

1 GVP12 Charles Mayfield

2 D: State your name for the record.

3 C: My name is Charles L. Mayfield.

4 D: And Charles, how old are you?

5 C: I'm 38 years old.

6 D: And Charles, I know you've been affected by gun violence, but can you please share your
7 story?

8 C: Yeah, so me, myself, I was never directly harmed or nothing like that, by, by gun violence.

9 But just living in that community that has been affected by gun violence, I have experienced it,
10 been a witness to certain things. I give you one, one incident where I was, in the summer time, I
11 think it was the summer of let's say 2015, I want to say. It was a, you know, summer afternoon,
12 was pretty quiet in the neighborhood. I was on the phone with my mother and heard some
13 commotion and some, some arguing going on and after that, heard, heard (pause) a lotta shots. I
14 forget now how many shots I heard. If I had to say how many shots I heard, it was probably at
15 least 14 to 15 shots. So, I got off the phone with my mother and I was talking to my wife, like, "I
16 think somebody just got shot." So, after I said that, I hear, I hear somebody yelling for help,
17 "Help! Help! Help!" You know, "I'm hit! I'm hit!"

18 D: Where were you at?

19 C: So, I lived upstairs and so, it was my neighbor directly across the alley from me. I was living
20 [in Old North Milwaukee] the time. So, I was the, the second house from the corner and I could
21 hear all this out my back out my back balcony. My balcony was facing the particular neighbor
22 house who, who had got shot. So, I was actually the first person on the scene and when I got
23 there, it was, it was a, a pretty bad situation. The first person that I walked up on, he, I thought he

24 was dead. He wasn't moving and it seemed like, I, I'm pretty sure he was the, the target of, of the
25 shooting because he, he was hit everywhere. And he wasn't moving. I saw another neighbor
26 who, who lived in that house with that guy. Saw him, he was shot up on the porch. He was the
27 one who was yelling for help at the time. And so, at that, at that time more neighbors, you know,
28 they scrambled to the scene and trying to see what you know, what everybody can do. So, we,
29 eventually we called the police and everything. And the police came. And so, that's just one
30 incident that I was involved in that directly affected me because you know, like I said, it was in
31 my neighborhood, too close for comfort for me. I mean, you know, you, you hear incidents
32 where bullets is flying through, through walls and different things like that. You know? It
33 could've just as easily been one of those situations, you know, where a bullet could've struck me
34 or you know, numerous other neighbors who was, who was in that area. And so, yeah, I really,
35 really think that when you live in a community that's affected by gun violence then you, you are
36 directly affected. So, whether it's you personally or just you know, you being in that, that
37 neighborhood.

38 D: When you saw the gentleman, what, what time of day was this? Was this in the morning? The
39 night?

40 C: It was more towards the afternoon slash evening. 'Round maybe, let's say three to five
41 o'clock, right around that time.

42 D: And you said one was on the ground and one was on the porch, right?

43 C: Well, one was, they both were on the porch. But one was on the front stairs going up to the
44 porch, leading up to the porch. So, he was just, he was laid out, wasn't moving. And the other
45 guy, he was on the, on the porch, he was shot up in the leg, I think it was. And he told us
46 somebody came from the side of their house with a, with a bandana around their face and just,

47 just unloaded on them. And what's, what's messed up about that is and this was actually on the
48 news, one of their neighbors, well, one of their, not neighbors, one of their relatives was I think it
49 was one of the, one of the two guys who got shot up on that bus stop on what street was that? On
50 Hopkins. And this was just a couple weeks prior. And so I guess, you know, they were trying to
51 finish the job or whatever they was trying to do.

52 D: Did they survive?

53 C: Yeah. Believe it or not, the guy who I actually saw shot up, he, he actually survived. I mean, I
54 mean, he wasn't moving at that at the time I saw him. And I was like, "Wow, I can't believe you
55 survived!" Thank God he did, but—

56 D: Right.

57 C: —for somebody to be shot up that, that many times, that's, man.

58 D: Wow.

59 C: It's a lot.

60 D: What would you say we could do to reduce gun violence in our community?

61 C: (pause) It's a lot of things that would have to be tried. It's just, it's not just one thing. You can
62 always bring awareness, you can always hold rallies. You know, have different meets and, and
63 stuff like that. But I think one of the main things is trying some type of outreach to the younger
64 people that's, that's actually out here committing these crimes. I mean, they the ones who
65 committing these crimes. It's not even people that's, are around my age anymore. It's the, it's the
66 the- these young teenagers and things like that. Who, maybe if they had something more
67 constructive to do, I don't know. Maybe they wouldn't turn to that, you know? And so I think, I
68 think outreach, which covers a lot of different areas that, that could be something that could be
69 done.

70 D: What would you say to our elected officials, what you'd like to see changed as far as laws to
71 reduce gun violence?

72 C: I feel like, and I don't want to go off subject here, but I feel like some of the elected officials
73 who not really in our neighborhood like that. I think they should get to know the people in our
74 neighborhoods. I think they get, they need to get to know and see the culture of their
75 constituents, you know, the people who, who, who voted for them. And then have a Q&A. You
76 know? Listen, listen to what people got to say and, and, and their different inputs and stuff like
77 that. I think that'd be, a that'd just be a start. You know, just be the jump off to a lot of different
78 things that could, that could possibly help. So, yeah. To the elected officials I would, I would say
79 get to know the, the people in the neighborhood, get to know the culture, and maybe even talk to
80 some of the, the younger people who could be the ones doing these things.

81 D: When you saw that incident across the street from your house, were you afraid in your
82 neighborhood at that point?

83 C: It wasn't nothing where I was afraid. I was, I was more concerned, yeah, because I got to, I, at
84 the time, had a almost two-year-old son. And, you know, just not, just being a first-time father,
85 I'm, I'm looking at stuff totally different. Now, I'm like, "Well, I do like this neighborhood, but
86 maybe, maybe it's time to move away from here." You know, cause it was, that summer it was,
87 it was a lot of shootings going on and, you know? You know, who wants to live in a
88 neighborhood where they, where they don't, you know, feel safe? So, so, yeah, I'm more
89 concerned than, than scared.

90 D: Okay. What would you say to someone who have heard the gun shots in their neighborhood
91 or who ran across an incident like you did and now are fearful?

92 C: (pause) What would I say to a person? Well, (pause) I would, you know, just tell that person
93 to 'course be careful. And just really, you know, what can, what can you tell a person, you know,
94 in, in that, in that situation. I mean, you can tell them to move, but if they, if they, you know, like
95 that neighborhood, they're not going to move. Most people just go and resort to not coming
96 outside or, or just coming outside at certain times. You know? So, I guess I would, I would tell
97 that person to do some, maybe some preventative things. Cause when I started the, me, myself
98 after that, I actually was like set to move after that. I'm like, "Well, yeah, I'm for sure moving
99 after this. It's getting, you know, it's getting too bad over here." And so, even though I like that
100 neighborhood, I had to think about you know, my safety first. So, I, I would tell a person, "Hey,
101 you know, if you don't feel safe, move. Or, or, or, you know, pick and choose the times that you,
102 that you move around in this area."

103 D: You didn't have, did you experience any post-traumatic stress after seeing those two men shot
104 and bleeding?

105 C: I don't think I, there were any post-traumatic stress, but it's, it's a mental picture that's in my
106 head. Just to know that I saw that and that it was, yeah, this is, I guess you could say it's pretty
107 traumatizing cause you can't just walk away from seeing somebody shot up like that and be like,
108 "Well, okay I just saw somebody shot," and it not really affect you. I say the way that it affected
109 me was being more aware of what's going on in our community and you know, I always had a
110 heart to help people. So, if it's anything that I can do, you know, just like this interview, you
111 know, just bring awareness to certain, certain issues, and, and things in our community and
112 neighborhoods.

113 D: Is there anything you'd like to add?

114 C: (pause) I would like to add, just, you know, just, really just keep bringing more awareness and
115 you know, as I'm talking right now, there's just, you know, things going on in my head that
116 maybe, maybe we could do in our community. I know we have meetings down at the, at the park
117 so, that's a start. You know, getting to know our neighbors and I know we have a block party
118 over here and things like that. So, I think that that's a start for our, for our area. You know? And,
119 and maybe different neighborhoods can, can and do that too, come together and bring more
120 awareness and talk to some of the kids that's, that's in their neighborhood. And not, not at a, at a,
121 at a place where you're attacking them. But just, just really trying to make, make it a more how
122 can I say, human situation. Cause it's like, man, don't nobody got no feelings out here no more
123 with all the stuff that's going on. So, I, you know, just got to humanize the situation and, and
124 bring more awareness to these, to these kids and different things like that and maybe that'll be
125 something that'll shift in them, where they won't want to do, you know, the things that they're
126 doing.

127 D: Okay, and is it, that's it?

128 C: And that's it.

129 D: Thank you.

130 C: Thank you a lot.

131 D: That was good.