

**TAVP Visions After Violence Interview
Interview with Devan Harral**

Interviewer: Marci Marie Simmons

Narrator: Devan Harral

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Summary:

As a formerly incarcerated individual, Devan Harral relates her personal experience with incarceration and shares anecdotal evidence on the impact of her substance use disorder on her family, her life, and herself.

MARCI MARIE SIMMONS: Hi, there. My name is Marci Marie Simmons. I'm with the Texas After Violence Project. I'm here with Devan Harral, and it is April 6th at 11:22 a.m. Devan, thanks so much for volunteering to share some of your story as it relates to mass incarceration with us. I really appreciate you and let's just jump right in. I'll just start by asking, when do you feel like your story started as it relates to mass incarceration? Like, when was the first time you were arrested?

DEVAN HARRAL: I was seventeen, and it was for drug paraphernalia when my dad's house got raided by the SWAT team. And, I wasn't doing drugs at the time but I was in a room where there was something in it and I got charged with it anyway, at seventeen. And it kind of just snowballed from there, you know, like living with my father and knowing that he was doing the drugs that he was doing. It kind of just – I ended up falling right in line with and going down that path because it was all I knew.

SIMMONS: Devan, had your dad ever been incarcerated?

HARRAL: No, he hadn't really been, like he's never been incarcerated. But he has had drug charges, but he was never incarcerated. I mean, I grew up and my dad – he did a lot of drugs before I was born, and then he kind of got straight. And then when he got sick, when I was in like third grade or so, our life kind of fell apart, like completely. And my parents separated when he got out of the hospital, and then he started shooting cocaine again. And it kind of just ended up that my brother started doing drugs, and he was the first one to be really incarcerated. Then, I followed in line and I did eight months behind my brother doing four. And me and my brother are the only ones that have been incarcerated for any length of time. It's just me and my brother.

SIMMONS: How was that at seventeen? So, it's for a substance abuse charge, and you had never been arrested. Tell me about that. Did the police – they came to your house? You said your dad's house was raided, so were you handcuffed?

Describe that.

HARRAL: Oh yeah. Everybody else was asleep, and I was sitting in the living room watching TV, and I just hear them bust the door down – and I'm like standing there like this (puts hands up) behind a door. Because I know they're going to come in there and like they've come in there with M16s in my face and I'm seventeen. And they're like, Get on the ground, and they put me on the ground and then they get me up. They sit me in a chair and they have this dry erase board. And they write my name on it and they're like, looking through the room – basically looking for anything that could be drugs. Like, there was a plate with powdered sugar on it and they said it was cocaine. And I was like, Oh my god. I was like, It's not cocaine, and I immediately just start talking shit to them because I'm upset. I mean, I don't do nothing, you know, I'm a kid. Like, you're treating me like I'm some masked criminal or something. And I just didn't understand. Even from that day on, like, I've always had this really skewed view of law enforcement and the way that they do people, it's not right at all. I mean, I was a child – I mean I was grown, but I was a child, you know. I was under eighteen. I was a kid. And to do a kid that way, you know, I just feel like the system is all types of wrong, even from the beginning.

SIMMONS: And they took you to county jail that day?

HARRAL: Yeah. They didn't take me to county. They took me to Irving City Jail. And my grandmother, she bonded me out on the charge, and I ended up doing community service for it. And I mean, my troubles didn't really start then. They didn't really start until 2018.

SIMMONS: When you went to that city jail, did you ever go into population or you were bailed out before?

HARRAL: (Nods)

SIMMONS: You did. So –

HARRAL: Oh, yeah.

SIMMONS: Were you with adults? I mean at seventeen, you were with everybody?

HARRAL: (Nods) I was in general population with everybody.

SIMMONS: How did that feel? What did that look like? How many people? How many beds? Yeah.

HARRAL: There was probably like eight rooms downstairs and eight rooms upstairs. There wasn't a lot of girls there. At the time, there was more men on the other side, or whatever, that I had seen. But, that – it was like, it's like a cage. You're an animal. That's how they treat you, like an animal. I mean, it's cold, it's hard, it's uncomfortable. It's not private at all. I mean, it's just very – very much not anything that I was expecting at all. I mean, I wasn't expecting to ever go to jail, but when I went to jail, I was like – I don't even know how to explain it really. It was an experience that's unexplainable.

SIMMONS: Talk about the lack of privacy. You said that there was no privacy, like the restrooms and showers. How does that look?

HARRAL: They're open. Like, you have stalls and walls but there's no doors. So like, someone's walking by you, they can see you. And then, the showers are the same way. They can walk by you and they can see you, you know. It's not just the showers and the bathroom. It's like, you can't write a letter or be on the phone or have any type of privacy at all because they take everything away from you. You don't get that in there. You don't get that in there at all.

SIMMONS: So, you were able to come home and then do some community service to face that. And then, you said, in 2018, things for you kind of escalated in that type of environment. What happened then? What happened in 2018?

HARRAL: In 2018, I had my son who was like eight or nine months old and I went out while he was asleep. And I didn't come home. I didn't come home for three days, and then they released me because, I ain't gonna lie, I told them that I would snitch on somebody if they would release me because I knew my baby was at home, you know? I was like, I'll tell you whatever you want to get me out of jail right now. I caught a charge for possession of methamphetamine and I'm telling these police. They're like, If you cared about your kid, you wouldn't be here. And at the time, he was right, and I didn't understand how right he actually was until last year. It kind of stuck, you know. I didn't really understand it at all but I managed to get on probation in 2019. So, I got arrested, I got released, I got arrested again a month later because I didn't turn anybody in, I got bonded out the next day, and then I was on bond for a year. And then they wanted to send me to Wilmer – that was like their agreement after the [inaudible] evaluation – they wanted to send me to Wilmer and I told them, you know, I have a one-year-old son. I said, I will do anything else but that. I'm his sole caretaker like, I can't leave him, and they're like, Okay. And they give me this whole other deal, you know. But they're like, If I see you back on my desk, you are going to Wilmer. No other offer. You're not getting anything else. And so, that was July of 2019.

And then I got violated during COVID because you couldn't check in. You couldn't call them because there was nobody there. You couldn't talk to anybody at the courthouse because there was nobody there. So, I got violated and I was on the run from – I think they said that they violated me at the beginning of January or something when I was in rehab. But, I was in there for three months. From January 2nd to March 17th, I was incarcerated. Well, in rehab. And then, I got out and the next day they had the lockdown with COVID. They started to lockdown where you couldn't leave your house. And so, I had already been violated. I ended up getting into a fight with my mother because I get out, and I'm all motivated to do right, and

have a job, and do all this while the lockdown happened, so I started getting high again. I mean, I was getting high a week after I got out because I couldn't sit and just be with my family, you know. And me and her end up getting into it, and I leave. And, I'm with my two-year-old son – he's two at the time, running around hotel to hotel, going to other houses and sleeping places because I don't have anything. And I finally gave him to my mom and I just – something was telling me, he doesn't need to be with you, you know? And I felt like such a horrible mother because something is telling me that your baby doesn't need to be with you. You're not good enough. And it's not that you're not good enough, you know? It's just you're not in the right place right now. And it was my mind telling me, You need to let him go. And then she came and got him, and three days later, I got arrested and I did eight months.

I didn't talk to my son for probably six months. My mom wouldn't let me talk to him at all. She's just telling me that it's not good for him to talk to me because he doesn't understand where I am. And, she would just tell me how – like through our addiction, I was in hotels with him, you know. So, whenever he would pass by a hotel, he would say that's where my mommy is. Because, that's all he remembered. That's where my mommy is. And I'm just like, not there, and I can't fix it, you know? I'm like, I already – I felt like I already fucked up. He's registering hotels with his mom and I'm like, not even around. I can't talk to him. I can't make him feel any better.

And I come home in May, and while I'm incarcerated, my dad has cancer. So, there's all these family aspects that are all going on outside of where I am that I can't be present for. Birthdays, holidays, people being sick, and just being absent, you know? And it's a really shitty feeling to be missing, things like that. It really is a shitty feeling to be missing those things. And, when I came home in May, I was doing all right. I mean, I had a job and I was in sober living and this was in 2021. So, I got arrested in October – September. I got arrested September 3rd. I got out May 4th, and I was doing all right. And then, my roommate at the sober living gets covid and dies. So that, automatically, I was already feeling the restlessness, the irritability, and the discontent. I was feeling like where I was at wasn't where I should be at, and all these things prior to a relapse. And when my roommate died, and then my dad got sick – and he died a month

later. I just said fuck it, you know? And I started getting high again and thank god, I didn't get incarcerated again. But I mean, I did have a probation violation. I was on the run. I was lying about who I was to the police. I was saying, I was my sister and all types of stuff. I don't even – I feel like I'm going left field. Marci, you gotta keep me in line.

SIMMONS: No, it's your story, baby. And it's a beautiful story. So thank you for sharing it and sometimes it's helpful to talk. So you share what you want to share. Are you communicating with your mom at this time? Are you able? How is that relationship?

HARRAL: (Shakes head) I'm not.

SIMMONS: Not so much. Because when you're in your addiction, like a lot of people that are addicted, you stay away from everything, right? You're protecting the people you love basically.

HARRAL: Yeah. So we were all addicts, right? My mom's a halfway recovering alcoholic. She still relapses. My brother is in recovery. I'm in recovery now. But, at one point in time I was the only one that was still fucking up. And everyone else knew it and it was like a – I tried to not show my face, but like, the one person that I would show my face to was my brother because he lived down the street from where I was homeless, sleeping outside. So, I'd walk to his house and be like, Hey, I just need to sleep, or I just need to take a shower, or I just need to eat, you know? And that was their outlet for me. They would do that for me, but they wouldn't give me money. They wouldn't give me anything else. I wasn't allowed to talk to my son but I could get pictures of him. And it started out like that.

And then I really was messed up when my dad died and I didn't realize how messed up I was. Like, he died and then my family stopped fucking with me. So then, I start prostituting myself, I start shooting up, and doing all these things that, you know, you always tell yourself, I'm never going to go there. I'm never going to do that. That's never going to be me. And then sure

enough, your morals and values – something happens and you lose them. And I fell right into the shit that I said that I would never be. And, that was when I met Dustin. I fell into the line of things that I never thought I would be. And then I met Dustin.

SIMMONS: Who's Dustin? Who is Dustin to you?

HARRAL: Dustin is my child's father. Supposed-to-be husband, but he's not here right now. He's in the streets at this moment. I had Wesley on the 10th of March, and Dustin got released from ISF March 27th. And he lasted one week. Really, he didn't last one day because got high the first day he came home. But then, he lasted a week. He lasted two days at work. And then, we went to Dallas for him to check in with probation, and he told me to take the kids home. And he would meet us there.

SIMMONS: I'm sorry, baby.

HARRAL: And it's been three days, and he's still saying he's on the way, and he's not. I mean, he didn't check in with probation and he ran off. But, you know, it's okay because I've got my babies. And I got Hayley here right now, Dustin's sister.

SIMMONS: How did you get – because you got clean and you got your older baby back and you went through a pregnancy. Can you talk about that? Because, while Dustin was incarcerated taking an in-prison program, ISF, you were pregnant and clean. Can you talk about that? Talk about how you got clean, how you got your son back.

HARRAL: I was actually blessed with a really good friend and I had kind of told her in June, or well it wasn't June – it was in July. I told her that I'm pregnant, I'm living in a tunnel in Irving. And, one day, she just happened to message me and was like, Hey, one of our other friends just got locked back up. Can you please come housesit for us while we go on vacation and take care of our dogs for us? And I'm like, How long are you going to be gone? How long am I going to be out there for? She's like, It's just four or five days. So I'm like,

Okay. And then, they come back, right? Well, they're not trying to take me home. And everyday, I'm like, So when are you taking me home – home being the street Irving. And my friend, she was just like, You're not leaving. She said, I wouldn't be a friend to you knowing that you're pregnant and I just let you leave. She said, I wouldn't be a good friend to you. And she said, You're gonna stay here and you're just going to be here. And that was July 12th. I came out to Mexia. So, I've been clean off of everything since July 12th. Technically, not the 12th because I was high the day before so it would probably be like the 13th and the 14th, maybe on the 15th. But, there was no substances in after the 12th.

And, I just stayed out here, you know, just thinking about – I don't need to be in the city. I don't need to be around these people. I don't need the distractions, because the distraction or when I'm upset, I feel like, if my feelings get hurt or if I'm angry, I'm like, Well, fuck it. I'm going to go get high, then. And that for me, being in this city is so easy. And when I'm out here it's easy for me to not feel those feelings and process through my emotions and be able to do all these things with the right mind. Because I don't have that to fall back on, my addictive behavior. And so, I just stayed out here and I got in school. I got a job. I got my son, technically, back by default.

It wasn't supposed to happen that way but my mom had relapsed and I got a text from my brother saying, Hey, you need to go and check on Atticus right now. It's not good. And so, I had my friend drive me to Denton, Texas, all the way from Mexia. And, I get there. My mom's car doors are all open. She's not home at all and my four-year-old son is there, home alone. So, I asked him where she was and he said she walked to get a cell phone. So I have my friend Zack drive to the phone store down the street to find my mom, and she's not there. So, I packed Atticus's bag with some of his stuff, not thinking I'm going to be having him forever again. I'm just like, I'm just going to pack some of his stuff and I'm going to leave them a note and we'll just bring him back out after the weekend. Well, as we're leaving Denton, I'm like, Stop at that Applebee's right there. Like, Stop at that Applebee's. See if she's in there at the bar. And my friend, he didn't even walk inside. He opened the door and – I seen it. He opened the door, and he just was kind of like (scoffs). And he just lets go of the handle and he starts walking back to the truck and I said, My mom's in there. And he comes out to the truck, he opens the door, and I said, My mom's in there.

And he said, Yeah. And I get out of the car and he's like, I don't think it's a good idea for you to go in there. And I just went in and she's talking to some guy she doesn't even know. She's drunk and I just go up to her and I said, Mom, I love you. I said, I hope that you can get better. At this point, I'm three or four months clean. So I'm like, I hope that you can get better. I got Atticus. Don't worry about him, he'll be fine. I said, I just hope that you are able to get better and find whatever it is that you're looking for. So, I wasn't even supposed to get him. I just kind of went and stole him back because you leave my four-year-old son at home alone, anything could happen to him. You might tell him not to go outside but I know my son will go outside. And what if he goes out in the front yard and somebody takes him and you're not home. Or what if there's a fire and he doesn't know what to do. So, I just took him. And it gave me a real motivator, after the fact of, you know, I am in school, I am working, I am getting these things. I'm like, I can do this. At first, I was scared shitless and I was like, what the fuck am I gonna do? I was like, with a four-year-old I haven't had for three years. I was like, What am I gonna do, dude? And my friend was just like, You'll be fine.

And December comes around. I enroll for my next semester of school, and I get the money, and that's when I was able to get our house that we were in. I got a truck for us and all while being pregnant. I'm working a job every day. I'm going to work and I'm spending the majority of my money, my weekly check money, on Securus phone calls, Securus video visits, the money for his food, and it's expensive. I didn't get that luxury of, when I was incarcerated, to get people to put money on my phone or give me commissary or do all these things. I said – I told my family, I would rather have money on the phone to be able to talk to you guys than money for food. I don't need food, they feed us. Just because I wanted that connection to – outside of there. Because all you see in there is the same bitches doing the same crap. Spades, dominoes, fights, or drama, and all this. It's just like, I would rather be able to escape out of there while I'm in there, than be in there and just be chilling and comfortable. I would rather be uncomfortable.

SIMMONS: So, for people that don't know, that don't have loved ones locked up or have never been in the system, can you tell us what is Securus? How is that taking so much money? Why is it taking so much money from you?

HARRAL: Securus is the way that they get to use the phone and the way that they get to use their tablet, because they get tablets in there now. And the way that you can put money on their side of the phone, so they can call whoever they want or they can just call you or – I think you can also do text messages through Securus and pretty much, eat for ten stamps. It's like five bucks for twenty-five stamps. It's like eleven – no, it's not. I think it might be like \$11 and it's one stamp per letter. And then, the phones. They're seven cents a minute, but when you talk to them every day all the time – well, depending what unit they're at it's seven cents a minute, but some of them are more like 25 cents a minute. Because where I was, it was twenty-five cents a minute. So, it's expensive to continuously put money on there to communicate with your loved ones, you know? And I feel like it is a, not like a – like a punishment. It's a punishment, it really is. Like, you want to talk to your loved ones or you want to talk to them? Well, you have to pay high, high dollar for that. High dollar for it.

SIMMONS: And your loved ones—

HARRAL: And my loved ones, they're worth it for me, you know? I mean, Dustin's worth it for me. My brother, at the time, when he was incarcerated for four years, he was worth it to me. But, when my brother was incarcerated, I was still on drugs. So, I didn't have the steady money like that. And it was like – now I got the steady money, but now it's like I'm struggling to keep gas in my truck because I'm putting money on there. And I'm struggling to do all these different things because my stuff won't level out. I can't level out my stuff because I'd rather talk to my husband than have all of my things in line on the same scale. I'd rather talk to my husband and my best friend than be – I'd rather be able to talk to him and run things by him and be able to get his input and have that person, other than the one that's inside of my mind because that bitch is crazy. I mean, I would rather hear from my loved one than be doing it all by myself because I feel like I could make a poor choice and end up fucking myself. So, I'd rather talk to my husband, run everything by him.

SIMMONS: So, when you're talking to your husband on the

phone, and you're pregnant. You're pregnant with y'all's baby. When did Dustin find out? When did your husband find out that you were pregnant? Was he incarcerated at the time or was he home?

HARRAL: No, me and him were both still running the streets, and he wasn't talking to me at the time. But I knew that it was between him and another guy so I let them know off of the top. I was like, Hey, I'm pregnant and I slept with both of y'all around the same time, so it could be either one of you guys. And, I didn't talk to Dustin, really. I didn't see him at all before I left town. I kept trying to see him, but I wasn't telling him why I was trying to see him. I just wanted to see him to see him, but he didn't want to see me because he was mad at me for cheating on him. I'm going to call it cheating on him, we're going to call it cheating on him. And so, he was not talking to me at all. And I told him I was pregnant and he still wouldn't talk to me, really. But, he would talk shit to me. So I was like, Okay, I got some type of communication with him. He's talking shit to me, so he's talking to me. And I finally was just like, Hey, I want you to come and meet me. I want to see you, but I wasn't telling him like, Hey, I'm leaving town tomorrow and I want to see you. Because I knew if I told him, Hey, I'm leaving town, like I want you to come get clean with me and woopy-woo, I knew he wasn't going to come. Just like he doesn't want to fucking be out here right now. He wasn't going to come, so I didn't tell him. And he got mad at me and he held that over my head for like, I don't know, probably the first three months of him being incarcerated. Oh, you just left me out there and you went and you got clean. You did all this stuff for you. And I mean, I did leave for me, but I left for us. To be able to get better things, you know? Nobody wants to be with the person who's on the streets, and you're living on the streets, too, and you don't have a place to live or take a shower and, you know, that's not a way to be. And I was that way. And I know now that it's not the way to be. You can't be in a relationship that way. You can't have a baby on the streets. You can't. I was like, I did it for us, for our son to – well at the time, I didn't know it was a son, but I had a feeling. I mean I left for us to have better. At the time, yes, it was a selfish thing. But, I didn't want to not come back. I thought I'd come back. I just – I don't know. I don't know, Marci.

SIMMONS: What do you know about Dustin's history with

incarceration?

HARRAL: I didn't really know anything about it at all, because I didn't even meet Dustin for the first time ever until March when he got out of TDC last year. I didn't know him at all. I knew Brittany from a long time ago. And, it was really like – I knew Brittany from a long time ago. Me and her didn't see each other for a really long time because I moved away. And then, me and her were fucking around with the same people. One time, I seen her one time and then she got arrested. And so, I knew his sister, but I didn't know all the other Pokorskis and Dustin was the last one. And I just – I didn't know anything about him, really. I didn't know nothing. I didn't know that he had basically been incarcerated his whole life through TYC and then TDC. I didn't know anything about it. And I'm getting the glimpse of it now. I've been shown pictures of all of his little mugshots, or whatever, basically, starting since he was ten years old. He has a mugshot from ten. And so, I didn't know that until, probably three months ago, his sister sent me all those. I mean, I didn't have an understanding of where exactly Dustin was coming from. Like, he used to try to tell me, but I didn't really understand and I didn't even know Stacy was in prison, his mom, until like last weekend. I didn't even know that when they were growing up and I knew Brittany then. When Hurricane Katrina happened and she was locked up, I knew Brittany then and I didn't even know Brittany's mom was in jail. So, I didn't know nothing the Pokorskis. I knew nothing about them. Dustin's still a secret. I don't know nothing about him.

SIMMONS: You said earlier that you had your baby, little Wesley, who wasn't so little, right? And, you had Wesley and then Dustin came home. Can you tell me about how that was picking up Dustin from his in-prison program. Tell me about how it was seeing him meet his son.

HARRAL: I mean, I wish it would have been better. We went and picked him up at 7 o'clock in the morning. It's still dark outside of the Dallas County Jail. And, I just have Wesley in the car seat and Dustin's got somebody he wants to give a ride home to, so we got to ride with this guy we don't even know across town to drop him off. So, Dustin

didn't really, really meet Wesley until we got to his mom's house. But, as soon as we got there, he was trying to already see people and do things, so he didn't really, really get to experience Wesley the way that I was expecting him to when he came home, you know what I mean? I was expecting him to be like fully there in the present moment with this child that is your seed – to meet him and be there with him. And, he just wasn't that. I am a recovering addict, so I understand being an addict and being fresh out and being in the city and wanting to run around. But, at the same time, it hurt my feelings that you just didn't want to be there with him, you know. You didn't want to be there with him. I get he's a little baby, but that baby is not little. Okay, he's a little baby, but he's not little. And you don't even spend time with him now, even now being a week that he has been home. He fed him maybe five times, and it wasn't even a full bottle he fed him. It was kind of like he fed him until he stopped crying and then he stopped. Or, he's changed one diaper and it was pee and that was it. He basically just – everytime, anything to do with the baby was thrown on me because that's what the moms do. That's the mom's job. And I understand it is my job. That is my child and he is a baby. So, that is my duty as a mother type-thing. But, it's also a man's thing too. You can't just put it all off on me and that was what he was doing.

And then, when we were coming to town the night before, he was telling me, you're not coming with me. Like, I'm taking Wesley and we're going alone, like blah blah blah. And, I was like, No, you're not. After a day of him telling me that, the next day I was like, You are out of your mind if you think that you're going to Dallas without me and your kids. Like, you're not. And, we went. We went and then sat at his mom's house while he ran around. And then, he just told us to come home and he'd meet us here. He was gonna commit crimes and come down by himself. And I knew that, that was not going to be what it was. So now, I've got Wesley and Atticus and his sister, Hayley, and we're all just sitting over here, waiting for him to come home or come down or end up back in jail. And I'm pretty sure he's probably going to go to jail before he comes home.

SIMMONS: I'm sorry, baby. I'm sorry. I'm wondering if you have – are you concerned about Wesley growing up without his dad?

HARRAL: Yeah. I mean Atticus, already, is growing up without his father. And, Dustin made sure to say all these things and make my son think all these things about him, like that was his dad. And, he wanted that so bad. He told me. My son's like, I want a dad. My cousin calls her dad, Dad. This person has a dad. He's like, I want a dad. He was like, Dustin's my dad now. Then, he did the same thing that his dad did – couldn't stop running the fucking streets and he just left. But now, it's like, you didn't just leave on my first son, you did it to both of my sons. And, I could be pregnant right now and I don't even know. That's about where we're at. Don't even know.

SIMMONS: Are you attributing Dustin's behavior to his substance abuse disorder? Is there a correlation there?

HARRAL: I mean, how do you mean?

SIMMONS: Well, do you feel like that's the reason for his behavior? His addiction.

HARRAL: Yeah. Yeah, and being that he is young. He is young and dumb, you know. And, when you grow up in a way that that's all that you know, and you – even when you get shown another way, you still feel that I'm not worthy of having this good thing because I've never had it before. And I know that's where he's coming from to an extent because he's told me before. He said, I've never had anything good in my whole life. He said, How am I supposed to do anything good, if I've never even been shown it before? And, I met his mom and I didn't think nothing of her. I didn't know her past. I didn't know how they grew up when I first met her. So, I didn't know anything. And I definitely think that it's a contributor. Your life factors are a contributor.

SIMMONS: There's definitely a generational thing going on in Dustin's family. He has a grandfather that was incarcerated, and then both of his parents went

through incarceration, and his first mug shot, you said, was at ten years old. If you could think about Wesley as an eight, nine, ten year old and Atticus, is there something in your mind? What would you tell them about life in hopes to break that generational curse?

HARRAL: Well, I always tell like – because I have younger siblings who are 16 and 15, and they're kind of starting their journey with drugs. They smoke marijuana and I don't know what else they've done. And, I always try to use myself as a – you don't want to end up like me, thirty with nothing, no school real experience. I dropped out in the 10th grade. I was like, You don't want to end up like me. But, I don't want to go to my children and be like, You don't want to be like me. I want to go to them and be like, Hey, I have a past, and this is what it was, and I just want you to know and understand so that you know where your life can go. If you don't make the right choices and do the right things, your life can go these, so many different ways. And I've got people to back it. It's not just me, it's my brother. I mean, my sister, she caught a felony. But she got a felony, she got bonded out, and she never went back ever.

She's been clean for fourteen years or something – not fourteen, he's ten. But yeah, so he's ten years. She's been clean ten years. And I can show you exactly what happens, just by example, my sister, she's been clean for ten years as soon as she had her son. She stopped fucking around when she was pregnant. She started as a bartender – a barback, not even the bartender. She started at Chili's and now she's an aerial manager over eight Chili's in El Paso and New Mexico. She makes over \$100,000 a year and she used to be right where I was at, doing the same shit I was. But she has expanded and grown and gotten way farther in life because I took so long to start my journey in sobriety and recovery and doing the right thing and not fucking up and doing drugs. And, I feel like fucking up right now. I'm so fucking mad at Dustin right now, and the devil that is addiction. Its claws are in my back like this (imitates claw with hand) and I can feel it from the middle of my spine all the way into my shoulder blades. It just feels like (imitates claw with hand) on my back. It's wanting to pull me back down and I am not letting it. It can't happen. Just now, I've gotten my sons in a good place and I have both of my sons. I don't have CPS. I'm not losing that. I'm not losing my kids again. I've had five CPS cases with a son

who's only five years old. I'm not – I'm not, I'm not going back. I can't.

Because, I just realized recently, when I got pregnant with Wesley, my son was in school with my mom, and they were getting calls from the principal almost every day. He was getting kicked out of school for fighting and acting out and spitting and doing all this crazy behavior. And I realize, it's because I'm not there. It's because I'm absent. His mother's absent and he is acting out in all these different types of ways. And I didn't really even take it into consideration how my actions in my addiction would affect my child. Because, it really does affect your child, more than you even think that it would. Because I remember before my son even – he was two, he wasn't three yet, but he was two. We were in a hotel and he'd be asleep and I'd be in the bathroom and I'd be smoking dope. But, he would see the pipe sitting there, you know what I mean? So, one day, I had an empty pipe that had nothing in it, right? It was clean. And I went somewhere, I took Atticus with me, and he gets out his bag from the trunk of the car, which is supposed to have toys in it, and it has a fucking pipe in it. He pulls it out while we're in this person's hotel, like, everyone else has one. I have one too. Even then, I didn't register how my actions and the shit that I do in front of him, let alone around him, affect them. And even now, he asks me questions and I hate answering questions. He asks me stuff I don't like answering. Like, What is this and what is that? And your Uncle Zach this, or something – because they smoke weed and they drink. And, I'm like, I don't know what that is. I don't know what that is, don't ask me. I don't know what that is. Because, I don't really know what to say. I mean, I don't know what to say. This is a recreational drug. Like no, I don't know what to say. I have no idea what to say.

SIMMONS: Devan, you've shared so much and I'm so appreciative for your contribution to this project and for sharing yourself and your story. I have one more question and it's just that – you had talked about your first encounter with incarceration was at seventeen years old. And if you could go back in time to maybe a month before that raid happened and those officers had you on the ground and then in the city jail, what would you tell that seventeen-year-old Devan? What would you want her to know?

HARRAL: Don't go back. I had moved to Ohio and I had just moved back. I had just moved back home because I missed my family and blah blah blah. I was homesick. So I moved back home. And then, it was like the next week we got raided. And, I was like (sighs). I would just tell myself not to go back. Don't go back. There's nothing for you there. And, I probably would have never ended up on the drugs I was on and around the people that I was around because I wouldn't have been exposed to that life like that.

SIMMONS: Very good. Very good. I'm going to stop the recording now.