M: To date. I have yet to receive my son's case from my attorney who is a litigator who is
20 working with the police department and the DA's office and the city attorney and also
21 prosecutor's office. So, that's why I'm actually fighting right now, to have that change where we
22 can actually have attorneys come in state to represent us. That's not affiliated with the group of
23 people that was involved in a cover up of my son's death.

24 D: We can't do that?

25 M: As of now, for the last eighty years, you have to be a licensed attorney to represent a client
26 that resides in Milwaukee.

27 D: Oh, well as long as they have, their license is in Wisconsin then?

28 M: Yes.

29 D: Okay.

30 M: Yes. But we can't get many attorneys to actually take the cases when the police are involved.
31 So, I actually went and got my attorneys from California. But they had to vet attorneys here. So,
32 we would have attorney that was actually on the case. Christopher Manning was fired. That was
33 the penalty. I don't know why he tried to get his job back. So, that was another, I want to say five
34 to six months of trauma for me. To actually sit through hearing after hearing and have this man
35 try to get his job back. The fire, police commissioner upheld the hiring, I mean, the firing of
36 Christopher Manning so he cannot work for the Milwaukee Police Department, but he can work
37 at any other police department in the United States.

38 D: How is that?

39 M: That's why we have a lot of these repeat shootings because when they're fired from the
40 location where they work at, the police union bylaws are in place to actually prevent them from
41 not being fired from any other, working at any other location. So, that's why we have repeat
42 police officers killing people and just going other police departments. Killing people.

43 (pause)

44 D: So, it's not on his record, what he did to Dontre?

45 M: Well, his record has been sealed. His record has been sealed because he claimed that he
46 acquired debilitating PTSD, so, that put it into a medical record's file.

47 G: Got you.

48 M: And that's how they do it now. But since Dontre's death, and this case specifically, changed
49 the way that their care after the issue then, whether it's say, any, I want to say, sense of force in
50 the police department, when they're put off from work or when they filed for disability, it all
51 goes through another process where the county picks the doctors, the police associates. You can't
52 pick the doctor's that these people actually go to anymore. And then they rotate them because
53 once they start getting their disability, every four to five months, they have to be reevaluated and
54 rechecked and go through reassessment.

55 D: Okay, a reassessment.

56 M: Okay, they have to be reassessed and then the doctor that did them before wouldn't be the
57 doctor that actually does them at the next reassessment. So, that was put in place because of
58 Dontre's case.

59 D: That's good.

60 M: We're also working on the, trying to change the way the, the fire/police and commissioner's
61 board do reviews for police officer's when there is a, abuse or any kind of reprimand for them.
62 Right now, it goes to the Chief of Police and then it goes to their little process on the inside. And
63 then they determine whether or not the police are going to re-reprimand whatever for whatever
64 reason, whether it's rape or whatever it is.

65 D: Right.

66 M: It's messed up. They have the final say. As to if there's going to be some disciplinary action
67 done. We're trying to change that. Where that actually will go to the fire/police commission and
68 the police and the fire chief are left out of it. Because it's bias.

69 D: Right.

70 M: We're working on actually trying to get some other complaints against the police. (inaudible)

71 They have a backlog.

72 D: I saw that.

73 M: Yes, from, I think it's dated back to 2006. And the mayor is saying they can't get to it. Well,

74 what are these police officer's doing in the meantime.

75 D: Right. Right.

76 M: (pause) If Christopher Manning had been dealt with, and I'm going to say "dealt with"

77 because he had seventeen complaints against him.

78 D: Prior to Dontre?

79 M: Prior to Dontre. And one of them was, he had broken a woman's arm in her house, cussing,

80 swearing at people, one was a sexual assault a year before Dontre died, he beat up the clown on

81 his street in front of, there's a video on YouTube of that, of him beating up the clown outside—

82 D: (inaudible) media.

83 M: No. No. Because the media is behind it too.

84 D: Oh my God.

85 M: Yes, seventeen.

86 D: Oh my God.

87 M: Yep. Misuse reports. That's why he was eight years walking the beat downtown cause no,

88 nobody else wanted to partner with him in the car, squad car. So, they put him on the street. And

89 he had only been on the force thirteen years.

90 D: Oh my God.

91 M: He had PTSD when he came out of National Guard, he never should've been hired.

92 D: Don't, I thought they did some sort of psychological testing?

93 M: Nope. Nope. When Dontre died, they don't have a psychiatrist or anything. They, they don't,
94 you would think since they occupied spaces in our community with the high crime, that every
95 five to six months, they would rotate them in and out of the different areas. But they don't. And
96 there's no mental evaluation after they shoot somebody, or they do abuse or something.

97 D: Before you dip into the police department, do you know what the requirements are? Meaning,
98 is there some sort of psychological testing or test or?

99 M: There is a test that they have to take, but I was told that if you score over 85, you can't be a
100 police officer.

101 D: You can't?

102 M: You cannot.

103 D: Okay. (pause) I wonder how he got passed.

104 M: Because he probably scored under. (pause)

105 D: Oh my God. Oh, what is your age?

106 M: I am 59 years young.

107 D: And your race?

108 M: I am a Black mother.

109 D: And your gender, well you said your gender already.

110 M: Female.

111 D: You said female.

112 M: [Indicates yes].

113 D: What neighborhood and area of Milwaukee do you live?

114 M: During the time of Dontre's death and up until March of this year, I lived on the East Side. In
115 the Riverwest area.

116 D: Okay. And how long did you live there?

117 M: I lived there for five years.

118 D: And can you tell us what happened?

119 M: Dontre in 2013 was diagnosed with a, schizophrenic. It took maybe a month or so for them to
120 actually get the right medication where he could actually focus, function on his own. In his own
121 apartment and still work, and drive, and take care of his daily needs. He was going to the
122 Outreach clinic on East Capitol to get his monthly shot.

123 D: Okay, I know where that is.

124 M: For, yeah. And he went in March and they told him that they didn't have his medication. And
125 he didn't have state insurance anymore. So, I ripped and ran the whole month backwards and
126 forth from behavioral health to outreach, behavioral health. Because if you go to behavioral
127 health, it gets your medication, you must not have insurance. So, they wouldn't give him the
128 medication at Behavioral Health. They kept directing us, we're calling backwards and forth, now
129 when we call, "Oh yeah, everything's in the system." She looked it up at behavioral health, his
130 Medicaid and everything was in the system so, she personally called over there and was like, "I
131 don't understand why y'all would tell him that." And the medication had been out of the system
132 at that point, two months. So, he had started hallucinating again and hearing the voices so, the
133 Monday before April 30th, I seen him. His eyes looked kind of glassy. He, he wasn't himself. He
134 was really quiet and kind of subdued. So, I called behavioral health and had the task team to go
135 out to his home. And they called me when they were leaving and said that, "Yeah, his eyes did

136 look kind of glassy. But he promised me that he had a doctor's appointment coming up and that
137 he would go to his doctor's appointment." Well, his doctor's appointment was May 7th because I
138 set it. They had to, he had to go all the way through the process again that he went through when
139 he was reassessed at behavioral health when we actually signed papers to have him stay there to
140 get evaluated. So, they left the house, it was happening (inaudible).

141 D: Oh my God.

142 M: So, they left the house and didn't take him to behavioral health. So, later on that evening his
143 roommate got there. Dontre started hearing the voices and the voices were telling him that they
144 were lying to hurt him and steal his money. So, he left and went to Nate's house. By this time,
145 it's eight or nine o'clock, Nate had left to go to leave for the night. And Dontre called me from
146 Nate's house and was like, "They in there because all their cars are here." I'm like, "No, Dontre.
147 His car isn't there." And Daniel's car isn't there. He was like, "Mom, they're in there." I was
148 like--

149 D: So, he sees things too?

150 M: Yep.

151 D: Okay.

152 M: So, I tell him, "No, nobody's there. So, I wanted him to eat and get some rest. So, I was like,
153 "Okay Dontre, do me a favor." I asked him if he had money on him. He was like, "Yeah. My
154 money was in (inaudible)." So, I said, "Well, go downtown and get you a room." And we'll deal
155 with all of this when I get off of work." Because I was working 5 to 11, 5AM in the morning to
156 11 at the Wisconsin District Center, so I would've been downtown anyway. So, I told him,
157 "When I get off of work, I'll just meet up with you and we'll take care of the electrical problem."
158 Because the light, his light switches or something in his, in his bedroom wasn't working. So, he

159 couldn't watch no TV or nothing. So, that really triggers a lot of the paranoia. So, I talked to him
160 until he got downtown and when he got to 3rd and Wisconsin, he said, I told him and I said, "It's
161 a," aw dang. What is that restaurant, a breakfast restaurant?

162 D: Right by those little apartments?

163 M: No, it's actually right past the blue building. Dang, what is it? It's, it's a known restaurant.

164 But I told him to get him something to eat and he did. And when he ordered his food, his phone
165 went dead.

166 D: That building is approximately where on Wisconsin? Just approximately.

167 M: Well, no, it's actually on 3rd street, it's two blocks off.

168 D: 3rd and Wisconsin?

169 M: Dang what is that, what is the name of it?

170 D: George Webb?

171 M: George Webb.

172 D: Okay.

173 M: Yeah. So, he, he went to eat at George Webb and his phone went dead. So, he got his food
174 and when he got to the Hampton Inn and got in his room everything, he called me. And I was
175 like, "Okay, well, I'm going to have Nate come and get you in the morning. And then we're
176 going to go and take care of all of this." So, he called me. I kept calling and once my phone, once
177 his phone, he, I told him to plug his phone up and I couldn't get no answers. So, I called up until
178 like, I got off of work. And Nate said, "Well, I'm getting ready to go and get him." And then
179 Dontre called me and was like, "Mom, if I leave this hotel room, somebody going to kill me." I
180 was like, "Dontre, ain't nobody going to kill you." He was like, "Yeah. I know that I'm going to
181 die." And I was like, "I'm not trying to hear that." I said, "I'm going to have Nate come and get

182 you,” and Nate called me, I dozed off and went to sleep and I actually seen his funeral. (pause)
183 And when I woke up, I called Nate and I was like, “What happened? Y’all didn’t call me, didn’t
184 come and get me?” He was like, “I can’t find Dontre. They say he checked out this room.” And I
185 said, “Okay, well, I’m going to keep calling.” Nate kept calling. Damien kept calling. And I left
186 home to get (inaudible). I called behavioral health and I talked with James at behavioral health
187 and non-emergency. He said, “Well, (inaudible) if you can get him out here before, before I
188 leave, I’ll make sure that I manage or have them to manage the medication.” By this time, it’s
189 like, 3:20 something. It was during this time Dontre was being killed.

190 D: Oh my God.

191 M: Because when I got his personal belongings, I left a message telling him, “Hey, I hadn’t
192 heard from him since yesterday. I need to get in contact with him, please give me a call back.”
193 And it’s as in documentary now. We edited it into the documentary. They knew that Dontre
194 wasn’t homeless at the park, his keys and his rent receipt, what he had paid his rent for the month
195 of May was in his wallet.

196 D: And is that part of police procedures to check your belongings before they—

197 M: Identify you. Well, when they contacted me at twelve o’clock midnight, they told me they
198 didn’t have no contact. They couldn’t ID him. But Dontre got his name tattooed on his arm, his
199 license was in his purse, I mean was in his wallet. They knew exactly who it was. They actually
200 went to all the what you call the house? The guesthouse and all the shelters to see if he had a bed
201 in any of the shelters. And they had his house keys. They knew who his landlord was. They had
202 already went to the property and all of that before they had contacted me. Dontre laid down there
203 until DNC got there. So, DNC didn’t get there until after eight o’clock. My baby laid down there

204 for four-and-a-half hours, on that ground. That's why, where his head was, you can actually go
205 right now and see the dark place where the blood soaked into the concrete.

206 D: Oh my God.

207 M: So, Red Arrow Park is, is ground zero for me.

208 D: I know that's right.

209 M: And that's where I go and spend time with him. That's where I go and pray and meditate.

210 Right there. Because his presence is there. His presence isn't in that, it, that's just a shell at the
211 cemetery.

212 D: Oh yeah, I know. I understand. You know, you mentioned about his schizophrenia. What is it
213 that the community should know in reference to people who have schizophrenia because you told
214 me he sees things, too. So?

215 M: You can't approach or touch.

216 D: Okay.

217 M: During, during the time where Dontre had his episode, he hallucinated about other people or
218 his family members been harmed.

219 D: Okay.

220 M: So, he used to always call me, like, "Ma, you okay?" "Yeah, I'm okay Dontre. I just talked to
221 you like, half an hour ago." And he's like, "Well, just checking on you. You need me to come
222 over there?" I was like, "No, I don't need you to come over." And he used to do his brothers.

223 His, his cousins. His aunties. Everybody like that.

224 D: Oh, wow.

225 M: And that was a part of his illness, thinking that somebody was being harmed. He worked with
226 Nate. Nate has a home improvement business. So, they do roofing. And he had an episode, he

227 was in crisis and he was actually helping Nate doing the roofing. And took some bundles up and
228 he was like, “Aw, that Nate is being downstairs being beaten.” So, he, he wasn’t violent or
229 wanted to fight or anything like that, he wanted to protect others.

230 D: He was overprotective.

231 M: Yeah.

232 D: I’m curious. When you said that the lady downstairs was being beaten, was he correct?

233 M: No.

234 D: Okay.

235 M: No.

236 D: Oh wow. Okay.

237 M: No, but it was real to him.

238 D: Okay.

239 M: He, he actually and, and I think Chief Flynn actually spoke on it briefly at his press
240 conference the next morning talking about he didn’t want to demonize him and that the family
241 didn’t want to be bothered with him. All lies. Said that he was a robber, he had had, had, had
242 conflicts with the police off and on because his schizophrenia. And they only found out he was
243 schizophrenic when they interviewed me for 45 minutes in car with a recording, not telling me
244 that I was being interviewed.

245 D: Who interviewed you?

246 M: Three detectives in a car outside my house at 12:30. And they wouldn’t let my son get in the
247 car or nothing. And then after I told them, Nate has his own business, Dontre was just diagnosed
248 so he worked part-time with his brother and for some temp agencies. Damien worked for Sprint
249 at the time that he had died. And I was like, we’re really close.

250 D: Right.

251 M: And I'm surprised I haven't heard from my son today. And when I said that, the detective
252 that was sitting on that side put his head down and I asked him, what, what's going on? "Well,
253 there was an altercation at Red Arrow Park between an officer and—"

254 D: That's when they knew they messed up.

255 M: "—and Dontre. And he's deceased." I said, "Well, take me to my child." "Well, I can't
256 because they're doing autopsy and then there has to be a state autopsy." They held my son, that
257 was April 30th. His body was released to us on the following Wednesday, which was the 6th of
258 May. And they had left his body out at the coroner's office. So, I had to, the funeral people who
259 was a young man that went to school with Dontre told us that, "You have to do his funeral as
260 soon as possible if you want to have open casket." And I'm like, "What are you talking about?"
261 And he was like, "Well, they didn't put him in a cooler."

262 D: They didn't?

263 M: No.

264 D: So, it was like they were trying to destroy evidence.

265 M: Because Dontre had been beaten with that stick. Prior to being shot. Dontre had eight bruises
266 and lacerations over the upper part of his body, from Christopher Manning hitting him with that
267 stick before Dontre was actually able to turn and get it from him. And then they wiped the stick
268 clean. So, how is it Christopher Manning, it was his stick for 13 years, his DNA wasn't nowhere
269 on it. Only Dontre's DNA was on the handle. (pause) Because they wiped it clean and put his
270 hand on it, you know. Had his hand, pressed his hand down on it.

271 D: That's so, a shame. Oh my God.

272 M: But girl, there's no limitations on murder. And one of them police officer's going to have a
273 heart or be on his death bed or something and eventually, we'll get the video because it, it was on
274 video. Starbucks had a video.

275 D: But you said that they, they won't—

276 M: Starbucks had a video. The, they released it to the police.

277 D: Right.

278 M: The, the federal building on this side, there were cameras. There're cameras, six cameras
279 over at the art. And then, there was a camera, catty-corner at the park. But the Starbucks video,
280 police took it.

281 D: But they didn't mess with those other cameras?

282 M: Nope. Well, they didn't, they tried to say that the only camera that viewed the park was the
283 one from the hotel and it was on a timer.

284 D: So, that means what?

285 M: That it didn't show the incident. It showed after the incident, when the police start coming up
286 to the park, that part was there. But the incident, no footage. They cut it out. They took it.

287 D: Oh my God. (pause)

288 M: So, after, after they interviewed me and I didn't get to see my son until May, the 9th. Which
289 was my birthday. Because if I'd have waited until Monday I would've had to have a closed
290 casket and I wasn't going to do that. So, I did it. But then, well, the, I think there was like 18
291 hours or something that he had to cover his body. So, I told them to go ahead, do it. Just get it
292 over with.

293 D: Were you able to, your attorney able to have another autopsy?

294 M: Yes.

295 D: Great.

296 M: Yeah. We did have another autopsy. Dontre, he had 21 bullet holes in his body from the
297 fifteen gunshot wounds. The, seven of them exited as well. Six of his organs had piercings from
298 the bullets that entered, his thumb, right thumb was cut off, so.

299 D: From the bullet?

300 M: Yeah. And that bullet lodged in his neck and Christopher Manning stood over him and shot
301 him point blank in the back of his neck. Dang, I lost my train of thought.

302 D: I asked you about the autopsy and you were explaining (inaudible)

303 M: Yep.

304 D: Able to also mention the bruising?

305 M: Yes, well, what we actually got a copy of, our autopsy, and we went to City Hall in front of
306 the mayor's office and Nate and them did a demonstration because seven of the bullets that had
307 pierced his main organs were downwards.

308 D: And he was laying down.

309 M: Yeah. He was on the ground when he was actually shot. That last seven shots.

310 D: Oh my God. (pause)

311 M: He would've been, Dontre would've had some brain swelling had Christopher Manning not
312 been able to pull his gun out from the beating he got from the billy stick.

313 D: So, that means he was on the ground then too?

314 M: Yep.

315 D: I heard that he was sleeping.

316 M: Well, he wasn't. You know how, how if you're, even if you're on your bed. And you're
317 sitting up in your bed. You got one leg straight and you may prop this knee up. So, he was
318 actually up against that statue like this, with his head back. Looking up.

319 D: And that statue was in Red Arrow Park?

320 M: Red Arrow Park.

321 D: Okay.

322 M: Right in the center. And he had a little blanket, little throw blanket there. And when
323 Christopher Manning walked up, he was laying, he was laying like that. And when Christopher
324 Manning walked up from behind him and poked him, that's when he sat up. And like, "What are
325 you doing?" Because the police had already been there twice.

326 D: Right.

327 M: And they knew he was waiting on his son. But the other officers actually said at the hearing,
328 they thought he was a student from MSOE and what he told them, "Hey, I'm just relaxing in the
329 park. I'm waiting on my brother to get out from work. He's staying on 24th place. It doesn't
330 make sense for me to go home," because he stayed off of 20th and Center. So, he called Nate.
331 And Nate say, "Hey man, I be home in 15 minutes." And he didn't get a chance to leave the
332 park.

333 D: Oh my God.

334 M: Because Christopher Manning came.

335 D: (pause) Do you think that this incident could've been prevented?

336 M: The only way this incident could've been prevented, if Christopher Manning didn't come to
337 work that day. (pause)

338 D: And I just want to make sure that we have Dontre's age, race—

339 M: Dontre.

340 D: I mean, Dontre. Age, race, and gender.

341 M: Okay, Dontre Deann Hamilton was born January 20th, 1983. He was 31 years old at the time
342 of death. He's a male. (pause)

343 D: And we, we know the perpetrator was caught. De was fired, right?

344 M: Christopher Manning, ex-police of Milwaukee Police Department. Christopher Manning was
345 fired six months after the shooting.

346 D: Wow. How did this affect your family?

347 M: It was, it was really kind of rough. Because me and my sons, my three sons and their dad,
348 even though we were divorced, was very close. And all of us was affected differently. I felt as
349 though, Dontre is my baby first of all. I felt as though he was torn from my womb when this
350 killing happened. With Nate, Nate felt guilty because he didn't tell him, "Okay, I'll come and get
351 you." So, he wakes up every morning to save a, a child's life or to help or to do something in the
352 community. He wakes up every morning going to get his brother, because he didn't go and get
353 him April 30th. My oldest son is married and has teenage daughters and he works for the
354 government, so he had a hole for life. He wished as though he had spent more time and got to
355 know and understand the mental illness that Dontre was actually going through. We all have did
356 soul-searching and it has changed who we are individually, as human beings. And because
357 Dontre, Dontre's human being part of him was stolen. (pause) So, he lived, his spirit lives
358 through the work that we do in this city and cities across this nation. When I go and speak, I
359 always say that, "Dontre, the human being him, was planted in me. And now he's planted as a
360 seed in the Earth as he go and sit beside his father in heaven, for us to do this work. And this

361 work isn't, it's a movement." It's not the civil rights fight. It's not slavery as we were taught by
362 peoples, but this is a systemic slavery that's embedded into the very fabric of the United States.

363 D: Since the death of Dontre, you've started a movement. A group. Tell us about that.

364 M: Mothers for Justice is a, Mothers for Justice United is an organization where we provide
365 peer-specialists work for women of color who are losing their loved ones to trauma, to police
366 violence, to the systemic shadows that, that lingers over our communities with this crime and the
367 gun violence. I had a preservation one day about being a black woman and having enough
368 money to have a ship to bring millions and trillions of guns and rifles over here. And I could
369 never be her. So, our government designed all the, all of this activity that's going on in our
370 communities when they took they jobs out our communities, when they, when they stop putting
371 federal funding into our schools, when they started paying our pastors in these churches federally
372 to not deal with hurt people in this community, our transportation to back and forth to jobs. What
373 social justice need is a link in the chains for the design to keep us embedded in property. So, it's
374 all a cycle. But how, I got woke when y'all took my child and felt as though I didn't deserve as a
375 human being to know where my baby was, what happened to him, and why it happened to him.

376 D: Hmm.

377 M: So, y'all don't give me answers, y'all done pissed me off. Because as a human being I
378 deserve to know those three things.

379 D: Yep.

380 M: And to this day, I still don't know why that happened to Dontre at Red Arrow Park other than
381 he was racially profiled by a manager at, at Starbucks. And they covered it up. And they wanted
382 to go away. And they wanted me to be silenced. And it backfired.

383 D: Does the manager at Starbucks still work there?

384 M: She worked for Starbucks, but they moved her after a group of kids from a high school did a
385 video to memorialize Dontre in the park. She called the police on them. And we started
386 protesting in Starbucks all over the Milwaukee area. And the CEO flew down here in his jet to
387 try to stop us from doing it. You know. And, and want to throw up a Starbucks in a black area
388 where black people can't buy coffee, because they can't afford it. But you want us to help you to
389 design it, you're a lie. It ain't going to happen.

390 D: Right.

391 M: So, that didn't happen. So, we were actually threatened by their attorneys to stop slandering
392 and stop protesting and they were Starbucks, so they were going to bring charges against us.

393 D: Against your group?

394 M: My family.

395 D: Oh. You can't control protesters.

396 M: Nope. I have a fourth amendment right.

397 D: That's right. So, you—

398 M: But they did threaten us, though.

399 D: Did the protest still happen? It did?

400 M: Yes, it continued. So, they did move her out to Greenfield, where we wasn't protesting, but
401 we found out where she was working at.

402 D: What do you think we can do to lower gun violence, in your case, it's a different gun
403 violence.

404 M: It, no, it's, it, it's not a different gun violence because Christopher Manning was a human
405 being that made a choice to pick a career where he could use his bad decisions to hurt people.

406 D: His was abuse of authority, too.

407 M: Yes. Yes. So, for me, we're actually doing a march Saturday where we're calling on the
408 mothers of victims to gun violence, police brutality, and custody deaths, so, and moms who don't
409 have a child who has been victimized, to come out. If you have a gun, if you holder, hey, second
410 amendment. I'm all for it.

411 D: Right.

412 M: Okay. To protect yourself and protect your family. Put safety measures in your house, if
413 you're going to have a gun, so you're five-year-old child don't get the gun. We're giving away
414 gun locks, okay. For, for those criminals out there, hey, you got a mama too and you may be
415 somebody's child. So, we want you to, to look at your children when you leave this march and
416 tell them, "I love you. And I'm willing to stop doing what I'm doing for your life." Because
417 while you out here, weeping havoc, it could be somebody else weeping havoc around your kids.
418 (pause) So, we're going, we're asking you, we're demanding you. Now, if you need any kind of
419 services, we got services. We, we got, we got programs where we can get you trained in anything
420 you want. If you need mental health, I'll go and sit with you at behavioral health. They're still
421 open.

422 D: Right.

423 M: For business. We, we have to meet people where they are.

424 D: That's true.

425 M: So, that's why the moms are taking to the street. We're taking them over so we can have a
426 conversation and tell you, "Baby, I care about you. Maybe nobody never said that to you. I'm
427 here today to tell you that I love you and your life means something to me."

428 D: What would you say to our elected officials?

429 M: You've been in your position too long. We need for you to give up your seat to somebody
430 that wants better in our community.

431 D: Hmm. (pause)

432 M: It ain't work. Whatever y'all was or used to doing, it's not working for this community. So,
433 thank you for your service and goodbye.

434 D: Amen. And is there anything else you'd like to share? Because you have more than one
435 organization.

436 M: Yes, I have a national organization that I'm going to be traveling actually, around the
437 country. There are thousands of mother organizations and we're actually going to do peer-
438 specialist training and get people certified and licensed to actually help the people in their
439 community so they won't have to go to the suburbs and take their taxpayer dollars out of their
440 own communities. We're going to build off of my organization to network with other
441 organization because I do want the united that's in my name, of my organization. So, we're
442 going to join one way or another and hopefully, we can touch and network with enough
443 organization where we are that link from Hawaii to Texas. We, we want to go across the nation,
444 just letting people know that we are a country of love and it was built on blood and love. And we
445 want that back in this country, regardless of your color. I also want to say because I know this
446 will probably reach a lot of people, that I've never been anti-cop or pro-cop. Okay. Even though
447 a man in a cop uniform killed my son.

448 D: Right.

449 M: It wasn't his career that killed my son, it was the system that governed his career.

450 D: Right.

451 M: That killed my child. (pause)

452 D: And is that it?

453 M: Oh, there's more to come. (laughter)

454 D: Thank you.

455 M: You're so very welcome.

456 PART TWO: 5:03

457 D: Explain to me what is the peer counseling?

458 M: Peer-specialist counseling.

459 D: Oh, it's peer-specialist counseling, I'm sorry.

460 M: Yeah, peer-specialist is, peer-specialist counseling is a hope line for someone who has dealt

461 with trauma, drug abuse, alcoholism, or whatever their addiction was. We talk with that

462 individual and we allow that person, through their hope and that journey, to decide how they're

463 going to heal. And they make all the choices and the decisions as to how that recovery is going to

464 look, we are only support. And we provide services to them to get them to that point. They make

465 goals, short-term, long-time goals. Then we take them out of the situation that they're in now.

466 When they want to be in a dark place or hide from people, we get them involved in social, social

467 justice outings. We go out with them. We have dates with them, as well, to get them back out

468 into society. And then we ask them to choose something that they have a passion for. And we

469 take that passion and healing and our stories, me telling like I just told you my story, it's a form

470 of healing. You have to, you have to be selective to the degree of storytelling that you tell

471 somebody when they are going through this process. But most peer-specialists, I want to say all

472 the peer-specialists that I've ever meant were here at some point. And they had some kind of

473 addiction or trauma in their life, whether it be sex abuse or as a child, or whatever the trauma

474 was, they've been traumatized. They've been traumatized. You can't be a peer if you ain't had
475 no trauma in your life.

476 D: Okay, got you. Do we, do we have an example or are we actively doing it, are you guys
477 actively doing it now?

478 M: Yes, we are actively doing it. I just completed eight weeks, eight-week training. A
479 certification as a peer. I'm taking my state test September, the 25th. And then I'll be training to
480 do facilitating and what facilitating will be, a group where I can actually pair, do, facilitate where
481 I can actually have maybe fourteen, fifteen moms take this training. So, they can get certified and
482 do get their statewide test. I'm in the process of working with Sabrina Fullton who was running
483 for Commissioner in Miami Day. So, I'm actually going to Miami and I'm going to train her. So,
484 she can actually facilitate this model that we have here. In Miami. And I'll most likely, once I
485 get, I have two moms that I'm peer, that I'm doing peer-specialist with. One of them is Dede
486 Lodge and (inaudible) Anderson. So, they're actually going through the process of doing the
487 certification for peer-specialist because I can't do it all myself.

488 D: Right.

489 M: But I want people to have access to peers.

490 D: Right, everyone, someone who has a heart for that work.

491 M: And then, there's so many, I found out, since my network with peer-specialist and mental
492 health, and I'm on the task force, I work with Mental Health of America, they all have CPS
493 training. So, even if they can't get into my training group, the county is actually paying for them
494 to be able to, all you have to do is apply. And they normally pick anywhere from nineteen to
495 twenty people out a group of fifty. And they do the training three times a year.

496 D: Okay, great.

497 M: Yep.

498 D: Okay. So—

499 M: And there's a need for them.

500 D: They, there is. And I just met a woman who, I'll, I'll take that off.

501 M: Right.

502 D: I'll, I'll tell you that after yours.

503 M: Right, right, right.

504 D: Thank you.

505 M: You're so very welcome.

506 D: That was good.

507 PART THREE: 1:41

508 M: Just death.

509 D: Say that again, what you just said. (laughter)

510 M: Okay, okay. There are three unarmed black males being killed across the United States every

511 three minutes and that's not including the people that they shoot that do not die.

512 D: Hmm.

513 M: That do not include in custody deaths. (pause)

514 D: That's scary. That's enough to make me cry.

515 M: It is. And the statistics are on my Facebook, on my Mothers for Justice page if you want to

516 look it up.

517 D: And tell us what that means.

518 M: It's a database that the UK's had decided to do after Dontre was murdered and I did the
519 million moms march. Because our federal, our state, and our local government do not have data
520 for police-involved shootings.

521 D: Wow.

522 M: Accurate.

523 D: So, what, what is your website or the link to that?

524 M: The link to, to, to get this information is on my Mother for Justice United Facebook page and
525 it's also posted on my website, which is MothersforJustice.org.

526 D: Thank you.

527 M: You're welcome.

528 D: You going to say something else, so I cut off you.

529 M: Nah, I'm done. (laughter) Girl please, I can sit here and spill it. I can—

530 PART FOUR: 0:25

531 M: Man, that's being killed by police.

532 D: (inaudible)

533 M: Every three minutes, there's an unarmed black man being killed public service of the police
534 department.

535 D: Hmm. (pause) That makes you want to cry.