

JUST WORDS

The Stories of Working People In Our Community

Episode 30: Darryl

Welcome to Just Words—the stories of working people in our community.

This is the story of one man's journey into corner life, and what he found there.

His name is Darryl.

My mom has three kids. I am the youngest, she raised us. She had two jobs. When she was working, she might come home late. "You do your homework?" "Yea, I did my homework." Never done my homework, but she was tired, so she couldn't go and check. She come in late from her second job and then had to turn around and get back up early in the morning to go to her first job. So she couldn't go checking behind us. I was selling everything. I started off with whippersnappers and then candy and then other things. You go on the corner, okay, you become somebody, women, bogus friends—and I say bogus because everyone is your friend when you out there. That's what I mean by bogus You have a million friends when you out there, they come through, holler at you, how are you doing? The cars, everything, it is all intriguing, it is fun. You can get the police pulling up on you, if you not dirty all that's fun because you know you not going to prison because you not dirty but you out there breaking the law. So you throw it in their face like, I'm not dirty, what? What you going to do?

That's a false sense of freedom. When you on the corner you are not thinking long term plans. You thinking about tomorrow, today and tomorrow. You are not thinking about next week. You thinking about, well today I am going to buy a pair of tennis for tomorrow, or things of that nature. On the street corners there is no long term goals, besides make your money today, make your money tomorrow. There is no long term goals at all. I remember when I was younger it thought it was so cool when someone said, I just come home from jail. I was so fascinated with that because that is a part of their culture. You just come from jail, I had a cousin That went to jail, what's jail like? So I got in trouble when I was 17, weighed as an adult, and that is what started the pattern. A kid thinking he was a man, thinking that because he was bringing in some money, taking care of his children, that he was a man. Thinking he was different than his father who wasn't there. And I ended up getting ten years.

Next week-Darryl speaks of his time in prison.

Music: The Proccussions, *Little People*

Brand Nubian, *Young Son*

Produced by Jessica Phillips. Hosted by Marc Steiner.

Through a grant by the Open Society Institute-Baltimore. Visit them on the web at www.osi-baltimore.org.