

Larry Christian
Anoka State Hospital Oral History Project
31 January 2014
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Neal Holtan: Hello.

Larry Christian: Hello.

Neal Holtan: I am Neal Holtan. I am here interviewing Mr. Larry Christian as part of the Anoka State Hospital oral history project. Welcome and thank you for coming in.

Larry Christian: All right.

Neal Holtan: Maybe we can start with a little personal background. What year were you born?

Larry Christian: 1952.

Neal Holtan: And where did you grow up?

Larry Christian: North Minneapolis, Jordan Neighborhood.

Neal Holtan: Can you say a little bit more about that?

Larry Christian: I have five brothers, three sisters, a half brother, half sister. When I grew up, my neighborhood was fairly decent. It is now the most crime-ridden neighborhood between Chicago and LA. While I was growing up, though, me and brother, Doug, who has since passed on thanks to the National Guard giving him hepatitis C, we did everything together. We went as far as the river, we went over as far west as St. Louis Park, we went downtown, went up past the Camden neighborhood. I spent a lot of time at the Theodore Wirth Golf Course. They had an archery range there. Most of the city parts have – or the golf courses, the parks, they seem to have an archery range for them. We made our own arrows and we shot a lot. I learned to bow hunt from my father. He said you have to learn to take a deer with the bow to be humane before you could shoot a gun. I still prefer bow hunting.

The rest of my brothers and sisters were all younger. I do not even remember them too much. I was out, I had a motorcycle when my youngest brother was eight. Gave him a ride to Canterbury Park one time and I do not remember much about him. It was a pretty nice neighborhood back then.

Neal Holtan: And how about the school?

Larry Christian: I went to a Catholic school, Ascension in North Minneapolis. It was the biggest parish in the diocese. I have since gone away from the Catholic region. We have different issues. I try not to talk politics or religion but we discourse on it here once or twice, I will not get mad.

Neal Holtan: Okay, fair enough. Were both of your parents in the...?

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Larry Christian: My father grew up in – he was born in Weyerhaeuser. He moved to Northeast Minneapolis with his older brother and he died when he was ten. The Village of Weyerhaeuser in Wisconsin. Another kid died at the same time and there were no doctors there so they moved first to New Brighton and then to Northeast Minneapolis at 945 Central. He went to Edison High School. When I was born – he met my ma at a place called the Band Box. There used to be one on Central Avenue. And when I was born, I actually spent the first year of my life on Marshall before they moved to North Minneapolis. He was a postal worker for the Downtown Minneapolis Post Office. My mother, after she was done raising most of us, she worked at the phone company. Throughout her life, she worked at the phone company.

Neal Holtan: Did you know of any history of any kind of mental health issues in your extended family?

Larry Christian: No. The only thing that even came close to it is my mother had two brothers who, one of them got a young lady pregnant. The young lady joined a convent and he joined a monastery. I do not know if they think that was a mental health issue or not. I do not think so. I think that is hiding from reality.

Neal Holtan: Did you have any conflicts with other people or with even law enforcement?

Larry Christian: No, not with law enforcement, no.

Neal Holtan: Okay. I understand that you were committed to Anoka State Hospital, is that right?

Larry Christian: I spent six weeks in the Hennepin County Juvenile Center in downtown Minneapolis and I was given the option of going there or a place called Bar None Ranch, which is still up on 47 in the St. Francis area in Anoka County.

Neal Holtan: What was that all about?

Larry Christian: I had a bad temper.

Neal Holtan: Did you have any say in what was happening other than that choice that you...?

Larry Christian: No, no, I did not. I was actually pulled out of school. I was going to the vocational technical school in Downtown Minneapolis. It was the equivalent of a high school but it was for people learning a trade and part of the juvenile center.

Neal Holtan: That is the building where now it is part of Hennepin...

Larry Christian: I believe it is part of the government, yes. Because I have a friend that had worked in the basement. I went to see him and they have a guard. It is a lot of computer stuff down there, I believe.

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Neal Holtan: What years were you there?

Larry Christian: In the State Hospital?

Neal Holtan: Yeah.

Larry Christian: I believe '67 and '68.

Neal Holtan: And did your parents kind of help you decide on that?

Larry Christian: I think they kind of washed their hands with me because they had eight brothers and sisters to take care of. And in retrospect with my father having the life that he had, I do not blame him, okay? I do not blame my folks at all. They were just trying to do what they thought was best.

Neal Holtan: Did you know how long you would be staying at Anoka?

Larry Christian: No, I did not.

Neal Holtan: How did that feel?

Larry Christian: It was just something to do, you know? Like this is part of my journey in life.

Neal Holtan: Did you know what to expect at all?

Larry Christian: No.

Neal Holtan: Can you describe coming to the hospital and what that was like?

Larry Christian: Stuff from that far back is kind of hard to express feelings on because it is so far back in my past that I have done so many things since then. I will tell you, when I moved on my own and I bought my first motorcycle, okay? And it was a full sized Harley Davidson. I remember the first time I got on it and that first minute I was going fifty miles an hour, which was less than a mile from when I got on that thing, that experience I remember, okay? I love motorcycles. I can remember experiences on that. I can remember experiences when my daughters were born. When I went there, I do not know that I was even apprehensive. It was just like, "Okay, this is a new experience. Let's see what happens."

Neal Holtan: And did they give you a diagnosis or tell you what was wrong?

Larry Christian: No, no. I knew just okay, this is going to be the same as being – to me, it was the same as being at like a Bar None or something. You know, I have got to be here for some time. I might as well get used to it and learn to enjoy it.

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Neal Holtan: And how old were you?

Larry Christian: I was fifteen or – I would say sixteen.

Neal Holtan: What kind of experience did you have at the hospital?

Larry Christian: It was pretty good. They had an accredited high school and I will apologize for this right now. I meant to bring out – and if you want, I still will. While we were there, we did a yearbook – a one-year yearbook. I did photography. I was in the dark room, I developed all the pictures. And I brought it up recently to Duluth last Tuesday and showed a couple people. They were surprised at how good of shape it is. I still have it and like I said, I can bring it here.

We had gym, we had math, we had English, we had science. I found out I could – at that time, yes, I am a little bit heavy now. But I think when I was that age, I could probably beat most of the people doing the interview here. I could do a mile in five and a half minutes, okay? There was one guy that could go up a rope faster than me. I was pretty proud of that. And he was a little skinny runt. He is a good friend. He lives in Frederick, Maryland, and he is into motorcycles, also.

Neal Holtan: So it was mainly school?

Larry Christian: You spent your time doing school. It was a structured activity thing to keep you out of trouble pretty much. So I think it was just designed to – we had staff, if you do get in trouble. And I had one incident. I spent time in an area, it was seclusion. It was a small room. There was a metal cot with a mattress that was _____ [00:09:14] for a bed and a washbowl or a stool and that was it. And it was all metal.

Neal Holtan: What kind of behavior would warrant that?

Larry Christian: I was in a fight and I dislocated a kid's shoulder.

Neal Holtan: And that was at the hospital?

Larry Christian: That was at the hospital, yes.

Neal Holtan: Was that an uncommon or a common kind of thing?

Larry Christian: Well, for me, it was fairly uncommon. That was the only time. And I do not remember a whole lot of fighting by any of the other residents either. Periodically, somebody would. They would end up in seclusion for a week or two weeks or a month.

Neal Holtan: How many kids were there?

Larry Christian: I remember about thirty boys and might have been twenty to thirty girls. There were two separate wings for each of us. There was a common – there was the boys' wing.

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You walked, Administration down here, there was the school, and on the other side was the girls' wing. In between them is a school and lunchroom. I could pretty much draw a diagram of this.

Neal Holtan: So you interacted with all of the girls?

Larry Christian: Mostly with the boys. If you were in this – the classrooms were co-ed. Outdoor activities – and there were not a lot of them but the outdoor activities many times included the gals, also.

Neal Holtan: Did they actually give you degrees or diplomas?

Larry Christian: No, but it was accreditation towards the high school.

Neal Holtan: Okay. How much did you need for completing the high school?

Larry Christian: When I left there, I needed my senior year of high school, maybe not quite even that. I went to North Minneapolis High School for about three months and thought they were the strange people and left. Three years ago, I went through the Workforce Center because I had been let off for the first time. And I had collected unemployment in '75 and that is the only time up until three years ago that I ever had unemployment. And I went through a thing called the Workforce Center and this gal talked me into doing a GED. I took some tests, they said, "Okay, you can take the GED without going to school." I aced it.

Neal Holtan: Good for you.

Larry Christian: It has never held me back from getting a job, ever.

Neal Holtan: Back to the time at Anoka, were you aware of any other treatments or attention that you might have gotten?

Larry Christian: One or two people – and I will not say myself or not – I will just say one or two people had some electrical therapy shock treatments to calm you down. Bite a rubber pad, wake up two hours later.

Neal Holtan: So you were aware of that going on?

Larry Christian: Yes, I am aware of that, yes.

Neal Holtan: How often would that happen?

Larry Christian: Not very often.

Neal Holtan: And do you think it helped people?

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Larry Christian: I think so, yes. We did a tour of St. Peter's Hospital and we ran across a nurse who was – I think she was shocked that we were actually walking around. If you had shock treatments, why aren't you locked up in a place like this here, you know?

Neal Holtan: Did you interact with social workers and people like that?

Larry Christian: Yes, there were social workers there, and a psychiatrist plus the teachers.

Neal Holtan: And what did they do for you?

Larry Christian: Played ping-pong, played pool, played cards all day long with them when we were not doing a structured activity. And I think that was how they figured, just by socially interacting with them, if you played – you know, the ping-pong was just between other people there. It was the card playing mostly. And I do not remember much other activities there.

Neal Holtan: Did they do anything like career counseling?

Larry Christian: No, no career counseling. We did not do any tours off grounds of this place or that place or anything, you know, either for just to get you out or to look at a possible career. You know, I remember in junior high school, I took a trip up to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Nice area, I have got some friends up there. I can camp but it is not something I particularly would do all the time. Deer hunting, that is something else, that is not camping per se. But no, I think it was just like if we keep you in the building and we keep our eye on you, then you are going to be out of trouble.

Neal Holtan: Yeah. Who decided when you could leave permanently?

Larry Christian: For me personally? I do not think anybody decided. I just walked out one day and I never went back. It was like okay, that was it. Nobody came after me.

Neal Holtan: All in all, would you say it was pleasant, unpleasant, good, bad? For you.

Larry Christian: It was just a phase of my life so it was fair.

Neal Holtan: Where did you – you said you lived in a special area. What building was that?

Larry Christian: I do not think the building was built for us to start with. If you see a diagram of the Anoka State Hospital grounds, when you are driving up North 4th Street, first you come across some buildings here. They were actually residential houses and the nurses staying in them. Then there was a straight front across the front and it was like there was an auditorium on the top floor and in the lower level, there was like a store for people to shop. But then the whole grounds, it was like a whole bunch of buildings in a big circle like this here and we were actually north of that. There was a long, it was a single story building that was the Miller Youth Center, and that is where we stayed. North of that there was a farm and there was a graveyard. And I talked to somebody who

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said the graveyard is still in existence and those are people who actually died on the grounds of the Anoka State Hospital.

There was an underground tunnel at the State Hospital you could actually walk all the way around to see most of the buildings. I am not sure if most of that is existing still or not. I remember the Burns Building, which is where the most violent people went. And if they could not make it there, then they were shipped onto St. Peter's Hospital. But I never interacted – we never really interacted with any of those people. We might periodically see one going down to where they had this cafeteria store area but we never talked to them.

Neal Holtan: Could you go anywhere you wanted to on the grounds?

Larry Christian: On the grounds, yes. But it is like what are you going to do, walk around and see a bunch of buildings? So we just basically stayed there although periodically, there was Coon Rapids. The Rum River was right there, periodically walk along the river or else just go walking around. There were some fields right there, some woods. We would go walking in the woods.

Neal Holtan: Were you required to do any work?

Larry Christian: No.

Neal Holtan: How was the food?

Larry Christian: I do not remember anything special about it so it must have been tolerable, you know. It is not like Nye's.

Neal Holtan: [Laugh] What were the other people like in your program? Do you remember anything about them?

Larry Christian: Some of them were quieter and some of them were more outspoken. I know from experience and from having talked to other people there is at least one person in St. Peter's facilities right now. Twenty years ago, one father – one guy got into a business with his father. It was a collection agency. He had issues in his life, he had issues with his father and stabbed his father to death in front of his mother in their kitchen. I know a couple of other people have committed suicide but I know others have gone on to lead productive lives without letting what they did affect them.

My father worked at the post office. This is what I tell people. My father worked at the post office in Downtown Minneapolis. In the Downtown Minneapolis post office – he started there right after the war – there was a pistol range in the basement. People always talk about going postal. He was the Vice President of the Gopher Gun Club. Where I am from in North Minneapolis is the most violent area in the whole Twin Cities area. So I tell people I got two choices in life – I can go postal or I can enjoy life. And I enjoy life. I like guns, I reload quite a bit. But I enjoy life. Nobody is worth the cost of a twenty-five cent reload. If there is a shooting somewhere – and this is a statistic I

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just found out recently – of all the school shootings that have been happening lately, and it is a really sad thing, the amount of people that have been killed in all of those shootings in the last fifteen to twenty years is still less than the amount of people that have been killed within one to two years in the Chicago area – an area that bans guns in any way, shape, or form. It is a mental health issue. People who are psychiatrists should be required to have these people put in someplace like Anoka – it should be opened back up – or some other place where they can get mental health treatment. They say – and I have heard this all the time – people who are schizophrenics, they take their drug and then they stop taking their drug and then they go funky. They should be put in a place where they can be helped with that. Maybe not committed behind bars but in a place where they are going to receive the treatment for that. The average Joe on the street has no problem, it is just a periodic person who is off their meds or they were not raised right. They are not allowed to – when you raise your kids now, you are not allowed to give them a spanking. It is almost like people are afraid to even put their kid in a time out in the corner. Kids learn there are no boundaries, they can do whatever they want.

Neal Holtan: So this vision of having a place for people to go and get that kind of care, is that what you would say Anoka was like?

Larry Christian: I do not think that is what it was like then. I think it should become something like that now. I think psychiatrists are worried about the confidentiality agreement, as like a priest would. I think that is preventing this from happening so I think more shootings are going to happen. If it is not at a mall or a school or be it some little just – I do not know. I do not know how to deal with that. I just stay in my little world now. I have got my wife, I have got my girls, I have got my grandson. Another one is on the way.

Neal Holtan: Well, let's switch to that topic. Can you describe your family?

Larry Christian: I am married, I have got two girls. One is thirty-one, she lives right next door to me with my grandson. Two years ago, we cut a gate into the fence separating the two houses in the backyard so he can come over instantly anytime he wants to. He loves coming over and raiding our refrigerator. I am going fishing with him tonight after work. It will be the first time ice fishing. He is only five. He went fishing last year for the first time but I was not able to go with him because I have been in North Dakota for two years working. I am missing my grandson really bad.

My wife, in 1993, was in an automobile accident. She had surgery at Fairview Riverside Hospital. Fairview Riverside Hospital at that particular time, five people had the same surgery at the same time at the same hospital with the same doctor. All five were given part of a cadaver. That cadaver gave my wife a disease called systemic lupus erythematosus. Back then, they were not screened for that. They were just screened for hepatitis C and maybe AIDS. Systemic lupus erythematosus is an immune deficiency syndrome that causes the body to rot from the inside out. There is nothing we can do about it. She has had her left ear replaced once, her right ear replaced three times. We put her on steroids to try and make it go in remission. She ballooned from a hundred and forty-five pounds of this incredibly active gal that I still love to over three hundred and twenty-five pounds of severe depression and using a cane and a walker to get around. After her last right knee revision, she

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basically said, "Screw the whole world." She has been going to Curves, she has lost over a hundred pounds. She is actually going out without a walker or a cane. People do not even recognize her anymore because she has lost so much weight. We still cannot do a lot of things that we used to do but I took her on our first honeymoon this year for the first time – or last year – to New York. We did Niagara Falls, we did a carriage ride in Central Park, we walked to Times Square, which was over two miles or about a mile and a half. She is ambulatory for the first time. That is great.

My other girl, she married an Army guy down in El Paso, Tex-ass. They just got moved to Colorado Springs. She is expecting my second grandchild. He is also going to be a son. She came up for Thanksgiving and Christmas. I was sorry to see her go but they both know it is like this is what I have to do, I have to be able to pay the bills, so that is why I have been in North Dakota working.

I am a commercial industrial electrician. I am in the union and you have to do what the union tells you, although it is going to be good for my retirement in a few years. I will take North Dakota and then come back and I will be back this year at some point.

Neal Holtan: And how does your family do without you?

Larry Christian: We Skype and I come back every couple months. My wife is able to be self sufficient with my daughter right next door. That has been a big help, you know. And grandson goes over there and he takes care of Grandma, too.

Neal Holtan: Good. Can you say some more about what you do as an electrician?

Larry Christian: When I first started out, I used to wire old houses. It would be some house that was in – a lot of houses in Northeast Minneapolis. Crawl around a grungy attic, crawl around a grungy basement. When I first got into the trade, there was the big thing about energy. We put smoke detectors all over the place. I got away from that. I do not mind getting away from it at all. I went to commercial, did a lot of businesses. I worked for one outfit for seventeen years and then after I had a little bit of colon surgery, they decided, "Well, he is getting really old, we do not need him anymore." They laid me off. I have been working sixty-hour weeks out of North Dakota since then doing industrial work, which is a rigid pipe that you thread. You cut it, you bend it, you thread it to the exact specs. It actually requires to do more thinking, which I really like. And sixty hours a week, it keeps me out of trouble out of North Dakota. Not that I am saying there is trouble that I would get in because I am past my drinking days and my drug doing days and my going out with wild, wanton women days. But I can see where I could still get in trouble out there.

So working sixty-hour weeks is fine. The place I am working at, a lot of it is what is called an explosion-proof atmosphere so they use what are called seal-offs to prevent – in certain types of atmospheres, when you slip a switch or you plug something in, there is always going to be a spark. If I go to a wall in this building here and I flip a switch, there is going to be a spark, okay? When you are in an explosive atmosphere, it is going to be either paint or dust of some sort or another or vapors of some sort. You cannot protect – you cannot prevent those from getting inside the pipes. Even when it is a five threads per fitting to get this explosion-proof. So what they do is they contain

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it. Every switch, every receptacle has what is called a seal-off within eighteen inches of the box. After you have put your piping in place, you put your wiring in place, then you seal it off with a compound. That is like a liquid cement that hardens up. And if there is an explosion from a switch because vapor got in there, it actually contains the explosive so the whole place does not blow up – hopefully, theoretically. Like I said, it involves a lot more thinking. I enjoy that.

I was also a foreman for the last six months I have been out there. I do not know that I like it because I do not get to work with the tools and I just have to think a lot. And I do not mind thinking but it is five younger brothers and my wife that keep me on my toes so I have to exercise. So we will see how it works out.

Neal Holtan: Do you maintain any contact with people that you met at Anoka?

Larry Christian: Only in the last three to four years and only because of Facebook. I stumbled across one that lived in Columbia Heights. He got into drugs when he left. Afterwards, he ended up in Hazelden courtesy of the psychiatrist that we both knew. Then he became a drug counselor. He worked for quite a few years here in the Twin Cities then the company he was with shipped him off to CKE in Pennsylvania. He worked out there three or four months and then the company reorganized and laid him off. He just got a job with some other company out there. I stopped to see him November last year. He is doing all right. He has got a beautiful wife. Through him, I have met three or four other guys. And actually, he has had issues just like me. Last year, he contracted the flesh-eating virus. There was another name for it, fasciitis or something, and it actually went from his shoulder down through his arm. They just cut his arm right down to the bone all the way down. They put him on three vacuum pumps so suck off the poison and put antibiotics in him. He was in the hospital a month and a half and his medical bill came over, it was like a million, two hundred thousand dollars for a five or six-week stay in there. But he came out of it with his arm whole. We live strong nowadays. So it was really nice to see him and his wife. He is an old friend.

Neal Holtan: So how much do you guys communicate now, all of you?

Larry Christian: We talk all the time. I was just up in Duluth seeing a friend of mine in Coon Rapids. I just talked to him less than a month ago. We have stayed in touch quality bit because we had this experience together.

Neal Holtan: Do you ever talk about that shared experience?

Larry Christian: No. No, it is like when my father went to war reunions and for years he went to them. He helped set it up for these war reunions and the last two years that they were together – because I had gone to them so many times and because of what I did. They changed their bylaws and I was the only non-World War II member that was an officer in the 707th Tank Battalion Association, which I feel very proud of. But it is like that. When they went to those reunions, they did not talk about what happened there at all. If I was one-on-one with one of them, they would talk but that whole time, no. They were just visiting with each other and that is what I do with Bob

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Eckley [PH] and all the rest of my friends. Steve Stoyke was an artist in South Minneapolis on 42nd and Bryant. Now he is a minister out in Frederick, Maryland.

Neal Holtan: So Facebook has kind of changed things.

Larry Christian: Facebook enabled me to get in touch with them. And there is a personal messaging section with Facebook and I keep my settings pretty private. I think, I do not know. One of these kids might go look afterwards and see me. I do not think so, they do not care about an old man. No, it has enabled me to stay in touch with people, yes.

Neal Holtan: Do you think that is a positive thing for you personally?

Larry Christian: I do not know that I am going to get out East much more. Yeah, it is positive because you know, it is like when we would see the people from my dad's war reunion outfit. You see them one week out of the year. I love them all, I have become friends with them all. The same with these guys. If I had to interact with them every day, a couple of them, well, we might have some issues. We have different political views. Yeah, there might be some issues. But we get along because we do not see each other every day.

Neal Holtan: Do you think they all see it as positive, too?

Larry Christian: Yeah, I do.

Neal Holtan: Let me just check these notes a little here. You know, societal attitudes have changed towards mental health illnesses and institutions. What do you recall about how people viewed you being at Anoka back then – your family, friends?

Larry Christian: I have a brother that has been on the big island of Hawaii for twenty-five years or more. He used to call me mental. When we got Skype, the first thing I did, we spent five and a half hours on the phone. I was on Skype with him until 2:30 in the morning. We get along great and it has nothing to do with that. Just that was the term, I was mental, okay? But it is the only person I know of that has even said anything about it. I have never asked any of my brothers and sisters. I guess I really do not care, you know? They have their own issues, too.

Neal Holtan: Do you think your attitudes toward your time at Anoka has changed over the years?

Larry Christian: I might have been a little bitter when I came out of there because of what it was as far as denying me some of my life. But like I said, I never blamed my father. Who else would I blame, society? No, you know. That was my own making. So I am still the way I am today. I do not think I have changed that much. If you come messing with my wife or my kids, I will get meaner today that I was back then because I have a lot of guns now. But in the meantime, no, they stay locked and safe. I am not one of those one point two million that leave them unlocked and let some – my daughters or my grandson get around them. My older daughter, she actually just got into shotgunning. She did her first grouse hunt last year and she shot her first grouse. But we are very

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careful around our guns. You know, it is a safety issue. I was taught that at a very young age, you know? And she makes a lot more money than I do now. I am pretty proud of her.

For the people in the construction trade, there is a box that you get on with wheels underneath it and a motor. Usually if it is indoors, it is electric but if it is outdoors, it is gas or diesel. You drive around in a building, you push some buttons, you go up in the air. You can work on the inside of a building up high, okay? It is called a scissor lift. She buys, sells, and rents them for a company called Beaupre Aerial Lifts and last year, she was made a board member of the Minneapolis Buildings Exchange. Earlier this month, she was made a board member of the St. Paul Buildings Exchange, they combine them, and she was the only woman on the board. She makes a lot more than her husband. I think he is a little bit jealous but I do not care. He is going to have to learn to deal with it. She does really good for herself. Both my girls, I have told them at an early age, "Guys are assholes, don't take shit from nobody," and she does not. And she has no problem failing a guy if he gets smart with her during a training session. It is a matter of living your life and not letting people push you over but being aware of the fact that yes, other people have a right to say their sort of thing, too, even if it is Justin Bieber or some other little nut case, okay?

Neal Holtan: We have ranged around a lot of topics. Have we left anything out that you want to talk about?

Larry Christian: You are the interviewer. I am just answering – here to answer your questions.

Neal Holtan: Okay. Would not want you to have any burning issues that you were not asked about.

Larry Christian: No. Like I said, we are not talking politics or religion.

Neal Holtan: No. So any further comments?

Larry Christian: I think they should open it back up. I think they should have a place for people that have issues with their inner demons. I like to go to a gun range. If I have an inner demon, I get a powerful gun and I shoot it. And I shoot it a bunch until that urge is gone. I have taught my wife to do the same, my girls do the same. My younger one sleeps with a baseball bat because if it is not in a gunfight, I said, "A baseball bat is all you need." And we went to the Louisville Slugger factory. She has been all over the country, too. Both my girls, I have taken them all over the country to see how other people live. I like down South because people down there, even when they do not like you because you are a Northerner and they want to stick a knife in your back, they are still incredibly polite down there, okay? They were taught that from an early age, "Yes ma'am, no ma'am, yes sir, no sir, thank you ma'am, thank you sir." People should learn to be polite with each other. If you have an inner demon, keep it to yourself, although I do not know about that because some people say it builds up and builds up and builds up. Find a way to get it out. Draw a picture, shoot a gun, go jogging around a lake, keep your yappy little dog next to your side but you know, just learn to find a way to enjoy life. The other people, yes, there should be a place like that. Anoka State Hospital where they can get help.

Larry Christian
Anoka State Hospital Oral History Project
31 January 2014
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I do not know what else to say about it, you know. I cannot make the government do that. I think half the politicians should be there, too. I cannot do nothing about that either.

Neal Holtan: What would that look like, do you think? What would be done for people?

Larry Christian: I think the same thing that happened to me when I was there. Just have people around you that can learn to listen. I think listening to people goes a long ways towards letting people relax. If you want to talk to me, I am willing to listen all day because I know it will help you relax, help you just get rid of some stress. And if you will remember before this interview I started talking to you, that is what you have to learn to do is just get people to talk about themselves. Maybe it is going to take a little bit of stress off of them.

Neal Holtan: You are skilled at that, I will say. Thank you for coming in today and sharing your experiences.

Larry Christian: Okay.