

## Index of Interview #1 – Interviewed April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

00:00:02

Introduction, permission, and verbal consent from Mrs. Jennifer Sipe to record and conduct session one of the interview. I thank Jennifer for making time in her schedule for the interview and I also explain that if there are any questions that she does not want to answer to please stop me. I also establish and explain to Jennifer that in session one I will be asking her questions focusing on her childhood and education.

00:01:03

Jennifer Sipe was born on November 11, 1969 at Chestnut Hill Hospital. (Chestnut Hill Hospital is located in Philadelphia at 8835 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19118)<sup>1</sup>.

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“I had a wonderful childhood”. Jennifer explains that her mother Patricia Brindisi was a stay at home homemaker. Jennifer’s mother encouraged her to read books, craft, and to be involved in sports and activities at school. Jennifer states that her father was a full-time plumber that worked for the union. Jennifer states that her parents were married for over 50 years before her mother passed.

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Jennifer explains that her parents had a subtle influence on motivate her towards early education and success. When Jennifer was growing up, her parents encouraged her to follow her interests. Jennifer recalls going to the creek and collecting animal specimens and skeletons and look up the body part. Jennifer also recalled a time when she destroyed the Britannica encyclopedias circ. 1970 by drawing all over the anatomical skeletons inside the books. Jennifer recalled that the encyclopedia valued hundreds of dollars and she explained that she never got in trouble for destroying the encyclopedias because her parents thought it was encouraging her to study anatomy and physiology.

Jennifer also remembers that her parents took her on day trips. She explains that at the time she didn’t see the importance of the day trips when she was younger. Jennifer recalls going to the fish ladder on the Delaware River, Washington’s Crossing, and the Philadelphia Art Museum. All these trips Jennifer explains encouraged her to explore and be creative.

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“There was no push to be in health care...” Jennifer stresses that her parents didn’t go to college and that when she was growing up there was no script growing up like there is today. Jennifer

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<sup>1</sup> Information regarding hospital location found on the bottom of Chestnut Hill’s Hospital’s main website. Accessed 18 April 2015.

< <http://www.chestnuthillhealth.com/Chestnut-Hill-Hospital/home.aspx> >

says that in when she grew up in the 80s and early 90s there was not a script. Jennifer again stresses that her parent's subtle influence on her childhood made it possible for her and her siblings to pursue their interests.

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Jennifer continues to describe her opinions on concept of parenting and she points out what she considers to be the dangers of a "scripted" childhood. Jennifer comments on it by what she sees in advising freshmen and sophomores today. Jennifer explains that students are compelled to go into majors that their parents want to see them to go into and not follow their own aspirations. Jennifer says that it can be difficult because students follow someone else's script and not their own. Jennifer goes on to state that it can cause harm, unhappiness, and it does have an impact on learning.

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Jennifer states that her and her four siblings where taught early the value of hard work and education. Jennifer has two older sisters, Kathy and Marion, and older brother Ralph, and younger brother name Donald.

## **EARLY EDUCATION**

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Jennifer attended Willow Dale Elementary School (Willow Dale Elementary School is located in Warminster, Pa at 720 Norristown road, Warminster, PA 18974)<sup>2</sup>. Jennifer remembers the classrooms she was in as being much opened. Jennifer also remembers being broken into pods for learning and the space holding up to 100 children at a time. Every hour at Willow Dale Jennifer would rotate to a different learning area. Jennifer also remembers at lunch time to either choosing between playing at recess or helping out with special needs children. Jennifer spent her time volunteering, playing, and helping with the special needs children. Jennifer says the time helped keep the kids clam and that when she volunteered her parents never knew she did this work.

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Jennifer was a big outdoors person. The park behind her house was 30 acres and she would hike a lot. It wasn't uncommon that Jennifer would disappear for 6 – 7 hours. Jennifer states that in those days (1970s) there were no cell phones to structure her childhood, and that her time truly was unstructured time. In junior high and high school, Jennifer became involved in many sports and activities. Jennifer reflected on how unstructured time gave her the freedom to do what she wanted to do and also go to college and beyond.

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<sup>2</sup> Information regarding location of the school was found on the bottom of Willow Dale Elementary School's Website. Accessed April, 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 <<http://www.centennialsd.org/Domain/692>>

Jennifer attended William Tennent High School and graduated in the class of 1987. (William Tennent High School) is located at 433 Centennial Road Warminster, PA 18974.<sup>3</sup> Jennifer recalled running track and also doing shot put and went to states. Jennifer was involved in cheerleading, the computer club and even tried the science fiction club for a bit. Jennifer had a rigorous course load which she picked herself. By the end of her sophomore year, Jennifer had already taken 4 AP classes. Jennifer also describes the classes and setup of William Tennent High School as well as her group of friends.

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Jennifer reinforces her earlier point of how her childhood was “unstructured”. She uses the example of being able to take astronomy and her ability to choose her own classes and electives. Jennifer marvels at how today some may not have the opportunity to take electives or their own courses.

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Jennifer had no working jobs during high school. She explains that children from her time period had neither concern for money nor a pressing need to put a resume together.

## **COLLEGE**

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Jennifer started college in 1978 at Temple University (1801 N. Broad Street Philadelphia, PA 19122)<sup>4</sup> and went there for two years. She studied chemistry. She recalled mailing out her college essay without her parents knowing she applied to Temple. Jennifer also explains choosing her own school and filling out the FASFA papers incorrectly several times. She talked about the stress of being a first generation college student in her family and worries of investing in higher education.

Even though she got a scholarship for her grades, Jennifer was extremely worried about investing in college and getting a job after college. Jennifer explains she applied to 5 random schools and there was no reach schools or safety schools back in her day. Jennifer went to Temple because it was a state school.

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Jennifer decided to leave Temple because she was getting into the harder chemistry classes and was behind two years in organic chemistry. Jennifer also reflected on the fact that she realized that she was not someone who wanted to be trapped in a lab room but rather working with

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<sup>3</sup> Information regarding location of the school was found at William Tennent High School Website. Accessed April, 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 < <http://www.centennialsd.org/wt>>

<sup>4</sup> Information regarding hospital location found on the bottom of Temple University’s main website. Accessed 18 April 2015. <http://www.temple.edu/>

people. Influenced by her two sisters before her, Jennifer left Temple University for Abington School of Nursing (1600 Woodland Ave, Abington, Pa, 19001) which was and still is a three year program located in Abington, Pa.<sup>5</sup>

## **NURSING SCHOOL**

00:22:31

“The nursing program at Abington was classified diploma program”. Jennifer explains how the nursing program works and how Abington School of Nursing provides RN licenses for students to become registered nurses. Jennifer explains how she went to Abington and how she had to retake a lot of courses over again for credit. Jennifer states that the first year at Abington School of Nursing was mostly science classes and that years two-three were primarily spent working and studying in the hospital.

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“Working at Abington was Exciting...” Jennifer describes in detail her experiences during her time at Abington School of Nursing. Jennifer states that Abington was a 500 bed hospital at the time and had a lot of people. Jennifer loved working with a lot of different people. Jennifer describes this time as stressful and overwhelming. Jennifer shares the realities of nursing school and nursing as a profession. Jennifer also shares for the record her first experience working with a dead person. Jennifer goes into great detail about the experience and shares what she learned from the experience. After the experience Jennifer almost left the program.

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Overall, Jennifer describes Abington as an immersive experience because she lived on campus and was immersed in Abington Hospital and the culture of medicine.

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Jennifer explains the life of a nursing student as structured. She goes into detail explaining fundamental courses and specialties courses a nurse would have to take. Jennifer also explains her own personal experiences in rotations and course work in this section as well. Jennifer adds on to explain that all nursing programs whether diploma or BA program are very “prescribed” this meaning that nursing students have to meet certain requirements in order to take tests and to be a licensed nurse.

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<sup>5</sup> Information regarding the location of PSU Abington School of Nursing was found on their main website. Accessed 18 April 2015. <http://www.abington.psu.edu/>

Jennifer explains that she didn't have a favorite course until her last 15 weeks of her last semester. Jennifer describes her anxiety and fear of not graduating on time. In her last semester in ICU (Intensive Care Unit) Jennifer witnessed a lot of back and forth dialogue and respect between colleagues. Jennifer says that during this time in the mid-90s nurses were not required to get out of their chairs for doctors in ICU. Jennifer liked the diversity in ICU. Jennifer explains that at the time 35-40 percent of the nurses in Abington Hospital's ICU were males at the time in the mid-90s. She continues to add that this was shocking statistic to view because at the time in the mid-90s the males overall made up for 5-10 percent of the nursing field. Jennifer concludes this segment by stressing that this gender-place is one of the main reasons why nursing as a profession struggles to get respect.

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Jennifer explains why she found critical care so appealing to her. She found it professional and diverse. Jennifer also reveals that critical care often had the higher educated nurses working in it. In the critical care unit at Abington, Jennifer saw a lot of master prepared nurses at the bed side with patients. Jennifer describes why she decided she wanted to continue to working in critical care.

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Jennifer recognizes past professors at Abington School of Nursing who helped her during her Abington years. One professor was Dr. Diane Breckenridge who encouraged and inspired Jennifer to pursue her master's degree. and well as be one of Jennifer's colleagues at La Salle. Jennifer also shares a story when Dr. Breckenridge invited her to her home.

## **LA SALLE**

00:42:52

Jennifer describes the beginning of her La Salle journey as an undergraduate. She explains that she enjoyed the courses because their focus was very broad. She describes the courses at La Salle as being both difficult and challenging. Jennifer also recalls be exposed to many new environments and experiences.

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Jennifer explained what it means to be a La Sallian at the time she was in undergrad. Jennifer also explains what the La Salle meant her at the student

00:46.39

Jennifer reveals that during her early years at La Salle (1995-1996) as undergrad student the University was going through a lot of change and transition. Jennifer remembers class being held

off campus in trailers. Jennifer remembers be overwhelmed and adjusting to the fast pace environment of La Salle.

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Jennifer explains the period in between finishing her BA and taking electives in between her master's degree. She remembers explaining the choice to continue her education to her father and his reaction. Jennifer also describes how she never stopped educating herself during the period between finishing her BA and going into her masters. Jennifer elaborates on this period and the process of preparing for the next step.

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Jennifer describes that the hardest thing in adjusting to the graduate level for her was that no one before her in her family had done that. Jennifer elaborates that the culture at the graduate level was different as well.

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After a follow-up question Jennifer elaborates more on the changes at the graduate level. She states that students have to be more self-directed and involved in the class. In her experience, Jennifer found that she did well in graduate school because she was an aggressive student who frequently asked questions and did the reading.

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Jennifer in the final section of the first interview session discusses the high and low points in her undergrad and graduate years. The first example she remembers as a high point in her career is a time when she when she prepared a sick women's hair for a family visit at Abington Hospital. Another highlight Jennifer describes is when she identified hypoglycemic shock on patient which landed her job offer. Jennifer also describes handing in a research proposal during her masters which wasn't substandard. It was a low-point for Jennifer. Another low point she describes was when she sutured a patient's wound incorrectly. Jennifer vividly recalls her mistakes and the lessons she learned from the experience.

01:05:26

I (Anthony) thank Jennifer for her time and conclude the interview. Jennifer thanks the interviewer as well.

**END OF FIRST INTERVIEW SESSION AND RECORDING**

**01:05:37**

