

**Interviewee:** Kathryn Tsandikos  
**Interviewers:** AJ Efstratios and Tom Lomenzo  
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**Transcriber:** AJ Efstratios and Tom Lomenzo



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**Abstract:** The interview of Kathryn Tsandikos focused primarily on religious background, ethnic roots, and her present day occupation. Kathryn expressed a major aspect throughout her life was religion because of its prominence in her family. Her father is a Greek Orthodox Priest at St. Spyridon's in Worcester, MA and also Co-owns the business that Kathryn runs today. She expressed that having her father involved deeply in the church shaped her life in various ways. Her ethnic roots also played a major role in her life from Greek organizations, the community she grew up in and her religious background all revolved around her Greek heritage. Lastly, she co-owns Coney Island Hot Dogs which is the leading hot dog restaurant in Worcester for over a century. Coney Island has been a staple landmark in Worcester and a major reason for this was Tsandikos and her family's involvement in founding one of the most successful restaurants in the history of the city.

**TL:** Just a couple preliminary questions what is your full maiden name?

**KT:** My name is Kathryn Tsandikos, T-s-a-n- d-I-k-o-s.

**TL:** Its Kathryn with a Y?

**KT:** It's K-a-t-h-r-y-n, yep and T-s-a-n- d-I-k-o-s.

**TL –** Ok, and you were born in Worcester?

**KT:** Yes I was, yep.

**TL:** What Neighborhood? I don't know the area too well but...

**KT:** I was born... [Hmm], I think we were living in my grandparents' house when I was born, which was in the Tatnuck neighborhood. I don't think my parents had a house when I was born. Yeah I don't think so.

**TL:** Understandable. So grandparents' house, and where was that compared to here?

**KT:** That was in Tatnuck which is Tatnuck is in the west side of the city on the way to Paxton.

Maybe fifteen minutes from here, from Coney Island if that's what you mean?

**TL:** Yeah, you probably know where that is?

**AE** – Yeah I know the area.

**KT:** It's just a section of Worcester.

**TL:** Yeah I've driven through some of those country Mass [Massachusetts] towns on my way, like I went through Amherst, route nine west, and I went through some very interesting towns.

**KT:** Oh yes, like Ware and Brookfield, and East Brookfield and West Brookfield.

**TL:** Some weird towns ... have you ever been married?

**KT:** Yes I'm married.

**TL:** And what was the name of your husband?

**KT:** Andrew Kelleher

**TL:** Andrew Kelleher, did you guys meet in Worcester?

**KT:** [Mhmm]

**TL:** Grew up together or anything like that?

**KT:** No just met in here actually, his family had a business next door and sometimes he would come in and we just met that way.

**TL:** What business did his family own?

**KT:** A furniture moving business, or not a furniture moving just a furniture business.

**TL:** Furniture business like a Bobs, or Bernie and Phil's? [Laugh].

**KT:** Probably, or like a small place or business, yeah.

**TL:** Now do you have any children?

**KT:** Two children.

**TL:** And they are?

**KT:** My daughter Alexis.

**TL:** And how old is she?

**KT:** 23.

**TL:** Okay, she working now, in school?

**KT:** She just graduated from college and now she is doing like baking internship now.

**TL:** Where'd she go to school?

**KT:** She went to Wellesley.

**TL:** Wellesley ok, is that all girls right?

**KT:** Yes it is.

**TL:** And your other daughter?

**KT:** And another son who is in his second year at Holy Cross. His name is Solon, S-o-l-o-n.

**TL:** And how's he liking Holy Cross?

**KT:** Good I think.

**TL:** Yeah. What's he studying there?

**KT:** Philosophy.

**TL:** Wow good for him, have you taking philosophy yet?

**AE** – I haven't I've been avoiding it. [Laugh]

**TL:** Actually I have, I dabbled in it, it was interesting, so he's majoring in that?

**KT:** Majoring in it, Deans List.

**TL:** Wow good for him, he definitely got that from you. [Laugh]

**KT:** [laugh].

**TL:** (So I'm just going to go out on a limb here.)

**KT:** It's a Greek thing right.

**AE** – Oh yes. [Laugh]

**TL:** I was just going to say I'll go out on a limb here and say that you're Greek?

**KT:** Yes.

**TL:** So you identify with that the most?

**KT:** With being Greek?

**TL:** Yes.

**KT:** Yes I do.

**TL:** And I'm sure you're very proud of that.

**KT:** I am proud absolutely.

**TL:** Are there any other ethnicities that you're...?

**KT:** Of me that I have

**TL:** Yes.

**KT:** Actually I am, let's see half, quarter, one eighth polish, and my great grandmother was from Poland.

**TL:** And the rest is Greek?

**KT:** [Mhmm].

**TL:** Wow good for you, I am actually a mix, I am Italian, Irish, French Canadian, and Mauri, which is New Zealand.

**KT:** Oh wow you are quite a mix.

**TL:** Yeah, yeah my grandfather was on R and R, in Auckland during World War II he was in the Pacific, and he met my grandmother there.

**KT:** Yes.

**TL:** For a night, and met her one night, and they started corresponding via letters and after the war she took a boat New Zealand to Philly and they got married.

**KT:** [Ohh] wow isn't that a great story.

**AE** – It really is [laugh].

**TL:** He was actually engaged before the war started, to Peggy.

**KT:** Oh poor Peggy [laugh]

**TL:** And that's what they said poor Peggy. She couldn't compare to Marie though.

**KT:** Isn't that something? It's like love at first site it really does exist.

**TL:** Yeah [uh], I was one when she passed away, my first word was nana though, she was a hell of a woman though, must be.

**KT:** Yeah absolutely to have that happen right.

**TL:** What about your parents though what can you tell us about them?

**KT:** What can I tell you about my parents? My father is a Greek Orthodox priest, retired. He was born in Lowell, to Greek immigrant parents.

**TL:** Oh really?

**KT:** [Mhmm] and I mean he has an interesting background in that you know his mother worked in the mills in Lowell, I don't know if you're familiar with those in Lowell, so she worked there. He tells us stories about how she would come home with cotton in her hair, I mean this is going really way back. His father, I think he had various jobs, he was very involved in the church, he was a chanter in the church and, but Lowell has a very, very huge Greek community, did then they had like three churches.

**TL:** Wow.

**KT:** So he probably, even though he was born here people, I don't know if you know my father, but people would say, "Hey father what part of Greece are you from?" and we joke and say, "he's from Lowell" because there were so many Greeks there that he spoke Greek, more fluently probably than English, I mean he was Greek. And then he had two brothers, they were all educated [uhm] and he chose to become a priest., and so he went to Helena college which is a

Greek seminary, became a priest and served a couple of different parishes, he ended up working here and running this [Coney Island Hot Dogs] because my mother, it's her parents who had it and she's an only child, and so my father is a priest but he also ran Coney Island for a great number of years.

**TL:** Ok, now what about your mother?

**KT:** My mother did not work here because my grandfather did not allow her to work.

**TL:** Really?

**KT:** So going back, I mean way back, you know interesting my grandmother worked she ran the place but he did not want his daughter to work, you know so she was never really allowed to work here. So she got married when she was twenty, married my father raised three kids and you know I think like many woman of the generation wish she had done more and wished to push more but you know she raised us and that's what she did.

**TL:** Well, raised you well.

**KT:** Yeah raised us well, because we all, I have a brother who is a lawyer, he works in New York, and I have a sister who is a psychologist and then I went into the business, so I think they raised us pretty well, so we did okay.

**TL:** Do you have a big family, like extended wise?

**KT:** No, very, very, very tiny. Very tiny.

**TL:** See my mother one of seven and my dad is the oldest of eight with seven younger sisters.

**KT:** Oh my goodness, wow isn't that something.

**TL:** They worship him though they really do.

**AE** – That's amazing.

**TL:** That is amazing [huh]

**TL:** They do worship him, so I've been blessed with a ton of cousins.

**KT:** Yeah, not me at all, like nobody. What about you, you have a big family?

**AE** – I have a large amount of cousins but I'm an only child so siblings wise I'm a only child so.

**KT:** Yeah so you have your cousins. Isn't that funny.

**TL:** Different time I guess.

**KT:** It's nice to have cousins I only have two, and they came later in life so I really essentially don't have any, I would've loved to have cousins.

**TL:** There all older than me, late-twenties and stuff because my father's sixty five, my mother's fifty eight but we've gotten closer through the years.

**KT:** I'm sure family holidays or weddings.

**TL:** We had a reunion at the end of this past summer but I was at school cause we had football camp, we both play football, and it was the first time the whole family got together since my grandfather passed away at ninety five. Played nine holes of golf three times a week till he was ninety three.

**KT:** Must have kept him going.

**TL:** I unfortunately missed that but do you have to run?

**KT:** No I'm good.

**TL:** Ok

**KT:** They're managing.

**TL:** So now, have you always lived in Worcester?

**KT:** No I went to college, I went to Boston College and then I after college I moved to Washington D.C. for a couple of years and just lived there didn't really have a job I just worked and had fun and then after that I went to, I lived in Boston for a couple of years and then I moved back here and this was it.

**TL:** Where'd you live in Boston?

**KT:** On Marlboro Street in the Back Bay.

**TL:** Oh yeah, I, my family actually has a place on the corner of Beacon and Dartmouth.

**KT:** Get out.

**TL:** Yeah it's the best.

**KT:** I'm so jealous I always, I didn't want to leave.

**TL:** Marlboro streets awesome, it's a great part of the city.

**KT:** Best years of my life.

**TL:** Yeah how long did you live there for?

**KT:** Just two years.

**TL:** Best two years though.

**KT:** Yeah 54 those were the best two years, kids and all those were the best two years. [Laugh]  
What does that tell you [laugh].

**TL:** We go up on the fourth and watch the fireworks on the Charleston on the roof.

**KT:** Wow.

**TL:** Yeah it's great.

**KT:** Do you know the area?

**AE** – I do.

**KT:** Just incredible.

**TL:** We got it from my uncle before he became head of Rhode Island Hospital because I went to Boston College High School which is in Dorchester.

**KT:** Oh yeah.

**TL:** But I commuted from Dennis so that was with traffic and carpooling it was a two hour drive there and then two hours back so depending on what sport I was playing some days during the week I'd just stay at this place but my parents own their own real-estate business in Dennis, it got tougher for them too... and they don't trust me out there by myself, I wouldn't I'm nineteen so.

**KT:** Great location though.

**TL:** Oh yeah it's the best do any of your other family members live around here still?

**KT:** Just my parents.

**TL:** Just your parents, where do they live?

**KT:** In Holden.

**TL:** Oh ok and that is?

**KT:** Oh the next town over.

**TL:** Is it. In what direction.

**KT:** North.

**TL:** Ok yeah so this is a real citizenship question, what challenges do you think the city faces?

**KT:** What challenges does the city face?

**TL:** Like what do you see that you might change if you could about this city, like what do you think are some issues?

**KT:** Well Certainly Worcester has its good and bad and plus and minuses, but if anything I think Worcester has lost its industry, without industry its lost jobs and I think that's probably the biggest problem, at least need to bring back some industry which is probably unlikely, I don't know if you've had a chance to drive around Worcester?

**AE:** I have when I was younger, yes.

**KT:** The factories are you know all closed down, you know Worcester was part of the industrial revolution, Worcester was a really, really thriving city, so I think jobs are the biggest challenge.

**AE:** I absolutely agree with that.

**KT:** Economy and Jobs.

**TL:** I'm asking all the questions here you want to chime in? We're right around this area, yeah right there. No you're on the additional questions.

**AE:** Yeah I think you stole my sheet.

**KT:** [laugh]

**TL:** I think I did too.

**AE:** So have you seen any change in Worcester over time, have you seen any change since you were younger or?

**KT:** Yeah I think a lot has changed, certainly the city itself has changed its probably more run down than it used to be it's a little more shabby I think the city kind of I think the city was trying to do a good job to preserve it and try to maintain it and I think the other thing that's changed drastically is the demographics, I think it was, I don't want to say all white but mostly white at one time certainly I think the demographics changed in a positive way, it's a melting pot now.

**AE:** Yeah more diverse.

**KT:** Definitely more diverse so I would say just from being here there's probably one of the things I notice the most cause you see a real fabric of people coming in that we didn't always see when I was growing up so I would say that that's one of the biggest changes.

**TL:** Fitchburg is the same way, my mother comments all the time cause my uncle who had epilepsy used to live up there and it's just really gone downhill it's unfortunate

**KT:** Well because of the lack of jobs and industry so for a lot of these cities all over the northeast actually, they've attracted, you know people move to these cities maybe they were immigrants looking for jobs, but you know Worcester I think has done a really good job of still maintain the city even though, they have that issue.

**TL:** Yeah.

**KT:** But I think you know it could be a positive too.

**TL:** when did you come back to Worcester to live here?

**KT:** 1986

**TL:** 1986 and right when you came back were you struck by some of these changes, were these changes already in motion or, more so seeing since you've been back?

**KT:** That's a good question, I grew up, left for college, I'd say I don't think I've noticed a difference from 86 to now I think, I think it was from 86 previously, so I think the changes were already in motion, back in the eighties I mean it was already starting to change then.

**TL:** Yep

**AE:** what do you think makes Worcester the place it is like one or a few words to describe it?

**KT:** I think you know again the ethnic, you know it's interesting, probably what's changed I think Worcester's always been diverse in terms of ethnic neighborhoods you know it had the polish people lived in one neighborhood and the Greeks and Jewish people lived over on Water Street, yeah diverse in that sense and now it's kind of diverse in another way, more colorful you know but that's a good thing and so I think that that is a positive thing I think and I always tell this story because it impressed me, a few years back I went to Boise, Idaho with my daughter.

**TL:** Oh my uncle lives there.

**KT:** And what you don't notice about a place until you leave is how white it was, white in the sense that everybody had blonde hair, you know the three of us are sitting here and we are all ethnic, we are three dark hair, dark eyed people, when we went there everybody was blonde and blue eyed to the point where when you're in Worcester you kind of feel like you fit in and your part of it but when you're not here with this mixture and you're in a place where everybody is like that it was almost uncomfortable, it was like [woo] I don't like that you know, so think the people here are its best feature, I think the people in Worcester are fantastic and I think that you can't be afraid of people, you can't people are bad just by looking at them, you cannot judge people by how they look, I've learned that here and I think that's one of my...it's one of the best lessons that I've learned working with people, cause people are nice and good inherently and if you treat people nicely your treated nicely all of that is just being here is like a blessing for me.

**TL:** Yeah I, I experienced a little bit of that, I grew up on the Cape, and it's more like Boise like you said

**KT:** Yeah it is like that exactly.

**TL:** And you know going to BC High I spent a lot of my time in Dorchester [Boston], Southey [Boston] my friends there, Roxbury, West Roxbury, the North end and you meet so many different kinds of people

**KT:** And you don't know what you don't know so I don't think you're missing it unless you have it, and once you have it your like oh my God, it's like the colors of the rainbow, you know it just highlights your life

**TL:** And it's not something to shy away from at all. It's something to be involved in and I...

**KT:** I think it enriches your life. I think it's just a really neat thing. That's the way I look at it.

**AE:** Now focusing more on the gender aspect in Worcester, what do you think woman's roles have been in Worcester since maybe when you were a child living here till when you moved back has there been a role that's changed, as maybe they didn't have as big of a role in what they were doing or?

**KT:** Ok let's see how I could answer this.

**TL:** Yeah it's a tough question.

**KT:** It's a tough question but I guess in my own experience and you guys wouldn't know this but for example when I was growing up and I went to grammar school we would come home for lunch, now what does that tell you how have woman's roles changed in that way because we had to come home for lunch which means that woman didn't work right, your mother had to be home to get you lunch, I don't think I knew anybody whose mother worked cause they all walked home for lunch.

**TL:** Wow.

**KT:** And so everybody's mother was there she served you lunch and whatever so that is probably huge I mean there were probably some woman who worked, like my grandmother worked but I would say for the most part I don't think I knew of any mothers who... I mean woman were teachers right but I don't think I had any friends whose mothers worked really or had careers, you know maybe the mother worked but I don't think it was like careers I don't know any woman who were doctors or professional woman, and I think well I know that it has changed a lot. When my children were in school almost every one of the mothers worked outside of the home. And think there is still a small group of woman who don't so, I don't know does that kind of answer the question.

**AE:** Yeah I know exactly what you're saying too cause my grandmother, obviously my grandfather owned the pizza shop and you know everybody in the family worked there but she would help out a little but was always kind of behind the scenes at home and make dinners for everybody.

**KT:** Yeah and you know it's interesting because when I say my grandmother worked she worked in Lowell and that was probably in the thirties and forties, I think probably the fifties and sixties changed that. So in the fifties is when we had those housewives who didn't work like my mother in the fifties and sixties they stayed home but before that woman worked because of the war and this and that because they had to. But then it got to the point where woman did not work and it changed so that woman obviously do work again, but I still think my experience tells me from having lived in Washington, having lived in Boston, having lived in Worcester. I still don't think Worcester has reached the level of professional woman like some other cities. I still don't think that...

**AE:** Still lacking?

**TL:** Could you pinpoint any reason for that? Lack of opportunity maybe in the city itself or careers like that?

**AE:** You said there has been a lack of jobs here and...

**KT:** Lack of jobs yeah I think lack of opportunity, I don't know, I don't know, I think the people sometimes like a particular group of people I know the woman don't work there still stuck in that fifties housewife, where they don't want to work and they want stay home and raise their kid and that's naturally in that dilemma of do you work or do you stay home. I do know a ton of woman who don't work and I guess I can't grasp that. I don't know I can't understand that because I just think that it's nice to stay home with your kids but it's also nice to have a job and a career

**TL:** Yeah it's such an integral part of your life, like my mother she, I was home schooled up until the third grade and then after that she became a realtor and then after a couple years her and my father opened up their own business.

**KT:** Oh that's wonderful.

**TL:** They do good considering the economy, I'm real happy for them specially that I'm now out of the house to not cause them so much stress and focus on their business.

**KT:** [Laugh] you're a little trouble maker huh?

**TL:** Yeah a little bit.

**AE:** Shifting off of the whole Worcester thing, we are going to shift like politics and community involvement if you're comfortable with that?

**KT:** I'll let you know if I'm not.

**AE:** do you consider yourself an active participant in politics, like politically.

**KT:** I vote.

**AE:** You vote.

**KT:** I vote yep. In almost every election I take an interest but I wouldn't say I'm any more active than that, like I don't attend rally's or do political things like that so I vote.

**TL:** Is the like how do you feel about the politicians in Worcester is that not something your particular passionate about or involved in but you're aware of it?

**KT:** Exactly, I mean I think they could always be maybe better people sometimes yeah know.

**TL:** It's politics

**KT:** It's politics, so I not to get too involved cause you know I think you can't really complain about stuff unless you want to do it yourself, so I don't, I mean some people want to run for office cause that's what they want to do and good for them. If that's what they want to do than who am I to complain. Yeah.

**AE:** Now on the community aspect, obviously you have a major role in the community when you own a business like this where a lot of people come in and out but is there anything else that you've done in the community, maybe in years past or recently?

**KT:** Yeah you know I've been I think the thing I've probably done the most has been involved in school with my kids, so probably that has been that or this not involved in any other way.

**TL:** So involved in there high school and that, where did they go to high school?

**KT:** They went to Bancroft which is a private school in Worcester, actually it was K-12 so they went there their whole time both of them. I mean I was just as involved as I could be.

**TL:** So do you still feel pretty involved in the community just owning this business?

**KT:** Oh absolutely, yeah you have to be. Yeah you have to know what's going on, be informed when you talk to people, you have to have an interest in things, and yeah definitely you do.

**TL:** I mean I can't think of any better way to be a serious member of the community than owning something like this.

**KT:** Yeah, definitely I think you definitely are and I mean I'd like to do more but I just haven't done it yet, you know I'm at that point with the transition with the kids, so I don't know maybe someday I'll do more I don't know but I don't know what I would do?

**TL:** You must have just some great people come in here, I'm just blown away by this place I know it's the middle of the day and it's a little empty but I could only imagine.

**AE:** Fills up real quick.

**KT:** Oh it does.

**TL:** I bet.

**KT:** I mean it's a landmark it's just a fun place.

**AE:** Yeah you know it's a landmark because my father came here and he had to bring me here when I was old enough to come and you know he brought me here every summer every time we

could when we were in Worcester he asked me if I wanted to come here and it was always a yes and if it has that big of an impact on people you know you're making an impact on a lot of people.

**KT:** Oh, you're right absolutely it does and I that's why I love it, you know the fact that my grandparents had it, the fact that my father worked here, the fact I can be here and kind of carry it on the best I can. I mean people still talk about my grandmother, and she's the one who should be giving an oral history because she was remarkable. I don't hold a candle to her and you know maybe someday I will, but she was just incredible. And they did an obituary for her in the Worcester paper, she was just like a really unique woman so, you know that's what's neat being able to keep that going.

**TL:** Did you feel any kind of pressure to be the daughter that would carry this on or?

**KT:** No I don't think so. I think I wanted to I think I spend a lot of time with my grandmother, she might have pushed a little but certainly my parents didn't and I think I just wanted to.

**TL:** Just from looking at your grandmother and how rewarding it was for her...

**KT:** Yeah I mean I went to college I had other jobs.

**TL:** What kind of jobs?

**KT:** Nothing worth mentioning [laugh] and I don't know there was something about this that I just kept gravitating to. You know there was nothing glamorous in any way, it's not a profession. When I moved back to Worcester I was going to go back to school to get my master's in teaching cause I thought if I was going to come back here my father said I should do something. I shouldn't just do this, he wasn't happy with that idea.

**AE:** So your college degree was education?

**KT:** No my college degree was sociology actually.

**AE:** Sociology, Ok and you were going to come back for your masters.

**TL:** Have you taken sociology yet?

**AE:** I haven't.

**TL:** My roommate take it he's I don't know how he feels about it. So some days he comes back and says it was an interesting class and some days he comes back and takes a nap he is so mind blown.

**KT:** Yeah it's kind of boring. You have to be interested in it I think. (I didn't know what I was going to do so...)

**TL:** It's interesting to hear that you didn't feel any pressure like that cause I feel pressure because my parents business is Lomenzo properties it's got my name on it and both of them are very involved in the community my dad's...Have you ever heard of like historic committee?

**KT:** Yeah.

**TL:** My dad's chairman of that so, Dennis very historical town, lot of land of preserves so when people want to build they have to talk to him and so everyone in town knows him from that and everyone thought that would be a impediment to open his business both very involved in our church and [uhm] you know in talking to my parents about that...

**KT:** I think I'm more involved in the church.

**AE:** That was actually my next question.

**TL:** I'm thinking about that I'm thinking about, you know I'm leaning toward business in my studies and thinking how can I be as successful or have their experience be as rewarding as mine in reality you know when I'm right out of college or something and not involved in the community.

**KT:** Yeah I think you have to do something else first, you have to follow your heart and your passion, if you go back and do it later that's fine.

**TL:** Yeah I mean I look at my dad, I look at both my parents and I see how people are towards them and they adore them.

**KT:** Right but they might not even want you there right away, think about that.

**TL:** Yeah I think they want me out of the house as long as possible.

**KT:** [laugh] exactly you know.

**TL:** Yeah it is cool though, not to say lean back on but have it as an option

**KT:** Oh exactly and I think when I was in college I did I think about it, I really don't know, I thought I was maybe going to go get my master's in social work, I thought I might do this I might do that. I just didn't know, I worked at hotels for a while I worked at the Ritz Carlton for a year, hotel sales I just really did not know what direction my life was going to take. And you know I tried this and maybe this might not have worked.

**AE:** That's what we are in the process in right now, we are in college trying out different things.

**KT:** Exactly, yeah you don't know. I think the best opportunity I had was working here with my grandmother and my father and I think that's what made it fun you know, I mean I worked with my husband and that was ok.

**TL:** [laugh]

**AE:** [laugh]

**KT:** Not the same as my father and grandmother. It was just fun, I loved coming in every day and that's really what it's all about.

**AE:** Of course you have to love what you do.

**KT:** You have to love what you do, you have to love coming in every day.

**TL:** I mean you're lucky nowadays, that's what I see like people being lucky if they find something that they really love.

**KT:** Exactly. You don't want to wake up every day and hate that you're going to work.

**TL:** yeah and I know people whose parents are like that there just beat every day.

**KT:** [mhmm] cause you have to pay the bills and you're miserable I know.

**AE:** Yeah it's a lot easier to come home from work when you enjoy doing it.

**KT:** Exactly. What was the next question?

**AE:** The next question was, obviously with your father and grandfather and stuff, how has religion, how has it played a role in your life.

**KT:** It's a big part, a really big part of my life. I was brought up with it, my father being a Greek Orthodox priest his philosophy, if you will, without sounding corny is "Love and Jesus," love and Jesus but not in a crazy evangelical way. It's a way he rubbed into us. Like when he preaches you always love each other and love fellow man and that's what Jesus is and that's what God is, its love. Its love, love, love, love love. And I think it rubs off because I think you do have to love people you have to love just that feeling and that warmth that you kind of have. So I think that really religion has touched me that way, I mean you can't just go to church on Sunday and disregard it, it has to affect every aspect of your life and how you live. I think it's the way it's affected me, and I don't even think I've done a good job. You try to be a good person, you get up every day and try to be a good person. Try to raise a family, and do what you can do to be

good. So I think that's how religion has affected me.

**AE:** Just a question -- has your father, has he preached anywhere in Worcester area?

**KT:** He used to be at Saint Spyridon's.

**AE:** Saint -- that's my church actually, I was curious about that.

**KT:** So it used to be Saint Spyridon and then he was in Clinton for a long time and now he is retired. So I think the other way that religion has impacted me personally and it's not necessarily religion but I guess my... I don't know what the word is I guess religion we'll use that broader term but like my grandfather was really influential in building the church, the Greek Church here in Worcester and then my father was a priest there. But what it becomes, is like other people will sit around and talk about the weather, my family talks about the church. You know what I mean it just becomes who you are it's such a big part of who we are I don't think when we are together when we are not talking about that church. Something about something about whatever. So it has impacted my life as always learning the history of it and its important knowing what my grandparents did, what my father did and all of that affects who you are. Like your parents have done all of that, that's impacted you and who you are.

**TL:** Definitely

**KT:** That impacts you and what you want to do in the future, like I sing in the choir, I stay involved in the church, I try to bring my kids up in it because you want to carry that on.

**TL:** Yeah I was an altar server, I'm a lector now this Christmas or this summer.

**KT:** Oh great.

**TL:** Has it always been that constant for you where religion was always in your life, was there ever a time...

**KT:** Yeah I think there was probably a time like when I was your age, I think when you're younger you don't feel it as much as when your older. There has actually been a priest tell me that there are different stages of life. And when you get to be like my age you do become more spiritual and start to feel it more because you're approaching -- not that I'm at the end -- you are approaching you know you go through stages of life. And I'm at that stage now where you do become, not that the religion has always been important to me, but I think I've become more spiritual as I got older.

**TL:** I get that I [uhm] I'm the same way it's not as big a part of my life as I admit it should be, but this past Sunday I was home and I spoke to my parish's confirmation class just as a witness type thing and it was refreshing, it made me realize, you know the way I put it to them is, there

are parts of your life you should look at and be thankful for what God's given you. Me it's being an athlete, and being healthy, and fit. So I'm working on that just constant reminders of you know where spirituality and religion should be important to me in my life because it is a huge part.

**KT:** Yeah but you're young, you guys don't think about it every day like why should you, that's just the way it is.

**AE:** Yeah we do have a lot of stuff to worry about on top of it but...

**KT:** So yeah the older I'm getting it's a bigger part of my life yeah...

**TL:** That's great though that you had priest in your family

**KT:** It is really cool, it's fun.

**AE:** It really is...

**TL:** Well I mean you guys must have a great history, I mean I'm Catholic so we have a pretty crazy history but you guys I could only imagine.

**AE:** Well one of my cousins actually, Father Dean, do you know Father Dean at Saint Spyridons?

**KT:** Well of course I know Father Dean.

**AE:** Well he's actually part of my family.

**KT:** No kidding, wow I did not know that. Isn't that cool it probably is... [Laugh] everybody Greek must be related to some Greek priest or in the line, yeah, yeah [laugh] Wow that is pretty cool of course I know Father Dean that is my church. I go there whenever I can and yeah, yeah it's great.

**TL:** That's cool.

**KT:** Yeah it is very cool, it's a great community. I mean that's changed a lot but that's a different story, that whole part of my life in terms of...but it probably changed with the demographics of Worcester, you know I used to know everybody and now I go to church and don't know anybody, I mean things like that, like that's changed, but that happens.

**KT:** Okay, so, where are we next?

**AE:** You go.

**TL:** Okay.

**AE:** Your turn.

**KT** – (laughs.)

**TL:** Oh, this is a good one...what major historical events in Worcester have occurred during your time here?

**KT:** Hmm...

**TL:** If you can think of any...relatively significant events...

**KT:** You mean just in...just Worcester historical events? Or national, historical...?

**TL:** Worcester, national, I mean or like, in Worcester or if it was national how it was received in Worcester.

**AE:** It can even be important just to you, maybe it wasn't national, or just city-bound[?].

**KT:** Hmm...I would say, there are two things that are, probably the very, very first thing was 9/11, which I think you can't ever have gone on with your life without it having impacted you, at all.

**AE:** I remember it in second grade.

**KT:** It was horrific, but probably had the greatest impact ever. But another thing that I just remember more locally happening...I don't know if you guys...you might remember, but it was the fire in Worcester, and I don't remember it was in December, I'm just not sure what year it was. But we lost...I should remember because I'm talking about what an impact it had, but I do remember it had a huge impact in the city. It was a major, major, horrible fire in a storage warehouse, and we lost several fire fighters, and the city you know really came together and the city mourned these fire fighters, and there was a parade down Grove Street. Then, actually President Clinton came and they had a service at Mechanics Hall for them in Worcester. So I do remember like that, locally was just a really interesting time to see the city – because it took days for them to find the bodies – I mean it was just a, real citywide tragedy, above and beyond anything I've seen before. But other events?

**TL:** Any triumphs?

**KT:** Triumphs?

**TL:** It's a dramatic word, I know.

**KT:** Really! Wow. It's hard to think in terms of "triumphs" isn't it?

**TL:** (laughs) Yeah, it is.

**KT:** Triumphs...now in any way, huh?

**TL:** Mhm.

**KT:** Wow, you got me there. I don't know.

**TL:** It's like jeopardy (laughs).

**KT:** Yeah! I don't know. Let me see while I'm talking in the back of my head if I can think of anything. Alright?

**TL:** Okay.

**KT:** I just can't off hand.

**TL:** Alright, fair enough. This is what comes up in these questions, but how old were you when you were allowed to date? Or what was the policy like in your family?

**AE:** Very weird question.

**TL:** Yeah, I do...

**AE & TL:** It's on the list.

**KT:** Let's put it this way, if anyone asked, I might've been able to go out, but it wasn't a big issue because nobody really asked, so who knows?

**TL:** I don't believe it; I'm not buying it.

**KT:** Well sure, I went to an all girls' Catholic high school.

**TL:** Where'd you go?

**KT:** Notre Dame Academy. All girls' school, I had to like, you know, beg to find a date for the prom. Yeah! I'm serious. It was not a big issue. Thanks for being flattering, but that's the truth of it. It wasn't an issue.

**TL:** You had a sister, too, right?

**KT:** Mhm.

**TL:** What about for her?

**KT:** I don't think anybody really – and she's cute too – (**AE** & **TL** laugh) but I don't think anybody really asked her out either; maybe because we were the priest's daughters. That could've been it, you know, what kind of a policy is it if you're the priest's daughter? 'We're not asking you out anyway!'

**TL:** Fair enough. Do I dare ask about your brother? I'm sure he had free range to...

**KT:** You know, are you asking if it was different or not, or whatever...I don't think he dated a lot either.

**TL:** No?

**KT:** No. Just not a real big dating family, a bunch of nerdy losers.

**AE:** Losers? I don't think "losers" if we're doing an interview with you right now, I'll tell you that.

**TL:** Are both of them married now?

**KT:** My sister is married, with no kids, and my brother is not married.

**TL:** How old are they?

**KT:** My brother must be 52, and my sister just turned 50.

**TL:** Okay. How long has she been married, do you know?

**KT:** Let's average about 15 years, maybe?

**TL:** Okay.

**KT:** Yeah, I think so.

**TL:** What kind of places around here when you were younger – high school – did you hang out? Were there any particular spots so to speak that you and your friends would go to?

**KT:** Oh, we used to go...Friendly's was a big one...we'd go to Friendly's.

**AE:** Same in my town. Friendly's is huge! I don't know if you know Six Flags? That's in my town. But other than that it's Friendly's, a high school, and a few gas stations, and that's pretty much it. So I understand.

**KT:** Well Friendly's is a big place. And there was like a Big Boy's, which is like a hamburger place, we'd hang out there

**TL:** This country needs more of that.

**KT:** Yeah. I mean really there's no place to hang out. No.

**TL:** I mean I wish Dennis had something like that, I've always kind of wanted a place like that, some kind of burger stand or whatever.

**KT:** But Big Boy's wasn't like that. You have like the A&W at the Cape?

**TL:** Oh, okay, yeah.

**KT:** That would be a hang out. Or no it's not, but you know, like the cars pull up. So I'd say Friendly's.

**TL:** Was it fun, did you find yourself having a lot to do around here? How would you describe your social life?

**KT:** In high school or growing up in general?

**TL:** Both.

**AE:** Or even college.

**KT:** I think that, probably through high school, up until high school I think I was very involved in the Greek community because my father was the priest, so a few days a week I would go to Greek school, then on Sunday's I went to Sunday school, and I was involved in GOYA, and GOYA had...they used to have dances all the time. So we were always, just always doing stuff, you know? And it was really fun. So, in light of...because I lived near the Greek church, the parish house was there, and a lot of my friends were Greek, you know, so we had the same schedules (**TL** laughs). We were Greek-American, we weren't like "Greeky", it was just that's who we hung out with. So, so it was fun. I mean I remember – you know I grew up near Elm Park actually, which is near where the church was – you know and God it makes me feel so old k suppose when I say it, but we were allowed to run around, you know, like your mother didn't know where you were until you came home for dinner at night. So we would roam the streets and we would ride our bikes, and we were at friends' houses, and nobody knew where you were

all day long. My kids did not grow up like that. And I think it was really sad.

**TL:** I did.

**KT:** Did you?

**TL:** Yeah. It's Dennis, you know? And especially in the wintertime, I mean even going into summer, I lived on my bike, I didn't get my license until this past summer.

**KT:** Really? That's funny.

**TL:** Yeah, I mean I'm right in the heart of town, I have a bunch of great places around, all my friends live close, from my town.

**KT:** See like that makes a difference. When my kids went to prep school, Worcester, like when everybody went to the same local school, that was really fun too. Now, everybody goes to like you know, different...you could have ten kids on the street and everybody goes to a different school.

**TL:** Yeah, I went to private school. But it was nice having different groups of friends between like, your school and then your town, who you played Little League with.

**KT:** Yeah, so there everybody kind of knows each other anyway, right? It's small enough. So I think I had a great childhood, high school was fun, I went to an all girls' high school, and we used to hang out at each other's houses, and drive around, and the same things that kids probably do nowadays, I would imagine, I don't know.

**TL:** I think all girls' school are a little more intense nowadays, because girls are very dramatic.

**KT:** Yeah, maybe. I had fun. I can't ever look back and say I didn't have fun; I had fun. Except for finding a date to the prom, that was...(TL laughs)

**TL:** You mentioned GOYA, and I'm not familiar with that, what is that?

**KT:** GOYA is Greek Orthodox Youth...Association I guess, I forget.

**TL:** And what was that like for you? It sounds like fun, with dances and what not.

**KT:** It was fun! You know, the Greek kids would get together, maybe once a week or every couple of weeks, I don't even remember, and have what was maybe supposed to be some sort of religious meetings that I'm sure they never were; but you at least got together, you got know your peers, and hang out, and dances, sometimes kids would come in and they'd bus them in and kids would come in from different or other churches, or we would go, we would get on buses.

And in those days – oh my God I'm so old – I mean I'm laughing as I think about it, we used to wear gowns, I mean this is like, you'd get really dressed up to go to these dances. It was a big deal. You know it wasn't like you just went in jeans and a t-shirt.

**AE:** Like me, nowadays. (**TL & KT** laugh)

**TL:** Or sweats. Jeans if you're dressing up.

**KT:** Well actually everybody got dressed, and it was really, really fun I think. I think everybody had a great time.

**TL:** Now, it sounds like for you growing up, your ethnicity was just a huge part of your identity, and for a lot of your friends. I mean, personally I don't see that as much at 18, I didn't get that much growing up. Do you think that's just the times, or is it just the community that you lived in, that really encouraged that, you know with GOYA, and living in a neighborhood like that? What do you think?

**KT:** I can't speak for like, what the kids go through today in Worcester, in other words, like my kids were removed from it, you know because their father is not Greek, so we didn't like live in that community. I think Worcester – hmm, it's hard to say – I think Worcester was like different then, in terms of community. I think a lot more people lived near the church, so I think like...hmm, it's hard to explain. But you know like where I lived near the church, all my friends lived near the church, we all went to the same school. Now I think, people have moved away, you've got different people living in the various towns, so it's not maybe close knit, in many ways. So I don't know if kids today...they don't have as many dances...

**TL:** No we don't.

**AE:** Nope.

**KT:** I don't think the kids today will have the opportunities that I had. So even if they are Greek Orthodox, or even if they are growing up like you for example [gestures to **TL**] I don't think you...was it more so for me because my father was the priest? I don't think so, because I had friends who had the same experience, you know what I mean? So, I don't know, I think it's just the way it was then.

**TL:** I think it's a shame, I do. I mean, my parents never really – I'm Italian, but I'm several different other things – but it really makes me kind of envy you in that way, just having that...

**KT:** Right, but I think there's like more Greek pride now though. You know what's funny? The fact that I hung out with all these kids, the fact that they were Greek, the fact that we did all this stuff, did not mean that we were like Greek, it's just happened that's who they were. But what I notice is that these kids are really pro-Greek, like really "Greeky"...

**AE:** I'm very proud of it actually.

**KT:** Yeah, but we weren't like that, you know what I mean? It wasn't like we wore it on our sleeves; it just happened that's who we were.

**AE:** You didn't have to put emphasis on it, like nowadays.

**KT:** Exactly. It was just kind of who we are. But now, it's become this big pride thing, and we weren't like that.

**AE:** Well 'cause towns are so different now, and like you said, Worcester's a melting pot now, you're living next to ten different families of ten different ethnicities, you want to be proud of what you are.

**KT:** Exactly! And I think it's great. You know, but it's just different, and why not be proud of being Greek? There's something about being Greek, so they are really proud. You know the Greeks are...yeah, they do! You could say you're Italian, or this and that, but there's something about Greeks, I can't explain it.

**TL:** I had a friend, Zambelis, growing up, and his parents own a couple of the Greek joints on the Cape [Cape Cod] and I used to just love talking to his father, just oh, [**KT laughs**] what a guy!

**AE:** Pretty good stories usually.

**TL:** Oh, the best! Firm handshakes, firm handshakes.

**KT:** Oh, yes. Really firm handshakes.

**AE:** Extremely.

**KT:** Because they're very proud, and that's a great thing.

**TL:** It is; and it's a little lost today, which is unfortunate, but these things change. More of a social question – if you can manage to pinpoint this – favorite musical group/singer, when you were our age, in high school, early college? I've been blessed to listen to my mother's music now that I got her an iPod. She loves Joni Mitchell.

**KT:** Hmm, I'm going to say, one of the ones that rings a bell – there were several – but one of the ones that rings a bell probably is like Elton John.

**TL:** Okay.

**KT:** Yeah, Elton John, probably.

**TL:** Are you not a big music person in general?

**KT:** I'm a big music person, but more I listen to classical music, Broadway music, Greek music, so I listen to a lot of music, but I think when I was...I didn't become, like my husband listens to hard rock...he's got his whole thing of music that I never listen to. So I listen to music, but like I said more pop.

**TL:** But you said you listen to Broadway music, right? Have you ever been to Broadway, or seen any plays there?

**KT:** A couple I think, in New York. Like *The Wiz*, and I think I saw *Beauty and the Beast* in New York, and, oh my God, what's the jungle one, that Disney just did?

**AE:** *Jungle Book*?

**KT:** No.

**TL:** That's a movie.

**KT:** Oh! *The Lion King*!

**AE & TL:** Lion King!

**KT:** Oh my God, that was so amazing!

**TL:** The first Broadway play that I went to was *Les Mis* [*Les Miserables*].

**KT:** Oh really?

**TL:** Did you see the movie?

**KT:** Yes, twice.

**TL:** Oh, me too.

**KT:** I got tickets to go see it at the Hanover [Hanover Theater].

**TL:** [KT laughs] I saw it ,I was eight years old, and my mother tells me – actually I think I was six, we had balcony seats – and my mother just says I was just in rapture on the balcony...

**KT:** Did you love it?

**TL:** Oh, I loved it.

**KT:** Do you love it now? Have you seen the movie?

**TL:** Oh, I've seen the movie, four times now. I think it's incredible.

**KT:** Get out! Do you like Broadway musicals?

**AE:** You guys can talk on this one [**KT & TL** laugh]

**TL:** My mother always brought us to stuff like that, you know...okay sure.

**KT:** [to restaurant employees] You need me? Oh the stuff downstairs, do you need me? Okay great, thank you. [To **AE & TL**] Okay, sorry about that.

**TL:** My mother always encouraged us, you know, she's the type of mother where, when we go on family trips, we're going to museums, we're going to plays, but it was a great experience for me growing up and getting to go to Broadway and see that.

**KT:** Oh my God, to see *Les Mis* on Broadway...I saw the movie again the other day...

**TL:** My roommate – he knows my roommate [gesturing to **AE**], you know he's seen it right?

**AE:** He has?

**TL:** Twice.

**AE:** Twice?

**TL:** Yeah. He saw it with his girlfriend. I saw it with my family on New Years' Day, and then, I think I went to the movies by myself with a hood to go see it [**KT** laughs]. It's just. It's incredible. I was actually really disappointed watching the Grammy's that it didn't win more awards. But, to me, it was just incredible.

**KT:** I think so, too.

**TL:** Yeah. You got to see it [to **AE**].

**AE:** I will check it out.

**KT:** If you can stand a musical, some people just can't stand a musical.

**AE:** I loved *Grease*, so...

**TL:** I actually took a girl to go see it, one of the times I went. And Hugh Jackman starts singing and she leans over to me and says, 'Is this a musical?' [**KT** laughs] I was just like, 'We can go if you want.'

**AE:** To be honest, I wouldn't have known.

**TL:** One Sunday morning we're going to watch it.

**KT:** Alright, good. Go see it.

**TL:** Now, how were girls treated when you were in school? Pretty open-ended question.

**KT:** Okay. I mean, again, difference comparatively from, you know, you don't know...when I was in grammar school, girls were not allowed to wear pants to school. We weren't allowed to wear pants, except for on gym day. When I went to grammar school, there was, when you went out to recess, a boys' yard and a girls' yard, and we didn't really play together. The boys had a basketball hoop, the boys had equipment, and we had, if you brought your jump rope from home you got to play jump rope. So it was definitely like, boys got to... [**TL** laughs]. So like what other...little things like that, you don't realize...so I went back to the sixties and I was like 'Wow' girls really were treated differently, you know? I think...those are the most distinctive things that I remember, things like that. In terms of how we were treated, I mean I think...when you're encountered with situations like that you may not realize how they're affecting you, but they're not to affect because you know you're not the same as the boys, you know? There are just differences right there, right? So, I don't know how I remember it affecting me, and maybe it didn't; but then I went to an all girls' high school, which I think is the best thing I ever did, because I think it really empowered me. You know I might have been a little shy, but it just taught me girls can...I believe that same-sex, whether it's girls or boys, I think you do better in that environment without distractions, especially in high school...

**TL:** I went to an all boys' high school.

**AE:** Yeah, I can see where you're coming from with that. I went to public school, so I didn't have that but I can see...

**KT:** Yeah, going to Notre Dame for me, all girls was great. It was a good experience.

**TL:** Yeah, I went to an all boy's high school, and it was, it was great. I mean...

**KT:** You get to kind of be yourself, and you don't worry what the guys are thinking about you...

**TL:** No, you don't.

**KT:** ...or all that stuff.

**TL:** It's a different level of bonding I think. Because I have some great friends from BC High, and I know they're going to be great friends for a long time. So it was a great experience.

**KT:** I think it is. I think so. Did I answer your question?

**TL:** Yeah!

**KT:** Because I'm not sure that I did.

**TL:** No, you absolutely did. I'm just getting memories right now about what my mother used to tell me about when she was in grammar school with the nuns, with my uncles and stuff, and how the punishments were different, but I doubt you experienced that or anything.

**KT:** No, I don't think I did. Again, going back to religion and our church still is sexist in terms, and how things will never change. The boys are still altar boys, and the girls are certainly not allowed to go on the altar, not allowed to do anything. There've been small changes made, like I think girls are definitely more involved in the church in some aspects now than we were allowed to be, so maybe that's changed, but the church is pretty sexist.

**TL:** Well I'm in the Catholic church.

**KT:** Yeah, I mean I think even the Catholic church has gotten a little better. They have altar girls?

**TL:** They do.

**KT:** See, we don't.

**TL:** Really?

**AE:** Nope.

**TL:** [to AE] When you come to the Cape I'll take you to the Greek Orthodox church in Hyannis. It's nice.

**KT:** It's a beautiful church.

**TL:** You've been down there? To Hyannis?

**KT:** Oh, yeah, yeah.

**TL:** I've never been inside, but my aunt and uncle live right by there.

**KT:** Oh yeah, you should go. That'd be great.

**TL:** It would be a great experience; I haven't experienced too many denominations, or anything, which I would like to. Earlier this year, for this course that we're doing this interview for, we went to an ecumenical service, which your priest was there [to **AE**]?

**KT:** Oh yeah? Where was that? Here in Worcester?

**AE:** It was at Assumption College.

**KT:** Do you not love that chapel?

**TL:** It is beautiful.

**KT:** That is just the best place to go and just sit and meditate.

**TL:** My mother said that for people, like graduates or for whoever wants to get married there, there's a three-year waiting list.

**KT:** Really? Wow!

**TL:** It's a gorgeous chapel.

**KT:** I think it's one of the prettiest places in Worcester. Easily. Like our church is beautiful, St. Spyridon's is beautiful, but there's just something about that Assumption chapel.

**TL:** Yeah, it is. And I'd hear about it when I was growing up, I mean my mother went to Assumption, both of her sisters, two of my uncles, and my grandfather and his five brothers.

**KT:** Really? Jeez.

**TL:** And my grandfather and his five brothers hold the record for the most siblings to go to Assumption College.

**KT:** Really? No kidding? That is so cool.

**TL:** Yeah, they did a piece in the magazine last year [**AE** laughs], so a little bit...

**KT:** Are they French?

**TL:** Yup, French Canadian, because I mean back in the day, that's what they spoke at Assumption. Yup, Assumption. I dabble in a little bit of French. So if possible, what would you say were some difficult transitions for you, from childhood to adulthood, regardless of where you lived? Just in general, just the times...

**KT:** Hmmm...this is tough, because I'm trying to think in two ways, like personally, is what you go through, it's personal what you go through in terms of growth, and pimples, and you know...

**TL:** All the fun stuff.

**KT:** All that stuff! That's one aspect to it. And then there's the times that I grew up, that were the tail-end of the Vietnam War, and the sexual revolution, the end of Woodstock, these are when I was young, it was something that was just changing society, changing the whole time I was in. so there's that part of it. But, so what was the question again?

**TL:** Just, difficult transitions growing up. It's tough to think about...

**KT:** It's tough to think about because life is a transition, and every stage is difficult, and you just, you just do it.

**TL:** I haven't had a chance to really pick my parents' brains about this but, I mean, are you blown away at all or are you really just wowed by some of the things you've seen over the years, like all the advancements, that you've lived through? We take them for granted.

**KT:** For example, today, this is not like 'wow', it's just like a thing. Like today's paper there was an article about how a few years ago, we were all told as parents to have the computer in the middle of the house because you could watch your kids. So my kids were just starting to do maybe MySpace I think it's called, before Facebook? And then all of a sudden Facebook came on or whatever and I would go to meetings at school about how to keep your kids protected on the computer and this and that, and this article today was like it shouldn't matter in a couple of years, because now everybody has smartphones and you can't protect your kids anymore. And I thought 'Wow, that just happened in a matter of...'

**AE:** A couple years.

**KT:** A couple years! [To employee] Yes there is a bag in the basement. [**KT** laughs] So yeah, I mean I think I've seen tremendous changes and I don't know if they're all good.

**AE:** I obviously have a smartphone right here, but you can't see anything, you can't protect your kid from what he's looking at...

**KT:** Exactly!

**AE:** It's definitely a dangerous situation.

**TL:** And if you try, you come under a lot of scrutiny from other parents. I see it with some of my cousins who are getting married nowadays, and my parents kind of scrutinizing them. It's...

**KT:** I mean think about it, not even when I was growing up, and this is just a matter of a couple years ago, people called the house phone, so if your daughter wanted to date, he called the house phone, right? If your friend, if you wanted to do something with your friends they called the house phone. Now nobody calls the house phone. So you can't, as a parent you've lost complete control and there's something you can't rely on a kid to tell the truth, even the best kid, right? So I think that...hmmm...I don't know it, it scares me. They don't tell you who they're talking to, or who they're texting. So I think it's really scary.

**AE:** Yeah, absolutely.

**KT:** It's scary. I'm glad I'm done with it.

**TL:** Good for you, you survived. Good for you.

**KT:** No I didn't. I don't think...my kids didn't have smartphones.

**TL:** I didn't have a cell phone 'til freshman year.

**KT:** Yeah, cellphones maybe, but not, like you said, not until freshman year. But they didn't have...smartphones I think are the worst. The internet, and...but I think phones really, really dramatically changed...

**TL:** I hear it every night from my own mother. We acknowledge what it does...

**KT:** Well it's not just the youth. It's all of us, right? I went out to dinner with my friend the other night. Okay, I'm 54, I've got two best friends who are 54, and we watched the Academy Awards, and the three of us each watched it in our respective homes. And we texted each other all night long. So we were laughing we were like 'How old are we?' [**AE** & **TL** laugh] We're sitting there like *na nana na na na* and texting each other back. And it can be fun, and it's not like how the kids are doing it, but I think what's hard is that parents have just lost control, and parents need to have control. Don't you think?

**TL:** Absolutely agree. Switching gears a little bit, I'm sure this place keeps you very busy, but do you have any hobbies or leisure activities that you make time for? Or even anything that you're really passionate about?

**KT:** I sing in the church choir, on Sundays. Let's see, I had been singing in another group...right

now no. Right now this is pretty much it I think. I was going to volunteer, I did sign up to volunteer for this homeless for horizon things, which I wanted to volunteer for the kids, but then I couldn't, I couldn't reschedule the time because I'm never on a regular schedule. So it's hard to do things that I would like to do, because I'm just here. So, what I do instead of being involved in things I'd like to be involved in, I do more here I guess, you know what I mean? I just cook more here, like you know it is a passion, I like to cook, I like it. I just started doing macaroni and cheese here, and it's just been a huge, huge thing, so it's fun. So now I'm always in the back making macaroni and cheese or we make beans, so I guess there's my hobby, its pathetic...

**TL:** No, not at all. It's a passion, it's great.

**KT:** I'd still like to do other stuff.

**AE:** I enjoy cooking as well so...

**KT:** Yeah it's fun. It's relaxing. So I like, you know, music, I try and get out to dinner with a friend now and then. That's it.

**AE:** Now maybe when you were younger, were they any different hobbies maybe when you were younger that you were...

**KT:** I played the piano. Think of what I did when I was younger...you know your life gets so caught up when you have kids, and what their lives were, and like my daughter was a golfer in high school, so I spent an inordinate amount of time with her and with golf. And then my son was involved in theater and speech and I spent a ton of time with him and his speech and blah blah blah, and I think I lost a lot of myself in those years. And I think where your kids go, you kind of need to redefine that, so I think I'm in a transition period where I'm looking for that. I'm looking for more to fill up my life now that they're gone. So, that's where I'm at.

**TL:** So now, here comes a couple of open-ended questions...how do you get through tough times?

**KT:** Prayer...friends...family.

**AE:** What more do you need?

**KT:** What more do you need? Exactly. That's how you get through tough times. That's a no-brainer.

**TL:** So you stay really close with your family then?

**KT:** Yup, yup, very close.

**TL:** Siblings too?

**KT:** Yup.

**TL:** Do you usually go to visit them, or do they come back here?

**KT:** They mostly come back here. Because they come here to visit my parents.

**TL:** Okay.

**KT:** That's when I see them. So I'd say I'm pretty close with them. I have my kids, my parents, my friends, the people here I'm pretty close to. So I get pretty involved in their lives [**TL** laughs]. I know can you imagine? We're just so close, all of us, we just have a lot of fun. And, yeah I guess that's it.

**TL:** Okay. How would you define "success" in your life?

**KT:** Probably the three things that get you through life are your successes: your family, your friends, and prayer. I mean success is not money, it's, it's...personal happiness, it's, for me it's having raised a family, that's been a success of mine. Success is, having Coney Island continue, so being able to continue the legacy that my grandparents started, that's success. But I don't measure it in terms of monetary success, that's never been me, I just don't. And anybody who knows me knows that's not what I do. But success is, I think relationships that's success, having friends, right? That's what it's all about. So yeah, that's success.

**TL:** Based on your life experience, what advice would you give to women today, women of future generations? What would be some of your advice based on what you've experienced throughout your life?

**KT:** I think, I guess I'm a bit of feminist, which is no surprise why my daughter went to Wellesley [**TL** laughs]...I think that, you have to be able to be independent. I think a woman has to be educated. If I lost everything, given that I had my health, I've been educated, so that I would always be able to like find a job, I'd be able to do something, I'd be able to support myself. I think it is key, key, key that a woman be able to support herself, that a woman be financially independent. If a man is able to support her, and she finds that relationship that's great, but it's really the icing on the cake. So my advice is to always, always be self-sufficient, educated, to be able to support yourself and really not rely on a man. That was my...I know, if you find your degree...

**TL:** So we're obsolete? [**TL** laughs]

**KT:** You really are. You should hear us, here. This is like...we're horrible. But if you find a relationship, if you find love, that's great; but you shouldn't...

**AE:** Fall back on that.

**KT:** Shouldn't fall back on that, that's right. I think you need to have your own ambition, your own independence, financial independence I think is probably key.

**TL:** Now, you mentioned the legacy of Coney Island, is legacy important to you, or do you feel that you have a legacy, as a person or as a woman?

**KT:** I don't know that I feel that I have one myself, yet. That's interesting. I feel like I'm carrying one on, but I don't know that I feel like I have one, or what would it be.

**TL:** It's not something that you're always thinking...

**KT:** It's not something that I think about, no. Maybe I'm at the point where I should start thinking about it, that's a good question, because you do want to think about what your legacy would be, right? And it's interesting because a lot of those questions that you did ask me, what are my passions, what am I involved in, what am I doing, sort of, if I had more than what I just do would be sort of what would lead me to have a legacy. I don't think I'm...like I said I'm in a transition right now, where I haven't really transitioned from having a family, to doing more what I need to do for myself, and I think, I think when you work full time and raise a family, as maybe your mothers can attest to, you don't have any time off for yourself, very little, especially since, you know I'm a Greek mother, it's cooking, cleaning, laundry, this and that...like I almost raised my family like I didn't work. And I think that's really hard. It's unimpressive, it's crazy. It's a fine line, with all the yelling and screaming going on there, can you imagine that? So, I think that, now's the time for me to reflect more about my life, you know I'm just at that stage. So, that's a good question, it's great, really makes me think about myself.

**TL:** And we're all done. Thank you so much for sharing all this with us. This is incredible, and we just thank you so much for spending this time with us.