

Frierson_Nella_062624_RAW

[00:00:00] **Frierson:** [Mic bleed]

[00:01:22] **Lemley:** Yeah, and we like to away. You don't have to look right at it. You'll just look at me over here. But we'll be pretty close to it.

Uh.

Okay.

[00:01:37] **Frierson:** Let me take my chair and

[00:01:40] **Lemley:** Okay.

yeah.

Yeah, I did the same thing.

Okay, Yeah, me too.

I want to be present here despite everything else. Yes.

Okay, Okay, so I will say we are now recording. My name is Tasha A. F. Lemley, representing Urban Green Lab and Tennessee State University. The date today is Wednesday, June 26, 2024, and the time is approximately 2. 15 p. m. Central Time. I'm in Nashville, Tennessee, and taking a brief oral history of Ms. Nella Frierson.

Could you say and spell your name? It's

[00:03:10] **Frierson:** My name is Nella Pearl Frierson. Nella, capital N E L L A, Pearl, capital P E A R L, Frierson, capital F R I E R S O N.

[00:03:21] **Lemley:** Thank you. And so you do go by Ms. Pearl.

[00:03:23] **Frierson:** That is correct.

[00:03:25] **Lemley:** And um, do you consent to be recorded? We are recording.

[00:03:28] **Frieron:** I have consented to be recorded,

[00:03:30] **Lemley:** Okay. And um, I mean, let's just start out with a little bit about who are you, where are you from, who are you from?

[00:03:39] **Frieron:** Okay, well, um, I am the fifth born of, uh, ten children
from

the late Ida Bruce and John Frieron. And we come from Columbia. My mother's people come from Columbia, Tennessee. And my father is from Mount Juliet.

Pleasant, Tennessee. Mount Pleasant, Tennessee. And they had farms down there, and we had supersonic big families. My mother was a, um, one of the daughters of 14 children. And my father, he was adopted out, so we don't know if he had siblings or not. And I have five grown daughters, six grandchildren, and one great granddaughter.

And I just kind of waited on my mother's footsteps. She used to win all these awards for having the most beautiful yard in the front. She had all these flowers that she would grow. And, um, she would just take time and patience, which I didn't like it when I was young. But I wanted to be near her, so I would just pull weeds and look at her.

And sort of kind of Do what she was doing, but not really Liking it, but I was just doing it because she was then that I can say that's what my passion for growing vegetables and fruits and Just being outside came from

[00:05:03] **Lemley:** And, You've mentioned a couple times since I've been here, you know, the short time I've been here, there's just so many good things happening. Can I ask what, what are those? What's going on today in your heart?

[00:05:14] **Frieron:** Oh! Okay, so let me get a backstory. Uh, we have Brooklyn Heights Community Garden Urban Farm, and it was established, it was started 15 years ago, uh, by myself, and the reason why was to, uh, help the youth, because, um, The gangs had moved in the neighborhood and, uh, you know, there was, it was challenging moments and stuff like that.

And long story short, one of the young men who was one of my children's friends and one of my, the men that I was mentoring, he got shot down. So I was

like, I became numb. I became, I couldn't eat, sleep for like four or five days. I couldn't. I couldn't work and I kept saying I gotta do something while the blood is running warm in my veins I didn't know what I was gonna do because I was already playing with the children uh, helping with the homework, uh counting out to eat, riding bicycles, hula hoop, jump rope, just doing living stuff.

I was teaching how to meditate do yoga a little bit, but I was working so I was like I gotta do something. God, I gotta, Lord universe, I gotta do something. So The, that, how, that was how Brooklyn Heights came to be.

[00:06:24] **Lemley:** Where is that?

[00:06:25] **Frierson:** Brooklyn Heights is, uh, four plots here. My home 18 30, 18 31, 18 33, and 1835 Haynes Street, Nashville, Tennessee.

3 7 2 0 7. And so it's where we live. It was the, uh, Brooklyn Heights Community Garden, urban Farm. And so, um. Now, moving forward, so we have what we call the Blue House. We have taken the Blue House. And it's always been somewhere somebody would live. My children would live there first. And I think I've had like two or three different daughters who have lived there at some point.

And then this last, uh, I was just visualizing meditating. So what can I do more? What would we, what do we need to heal? Because I know that healing takes place from the inside out. You know, what you eat, what you think, um, the energy that you around. So it came to me to have a healing hut. So I've been calling the Healing Hut for the last 10 years.

Now. People are painting the Healing Hut. We are working on getting sponsorship grants. We have a young man. When the healing has not been utilized for, uh, dancing, poetry, stand up comedy, uh, writing, even playing games, um, meditation, yoga, teaching qigong, lymphatic joint. I'm a reflexologist, so that's what it comes into play, those different healing modalities.

So we're gonna do that there. We're gonna even teach about herbs, the use of herbs. We got, we have herbalists on staff, a midwife. So, Right now, today, a group from the Catholic Church, oh forgive me I forgot the name, but the Catholic Church, um, summer camp, they painting the whole, they are painting the whole house, front and back Also, weeding out, helping, uh, build another platform in the back. We call it the, uh, I call it the hush hut. I like her. I guess I can tell, but, um, I called the hush hut. So it'd be quiet. We do not. Be quiet. We

do not be still and listen. We always on the phone, including myself. We're on the phone. We, we in motion.

We always doing something. Listen to some music, which is fine. But sometimes you just need to be with your own thoughts and listen to your body and just be. So I'm building a space in the back For the, for myself and for the children of the neighborhood, for my grandchildren also, you know, just, and for grown folk, whoever needs to come to WUSA to just stop, get off the rat race, get out of the rat race off of the treadmill. We kind of look like the treadmill, get off of it,

[00:09:16] **Lemley:** With a hamster wheel. With a hamster wheel. Both of those.

[00:09:19] **Frierson:** Get off of it and just be still to heal. that's what's

[00:09:27] **Lemley:** what's happening today.

[00:09:28] **Frierson:** might hear

[00:09:28] **Lemley:** might hear some kids in the background.

So that's what they're doing today.

[00:09:32] **Frierson:** correct. They, um, um, the second group in this, this summer, uh, partner with, um, why we can't wait.

Who's also under the umbrella of Metro action. We have a summer camp that consists of five children who's getting paid 12 an hour. And then one of my neighborhood granddaughters, uh, she's not getting paid, but she's one of the leaders that comes and helps to, um, you know, Learn how to interact with each other, how to talk nice to each other, how to be present, how to show up in whatever fashion.

If you're tired, show up tired. Then how to become untired, do some lymphatic drain, drink water, talk about what's going on, or journal it. Some people don't, most of the cheerers don't want to talk about it, but you, you can tell how they move, that something is wrong, or out of order, or they're hungry, or they've been up all night.

So, you know. Uh, it's a real good thing that we, you know, the, the summer camp, uh, only thing about it that I'm not really used to being up all day every

day, but I did it on purpose because one for the, um, I'm gonna take it back one for myself. Cause I want to get up. I want to get up, get out and do some.

Um, um, I am in training for Tough Mudders, and it's going to happen October 19th. So I wanted to get up, get moving, and just enjoy the chill that was early.

[00:10:55] **Lemley:** are

they getting here?

[00:10:56] **Frierson:** They get here at 8. I get up at 5 o'clock to go work out. To just look out at the sun, to just be. Because I have to do all, I have to do lymphatic drain, qigong, uh, get some breakfast.

Um, I go actually to the gym.

Strength train

At least

three times a week. I tried to do four. Four is almost ridiculous. LOL. But I still try to do it because, you know, I need to be strong. And, um, I have a trainer who lives here. So that makes it super easy.

[00:11:27] **Lemley:** that sure does. Oh my gosh.

Um,

So, you've talked a little bit about this, but what is What's the importance of the community gardens? Like, you've talked a little, go into that a little bit more.

[00:11:43] **Frierson:** Okay, the importance is, is even more than I know. But I know that. One thing that I use it for, when I'm upset about something, or when something has bothered me and I can't really figure it out, I go pour weeds, or I go outside and just look at the bees. The butterflies or look at it, turn the leaf over. It's so intricate. Every leaf is different and it's kind of like just a woven. Why is it like that? I, I don't know, but I know it makes, brings me joy. I take my shoes off and I just breathe. Uh, even the importance of the community garden, something huge. You can heal thyself.

And so I did, I did read some books,

Um,

from Louise Hayes cause. It's entitled Louise Hayes, All is Well, and I can't think of a name, uh, Heal thyself. Something like that. And anyway, those books, I read it because I was determined to get off of high blood pressure meds because one year when I went in to get my

annual checkup, they had the nurse say that my kidney was functioning at 60 percent because I had high blood pressure. I was wondering, what's going on with my kidneys? They said because you have high blood pressure and because of your age.

I

said, no, that's not true. I said, I got sisters and brothers who don't, doesn't have anything wrong with their kidneys.

And so, that put me on, uh, a high, a spiral of learning how am I going to get off these high blood pressure meds. And the garden is a high, um, it's one of the high components. It's something that, you know, If I didn't do it, I knew I wouldn't heal as fast. I am off my high blood pressure meds. Um, my blood pressure normally runs, and it's a little low, but they said that's perfect.

It's like 116, 110. Most times, I want it to be 120 over 68. That's when I feel normal. 110 over 68. I feel wobbly, but they that's perfect. No, it's not perfect for my body, but I'm adjusting to it and it has helped me with my sleep. My insomnia is gone. Um, my taste buds have changed probably because of aging, but I can tell when something is really unhealthy.

Oh, I can barely eat it. All that good old white donuts. I

[00:14:10] **Lemley:** I used to

[00:14:12] **Frierson:** chocolates I can't even anymore because it tastes yucky. It tastes artificial tastes Oh, you can taste the chemicals

[00:14:18] **Lemley:** Or the color sometimes, you

[00:14:20] **Frierson:** can taste the colors of mine and they and they keep taking out

Used to be like a cocoa bean used to be used.

It's mostly chemicals now. They don't really have a real cocoa bean So in the garden, we teach the children how to grow it how to nurture it how to eat it You How to thank it first, then how to eat it, and then go back through the cycle. You know, so cause most, when you buy food from the store, you don't thank that food, you just eat it.

You don't know that it has given its life for you, to sustain your life. And so, I'm teaching them that, and I, sometimes I look out the door and I see some little girls over there with their hands raised, I'm sure they're doing what they call a prayer or a thank you. And they're waving back and forth, then they start pulling weeds.

Do you know how I feel?

[00:15:04] **Lemley:** It

[00:15:05] **Frierson:** It just make me feel like, yes, they get it, they got it. A lot of them will tell they When I come over and I'm listening to what they're saying, they tell their friends, Thank that weed! They didn't say they're nice, but I'm just saying, at least they get the concept that, uh, be grateful.

So that's a big component. A lot of people think, oh, community garden, just a community garden, something you do to get some free veggies. It's more than that. It helps you to nurture, um, a community. It helps you to learn how to nurture yourself, it helps you to nurture plants and other people. Cause we all think we, uh, we don't know that we're interconnected to some degree.

To, uh, because we're human beings, cause we all breathe air. That, that start there, you know.

[00:15:47] **Lemley:** That's right. That's right, because when I, when I, See, the first one I

[00:15:57] **Frierson:** That's right.

[00:15:58] **Lemley:** doing, I've always done it, because

[00:16:03] **Frierson:** That's right, cause when I, when I, 10th and 1st when I started, I've always done it, cause I, first when my mom would just do it, I'd be like, What is she doing?

[00:16:10] **Lemley:** she doing?

[00:16:11] **Frieron:** She'd be like, and I'd thank her, and I'm like, who is she thanking? She would do that before she started pulling the weeds. She'd just say, I thank you out loud, or she would do it back, and I'm like, My what you doing?

I wouldn't say nothing because you say ask too many questions. You make you leave

[00:16:25] **Lemley:** And

[00:16:26] **Frieron:** Because she's that was a quiet time. So so I read in a book and I heard on tiktok and you know facebook About being grateful and gratitude goes the weed came for a reason and we studied this summer that uh frostweed Has a purpose we think it's a weed so we drying it me and these children and they found out that um wild lettuce good for laxatives and You It's expensive, but it grows everywhere.

M Mullin, expensive. It's growing everywhere Everybody just cuts it down. We decided to let it grow, let it dry out. And we're gonna have, um, We're gonna start here. We're gonna have, like a little um just once a month. We're gonna dry it out, some herbs, put a name on there. We're gonna make some cards so people can buy the cards, buy a sample of the

And they happen themselves with a college fund.

One young lady, she's Addison, college fund. Montez, he wants to buy a car. Um, Caleb, he wants to invest in bitcoins. Kel, He wants to buy him a PS5, no judgment.

and

Dre, he wants to save it for some clothes for school. Imani, she wants to save her clothes for school. So they got, uh, they intentional about cutting the weeds down.

When they cut a weed down, do we, should we save this? I'm like, Let's save it, let's dry it. Or I'll say, let's go, thank it, let it go to glory. And then we put it in the compost bin. And then it'll give life again. Cause it's a cycle.

[00:18:04] **Lemley:** What was your mom's spirituality? Did she identify as a certain spirituality or religion?

[00:18:10] **Frierson:** Yeah, she

was mostly, um, Christian, but she was spiritual.

She, um, cause she was, um, in tune with the energy, you know, she had 10 children. Plus my dad had a daughter before he married her. So it was 11 children,

but she knew, she knew what we were going through. She knew what to say to us at the right time. I'm like, as I look back on it, all of us would get together and just talk about things mama told us. We was like, she was so in tune, you know. She knew about energy. She, and what she, and I didn't pick this up from her, but she wasn't, she was close to us, but she wasn't like in our business every day. She wasn't our little buddy.

She wasn't our, we wasn't her little friend. And so we, it was healthy boundaries, but um, I didn't learn that, I should have learned that. Uh, yeah. But, uh, you know, she was real spiritual. She was really into, she was a healer. Cause she hardly ever took us to the hospital. I remember when we was playing.

And you know, we just played with anything we had. So we had bought, somebody bought something. I can't remember what, uh, household utility we had bought in a big old box.

So I'm in the box, just a hopping boom, boom, boom. And we had this, um, potbelly stove that we, that we, uh, hit the whole house with. How about I hopped up?

landed on the handle of the stove, then cracked my head. That's right there, still a big dent. My momma cut my hair and smacked some big ass in there. Then I woke up the next day. Momma said, you'll be alright. I didn't go to the hospital.

Ha ha ha. It's a true

[00:19:58] **Lemley:** So it's like over your right eye, like up near your hairline. Right there. She cut your hair and slapped some Vicks in it. That had to, that had to hurt on

[00:20:07] **Frierson:** probably was a concussion, but I don't know.

But

um, not, not being funny, I did have, started having like visions or something after that. I could tell when somebody was going to fall, I'd be like, be careful. And they would fall, but then everybody kept, I was about seven, eight. So I was still innocent.

Then as it turned to about ten, twelve, people started thinking it was, you know, Do do do do do something off, so I stopped saying anything, but I could tell she's ready to fall I don't know what kind of gift it was, but I don't know if it came because of it

Chunk of hair, chunk of skull, you can feel it, a chunk of skull missing and my mama just smacked some past me

[00:20:46] **Lemley:** do you still see visions?

[00:20:49] **Frierson:** Yeah, but not like, yeah, I still see, I don't see nobody falling,

[00:20:54] **Lemley:** Mm-Hmm.

[00:20:55] **Frierson:** but, um, I still, it's stuff like when I know the phone's gonna ring, I know who's gonna be, or when somebody's gonna be, somebody, a baby's getting ready to enter the world, I know, or somebody's getting ready to die, I know.

Um, like for instance, I do have, and I'd be real intentional about manifestation, about visualization, about what, about anger, uh, what I'm, how much, what kind of energy I'm putting out, um, I'd be real intentional about, um, Being honest, purposeful, present, because soon as I shift back to my um, say negative or yuck

[00:21:34] **Lemley:** brings

it,

[00:21:34] **Frierson:** It brings it, it was tenfold.

And so I, yeah, so I've learned this case in point, I had a friend for, we've been friends like 40, 45 years and we both had the arthritis. We both had high blood pressure, uh, had back issues and I had five girls and she had like three children. I think she got three or four children. Anyway, I decided I said, I got to live.

Cause I got to live with these children. I got to, I got to get healed. So I wouldn't get no back surgery. Day one, we do, I'm not. They wanted me to do, um, a lot of drugs. I'm not, I couldn't function on no drugs. And I had all them children, so I decided not to. But she, no judgment, I think. She decided to do the, uh, surgery.

You know, and, and to get all the drugs and stuff. So, and I read this book. And I heard, um, not Tupac Shakur, but, um, Deepak Choppa.

Yeah.

I,

[00:22:31] **Lemley:** Tupac, Deepak.

[00:22:33] **Frierson:** Depo. He said Age is nothing but a number. I was 36, I'll never forget that. Yeah. He said Age is nothing but a number. It's a concept. We have all, uh, agreed to.

That time does not actually exist. We have agreed to, as a nation, as a, as a society that it exists. And he said, you can pick any age you wanna pick and be that age to for the rest of your life. I said, I'm 36, so. At that time, I said, I'm going to be 36 for the rest of my life. That's exactly what I said.

And so anyway, I started feeling energetic. Because first I was going down for the count. Depression. We both had depression. I was like, I can't live like this. So I went and got therapy. I got counseling. I changed my diet. Um, I started having, uh, meditation time with my daughters every, I try to do it every day, but we was doing like, we called it family Fridays.

And we would just make sure we spent time with each other, talking about what was, what was good, what was bad, and meditating. Our version of meditation was, you know, we were just there laughing with each other. We never really could get quiet, but we was trying. And so, uh,

My back started healing, but I learned, I read all these books about the spiritual reason for dis ease. And for the back is when you feel, you don't feel supported. Um, and for the heart, um, Anger is high blood pressure. That's the base of it. There's a whole bunch of other stuff, too. But, so I said, wait a minute. Okay, I'm mad all the time. So I'm gonna express it. So, this year is the first year I expressed to her exactly how I felt.

Because I overly love her in my heart. But I get that she can only do what she can do. And I kept saying, why you gonna show up for me? She can't. She's doing the best she can to show up for herself. She's a wonderful, beautiful person. She makes my heart happy. You know, but we were two different, we were down two different paths, you know, so, and that was, it was, it was heavy at first, but then I realized I'm doing the best I can, she's doing the best she can, we just be the best we can, we meet up again, we will, we don't, we don't, but we live around the corner, so it's okay, I'll see her when I see her, when I make an effort, when she make an effort.

[00:24:41] **Lemley:** How did you express your anger when you decided to?

[00:24:44] **Frierson:** The first thing is, breaking glass. I go out in the back, and I do some cuts on the top of my lungs, and I break some glass. Or I take an egg, and I, like I say, this is T M I. If I'm mad at a romantic front man, I'll take the egg, and I'll rub the egg, and I'll say his name, and I'll rub it across my head. Get out of my mind!

Get

out of my heart. I rubbed on my heart. I rubbed on my arms. I don't want your touch anymore and I'm, cause I'm letting him go. And I'm mad at you because you, This is, this happened. You got mad at me for passing gas. That's normal.

[00:25:23] **Lemley:** He

[00:25:25] **Frierson:** super mad about that. And then I, it just kind of bothered me, but it made me look him different.

Like, but then I said, he's doing the best he can

in his mind. That's nasty or whatever. So I would just take the egg, just break it in the bathroom and I'll just rub my whole body, just break. Then I start feeling relaxed. Then I do this, uh, put myself in a bubble, you know, and then I made that I'll journal if I'm mad at one of my children, which that's a long time ago.

We're now we buddies. Sister friends, you know, um. They're not my peer, but they are my friends and they almost same age as I am. LOL. 51, 50, 46, 43, 39. Anyway. So, uh, if I have a tiff with one of them, I write it out. What exactly happened? What did she say? What did I say? Why do we say that? You know, and then we always make back up the same day because we don't want to go to sleep with the anger in our hearts.

So that's the best way. And then another I do I run. I run either by the bike cause I physically get out of my physical body that I do now do Qigong and I can't tell you the last time I was really angry about something, but I do Qigong, lymphatic drain, reset the nervous, vagus nervous system, deep breathing.

I have a lot of little children around me all the time. They overly love me.

[00:26:50] **Lemley:** Mm.

[00:26:51] **Frierson:** They overly love me. They knock on the door. They know my love language. Miss Pearl, I said, yes babe, can we go pull some weeds?

[00:26:58] **Lemley:** Oh,

[00:27:00] **Frierson:** What y'all wanna, right. Uh, then the next little girl down there, Miss Pearl, what you buy me? Cause she knows,

[00:27:06] **Lemley:** she's got a

[00:27:06] **Frierson:** love language.

I always make sure I have apple, peanut, something. Cause she always, what did you buy me? Oh, did you buy me some fruit? Cause she, she the one come pull weeds. That's my love language. Service, acts of service, my love language. And she's got it down to a science. She's not gonna wear a shirt. Won't come pull no weeds.

But she won't come get her apple. But she know it's an exchange. So she pull weeds, get the apple. And she gone about her business. Oh, that sounds precious. So

[00:27:34] **Lemley:** So it sounds like, coming back from your mother, and I'd be curious about even her mother, there's a type of almost folk magic. Like this egg ritual, did you make that up or is that something you got from somewhere?

[00:27:48] **Frierson:** I

got that from actually my daughter, my youngest daughter. Uh, we just gonna call her CK. She's always telling me about mama. Okay, this is what I done done. She'll send a video from

[00:27:59] **Lemley:** Okay, okay.

[00:28:00] **Frierson:** or um, facebook So that egg ritual I got from her and so my mother they did have the different things they would do Uh, let me try to think mama She was kind of

But hers was kind of, let me think, touch.

It'd be just touch. It'd be something like she was

[00:28:20] **Lemley:** Just

banging

[00:28:21] **Frierson:** them or just being silent. But one thing she never did do, she never did, um, with us around it anyway, she never did gossip about people. She never was negative. She always had an energy or like, like giving and all vibrant. And, um, but I can tell sometimes she wasn't feeling good, but she still had that kind of, I'm okay.

I'm okay. Energy, you know, and I'm sure she had some rituals and stuff she would do, but. She didn't really pass them down. It's kind of new.

[00:28:49] **Lemley:** Yeah. So your community gardens, it sounds like, you know, when we're talking about the purpose of them, it sounds like healing.

[00:28:59] **Frierson:** That was the main purpose is to heal and to play, to heal and to play.

We don't, we don't know how to play anymore. And when I'm playing people, you act like you're young. I said, no, I'm young because I can beat your grandchildren running. So, and they're like, you're taking it the wrong way. And I was like, well, come around with me. I'll come play. I'll come. What, you know, you, you mad about something.

I'm not mad. They used to make me real mad. You think you're young? I don't think I'm young. I'm young. You're 36. I'm 36.

[00:29:27] **Lemley:** young. I'm 36!

[00:29:31] **Frierson:** Oh,

you know, I, and this is, I was, you I took a test to tell your age. My age was 71. I'm 68. But it was by that test thing I was 71. At that time is when I first got diagnosed with a kidney.

[00:29:46] **Lemley:** Yeah, okay.

[00:29:47] **Frierson:** But now I done cleaned my diet up for like, um, I done it six weeks, um, It's Qigong the Dragon's Way. You do it for six weeks, you take out all the junk food, all the dairy, meat, processed food. Um, you eat a certain way, you just eat like some. Walnuts, a lot of watermelon, watermelon,

and fruit,

and just different combinations, like some fish, and you don't fry anything, you don't barbecue, so you do that just on six weeks to reset your organs.

So I've done it, I've done it about four or five times, not strictly, cause I still might eat some candy or something. Cause it says if you want to eat it, just eat it, don't punish

[00:30:29] **Lemley:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:30:30] **Frierson:** And so that has helped me. that what has done is have helped me to heal. Um, you know, because I, you know, this is super TMI.

I had hemorrhoids and they was like, just massive. So I went to the doctor thinking that I could get an appointment to get surgery. I thought I had an appointment to get surgery until my primary doctor called me for a one on phone conversations. Um, phone, when you got it, phone, you don't have to mind.

[00:30:58] **Lemley:** Like a consult, yeah.

[00:31:00] **Frierson:** So anyway, she called me and I was like, okay. She's like, okay. Whatever happened about, uh, no, I asked, I said, can you make sure that I have my surgery, uh, date correct? July 27th. She said, let me check. She says, you don't have appointment set for hemorrhoid removal. She said let me go look. So she called me back in a couple of days.

And she was saying that the surgery, the doctor had the audacity to say that I was not a good candidate because one of my age and two because, uh, if they cut him they could, because mine didn't, uh, was not, uh, Itching, burning, was,

they were just there from stress and straining. And that comes, hemorrhoids comes from trying to make things happen before it's the time.

So I always try to make things happen for his time.

[00:31:46] **Lemley:** Me too, yeah.

[00:31:48] **Frierson:** So anyway, when she told me that I was like, cause I was just so happy. Yes. I'm going to get a quick fix. There's no quick fixes cause I've had them since I was 16 because when I had my first baby. Yeah. So anyway. Uh, With this cheek on, I'm healed from them.

And I can ride a bike. I know I can ride a bike. They don't be burnin itch. They know they burnin itch. But they, sometimes they would bleed. But all that's gone. So I'm like, whoo! And you know, for your, um, hemorrhoids, your uterus. vaginal wall is what holds up your anus.

[00:32:28] **Lemley:** Okay.

[00:32:29] **Frierson:** I didn't know that. So

[00:32:30] **Lemley:** have you been doing like Kegel exercises

[00:32:31] **Frierson:** used to do it, I used to do it religiously. Then I stopped, then I'm back. You know, with the Kegel balls. With the, doing the Kegel, with the doing the, uh, getting the floor raised up, what do you call those?

[00:32:41] **Lemley:** Like a, like a, like a plank?

[00:32:44] **Frierson:** um,

[00:32:45] **Lemley:** Thrush forward.

[00:32:49] **Frierson:** And

do it religiously.

I do it almost every hour of the hour, cause I'm determined.

[00:32:53] **Lemley:** my hour cause I'm determined. Cause

[00:32:55] **Frierson:** Cause I'm not, I don't work. I'm, I'm,

I don't

work work. So I'm on my own time. So yeah, my body's with me wherever I am, wherever I am, I do it. The children, uh, the teenagers, they'll do it with me.

They'll be like, Why we doing this? I said, To help me heal. I don't go in detail, tell them I got

[00:33:11] **Lemley:** and all

that.

[00:33:12] **Frierson:** I, but they with me. And then it,

You're with yourself so just do it and because I set the intention to heal. I know by next year I'm going to be totally healed. You know, so like now it's like, I'm serious, it's like, it's a dream come true to be healed.

But it takes, it took time to get there. So it's going to take time.

[00:33:36] **Lemley:** the weed is here for a reason. The hemorrhoid is there for a reason.

[00:33:41] **Frierson:** right. And the weed, we think, is weed, it's medicinal properties. Um, we know, of course everybody knows about dandelion, uh, daisies, um,

[00:33:53] **Lemley:** That, and it's expensive. It comes

[00:33:57] **Frierson:** That, and it's expensive.

[00:33:59] **Lemley:** when we've been,

[00:34:01] **Frierson:** Come free. So, we've been, and I've been, and one girl, the young girl, Addison, she making sure because she's determined when she goes to college she's not going to pay. She's determined to help. We writing a book. It's an e book. And we're going to have cards.

It's going to be, uh, the birth and, Uh, Brooklyn Heights Community Garden. That's a book that I was commissioned by Vanderbilt to write, which didn't come to fruition, but I, I do have five chapters written. So what we doing? We putting that different segments of it in the e book. And it's called, uh, like I said, The Birth and the Brooklyn Heights Community Garden You Work, You Eat.

So we telling little bits and pieces. And we having those, uh, I have them making Canva, um, herb cards. With all the herbs that's here, that's growing in Nashville, that's growing at Brooklines, then we're just swirling out. And it's gonna be like at least a hundred. A hundred to a hundred and fifty. A hundred and twenty five, that's about enough.

Herbs, fruit trees, nuts, trees, um, all the vegetables. And what their properties are, the medicinal properties, and how much it costs. And, yeah, so we're making a whole, we're making a whole, uh, What do you call it? Industry. Not just industry. What is that word I'm looking for? We making a whole business. Enterprise. Enterprise! That's the word I'm looking for. We doing it because that's the component that's missing in most community gardens. They need monies, but they're not generating the monies.

Yeah. Because you can grow, we're not going to grow enough food to really pay for a mortgage. We just, it's just not that much. We just not, we small and it takes a lot of manpower, but what we're doing, we, um, utilize and start where we are useful. We have to, we must just get busy. And they, a light went off in the light went off.

I seen it. I felt it when I connected with them. When I said, let's make these cards, uh, and this, this is going to be our enterprise, you know, this was going to be a way that we going to make the money. If you're going to get a bank account, that's strictly for this.

And I said, uh, we'll probably just put two people named my name and somebody else's name on there. But I'm not sure because they're underage. But we'll figure that part out. Yeah, they're underage. But, um, myself and somebody else

can make sure that keep, not necessarily keep me honest, but to make sure that their interest, maybe a lawyer friend of mine, to make sure their interest. It's well preserved.

[00:36:33] **Lemley:** Yeah. Protected. Yeah. So. How would you describe Nashville's climate as it is today?

[00:36:44] **Frierion:** It is like something is like a,

it's so God doggone hot. I've never experienced it this hot ever. It is like a,

I didn't

think about it much until I experienced it, but you know, it is like, it used to be like a shield used to be there.

It'd be the sun, then of course the clouds, then it was like a shield where the sun get through. But it won't burn you. Just, it won't be so hot that, uh, you feel like you're gonna pass out. Or that you feel like your blood is boiling. Or that you feel light in it. Cause, I'm like, wait a minute, what is going on?

Cause I, I still stay outside a lot, but I tell them that you're 30 minutes out. 30 minutes in, 30 minutes out, we gotta be realistic. Then at a certain time, 30, we ain't outside no more. Until about 4. It's too

[00:37:35] **Lemley:** I haven't thought of it that way that the actual heat of the sun on my skin feels different. The same sun

[00:37:42] **Frierion:** same sun, same time of year.

Happiness.

[00:37:45] **Lemley:** happiness and now it feels a little threatening.

[00:37:48] **Frierion:** A lot threading. And I wear, every day I wear sunscreen. And I make them wear sunscreen. We dark, we black, I get it. Put that sunscreen on, cause it's, I feel like it's burning me. And I do, I will get some, you know, some burn.

But in the islands, not in Nashville. And I'm getting burnt here. Woo!

[00:38:09] **Lemley:** What do you remember of the climate when your mom would be out the

[00:38:13] **Frierion:** It was, it was, um,

That's where I can say it's happy. It was like you wanted to be outside because the sun was out. And it was like you were with your mama and you could see

these, something so little. Her trees, her flowers and stuff would be massive. I have, which I didn't water them, oopsie, but I have one, two,

I think a whole, um, Her irises, they're over 60, 70 years old.

I have them in my front yard and in the front of the garden. Um, But it was like joyful. It was like you could stay out there all day long and you just take a little hose and wet yourself down and then you just keep going. But now you wet yourself down and you still gonna be burning up. It's uncomfortable.

And most of the little cheer do not be outside. Ever.

[00:38:58] **Lemley:** What about the cold weather? What about the winters?

[00:39:01] **Frierson:** Ooh.

[00:39:02] **Lemley:** How, how are they changing?

[00:39:04] **Frierson:** now? The winters is barely winters. It'd be, and it, and you could have four seasons in one day. One week it'd be cold, freezing. And then the next day be about 30, 40, 50, then it'll rain, and then I'm trying to think how it went.

It was like rain, it was a, you could have on shorts, which I would never do that, because in the wintertime, my mind is like, keep the sweat on at least. But it's unreal, it's not, I don't think it snowed this year. I think it maybe did once,

[00:39:35] **Lemley:** We got, we got, we got that one big snow with the ice for like three or four days.

[00:39:40] **Frierson:** Three or four days, and it's like snow used to last, you know, At least two weeks,

but then, mm mm, and it used to be like ice, you know, ice storm over against just snow that you played in. Well, we

[00:39:53] **Lemley:** used to have pretty ice storms where the trees would look like glass. I remember when I was a kid, we were, I was in Alabama, Northern Alabama, but I remember the, the glass trees now take down power lines was the problem.

But it was beautiful.

[00:40:05] **Frieron:** was beautiful, but then, mm mm, and then, I don't know what the government or the city, they got to do something better. soon as a little bit of ice, all the power's out, it's like, it's, it's overloaded or something. The, uh, power lines.

And then you, it is so many of them. It's like the frequency. I can, I can feel it, you know, you can, it's, you can hear if you be quiet enough, like a frying, and first I thought it was just my mind, but I could, I actually came 'cause some little cheer. You hear that? And I'm like.

It's like something is, what is that? And they, but they, I'm like, they sensing it too, but I didn't tell them. It's the frequency, you can hear it. You can hear, you know, you can feel it. And so many wires.

[00:40:56] **Lemley:** How, how, how many times have you lost power this year, do you think?

[00:41:00] **Frieron:** I holler loose power because I have a, um, I have a, um, You have

[00:41:06] **Lemley:** You have solar panel. Your electricity is solar. Is it a hundred percent solar?

[00:41:10] **Frieron:** It's, um, Half of the house is 100%. Because, uh, if the, if all the power goes out, the refrigerator upstairs and downstairs will not cut off. They'll, um, Cable would not cut off. Half house would

not

[00:41:24] **Lemley:** cutoff. So you've got a battery, a solar, like the ba, the solar fills a battery.

[00:41:28] **Frieron:** Right. I was blessed with a forty five fifty five thousand dollar solar system that has the battery and everything. It's hooked up to the outside of the house. Have about, I think we got sixteen panels. I forgot.

About sixteen panels. They, what happened was I was praying about that and I said, God I'm going to buy me some, I'm going to get me some solar panels.

So I just wrote it down in my little book. Thank you. Creator for my solar system, but I said about three or four five years ago. Somebody called me out of the blue Nass Rebuilding together Nassville. I had gotten sick. I told you about when I had my back injury. I had a back injury So they came they had fixed some stuff at the house.

And so they remembered That's when I got introduced to the Brooklines Community Guard. And that's how I got picked to get the 45, 000. Uh huh.

[00:42:18] **Lemley:** Oh, that's

[00:42:19] **Frierson:** wonderful. Oh, yeah. That's

So, I was hollerin to go out, but the man next door, Mr. Larry, he always said, here, let's go out. At least, I know, as soon as winter hits, it's going out.

[00:42:31] **Lemley:** And

then these winds.

[00:42:33] **Frierson:** Yeah. Oh, yeah.

[00:42:34] **Lemley:** Does this neighborhood, is it very affected by the winds? Like the derecho, the straight line winds, or the, or have you been affected by a tornado?

[00:42:43] **Frierson:** Uh, yeah one tornado

The tornado took out the greenhouse our hoop house and our shed it took it out Uh one time I was like

I don't know if it was a storm or a tornado or whatever it was.

But then it took out my shed in my back and my own, my personal greenhouse.

[00:43:06] **Lemley:** All at once?

[00:43:07] **Frierson:** It was like two or three different times. It kept just going boom, boom, boom.

[00:43:10] **Lemley:** So you've kind of lost all your outhouses. They're not outhouses, but the out Out of

[00:43:15] **Frierson:** structures and roofing. It affected the roof.

[00:43:20] **Lemley:** it hit the solar panels or they're too new right now?

[00:43:23] **Frierson:** Now, I think it was before I had the solar

[00:43:25] **Lemley:** I had solar panels.

[00:43:27] **Frierson:** So,

like three to five years ago.

[00:43:29] **Lemley:** three to five ago. You start seeing

[00:43:40] **Frierson:** Mm. What ways do I see the community? Less? People outside the,

they do not get outside and so, you know, they more, uh.

Be, um, what you call, um, keyboard warriors. And it affects them in the negative, cause they don't get outside.

And they on the computers, um, phones, they don't interact. These chairs most of the time stay up all night long.

um

Just been in the house, and the mothers, I, I think they do the best they can, they done got, they done with it.

And, um, even my own daughter, I keep telling her, I said, teach him how to make some money from doing it, let him be a streamer or something.

[00:44:20] **Lemley:** or something.

[00:44:23] **Frierson:** But

I told her, but he, you know, he too young, well let him study it, so when he gets 18, so that can be his profession, sissy. So, he's really good at it, and he's really calm, that's my, Youngest grandson, not my youngest, my 14 year old grandson. Real calm.

[00:44:39] **Lemley:** I think.

[00:44:41] **Frierson:** Not from me.

My daughter, she's not real calm either.

I'm not sure. I think he cultivated himself because he'd say some most beautiful things. He'd be like, Granny, when my girlfriend's not good, do it right. And she's disrespectful. She's not my girlfriend anymore. I'm like, uh, are you mad? He says, no, I just give me another

[00:45:03] **Lemley:** you're going to catch him out back with an egg, rubbing it, rubbing it on his forehead. He'll be like, okay. You'll know he, he's transitioning out of a relationship when you see him out back with an egg.

[00:45:13] **Frierson:** an egg. But he talks about it freely, especially with my other niece. He'll talk about it freely about, you know, we got, we ate, you know, Eighth grade, girlfriend and boyfriend, so you got to let your mind know that we, we are young.

I'm like,

[00:45:26] **Lemley:** Oh, but it was serious. Eight grade was serious.

[00:45:29] **Frierson:** I never had a boyfriend in eighth grade. I wish I had. I was too shy. I was too shy. Now, you know, I just, I felt what you think is what comes upon you. I kept saying, ain't nobody gonna want me because I had a big gap in my teeth. Still got that gap. Had a big old face. Still got that face. Had real short hair and I was real, real skinny.

And so I felt like, did anybody want me? Cause I was like. Looking at my, I had a younger sister named Beverly Curly locks of hair waistline, I promise you probably it was 22, 23, 20. Uh, and her behind was like boom, boom. Uh, she never had no big sized breasts or nothing, but she was just light pretty. And I'm not into skin color, not like that, but just know she how she was.

And she was quiet, like, and she was meek, and I was loud.

and

she was just pretty. And I never get no hips. The universe didn't give me no hips. So

[00:46:21] **Lemley:** So you were shy but you were loud.

[00:46:24] **Frierson:** Mm hmm. Cause I was, uh, I was shy. And I was loud trying to make people, trying to fit in. Yeah. Mm hmm. But I used to cry by myself.

I used to cry in the closet and stuff. Because I was ugly. But my sister in law, They just love, because everybody look at, Oh, y'all sisters. Yeah. Y'all, is this you all, she, y'all sister?

[00:46:43] **Lemley:** No! Like I

[00:46:44] **Frierson:** Like I was a run. I was like, and then I stuttered, you know, so I was like,

and then my mama, she helped me with that. She told me, she says.

I never got nothing to talk about. She used to read the encyclopedia. So I was a walkin encyclopedia. I used to, I coulda got on Jeopardy. Which I don't forget most of that stuff. But I, it was trivial. But I would just read it. And then, you know, ask people different questions. Did you know something, something, something?

And so everybody thought I was smart, but I was just reading the encyclopedia. You

[00:47:13] **Lemley:** you would read the encyclopedia out loud?

[00:47:15] **Frierson:** No, I would read it to myself. You know, then I would go around people and ask them questions about it. Did you know, um, What degree water freezes or did you know how long a bear hibernate this stuff, you know, we gotta forget all of it

[00:47:28] **Lemley:** Did you kind of gravitate towards science y stuff

[00:47:30] **Frierson:** Shoot no, I hated school

[00:47:33] **Lemley:** Okay.

doing it.

[00:47:35] **Frierson:** So I had something to talk about

[00:47:37] **Lemley:** And so when did your stutter go away?

[00:47:39] **Frierson:** Because I kept talking about it and um, I guess I didn't think about it no more I just kept talking Yeah, because usually when I get around people I wouldn't talk. I'll talk about my family and then I had a sister named georgia She was just about Um, about a year and some months older.

And for some reason she would telepathically know what I was saying, so I'd be like,

she wants some milk

[00:48:07] **Lemley:** And

[00:48:09] **Frierson:** And then they'd be like, you want some milk? I'll shake my head. Yep. She wanna go outside. You wanna go that? Mm-Hmm. . You know. So she knew.

[00:48:19] **Lemley:** How old were you when the stutter stopped?

[00:48:22] **Frierson:** Oh, I'm trying to think. Mm. When I had to go around people, I think probably about eight

[00:48:27] **Lemley:** Really? Okay.

was. And you were already reading the encyclopedia?

[00:48:31] **Frierson:** Yeah, I was reading an encyclopedia and I read that encyclopedia up until I was old Till I was 15 something like at 13 point to 15 when people started making fun of me

then I quit

[00:48:40] **Lemley:** when people started making fun of me, then I quit. Yeah,

[00:48:54] **Frieron:** Yeah, cause now they will come out a little bit, but about around 6 o'clock. But they don't stay out much. And about 8, 9 o'clock, everybody's in the

[00:49:02] **Lemley:** o'clock, everybody's in the house.

[00:49:03] **Frieron:** Even the grown folk. Looking at TV. Eating processed food. Just not doing it. But the kids right here, because I be outside, they come. But I make myself go in about 2 o'clock.

Like 11, 10, 11 o'clock. Maybe 11 o'clock is when I try to go in, because the heat of the day is just, it's too much, it's draining.

[00:49:24] **Lemley:** it's too much, it's draining.

[00:49:31] **Frieron:** We, we are tearing down all of the natural habitats. We are, um, digging up the earth to build so many freaking apartments and, and um, places to play that cost, cost money, like, um, a whole lot. When I go through Nashville, they got a whole lot of places where it used to be just open spaces, it's parking lots.

It's a lot of places to eat. Almost every other

establishment I want to eat or What it, um, or something. But it's so many places where they So many apartments right, just right around my in this neighborhood, my neighborhood, they don't tore down all the place where the deers and all the, you know, the greenery.

It's no greenery. barely anybody in the green. It's, you know, greens places to be.

[00:50:32] **Lemley:** So you think getting rid of the greenery is part of what's changing the climate? Anything else?

[00:50:36] **Frieron:** Um, you know, of course, it's, let me think.

it

is deeper than than I know, but it's, you know, The government, they always doing something up in the sky. When I, what do you call them, chemtrails? No, what is chemtrails?

I guess that's the chemicals they putting out. You know those, when um, um, planes ride by. Yeah. Then they have like four tail, four lines or something. Yeah. I'm not sure what that is. And then it's like, um, and this might be conspiracy stuff, so don't quote me. People have said it's some way that the government be fooling with the weather.

I don't know if it's true or not, but I know that, um, something is happening. You know, um, I know there's, what do you call it, when the, um, sun is getting so hot. So I don't know, what do you call it, the

um,

[00:51:27] **Lemley:** the ozone

[00:51:29] **Frierson:** The ozone's been affected by something. And all these chemicals, all these things we're making, all these cars, all those fumes, they're going up,

[00:51:36] **Lemley:** they going up,

[00:51:37] **Frierson:** up, they're going up, they're going up.

So, where's it going? It's going through the ozone. It's affecting something. You know, so I don't know and I don't give it a whole bunch of thought. I just be trying my best to be balanced, intentional, focused, happy, loving, um, and I, sometimes I need to be more in depth

researching, but I haven't. Sometimes my daughter, I have a daughter that studies it.

So she talks about the climate. She could talk about I should have had her come. She talking about the climate change. She talking about what, what caused it, what

[00:52:11] **Lemley:** What does she say?

[00:52:12] **Frierson:** I'm trying to remember. She always, but I keep, I don't really listen because it's not my forte. It's not. But I know it's changing and I know the less trees, the less air we breathing.

So we're killing all the trees. Soon as I want to build something, they're tearing down all the old trees. So I know that much and I know that, um, yeah. How we, um, putting the oils and stuff, uh oh. How we putting the oils and stuff, uh, leaking crude oil from those cruises and all that stuff. It's messing up everything.

It's interconnected. The ecosystem of the water, waterways, the trees, the, uh, they tearing down the rainforest. All that is affecting everything. They, um, I have a girl that lives in Alaska. She says it's hot, it's warmer over there than it used to be. Because a lot of glaciers and stuff. It's. Melting.

[00:53:05] **Lemley:** Mm hmm.

Remind me where you were born.

I'm not sure if we said that at the

[00:53:10] **Frierson:** Uh, I was born in Nashville, Tennessee, Davidson County. We lived on, um, 11th Avenue. No, we didn't. I was born on Brown Street. I thought 11th Avenue wanted to. Not Brown Street. We lived on 10th Avenue when I got to be a teenager. So I think I was born on Brown Street. life. I have. I took, uh, I lived about a year in Memphis. It was too fast for me. That was back in 78, because I remember I just had a baby. 70, 80, something like that. 70, 80,

[00:53:50] **Lemley:** Gotta do some math, which we're not gonna do. How have you seen Nashville change, like the community change, over all your

[00:53:58] **Frierson:** Yeah, gentrification is here.

Um, They take a

little bit of plot and they put like six houses on it, or two houses, tall and skinny. And some people, now, I've been on a mission. My children say, Mom, you gotta leave people alone, but I'm not. So when they move into the community, I don't need them to come and take over.

You have to be acclimated into the community. You don't own nobody nothing. But if somebody waved at you and said, how do you Being able to nod or something, but you don't have to, but I'll be consistent and persistent. So usually when I see him, I say, now I know you see me.

[00:54:31] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[00:54:32] **Frierson:** And so normally they'll wave their hands up, or they move.

And so my children say, Mom, you can't, I ain't making But I'm just insisting that they say

[00:54:42] **Lemley:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:54:43] **Frierson:** And usually what happens when the children see me, and they, Mom and Daddy, I'm not sure what kind of Mom and Daddy they have, but they try to hold their hand down. They usually move.

[00:54:51] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[00:54:52] **Frierson:** Cause, uh, you know, you've moved into the community.

It's not just ours, because we've been here. It's us's. When you come, it's us's. Are you coming for community or what you doing? Why did you come just so you can make a profit? That's fine But don't be yucky while you're here, you know, because you I told different people man Everybody taking over the white people taking over.

I said no They doing what they supposed to do. You gotta do what you're supposed to do Stop giving them your energy in the negative thinking that they doing something arbitrary to you. They ain't thinking about you They're not they thinking about them and they doing what they supposed to do for themselves And so because nobody I don't own this house.

I don't own this land actually in actuality, you know, so because you never can really own nothing It's not land Anyways, so I just be grateful thankful that this is my opportunity to be a good steward of what I am

[00:55:48] **Lemley:** Do you have the deeds to these properties or are they non profit?

[00:55:51] **Frierson:** No, I have the deeds so i'm i'm working on getting it to an LLC or something because I don't want the deeds I mean if I don't want the deeds it's less cumbersome when i'm passing on the glory.

[00:56:01] **Lemley:** Yeah. Yeah. What do you think is going to happen to the community here?

[00:56:07] **Frierson:** When I pass on the glory. I believe, just for my little believification, that's a word I made up. Okay, um, that Brooklyn Heights will live forever. That the purpose of healing This will be a healing center forever. Uh, I even told my daughters, we're not gonna sell the full properties.

That, um, it's, right now I turned my house into an Airbnb so I can have some money flowing in order to, uh, make sure the healing hut manifests. In order to make sure the hush hut. Cause that's how I relate to that, so I can be quiet. And

to

make sure that that manifests. We have here a bike club to make sure that the children get out and ride a bike.

Get out in the, they don't know that they getting vitamin D. Or they building a camaraderie, or um, They build up this community by interacting with other people they don't know. They don't even know that. They're doing it effortlessly because that's how we done it. You just meet somebody, hey, how you doing?

I'm Pearl. Then you start talking with them, they be like, I'm scared. That's okay, just introduce yourself. Then they get out of their shell sometimes. Most of them, they won't. Because they, their, um, skills, social skills is minus zero. Because they looking at a computer all the time. Cause I was talking, this, I was in, um, Home Depot.

This fine young man, which he was, of course, he was a little bit too young for me. But I was like, I don't care, I'm gonna talk to him. So he was on his phone and I said, you know what? He looked over and I said, I'm just gonna walk with you. How you doing, Miss Pearl? He was like, okay. I said, it was this man. I said, I'm gonna tell you a story, which I made up.

I said, I'm gonna tell you a story. This is true. This is really, I made it up for him. I said, it was this man. He was walking, he was on his phone and his future wife passed him by and he never saw her. He never engaged. Because he was on his phone. Okay, I'll make that up. He says good though. I'm gonna remember that.

That's right That's because hey, you never know He's like i'm gonna remember that he stuck a phone in his pocket

[00:58:11] **Lemley:** Probably met his future wife three aisles down.

[00:58:14] **Frierson:** wish I was up, but I can't

[00:58:17] **Lemley:** What'd he look like?

[00:58:20] **Frierson:** He was tall dark, um Had a low fade had all his beautiful teeth. He probably weighed 200 pounds. He was about he was about six feet He was muscular And he had a happy vibration about him, but he was looking at that going phone And he probably about if he was 38 I'd give him a dollar

[00:58:41] **Lemley:** Yeah. he

[00:58:44] **Frierson:** And he smiled, he said, I don't remember that.

But the best thing he done was put that phone in his pocket after I said it. I said, I made that up.

[00:58:50] **Lemley:** Ah, I love it.

feel like as things change, you have a say? Do you have a voice in the community or with the government

[00:59:04] **Frierson:** As

[00:59:05] **Lemley:** what happens?

[00:59:06] **Frierson:** Yes, I do. You have, but you have to go to those meetings. you have to be consistent, persistent, and you have to vote. You know, you have to do the things that this government, um, aligns with or deems important. 'cause to be honest, on some level, I feel like what's gonna happen is gonna happen.

'cause I think getting into.

You know, it's the opposite. All of them do the exact same thing. And I wonder what's going on. Why come what they promised you at the beginning never totally manifests, or never manifests, or manifests for two to three to four or five years. Case in point, um, Edgewood. I'm, I'm not kidding.

The mayor's office used to come all the time breaking up the sidewalk and refixing it back. So I said, excuse me, They did like two times. I'm like why y'all breaking this up? This is not even messed up So he looked at me they had their

little sign So I had my little phone out and I wasn't trying to be negative or nothing like that But I was like letting them know i'm gonna report this because this don't make no sense y'all Breaking up sidewalks was already sidewalks.

Why don't y'all bring them sidewalks down here where my children live at?

[01:00:11] **Lemley:** We can walk over a couple cracks if we have a new sidewalk over here.

There

[01:00:15] **Frierson:** it was no cracks they was taking a jackhammer thing And breaking it off and they never came back no more after that. I said i'm telling it I'm telling somebody which I never did tell nobody but I got my point across and I'm like why y'all breaking up the sidewalks This is a good sidewalk.

There's nothing wrong Well, we was told to by whom because if I was told you told you I would told you put some sidewalks on my children Riding bikes and at the time my children was young, you know, they was like teenage 19. She about 20 about 22 33 to 40 Anyway,

we need those sidewalks over here.

And see, the government, it's probably for the people by the people. To me, it's by the money. It's, it's like, um, some kind of way. People with the money, cause everybody know that the wealthy doesn't pay as much tax as I do. And they got trillions of dollars more than I have. So why is that? How is that making sense in anybody's mind? The

wealthy keep their money and the poor money has to go out.

That don't make no sense, but that's how I set up. So yeah, uh, but I do know that I do have a voice because I will go out there and say something. And, um, you know, I don't protest no more. And I will, I will sign, um, petitions. And I will support what I deem, um, necessary or important. 5, 10, 15, uh, No more than 1, 000 a month. 1, 000 a year, let's correct that. I will, you know, engage like that.

[01:01:55] **Lemley:** We used

[01:01:57] **Frierson:** to

protest,

of course all this violence, police violence. Um, about abortions, about rape, you know, about housing. Those were about civil, back in the day, civil rights, yeah.

[01:02:16] **Lemley:** Tell me about one of those protests back in the day.

[01:02:18] **Frieron:** Let me think. We used to, um, you know, get together. I keep trying to think, we was in, hold on. Hadley Park, Centennial Park, downtown. I

always sing it. We shall overcome. We shall overcome someday. We would sing so hard. Cause I was like, I don't want my daughters to go through. Go to a store and be looked at, shunned upon. It still happens now. But I didn't want, I want them to know that your mom at least tried. Not tried, your mom at least said, look, stop this crazy crap. My, my money's green. My, I worked hard. I'm a human being. I matter. And so that was one reason why I was going, you know, standing up for the cause.

And my sister and brother were like, I'm not going. God, you know, gonna fix it. Fine. He gonna fix it through me. I'm helping him.

[01:03:24] **Lemley:** What

type of discrimination do you and your family and community still experience?

[01:03:29] **Frieron:** Oh, shoot. Just today I went to this, um, I'm, I'm gonna name the company, but I needed a part. Okay. We fixing the Hush hut floor, so this company around the corner from me. Gave us the four, three of the platforms. So the people from the Catholic Church came and fixed the fourth Platform, so it need to be some kind of latch thing and I went all around Nashville trying to find it, couldn't find it.

So I went to them to ask, the man looked me dead in my face. Of course he was busy.

You

know, I could tell he was having a meeting. So he just looked dead at me and just kind of like, What are you doing here? That's how he looks. So I looked at him, I was like, I'm not gonna lie. But I just let him know, I see you, you see me.

You, he could've done something to say, look I see you. But he just rolled his ass. I can't believe she came in here. Which, you know, you don't know what I, who I was. Or what I was there for. So I didn't, but I, something like that, I don't take a person, I'd say a person got a right to be which way, every way they are.

Cause, that happens. And then a couple of times, which is, this happens rarely, but it still happens. You in line, somebody walks up, May I help you I said you can't help me. Well, I was just gonna you can't get her she wasn't in It's not her turn and I said a nice word and sometimes the person try to get it's the old lady Not that it matters but some of them kind of don't know not that they don't know it's like what baby You know, they 80 some idea ma'am.

You can go on anybody's why you gotta go cuz I did, you know I hope that when I'm a little bit simple minded I'm just gonna say or see now or something She wasn't even trying to jump in front of me. She was trying to get her stuff paid for and get on by her business. Everybody was like, yeah, yeah. I said, mm, let that lady.

But the other, the cashier was going to force her to be next. I said, you see me, but I'm letting her go. You know, and the cashier was just kind of staring at me. But you don't, it wasn't for her to do. It was for me to do. But the old lady was like, oblivious to what was going on. She wasn't trying to me to be up in here or something, but the cashier knew that I was in line next.

So the people behind got irate and they was like, no, we're not going to let that happen. And I was like, It's You know, so

what's that do? It still do what happened. Then I was looking into what you think, what you feel is what you would manifest. So I'm like, why is it still happening? Cause I ain't caring about nobody jumping in front of me or I'm not lesser than somebody else.

You know, but to be honest, when I was young, I didn't think that because our mama didn't teach us that way.

[01:06:17] **Lemley:** Mm hmm.

[01:06:18] **Frierson:** And everybody was like, aren't you scared? No. I couldn't understand why other people were scared, had that fear of, you know, white people or had the fear of the teacher. We just didn't because our mama was like, y'all special.

We are special. And so we never knew to back down. I didn't have the back down spirit and I just didn't back down. You know, and sometimes I should have backed down. I should have. Yeah, because I was like fighting a cause that wasn't necessary. You know? Oh, a fightin to my ass is a fight.

[01:06:51] **Lemley:** Mm-Hmm.

[01:06:52] **Frierson:** Because I was more powerful, more After I stopped being shy, after I came out of my shell, after I read about I am somebody that my life matters, that I got When I had my daughter, that's when I started thinkin I gotta live for her, too.

I can't teach her how to be weak.

[01:07:06] **Lemley:** Mm-Hmm.

[01:07:07] **Frierson:** I can't teach her how to be Put herself last. You know, so we have the one beautiful thing we have. We have, uh, self care Tuesdays and then everybody put in a text what they done to love on themselves. What kind of things

[01:07:24] **Lemley:** What kind of things do people do?

[01:07:25] **Frierson:** and my daughters. So, uh, my oldest daughter, she might go work out.

Um, then my next daughter, she'll pick, cook her favorite meal. Or she won't cook anything. She's married with one child who's 18. She'll say, I didn't cook nothing. I just went to the beach, I just went to the, uh, the river and just sat down. We were like, yeah! And then my other youngest two daughters, they might go do, um, pedicures, manicures, or fix a good meal, or go for a walk, um, go to bed early, or stay in bed,

Let me see, uh, what else?

Clean, make sure to clean the whole house out. Get trash out, get, uh, uh, Uh, worthless stuff out of the house.

[01:08:09] **Lemley:** so good.

[01:08:09] **Frierson:** Yeah, cause I've, I've done the whole, I detox this whole house. This house, this house has housed over 70 people. Uh huh. Because, you know, my five children, then my, um, I have some nephews that come live, then I've had the Airbnb people, then I've had like people trying to find their way, or thinking like they're trying to find their way.

Or act like they getting off drugs or stop drinking. I've had them here. You know, then I started doing a DIDD

program where I got paid to take care of people. Yeah, so I've had over 70 people live in this house. And so, most of them leave stuff. So I, what I done,

I read

this book by Marie Kondo. spark joy and the art of tidying up.

[01:09:00] **Lemley:** Yes.

[01:09:01] **Frierson:** You've heard of those two

books? So I've done it. I have nothing in my attic, all the stuff in my basement. Uh huh. Everything. I have a young man living down there, but all of my personal stuff is out of the basement. My shed, both my sheds are cleaned. And to be honest, The goo goo goo stuff that I don't want to throw away or give away, I put it in the storage we have in the yard sale next weekend, and that storage will be closed down.

[01:09:29] **Lemley:** Yeah. And I

feel

[01:09:30] **Frierson:** light. My car is clean. My car is clean. My car is clean.

[01:09:33] **Lemley:** my gosh. He How, when did you start trying to tidy up?

[01:09:38] **Frierson:** it took two years. It, uh, it took me two years to get to this point right here. Cause what I done, I packed it up. Let it out packed it up got it back out So now to really make it make sense. I had to do the qigong lymphatic drain I had to I do this thing

when you to retrain your brain you brush your teeth with your right hand

[01:10:01] **Lemley:** I heard that. Brush it with the other hand.

[01:10:03] **Frierson:** a non dominant hand You say you both do it 10 times.

I do it 30 because i'm a little hard headed you say 30 times I love you. I love you looking at yourself and you're not saying just words because this universe is a feeling universe You feelin it. Of you. Of you. I love you. Then you take 30 breaths. You're supposed to do 10, but I do 30 cause I'm a little hard headed. 30 times. That resets your brain. And that's how I started learning how to get up early. Cause I never, I never did get up early. I never could get up early cause I was sluggish. And then another thing I had to do, stop eating by 6 or So I can be hungry when I wake up. And that all affects your blood pressure.

Your sugar level. So I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm almost a doctor.

[01:10:54] **Lemley:** You're going to be, not Dr. Tupac, not Dr. Deepak,

[01:10:57] **Frierson:** Tupac. But, uh,

Dr. LaPearl.

LaPearl. And it's all these things. Sometimes I can't tell you what I ate yesterday, but I can tell you all these things. I can remember this, but it has hit my brain. It has helped my brain to remember, cause I write stories, but I'm a, I'm a, I'm a stop saying this, I'm a writer less, a writer less writer, I'm a stop saying it, because we giving it, publish that book, the um, Art, not the Art of Courtship, that's the other book I got, but the Birthing of Brooklyn Heights Community Garden, You Work, You Eat.

This summer camp has made it come to fruition. That book is going to be online before July the 20th. Because I'm going to perform at the Kindling Arts Festival July the 20th. So that's going to be one of the things that we have to offer.

[01:11:50] **Lemley:** you have the book sitting around anywhere? Like the manuscript?

I

[01:11:53] **Frierson:** I got the manuscript.

[01:11:54] **Lemley:** you, you want to read something from it?

[01:11:56] **Frierson:** Which one?

[01:11:56] **Lemley:** It, um, like the one that's about to come out. Like a couple of paragraphs.

[01:12:01] **Frierson:** Okay, the um, the um, the birth and a Brooklyn Heights community. Okay, so we're gonna stop.

[01:12:07] **Lemley:** Well, we'll just, we'll just let it roll like, and you can go grab it.

[01:12:09] **Frierson:** oh, and then you, you taking, um, edit this out or something?

[01:12:13] **Lemley:** Well, I mean, Well, this won't be used for a little while.

So, cause you said it's getting released when?

[01:12:19] **Frierson:** Um,

the book is getting released July, before July the

[01:12:23] **Lemley:** 20th. Okay. Yeah. This, this will hardly see, Stephanie will get to listen to it before then, but that's it. Yeah.

[01:12:28] **Frierson:** but I'm saying do she, um, if it's just rolling and I'm getting up.

[01:12:32] **Lemley:** Oh yeah. Don't worry about that. Yeah. Do y'all cut that out or what?

Yeah. Well, yeah. If we ever, if we ever like tighten it up, we will. She's jogging down the hall. I

So I'll describe the house a little while you're getting your, your laptop out. Um,

Oh, it's paper. Good. We've got, we've got some paper coming. So while the paper is coming out, I mean, I had noticed like, like you've got every, everything has its place. And I know that's like Marie Kondo's thing. Like everything has its place.

This house is set up. Like you, you've done all of this. This is your tidying up. We've got,

[01:13:29] **Frierson:** it all. I had help

[01:13:34] **Lemley:** She had said she had to help from someone. If you can hear that, that live downstairs. So we've got like little blue storage. Uh, we've got a tall shelf with, with cubbies and there's probably two dozen little blue baskets in there with, with, Things all in the cubbies.

Um, the windows are covered with some like contact paper to keep, let the light come in, but keep some privacy. There's like one little plant in the window that looks so happy and another little succulent in the window. Um, the, there's a recycle bin, of course there's brooms and, and mops like have are hung on the wall.

They've got their place. The counters are clean. yeah, I'm so impressed. Like it's inspirational to me to see how everything it, you've created a sense of peace. Yeah. I've noticed that that picture was crooked. She just fixed it. I was not going to mention that. Uh, and um, you know, just so much, you've created a sense of peace in here

that

for me comes onto the inside as well.

[01:14:37] **Frierson:** Right. My house, I my house

[01:14:42] **Lemley:** Yeah. this, this where we are right now is also an Airbnb? That's correct. Okay. How many bedrooms? Uh, six bedrooms. Okay, so this house has Six bedrooms, Okay, Six bedrooms, three bathrooms, two kitchens.

[01:15:03] **Frierson:** is chapter,

is chapter five.

[01:15:07] **Lemley:** Okay, we're going to read a little bit from, and we'll say the name of the book one more time and then where we are.

[01:15:12] **Frierson:** Okay, so let me, let me see. Should I say, for some reason this has come up. Let me start with the first chapter. Where's that first chapter? Come on, Ms. That's chapter three.

This is going to make me have to

[01:15:28] **Lemley:** it.

[01:15:34] **Frierson:** chapter Okay. Well. 1 we at? And it's all written in all kinds of helter skelter, so for once I can

[01:16:16] **Lemley:** Okay.

[01:16:16] **Frierson:** Okay, chapter 1.

[01:16:19] **Lemley:** Let's get a little closer to the mic if you can. Yeah, there we go.

[01:16:24] **Frierson:** I like chapter But anyway, let me see.

[01:16:26] **Lemley:** We can do chapter five. You want to do chapter five. Let's do that.

[01:16:29] **Frierson:** yeah. I can read it better.

And

this ties in with, uh, when I said about my daughters. We was doing, um,

[01:16:40] **Lemley:** Yeah. Self care Tuesdays.

[01:16:42] **Frierson:** care Tuesdays. Now this is chapter This is chapter four.

[01:16:46] **Lemley:** Chapter four

[01:16:47] **Frierson:** or five? What is

[01:16:47] **Lemley:** That is four. We're looking at some Roman numerals is what's happening right now. And so we're looking at chapter four of the, what's the title again?

[01:16:55] **Frierson:** Um, the title of the book is called The Birthing of Brooklyn Heights Community Garden.

You work, you eat.

[01:17:00] **Lemley:** was going

to

[01:17:01] **Frierson:** I was gonna look for the outline. Anyway, so chapter four is prepare your body and mind. Get yourself together. I have learned through years of working on school, garden, business projects, and self help health goals, the perfectly best preparation is preparation. LOL. I was making a funny. There's no perfectly best way. Everyone will start where they are.

Just try out a lot of different methods, then select and keep the ones that best fits to your liking. What works best for me is to write out longhand. Me and Typin are working on bettering our relationship. It has not happened yet. Because I can't stand the computer. I write out the night before about three to five realistic tasks that I will accomplish the next morning.

I always feed my mind first because she is control. Control. In my Janet Jackson voice, being that my mind is encased in my brain, which is a part of my body, I make sure to treat her with tender, loving care and consideration as well, by choosing a small amount of tasks that is for sure that I can finish.

That I, that won't overtax or be a burden. For example, let me see, by picking on the three to five small things, you know, in your heart of hearts, you will get all of them done. You can always add more goals to your list. The main thing is to get started and stick with your routine long enough, about 21 to 30 days.

So we become a good habit and you will automatically do them because they have become a part of your subconscious. Subconsciousness, and they make you feel much better to do these activities. You know, I'm speaking from experience. Of course, this doesn't happen for everyone. Remember to something your own, to toot your own horn, give yourself praise and rewards for any and all of your small accomplishments.

Like for example, when I get up in the morning before I brush my teeth, I fix my bed. I, I pull the cover up, fluff up my pillows, then I'm like, Yes! Yes! Yes! I done done something. I done fixed, I done fixed, I done fixed my bed. I done, I

have, took the cover, shook it out, and fixed my bed up. All, did you know that all wealthy people fix their beds until they got a bed.

Even though they have a maid, they still fix their beds. That's what I, that's what I read. Heh heh heh. Uh. In the event your routine becomes routine, change it up.

Because sometimes you get tired of the routine, you know, just kind of doing the same old thing. So I'll change it up, but I always fix that bed.

And then I might, like, dance in the mirror. Look at the, I like to look out at the birds. Since I done made this, turned this into an Airbnb, in my birthday suit and just be looking around like I used to. So I'm kind of missing doing that. But I go into the bathroom and I might, Make faces in the mirror or might make some, uh, make some stories or some skits.

But I always try to do my lymphatic drain, do my qigong, deep breathing. Brush my teeth, take a bath early in the morning, let that be my first thing. But sometimes it gets boring, so I do something different. I won't take a bath.

[01:20:43] **Lemley:** Yeah, it's good for your brain to mix it up.

[01:20:44] **Frierson:** yeah, so I won't, I won't, I always brush my teeth. But, you know, I always use the restroom, but I do something different.

I try to use the restroom first, just do something different. Or, um, straighten up or clean up the bathroom before I get in there.

Okay, so, let me think of something that's on here.

Okay,

so that's chapter, that's all I want to talk about in chapter four. Yeah,

[01:21:08] **Lemley:** Yeah, that was the beginning of that chapter, yeah. Okay. Well, thank you. You're welcome. Love it.

[01:21:17] **Frierson:** cause I got it written out exactly. I, I got it all crazy.

[01:21:27] **Lemley:** So you said that you used to go out naked on your balcony?

[01:21:31] **Frierson:** Love, yeah. That's before they put a house back there. There's a house in the back of my yard

[01:21:36] **Lemley:** used to have some privacy so you could just go out there. It would

[01:21:39] **Frierson:** it would be just

All these bushes, all

[01:21:44] **Lemley:** Mmm.

[01:21:45] **Frierson:** And I'll just go out there and just be in my birthday suit. Jumpin around, bein happy. Are

[01:21:53] **Lemley:** are you able to do that anywhere now? To like substitute? Or you just lost it? Mm hmm.

[01:21:57] **Frierson:** think the hush hut is gonna be where I'll be, uh, expressive again.

Cause it was just fun.

[01:22:05] **Lemley:** know, one of the things I've thought is, is weird. And as women, our breasts never see the sun hardly.

Right. And I think that's weird. Like a part of our, like parts, major part, most of our body. Right. The sun never hits it.

[01:22:21] **Frierson:** Exactly. And that's why, and that's why I consciously would go out there and just sunbathe. Yeah. I'd just be outside.

Yeah. And you'd feel so much

[01:22:29] **Lemley:** Yeah. Yeah, you do. what do you want people who have power, more power, the ultimate power?

Is that too much to say? Because we all have power.

[01:22:43] **Frierson:** right?

[01:22:44] **Lemley:** But the people that get to make the decisions, what do you want them to do? To know about your community, your neighborhood, and, and what all is Nashville that we need?

[01:22:57] **Frierson:** well, Biden got hooked on his book.

[01:23:00] **Lemley:** brain back.

[01:23:02] **Frierson:** Okay, let me get my brain

[01:23:03] **Lemley:** Yeah, yeah.

[01:23:04] **Frierson:** Okay, let me, mmm.

Okay, now tell me, ask me

again.

[01:23:08] **Lemley:** Yeah, so, um, the people that, that get to make the decisions in the end, you know, get to push the button, what, what do you want them to know? About this neighborhood, Nashville, and, and what we all need.

[01:23:24] **Frierson:** Okay, I want, what I want them to know is that, Okay. They are killing themselves by staying behind them computers, come out and play in the dirt, grow something, and, um, give us a piece of the pie. Give us a piece of the pie. We don't want to be jumping through hoops. Stop giving the same organizations, um, the money.

[01:23:47] **Lemley:** Yeah,

[01:23:47] **Frierson:** they normally give the same organizations. A lot of them organizations not doing nothing. I'm just saying. But, um, And learn how to understand that you're interconnected. A lot of them on their deathbeds, that's what they said. They would say, I wish I had lived more. I wish I had, uh, been more

connected

or been more freer.

Uh, you know, cause I used to be a caregiver. A lot of rich white people would say, even the black ones, they would say something like, I didn't do nothing with my life. I didn't do enough. I was such and such and such. That ain't nothing. And they were trying to give him money to me, but I couldn't take it because, you know, I couldn't, because I'm working.

And so, you know, we got them, the laws of, and of course, most of them said like they was feeble

[01:24:33] **Lemley:** and

[01:24:33] **Frierson:** they would try to give me the money. I said, I'm here to serve you right now. I'm getting paid.

[01:24:37] **Lemley:** Mm

[01:24:39] **Frierson:** And so, They realize at the end of their life that they didn't do anything. So don't let it, you get to the end of your life and feel like, what was your life for?

What difference could you make right now? Come, come here. Uh, agree to be a friend of somebody. Just cause you got some money don't mean you know better than nobody else. Now, if you had five arms, you could do more work. Four legs, you can walk fast. You'd be, you'd be like a wonder, wonderful something to see.

But listen to me, come out from behind those computers, share the wealth. And understand that nobody want no handout. We need a helping hand and some of us don't need no helping hand. We just need you to understand,

stop stepping on people's necks, you know, and let everybody eat. Cause a lot of them can't go sleep at nighttime.

That's why they do the drugs. Um, Why they do all their sexist stuff because they know on some level that they, they, they not right. That they're not doing something super productive. And then a lot of them are doing something super productive. So that's all I want to say is that give peace, give love a chance, come out from, um, Behind your work, uh, closet or work door and live right now.

[01:25:58] **Lemley:** now. Stop seeing the city maybe as a concept or just as words on the screen and come see

Come see the neighborhood you're actually

[01:26:06] **Frierson:** be funding or need to be funding or should be funding or um, that you need to

connect with. Because a lot of people, they have to

disassociate

in order to be greedy.

They have to disassociate, or see somebody lesser than, in order to feel good about themselves.

[01:26:27] **Lemley:** Make a zip code just a number instead of seeing some faces and experiencing it.

Yeah.

[01:26:33] **Frierson:** And live isolated.

[01:26:37] **Lemley:** Mm-Hmm. or, you

[01:26:37] **Frierson:** you know, certain things that the rich people are supposed to be doing, and certain things that people that's not rich are supposed to be doing.

That's an illusion.

[01:26:43] **Lemley:** Mm-Hmm.

[01:26:44] **Frierson:** But we all have bought into it, so it's real. Because we all believe that they doing something. They ain't doing no more nothing we doing. We ain't doing it. When they on they yachts drinking and whatever they doing. You know, I've been to some of the parties. I don't, it ain't fun for me.

Because I'd rather be in the dirt. I'd rather be in the dirt. I'd rather talk to some people. I'd rather, you know, what I have done is learn how to take care of me. I can't take care of nobody else. I can't save nobody. I can share energy. I can share knowledge. I can be present to play, laugh, have fun. But I can't save nobody.

That ain't my intentions anymore. My intentions is to live and let live

And to, um, interact from a spiritual standpoint. And then go into glory. And write these books, because I have four books. Can I say my four books?

[01:27:36] **Lemley:** Yeah, please do.

[01:27:37] **Frierson:** The next one is called, uh, 53 Lovers and I. Now that book is about my love life. Most of that I made up. But some of it's true. A lot of it's true. And I hope the people that I'm talking about don't realize it's them.

[01:27:51] **Lemley:** 53 Lovers and I. 53

[01:27:53] **Frierson:** Lovers And I. And then another book I wrote for my youngest daughter. She was, um, Didn't know how to court. She's 39 now. I haven't finished. The book is written. I just gotta get it published.

It's called The Art of Courtship Through Septima Moon's Eyes. I called her Septima Moon. I wanted to name her Septima Moon, but her daddy said, no, she's not gonna be named Septima Moon because her name follows you for the rest of your life. I said, I know. She was born in February. But Septima Moon, that's so beautiful.

Then one day, um, she was sitting outside. I never forget. She was uh, She had a hard childhood because of a lot of stuff. But she was sitting outside with her friends and they, uh, Momma, when it's, when it's, I, I made sure I, because every time she would run away and do stuff, I would make sure I would be there.

I'm like, mm, I'm your momma.

[01:28:44] **Lemley:** Mhm.

[01:28:45] **Frierson:** What is it? Let's figure this out. Let's go to therapy. Let's do some meditation. Let's do something. So they were sitting on the front porch, her and her friends, and I, I had the door open because I'm eavesdropping. And I heard, uh, one of them say, Why your momma always call you September Moon?

She said, Mmm, I can't tell you. She said,

Why? I wish my momma would call me something. Call me a pretty name, she said. So I walks out, cause I, I never told her why I called her September Moon. So she says, She wants that to be my name. And he's like, Oh, it's so pretty. Then I said, Do y'all know why I called her September Moon? They was like, no ma'am, it's because it's the most beautiful moon God has ever hung. Then I was like, uh oh, September moon. I

[01:29:34] **Lemley:** I love it.

[01:29:35] **Frierson:** it. So she

didn't mind me calling it September moon no more. Then one day she told me, mama, don't call me

[01:29:38] **Lemley:** that no more. About

[01:29:39] **Frierson:** About 17, she's,

[01:29:40] **Lemley:** don't call

[01:29:41] **Frierson:** call me that no more.

[01:29:42] **Lemley:** today, can you call her that?

[01:29:44] **Frierson:** Oh, she was just, she's my buddy now.

She's my buddy.

[01:29:46] **Lemley:** And she's September Moon once again.

[01:29:47] **Frierson:** September Moons. I named, I bought that, that's a book for her. Then that's, okay, Three Loves and I. Uh, The Art of Courtship Through September Moons, I asked. Uh, The Birthing of Brooklyn Heights Community Garden. You Work, You Eat. And The Listening Ears of Miss Lachelle.

That is a book about, uh, the sayings that old, old people say. And poetry.

[01:30:07] **Lemley:** Mm hmm.

[01:30:08] **Frierson:** And so those are the four books that's, that's gonna come out of my, Lawrence. When we

[01:30:15] **Lemley:** Oh, it's beautiful.

[01:30:17] **Frierson:** power

[01:30:19] **Lemley:** me think if there's, what else we want to look at. Um,

When we think about people in power or people that are the decision makers and groups

that are coming together to influence change, who are some of the groups and individuals that are, that you work with or that you see who are addressing changes to the environment?

[01:30:46] **Frierson:** the environment? Uh, you know, I kind of like dabble and dabble a whole bunch of groups. Um, because I speak with Gideon's Army. What is her name? She got Fuquay. What is her name?

[01:30:59] **Lemley:** Oh gosh. I know.

[01:31:01] **Frierson:** Army. Yeah,

[01:31:01] **Lemley:** yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh, uh, Rasheeda. Not Rasheeda. Rasheeda! Ok.

[01:31:05] **Frierson:** Rashida. I've, I've spoke with her. We supposed to be doing some healing stuff, so, 'cause the healing takes place from the inside out. The average person don't know that. So she and I have been talking about that. Ooga. Ooga.

[01:31:17] **Lemley:** we go.

[01:31:18] **Frierson:** And then I, I'm friends with uh, Clemmy Greenley

[01:31:22] **Lemley:** Who just lost? Who did she just lose? She just had someone else die.

[01:31:26] **Frierson:** Oh no, it was on Facebook, I forgot. Yeah.

[01:31:29] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[01:31:30] **Frierson:** Hmm. And then I'm, right now I'm dealing with a whole lot of, um, Um, food groups, like, um, The Fruit, Food Project.

[01:31:42] **Lemley:** National Food Project. Yeah. Food

[01:31:44] **Frierson:** Project, and, um, Mm, mm, mm, it's another one.

F something. I did a lot of, um, Surveys for them. Ugh.

[01:31:55] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[01:31:56] **Frierson:** They, um, did a lot of, uh, community gardens. I just did with them a lot of churches.

I was doing with the churches. His name is William Jordan. They have set up a community garden. It was two different churches. I can't think of the church name.

William Jordan and then, um, Girl Scouts, Khadija, but, and then now it's, um, a big, it's called Avenue Construction Company has agreed to talk with us to partner with us.

a potential partner with us to, um, see what we need. And they, they, they are building, I think, 16 units with about, I forgot, 40, 40 houses each.

[01:32:45] **Lemley:** Wow.

[01:32:46] **Frierson:** I know, I forgot exactly.

[01:32:47] **Lemley:** Nearby.

[01:32:48] **Frierson:** Right on, um,

[01:32:53] **Lemley:** West Trent Lane?

Um.

[01:32:54] **Frierson:** hmm. Mm hmm. Yeah.

[01:32:56] **Lemley:** So those are some of the people that you get to work with.

[01:32:59] **Frierson:** Yeah. And then I, you know, of course, uh, I'm trying to think, oh, I forgot she was here.

Um,

uh, who else I be working with? Um, I got some homeless people that, but that's just my project that I've been doing for, since I was 19. That, um, homeless people. Yeah. That feed. And then on Young's Lane, um, they house, they help people houses burn down, that then there's this called. Young's Lane. Oh, shoot.

Anyway, I, I do collections for them of shoes, clothes, household goods, because they have people who was homeless and got some how, uh, you won't say homes, but it's supposed to be

[01:33:47] **Lemley:** unhoused.

Unhoused, yeah.

[01:33:48] **Frierson:** Why?

[01:33:49] **Lemley:** I, we change it to be more, I think, appropriate from, you know, like less, I think it could be seen as degrading. I still flip back and forth between the two, yeah,

[01:33:57] **Frierson:** okay. Well, unhoused. Let's take it home as that. And, uh, anyway.

[01:34:02] **Lemley:** You said you've, you've worked with homeless or unhoused people,

[01:34:05] **Frierson:** Just, we was

[01:34:06] **Lemley:** ever since you were, yeah, since you were 20, so like 20, 50, 50 years?

[01:34:11] **Frierson:** Oh. Almost about 49.

[01:34:14] **Lemley:** Yeah. So, um, where do, where do they stay around here

[01:34:18] **Frierson:** Now they don't they don't they have torn down almost every place where they stayed around

[01:34:23] **Lemley:** I know. Yeah.

[01:34:23] **Frieron:** but they got one last place over about

Right off right by that 7 eleven store But they outside they just around a little corner. They used to be like

[01:34:32] **Lemley:** like a campsite or just like a

[01:34:34] **Frieron:** This ain't no campsite. It's like a nomadish.

They have like a piece of A sheet.

[01:34:40] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[01:34:41] **Frieron:** And they, they tied to the trees and the bushes. And they over there. Now, to be honest, they're more aggressive. So I stay in my car. I deal with them, I deal with them with the car running. I ain't gonna lie. I deal with them. The others I would get out. But I never go into the camp.

But I would have my car facing so I could just jump in. And I would never go by myself. Because they were like, come down to the camp. No, I'm good. Because it didn't feel safe safe. And some are mental, you know,

[01:35:11] **Lemley:** Yeah, yeah.

[01:35:12] **Frieron:** but I've been, I've been, and when we was living out public housing, me and my daughters, we lived in J.

C. Napier public housing. So we've, we've been feeding them homeless and closing them. We just done it because it was the right thing to do. We didn't know that we're trying to be no movement at all. It could be us. We want to check away from being unhoused.

[01:35:31] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[01:35:33] **Frieron:** now it's a big movement kind of something.

[01:35:36] **Lemley:** have you seen? The environment, the weather, or the, you know, the community change around people who don't have a place to live. How have you seen that change over 50 years?

[01:35:46] **Frierson:** People trying to get rid of them. Even down the street where they had a camp, two of them got

[01:35:52] **Lemley:** killed.

[01:35:54] **Frierson:** After the developer started developing it. So I'm like, that ain't no, that they, huh? Who killed them two people? They been there for years, you know, and they didn't bother nobody.

They just, uh, transit people. I know, I knew the man. I didn't know the girl, woman, uh, started T. I kind of make myself forget about it. I forgot. I forgot. Troy, Tony, something like that. But you kind of try to bring it out of your mind. Cause they killed. I don't care what the developers killed. The one who took him out cuz he was there forever and he was stuck way back in there You only knew he was in there cuz he came out, but he know how to talk.

His name was Tony I forgot Troy Tony one two

[01:36:42] **Lemley:** name was Tony. I forgot. Troy Tony. One, two. Troy Tony.

[01:36:48] **Frierson:** Literally shoot cuz they shot him

[01:36:52] **Lemley:** But he

[01:36:55] **Frierson:** No, they, but he was shot and killed. Which homeless, which unhoused person's got a gun?

[01:37:00] **Lemley:** Right, right.

[01:37:02] **Frierson:** Huh. And why would somebody just try to kill him?

He ain't got nothing. He don't, he doesn't have anything of value, I would think. Cuz he gets stuff off the street Yeah, but he had pride cuz it's some stuff. I cook you wouldn't eat it. He's like no. Thank you.

[01:37:19] **Lemley:** I'm

[01:37:20] **Frierson:** okay

[01:37:21] **Lemley:** I had someone throw a sandwich at me once, yeah.

[01:37:24] **Frierson:** And I had one guy I was giving some pants he says wait a minute some women there was my old pants

[01:37:29] **Lemley:** I said, But no, he was like, It's

[01:37:34] **Frierson:** But now he's like it didn't win my pants. I said How would you know? Like, I think the button must be on the opposite side or

[01:37:40] **Lemley:** something. I'm

[01:37:41] **Frierson:** I was like, you better put them on. You got ones more raggly.

But I said, you know, that's his pride. So I took my little pants and folded them back up.

[01:37:47] **Lemley:** just be out there. Most of them try

[01:37:53] **Frierson:** They just be out there. Most of them try to get into a shelter or something. And when they was youth up on, out on, um, West Trinity Lane, I think it's East. They just get up on, up in there. Yeah. But somehow they made it so they can't live up in the, in the, uh,

[01:38:09] **Lemley:** They block it off somehow, yeah.

[01:38:11] **Frierson:** Yeah.

[01:38:13] **Lemley:** Have you seen the way homeless people survive change over the decades?

[01:38:20] **Frierson:** They more aggressive. They, they walk in front of the cars, ask you for money. You know, they used to be on the side just being, uh, timid. No, they aggressive. A lot of um, uh, A couple of them had told me that they had banded together to get hotel rooms.

That they banded together and all the money they make all day, then they get one hotel room, like that. But, um, this was a girl, this was a 28, 29 year old looking girl. So, I think her homelessness, her unhouseness,

[01:38:52] **Lemley:** You can say homelessness Her

[01:38:53] **Frierson:** okay, her homelessness was because of drugs. Okay. That's what she, she looked like she was on drugs.

She was real skinny. Had like blotches of blood. And I didn't feel threatened by her for whatever reason. Not because she was small. But some of them you feel like,

[01:39:07] **Lemley:** You have to listen to your spirit. With everybody. Yeah. Over

[01:39:11] **Frierson:** danger, danger. It just felt like it.

[01:39:13] **Lemley:** like that. Yeah. What, why do you think you're seeing some more aggression in this, in that, that particular community over the time?

[01:39:20] **Frierson:** Uh, now these are different people. Most of these people who's real aggressive is the white people that has come. And I think a lot of them have put out of their homes or something, like the mates don't want them or something. It's something, it feels different. It don't feel, it doesn't, let me try to put my, it doesn't feel like, like they ran away from a home that was abusing them. It feel like drugs, it feel like they made a choice and then they was put out, was forced out. So, if that makes any sense, it just, it just feels like something different. I can't even put my finger dead on it. Like they entitled to your money.

[01:40:06] **Lemley:** Oh, yeah, okay.

[01:40:07] **Frierson:** it's more aggressive.

One time I gave a guy some change, he just kept looking at him like, I want to say something. Give me my change back. That's all I had was that change. But he didn't look grateful or happy. He just looked like this. All you gave me, that's

[01:40:21] **Lemley:** Ah,

[01:40:23] **Frierson:** And some blacks have done it too. But mostly, you know, because it's new, they're aggressive.

They're more aggressive. Tell

[01:40:33] **Lemley:** Tell me a story if you've got one, about a recent weather event in this part. This part of Nashville.

[01:40:40] **Frierson:** Um, let The only one I remember was Storm that took out. I was surprised It had to be recent. You say it

[01:40:55] **Lemley:** Go ahead and tell what everyone comes to mind. Yeah.

[01:40:58] **Frierson:** I never get that flood that happened in 2010 My yeah, my second grandson at the time he was about let's see about 12 and he was over at me He was just playing. We're just running and playing in the rain. And so all of a sudden we were just playing and Yeah, I said this, let's go.

He says, can we go down the street? I said, let's go down the street. So down to the, if you go down the street to the left, to the right, I'm sorry. There's a ditch where it's a whole bunch of water running. But they done put drainage in so it's not, the water won't get as high

in the back of, used to be in the back of my yard, go down.

So all that's fixed now. The infrastructure. That's been placed in, put in place, let's fix that. But anyway, back in 2010, it was all this rain. So we was like happy, you know, we didn't have no coats, nothing on. I done took my shoes off. I think he still had on his rain boots. We just running, just laughing, because it was like fun.

We look, he saw all this rain. He says, Granny, can I get in that? And it was just, it was like rushing. I said, no, Southside Side, his name is Saeed, but I call him Southside Side. I said, no, Southside Side, I don't think you, because I believe, There's something that's going on. We didn't know it was a flood. I didn't have my phone on.

We didn't, I didn't ever look at TV. So we were running down there.

[01:42:16] **Lemley:** And

[01:42:16] **Frierson:** so I told him, I said, I want to show you something. So the water rushes through. It's a big old opening and then it rushes out. It goes to the, to the river. So he said, Oh, so I said, Ooh, let's go to the river. We go across the street, across, uh, World Baptist.

We look down. I said, Where do all that water's coming from? It was the flood, but we not, we

And it's a flow. I'm like, I'm looking. Do you sell it? Where is he? Yeah, grand. Let's go play. Let's not, let's go to the river. We go into the river. This true stories. We were down the steps. We saw all these beautiful, beautiful, uh, sticks.

said, they were snakes. They was,

[01:43:01] **Lemley:** What?

[01:43:01] **Frierson:** they was copper heads. They was all kinds of snakes, but there was this beautiful, but the snakes said they were straight. They wouldn't call it up. They was just laying straight like a Stick

[01:43:11] **Lemley:** In the water? No. We

[01:43:13] **Frierson:** had walked down the steps. It's, uh, I forgot the name of the Elizabeth space over here.

Uh, and we walked, it's like one set of steps, two set of steps, three set of steps. You'd be in the water. The water was already up to the second set of steps. I kept saying, but my mind didn't think this is a flood, Ms. Pearl. So I was like, why is that water that hot

in my mind? But I told him, I said, hold on, let Granny check this out first.

I said, something ain't right. Why is that water be right there? You're like, I don't know. So we looking, he's, Ooh, I'm gonna pick me one of those sticks up. I said, let me pick mine first. I rest with that stick, that snake cord. But he was in a, like a shock position or

[01:43:55] **Lemley:** He was kind of, yeah, like in shock.

[01:43:56] **Frierson:** his little tail was like, all the snakes was straight.

It looked like a daggum stick. And we didn't look like, he caught up. I said, run Sayeed, I can't leave you granted. Man, I became a track star. I leaped on them steps.

[01:44:11] **Lemley:** No,

[01:44:14] **Frieron:** was on the street. Okay. The street here. And you go down about

10 Then it's a platform grass, of land. Then if we went down a little ways, we would be on the second platform of grass and land. Then the third platform is where the river is. On the first platform is where the snakes done came all up because they done came out of the

water.

[01:44:41] **Lemley:** trying to dry out, yeah.

[01:44:42] **Frieron:** to get away from the rain. And we didn't, we, I'm like why is that? Me not thinking, but thank God I went first because Sayid was gonna get in the water. He was determined to get in. I said, nah, that's cause Sayid, if you jump in, I'm gonna have to jump in to get you. And my granny can't swim that good. But I almost said go on. Somebody told me, Pearl, no, don't get in the water. Cause I was gonna just put my foot in the water. But we saw the pretty sticks. Made us stop thinking about the water. It was a snake's run. Get back to the house. Everybody blowing my phone up. Cause the The flood is right over there.

We planned, we planned,

it was so much, we planned, me and Sayid, looking at each other, we could have been gone. How

[01:45:24] **Lemley:** How did that flood affect you or your community?

[01:45:28] **Frieron:** A whole lot of people lost, a lot of people lost their houses. You know, on, uh, West Hamilton, they, some, uh, God rest his soul, a man went out to just see what was going on, an older man, and he got washed away

[01:45:40] **Lemley:** his

[01:45:40] **Frieron:** his backyard.

And all the people lost their houses.

They tore them down. A lot of businesses shut down. Now here, uh, because we on higher land, it didn't really affect us. The rain did come up, and I thought it was gonna come to my basement. But it came halfway up, and a snake was back there too, but I knew then it was a snake.

I'm like, we're not gonna play with that, that's a snake. My grandchildren wanted to play with it, but I was like, nah, I think that's not a stick. So, but it didn't get in the basement, thank God, because it just came halfway up the yard. And, um, yeah, a lot of people lost their lives. You know, of course they couldn't work and some people lost their cars, but the worst is when they lost their life. Because I knew, I knew the old man. I didn't know the old man, but he was next door to some people that I knew.

So yeah, I mean, some next door to, yeah, people that braided their hair a long, long, long time ago.

[01:46:36] **Lemley:** long time ago.

[01:46:42] **Frierson:** so I want to say, of course we, I always would, uh, collect clothes, shoes. I'm not big on collecting food.

You know, because whatever I grow, I just give it to them, but they set up. And I think what's name came in, what's that, FEMA?

[01:46:57] **Lemley:** that, FEMA?

[01:46:58] **Frierson:** in, and then the community did, um, like bake food for them and stuff like that. But I just collect clothes and household, uh, stuff. So when they did get a place, they have that kind of stuff. And I did, I'm trying to think what else. That's about it.

I

feel like I let somebody live with me. I can't remember, we were up at the same

[01:47:21] **Lemley:** Well, you've had 70 people here, so who knows? Probably something overlapped.

[01:47:25] **Frierson:** Uh, yeah, cause man, but I was thinking I was helping them, but I wasn't helping

[01:47:29] **Lemley:** them

[01:47:30] **Frieron:** cause,

cause they was praying on me.

Then I finally woke up, going in my chair, mama, you got to stop cause you're not helping them. They just still doing drugs. I said, you still doing drugs? No, cause I could never, I guess the veil was on my, I want to see the good. I was looking for the good, so I was seeing the good. And then eventually I said, you know what, you're right.

I've turned to Airbnb. The people here come purposefully driven, you know, to go to school or change their lifestyle some kind of way or something. They have to pay before they come. They pay before they come and then I'm out of the picture. So I like, I like that better.

[01:48:06] **Lemley:** On just this real quick.

[01:48:09] **Frieron:** Okay.

[01:48:11] **Lemley:** So we'll wrap up here in a minute. Um, I guess I just wanted to ask a couple more things. When do you feel like you and your community are prepared or have the resources you need for the way the climate is changing?

[01:48:24] **Frieron:** No, cause most people don't have air conditioning. or sufficient air conditioning. And they don't have, um, Let me see.

What's the grass gonna get all burnt out? Toe up. You know, because they don't have the resources or money to make sure that the grass is, uh, watered. Oh, and then think what else? A lot of the roofs are all tore up, messed up. So, they're not preparing. Plus, they're not thinking about it. Half of them not thinking about, you know, preparation or anything

changing.

[01:48:59] **Lemley:** not?

[01:49:00] **Frierson:** They just surviving. They thinking about what I'm gonna eat tomorrow, what I'm gonna eat today. Or The mindset is like, They have to get me so I'm gonna get them first and that keeps you in a state of paranoia Somebody always doing something to you. Ain't nobody always doing nothing. Ain't nobody thinking about you.

What does that mean? When they talk to me and so I became a life coach So I know how to ask questions because all the answers for whatever you need is within you And my asking the questions brings it out.

[01:49:33] **Lemley:** Mmm. Mmm.

[01:49:34] **Frierson:** so that's my goal. Instead of me, cause I, a lot of times I talk to somebody about something.

What is it you need to do? I say, are you doing it? Well, I plan to. Well, I don't, I just, I'm venting or I'm discussing, I'm talking. I, you don't have my answers. I got my own answers, but I want to share what I'm going through. Or what I'm, what Anticipating going through,

[01:49:54] **Lemley:** through,

[01:49:55] **Frierson:** but you don't have my house. And so if everybody could get that one little tidbit for me ask Questions,

you don't have the answers to somebody else because you your life is kind of a little bit messed up, too

[01:50:09] **Lemley:** So a few times in this interview, you have mentioned when you, when you go home to glory, what happens? What happens when we die?

[01:50:19] **Frierson:** What happens when we leave our body? Our spirit that you hear, which you would never see, is the essence of me that is encased in this physical body. So the physical body is no more. Because we are born with a certain amount of chi, meaning energy. And then when that energy is used up,

Now we have been taught that death is a bad thing, but it's just a different continuation of life, but in a different way.

Am I, am I on another plane? Uh, they say we have seven different, uh, what do you call them? We have, we have, we have seven different, um,

[01:50:56] **Lemley:** Uh,

[01:50:58] **Frierson:** spontaneously happening at the exact same time.

[01:51:01] **Lemley:** Oh, like um,

[01:51:02] **Frierson:** Seven different, uh

parallel universes!

[01:51:07] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[01:51:08] **Frierson:** And so I'm going somewhere, or I might stay here. But as of right now, this Miss Pearl right here, I long to be married. I'm somewhere married. I'm somewhere single. I'm somewhere with a whole bunch of children.

I'm somewhere without children. I'm somewhere fat, skinny. I'm somewhere. Other than Manifest, I manifest this way, in this physical plane, to experience what I need to experience here. So, cause, yes, cause you have, you heard of deja vu?

That happens sometimes, a lot of times. So I'm wondering, what is

[01:51:42] **Lemley:** Yeah.

[01:51:43] **Frierson:** And be with people like, I met you before, or I know you, or, you remember something, something. I'm like, no. Instead of how I dreamed about what they asked me, I'm like, We did, that did happen. Well, I won't dream, but I've been thinking about it. You know, that, did that happen before? Or did I meet them before?

And yeah.

So, I just won't physically be here no more. And I, you know, I You don't want to die, because you want to keep experiencing whatever it is you're experiencing. But when you die, you don't know you're dead.

[01:52:11] **Lemley:** Yeah, that's true.

[01:52:12] **Frierson:** You don't know you're dead.

I think that's where ghosts come from sometimes. And like, when they, sometimes when they was drawing me, I would say, go to the light.

Go to sleep. Whatever that mean. I was taught to tell them go to the light, go to the energy source, you know, so. I believe that's what's going to happen. Miss Pearl will be, I'm going to be a cherry tree. I'm going to be put in a pod. My physical body is going to be, um, cremated, put in a cherry tree and I'm going to plant it outside.

So people can enjoy cherries on me. Pick my cherries.

[01:52:54] **Lemley:** Well, there is not a better place to land than there. So thank you so much.

[01:52:59] **Frierson:** more than welcome. Thank you.

[01:53:01] **Lemley:** So this concludes the climate related brief oral history of Ms. Nella Frierson or Ms. Pearl on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, that took place in Nashville, Tennessee. The total running time is approximately one hour and 53

[01:53:17] **Frierson:** Oh, may the force be with you.