

Community Archives Initiative
LaPortia Mosley, GHS Community Engagement Officer

Georgia Southern University
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Kay Coates • Oral History Transcript • Fall 2026

Unknown Speaker 00:06

So this is an oral history interview being conducted by Henry Bryant and Katie Billard. We are interviewing Miss Kate Coates on September 10²⁰, 26, and let's begin. Would you mind stating your full name,

Unknown Speaker 00:22

Kay Coates

Unknown Speaker 00:24

Okay. Do I have permission to record this interview?

Unknown Speaker 00:27

Of course.

Unknown Speaker 00:28

Okay. And do I have permission to take photos or scan your and or scan your primary source artifacts? Yes. So, first question: Who are you, and what do you do?

Unknown Speaker 00:40

I am Kay Coates. That's who I am. Professionally, I am a librarian instructor for one of the media literacy courses in the University of Georgia Southern Libraries.

Unknown Speaker 00:54

Okay. Where and when were you born?

Unknown Speaker 00:58

I was born again in South America, in the city of Georgetown, which is the capital of the country.

Unknown Speaker 01:08

But you already answered. Where did you grow up? What was it like growing up there?

Unknown Speaker 01:15

Very different from United States. Guyana happens to be, they call it the land of many waters. There's six races. So when we talk, when you talk about multiculturalism here, we know it from scratch because there's just six different races in the country. It's hot. There's only sun, no rain. There's no snow. There's no autumn. There's no summer. It's just rain and sun all the time. Yeah, and so that's the weather pattern. May June is a lot of rain. December is a lot of rain. January is hot. Closer to July it's hot. It's very hot as well. There, here, people get upset when the electricity goes out for 10 minutes. Now there, you don't even get schedule blockers. It's just blockade. Just wake up and it's blocked out. Sometimes for 24 hours, and you still have to get to work on time. You still have to go to school on time. Wow. And sometimes there's no water coming through the pipes, which means that you put some jerry cans in the back of your cart or car, or you put it on your horse cart, and you go find water. So my day, but back then would start like about 4 a.m. in the morning.

Unknown Speaker 02:32

Wow. To think people here in the U.S. we basically take everything we have for granted.

Unknown Speaker 02:38

I look at you guys and I smile, and I'm like, you guys upset for these little little things. Come on now, come on, you don't know.

Unknown Speaker 02:44

Yeah, the sun and rain, like just that, like that's

Unknown Speaker 02:46

yeah. There's no snow, you know.

Unknown Speaker 02:50

Yeah. So why did you initially leave?

Unknown Speaker 02:58

I have a wonderful, wonderlust spirit. That's to begin with. But my main reason for living in Ghana is because I wanted to take my family to experience life in North America. When you live in one part of the world, and all you see on television is what you see, and you're like, "Okay, I need to go visit there. So that was the major thing. The other thing too for me was the fact that I wanted to travel. I've traveled and lived several different places, so that's my main reason for ending up here, more or less.

Unknown Speaker 03:32

Yeah. What are some of the other places that you visited?

Unknown Speaker 03:36

I lived. I studied in England. I visited. I just got back this year from Japan. I attended a conference in Japan early in the year. I got back from Panama. I go to Panama every year. Actually, I do work with a nonprofit organization that caters to marginalized students in Panama. So yeah, I do that every year. I visited. I lived in Canada for several years. My husband was doing his PhD over there, and I've gone to other places. I've lived, but in the Caribbean, I've moved around the Caribbean, just visited and stuff like that. So yeah, this would be a long list if I continue. Wow. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 04:30

See. So where did you live? Okay. So when did you first when you first moved to the U.S. Like where did you live? Did you come to Statesboro or

Unknown Speaker 04:39

I've been I've lived in the U.S. twice. I came to the U.S. way back in the late 80s. My husband was doing his master's degree at a point in time, and then we went back home. And then I came. The last time I came to the U.S. was straight from Canada. After he got his doctorate degree, and that was in the early 2000s.

Unknown Speaker 05:11

So, okay, so so when did like you moved to Georgia? You said early 2000s when you moved to USA. You moved to Georgia directly. Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 05:25

I moved. I moved to Georgia. Okay. Did you

Unknown Speaker 05:26

come straight to Statesboro? Okay.

Unknown Speaker 05:29

No, I live and still live in Atlanta. Yeah. So I travel between Statesboro and Atlanta.

Unknown Speaker 05:36

Okay. Yeah, I'm actually I'm personally from Fayetteville now, yeah, the drive. So you do you travel back and forth like every weekend or like?

Unknown Speaker 05:47

I used to do it twice a month when I stopped. I do it when I feel like now my kids are around. Everybody's beautiful when they feel going on. Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 05:54

yeah. So who did you grow up with in your life?

Unknown Speaker 06:00

I grew up with my mom. My mom and my dad separated when I was like what six years old. So I grew up mainly with my mom. My mom was ill. I literally raised my siblings. My mom had bronchial asthma, and so I didn't think she would have lived

until she got through her 90th year. She did. Wow. She passed in 2020. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So, I mean, growing up for me wasn't. I didn't have a lot of playdates. People here played character and I couldn't do that. I just, I just had to raise my siblings.

Unknown Speaker 06:44
Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 06:44
I had my my little sister at 12. I was carrying around my little sister. People in the neighborhood thought it was my kid. It wasn't.

Unknown Speaker 06:53
Yeah, was my my little sister. So we put her. We lived in tenement yard. There were four, six houses in the yard, and so my mother would leave for. We had to. She'd walk to the bus stop. We'll take her back to the bus stop because she couldn't fetch it because she she just had she was ill. So the bus the bus driver would keep her back till she get to the bus. We'd go back home. I'd put my sister beat her, put her in the cradle, leave her bottles out. My neighbor would come feed her when I get home at midday. Then I would change her feed her again, put her back in the grid, to let my neighbor know that, hey, my I'm gone back to school. So she'd look at her until I get home in the afternoon.

Unknown Speaker 07:33
So do you only did you only have one? Do you have one sister or do you? Oh, I had

Unknown Speaker 07:38
I had two sisters and an older brother.

Unknown Speaker 07:42
So, what was the place where you grew up like, and how has it changed over the years?

Unknown Speaker 07:50
Guyana, right now, Guyana is one of the fastest growing GD country with GDP because they've just discovered that they have an island. Guyana's rich in bauxite Timber, agricultural products, manganese-very rich. But they just recently discovered oil, and that has sort of changed the whole political and economic flavor of the country.

Unknown Speaker 08:17
Wow, amazing!

Unknown Speaker 08:19
What kind of what places stand out most in your mind and why? Like what what were your neighbors like, and what kind of local gatherings and events are there? And what stories and memories come to mind for you?

Unknown speaker

Guyana Guyanese people, people on the whole from the Caribbean are very very welcoming, and they're everybody. Most people in here they call one another family, like uncle this and auntie that, and they're no concern why relationships. They're not relation by blood, but the way they live, you'd believe that they were relations by blood. People just live like that. So your neighbor would people would think here. People would think it's your family. It's not your family, but people just live very very closely with one another.

Unknown Speaker 09:09

No, yeah, I understand that because people that I call oh that's my cousin, when I was younger definitely wasn't related, but so definitely had that connection sometimes. Okay, so as for your possessions today, like what different primary sources did you bring with you? I brought I brought this. This represents. This is my the map of my country, and this is the flag.

Unknown Speaker 09:35

Okay.

Unknown Speaker 09:36

And I bought this because this is made out of what Guyana is known for having a lot of forest, a lot of different timber, different types of wood, and this I brought this because Guyana is very rich in terms of the kinds of agricultural products. Yeah. Now this is. Made from coconuts.

Unknown Speaker 10:01

Oh wow! Yeah, I was wondering.

Unknown Speaker 10:04

Yes, it's made from coconut. So he wouldn't think it is, but it's made from coconut. My husband actually came from the Wakhanam, which is one of the country, which is one of the settlements just outside. If I pull up the map again, you'll see it. And they owned coconut estate.

Unknown Speaker 10:25

Wow.

Unknown Speaker 10:28

And so this is the coconut is a major enterprise in Guyana. People not just digits. They actually make oil. People here talk about coconut oil, but we make coconut oil from scratch.

Unknown Speaker 10:38

Wow. Yeah, most people here they just go out and buy it. Right. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 10:43

Some people here don't even know what the coconut like looks like that it comes out. But it doesn't look anything like this. Trust, trust me. It doesn't. Interestingly, the coconut they make coconut oil with it. They make buttons. This is the hard shell. They make buttons with it. The the inside of the coconut, which is called the kernel, they dry it and it becomes copper. Then from the copper, they they blend it, they grind it, and that's how they make coconut oil.

Unknown Speaker 11:16

Wow! I didn't know there's so many uses with coconut oil. Oh my! Yeah, there's because most times you hear about the water, the coconut water, the oil. But yeah, I know people make like buns.

Unknown Speaker 11:26

And inside when the coconut is very very ripe, there's a little there's a little nut inside that we call a goodja, and you eat that. It's very very nutritious.

Unknown Speaker 11:36

I've always wondered. So like I guess what people like, and sometimes you can like take it and replant it if you want to grow anything else.

Unknown Speaker 11:45

Well, usually the trees, one of coconut tree drops when it's when it's very very ripe, it literally kind of grows itself, falls on the ground, and then the plant grows by itself.

Unknown Speaker 11:55

Wow!

Unknown Speaker 11:56

People people usually go take it, and when you know you have to fit it a certain way so that when it grows it doesn't lean towards your house, so they kind of replant it and put it in the position they want to put it in. Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 12:09

The fiber for the coconut actually they use it to Crowell pots or whatever. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 12:17

Okay. Yeah. Yes, I've seen coconuts and everything, but I've I've never really known like like where they really come from and like the uses you can use.

Unknown Speaker 12:27

Oh, and the uses are endless. We actually have a dish at home that's called cocoa price that's cooked with coconut. You have to save the dry coconut, break it, grate the the meat from inside. You call it meat. Squeeze the meat, and you get milk, and that milk is what you boil the rice and everything else with.

Unknown Speaker 12:46
Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 12:50
Then there's a sweet meat that we make with it called sugar cake.

Unknown Speaker 12:54
Okay. Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 12:55
you grate it and you cook it with sugar, spices, Cinnamon clove, and then you'd cut it. It would be looking like something like what you call nut brittle here. It looks like that, but it tastes very differently.

Unknown Speaker 13:12
Yeah, and then there's pastries that we call salaro. You dye the the meat. They dye the coconut meat red, and you fold it and you bake it. And yeah, there's there's so many different things that you make with cooking.

Unknown Speaker 13:24
Yeah, I like that. I'm gonna have to definitely try that out sometime. What other pieces did you bring with you?

Unknown Speaker 13:34
Yeah, so this is my map on my flat. This is coconut. I brought this because in 2024, I I had I represented the university at a conference in Kazakhstan, and I went hot air balloon riding. So I, so because of being here, I had this opportunity. That's why I brought this one.

Unknown Speaker 13:55
Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 13:55
this is the certificate I got from the conference that I attended. I presented at Kazakhstan.

Unknown Speaker 14:01
yeah. Okay, so what language languages do you speak?

Unknown Speaker 14:14
English, basically English. But depending on which part of the country you live, you'll speak different types of Creole. So if you, because Guyana is the only English-speaking country on the mainland of South America, so near to us you'll have Sarnam or Dutch Guyana. So if you live on that part of the country, you speak a mixture of English and Dutch. If you live on a part with Brazil, which speaks Portuguese, you speak a little bit of Korea, which is Portuguese and English, and then you speak a

little bit of English and Spanish. It's just a mixture of different things happening. I mean, if I really speak Korean, you will not understand one thing of what I'm saying.

Unknown Speaker 14:57

But yes, and I guess because you said like the multicultural aspect. Yeah, yeah. Just brings in all these different dialects within English. That's amazing. Let's see. Is there anything? I know I have all these questions, but is there anything that you personally want to talk about, like share with us?

Unknown Speaker 15:15

I guess. Let's see.

Unknown Speaker 15:20

Oftentimes people ask me how I end up here, and it's interesting that they ask that question. I came to Georgia suddenly because my husband started working here as a professor in the technology department. At the time, I was doing my postmasters in Philadelphia. When I finished, I got I came here, so that's how I ended there. And I volunteered for one year before I actually got the job working here.

Unknown Speaker 15:53

I've actually watched videos of the peeled coconuts open.

Unknown Speaker 15:57

Yes,

Unknown Speaker 15:58

it's really fun to watch.

Unknown Speaker 16:00

The thing that's fun to watch is to watch them climb the tree to pick it.

Unknown Speaker 16:05

Wow! Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 16:05

they actually tie. They have a rope and they tie it and they put it on their feet.

Unknown Speaker 16:10

Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 16:10

And there's nothing in their hands and they use their feet. They pull themselves up to the top and then they get the top. Yeah. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 16:16

And then like somebody like down below like catch them or they just let them drop the ground.

Unknown Speaker 16:20

You don't want to be under there. These coconuts are heavy. Oh, they get to the top and they kind of shake the tree. The other thing too is that, depending if you wanna, if you just want coconut water, then you can climb the tree and get when the fruit is young, when the fruit is ripe, and you have like about three bearings in a year. So they they know the timing, and then they plant the tree. And the ones that are fully ripe, they'll shake the tree, and they'll fall most of the times, or they'll bring down the whole trash, which is like a whole big heavy thing, and they'll drop it. So nobody stands on them.

Unknown Speaker 16:54

Yeah, you don't want to get hit in the head. No, no, you sure don't want to get hit in the head.

Unknown Speaker

Oh God!

Unknown Speaker 16:59

And those trees are tall, so when they get up there, you actually could see the trees swaying like this.

Unknown Speaker 17:04

Wow.

Unknown Speaker 17:05

Yes. Wow. The other thing with the coconut trees that they use the branches and they they strip strip them off and they make brooms. Yeah. Point of brooms. The other thing they do with those tools that they make touch roofs. The Amerindians use it to make touch roofs for their buildings.

Unknown Speaker 17:26

Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 17:26

Yeah. Wow.

Unknown Speaker 17:28

So many different uses for buildings. Like that. Just very resourceful. Yeah. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 17:36

Well, when you live in that part of the world, you don't have a lot of technology that you guys have, so you have to be creative, and you have to literally use what you have, which is what people do out of that. Yeah, yeah,

Unknown Speaker 17:49

and I really I I look up to that and want want to be more resourceful and just think of ways I can use like my knowledge and just experiment and problem solve myself.

Unknown Speaker 18:03

I actually have a question. Yeah, did you have any culture shocks coming over here?

Unknown Speaker 18:10

culture shocks.

Unknown Speaker 18:11

Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 18:11

Yes, that people look at you strange. You get here and you have an accent and they think that you don't know anything. Yeah, people just people just have an attitude. You have an accent, and they put up a front. They're like, "Well, I don't understand what you're saying. Really, if you listen carefully, you understand what I'm saying. I'm speaking English, right? Yeah, yeah, yeah. I taught I taught middle school for a while when I first got here, and it was interesting because the kids will laugh when I say notebook. They found I don't know why they found that word funny, but they they just break up in laughter. And then I had some of the kids who were like in the eighth grade who just would want me to speak all the time.

Unknown Speaker 18:54

Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 18:55

But they were they would say that they don't understand. They didn't want to do the work. They just wanted to hear me speak. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 19:01

Because as an ask you, I know you're the the College of Education's liaison, and so you have a teaching background. Like, what did you do before you became?

Unknown Speaker 19:12

I've always been in libraries. Okay, always when I left college, I started working as a library assistant.

Unknown Speaker 19:18

Okay,

Unknown Speaker 19:18

And then I got a scholarship. I did my bachelor's degree at home in sociology. Went back to work in the library. Then I got a scholarship last scholarship to go to England to do my master's degree. And in librarianship, you have to have a terminal degree to be a librarian. You must have a master's degree. So I did that. Then I went back home, and then of course by that time my husband got a scholarship to go do his PhD. We left, went back home. We've just been we've traveled over.

Unknown Speaker 19:51

So do you travel back to your to Guyana often?

Unknown Speaker 19:55

Not as often as I would like because when you're contracted here, you got to work with the. We can't be traveling back and forth with you, because here, here, I still have. Even though I'm a librarian, I teach media literacy class. As a matter of fact, right now I'm grading, and then I still have to do scholarship. I have to do research, and I have to do service. And what that means? It means that I have to be on either one of the boards of the American Library Association and one of the committees. I'm on two those committees. Value of librarianship, and the other one is the education committee, the education committee, and outside of that, the library has several committees that, like the liaison committee, the library faculty committee. You've got service to do a lot of those, and you have to write to maintain your scholarship level if you want to have promotion and all of that. I got tenure in 2004. My post tenure week comes up in a couple of years from now. But between that, I'm expected to build a portfolio. Yeah, building a portfolio means that I have to attend conferences, I have to write grants, I have to write book chapters. Right now, I have two book chapters in the making. I just sent off the first part for one of my book chapters last week. So all of that is included in my work. It might look like this, but people think that when you work in a library, you just get to read books. You just don't. You get to read stuff, but the half the times is not what you want to read because you got to respond to the folks who want the information that you're looking for.

Unknown Speaker 21:44

I guess as time has passed, how does your experience compare to what you expected? Like, what did you expect coming to the U.S.

Unknown Speaker 21:57

Coming to the U.S. I expected people to be a little bit more open in sharing information. People here cannot share information, and that struck me as strange because if you live in a country where you've got okay, America brands itself as the best country in the world. Take that off the table because it's not true. It's just a brand, and you can brand anything the way you want it. So they successfully branded America as the big, the best thing that could happen to everybody, and that's not necessarily true. You can come to America, and as a matter of fact, there's studies that show that people who come from like the Caribbean come to America and get sick. They end up with stress because of the nature of life. People are so busy; they

don't have time to relax. They don't have time to like back home. People really, really are involved with the community. Not because you have to sign up here; you got to sign a sheet for everything. Yes, you got to bring your ID card and do all this. Everybody knows you back home, so you don't have to sign up. You are voluntarily involved, which is a very different thing from here. At home, people share information much more than people share information here, which I found this strange. You'd think that here people pass it away. You can look at this website, or you can go to the library. You have to. If you really want information, sometimes you really have to go to the library here. Back home, no. It's it's such a such a society where people just share information. As a matter of fact, there are more traditional families than they are here. Here, lots of families tend to be nuclear. It's just the the parents and the children, or just the parents alone. Back home, you tend to find three and four generations operating in one household, which makes much of a difference. Nowadays, there's this push right here for co-generational interaction and co-generation housing and co-generational groups and co-generation of that. And this is supposed to be something new. Please, this is old for me. Oh, that happens organically. Here again, it's more. You have to. It has to be planned. It has to be scheduled. And now they have. They're building communities where they're putting housing for the older generation with a school nearby, so that they can have the interaction between the youth and the older generation. Look, home is organized. Very organic.

The other thing here too is that back home, I own horses and cows, and here you gotta get a license for everything. You gotta get a license to fish. You gotta get a. If if you wanna if you wanna own horses, you have to have so many acres of land. I mean, it is so structured that my gosh, people. I understand why people here are starved for experiences, because it is so structured, which makes it stringent that you have to meet all these criteria before you qualify doesn't happen like that back home.

Unknown Speaker 25:25
Wow,

Unknown Speaker 25:26
doesn't happen.

Unknown Speaker 25:28
that is that is very interesting to think that you know in the U.S. they frame it as all you have all these freedoms and rights and stuff. Well,

Unknown Speaker 25:36
you don't.

Unknown Speaker 25:36
Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 25:37

you can't here. You just can't go fishing. You gotta get a fishing license. Somebody see a fishing, somebody call the police when you get the logs. Right here is like if you have a to have a one of these little what you guys would call it log houses. You have to have how much? Five acres or not? It's not like that back home. It's just not. It's just not like that. I mean, so when, for me, when you look at politics and you look at the way societies organize and people talk about, you know. Advancement and getting by-you wonder at-and then you look. You start looking at the research, and you recognize that indeed things are built by people who can dictate what they want, and so the people who find themselves in positions that they can dictate what they want. They have to meet those standards, which in a way alienates them for actually enjoying better standard of life. Yeah, very, very, very, very different.

Unknown Speaker 27:01

It makes me wonder about a lot of different things. Just I'm just sitting here thinking. Well, it makes you wonder,

Speaker 2 27:07

but I see a lot of different things here that you know. You like, gosh, this is interesting. People said this is supposed to be the best country work. Give me a break. It, it ain't. Yeah. What I could say here though is that there's lots of opportunity, and I think one of the reasons that people here do not or are kind of not in a good position to explore those opportunities is because they don't have anything to match it against. There are people who leave home. People say, "Well, why would you leave a country where there's only rain and sun, and get to a country where there's winter and some horrible winters sometimes, and then there is some terrible summer sometimes? And it's it's so organized to the point that you gotta be here on time. You're gonna you lose your job if you don't get to work on time. Stuff like that. Why would you leave your country, which supposedly is freer than that, to come here? Well, that's because again, it's it's the way politics works. When you get an education back home, the way out of poverty most times is an educational route, and to take an education route, you're gonna make a lot of sacrifices. And so when you get here and you recognize, "Wow, I can do this, you look at the barriers that people say, "Well, this is a barrier. This is stopping me. You say, "This is this is a barrier indeed. But you know what? We can climb over to the barrier. We can get through it, yeah. And so sometimes, because people don't have that that angle of understanding what restraint is from what is constraint, when you can separate those two things, you can find your way forward. When you're restrained, there's a different things to when you have constraint. Constraint you can kind of work around. Restraint is a different matter. You kind of gotta look at it in a more strategic way. Yeah. Home is about community. Here, people. I look at students here, and they'd be in a classroom, and they wouldn't talk to one another. They wouldn't share notes with one, and that baffles me. What it is? it is that you guys don't share information? You look at the other person, the person, and there's some. I have a class of 30-some people, and I see them once in a while. My class is virtual, but when I see them, I said, "Did you you want that class? Did you ask your friend? No, I don't

Speak. What? That is the craziest thing to me. You have your peers, and these guys don't communicate. Why? What's what? What is it about this that you don't communicate? Yeah,

Speaker 1 29:58

I guess one of the things. Is like starting from I guess like really elementary. It's just a thing of you competing against everybody. Where we don't have to work together.

Speaker 2 30:09

Let me say this: My daughter did her bachelor's degree in mathematics and engineering, Georgia Technical Institute. Spell my she gets Spelman, Matt at Spelman, and industrial student director. So she was going between two campuses, and she'd say to me, she said, "You know, Mom, it's not like back home. And I said, "What do you mean? She says, "People just don't talk to one another in the classroom

Speaker 2 30:40

That's the strangest thing, and so for her it was more or less a culture shock.

Speaker 1 30:45

Yeah.

Speaker 2 30:46

As a matter of fact, she got a scholarship to go to Oglethorpe University. She refused to go. She looked at the she looked at the demographics. I don't want to go there. I want to go with my people. So she ended up going to Spelman. Same thing. People just weren't. They looked like her mostly,

Speaker 1 31:02

yeah.

Speaker 2 31:02

But they just weren't communicative. They just weren't.

Speaker 1 31:05

Wow. And

Speaker 2 31:06

then when she gets to tech now, it's a whole different dynamic because as a black woman at tech, first of all, people don't think you should be there.

Speaker 1 31:13

Yeah. And

Speaker 2 31:14

so you're there, and you get ordered. And because you're in a field that is mostly dominated by men, that's another artery. So it takes the family as a community to give her that support for her to be successful.

Speaker 3 31:30
Yeah. Wow.

Speaker 2 31:32
Yeah. And so when she wanted to do her master's degree, she said she wasn't doing it here. She did her master's degree in France.

Speaker 1 31:38
Yeah.

Speaker 2 31:39
She did a master's degree in analytics and marketing. She did a really great event.

Speaker 1 31:43
Yeah,

Speaker 2 31:43
yeah, and so it's not that there's so many opportunities here, but I think people, the way people operate and the way they communicate and the way they interact, I think stifles growth and stifles professional development, and STEM is people creating communities that they benefit one another because they just operate in silos, and the information you have is not shared with this person, and so we can't blend them together and come up with something innovative that makes it work.

Speaker 1 32:18
And I just think I think that's why a lot a lot of other countries are so so growing so much more in the U.S. Because thing is, everybody wants to keep with their own. But then look at it, the

Speaker 2 32:29
U.S. does they import a lot of people to get their stuff done because the people here, and I'm not knocking the people here. They just know what they know, but when you bring somebody from abroad, and they come and they could look at your whole system and say, "Oh, I can make an input here. I can do an intro there. It's going to take some sacrifice, but we're going to do it and get it done.

Speaker 4 32:52
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1 32:56

Just to have your perspective on just every family is just-it's eye-opening, very much eye opening because you know I just get stuck on this one like track of of seeing everything, but really.

Speaker 2 33:08

And here too, people people become comfortable sometimes, and I think people sometimes don't wanna they they wanna fit in, and I'll tell you why I say that when I got here, I did not have to apply for this job. I got a job after volunteering for one year. I told them I wasn't coming back because they were putting my name on the schedule and people were scratching it off because they felt that I didn't belong. And at the time, outside of the the one head of the department who was black. I was the only black person.

Speaker 1 33:43

Yeah,

Speaker 2 33:43

and because I was a volunteer, they assumed that I knew nothing, and I had nothing. People make a lot of assumptions, right? And so when I told him I wasn't coming back, I I remember I went after I went on a vacation to Aruba, and I came back, and when I came back, the dean at the time, which is not the present dean, handed me a letter offering me a position as a lecturer, even though I was qualified as a librarian. But there's a foot in the door, so I started there.

Speaker 1 34:11

Yeah,

Speaker 2 34:13

it so happened that one of the librarians retired, and they advertised the position for assistant Professor and I applied. Boy, who told me to do that? After the first round of interviews, the head of the search committee said to me, "You are not going to the second round. And I ask the individual why, and she says, "Well, no, you're just not going. I said, "Okay, do me a favor. I want you, since you're the head of the search committee and all the members of search committee, send me an email and detail why I'm not going to the second round. With that. I filed a Title Nine. I took the whole university out. I filed it. Within two weeks, I was back in the in the second round without any explanations. But in life, you've got to be brave. If you're not brave, you will not get where you want to go. You can sit and cry. When when you cry, you cry by yourself. When you smile, the war laughs with you, but you've got to make decisions. You have to make decisions. Like, what's the worst thing you can do? Find me. I mean, the best thing can happen is that I get a job. So I was in the next next round. I eventually got that position. Yeah. Now

Speaker 1 35:40

I was gonna ask you, like, what kind of challenges have you experienced? Just, I mean, being from another country, but also just really being a a black woman in America is, I mean, I know black

Speaker 2 35:50

woman in America. It's a tall order because I mean, we we're talking about a history where black people were seen as possessions, and so even if even though you live in the 21st century, people still have that mentality. People are raised thinking that black people are lesser than. To this day, there are medical instruments that measure people's lung capacity, and the measurement is is calibrated differently from the ones that they measure white folks, and so the measurement is wrong. But when people when they measure black folks, they say this is how this is only so much lung capacity, which is not the truth. And it's just recently I read this article like about three weeks ago. They're trying to change that, but it takes a whole long time to change that kind of business. But that's what black people are have been subjected to, and so people tend not to see black people as human beings for who they are. But and so they treat you that way, much as when you have an accent. You have an accent, boy. These people, Americans, have the thing that you want to take their jobs. Right, and the funny part is that half of the Americans and Black people in particular do not even have the qualifications to to keep the jobs that they say that we're taking. Yeah, we can't even begin to have a conversation because you know we're near there. The the the things that come about these people, I'm often against. But again, it's you know Durkheim talks about the presentation of self in everyday life, and he's old sociologist, social psychologist, and he talks about performance management. Americans do a good job of performance management. They dress the part, look the part. Boy, let them open their mouth and you're like, yeah, boss, please. Yeah, they're very good at performance management, but when it comes to activating that, it's a whole new different body.

Yeah, and if you pay attention to how they treat you, you would be put off and not necessarily do what you should do because you get offended. And I've learned in life not to be offended, but to fact find, and there's a difference. When you get offended, your brain doesn't work, does anyway. Yeah, you're not hearing, you're not seeing blood. It's blind rage. Rage does not help you. What helps you is when you take a step back and says, "What it is that I am doing that is offending this person? If you recognize it's not you, then you're like, "Okay, that's your problem. I'm gonna let you deal with it. I am just gonna keep on moving. Yeah, oftentimes that's what takes you in the direction where you where you wanna go, right? Yeah, and trust me, as a black person, I know somebody's always gonna challenge you. I want to ask you now. When I went up for tenure in 2000 2000, I went up for tenure in 2024 two years ago. My third, you know, you go up for tenure after five years. In my third year, I was told that I wasn't successfully progressing towards tenure. There's a tenure committee, right? They write you, they tell you these things, and then my boss calls me, and my dean calls me, and they said, "Wow." You have to add another year to your tenure portfolio, and I looked her dead in the eye and said, "Sorry, ma'am, it's not gonna happen. She's upset, so she sent the form. I didn't pull it up. I'm like, I'm playing

young games. The fifth fifth year, and I submit my portfolio. Half an hour. She writes me to say, "Okay, I've sent it off to the external examiners, external reviewers. I know it was good because I knew I'm capable of the work. And even if it took me whatever, I'm going to do more work than you think I need to do because you know what? I am invested in this, and I'm going to see myself through it. Yeah, yeah. So you've, I always tell my kids, you've got to perform 150% better than the average person. Yeah. Cause one, you black people ain't gonna take you seriously. Two, you get an accent. You come from another place. And Americans have a good way of saying, "Well, where are you from? And I'm like, "I'm from Earth. Come on, now we all are twins. I might have a different accent, but that's the truth. That's the truth. And I and here, lots of students would come to me and said, "How how did you get here? I said, "Well, I mean, I took some road transportation. I took a plane. I mean, oh, that's a long time. I know that's not what they want, but sometimes I just get tired answering the same question.

Speaker 5 41:21
Yeah.

Speaker 2 41:23
Yeah, yeah, and I mean I've had issues where I when I worked at the ref we had a reference desk in front, and I somebody from the welcome desk would say go over to the library and they come over and they see me as a librarian and they'd walk back and say well I'm looking for the librarian, and the person said, "Go back. That's the librarian. Then they said, "You're the librarian. Yes, I am. But again, it's not. I'm not the problem. The problem is what's happening in the person's mind. What, what experiences they had, what kind of orientation they've had. When you don't grow up in a multicultural society, and people say they grow up in America in a multicultural society, it's very different. People here meet, but they don't necessarily mix.

People kind of look for their own crowds, and if you if you look at the classrooms here, and you have black folks in a classroom, they tend not to be mixing with the rest of folks. They either sit at the back, which bothers me a lot. But it's conspicuous. You just see them in one group,

Speaker 1 42:27
yeah,

Speaker 2 42:28
and they're not integrated with the rest of the class. And I often wonder. I say to myself, why does this happen? And this is a society where people feel that way. You know what? And it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter which generation. I mean, now we talk about generations, but you see the same thing happening. And you're like, this is supposed to be a society where people are communicating. They're open. They talk about belonging. What the heck does that mean? The way people sit in the classroom, there's no belonging happening. We are just attending this university.

Speaker 1 43:02

Yeah, so true. You think a lot of times people they gravitate towards sitting in the back of the classroom before sitting in the front. I'm like, I'm always that person that goes and sit at the front because I'm like, that's where you most attentive at. You pay attention to the professor. Yeah.

Speaker 2 43:17

But the the thing the thing here again is is people perceive what they perceive, and sometimes if I think when you grow up in a society where you're black and you're accustomed to people treating you in particular way, you find you tend to see people not wanting to inhabit their full selves. They tend to shrink, and so I sit at the back because I don't want to invade your space, kind of business, which doesn't really make sense to me. When I got a scholarship in England to do my master's degree, I got there and I turned up for registration. And the first thing I got to the gates, and there was the security guard at the gates, and I had to get in. So I pull up my my letter, and I showed it to him. And he says, "Are you sure you're supposed to be here? And I ask him, "What do you mean by that? He says, "Well, I'm asking if you're sure you're supposed to be on this campus. I said, "I just handed you my letter. If you read it, it will state when we're may not say how, but when and where. And there's the same date I'm here today, which this paper says, and this is the campus. So he says okay, and he calls somebody for I don't know whatever he did, but he told him the number and whatever, whatever. Anyway, he let me in. I get there and I get to the reception desk, and the person says to me, "Are you sure you were capable? And I said, "Sure. That's a strange way of asking my name. Yeah. He says no. I'm not asking your name. I'm asking if you are giggles. I said again, you've got my letter there. I don't have an ID card yet because I'm in the process of registering, but I've been accepted by the university. I can show you my passport that has my name, and then I show him my passport, and he says, "You know, I wasn't expecting you. I said, "I'm sorry. So those are the kinds of things you have to navigate in life. It either breaks you or it makes you. For me, it's like it's your problem. You did good. I don't look like cakey was too bad. I don't know what you think cake goats could look like, but I mean, it's England. Coates is an English name, so you probably expect an English word for a white person. But listen, y'all left England and went to the Caribbean. Do we all do send all y'all have crazy people, all your thieves and everybody with Columbus, and so my name got changed. So here, this is it. Take it. This is the protégé of whatever you greeted.

Speaker 1 46:11

You think most people in that kind of situation they'll just shrink and like a lot of people shrink

Speaker 3 46:16

and start crying and whatever. And I'm like, hey, you gotta stand your ground. Come with it. Just just bring it on. Let's talk.

Speaker 1 46:22

Like you said, be brave and stand stand your ground.

Speaker 2 46:29

Yeah. So it's it's just not America. That happens. It happens all over the world. It's just interesting, but it happens. Yeah. I went to Kazakhstan. Oh my God, and I don't think that people in Kazakhstan actually saw a black librarian. My daughter was with me when she took a trip with me. Everywhere they went, people just wanted to take our pictures. They wanted to hold our hands. It got so tiring to me. It's like this is ridiculous.

Speaker 1 47:04

Yeah.

Speaker 2 47:06

But I acquiesced in a lot of cases because sometimes seeing and touching is believing. That's why it actually allows some people to touch me because it's like it's now that you actually.

Speaker 1 47:30

just shows you how separate the world is, and just

Speaker 2 47:33

yeah. So I mean, you you read you you do academics and you read things and you think that this theory says that and it's whole lovey double. Yeah, but it doesn't. You cut out to have your own experience, which has nothing to do with these theories inside half of these textbooks. No, please forget it now. Yeah.

Speaker 1 47:54

Wow.

Speaker 2 47:56

Yeah, but hey, it's it's life. It it makes you. It makes you a more humble human being, and it makes you forgive a lot. Cause half the times, the people, the things that people do to you, is because of their lack of experience, lack of exposure, and lots of times is how they were brought up.

Speaker 1 48:16

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Some people don't have the control over.

Speaker 2 48:20

They don't have control over it, you know. It's like I told the guy when I got to England. I said, "Look, I didn't get to choose my name. I was given it, right? So I'm sorry if Kay Coates is not what you wanted to be. But if you ever have a chance, get an easel, get some paint, put Kay Coates, and draw what you want.

Speaker 1 48:41

Yeah,

Speaker 2 48:42

it might not look like me, but you'll be happy.

Speaker 1 48:45

Yeah, because I certify

Speaker 2 48:46

disadvantage.

Speaker 1 48:47

Yeah, it's just I guess people have that perception and like that that just yeah that that perception in their mind of how people should look and it's like

Speaker 2 48:55

yeah when you try when you try to see a black person okay and it happens so many times I've got students who come here and said, "I had to look you up, but when I saw you were a black person, I'm like, what? What this has to do with you coming for a researcher? I am really tickled. I am so tickled. I just start laughing. Like, okay, this is interesting.

Speaker 1 49:22

Yeah, because I will say, like, how how is it like just being in Statesboro stuff? Because I know Statesboro is...

Speaker 2 49:28

Statesboro is crazy.

Speaker 1 49:29

Yeah, because I know Statesboro

Speaker 2 49:31

is crazy. I'll tell you what, I went to the city hall because I have an old property in Statesboro. Yeah, and God, stays bar. It's just a joke. So I went to pay my taxes, and I said to the young lady, "You guys sent me a letter concerning one of my properties. She says, "One of your properties. I said, "Yes, one of them. She said, "Did you say?" One of them, I said, yeah. Then I said, and I give you permission. Just put my last name in there. You will see how many properties I own. And she did, but she says, Oh, I'm sorry. No, I said there's no need for you to be sorry. I just want you to understand that when I was saying one of my properties, I literally meant one of my properties.

Speaker 1 50:19

Yeah.

Speaker 2 50:20

I said maybe my accent is what showing you off, but hey, I do live in Statesboro. I work at a university, so let's let's take it from there.

Speaker 1 50:32

Because I always talk about like if you take the university out of Statesboro, people they will not experience as much diversity and everything that they do here, and it-I feel like it's open up their eyes ironically, but still, in some ways, they're still sheltered in that way.

Speaker 2 50:47

Yeah, Statesboro is just rural. These people are so rural again, funny. I tend to limit my dealings with people in state world because they're ignorant. I'm just being flat off the street, and I'm not being-I'm not being derogatory. Is it true? Is it true? It's the truth. So it's. I mean, it's just. My God, it's just. But I'm thankful because I've tried. I've traveled. I've lived many places. I've traveled a lot, and so you learn to be empathetic. You learn that your first resort is not anger, but inform, and so you're patient. Okay, I said one of my properties. You said one. I said one out. I'm insulating that I have more than one, and you can check it. You're writing for the computer. Please do find business, and you watch them shock, and then they start apologizing. I'm like, I don't need apologies. I just need that when you see people, you listen. I mean, if you if you had a question, that's not to say one of yours.

Speaker 5 51:53

Yeah,

Speaker 2 51:54

just ask directly. I mean, yeah, yeah. But this one is just someplace. I mean, it's it's all a part of it. It's part of experience. I have traveled and lived so many places. You recognize one thing. I understand is that people are people regardless of where you go, and depending on where you go, do some background search before you get there because you can kind of anticipate how you're going to be treated. The good thing about being in education is that when I travel and I go to conferences, I can turn up at the airport with my travel documents, and they won't give me much of a hassle. Once I say that I'm here representing the university, or I'm here to attend the conference, and I can show them the paperwork. Sometimes they want to see it. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes they go a little more than wanted to see the paperwork because I'm glad, and they don't believe that I actually work in university. It it could get confusing sometimes, but I'm patient.

Speaker 5 53:06

Yeah,

Speaker 2 53:06

do your thing, you know. So you you learn that sometimes when you happen to be in a particular color of a body, that these are the challenges you have, and so you take

them and you stride. Life is good. It's good. And one thing you always keep at the front of your mind is that is not to let somebody else take you off course because of what they feel or what they think. You've got to keep your ambitions up. You have to keep understanding that other people will do stuff not because they want to be malicious, but because they don't have an understanding. They don't have, they're not very well exposed to differences and people and language and cultures. So you got to make some wrong plan. You get it from you get it from all ends.

Speaker 1 54:14

I guess as we finish out this interview, is there anything else you like to talk about or share with us?

Speaker 2 54:23

No, just that the fact that you guys are doing your degrees now, keep an open mind. When you read whatever you read your literature, question it, and I know we're living in the age of AI, and some people take shortcuts. AI is going to give you back what has been built into it, and 90% of building its bias. So you've got to take what AI says, use it as a tool, but always question it. Question it, check your facts because it. AI is gonna make up some stories that my gosh, it's unbelievable, believably unbelievable. So it's your duty to do yourself the favor of checking. You've got to go back to check your. You have to go back and check your primary sources. You've got to because I mean hey AI is fast it's gonna give you a fast answer the other thing too is that if you don't ask the correct questions or you don't frame your prompt and right now we pass prompting in AI we're looping right now we're in loops yeah we're looping we we pass prompts and we haven't quite grappled with how the prompt yet much less, and now we're at loops. So if you don't frame what it is you want from the United in a particular manner, you're gonna just get what you tell it because it cannot reason, it cannot think. It's gonna just predict the next word that comes out. This is this, and it's gonna give you an outcome which is a prediction. It's your job to do the hard work behind people thinking, yeah, it's it's awesome, it's cool. You still got a lot of work to do. Yeah.

Speaker 1 56:11

Yeah. I mean, even say just going into the education field and becoming a teacher, like, is a thing of you talk. You see a lot of just fellow peers and fellow student teachers talking about yeah using AI for these different things like but you still need to use it as a tool but still think about things.

Speaker 2 56:30

Let me say this. I presented on it yet. Depending on the field you're in, AI will serve different purposes, and you have to know that. But as college students, you say, "Look, I I tight on this agenda. I'm just not policing here. I'm not going to get a match. I'm the teacher. In some cases, it might be justified because it might be crunch for time. You might figure it out rather than don't submit any some nothing. Submit something, but then hey, B, be great to take the grade again. All right. And admittedly, the other thing I've been telling students recently is that the university

has only given permission for three tools to be used: Copilot, Gemini, and notebook of them. People using here ChatGPT. Now you can get into trouble for using ChatGPT because the university hasn't signed. They haven't given you permission to use it, and not lots of people do that. But ChatGPT came out when it came out in 2022, and people said, "Well, yeah, don't use ChatGPT. ChatGPT. If you really want to do serious research work, no, not ChatGPT. Let's talk insightful. Let's talk GVO. This is a whole list. The conference when I did in Kazakhstan, we discovered we did a survey 25 tools that students can use, but then it goes it goes back to the ones that university has actually given permission. And if you look on the university's homepage, you go to technology sources, and you can see the ones is just three. So students are blindly going down the road doing what they think. They do think that. So when you so like my students send me something and I can look at it and I said, why does your PowerPoint in with a question? You've been using AI. My policy says if you want to use AI, you have to ask permission. You can't use AI for every module. And if you use AI, you don't ask permission, you get to zero. And if you're going to use AI, there's a form that you have to fill in to tell me how you use it, what you use when you change the prompt. That's a lot of work, so they don't want to do that.

The

The only way it can help you is if you understand that AI is a tool, and if you don't know what you want from it, you need to have something in your mind before you decide what you want from it. Yeah. But if you feel I don't need all, I have to do is put some work in there, and it's going to give me something. Yeah, it's going to give you something. It's going to give you anything. But you, as as your your duty as a student is to give yourself the best opportunity to learn, to use the resources that are greater. When I was growing up, we don't have we didn't have academic success, we didn't we didn't even have a librarian, we didn't have we didn't but peer support. We have none of that, okay? You walked to the library, which is like walking from Georgia's Southern to Brooklyn to borrow a book, and if you get there and the book is not there, you find another book, and sometimes you can't borrow the book. Because it's on hold for somebody else, so you sit there, you write what you want, and then you walk back home. But here, people grumble and complain about every darn thing.

Speaker 1 1:00:12

A lot of times, take things for granted, and the older I get, I I try to just look at that. I just think things I I need to be grateful for what I have, and I mean the resources that are out here for me. That they're here.

Speaker 2 1:00:26

Yeah, it's like students don't go to office hours.

Speaker 5 1:00:28

Yeah,

Speaker 4 1:00:29

I was like, why?

Speaker 5 1:00:32

My mother has a big thing on that, and she raised us to be mindful of those situations. I've never had a phone until I was a teenager.

Speaker 2 1:00:46

My daughter too. I don't know those jokes.

Speaker 5 1:00:48

I was given books, toys. You go outside, socially interact.

Speaker 2 1:00:56

People now, young people now, can't even look you in the face. You look at them in the eyes, and they bend their heads like this, and you're like, "What is there to hide?

It's just interesting, very, very interesting. And people think that when you get education, it will make a difference. That's why the loneliness epidemic is what it is, and that's why people don't get the full value for what they think is worth. An education is worth, but lots of it is. I mean, you pay for an education, but it's what you put into it that you get out. And you have to be able to step outside your comfort zone. And if you don't learn or you don't grow unless you give yourself permission, and I deliberately say give yourself permission to experience new things, yeah, you have to give yourself permission. Sometimes you have to give yourself permission to just be you, and understand why you're angry, and understand why I don't want to do this assignment. Give your pen permission to be angry with yourself, but why do I don't really want to do this assignment?

Speaker 5 1:02:01

Yeah.

Speaker 2 1:02:03

And then decompose that and say, well, I don't want to do this assignment because I don't like it or I don't. But if you don't like it, then you've got the academic success center. You've got library.

Speaker 1 1:02:21

Every student has a personal librarian because there is a librarian attached to every college on campus, and I just recently learned about it, and you told share that with me.

Speaker 2 1:02:26

Every student has a personal librarian, so you can set up an appointment. You can come to the library. You don't even have to have an appointment. Someone in the library is going to see you. Yeah, you know that kind of business. But the avenues are dear. You got to take the steps. Yeah, yeah. The funny thing is, I we go to sometimes the professors invite us to go to do lunch-up sessions on the classes, and you ask

questions of the students, and they just sit there and glum and they say nothing. I was like, I can't help you, and then at the end, you have they have to give you an evaluation, and they evaluate that you didn't tell them anything.

Speaker 1 1:03:09

The purpose was to answer questions. Half of them

Speaker 2 1:03:12

are on the phones, so they're not paying any attention. I'm actually doing a presentation for a conference coming up yes next year on intentional attention in the digital age, because it's something that just fascinates me. Because people just feel that once you have technology, the problem is solved. The great their minds behind that technology, and you can be one of those minds if you give yourself the opportunity to just learn. What what will come to your mind will be different than what comes to my mind. But as human beings, we're so dynamic that we don't give ourselves the opportunity to just explore the dynamism that's possible because we interact with people. We interact with we learn to read. One of the basic things now is reading. People aren't reading. I've got I've had students who made appointments with me and come and hand me the paper with the assignment. I said, "Excuse me, what am I supposed to do with this? I said, "Well, you should be able to assist me. I'm sorry, but if you read it, come back and tell me what it is you want. Or they put the chart and they paste the whole assignment in the chat, and I write back. So how can I help you? And then say, I just pasted in chat. I said, yes, you did, but how can I help you? This is my job. This is not my assignment. This is yours. So that's where we are. And of course, people say post COVID. Yeah, I agree. But still, you still got to take responsibility for your life. Yes, people blame so much on somebody else. You got to take responsibility. Okay, that's why some people say, "What? I don't like my professor that doesn't teach. What? This is a university. The universities where you do research, the professor is not supposed to teach you. The professor will lead you. They will give you sources. They will tell you how to approach it, but they are not supposed to teach you. Your teaching happened when you were in high school and mid school and kindergarten. Here is a different ball game, but I don't think that again students are prepared for the transition from high school to college, they aren't prepared, so they get to college, and it's a definitely it's a big shock. What did I get myself into? But you're already here. Explore the resources. Go to other than go to the Southside Center, go find your tutor, go find the resources that are here to help you. Go to the library, ask questions. It's free. You have to pay separately up fees, but there's just a whole line of things that can get you along the path where you want to go. The other thing here is that students expect that once they suddenly can say, "You don't get any. You don't get an A, and boy, aren't they offset? And then you carry them back to the rubric and say, "Well, you had the rubric before. Did you look at it? No, that's great. I'm sorry.

Speaker 5 1:06:22

I'll make sure. to check it over every time. Well, you have

Speaker 2 1:06:26

to because sometimes you could read something completely misinterpreted, and then halfway through, like this is not what I'm supposed to be doing. Yeah, but you would have learned something in the process, right? Yeah. People care. You said, "Don't use AI for this assignment. It was my final assignment, and somebody said, "Miss, like speak where AI is telling me what it is. I'm like, "Well, I said, "Listen, I'm gonna send this back. I'm gonna be. I am do you favor. I'm not even gonna grade this. Do it over. Do my AI tell me what it is. I don't. I don't want to hear AI spots. So yeah, but it's an interesting time to be living in. It's an interesting time to really take your stance as a human being because AI is going to challenge that. Yeah. And. And and because AI is going to challenge that, you get to show how dynamic human beings can be. So you you got to question AI. You got to put it in its place. You got to decide. You have to be intentional about how you use it and what you take from it. Yeah, yeah. And the funny, the good thing with AI is that you can put some wild ideas in there and say, "How far? What can I do with this? And it will give you a response. It will help you crystallize what you have in your mind. But if you don't, if you don't have the background to it, then you can't ask the questions that you can ask. You know, it won't spark any ideas. It just won't. Yeah, and I don't. I think people here complain a lot. They just complain. And then, guys, you got purple switch. You got to follow electricity. You get water on the tree pipes, and you're complaining. What are you complaining about? What? Yeah, yeah. So for me, it's fascinating. I travel a lot because it's fascinating to see how people live in different places and the things that people take for granted.

Speaker 1 1:08:43

Yeah, because that's that's definitely something I know I want to do over the next couple years. Just travel, just

Speaker 2 1:08:50

yeah,

Speaker 1 1:08:51

just go in with the open mind and just experience.

Speaker 2 1:08:56

And here you guys can study abroad. You should try to do that, even if you just want. This is so important. Yeah, let's do. But people here tend to want to go in packs. Different not going. They're not going, and that doesn't make any sense. Doesn't make any sense. You've got to, you've got to give yourself exposure. If you don't expose, not expose other people. You don't mind being different. You run to the pack. You know just what the path does. Yeah, you go to the people and you you learn to you learn a little bit more about yourself as well, and you learn to adjust, adapt, amend. You know that kind of business. So you give yourself the opportunity to just explore and grow. Life in itself is an adventure. You don't know what tomorrow is going to bring, but you have your stale self today that you got to mention tomorrow, which means you got to do some adaptation tomorrow. I've

agreed to you. You got to you got to deal with it, right? Because you don't know what's coming tomorrow, and the only way to you're taking what you have today, which is stale, to deal with the new day, which is tomorrow. Which means that, in some way, shape, or form, you're ready to adapt or adjust, because that's new, and you do that based on what you know and what you don't know. You go look for information, you find out. So it's an adjustment. Yeah, but it's it's it's a wonderful time to be alive. And I hear young people here saying, "I'm depressed. What? With what? Oh my God! I love opportunities. You just have to be able to behave enough, explore it, and you don't have to do it like everybody else does. You don't have to. You know, it's just interesting. Interesting to watch. People want to be cookie cutters. You are not. To be a cookie cutter, twins are not the same. Quadruplets are not the same. Everybody's got their own different personalities. They've got their purposes in life, and they're gonna just be who they are. And you've got to learn to embrace that. People tend to look at somebody else and say, "I wish there's more horses, beggars would ride, but they ain't horses, and so you can ride. You do with what you have. You either prove it, you prune it, you grow it, you take care of it, and you launch it. Right? People don't want to do that. They think it's no. It's cause for effort. You can't feed yourself if you don't raise your hand to your mouth, right? And if you try putting your face down there, buddy, you don't kill yourself. You can't breathe because everything goes your nose. So it's it has to be action. It has to be effort. Yeah, you gotta put the effort in. And sometimes you don't wanna do it, but who's gonna do it for you if you're gonna do it for you? At some stage in life, you have to take the responsibility that you've got to do it. Be kind to yourself. If there's something that you don't want to do, you you just say you know I gotta be kind to myself. You just gotta get done and give yourself the best possible chance of succeeding. And success doesn't always look like an A. Sometimes success looks like a C because there's a particular course that's gonna give you a hard time, and you even gotta put the hours and the effort in it, and all you can get is a C boy. But that C is like you just win the lottery. Like boy, look, I am so happy. Yeah, but that's life, right? But if you go in with the mentality that y'all just have to have an A. No, no. You get to determine the outcome with a lot of the stuff. And sometimes people, there's things people see failure as an F as a failure. But sometimes that F is to say to you that there's some things that you're doing that's not court where you want to go. It was like I have students compromise and said, "What is your major? And they say, "Undeclared. What? I said, "Okay, do me a favor. Pull up the libraries. Pull up the university's website. Let's see academics.

Speaker 2 1:13:20

Let's see where undeclared is on that list, and this is not there. I said, "Well, it's not a major. It's what it's saying to me is that you haven't made up your mind what you want to do, and I'm going to say to you, of all the subjects that the university is offering, find something that interests you. It might not be the measure you end up with, but find something. But if you remain unclear, you're literally walking around with a fish rod, hoping that you can find fish in the grass. You guys start go find where you can fish, So you need to start someplace. The closest thing would be to a

pond. Only clear doesn't help you. I know some people get upset with me, but it's the truth. Only play doesn't help

Speaker 1 1:14:17
you.

Speaker 2 1:14:17
At the end, you you finish the two semesters on what? You still don't know what you want to do, and somebody's paying for this. You're not being fair to them. No, no, no. You're just not being fair to them. Do yourself a favor. Find find something you're interested in. It's just interesting, and I guess because I come from a different background, here people don't. tell you. People don't tell you. They don't give you the facts. They don't tell you like they did. They kind of, well, they tell you, but it's not so bad. What does not so bad mean? But you're going on a track that's not leading you anywhere. Look, undeclared is not a major. Fighting a major. You could be mad with me. That's fine. And at least you think about it. Somebody said, "Okay, just do what you want until you figure it out. How many years are you going to think to figure this out? What? No, you're only young once. Time goes every day is another day to your next birthday, and after a while, the bird is add up, and you recognize that you're not eight anymore, you're not six, you're not 10, or you're not 18 anymore. So yeah, yep. But I've done spill. Keep you all here for the rest. My kids used to say, "You keep these people for the next two hours. But yeah, that's all right. But yeah,

Speaker 1 1:15:46
thank you so much.

Speaker 4 1:15:47
You're so welcome

Speaker 1 1:15:48
for your insight. I mean, it's it's open up my eyes a lot, and definitely I've I've always had an open mind, but definitely just even open up my mind more and just being grateful for the things I have and not taking things for

Speaker 2 1:16:00
granted. Strangers. thing is here you get here. Think people think that an accent means that ignorance and it annoys me so much like that. Really, if you know where those people came from to get here, you would have you would want to talk to them. You really want to find out, and they'll tell you stuff that you'd be shocked. Yeah, yeah. Guyana, Guyana, yeah, and that's the other thing. When I tell people from Guyana, they say Guyana, Ghana, Guyana's program, vastly different continents together. So yeah, yeah. Look, you know, the the thing is, people hear.