

The logo for "Voices of Our Region" features the word "Voices" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Above the letter "i" in "Voices" is a stylized human figure with arms raised, emitting three curved lines representing sound waves. Below "Voices" are the words "OF OUR REGION" in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font.

Voices

OF OUR REGION

Interviewee: **Tiphonie Annan**

Interviewee Number: **28**

Interviewers: **Athena Aardweg and Tony Buba**

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Tiphannie Annan
May 29th, 2008

Wave 1

Tiphannie: Uh, my name is Tiphannie Annan. I'm originally from New York but I ended up coming down here in an ugly custody battle. My mom moved down here. I was um abused in my childhood by my stepfather and my mother, um, never ever learned how to be loved. I always thought that it to love someone you had to hurt them, and, you know that's the way I learn love. Uh, my stepfather sexually abused me. Um, all my life I've lived in fear that he was coming back and that he was going to hurt me. And I still to this day I live to that fear. Um, I was so traumatized that I didn't know how to make a friend or how to keep a friend. I thought that in order to love myself I had to harm myself. So I resorted to things like cutting and uh stuff like that. I was... my mother, when I was kid. My mother when I was a kid, she took a knife... from one side of my head to the other and said "this is what parents do to their kids." She had, of course, she had me sit down and she said "I'm gonna do you your hair" and she took a knife and cut my head and...

1:39

Voice 1: How old were you?

Tiphannie: I was 5.

Voice 1: And that was in Pittsburgh? What, when did you move to Pittsburgh?

Tiphannie: That was that was right after we moved to Pittsburgh. Yep, my mom used to say "well, wait 'til I send you to your father." And in my head I wanted to say "well send me then, don't threaten, send me." But I was always afraid of my parents. I was always afraid to say stick up for myself. You know, I would either, they would either. It wasn't really hard to break my bones when I was a kid 'cause I got a brittle bone disease. (2:18) But uh, they managed... to... have me with a broken bone like every other day practically. And the doctors were like "Well she has a bone disease, but she shouldn't breaking bones this often." And they'd say "Well, she ran into a door." Or "she fell off her bike," which I never learned (2:43) how to ride a bike so I don't know how I would ever fall off a bike. You know, I've done some pretty stupid stuff in my childhood, but to fall off of something I never learned how to ride, that my mom would never ever let me ride. You know what I'm sayin'? And, um... One time my little sister was born and I was 8 years old. My mom was holding my sister. And she looks at me and she goes "I don't need you in my life anymore. I have another little girl. She can take your place." And right then I got real jealous, ticked off. Wanted to like kill my little sister and she's an infant. (3:26) But my mother put those there because, you know, she said that. And all my life all I wanted was for my mother to love me, that's it, just my mother's love. Not any mother, my mother. And when they took me out the house, me and my brother thought thought it was a joke. We were laughing. We sitting there thinking "All right, mom playing this cool joke on us." So we thought it was a joke. And then our caseworker comes, take us from school and she goes "We're gonna to take you to another home." We thought it was a joke. We got into the CYS office and they said "Bobby you're going to Auberly. Tiphannie, you're going to emergency foster care." When they split us up... I mean it was like the end of the world to us. And I fought, kicked, screamed until they placed us together again. Uh, they diagnosed me with a mental health disorder. And my brother, they said he was normal. Because he didn't fight, kick, and scream. (cough) So, but at 12 years old... and they put um... both of us at the Western

Psych on the John Merk unit. (bird sounds) They tried to say I was MR or autistic because I rock every now and then and stuff like that and that was just... When I rocked, it was a comfort thing. You know. So by the time I was 13 they took that "autistic" off my chart. (laugh) And I ended right back in Western Psych, though because one of my foster parents read my journal. And she didn't like what was in there. I'd a list of ways to harm myself, but no intentions on doing it. You know. At 13 you... people write things down, you know, just to get them out. But my foster mom (unintell. at 5:30) said I let my journal out. No, my journal was underneath my clothes in a bottom drawer. She had to a been snooping. And I got really mad. You know and I said some things I didn't mean and I was told I couldn't go back there. So then I went into uh... APA and stuff like that. And in APA I learned that...

5:58

Voice 1: What's APA?

Tiphannie: Alternate Program Associates. It was a group home for... kids. And there I learned that... you can get restrained and get your anger out. So then that's what I started doing. Every time I got angry I... do something to get restrained. You know. And to me getting you restrained was a game. You know. You get restrained you get your privileges back. There are no consequences to being restrained. None. You get restrained. You get let out. You get your privileges back.

6:37

Voice 1: So what year were you, how old were you when you were there?

Tiphannie: 12

Voice 1: For how long?

Tiphannie: 12. I went to Kansas when I was 12. This is all my 12th yr.

V1: OK.

Tiphannie: Yeah or so. And then I found out that my aunt in Kansas wanted me.

V1: Uh huh.

7:00

Tiphannie: But then we had this lady at a one a ADPH want to adopt me. It was either the lady (laugh) at APA that wanted her, where her house smells like dog poo, or go out to Kansas. And try to live a normal life (unintell.) (7:17) And then I find out that the people trying to adopt me are on my stepdad's side of the family. That was really nice. I did everything I could to get sent back town to Pittsburgh.

7:29

Voice 1: So you sent to Kansas, er?

Tiphannie: Yeah. I did everything I could to try to get sent back down to Pittsburgh. Because that was my stepdad's side of the family. I didn't want to be up there in, in, uh, his side of the family.

V1. So how long were you there?

Tiphanie. Oh 3, 4 months.

V1: And then you came back?

7:46

Tiphanie. Yeah. I said "I wanna go, go back." "Why?" "I just wanna go back." I don't want to say because you're my stepdad's side of the family. And that's not (laugh) I mean (laugh)... You know I found that out... and I'll buy my own plane ticket back. Just send me back. I came back and I went into... At 13 years old I came back. Had my 13th birthday up there. Then I came back and then I was placed in several other institutions and finally ended up in Holy Family Institute. And there I learned again that if you want to get out of trouble you get restrained. (laugh) That's all, that's all every place was teaching me. You get held down and you get back up and you're in no more trouble. You know. That's what I was taught.

8:43

Voice 1: So then how long were you at Holy Family.

Tiphanie: From 13 to 15.

Voice 1: Mm hum.

Tiphanie: Yeah I was... (both are talking together)

Voice 1: (unintell) was it a school or how is I don't know this structure.

Tiphanie: Holy Family Institute?

V.1: Yeah.

Tiphanie: I was in the institution part where was a, uh, a client there.

Voice 1: OK. Hmm.

Tiphanie: So one day, me and my brother get this crazy idea. We're gonna run away. From the bus stop cause we were in public schools.

V.1: Um hmm.

Tiphanie.: We gonna run away from the bus stop. We all the way to Rex, Wexford. Cops stop us, ask our names. I'm Shawna and that's what's his name. I couldn't even think of a name for my brother. (laughs) "Who are yinz?" "Shawna and what's his name." Exactly what I said, "Shawna and what's his name." "How do you know him?" "He's my brother." "Ok, you don't know your brother's name but you know he's your brother." "Uh, yeah." "Get in the car." "No." (laughs) Where's... An then I used to always... hide in his ditch in a, in a hill. I'd go and hide there. I was so tiny.

End wave at 9:59

Tiphanie – Wave 2

Tiphanie: I'd go and hide there and I'd walk right past me looking for me. It was fun. They don't... They walk right past me looking for me. And I just stand up and say, "Hey, y'all looking for me?" "Where was you?" "Right here in this ditch." (laugh) I'd go upstairs and into the cottage, Nazereth Hall, and they sits there they say... they sit there and they say... Oh what would they say? They'd say "Tiphanie's up to her tricks again." Yep..eh, eh, ehha... And then I knew I's gonna get in trouble so I do something to get restrained so I wouldn't get in trouble. (laugh)

Voice 1: So you were there, you and your brother werer both there? (unintell.)

Tiphanie: Yep.

Voice 1: (unintell.) were 15.

0:44

Tiphanie: Yep. And when I when I was 15 right... about 6 month before I left there... my mother, I was going to see her. She decide she gonna start a fist fight. She decided she gonna punch me. Uh and I had the last straw. I wasn't taking it. But she wanted to punch me. I walked through the door I get a punch in the face I turn around and I... for some reason I didn't hold back that time. I hit her right back. My therapist from there was shocked. He sat there and just stood there for the first couple seconds we was fighting. And when I actually overpowered my mother... at 15, he was like "What do I do?" (laugh). He said "Now I knowed I could restrain Tiphanie but I can't restrain her mother. (laugh) And I had a pretty big thera... Matter of fact, I still do talk to my therapist from there.

Voice 1: um hmm

1:50

Tiphanie: Oh, yeah, he said... He said "Tiff, your mom has some issues." (laugh) He said, he said "Your mom um..." what's that called? (unintell.) My mom is, is part of the reason why I have my issues. And he keeps telling me if I let go of my mother my issues would probably be gone. And, and, you know what? Sometimes, sometimes you can't. You know sometimes... And they have me in so many foster homes it's like "Well we try to give you a mom." I don't want any mom. I want my mom. You know, you can bring the nicest person in the world to me. And that's not gonna be what I want. I want my mother. I know my mom ain't rich, my mom may have abused me and that, but I still want my mother, the mother that brought me into this world.

Voice 1: So then, what happened (unintelligible)

2:51

Tiphanie: I got put in Mayview for the 1st time.

Voice 1: OK. For..

Tiphanie: I was at Mayview for about 3 weeks and they let me go. And at 16 I got put in Mayview again. I become, I become addicted, like physically addicted, to being held down.

Voice 1: Um hm.

Tiphanie: Um because of that's how I grew up.

Voice 1: Right.

Tiphanie: So. The addiction was there. It was already set. And I could not be in a setting like I am now because I needed to be held down. And so they had to put me in places where I could be held down because, that's the behaviours I displayed. And it's just recently that I had given up those behaviours.

Voice 1: So angry... (Tiphanie. Coughs) in between Mayview, were you still at Holy Family?

3:47

Tiphanie: Nope. I was thrown from here to there, here to there.

Voice 1: In the foster care homes or just..?

Tiphanie: Foster care and other places.

Voice 1: Ok.

Tiphanie: Until I's 18 an when I's 18 they stuck me in the adult mental health. And then I was stuck in group homes, adult group homes. And you know no adult group home would take me anymore. So...

Voice 1: Why?

Tiphanie: Because of my aggressive acting out, self-abusive behaviours. And then I's up at Torrence a year ago, right before here. And my I had a doctor that had a lot of faith in me. And that helps. You know if you have faith in a person. Because most doctors would sit there an say "You're going back to the group home." Well the doctor looked at my charts. You know read my charts, read my background history. And then he started me on some different meds. And then he helped me see that medicine isn't the only answer. You know. And then he gave me all these different skills like DBT skills and...

Voice 1: What are DBT ..

Tiphanie: Oh, emotional skills that you can use, so you don't make a situation worse. So he taught me all of dose skills and ways to calm myself down when I get upset.

Voice 1: This is at Torrence?

5:18

Tiphanie: Yep.

Voice 1: Ok.

Tiphanie: And, well, I had a choice Mayview or Torrence. I've been in Mayview 7 times...It didn't help. I'd get, I'd get out of Mayview 3 days later I'd be back in. And I said to the hearing officer when they was gonna send me to Mayview I said "Why don't you try something different?" He said "What do you mean?" "Instead of sending me to Mayview, why don't you send me somewhere where they offer treatment? Not like a holding cell." So he sent me to Torrence. I had... You know what? I've only had one hospitalization since I've been out. And that was a 2 day one. And I bounced back from it pretty quick.

5:57

Voice 1: That's great. Hmm. So what do they teach you there that really stuck with you ... the...

Tiphanie: The fact that, you know, just because you have one setback or anything like that, doesn't mean you failed. You haven't failed until you've stopped trying. You know and when you say "Screw it I'm done. I can't do it," that's when you fail. With you... Like I did, if you get up and you can't get out and come back on the outside and you go "I'm gonna try harder to not do what it is that got me back in there," you have not failed.

Voice 1: So then how did you get to here?

Tiphanie: Here?

Voice 1: This apartment. Um hmm.

Tiphanie: Ok. My doctor told me "Hey Tiff, I'm gonna give you a chance." Ok. He said "You have this much time to prove to me that you don't need to be in a group home." He said "Cause we're thinking about putting you in an apartment setting." He said "But everyone else but us an your team at Western Psych. team when, when they had you they wouldn't put you in an apartment. They wouldn't put you in an apartment. They think you should be in NLTSR. Prove to us that you don't need to be in one." Sure enough my attitude changed and everything. And uh what I did was I admitted to my team that a lot of stuff I did was for attention, number one. And that's very hard to admit. As I look when I do this, this and this. This is for attention. Ok... Then I said "I am addicted to people holding me down." I said "I wanna stop that addiction because if I don't I will never be able to, to move into this apartment setting." Cause they were talking bout all addictions and they had me in this group an I'm not addicted to stuff an I said "Wait I got one addiction that I will be, that's hard for me to admit but I won't be able to..." I said "I'm addicted to people holding me down." I had, they also had a crop and I's like "No, no. I don't need that kind of attention for that." They said "No, Tiff, that's a big step you made." That's what he told me. He said... They said "I don't know any other borderlines who could sit there an admit that." That's what they told me. You ask any borderline they're not gonna tell you they're addicted to being held down or they're addicted or they need certain types of attention. (8:45) And now if I need attention for myself I'll call up, they'll be like "But why you calling?" "I justwan some attention."

Voice 1: Um hmm....mmm.

8:55

Tiphanie: And it takes it a takes a big person to sit there and say "Hey, I just want some attention." Because I've learned now... I relearned that it's better to get attention in a positive way than it is in a

negative way. Because the attention you get in a negative way is not the right kind of attention. And I learned that. And like they say, medicine isn't the only thing either. You can't get better from medicine alone. You know. You can't. Medicine ain't gonna... Oh, when they give you heart, when you have a heart problem. That medicine isn't the only reason why your heart's doing better. You gotta exercise...

Voice 1: Right. Watch what you eat and...

Tiphanie: Uh huh.

Voice 1: Right.

Tiphanie: Uh and so it... my mental illness ain't gonna get better just because I take meds.

Voice 1: Right.

9:50

Tiphanie: Just because I take meds don't mean "Hey I'm taking my meds. I'm fine." No, you have to exercise your mind. You have to go to your groups, you have to talk...

Tiphanie – Wave 3

Tiphanie: ...about your feelings. And it's, believe it or not, I was told this too. You still have to exercise to keep your men, mental ill, mind... Believe it or not, you do.

V. 2: So what's borderline?

Tiphanie: Borderline personality is basically, um, when a mother and their child does not connect as a baby. The person... they, uh, the child... It's kinda hard to explain. The child does not connect with the mother and the child longs for the mother. And it, uh, usually the person grows out of that. But that person will involve in cutting or superficial scratching. Stuff like that, or attention seeking behavior.

Voice 1: (unintelligible)

Tiphanie: Yeah.

Voice 1: But the emotional attention is always something that's longed for.

Tiphanie: Yeah.

Voice 1: From what little I know.

:59

Tiphanie: Yeah. Li li lie like when I say I want my mother, that's I that's part of my borderline. 'Cause most people if they went a foster home, they'd be happy with the foster home.

Voice 1: Someone that loves them and gives them the attention that...

Tiphanie: Right. But I want my mother, not any mother. That's part of my borderline. Because any any other person, "Oh yeah, I'll go live with you, you're like my mom." What me, no, I gotta have my mom. Or like, like I, like we have a male staff here who's my favorite. Because he's like a dad to me. Now, that's transference. And borderlines have trouble with that all the time. Usually with their, uh... like me...it's a male. Now usually females have trouble with transference on males.

Voice 1: Um hmm.

Tiphanie: That's a big problem with female borderlines.

Voice 1: So, uh, what role does your mom play now?

Tiphanie: What?

Voice 1: I said, what role does your mom play in your life right now?

Tiphanie: None.

Voice 1: None.

2:10

Tiphanie: My mom and I don't even talk. I don't even know where she is. (laugh) But I do talk to my grandma and I did locate someone in my dad's side of the family. I sent him some pictures and it was pretty wild. He said I'm a splitting image of his mother, whenever she was younger.

Voice 1: So and your mom's mom, is that who you were talking to... or your..?

Tiphanie: My mom's mom. It's pretty wild, though, to get an A1 phone call, and I guess their son was on their answering machine. And it sounded just like me. I was sitting there thinking "The heck? I can't be on that side of the phone and this side of the phone, too."

Voice 1: And what about your brother?

Tiphanie: Which one?

Voice 1: You have more than one? The brother that you ended up wanting to live together with?

3:11

Tiphanie: Oh, he's he's uh... It's kinda tricky because some people say he's my whole brother but then you know you get the other thing. So uh... I don't even know (laugh).

Voice 1: Ok, so you don't talk to him... like you did when you were younger?

Tiphanie: No. I guess he got hurt and upset the like I have a real... uh... real iffy, uh, like my mental state can come and go sometimes. So, it hurts him... to see me like that so I guess he wanted to cut all ties. Who doesn't? Plus he's got like 8 kids, 29 years old. I told him to to, uh, tie a knot around it.

Voice 1: (laugh) Yeah, that's quite a few.

Tiphannie: Uh, uh well last time I talk to him he ast me to take of his kids. I say I say "Bobby, I'm in a supervised setting, what you want me to do with this, bring all eight kids here?" I asked Where, where they gonna sleep? What they gonna do if someone goes off?" (laugh) "Aunt Tiff, take your little 8 little ones an go to your room." (laugh)

V.1: Mm. And then did you ever get to know the, your younger sister and you know (unintell.)

Tiphannie: Nah.

Voice 1: ...cause that seems like it was a really stressful y'know experience, but I just wondered if at any point...

4:36

Tiphannie: Well, I did smash her fingers in a doorway. I didn't do that on purpose though. My mom claims I did, but I didn't. I got pissed off at Mom slammed the door. My sister was screaming. "The hell she's screaming for? I'm the one who's pissed off." I couldn't figure why she was screaming. She's sitting there screaming. Next thing I know my mom comes in yelling at me. I'm like, "What did I do?" "You chopped off your sister's fingers." I ain't got no knife, I can' do that. She is blaming me and blaming me. "I hope you're happy now." I had no idea what she was talking about.

Voice 1: So then growing up um, kind of uh how is the role of school?

Tiphannie: Yeah school wasn't too... I've acted out in school a lot. I would throw desks. If the teacher gave me an F, I threw her desk. (laugh)

Voice 1: And so um, did you were you in and out of school then, or did you just kinda get to a point where you... there were you know like where you just didn't go anymore or...

Tiphannie: I went to school to school to school trying to find a school that would keep me.

Voice 1: Public schools?

Tiphannie: Yeah. And when I went up to Westmoreland County, they had me in a stupid partial school where the teacher didn't check our work. I caught him on that. I put all the wrong answers down. He gave me a hundred percent. I thought that was interesting. I purposely put all the wrong answers down. He gave me a hundred percent. I say "'scuse me, teacher." "What?" "How could I get a hundred percent?" "Cause you did good." "Yeah but I put all the wrong answers down." "Really?" "Oh yeah, I did it on purpose to see if you was paying attention." Oh yeah, it was funny. And then I took it home an I showed my foster mom. (laugh) "Mom, look, I got all these right." And I, you know what, the worst part about it was I purposely missed 'em and he marked 'em right. (laugh)

Voice 1: So then you had said that you are working on your GED now?

6:43

Tiphanie: Yep. Well, once I got 18, um, they realized that I was gonna be in school til I was over 21. And they... (laugh) "You're dropping out of school. We ain't paying for it." (laugh)

Voice 1: Mm. Uh who's "they"?

Tiphanie: CYS... So zaps... I I didn't even get to the 9th grade.

Voice 1: Mm. So then who encouraged you to start going back?

Tiphanie: I I I did. I um, I keep wanting to go back. And then I like get real stressed out when I start going back for a couple weeks then I have to quit for a little while, then I have to go back, then I have to quit. You know 'cause..my mental state's kinda fragile. And then people are like whyn't you go to work? Naw I did something when I was 18 that I'm not proud of at work. They had me working at McDonalds when I was 18. (Voice 1: Yeah.) And I did something I'm not too proud of.

Voice 1: Well I think that that doesn't mean that you can't work again. You know.

8:04

Tiphanie: No what I did (laugh) is major.

Voice 1: Yeah. Major like you can't get hired again?

Tiphanie: Yeah. Not at a fast food or any food restaurant that deals with meat things. Cooking... I coulda got, I coulda went up for attempted murder. But my uncle got me out of it 'cause he's a lawyer. He claimed mental insanity. Yeah. And I don't even remember doing that. They said I put someone's head on a meat thing. And I don't remember doing that.

Voice 1: You don't, you say? Oh, like a person's head? Huh.

Tiphanie: I don't remember doing it. I wonder if I really did? I don't know, but I ain't trying to look back into it.

Voice 1: Right. Well I mean I think though there are other jobs that you know um...

9:07

Tiphanie: Oh you know what? I don't think I really did that though because if I did I'd a had a felony and I wouldn't a been able to get in this program. 'Cause this program you can't have any criminal charges.

Voice 1: And what do you what program do mean by this program?

Tiphanie: Leland support, supervised support of housing.

Voice 1: Leland?

Tiphanie: No. It's called "Specialized Supportive Housing, Mercy." Yep.

Voice 1: So how did you get involved in this program then?

Tiphanie: I've been um, in mental health for ages. And, um, my team put a referral in here. And they accepted it. So I was placed here.
End wave 3 at 9:59

Voice 1: So how does this work for you?
Tiphanie Wave 4

Tiphanie: Very well. This is the place I've been at the longest. Where I ain't gotta be held down (laugh).

Voice 1: Uh huh. That's wonderful. So what is what is been the most challenging part so far for ya?

Tiphanie: Keeping my cool under uh, extreme circumstances. There been times I just wanna cuss someone out and I gotta keep my cool.

Voice 1: Hm. Well then on the other side what's you know inspired or motivated you to keep going?

Tiphanie: The fact that if I can do it, anybody can. And that I wanna keep on showing people that, it's hard, but they can do it. You know, just because, you know, everything's not handed to you on a silver platter. Ok. You gotta work for what you get. And it's not gonna be easy either.

V. 2: So is this why you're going to participate in this, so you can get this message out?

Voice 1: Yeah, how did you hear about...?

Tiphanie: There was a little thing paper up in our (unintell.) office.

Voice 1: Ok. Just we're just I was just curious on where it's going an how people are hearing about it 'cause we have a wide variety. Well let's um, I thought I would talk a little about um, like the, you know, the MHMR community and the supportive services and perhaps lack thereof or kind of, you know, you seem to have a pretty good understanding of what's available and have experience in that. Kind of you know you could talk about your take on that and what's been helpful or what even where we silll need some major improvements...er...

1:54

Tiphanie: I think that there are a lot of people out there who are rejected by the mental health. You know, that can't get mental health services. And, um, I think that they should be available for those people, too. You know even the ones who don't have health insurance and that. Because, I mean, like me, I have health insurance given by the state an all that. And stuff like that and I, because I came from a mental institution that I will always have it. But what about those who really are out there that need help and are rejected and end up in jail because they don't get help? You know what I'm saying? I mean there're so many people sitting in the penitentiary right now that needed the mental health help, and couldn't get it, so they went out and did something. I mean, I mean what's up with those people? I mean, my team can be at my beck and call at any moment. But those people have nothing. (3:03) And that's all because the government's snatching people's insurance and SSI

and stuff like that. And that's why I'm not voting for Hillary. Because she sat there and said she's taking away the MH SSI.

Voice 1: So do you think as a society then we still don't, um...

3:25

Tiphannie: Understand the MH.

Voice 1: ...understand and acknowledge it as being, um, not that I really like to (both talk together)

Tiphannie: As an illness.

Voice 1: ...as a encompassing kind of factor that is...

Tiphannie: Right. I think they try to brush it under the carpet. You know, just, we don't need to see this. As a they they still do it. It's still stigmatized. And you walk out into the street and you say, you talking about, if you talk about a mental illness... it's bad. It's "We're crazy." And it shouldn't be that way. If you talk about your heart condition they ain't gonna go "Ooo, well, you're bad. Or you're... Or diabetes." But you're talking about mental illness. And that's not even right.

Voice 1: So then where um... What services or kind of situations were helpful? Or what do you think we should provide more of?

4:29

Tiphannie: You guys should provide more in-house services. Like if someone's in a crisis and they call crisis line... You guys should, uh, like you know suicide hotlines? Instead of sending the cops, ok, you should send a trained person. And them cops, they come in they're rude, ignorant. I'm telling you straight, they're rude they're ignorant. They are not sympathetic.

Voice 1: I didn't realize that the crisis line... So if you call though aren't, you're talking to...

Tiphannie: A person, and they're sending the cops while you're talking to em.

Voice 1: But they send the police?

Tiphannie: Yeah. You don't give permission. They do it anyway. I've seen that happen more than once.

Voice 1: Yeah. I've, um, that's very interesting that they don't send at least a therapist of some sort along...

5:26

Tiphannie: No, they just send the police.

Voice 1: Yeah. Hm. So then you said that you were, um, just a couple days ago in Western Psych.?

Tiphannie: No. I was in Jefferson.

Voice 1: Ok. And that was the 1st time since you've been in here?

Tiphannie: Mm hmm.

Voice 1: Well that's good. That's quite a while.

Tiphannie: I, and the reason why I know about how they send the cops, it's because I've had that experience. (laughing) They needed to send, if they're sending the cops, they at least need to send a trained person. Not someone who's gonna shoot tazers at you. (laugh)

Voice 1: Right, they just could look at you as some really uncontrollable animal or not as a...

Tiphannie: Exactly. They came in pointing tazers. I'm like "Whoa, whoa, whoa. I ain't gonna hurt yinz."

Voice 1: Right. If anything you'r more likely to...

Tiphannie: To hurt ourselves.

Voice 1: Right. Hurt yourself versus anyone else around.

Tiphannie: "Well how'd I know you ain't a lying moron?" I said "First of all don't call me outside of my name." I said "That's one thing that's gonna tick anybody off." The cop called me a moron.

Voice 1: That's very conducive to a calm situation. (laugh)

6:40

Tiphannie: Oh, yeah, they have good ways, don't they? They called me a moron. I wanted to kill him.

Voice 1: So now what?

Tiphannie: What do you mean, "Now what?"

Voice 1: Now, now what (unintell.). You seem to been able to work through quite a bit. And you are living in an aptartment that is yours and you know developed a bunch of behavior mechanisms to to recognize when you're starting to get apprehensive. You know, now what do you think?
Working on the GED.

Tiphannie: Yep. My suduko books in that book bag.

Voice 1: Uh I get so frustrated.

Tiphannie: Oh, I love em. But when I get frustrated I like put them back in the book bag so I don't throw them across the room. I got all my little nick-nacks.

Voice 1: Mm hm. So what are your you know what kind of what are your goals now? What are you thinking?

Tiphanie: My goals are to, um, continue to stay out of the hospital. You know, try again to get my, break my record. My record was just about a year. So, I'm gonna to try to break that record. Um you know, Tuesday, I go to group. I'm trying to get back into the groups thing instead of skipping groups. Try to mend and repair relationships and get rid of the ones I don't need. Ones that are troublesome. I use my skills to keep myself calm. I'll probably volunteer again at the animal shelter. I do that every now and then.

Voice 1: Yeah. Animals are always a good relief. They are for me. (laugh) Hm.

8:45

Tiphanie: Oh, I walk in the dog kennel an all the dogs wanna (dog sound).

Voice 1: So do you have like a hero or someone that you kinda always kept a spot... both maybe at you know a imaginary or type of you know like a TV type person or...

Tiphanie: Nope. My hero is God. Because if there, with my brittle bone disease, God kept me alive. People tell me I should've been dead at 12, then they tell me 18, then they tell me 25. And look I'm gonna be 31 next month.

Voice 1: So when did you when did you know that you had the brittle bone disease, when you were real young?

Tiphanie: When I was 10. I couldn't pronounce it until I was 10. (9:49) (medical terminology) type one. That's why I my doctors always say...

Tiphanie – Wave 4

Tiphanie: "Don't lose too much weight. Keep some fat on them bones." But then you go to another doctor and "Lose some weight you gotta lose..." And go to another one "Don' lose that much weight." I said "Can y'all confuse me anymore?"

Voice 1: (laugh) You need that perfect balance. (much laughter)

Tiphanie: I'd sit there. One says lose weight, one says don't, the other one says lose weight, don't... I said "Okay." As I look at them an say "Ok, y'all's confusing."

Voice 1: So you go to support group once a week?

Tiphanie: It's not exactly support group, it's game group. (laugh) That's why I choose it. (V. 1 says OK. Great) They that... "D'you want to go to the group on Thursday?" "Nope. No group on Thursdays." "Why? All ya got t' do is sit there an talk about your problems." That's the point. Well, she asked why I don't go to Thursday's groups. (both talk at once) That's why I go to Tuesday's.

Voice 1: ..in the beginning that you need to talk about your feeling and emotions and...

1:01

Tiphanie: Not in front of a whole group of people who just like me. (V. 1 laughs) Then I don't get to talk an they all talk an I be sitting there like "Nice group. I like how I get to participate."

Voice 1: Yeah. So Tuesdays you guys, you play games?

Tiphanie: Yep. I go play Bingo and do arts an crafts.

Voice 1: Oh, well that sounds enjoyable.

Tiphanie: Mm hm. The only thing...

Voice 1: What else do you do with your time?

Tiphanie: Um, today I'm going to pick out Bingo prizes with my staff 'cause we're doing Bingo here. Yep. I do my hair. (laugh)

Voice 1: So you do activities in the um in this area, something like the we (unintell.) complex.

Tiphanie: Yeah, it's a complex. Yep. And then like I'll write poetry. (untell.) find where my poem tablet is. Is that blue?

Voice 1: Uh, yeah.

Tiphanie: Yep that's it.

Voice 1: Would you have a poem that you would like to read or is your favorite or...

2:08

Tiphanie: I found a poem in a book oneday. And it's called "The Paint Brush". This is not by me, though. It's "I keep my paint brush with me wherever I may go, to use as a cover, so the real me doesn't show. I'm so afraid to show you me, afraid of what you'll do or see. Afraid you'll laugh or say mean things. I'm afraid I might lose you, oh, but then what would I do? I so truly want to remove all my layers to show you the real true me. But I want to try, I want you to try and understand, I need you to like what you see. So if you'll show me some patience and close your eyes I'll remove all my layers real, real slow. Please understand how much it hurt to let the real me show. Now that my layers are all stripped off, I feel naked, bare and cold. And if you still find me pleasing, you are my friend, as pure as gold. I still need to save my paint brush, though and hold it in my hand. Just in case there is somebody that still doesn't understand. (3:31) So please protect me, my dear friend, and thanks for loving me true. And please let me keep my keep my paint brush with me, until I learn to love me, too." And I have, and I have one very good one that I wrote myself. It's called "Thank You". It's called "Thank You" by Tiphanie Reagan Annon. That's me. "I want to thank you, each an every day, for showing us you care in your own special way. I want to thank you for the road you helped me choose. For it is face, faith that I will never lose. I want to thank you for all the things I outgrew and all the happiness that keeps me feeling new. I want to thank you just for being you, for now I know what I never knew. So through all the years, through the joy an through the tears, knowing that one day I will be able to turn around and say "Thank you for showing me along my way."

End wave 5 at about 4:42

Tiphanie – Wave 6

Voice 1: (laugh) (unintell.)... Um. Well do have any qrestions? What do you want to ask?

V. 2: Yeah. (?..it all?)

Voice 1: Really

V. 2: Yeah.

Voice 1: I feel like I'm missing some. We only have about 5 questions I think that we always ask.
Um..

V. 2: (Unintelligible) any advice?

Voice 1: Oh yeah, (unintell.) like that, um..try to just think of you know there's lots for you to tell us (laugh)..um geh I guess I really can't think of much else so, couldn't we try to end with if you have any advice for people or words to live by or you know kinda something that you fall back upon.

:47

Tiphanie: Um, what, whatever you do, just don't give up. Remember that it can only go up from here, you know. Even when you think you're at you're worst, you know, somebody else always has it worse off than you. That's the one thing I always remember. Even when I think I'm at my worst, things could never get any bet... worse. Someone always has it worse than what you got it. And you know what, if... and even if you do think you're at your worst, it can only go up from here.

V. 2: Yeah it use to be that was a movie years ago *I've Been Down So Long, Everything Looks Up From Here*.

1:38

Tiphanie: Mm Hm. And the other thing is God doesn't hand, give people what He thinks you can, can't handle. You can't handle it, God doesn't give it to you.

Voice 1: Well, thank you very much. I think that...

Wave ends about 1:54