

The following word(s) have been removed from this transcription for better readability, with a few exceptions:

- You know

**Moderator:** I'm very thrilled to introduce him. I think you're going to really enjoy this presentation. You'll have a chance, at the end, they'll be books available. His *Cultivate a Creative Mind* and *Small-Town Brown* will both be available for you to purchase and you'll be able to chat with him. So Simon this floor is yours.

**Simon Silva:** Thank you.

**Moderator:** Let's welcome him!

**Simon Silva:** Buenas tardes, good afternoon to all of you. My first time at CSU Chico and I was here in Chico many many years ago, but I did something at a high school for some high school program. But I didn't come to the campus, it was many many years ago. I don't remember...you guys remember? Oh you do? Okay so I'm not dreaming cause that drive up here kinda said "Yeah, you've been here before." So I have been here before, but not at the campus and so far what I've seen it's a beautiful campus, so you should be very proud of your campus. So I-I do want to say that whatever I say here tonight, it's only my opinion okay? With a little added information about the people whose work I admire, but for the most part a lot of this information is my opinion. So you can either agree with me or you could disagree with me as much as you want, or agree with me as much as you want. So that I just want to make sure that I clarify that, that it's only my opinion about most of the information.

This is what my current website looks like, it's about to change. It's just been up...same one's been up for way too long and I need to update a lot of things on the actual website.

For those of you who are students, I just would love to urge all of you to email, just like Cris did. I-I have been encouraging my-my kids, all three of my boys, to do this and to all the other students that I deal with around the country to email anybody and everybody whose life or whose work they admire. I mean the worse that can happen is that they ignore you right? The best thing that could happen is you become really close friends. A couple of my best friends right now happen to be former college students that were you doing reports on artists, specifically Latino artists from Cal Poly. Now we hang out, we're best friends. So, I mean that's a good resource; use the internet as a resource. It's a tool okay? It's not a [inaudible], it should I guess, but use it as a tool and use it to open more doors and to give you an opportunity to make connections. You don't have to reinvent the wheel and I think that the-the great thing about it is that it's absolutely free. So please do yourself a big favor, email everyone and anybody whose life or work you admire. I really would urge you to do that as many times as possible.

I want to first of all, I want to thank Cris Guenter, Deborah Summers, and also Christopher [inaudible] for doing a lot of the leg work and obviously getting me out here doing all the paperwork. So thank you three for doing that, I really appreciate you doing this and I was more than happy to just come out and luckily it just all worked out.

The-the other thing I wanted to do is I want to thank each and every one of you to for sharing part of your time to come out and be here with us this afternoon to hear what I have to say. Obviously you're interested in what I have to say and hopefully I won't disappoint.

The main overall theme of the presentation is Cultivate a Creative Mind: Nurturing 21st Century Skills. Although I've added some other components to this particular presentation because we're also celebrating, or hopefully some of you, might be celebrating Hispanic Heritage month. So those of you who are, happy Hispanic Heritage month. I do want to start off by talking a little bit about culture because I think culture, we're in a state right now in the 21st century and beyond, where culture, for me, I think it's gonna be an integral part of everyone's education. You know we have a half-black half-white president. I didn't think it was going to happen in my time and it has and I think it's a wonderful thing, personally. But I think that we need to look at culture in a way that is definitely a plus and I believe that part of the great education in the future is going to be found in the crossroads of multiculturalism. Not only multiculturalism, but also being multilingual as well and of course the arts, as far as I'm concerned is a universal language that definitely needs to be recognized and I'll talk a little bit more about that later on in the presentation. But to me culture is not about genetics. I don't think it's about the way we look. I have cousins in Guadalajara, Mexico that are blonde and blue eyed. Go figure that one out right? I think it's the German blood in my familia that kind of stands out there. We also live in a wonderful country where we have a wonderful opportunity to acquire as many cultures as we desire. Not in the language of the foods, but in how we approach things. I think every culture has something very unique, something very different, spectacular, inspirational, motivational to offer each and every one of us to further our personal growth and our education. So please look into that. And when I say acquire, I do mean acquire. I'll give you an example, well two examples. My young...my oldest son, if you walked into his room, you would swear there's an American samurai that lives in that room. My kid loves the Japanese culture. I mean he just loves the Japanese culture. One of my friends, [inaudible], actually his real name is Matthew. He's actually from Boise Idaho, red hair, Irish American. Married a Mexican American lady. He spends three months in Mexico. He speaks better Spanish than I do. He spends three months there, and he actually teaches Spanish at a high school. He emails me in Spanish and I email him back in English, I'm too lazy right when it comes to language there. He's more Mexican than I will ever be, at least at this point in my life right? So we can all acquire other cultures, and it's not the language or the food, but it's just the way we do things, the way we look at things. Culture on the other hand, also just a brief warning, that I think we also need to respect culture and use it wisely because I think culture can also actually hinder a person's education, if not use correctly or understood correctly. If you want to know more about that, we can talk a little about that as we move forward with the presentation.

Just to kind of share with you what happens when creativity and culture collide and a culture clashes. I want to show you a couple examples of what happens when you have these wonderful collisions. This happens to be an [inaudible] that my mom puts together during the holidays or Christmas time. She loves yard sales, she loves yard sales. She found this doll which is actually a life sized doll. I don't where she found it, but she probably paid a quarter for it. But as you can tell she puts a wonderful diaper on it and this baby is actually bigger than the cow, bigger than the camel, bigger than Joseph and Mary; this is a miracle birth. This is proof. Proof right? But then we have a wonderful thing called Vicks VapoRub right. I grew up extremely poor and growing up poor, we have those home remedies, right, that everybody creates in their own potions in their houses and what not. Growing up poor we had such a dedication, loyalty to this thing. I mean we used it for broken bones, fevers, birth control – not that I've used, but I mean I've heard, I heard. You know I think as Latinos we should be asking this company for scholarships. I mean we've kept this thing alive for a long long time, you know what I mean? So we did whatever it took to survive.

These are my three boys – 23, 18, and 15. Ladies they're all single. Kinda like pimping my kids' right? We can talk after the show. But when I got married to my wife, we were at odds as to how many kids we were gonna have. Her number was around six, eight, ten; my number was about .5, like a very small one that stayed small forever. We ended up with three. I did the math, right, nine months. May, that's what it was, it was May. May Mother's Day. Her birthday is in May, plus you add a little bit of good [inaudible] in there, it's a dangerous month right? So we ended up with three boys.

I'm also here to kind of share some information about those of you who are students or even adults, yes you can partake in this information. Over the years my kids have brought over a lot of kids over to our house for after school get-togethers. These kids come over, they eat a lot of my food, lot of electricity, lot of toilet paper usage right? Yes even the girls. Over the years we...my wife and I have only invited a handful of those students back to our house and I'll tell you who they were and why because it doesn't much to impress me these days, it really doesn't. The kids that impressed my wife and I and the ones that we personally invited back to our house, were the kids that the first time and every time they come back to our house, they look for my wife and I, they looked us in the eyes – not at the floor, not at the ceiling, not to the right nor to the left – but they looked us right smack in the eyes and they gave us a wonderful first name, two or three middle names, and their last name. And they won me over, they won us over and we invited them back to our house anytime they want. That information is something that is never gonna go out of style and the best thing about it guys is that it's absolutely free, it's gratis, and it can give you so much more opportunities in terms of impressing people because as human beings we're so critical of each other without knowing anything about that other person. But try a good handshake, a good firm handshake and watch what happens, it's magic. It'll impress future professors, teachers, in-laws, it may be me, or your future employer. And again, I want to remind you it's absolutely free, absolutely free.

But the other thing I wanted to tell you about my kids is that when we first had our first child and I thought about the opportunity of the excitement that I felt, [inaudible] had to share information with my first child and the other two. I was so excited for them to understand questions, the idea of questions and learning and sharing information with them. And I did something very ignorant that I just found out that I did and I'm sure that many have you have done this the same probably. A lot of my friends, well-educated friends, have done exactly the same thing that I did.

[10:34]

What I did, as soon as my kids were able to understand a question, I asked them the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" And if you're not looking at this question correctly, if you're not looking at this question from out of the box, you're not gonna get it. You're not getting why this is an old question that should never be asked again. Because the question for the 21st century is going to have to be, should've been, "How many things do you want to be when you grow up?" We compartmentalize everything right? You have to be a teacher, you have to be an attorney, you gotta be a nurse, you gotta be an artist, and you can't even look the other way because it's not part of your expertise. The 21st century question has to be how many things do you want to be when you grow up because I guarantee you that each and every one of us were born with multiple abilities and multiple intelligences. That is the 21st century question and of course we can all agree that education is gonna be a key component to obviously everyone's education and for success, whatever that means to you in the 21st century. But unfortunately, I still come across as I traveled around the country dealing with different social economic classes, I still come across a lot of people who are confused as to what an education really is all about. For the most-for the most part most people, most students agree that an education is about getting a great job. And I think that's really important, don't get me wrong. I just don't agree that that's really the most important aspect of an education. I think as a 53 year old man, for me, a great education has been that I've gotten to the point where I see myself in the mirror, and yeah I'm getting old, but I see myself in the mirror and I like what I see. I don't want to be anyone else. I'm glad I'm not the football players that I wanted to be in high school or the rich guy or the really good looking one, or actually the good looking one yes. But then I take a step forward...further and I ask myself that wonderful question "What else can I do? What else am I able to do? What else am I about?" And I think that if each and every one of us gets to that point in our lives, I think we would have received a wonderful education, and a big part of that education has come out of being out of an institution of higher learning. I think of education...in a nut shell, I also want to make sure you understand an education, at least for me in my perspective, doesn't make anybody more important than anybody else. It just makes us different. I'm no more important than anybody else, I'm just different that's it. It's a wonderful thing, but I'm not more important than anybody else, I'm just different. A great education should make our minds flexible to hear opposing views, opinions. You don't necessarily have to agree with that stuff, but at least we're able to listen and have an open mind, a flexible mind. An education doesn't necessarily make us wiser. How do I know this? Well, we're trying to dig ourselves out of that economic collapse right? There was a lot of intelligent, well-educated people that were part of that mess. But it doesn't necessarily make up wiser or

smarter, but again I think ultimately a great education should give us that opportunity to look at ourselves in the mirror and say "I like myself, I don't want to be anybody else and I want to know more about this person that I see in the mirror." I think that's a wonderful location to be.

I found this wonderful quote by Will Durant, it says "Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance." Don't you guys just love that? The more I learn, the more I realize I don't know that much. I don't know very much at all actually. Unfortunately, I'm a bi-product of what we have today or what's hopefully changing, this linear education system. I just was told by a friend of mine who's a professor at a community college that apparently now students are forced to pick a major and if they change that major, their funds, their student loans are actually pulled. I thought that was so tragic, horrible.

Anybody here seen the movie recently that came out called the *Ivory Tower*. Write it down. You know there's a CEO President, well actually a president of one of these private institutions, that talks about how college should be where you explore things right? I'm actually gonna disagree with him. I think by the time you're in college it might be a little too late sometimes. I think we should start exploring stuff when we're in kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd and 3rd grade, elementary school, junior high so we can be much more sure as to what we're doing and where we're going. I'm proposing that we create a much more organic model for the 21st century. We all start at the bottom, but there's many different ways to the topping. We just kind of go along and we embrace all this information not for the job we're gonna have right, but we embrace all this information because we love the hunt of pursuit of an education. I don't know about you guys, but the high that I get when I learn a new concept or when I'm introduced to something that makes me say "Wow, that is spectacular, this is what it means to be alive." That's what I'm talking about here. Being able to move through this thing, this organic thing that we call education and be able to accumulate that much knowledge. Doesn't matter if it's applicable to our job or not, but we embrace it because we love the idea of learning something new, something different.

I found this interesting statistic by Tony Miller, it says "Every year, over 1.2 million students drop out of high school in the United States alone. That's a student every 26 seconds – or 7,000 a day." But I think here's the real question about that. I think the real question should be why should any of us care? A lot of my friends, my Latino friends, say that I have a middle class mentality now. I don't know if that's a put down or a good thing. But that's a good question, why should any of us care if another student drops out or another 1,000, whatever the number become next year? Why should we care? Well I'm gonna answer that question with a question and I know you shouldn't be doing that, but I'm gonna do it anyways cause I have the microphone. The question to answer that question, in my case, would be is it possible that one of the students that will be dropping out this year or a student that has already dropped out took away with them the cure for Alzheimer's, diabetes, cancer, or the answer to many of our social or economic problems. Is it possible? I think it is, I think it is.

But here's the other thing, I believe that no one knows it all. I don't know it all. Cris is pretty darn close though. Well, at least from our conversation [inaudible]. No one knows it all, there's not a single professor in the world that knows it all okay? I don't know it all, you parents don't know it all, your neighbor doesn't know it all. There never has been, they're probably never will be I guess at least from my knowledge [inaudible] from looking into the future. I learned the hard way; I was doing a presentation just north of Sacramento, not as far as north as this, but I can't remember the town or this school. I was presenting, I was talked into presenting a group of 150 kindergartner/first graders. For a long time I was terrified of kindergartners/first graders. You're asking why right? Well the reason why I was terrified of kindergartners/first graders was because I knew how intact their creative brains are. You know this idea that at one point, right, we can do anything, go anywhere, be anyone at a drop of the hat. I mean that's too much power to have in such a small body right? So I got up in front of these kids and I asked them the demeaning question, I mean I didn't want to, it just kinda came out that way. I guess I was scared and I asked them the question "How many of you want to be artists when you grow up?" Such a dumb question. And I saw this group that many of them were picking their noses and damaging their IQs for the rest of their lives. I mean they were digging in deep, poor kids. Some of them were fighting with their neighbors. Some of them were trying to tie their shoe laces, picking at leftover food in their cloths – eating it. Some of them were in complete creative mode, some of them were falling asleep, some of them were paying attention and I heard this angry shriek scream out of me. I didn't know if it was a boy or a girl cause at that age we all sounded like Mickey Mouse on steroids right? And someone shrieked and screamed out at me "We are already artists!" And I heard that and I-I was so terrified, I wanted to run off stage and hide. But I began to apologize, me, I began to apologize to this group of kindergartners/first graders. Such an embarrassment for me as an adult to be put in my place. So if a kindergartner can put me in my place guys, as college students shouldn't you be able to put your professors in their place, respectfully that is? Teach em a thing or two. They don't know everything, they really don't. I don't know everything. Respectfully, you can teach your professor something. It should be a two way street there. That's great education right? We learn from each other. And I began to apologize to this group of kids and I said "You're absolutely right, you're all great artists probably. You're probably better than I am. And I promise you I will never ask that question again." The correct question should've been "How many of you want to be better artists when you grow up?" We can learn something from everyone.

[21:24]

And in their new book, *Think Like a Freak* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner, the book called *Think Like a Freak*, they're the guys that wrote the book called *Freakonomics*. If you haven't read that, you should. There is also a movie, it goes along with that. There's a passage in there that says "you're certain you already know everything you need to know about a subject so you stop trying to learn more." I can't tell you how many people come across who are never willing to admit that they just don't have the answer and that's gonna stifle a person's education. You know it all, so why am I gonna say I don't know it. And I think that's hindering where we're going as a society as well. We can learn something from even a humble [inaudible]. As far as I'm

concerned, he has the best customer service in the world. You don't have to dial 12 different numbers in order to get to a live person right? You don't like you paleta, you can complain right there. Best customer service in the world as far as I'm concerned.

But I think one of the things that I've also encountered over the years and I think it's getting a little bit better, so that makes me hopeful for many different things, but over the years I've seen the deterioration of our programs around the country, in our education system – junior high schools, high schools, especially elementary schools. There is such as disrespect for the arts, it's a glorified babysitting class. Who cares about art? It's not important right? It's just having fun. Do some crafty stuff, you know even a monkey could do that. Who cares? So it becomes kind of this advocate going out and talking to people explaining both in English and Spanish wherever I can speak and kind of give people my opinion as to what art is and why it's important, so I'd like to share that with you.

What I think art is, I believe art is it's a way of life. I think most creative types, artists if you wanna call them that, they can't turn it off. There's no switch and it's both a curse and a blessing. I have to be very careful about what I watch and what I talk about or I won't-I won't ever sleep. It's a problem and a blessing at the same time.

I believe art is an experience, it's a journey right? Most people assume that all arts art begins by the contact of the pencil or the pen or the brush on the canvas or piece of paper. That's not true, the art process it's already pretty much already done in our brain before we even begin for most of us. Art-art is a unique universal language. I get emails from people all over the world. I don't have to explain to them what my art is about. They get it and again hopefully we'll be smart enough in the future where we actually get people who create visual languages credit as knowing another language, rightfully so. I believe that art is about communication. Art is something that can take us to a place where we need to go, so that's a good one. Let me explain, if you've ever sat down and read a great novel, listen to a great symphony, some jazz. If you've see a great piece of artwork, watched a great movie, and after that experience you felt just a little bit more complete. A little bit more whole and sane. Like you understood human nature just a tad bit better. That's something only the arts can provide for us. Nothing else. I believe art is about problem solving. Art is about inspiration. I believe art is about answer questions. Art is something that can make us more human and art is about giving voice to the [inaudible]. That's a powerful one, I just sort of kind of, in my thought process, I came across, I stumbled across this and I thought how beautiful it is that everyone on the planet can become incredibly important through a song, a [inaudible], a novel, a movie, a painting. Everyone! Even the stay at home mom, even the stay at home mom. Imagine that, a stay at home mom can become incredibly important right? Who cares about stay at home moms anyways right? Everyone on the planet can become incredibly important through the arts. That's a powerful thing that the arts gave us. Art is about respect. Art is about making good decisions. Art is about explaining the unexplainable. Sometimes words just don't do it for us, it just doesn't get there for us. Art is a way to develop our sense of purpose and our sense of direction. So it's not a glorified

babysitting class. It's not necessarily a craft, it's something way way much more important.

But I'm sure most of you have encountered this word and if you haven't I'm sure you will because this word has become even a political energized word. And now with the application of the new common core curriculum, this is at the center of all that stuff. Twenty years ago when I started doing these presentations, by default by the way, I told the world that the arts specifically, creativity, was going to save the world and people laughed. Guess what? They're not laughing anymore. But let me explain what this word means to me because I think that people that use this word, many people don't quite understand what they're actually saying or what it actually means. So let me start off by the quote that I have in my new speaking website. I said that "In the world today, there is a renewed interest in the term, 'creativity.' It is no longer a word reserved exclusively for artists, musicians, or scientists. Ushering in a new era in education the word 'creativity' is being heralded as the essential 21st century skill." So let's say what these super intelligent Albert Einstein said many many years ago. By the way, I felt that he was like the first punk rocker of all time right? I mean look at that hair, it's beautiful. He said that "In order for us to maintain our leadership position in the world, it's not going to be dependent on how well we teach Math or Science...", this is coming from this guy, "...but on how well we teach individualism and creativity." And I believe the word individualism is actually equally or more important than the creative part of it. But what does this guy mean by this? Well let me share with you what I think he meant by this. Here we have this beautiful cardboard box. I grew up extremely poor. I was born in [inaudible], Mexico in 1961.

I came to the United States when I was a year and a half. So I've been here for most of my life. I actually consider myself to be American Mexican, not Mexican American, or Chicano, or Hispanic, or Latino, okay, because I've been through and been around the block a few times. And at this point in my life, basically, I did a mathematical equation where I gave myself ten percent because I actually dream in English, not in Spanish. That has to count for something right? So physically I believe that I'm actually American Mexican, but here's the thing, I believe that culture is actually something very liquid. It's not stagnant right? I went to go watch [inaudible], I took my wife to go watch [inaudible]. This Mexican guy diva, there's a whole story behind that. This guy put on a two and a half hour show of me nonstop and he was amazing. But I believe that after that show I became more Mexican than American, especially because I had a couple of tequila shots. Depending on what you consume, the cultural aspect in our brain and soul kind of maneuvers its way around in different percentages. It's a beautiful thing, you should try it sometimes. It works, and everyone can do it. Growing up poor there was 13 of us living in a two bedroom, one bath house. Figure out how we did it, I don't know. Two or three people in the bathroom at the same time, I kinda leave it at that, okay, just leave it at that. I didn't have my own room, I didn't have my own bed. I slept with two or three other brothers [inaudible] and I had to run out in the middle of the night. You know the winter time it was cool, right, because it was kind of a warm heating pad and then it got cold right? He would wet the bed. There wasn't a lot of food. I survived on a diet of rice, beans, potatoes, and eggs. On occasion my father would kill a cow or a pig and we ate some meat during the weekends. Maybe for a week and then it was over, but basically

that's what we ate. Gizzards, cow tongues, anything that was cheap at the store. My father would buy two or three cases of beer and he would buy us a big large box of that powdered milk. Have you ever had that? Awful stuff, awful. And I swore that when I get rich and famous, I was never gonna eat rice, beans, eggs, or potatoes ever again. And after a long journey to travel and speaking and come home, and my wife says "I don't have anything for dinner, what do you want me to make you?" Make me some rice, beans, eggs, and potatoes. It's become a comfort food, it's great. So never say never guys, really, never say never.

But on occasion my parents would something, they would go out to some cheap furniture store, [inaudible], and they would buy something that came in a box. This size, maybe sometimes a little bit bigger. They would remove the contents of the box and for my parents – and many parents today, well-educated parents today – to them this box becomes simply a piece of garbage. And that's so tragic because if I take you guys all back to our genius stage, right, as children, when we took a look at this box it wasn't a piece of trash. It was anything we wanted it to be right? It was an opportunity for us to apply 101 creative solutions to this thing. Maybe 200 I don't know. We had this enormous sensibility for problem solving and creative application that just was off the charts and most of us have lost that.

[32:42]

We've lost that power and the 21st century skills says that we need to recover it. It wasn't a piece of trash, it was an opportunity and for your generation, the 21st century generation any beyond, it's a must skill that you need to re-nurture back. And this is something that throughout history, master artists who study nature, we've known this. Nature has already provided everything that we need to just resolve a lot of our issues and master artists throughout have known this and many of them, during their life...during their artistic careers they actually made an attempt to simulate because they understood that regressing and returning back to their childhood was actually what were the good stuff was happening. The individualistic super-duper creative stuff was happening. So many of them, when you look at the artwork from Joan Miro or Paul Klee or Picasso or Matisse or Van Gogh, you see these aspects of just this brilliance in terms of them trying to stimulate that creative process that they had that was in abundance as they were in their child stage.

Now here's one of the things that gets in the way of getting back and getting us all back on track and trying to recover from this, is that there's still not only a big disrespect for the arts, in a misunderstanding of what the arts are why they're so important, but I think when it comes to creativity, I think the other thing that gets in the way unfortunately is that a lot of people believe that all artists are created by default and that's not true. I think that most artists or all artists are talented, but there's a big difference talent and creativity and I want to share with you guys my opinion as to what the differences are, but before I do that I want to share with you four questions before I show you some examples to prove my point here.

Number one - Do the images that I'm about to show you have a unique voice or unique perspective? Are the images unexpected or fresh? Number three - Would you want to experience these images again or more of the images by these artists. And the last one - Are these images fun? I just kind of threw that, I mean cause it was fun.

So these are some images that I found on the inter...these are actually award winning, high school artwork pieces. My artwork in high school looked pretty much like this. Are these images fresh? Unexpected? My opinion...I don't think so. Are they unique? No. What I like to see more of their artwork? Unfortunately I would not. Would I hire these guys? No. Now before you start throwing things at me and calling me names, let me show you what I'm talking about here.

But this time we'll take a look at these four very important questions. But this time what I'm going to do is I'm going to show you some fabulous stuff that I found on the internet. Happens to be childrens' artwork. Are these images fresh? Are they unexpected? Are they original? Are they different? I mean come on, who does a horse with five legs? This girl does. You know when I grew up, I want to do a horse with six legs just so I can beat her out. You know how I know something is really good guys? You wanna know how I know something is really good? When it angers me that I didn't draw the horse with five legs. When I experience something and it angers me, it makes me jealous that I wasn't the one that came up with that idea. That's how I know something is super good. Let's take a look at these guys. I mean this turtle looks like it can take on a whole entire football team and win.

I mean the attitude, the texture, the composition. But then let's take a look at the mice. I mean I would love to own these three pieces of artwork. These mice look like they've been electrocuted and they're still walking around or stumbling. The tails are about a couple of blocks long. The composition is spectacular. This is what I think creativity is. What I like to know more about these kids? Absolutely! Would I hire them? Absolutely, in a heartbeat. Would I like to know more about them? Absolutely. They've captured my interest because I know that these kids, they're functioning as individuals, not as a group and they're not doing whatever else is doing. They're doing something very creative and very unique.

Let me show you another piece. This is a piece that my son did when he was actually seven. He wanted me to change that. I said nine, I took a stab at it. He said no it was seven actually. This is a painting that he did from an old saxophone that I found in the dangerous part of Denver. Yes, there's a dangerous part in Denver. They had to buzz me in three times at a-at a pawn shop, so you don't wanna go there. But I had this in my studio because I love this piece and he decided that he wanted to do a painting of it, so he borrowed it, but he decided to do this painting with a black sharpie. Who does that? Well, a very secure, very creative, very confident person. A confident brain, but if that wasn't impressive enough, and I ended up doing actually some Jazz CDs for many of my friends for Christmas, which was a number years back, but the most impressive part of this whole piece is the fact that he actually did the impossible. He actually signed his name in the entire length of the whole painting. I wanna do that when I grow up. As a

matter of fact, I'm working on that right now in my studio. And you know how I got over this whole fear of doing a painting and then you messing it up with a big whole signature at the bottom? I actually started with the signature first and I'm doing the painting on the top. That was the only way I could do it, I was too scared. And yet this guy he starts off with a sharpie, right, and then he signs his name across the entire bottom of the painting. I actually submitted his artwork to professional art shows. Luckily he didn't win or else probably might've been thrown in jail for that, seriously it's crazy.

But one of the saddest things that I've experienced so far is the last few years is the growing number of students: second, third grade, fourth grade who are no longer curious. They can no longer be creative. They want to be told how to do it, when to do it, why to do it. They're lost and I hate to say this, but I think those kids, they're success ratio, if this is the 21st century skill, I don't know what's gonna happen to these kids and I'm finding more and more and more students just like that. I just did a summer program in Salinas where these migrant students' li...they lived in these garages and they may or may not have windows. And the darkness that comes out of those kids – the stifled creativity, the stifled curiosity. It's just unbearable, sad to see that.

[40:23]

So we're focusing, I believe, too much on talent and we need to start re-nurturing a lot more on the creativity. So how do we regain this creative confidence?

Well I put this book together called *Cultivate a Creative Mind*, a guide to regain creative confidence and basically it was a compilation of information that I compiled over the years from working with students as young as kindergarten, first grade, all the way up to college, university, business people, parents, both in English and Spanish. And I compiled all this information and basically it's a technique using a lot of philosophy...I'm sorry a lot of psychology, but I also wanted to make sure that I didn't scare anybody off and basically it's a-it's a-it's a transformation starting from the beginning aspect of someone whose already terrified and is not gonna be able to look at themselves as being successful or having the ability to be successful. So I apply a lot of psychology to a lot of the projects. I'm not gonna call them art projects because they're basically creativity projects. So one of the projects that we do is the baby play doh because who's afraid of play doh right? No one should be right? Play doh is one of the things that you can use and anybody will use it. It won't freak em out, the goal being that I used to show up to schools and I would show up with my brushes and paints and pencils and pens and the game was over. I was not gonna get very far with these guys, but I popped the play doh and everyone wants to be involved in it. Everyone is successful in what they do, so these are some of the projects, one of the projects. There's variable projects that we've done with the play doh, including one which is self-portrait. Which is sometimes fantastically wonderful. We also go through the principles of design and this case we actually applied to something in nature. It could be a bug, it could be a fish, in this case it happens to be a flower that my son actually applied on to a tshirt or we've also done some skateboards to that as well. We do a thing called a family portrait where they actually have to give me a family portrait without using people, but hey can use words and insects. I mean no words, but insects and inanimate objects of course, and so

these are some of the projects, but why is it so important to teach creativity in the 21st century? I think that's the real question here.

Well this study done, recent study by IBM, in it talking to CEOs basically they have said that the most important leadership quality for CEOs is creativity. For CEOs, creativity is now the most important leadership quality for success in business, outweighing even integrity and global thinking, according to his new study by IBM. So as you can tell, we're talking about some very very important things here. But I've added a list of things that I think are much more easy to understand, I mean what are really the benefits of cultivating a creative mind? I can tell you that I have found that cultivating a creative mind offers a person, a child, any individual, it offers them an opportunity to develop their problems solving skills, communication skills, it develops multiple solutions to a problem, develops self-esteem, decisions making skills, listening skills, and makes them a lifelong learner. It develops the ability to ask questions, the ability to be insightful, develops personal awareness, abstract thinking skills, critical thinking skills, and it helps to find out hidden abilities and hidden skills as well. But let's take a closer look at three of these guys.

When I mention it develops problem solving skills, what do I mean by that? Well I believe the essence by all great creativity is about problem solving. Let me explain. We are inspired by something and it produces a need to express or share what we feel, what we see, or what we see and what we feel. This becomes the problem that we need to, that needs to be solved. We solve the problem through a painting, a song, a dance, a story, or through words that best captures the essence of that idea. In other words you see something and it just, it just creates his image in your brain and only you can see it, but you gotta take it out right? It doesn't really exist, it only exists in your brain, but it creates all of these other benefits that come out of that, right, problem solving.

When we talk about communication skills, we become better communicators when we're able to explain or communicate what we think, how we think, how we see, and what we see. I think we've always been, every single one of us, I think we've all been incredibly brilliant and creative. I think the one thing that was lacking was communication skills. In other words, how would someone know that we're super intelligent, that we're geniuses, if we can't show somebody through a platform? In this case it can be a dance or a song or it could be a painting, a piece of artwork. When we develop our communication skills and we're able to take this and share it with another person, and they get the exact same feeling, they see the exact same vision or the image that we're seeing in our brain. Doesn't that make you a much better communicator? Of course, but it's a double whammy right? It's not only a visual thing, but they actually feel it, they understand it.

But let's take a look at this one, which I think is super important. I went to the Art Center, College of Design in Pasadena, California from 1981-1986. I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Illustration. It was the cheapest major I could find, so that's why I picked that one. But one of the things...that the way the school was run, it was run like a military school. I mean we didn't have buzzed haircuts, but the work and what was

expected of you was military in nature. And we had to bring in anywhere from 15 to 20/25 sketches, compositions once a week for five different classes. And it took me a long time to understand what the purpose of that was and what the benefits were gonna be for me or what they were. And now with common core, if you think about it okay, if we want to see the progression of thought and if we want to teach our kids that there's more than one way to come up with a solution for a problem, 15/20 sketches. How do we know that our first idea is the best idea? Or how do we know it's the only idea at all. That's why we have them do multiple sketches, multiple compositions to prove to themselves and so it becomes second nature. Again taking them back to that box right? They've eased the sensibility of coming up with 101 creative solutions. Pretty much the same thing here, but now it's more complicated right? A little bit more sophisticated. The problem is the other problem that I'm encountering students – young students, older students – who don't want to go through the process. They want a magic pill and there's no substitution ladies and gentleman for hard work and dedication. There is not a magic pill. You gotta work at it. Fifteen, twenty, thirty sketches, and once you get really good at that maybe all you have to do is three or four and then you got three or four brilliant solutions. How do you know, how does someone know you would be more successful the third, the fourth, the fifth time around? You don't unless you actually do it. It's a powerful thing to do, but unfortunately everyone wants a magic pill.

But what does creativity thing look like when we apply it to our society right? To fix one of our issues, social issues. Well about 18 years ago I came up with this idea called the homeless project. I figured what if we made these portable housing units made out of recycled materials and we embed a GPS chip in this thing. By the way, the people out in the streets guys are not all drug addicts, alcoholics. A few years back I went to Phoenix, Arizona to a school called [inaudible]. Eighty percent of the students there were actually homeless, quite sad. So what if we made these recycled portable housing units, this is just a prototype...I've been busy doing other things, so I haven't really developed this as much. But we would apply promotional logos and what not to these portable housing units – Gatorade, Nike, Apple – and they during the day we actually put some wheels on this, and they would have an opportunity to promote these different companies, these different products. And at the end of the month the GPS chip would actually tally the amount of hours or miles of promotion and they would get half the money cash. The other half would be put into a bank account, hopefully provide them with the opportunity to rent their own place. Now would it work? I can see some issues, but at least it's a step in the right direction. That's what it would look like in terms of creative application.

But I had to figure out how do I get back to my creativity because I lost a lot of my creativity in the process unfortunately? So I had to do some soul searching and I think that again that's part of what a great education does for us and I think that arts was the thing that did it for me. Books, can't say enough books and we'll talk about that in a second. I knew for sure that I was deficient culturally. I thought that cultural was something that was a throw away thing, wasn't very beneficial. I was deficient in my self-esteem, I hated who I was. I was deficient monetarily, actually the politically correct term there is financial challenged, you can write that one down or memorize it. I was deficient in my social skills. I was awkward, I didn't know how to speak, I didn't know what to talk about, [inaudible]. I hated being around people. I was deficient in my

communication skills and I was deficient my education support. My parents could have cared less whether we graduated or not. And if growing up poor and growing up with educational support wasn't bad enough, I also grew up as a migrant student.

[50:54]

This is a photograph of me when I was approximately sixteen years old picking raspberries. I think it was either in the state of Oregon or Washington, it could have been both because I picked raspberries in both states. You can still tell there is some in the bushes that I haven't picked here. I was pulled out of school a month early, came back about a month late. Came back with some beautiful purple hands that I kept in my pockets for most of the school year. I hated having people know my business and where I've been and what I was doing, quite embarrassing. I took whatever it took to survive. I graduated, I actually worked in the fields a semester before I graduated from Art Center.

I wanted to go to college, except there was one major obstacle, the thing was my dad. My dad hit, he yelled, he screamed, never really spoke to us. The other wonderful thing that I grew up with is a good-bad thing in the fact that my dad used to beat up my mom at least two or three times a week. As a child, of course, that was pretty terrifying. But someone once asked me, what or who inspired you to become an artist. I had to think about that for a while and I came to the conclusion that the fighting, all the fighting my parents did on a weekly basis actually was the thing that inspired and motivated me to become an artist.

When all hell would break lose in my house, I took a brown paper bag, pencil, pen, crayon, whatever was around and I would draw and draw and draw and draw and draw and draw until it was all over. Ten thousand hours right? That's what they say to become a professional in a particular area. I probably put that much probably about the time I was in junior high I think, for sure high school. Luckily for me, I had at least one parents that really cared about what was going to happen to me. Hopefully you have at least two, preferably two, one is good enough. I actually asked my mom to do my dirty work for me. Her job was to convince my dad to let me go to college. She didn't do a very good job at it. She approached my dad, my dad responded by trying to kick us both out of the house and he tried to beat both of us up and he called us a whole bunch of bad words both in English and Spanish and it was some Asian language that I didn't understand. Every time he got drunk he became completely trilingual. Kind of a beautiful thing right, I think he was trying to learn German with tequila shots I think. My mom she did not give up right? The power of the mujer. My mom got together with my two aunts, they formed their own little wise women club, you can call it a gang right, they were going to beat him up. They forced him to change his mind about letting me to go to college and he responded in a very positive, well, reluctant way. I was college bound, I went to a community college for two years and then I transferred to the Art Center College of Design, 1981. If you look at this young man eyes, know this is not Richard Ramirez the serial killer, this is actually me. 1981 I did whatever it took to survive right? If you look into this young man's eyes, you can see how terrified he is. He's uncertain of the future, but I had to do something and the best thing was that I think

that nobody expected anything from me, so I didn't have that much pressure, but it was pretty terrifying to go from a very small town of 2,000 people to basically LA. I basically had many opportunities where I wanted to quit, especially the first two or three months. I cried, I screamed, I yelled. Yeah, I cried and I cried some more. I had no idea what I was doing, but I think that one of the beautiful things that we have in our community today in this country is that I believe that we have a lot of people who want to be part of a success story. I want to be part of that. I currently tutor a handful of students whose work I critique online. And if you wanna send me your work, just make sure you're not ultra-sensitive because I'm going to give you a professional critique okay? Take advantage of that. I believe that we still have a lot of people who want to be a part of a success story. All you have to is basically prove to them that you want to succeed. That's what your job is.

I graduated in 1986 with a Bachelor's Degree in Illustration. I gave my familia six months' notice of my graduation. I thought for Latinos it was enough time to make some tacos, fill up the gas tank right? Unfortunately they did not show up and that was pretty difficult to accept. Unfortunately I think I had it wrong. The reason why my parents didn't show up, like maybe a lot of Latino parents, is that they still don't understand the whole education process and for a lot of parents to come to an institution like this or even your children's elementary school or junior high school. It's a terrifying ordeal. Especially when you have a secretary that is going to bite their heads off for asking a question and I've encountered that in many schools that I've been to. My parents did not show up because they were afraid and they were embarrassed because they didn't speak the right language, they didn't have the right cloths, they didn't have the right social skills, they didn't have the right amount of money, they had an ugly car. They were afraid, they were embarrassed. And I thought everything was going to be great, I graduated. I was going to be making a lot of money and again I was terrified of the fact that I looked at myself in the mirror and I did not like what I saw, who I saw. But then something wonderful happened.

I was introduced to a thing called books. I grew up with no books in my house and it was like someone turned on the lights for me to be able to connect with the characters in the books. [Inaudible]. You know, gosh, who else? All of those Chicao Latina writers. I'm getting old so names and numbers kind of go out my head right here, but now I read pretty much everything and anything. I have like 20, 30 books by my night stand, I don't even know which one to read anymore and I'm crazy. I still buy some more, but recently, like I said I was introduced to a wonderful book called *The Distance Between Us*. And I admitted to Cris that it does look like a chick book, right, so on the plane I made sure I covered the covered right. But it's not a chick book, it's not. I mean this is an amazing book and it brought back a lot of memories. But the one thing that I can say in terms of relating to the story of the book, is that from the perspective when she talks about [inaudible] or the other side...for me the other side can be anything really. It's a metaphor for many different things, for me at least, as a reader. My wife and I have sort of adopted this African American kid named Stefan or Stephen. His mom doesn't

want him, doesn't want her kids and she does drugs. She's gone over to the other side the drugs become [inaudible] the other side. It's-it's a tragedy I mean for me [inaudible] in reading this book there was glimpses of hope and-and fun, but they were just so short and minimal and they're so well spread out in terms of storytelling ability...and by the way we're both being represented by the same person and we were doing an event in downtown LA and you know she signed the book for me, so I have a signed copy which is nice, but again going back to what I said earlier about the arts guys. How art can make everyone incredibly important, I wanna meet her family. I want to pick her brain. But I wanna know how people who haven't gone without, who haven't gone through misery. You know when you read this book, I mean do you get it? Do you get it all? Or do you get some of it? That's what I want to now. I mean how do you really perceive this book, this story because for me it was like devastating. It was like in some ways reading my life story all over again. I mean it was just amazing, amazingly depressing, beautiful, tragic feelings that kind of was oozing out of me after reading this book. But I highly recommend it, so if you haven't picked up your copy, I would definitely recommend it, and it was basically the books that gave me a greater understanding of my past and that I was important. My experience were different, yeah they were different, but they were equally as important as everybody else.

And then I became addicted to this called learning and I have to get myself a fix of that wow factor. A good discussion right? A good book, a good movie, a good jazz album and it does it for me. By the way, FYI, if you're...if you are what you eat, you could also become what you email people. Be very careful that you don't email people junk. There's peoples emails that I will never open because I now that it's just junk, but there's people who email me stuff over and over again. I could hardly wait to open up those emails. Become what you email. Become something beautiful and inspirational.

[1:00:25]

I had an opportunity to kind of sum it all up and if I could sum it all up in terms of my experiences, it really is about experiences. I mean it really is. A quote, a conversation, a book, a movie, a concept, an idea. I would say if I had to sum it all up in 53 years, I would say that if we limit our experiences, we're gonna limit our education; and if we limit our education, we're gonna limit our personal growth; and if we limit our personal growth, we're gonna limit of effectiveness as professionals, as people, as educators, as parents. We're gonna limit ourselves. I'll leave you with this last though, then I'll open it up for some questions. I came up with this idea that I really believe that there was a generation of engineers that grew up watching these fabulous monster movies and sci-fi movies and cartoons. And I believe that that was at the center of a big part of their inspiration to get us to the moon. Where else can we go if we develop new generations of students and children that have a very clear understand that they have multiple abilities and multiple skills? And I'm wondering what else can we do? Where else can we go? I think that's the real question. Is creativity important? Are the arts important? I would say that if taught correctly, the arts and creativity, at any institution of higher learning or any school for that matter, is probably the most important course you will ever take, period. That's what I think. Any questions? Any comments? Yes?

**Audience Member 1:** I should probably introduce myself and maybe get invited to your house I'm Teresa [inaudible].

**Simon Silva:** Okay, I'll try to remember that.

**Audience Member 1:** [inaudible] I'm an art educator like Cris Guanter, so I maybe know almost everything too. [Inaudible].

**Simon Silva:** Sounds like it.

**Audience Member 1:** But I'm very very interested in what you were talking about in terms of the high school art you showed us and the you now lower elementary [inaudible]. I'm wondering if you [inaudible] truly investigate yourself, like the high school curriculum and where you see some of those problems.

**Simon Silva:** Yeah, what's interesting is that I was watching cause I'm trying to accumulate as much knowledge about common core and what it's about and what it's not and what it is. There's still some confusion, some states don't want to adopt it, they just rejected it. I was in Nebraska for a week doing something for the museum up there, visiting different schools. They don't want common core and so they rejected it entirely. They're doing their own thing, whatever it is. But what-what I found is that on some of the information that I saw on the internet, LA County of Education, they did a study and they found out that people...the teachers that were actually teaching the least amount creativity in the classroom actually were the art teachers because again they automatically assume if you're producing talents individuals or nurturing the talent that automatically translated to creativity. So again that's one of the reasons why I wanna make sure people understand there's a big difference between talents and creativity and as you all know, talent may not get you anywhere. I mean creativity, being an individualistic think and producer, is what's really gonna get you at the forefront, something that distinguished you from the rest of the pack. Intelligence is not gonna get you anywhere, I mean there are brilliant, intelligent, talented people that are never gonna go anywhere. And again going back to the examples that I showed you. I-I cringe at some of the comments that I get sometimes, almost like hate mail because they don't understand that I'm not saying that the talent is worthless, I mean there's a lot that...I mean it takes a lot to be able to do that. So I-I fully respect that, but what I'm saying here is that there's a big difference between creativity and talent, and I want to make sure that those kids who are talented also add to the rapport and their abilities that creative realm, that-that it's a combination of both that's gonna get them to where they want to go. Yeah? Yes?

**Audience Member 2:** [Inaudible]

**Simon Silva:** Who me?

**Audience Member 2:** Yeah you.

**Simon Silva:** No, I'm not a teacher.

**Audience Member 2:** Okay yeah [inaudible].

**Simon Silva:** What I do is I travel around the country and I do workshops and motivational presentations and what not.

**Audience Member 2:** [inaudible] an art teacher at the high school [inaudible] junior high [inaudible] science, technology, engineering, and math. And I've heard people say let's make that theme and put that art back in there. And I just really feel like we're going backwards and trying to just focus on this [inaudible] I agree with you. We need the art, we need the creativity, and that's what's gonna make better scientists, and make better engineers.

**Simon Silva:** Well I think you can do both and I think that's where the creativity kind of comes in to the whole objective there. The example that I can think of off the top of my head tomorrow we will try this with the workshop. One of the things that I did, I did show a PowerPoint presentation of the history of the cell phone, for example. I know for sure that I needed to connect with the students on their level on terms of something they appreciate and love and understand, but they...most of the kids are actually in the dark as to the fact that cell phones haven't always existed. Shock shock har har right? That texting hasn't always existed, so one of the processes that we do is I like thinking in the future and the way that I think, I think in the past, and the present, and the future. I just don't think in the present. I think in all of three different levels, so one of the things that I've always thought about was that the beauty of creativity is that if you create in the future, something for the future, no one can prove you wrong. There is no right and wrong in the future. People thought the Wright Brothers were crazy right? They weren't crazy, they just had a different vision and had a different way of thinking. So one of the projects that I've developed for the students to be able to kind of bring technology and creativity together, which is fun, is that I developed...we designed the cellphone of the future. And part of that is to get them to understand things like nanotechnology, which I find absolutely interesting that's it's here. Nanotechnology is here. It hasn't developed to the degree that we are envisioning it well, but it's here. I mean there-there doing that. Plus the science is called biomimicry, I don't know if you've heard of that, but you should look it up. It basically relatively new science. Again science that partakes of looking at nature and how it's resolved its own problems without chemicals and heat and pressure and that kind of stuff.

One of the things that I found was they study that bumps on the fins of the whales and they apply that to windmill farms. And they actually got higher percentage of degree of efficiency because of those bumps. They're looking at for example, they-they were studying the black muscles, or the muscles in general because they actually start disintegrating after their spoil. They're looking at biodegradable kind of experational experating packages on maybe some of the stuff that we produce or even just producing things without chemicals underwater or above water. Kind of how Mother

Nature does the shells, the hard shells. They're studying the way that seeds fall from the trees and how that can be implemented on these drones that they're out, that we're producing. So we do this cellphone project of the future, and basically what we do is we discuss the problems that the cell phones currently have, which are many. I don't know if you guys heard or not but here in California when they passed the no texting law, actually accidents shot up by 30%, so you guys know that right?. Did you guys read that article, LA Times? Thirty percent why? Well because people were texting down...up here before the law, afterwards they were texting down here right. Lesson learned there right. Sometimes maybe the law is not the way to go right? But...so we do the cell phone of the future and basically one of the things I've discovered is again the psychology of what you work on. For example we use a lot of 3x3 yellow post-its to do a lot of the artwork because again, I believe that we're all tracked on an 8.5x11 world. I mean we do everything on the 8.5x11 and we don't even know it. So just by tweaking what we work on, like a 3x3 yellow post-it or a huge piece of cheap butcher paper or brown paper bag, can really determine and get you out of the norm in terms of how you- how you interact with that surface and how it affects your creativity. I mean there's a lot of psychology here. So we produce actually the cell phone of the future and there's no right or no wrong and basically the crazier the idea, the better.

So I-I don't think that steam has to be kind of dull and boring. It could actually quite dynamic and I think the beautiful thing about that is that it actually proves to the people in power, right – super intendeds, school boards – that the arts have this other components that is actually applicable to making money which is what most people want to know about the arts anyways. Is it gonna make me money right?

[1:10:07]

So the other movie that I would also recommend and tomorrow for those of you who are going to be in the workshop, there's a handout or you can email me or I can pass it onto Cris and she can email it to you, but basically there's a packet that I also email to students who actually contact me. It's called the Business Side of the Arts. I making a list of jobs that you don't actually have to have a degree to practice in and the arts is one of them. Doesn't mean that you don't have to put your time and actually work at it, but you know it's one of those jobs that you don't have a degree in or for you to practice. So there's a whole packet that I have there, but steam doesn't have to be boring and dull. It can actually be quite dynamic, but we just have to be creative of some of the things that we actually do. And I think that being able to create something in the future, specifically, I think the area of medical is-is very important because we're living longer and I think that we're seeing that we need better contraptions that are going to help us. For example I came up, my friend and I who's a product designer, we came up with an idea that a wheelchair that turns into a bed, but it's also a pulley where you can also change the persons diaper by yourself because I found that my wife's grandfather, dead weight (the guy's a small guy), but we couldn't pick him up. So I mean how does one caregiver do that and how do we facilitate that kind of stuff? So that's very important for us to kind of think of things that we're gonna need in the future right? We're living longer. My contribution to that is that I'm designing these low riders, gem stone diapers. You know I'm gonna go out of style. You know I gotta go out of style, I'm gonna wear

diapers one of these days, so might as well go out in style. Anybody else have question? Yes!

**Audience Member 3:** [Inaudible]

**Simon Silva:** Thank you for that question because I think that a lot of you are probably wondering about that too. My dad, did he change his tune? I think that he didn't change his tune. I think my father, again, didn't quite didn't understand what an education was about. He thought once somebody who's educated becomes better right? And he was a classes, he was a racist. He had felt if you were born poor, you should stay poor. You should stay happy being poor. Obviously I don't-I don't partake of that philosophy, so he did change his tune about education, but I think in terms of what he did because I felt that I was really more of a slave to him. Kind of his property that he abused and he kind of abuses to the point where we were just basically property to him. And I-I think again, talk about going to the other side, I think that my dad in thinking about money and thinking about property and stuff like that, he went to the other side. And I think that was the thing, that separation that I felt in kind of dealing...associating my life with this particular story of this writer. But I think that what really kind of brought it home and kind of made it okay for me was the fact that at least I heard him take responsibility for this stuff that he did and for me that was good enough. You know he said "Hey you know I really screwed up, and I shouldn't have done that." that was it, that was enough for me to kind of forgive him and just kind of go on with my life. Yes?

**Audience Member 3:** [Inaudible]

**Simon Silva:** Well yes and no. I think that his reason for that...I mean...well let me just put it this way. I've gotten to the point as an adult, as a father, as a son, I can only handle so much. As I get older there's so...I mean I'm looking at my life. I'm 53 years old. I may have what? Another 30 years left.

**Audience Member 4:** [Inaudible]

**Simon Silva:** Well maybe, I mean if-if-if I was certain right? I mean the odds are actually getting lower lower as I get older, but let's say 30/35 years. I mean how fast did the first 35 years of our life go? Super-fast right? So there's so many things that I want to do, I mean hopefully I can clone myself soon, but I'm not counting on that, but there's so many things that I want to do. So basically what I've done is cut all ties with all my family. Every single one of them. And a lot of people have a hard time kinda dealing with that kind of brash kind of termination, but this is something I've rationalized and also have worked on for many many years. I can't change my family. We hang out with people because they offer us something right? Our best friends. Support, conversation, advice. If my family offered me that, I mean I would be there every weekend, but they don't. They can't because they don't look at education. They look at me as somebody who is better than they are and again that's one of the reasons why I mentioned to even a lot of parents. I tell them "Look you know, as an educated person I'm a little better

than you are, I'm just different. That's it. That's the only difference between you and me."

But I don't think that the reason why my dad came over was because he wanted to give us a better life. I think that within the context of the craziness that he was dealing with, I think that he wanted to pro...show us how to work. I think that was a plus and I think that was a positive thing. But I think that currently I'm working on a project called "My Father Said," and it's a children's book actually of all things. It's a children's books because I was coming across a lot of men of my generation who really don't understand that older generation. I think that my father grew up taking care of cows in the mountains of Mexico since he was like six years old. You know a great deal of responsibility in his shoulders, and I think the difference between that generation and my generation is huge. And now the difference between my generation and my kids, is even more. I mean the divide is even more, I'm not saying worse, but it's more. So I came across a lot of men who sometimes they cried on my shoulder and they told me all these stories and they kept all this bitter...just anger that they were still carrying with them and I thought that you know what I need to do something about that because I think these guys aren't getting that that generation, in a perfect world everything would have been perfect but obviously we live in a an imperfect world, and I think that generation of men grew up without the opportunity to be emotional, to be talkative, to be just involved in their children's lives.

I just-I just don't think that the majority of them were. That's just the way they were raised. To be hard and hardworking and stuff. So I decided to come up with this children book...children's book called "My Father Said." And essentially what it is is basically I wrote a forward about the difference in terms of...even just the word macho, for example. I think the word macho, I think that a lot of people think that macho means a wife beater or that you basically kind of demean women, but I mean what if macho really meant as a man because there's great difference between men and women right? We know that for a fact right? I can talk to a man and say a man says more when he doesn't say anything at all. Men get it, women don't right? But I also don't get why women need 500 pairs of shoes right? But I guess it's a good thing. So I decided to put this children's book together and basically it was an opportunity of me to talk about the generational differences to actually get men to understand that, in many ways, that our parents did show us that they loved us with the work that they did by killing that pig and making [inaudible] for us or harvesting that half acre of fruits and vegetables for us or catching the fish. They did all these very subtle things that prove to us as men, as children that they actually loved us. But it was more of a doing, not a saying kind of thing. So I think that in being smart, we need to understand that we need to give them a break and that that was a different generation that is probably disappearing from the planet cause we're expected to cry at a drop of a hat, which isn't a bad thing I guess. But anyways, any other questions/comments? I think we pretty much ran out of time right? Thank you.