Ray Trom ([00:00:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=XkEZYGoU2_5jV9K4DYclrPIoYGXHPigYWqjE9lQckiDt4KsO3ArpF2uMUObQM8T20b5b8AHKddl_Kza8XCvZ2p0WVOc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1.05)):

My name is Ray Trom. My Korean name is Kim Min Nae and I'm originally from Seoul/ Incheon area. I live in Phoenix, Arizona currently, and I was a professional chef as a career. Now I am vice president of a hospitality company where we're building actually country's biggest pool in the country right now. We're building out here. So it's a huge water park. So <laugh>, that's kind of what I'm doing currently.

Adapted Podcast ([00:00:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=p8Faz6oZ8REckSj6xwzg6evjxMX3Zcu0rIVouwFNpy3S58LoOzgC8mJM2H5KA3GP2e927vZlJGvlJW5AD9guM39hBxo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=36.92)):

And how old are you, Ray?

Ray Trom ([00:00:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hFnv5tbJhaCDynC1n4uxpmmffcP4FedJ0oI5SWMLqnLFZIjluc5JIjpDlommFPHcasmfuHpdX5c0E5oYDKQ0W-mNY8o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=38.85)):

I am 46.

Adapted Podcast ([00:00:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-LnboVDuH4BP5o3Be795xrxevkTbjRX_szok9NiM3ePxz64MF_nvr2ifDi00xiNIum1PfbHw8Wpmg23N95Ox653fBpw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=41.11)):

How did you find the podcast?

Ray Trom ([00:00:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=fECSTG0-zLQzM7EKB6VNF2Boh-5iv7BgHAnPr5OG9ubMBSNxUsTiSSeZFnnWnre9cYnk-VnqJ-iCaxryVSfXXO5WRbU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=43.729)):

I just kind of ran into it to be honest with you. I really I think actually I might have ran into it in Instagram, I believe. And you know, I guess it's part of my story is one of, you know, my past, you know, one of those things that you just didn't, I didn't want to talk about, or I really didn't acknowledge it. After listening to a couple of your podcast it definitely made me think about who, you know, my past and you kind of could put things in a per different perspective for me, you know, that's where I am.

Adapted Podcast ([00:01:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NbZq8XPAOH8KnrXOChdP6rWumnS5wmyO3fgRRKmGKazynb-fmL1vd6TDIBaXAhvZ550AT3cZaHLUWZILr_XNHerxtIM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=81.13)):

So you started thinking about your past in your forties?

Ray Trom ([00:01:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=31shLpuXK4p9cYuWE9j4sbmYvGVVyyNtnWBi7FoltA1ZUE3BMftY_Jk_NKA7DdxTfJ0uYc9ITYV_V64M-wcXVXM4Cnk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=86.09)):

No, I always have, but I, I guess to rephrase, I start thinking in a different perspective, you know, I guess I always walked around thinking that I'm a very grateful and blessed person which I am very am very fortunate, but I, I guess that doesn't always justify the past, you know, experience you have. You know, I think some of my Koreanness, you know, that's rooted in me always, you know, you, you just take that as part of your life and, you know, just, you know, take it for what it is be grateful and move on. I have a 17 year old daughter and as she's, you know, I'm, as I'm looking at her future and these things really are coming up in my mind. I also have a brother that he and I were adopted together. We're very fortunate. My brother has totally different perspective of what my our past so, you know, I know it's a something that we we'll talk we have talked about, but he's never in a good term, my brother and I, and he has two daughters that are little and as they're growing up, I know they're gonna be asking questions as obviously they look different than, you know, rest their mom and everybody else. So yeah, I guess, you know that's kind of where I'm at, you know, <laugh>,

Adapted Podcast ([00:02:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xz0U5kau-JLvG5PqyRWxfmEJL41sdFWUqZdHdQXpbfy2EeZWbiP_JWHmOwMxihcM02Rh98jC_l2adi1GD1Ufrjd8TKI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=178.4)):

So you were adopted at an older age, right?

Ray Trom ([00:03:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Lwe-vmKxrYEx5ehHQLoG7WClnc9xrP8JQpeVRO4GQ0aICbt8OfIdN1g4GwiDhJc1Szqs1-3RJfwT75i-ut3cZWpQweA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=181.44)):

I was 12 years old. My brother was seven years old. We were our parents passed away when I was seven. In fact I was there when my dad passed away and then soon after I found out my mom, my mother passed away and I lived with a fam- a couple uncles of mine at the time just didn't work well. You know, and my brother lived with my grandmother, which, you know, was difficult for everybody. And as family decided that the best thing for us was to get adopted to the United States. And we were placed we went to this orphanage Incheon called St. Vincent's Home for Amerasian Children In Bupyong, which is ran by this priest named Father Ben Zweber. Um yeah, we were there for, I wanna say a year and a half or a little more longer.

Ray Trom ([00:04:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eQj_WvF4m7_lsrHXLC7gzDruTMdLoCUbH8_10XJA0dInAktqaHKek2Szc72SZaLBPS43RvAlHCMxBzaviB0wNf7JrXU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=241.11)):

And we were very fortunate to get adopted. This was just before the Korean government was hesitating about sending more kids over here in 1988. We was right after the Olympics. So, yeah, so I was we were adopted by farmers, my parents who live in middle of nowhere, Minnesota, <laugh> literally, there's still no traffic lights in my town town is called Blooming Prairie. So yeah, it was it, it was pretty hard adapting to new surrounding from going from, you know, in orphanage and Incheon to, you know really middle of nowhere, you know, in farm to so yeah, that was, that was, you know, I reflect on that transition, how, you know, how difficult it was now at the time it was something we had to do, you know, you know, we, we were throw, you know, I was thrown into sixth grade soon as we came here.

Ray Trom ([00:05:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ve6nbBxoYWllcArsXyRFV2u2xSDLlTDo779la_27-cXTZiuyUppJQln4727S4dhwJvxdHtctkcdVlrN1s9Yl_ZqZrBQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=304.839)):

You know, without knowing much English and there was no, you know, Hey, it was really difficult, you know, translating words to do homework and, and trying to understand and, and trying to be, you know, adapting you surrounding. And, you know you know, as I'm interning my adolescent years, obviously 12 years old, you know, becoming a teenager, he, he was I had that going for me as well. <Laugh> and my brother you know, it was it was difficult for me cuz it was such a young age for him to experience all that. So, you know, I'm, he's coming to the terms. What he's not a happy guy. <Laugh>, you know, he hasn't been surpassed and that will hurt me that he, he bothers him. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:06:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=20bOv0WaCvy0eSdWsRB6GGevUtPhFbJaVir_LFpRjhgumxE6br-vtxHd5a4YTEdM9YoA3ieLnGVxV6y42LZjOsaHSVM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=364.55)):

Yeah. I can understand. So Ray, do you remember your parents before they passed?

Ray Trom ([00:06:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=pcRnee-_7GkwzC0DHrgLDZC-yedNzE7qDr6R5oTJnKIWsAuHL4AEZMKBP8tJ4f3qasoufJWyodZSWz78XWIq_h0WzLk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=371.2)):

Yeah, I do.

Adapted Podcast ([00:06:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=b7ivmgAgevLOQ52MqtZpbUh-2edt8J6MUuzEh_hn26B0ZYFGR32FHLDwhxUwzmwfYhE-frFLsLrfmwQYDMT5W5YniTg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=372.92)):

What are some memories you have of them? <Affirmative>

Ray Trom ([00:06:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RtUWj8e99UP0Dp-mPorASzSoOuUpusuVX05NohCGtyZ98xqWT0Uu2vgmnjAakSTk9ZG62tO0phnm7_3izY0dYl_VXA4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=376.66)):

Not too much because I believe, I think they were from my recollection is that they were, they were working in Jesu island often and we, I think we were with our grandparents most of the time. So I have very, you know, little memory of our parents. I, I do remember I was there when my dad passed away and soon after, you know, I was, as I mentioned before, you know we were told our mother passed away and I went, you know, at the, as a seven year old, I guess didn't know how to digest that. It really didn't mean what that mean, man. As weal went on we just accepted it that's the way their life was, you know, I'm not, you know, my brother was seven years old when we were dropped off at orphanage. And so yeah, I mean, that's really kind of the, the point from knowing our parents to where we were, that's one new recollection we have living with our, you know, our, our family members I had it was very abusive physically and mentally environment.

Ray Trom ([00:07:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Q9q_A6we-bwOpwUz-1_gPpjt2YNqD2P-0cktowdaN3L4SHGgfBqy8VT0aSua03DNSEPhcXZtMAPR2WuhWdNnFk1-p3E&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=454.961)):

Just the way I think at the time, how Koreans perceived orphan they were, you know, is more of a baggage, you know, and then anything else you know, they had their own family and their own lives and being part of that, it just didn't work. You know, I've had many there are a lot of things that done to me that I would never wish anything, you know, I, I just, I can't fathom that at that age, going through those kind of things. And as I was watching my daughter grow up at a different stage in her age and I recollect, you know, where I was in my life and, you know, yeah. It just, it's hard to, sometimes you gotta just put a blanket over and just say, you know, it's, it's not it's not worth thinking about it.

Ray Trom ([00:08:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BqK12rlpTEtV1IjjS_YQp39nPyPU3VeHF4SpGbifVNG7cy5L12thXcbkZoXW6LB-YKCU_DvfDIPO9N_6G_719hMR3xg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=504.35)):

And yeah. And my brother you know, is such a young age seeing all these things and I'm not sure was in his mind at the time, but you know, he has a lot of disappointment and how our family in Korea has handled us and, and he witnessed a lot of things, you know, in orphanage that that was, you know, orphanage was wasn't, you know, it's, you know, you throw a bunch of kits together and, you know, there are always gonna be issues. And there were always, there were fights or getting beaten up or different things that, that, you know, my brother saw as we were growing up. And those things, you know, left a lot of, you know, space in his mind, I believe. And

Adapted Podcast ([00:09:15](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=N7f5-8DHrmdTABCXKdO8muXdogcE7vfUFGQ5WL44ULcbDkVBo3c1DcYWN_K719N2VDXQoEV5xQYTXbGhU7aTcvL6epU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=555.94)):

Were you and your brother abused in the orphanage?

Ray Trom ([00:09:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=XXjG6UCK8FCYrUH7rNWcGzUR00rh_AtsZ_ws208EuKoair59zXw9WWQiNfZ5PZ9TtuUPa3NlwffL8iq5GCJtTUHKeUY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=560.09)):

No. My brother was young and he ran with the younger crowd. I probably, as 11 years old, I hung out with older boys. Yeah, we had a lot of, you know, did the older boy things and I was a younger, young guest of, you know, of that group. And yeah, there are things that, that I shouldn't have experienced at the time, a lot of physical abuse, mental abuse. But you know, those were part of surviving path at the time for us,

Adapted Podcast ([00:09:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=4sbU4ztK28SEOukMB59MFgaYoo5Pz4Kq6BQ4xzlDzfBpNdH2ho-w3m_EGYRr0b2hvxtyA5VWDa73Ch8AOhjjK3RHWcE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=592.03)):

You know? Okay. So you were abused, pH, physically abused

Ray Trom ([00:09:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=2x3opLD4ZmY9UBLHCb5Jfidqc4QTroRXnM0l2Bra275fqxNCq-I-elZn7H6gtlXcKhy6CKlkKB02xf8tr8AGMT6Vm-U&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=596.51)):

By others. Yeah. By other kids. Okay. The people who ran orphanage were wonderful people, they were you know I did connect with them when they both passed away, but I did connect with them when I went back to Korea I wanna say about 10 years ago. And but yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:10:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=75x5pl9x9FkZVyqqRZAp-Wpk_G90UbASegNsyoCyibIx-XMYs-7IDHKbKgTAEnAUv4ys-VTfPMpcIILda9nU0rT_woU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=618.7)):

And did you always know at that time that the idea was you were going to be sent overseas?

Ray Trom ([00:10:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7bQSSyZSfK3zNuMcsfR02vz2kYmDdERmD1B4YTCGzaCIf88XkV3jt1L_ZATnhWRKQomAAq2Oiekr6-oVoa-hLoM3FV0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=626.62)):

I'm not sure what I was thinking at the time, you know, I really don't. It was just you know, I, I, I feel like I never had that structure from when I was young having, you know, from kid having parents and, and, you know, sh showing the path and you know how to grow up. I really didn't know. You know, so

Adapted Podcast ([00:10:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ZLqIj62nR_zoI930SRLfbF-fHOLg_Axst1qQl0UR2Gvu8pavHQY_3DOBtn69XBD_VqbrqGcv670Z5LeudpgyG1ldZuA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=646.63)):

I, I just, the reason I, I'm just wondering, like, if you can remember, must have been a really scary time, all the changes. And like you said, you really didn't have a choice. You were just, you didn't, you, you went where you were told.

Ray Trom ([00:11:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ci4t_bEHfsv2lG3eUPA0S32FcFYO1IrM1EMB77pUGkLrn07lMxHJ5mom9yeoFwmBUarxNscU-1xE4LextDsz0O7dacE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=660.75)):

Right. I think we definitely were excited to come to America. No, you know, there's no doubt there was, you know, there was objective of being at the orphanage is, you know, you want to get adopt, get adopted. And I remember getting that call from, from the people, you know, from people who ran the orphanage saying, Hey, you know, there are people who wants to adopt both of you. And it was that feeling of wow. You know, I can still remember that. And then my parents came out and actually got us, which was, it's not always the case. Because of because the government was trying to, you know, limit other, you know, adoption, they came out and got us. And yeah, so we, we were very excited having parents obviously, but to, you know, come to America and, you know, for me, you know, I never had toys growing up, you know?

Ray Trom ([00:11:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=f2ouNKu5LSupnQfI-dVkvYRVbs04lKeTIJUkmnBF50V-fBnYycnr4b0ja90ZU62QCqfUoc12Qgbux8jHuGuTMm5WY3Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=717.26)):

So in my mind I was, I had all these idea about all these toys. I wanted, you know, radio, remote control cars and, and, and things like that. Those things are what, you know, very excited, you know, for me you know, and when we came here, my parents had all these big mouth presences that, that we never ever experienced. We walked into that and I remember it was such a joy, joyful moment for us, my brother and I to have all these great stuff they had, you know, our rooms, all newly ma made and, and decorated. And it was, it was great, you know, that the initial getting here and, and having that was greatest feeling ever that the one, yes.

Adapted Podcast ([00:12:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=gjMEQK2W3tPbKeOCAZ0ExlTjDEUyqHMcv-w7ssV5FOF0TZ0ukEHmvIqVVeZHp_jFp5vMI8L3lpIPQxV95h9yFyqZUxQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=763.8)):

Can you describe what it was like to, to meet your parents for the first time in Korea?

Ray Trom ([00:12:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=rwjyDoVZ5xl2Hqfc1lrvdRk4gasAvGOdlYvJzNTPYQ-Fd8oVyQ-lyP6dJvU4MyrGFxGp_XYFKlT5CRUndRxn9ghJTqw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=771.16)):

Yeah, I do. I, you know, I can even remember we went to the airport and met them and on the way back my brother, I remembered more my mom at the time to sit next to him. I remember that <laugh>, and, you know, obviously the language barrier and we weren't, you know, that the Korean shyness included that in there, we weren't, I don't remember much, you know, conversing much to be honest. And it's just no way to, you know, not understanding each other didn't help, but just knowing that these people are here for us and we're going home with them was that's the biggest, like this warm feeling. I had a remember coming back from the airport that, you know, just that, that this is the greatest ever, you know,

Adapted Podcast ([00:13:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=qk1dguu1U851Fo2gZQBNwzFknkwADqpxHDRBKmGD7dd2aI4e7WboOkVEamhqkyAmVUiIznQTuSLEcSxEqh_1V6HQMUU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=822.059)):

Were they the first white people you'd seen before?

Ray Trom ([00:13:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=swJnKPWwtEj7GJPSqb9-LuyjyLinvhCYHW0saj9jgdirrfnNjeM7ZCgdW6vX7J-xqo8ORqjHi8sGWahNrNT7_61YZKU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=826.8)):

No, the orphanage, you know, like I say, is ran by priest father Ben is from from Lakefield Minnesota. And and also the orphanage had, was primarily for ation orphans, you know, American Asians. So there were a lot of kids there had white background and black background and some are mixed with Filipinos. And so he was just kind of mixture of different, you know, race and races there. In fact, one one of the admiration his name is Tony. He was slightly older, older than I, I am, and I don't know why, but he always kind of was my protector. He always kind of watch after me and, you know, very ironically when I went back to Korea the people who ran the orphanage show me their catalog of all the kids that were sent over.

Ray Trom ([00:14:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=gv09dP_viwF2PxHHH07PJfvlo_7K0yvjdNFOJLN5zOQx9ABa6qBAMtNL-W2H4QBz3ctd5ZIouDL1vPFoU3DwndbSyVk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=898.3)):

And, and the time period where I was, you know, we were going through it and I took pictures of these people. I knew they were my friends and I took a picture of Tony's profile. And last year I was going through my photos, I ran into the photo, so I Googled him and ironically, he just moved to Phoenix on his LinkedIn. Oh, wow. Yeah. So I reached out to him and we were, it was definitely, you know, oh movement. But we, we connected and you know, he actually, he's moving back to Michigan, to his family. He was out here working, but you know, we share great, you know, we always did Korean food together whenever we got together, but it was a great way to catch up and re reflect on our past. And it was great to connect and he would be, you know, we'll, we'll stay in touch for the rest of our lives. It was such a, a cool situation for me, you know, I just wasn't expecting that, you know,

Adapted Podcast ([00:16:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=btBk1DqTjDUjijg2xmLiQf4NKLxfE1WI1vkpLnnJ3nytM3NxG0L78lD0Ig5tBmiv8QMW3vdXbC1LYOonh3_JdJOXHLQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=965.98)):

So, so how much time had gone by like 30 some years?

Ray Trom ([00:16:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=igL9Q3qdM-48m8AfCFOoXwgmQRM9ph2lsv1Qoh-ON5hl1YRgqvprL-Dn1tDy_hN9kdf8fSIgt9usw7AhuxBQlwlQx70&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=969.94)):

So not 88, so I, what are we at? Yeah. what it, 22. What is that? 34 years. No,

Adapted Podcast ([00:16:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=g8mksgzKk0JRHV3tEoTrFdXnlj6_vfWqRUd91BVp37FDpdN1VAbXmCpmya-1SYBRzABRd33MLwYAFkxGvWkQimqO_ak&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=978.75)):

Yeah. Over 30, 34. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Did he look the same?

Ray Trom ([00:16:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yDfFDjpdPAJckIY-nfyYg4JiEGBBsM5U2-iAS0xvGIfRVLMt0gQ4z-u1Jz8D6SZlpraq-sNvZMlpP9xdC38OLbvR9aU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=985.15)):

Somewhat, like I said, he had the, he has a, he is black and Korean, so he has a distinctive feature that, that Korean, you can see the Koreanness in him, but he's, he's look black. So yeah, I mean, that part, you know, <laugh>, you know, I was able to pick it up, but it was just to, you know, just to connect and talk, you know, kind of connecting his experience versus mine and, and, and just kind of, and we also, you know, connected with a few other people that were there at the time. He's more, he's been more in tune with them in, in touch with them, but yeah, it was great to reconnect and, and it just, it helped me to also kind of process things in my head about my past, you know, having those situations. So, yeah, it was very, very fortunate. I wasn't, you know, I really wasn't expecting something like that to app ever happen.

Adapted Podcast ([00:17:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7CVdnQdHq1j4FU0rdLNmCewcOGknx8UPt849RnskmwkpWuUXFWePY18N18DQoXhNzJjUz7xvUQbmY4xl0PWkSbKdYcI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1039.23)):

I'm curious, what's an example of how he helped you process some things.

Ray Trom ([00:17:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=W7I7ucma-UzJIF3PNbQgE_clGGdCY5r2lh7Y10_9xYdS0TB2QrIPsUe4ZFF1D0Wt1y8vJqYk2d9MGka4bzI_KthkRgo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1044.64)):

I do like I said, there were a lot of older kids at orphanage, you know, a lot of bowling going on. And I, I do particularly remember this older Korean kid. He was kind, he was bullying everybody around, you know, <laugh>, he, he thought he was, he was the oldest. So he had, you know, he got you know, at the dinner table, he got to eat first. He got to eat most. And, and, and, you know, you, you kind of had to do what he, you know, tell you to do. And Tony was always kind of, they were, I guess, kind each other's face. So he, I remember him kind of, you know, protecting me from him and the other kids, but they're, you know, that's just a, you know, a short period there, remember kids came in, came and went constantly. So they're different people that, that, it's like a, yeah, it's not just the one household that you were there. It was just a, it's just constantly people going in and out in and out. And, and, but for, for me, my memory of him is very distinctive and I definitely remember him and, and yeah, I think it was a fate definitely that we rec, you know, connect at this point. So very fortunate, very grateful. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:18:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RgAxzBBl-yQiZ47z1wnYG0qtPbCri1yLCf2SzPibuJbDekhHMvCRr-kH8r2Flj2z_nK6h6KlRG82oX7HQJgT5btjO9c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1122.93)):

Yeah. I mean, I, I can imagine, like, it must have been so surreal to, you know, have this friendship with this person in Korean and then meet 34 years later and then speaking in English, you know?

Ray Trom ([00:18:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=zKUgk2ZP0c7sa6E4So9-ICAYlddbHdLUqPLHLdgZIuZMEPSMxr2NR9OOimNHr53Mwg0IdxmmgdWNcFIrNSVCQhGWK1c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1138.23)):

Yeah. You know, it's funny, like we go to Korean restaurant together, a Tony still speaks Korean, like perfect Korean. I don't, I, I, you know, like when we, my brother and I were talking Korean, when we came here and we were told to stop talking because we had to learn English, which I get it, and we did. And at that point on, we didn't use Korean and gradually we lost, lost it. However, Tony is very fluent in Korean. So we, so we, it's funny, we were at the Korean restaurant while ago. And of course they always talk Korean to me cuz as if I can speak Korean and I, you know, I always tell him that I don't speak Korean in Korean, which confuses the heck out of everybody. <Laugh>, you know, but here Tony is talking away and remember he looks black. Right. <laugh> so, so yeah, he just doesn't doesn't help me to get the credibility when we go out. <Laugh> not a good Korean <laugh>

Adapted Podcast ([00:19:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=_cjuujfowxT5W03f4g7kUZJXRRr8EWaRsyVpkr2kGj_ejJUorp_ZotqAGfuSP9vvfaXSGfYt7V-CNxvEFpz29WtucTM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1199.24)):

I could imagine the, the Amos being really intriguing.

Ray Trom ([00:20:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Va5IFmat9huTuHIsEwGUNcJiPfrZBuDZcnxMfdUh76u75p3Uuqa_QlW3bnV8y69d0t4C4oNtqDsr9Q5WKY7gmFlt610&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1202.33)):

Right. I know they all look, they they're always confused like how Z and you don't what's going on. So, but yeah, it's I wish I, you know, I, I did retain, you know, the, you know how to speak and I can read and write obviously, you know, you know, going school in Korea for first, so many years of my life. But yeah, conversations, I can't carry on. I mean, I can understand what people are saying, but I can't, you know, talk back to people. So it is

Adapted Podcast ([00:20:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=bujmYSwXjf7SPjYC_mGsEtoP2eoc7_4L2pwikXQ9s3dYi70gG3v2fHA1Uf8vFUPnCP4bvwOpPxuZCOJxmlzOkBEP4iQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1234.66)):

Have you ever expressed to your parents that you wished you could have retained your Korean?

Ray Trom ([00:20:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QE_nFT1tXjsljhYZThNDIsvj27C8gbh5XcmlKlon5359OWRJI5KPDKzNT6QSD8oJ0Iymjsbm8y6MN6tStJwyDcp2FZ0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1241.04)):

Not really. You know, my parents, it's another thing for me. I love my parents but my parents are ultra ultra religious. So I feel like, you know, we were brought here and really the religion was just pounded in to us, just left and right. You know, day and night, you know, we prime rosary every day, going to church every day, you know, for Catholics, you go either church on Saturday or Sunday, or we went both days and we were made to, I wouldn't say we are made to, but they were because their point of view and religion, the society's always out to get you, you know, kind of perspective. So, you know, I wanna say when we came over here with religion and, and the new surrounding and what they're telling us about, you know, how world's gonna go, they're gonna be world war three and, and, and, and all these things gonna happen.

Ray Trom ([00:21:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RUxtaW2llT8DsEtWDZlM_mmPs8fsQMgVZFGrQ9NK_1XsgnJPYDIGMXA79eOsWlPjH5etl-YeUn0JSJ8CZ2_eARt8onc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1307.07)):

And just, it was really hard to process, you know, for us, especially for me at that age. This religion's really hard for me at this point. I feel like, you know, faith is something that needs to happen organically. I have a big barrier over it because of what I, you know, feel like it was went through. But I, you know, as I listen to your podcast with other, you know, other adoptees and, and I hear their story and I, you know, that's where it kind of got, you know, made me think about my past, like, okay, what that, that experience and the, you know, the path you caught, you know, went through, what is, you know, how did did that make me who I am and am I different if I would, you know, had different experience? I don't know could, but yeah. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:22:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Iv6WzFOK19jkhNF0CiK3FjeSn-iV8OiXPEGP2fVUxu_cnHqUirivO9ayJ0c3G8lHE4OSheBVaRf5R7GebvnJ7Wk5Hs0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1369.52)):

You do act, act as kind of your brother's protector then,

Ray Trom ([00:22:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=tHnCsKD70s8WULDP_xgHXY9_F54tGfT8SmMMwX3cdDaZXiV5Jyh3uXeSLknzAu30l_5uisu3ueORqG2kIN94scBBfkY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1373.56)):

You know, I, that's something that I'm really guilty about that I wasn't, I wasn't really nice to my brother. I really wasn't. Because it's, I think it's part of a Korean culture, you know, where first of all, my brother and I, I just have very little recollection of my brother until we got to the orphanage. We were, I really don't remember him much until we were dropped off together at the orphanage and we're holding onto each other. I remember, you know first day, I mean, that was really first recollection of my brothers. Like we were dropped off and, and this orphanage and all the kids went to lunch and he and I were just sitting there and they really hit me like, look, Kyle, wow, it's just you. And I,

Adapted Podcast ([00:23:55](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=rX18CBWnSu96hH7aVXNEfnk6Mu7LLb5XtobeEkg-nZflJRFtAcBN5aYUILc0PqO6p5LhOjeYfhZ_utw1IXq6XiRzwqI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1435.58)):

You know, maybe it's almost like maybe you resented him in a way because You didn't really see him much cuz you were separated and then he represented losing your family. You know, we know when you

Ray Trom ([00:24:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=25LRfYM8EzFJErjTuoESdU53fF4nWiRElXn6sZFLdTYPbWlZid-gKEeFcuvxFBHIcSotUaSzTZvxqXFYTTnrN-aoXAY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1449.3)):

Very well, very well could be. Yeah, very well could be. And obviously I'm, you know, I I'm, there are new new friends and new kids at the orphanage and you're trying to fit into your, you know, your age group. And you know, I do remember in orphanage, we were constantly hungry cuz we had to, you know, it's not that they didn't feed us. It's just that, you know, how Koreans eat, you know, they put food on the table and everybody go at it and sometimes we, you know, we, you didn't always get your portion. Right. You know, cuz older kids. So there are a lot of times we, you know, we're hungry. So I used to walk around and collect bottles, these sweater bottles and to, you know, sell it for money so I can go buy snack for brother and I that's, those are kind of memories that I feel like that's when I felt like, oh I gotta, I gotta take care of my brother. I gotta take care of my brother. And when we even came here trying to, you know, find my own identity and I feel like I wasn't always there for him. In, in fact, you know, at certain point I, I might have act like he was my burden, you know, which

Speaker 3 ([00:25:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=8JquZvoR0WIcA3HJp07E2rIoIKoaH0GILl2PxYoGnPqXMV2AR0Q1W1cdvFYVXyksbrq_4dl3OfXusCUwkE8Oe3Qef7c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1524.23)):

Yeah.

Ray Trom ([00:25:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=dI6rHwszqJzlBQkd_vJTuBsj_iHehUYlzjQpEJ7vsmeRuRmj-uezkNX9UsaPVyC1O4Xykxmie0iDzwxpF1ERwkbZFHQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1526.66)):

But he and I are good now, you know, he and I have, we're very close and you know, we understand each other's difference. It's, you know, we, we are very fortunate. We do feel right and, and yeah, but we are in, you know, he and I are very close now and we talk, you know, often we have this pack to go to we grew up as Vikings fan, you know, being in Minnesota. So we always, we made this lifetime pack that we're gonna go into, we're gonna go to Vikings game at least once a year. So we've been good except that during the pandemic we missed one. But so yeah. <Laugh>

Adapted Podcast ([00:26:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=x3T8hfH7xAoEFHWQWprT1Ww2WLYi--2f4j6eCgqqcUCxll-Uvnh4sX2oompbA8go25h-tpJ1HmGSdhbP49nhsq-cxas&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1567.17)):

What do you think with with the, the new coach? What do you think?

Ray Trom ([00:26:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=WRGwqROKXx6BgWvIWPXIq4_bUlCa0JJUqT0VAkOmkO6Z8eGQ4g-I3HQXBoCtdqh9pP1hjrNqgYaEvPq_MC_rJ0ySu_I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1572.619)):

I like it, I mean, it can't be any worse than what it was. It looked like the, the, the, the culture wasn't good. It looked like it was getting, you know, his locker room was pretty rotted, so change is good. I think young people is always good and but it's the Vikings, you know, I, I know, you know, we just know

Adapted Podcast ([00:26:31](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NRDan2ZQA68Iv8KU3cz2Mo8IeoriZMb2pIcbIGrR81bTOUtXUGgOCPuT0491-LK_kx3vES8bcNZ_ib0e0DV7vexyeHY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1591.67)):

What is, what is, what is the curse of the Vikings Ray? I mean, it's like to be a fan is like self abuse because

Ray Trom ([00:26:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ZpsEG4emPtIjTtufKG0gLeLFVvCh-yh_OyYx-NFt44dc5Uup61LMSbi7RBsGg7rUFegkhU8J1rsB-vMQLpx8VAmYmQc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1602.65)):

It's, I know, I know it's like, you know, you get so excited before the beginning of the season when usually you can tell what kind of season you're gonna have on the first game. And you're like, ah, yeah, well, that's what it is onto next year. That's my brother. I had to say, well, we got next year, <laugh>

Adapted Podcast ([00:27:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-RmTxbpVArOAgrBdjhFtOj-x3C-nRtCTV2j28VFVtHoieLmO0wfjAwj44BpSDI4eAgR4iUPIqS-206eAzsCcbguQu_o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1620.64)):

It ain have a, I mean, it's just they just constantly disappoint don't they like? Yeah.

Ray Trom ([00:27:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=76vB1TFjLeg4xosxF_2R0L56pPfoadZsj2uVP6hA4SoWnU_4JBOSQ4N_xMQdaxZc2gbWkL8zitmFQqLLpSZa3gy2n2Y&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1627.21)):

But, you know, I think like sports plays a big part for my brother and I too, because when we first came here, there was really first thing that we, it was familiar, something that we're familiar with, you know, watching the twins and, and football. We, we didn't understand, obviously. So we, we really try to understand, stand it really hard. And naturally Vikings became our team. And but you know, that really, I feel like sports helped us to connect to our new surrounding as well, because it is something that's familiar, you know, baseballs have played in Korea. So, you know, they play the same way here. So you can, you know, there was definitely connection of okay. And they won the world series in 91, you know, not too far after we came and we haven't won anything since then. So, you know, <laugh>

Adapted Podcast ([00:28:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=oQhNAbr0ir8DjvMYD8CnOGDVvEQY4nGpIhHEaVEjFHXcTXT9Rg59m3dIseBBthZhBiLgEzx-Rqb4jtMNUL0MSEI-4tI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1687.78)):

And your, your last name is Norwegian, right? Right.

Ray Trom ([00:28:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9R0nwKXc7dKRaGnkofIeNpgXAyyQAqicaiXEPiQBMJ2N_ddO7YJHa3mPZtA0KCqrANOPP8VavYtYLIfauxhbokvKii4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1690.52)):

Yeah. Tram is a Norwegian last name. My mom, mother is Sicilian and my dad's a nor Norwegian. It's funny, cuz like, you know, I meet people I'm feel filling out forms or, or anything, you know, people automatically assume my last name's tram when I say tra they spell it tra or tra or you know, but no it's trauma, it's a hoof name. <Laugh> <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast ([00:28:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Q4wg9jVBOUcTS_jUCE-HyLBwC6CNJ1e6vcWbip5GFKZ4Nogi_vnl3VhZFGhJd3nj7gWIcdwjySwXx0V4JbLXoEeXBwU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1719.66)):

And did, so what kind did you grow up with any of their kind of cultural things growing up? Like

Ray Trom ([00:28:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3hpkJqP3HPX4KfXlIAEh7QFL_TAeaT7HdGZS3et1hwrvpsuet7ygME0ivEVtj04nPNX1cpLsiU3t8O_kt8dpMTiaB-g&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1727.8)):

If anything else would be my grandparents? My dads parents oh, they were such a wonderful people. My parents, you know, one thing I gotta say is that whole family member that when we came here, took us in. So I mean, it was such a, I mean, I can't even express to you how grateful I am. You know, everybody took us in from our grandparents to our uncles, to aunt in, in here. And, you know, because we had different experience in Korea, you know, and coming, you know, going to family reunion or Christmas, you know, family get together. Those are very deep, deep rooted memories that, that help us to connect. And you know, our, if you look at our trauma's family portrait, there's my brother and I on the corner looks different. But maybe we used to think, well, wow, we look different.

Ray Trom ([00:29:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=f3toIZdRBntUjIUnbYRKLwseqaMoQwZtZAzSrF_WQlOTO5u196uoQVKTZTOQ09xKFKtwo2lgSAMGN_eWiwZyfzy69OE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1783.3)):

But the last time I saw the picture, we belonged there kind of dear and, and, and they're very loving. They're very have been always been there for us. We just, you know, with the distance and, and moving away just, I, I gotta do a better job of connecting with them, but yeah, it really, it came from our parent, our grandparents, if there were, there was, you know, having family reunion and get together, having, you know, <inaudible> and, and things like that. But my, like I said, our, our parents, you know, primary objective in their life was religion. So you know, farming and religion was really a really that's, that's all we got out of it, you know? So yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:30:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ctBvC0dqZONlgvtPBuYPliqmZ4MzplpBg10t8TUIhAaiSIL5cZD_2kUvIrfU3rCMF-aKx8UJ8UTCNkpc2kGWhKI_lXI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1829.6)):

And you didn't wanna stay on the farm. You didn't wanna,

Ray Trom ([00:30:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Jj5tP2BSb_3_7lxIl9ntU1S2T9A6nf1TPfTVZPXP4QTEEYe_vDgi_5QJIYjPkF9MYA_dkSZ8ubcd9fTNjt6Rdu6zPsU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1834.2)):

No, I we, I got the hell outta Dodge. I live in Dodge county, by the way. <Laugh> so it was kind of no pun 10. So you really did get out of Dodge. Yeah, I did get out of Dodge. I went to school in South Dakota first year. I, I was, I needed to get out and my first year in college, wasn't good for me. It's all this new newly found freedom, new people, new fun, you know, it is there weren't too much study. Let me just tell going on. So I couldn't go back to that school. After first year I took a year off and then I went to a college in Omaha college called Creighton university to be a dentist. And at a certain point I realized that's not that's not my forte. <Laugh>, you know, I didn't feel like looking at people's mouth rest of my life.

Ray Trom ([00:31:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NXFAR5vTGFdYh1shhT0chLzHzJzkoEcQsyHRJXqjIZ0UG4OwbdXGoFCaECvqI8fBuhunksSTeoUdKIHaxAu2QBMq2E0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1892)):

And then I got a job cooking at a hotel in downtown Omaha, and I knew first day, that was for me, like the first, very first day. That was it. So I finished college with degree math cuz very appropriate <affirmative> cause they're very appropriate <laugh> and I went to culinary school in New York. It's been doing me really well for my career and my family. I did have some marriage problem because my career focusing on my career was you know, it is a part of Koreanness and me, once again, you know, you get loyalty and, and you know, your, your commitment to work. It definitely took a toll in my marriage. We're back together on trying to work things out now as our going on. But yeah, being a chef is pretty, pretty rough. Currently I like I was telling you my, you know, we're building this huge resort out here, very fortunate to be, you know, I looked reflect on, you know, where I was 11 years old being dropped off at orphanage to where I'm at.

Ray Trom ([00:32:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1lXpbpmJYSoRxGSi3HhheVS5uW2klsxzw4i0YzqtvrSAmzxg3EwEl5A1fEgJMRI1uig7-lxK0Dw24hL1GGU_3VpMb0g&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1961.29)):

There are so many people in my life that just was there for me and took care of me and, and without any asking for anything or just being, you know, whether just I'm very for, I feel very fortunate that, that, you know, I feel like I put some of those people in my life to be there for me at certain times. And you know, that includes my, you know, my wife and my daughter and my family, you know, my parents and, you know so I, I, I'm very grateful, but I am, I definitely, I am reflecting on my past. Your podcast definitely made me think in different perspective. Good and bad. I had to, I be honest, I had to stop listening to before a while because he, it was just hitting too hard, you know, for me especially I think, you know, listening to some of podcast, you know, some adoptees experience as similar as mine, you know, going to very religious family and, and in middle of nowhere type of situation, I can relate to it. And my parent and I, you know, I'm not, you know, dogging my parents, they're wonderful people. They're, they're the most wonderful people in the world, but, you know, I don't always agree with how they, you know, what they think and how they think. So yeah, I very, I'm very fortunate. Let me tell you, you know, but doesn't mean that I'm gonna, you know, I, I'm just gonna sit here and say all that was good for me, you know?

Adapted Podcast ([00:34:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=AEAN6UbLPrG3jSYaXOY4wnLmT_1YI9Jaupw1qdf_iWuKmisHdtA4aYqGBl9LLUMvTsqjd89zTibyQcmE24rYeIwej6s&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2054.28)):

Right. I, it sounds like there was a lot of love and acceptance but also maybe strict and, and a tough environment anyway, to, you know, be a Korean kid 12 and get thrown into, it was probably all blooming Prairie in the eighties. Probably all white. Right.

Ray Trom ([00:34:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=mTmeFrA-UNdwpZLwT4l2_LnNmOCzRQqLQiYzSRmxSDA_d9khYPYDRQScIfAzgl7NigHxhkVL4-CSYTzK6cpsu6hukPg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2078.16)):

We did, I did have there were three other Korean adoptees in my school, in high school, actually not grade school. So they would, they would've been one hour 16 ish. Yeah, so I did have another Korean adoptee girl that was in my grade. And then there was one, one below me and one above me, but you know, none of us really ever spoke, you know, I think one of the other, did

Adapted Podcast ([00:35:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BuoY_PnEfNGZnnyVE7XT8MQcqky9G26a2zvjmjmazYcFR1s9zR-4gL6V_XQ1EiDD7UpwteAGfFQ_ZgTksfvOWpuMWAo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2108.56)):

You guys, did you guys kind of repel each other?

Ray Trom ([00:35:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1RWMqO2EHUYuQBsgCNj5CztrIExAJ3gHCl9fs5PBDLCqQ1CVC_UKlHh8QXNmOrfPlhn6VnGR39Hab2h1qhWivu-UlK0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2111.44)):

Yeah. You know, it's like you get, I think, I think people understand if you're Korean, what you I'm saying is that we purposely, I think didn't want to acknowledge each other because our objective I'm sure our objective was that we want to be like everybody else, you know, we want to, you know, only time you notice you're not is when you're brushing your teeth and looking in your mirror, but you know, on your everyday life going to school, driving around, going to work, you just didn't think differently.

Adapted Podcast ([00:35:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=sKnzvqApD3fEA13s_xme6XywDbcLXMebHduP8rFD439fqMoDhPSROL0CGmq3QjscGqVw6WXxUp0iqF7I1fghrrbCz6I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2139.03)):

Yeah. Did you almost growing up kind of feel like how you felt on the inside didn't match your outside? Yeah.

Ray Trom ([00:35:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Q0jOt9r_xW6LXvfbVd8ZisXih5NbbRDBuOiDSuGNMdang9HPcXCNvgptVkBdcr1_561OHCRn4TynIEOoWp_qgtp6_yI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2147.14)):

It was hard. It was really, really hard. I, like I said, you know, I, I think, you know, my language is a problem for English is a problem for me. I'm 46 years old and it's the biggest problem for me because, you know, being at 12 coming over here, I didn't have that. You know, I didn't have that foundation from, you know, it wasn't innate, if you get what I'm saying.

Adapted Podcast ([00:36:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=tqi54ljMvjqHXNMaljl7hSfVRdmdn5GbYEqRez9IL0QNiYObPP14C9b_Vkf2EJwi4F4a73RXojrnzuPx3BULbHVPCsw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2172.95)):

Yeah. It's not it wasn't your native language.

Ray Trom ([00:36:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=_3e-8E9UXSJ80PfyLYqYOM0huilwtR1rZpswSDVe58un8Kyqz1WEzl5vezYo9PB_WvRq-GctOIWJhOO8Js61yrnD4-A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2174.57)):

Yeah. And we weren't you know, I think we weren't given proper, I guess I don't know how to say it, but we, we were thrown, like I was thrown to sixth grade, you know, we really, I mean, figure that out, you know? And so I didn't have a good foundation for, you know, language. And so I still struggle quite a bit with my dialogue and, and you know, my emails and how I write. And I, I live in a professional world, you know, and I think, you know, people who know me are very understanding and they know but it is definitely a, it bothers me subconsciously quite a bit that, that, that I didn't have that, you know, foundation and kind of, you know, I am where I am at. I'm grateful, don't get me wrong. And, and I think being who I am and with my strong work ethic got me where I'm at, but there's definitely things that I feel like it prevents me from sometimes going further, you know, further up the ladder or, you know, my career or

Adapted Podcast ([00:37:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wgPP1sAaKdAjCbOK3QOHCyEW7yLtLiVtSMYFn5FjRUErKhlmQgpQb4U71GSmLVmmRinZWxqw-rsdqjs2XAQLqwvQmZo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2247.37)):

So being Korean in some ways there's still a feeling like something you have to overcome. Yeah.

Ray Trom ([00:37:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=D1kPBd7PiaknIsRBWL94Wjc5EEmbz1KZn15i7i_TaAU0-LiXj_y__AzWy_NE22efThKLYM5UH70PSTLqqPTI1lAWWvQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2257.06)):

Yeah. And I, you know, I really realize really, really I'm different is really during the COVID here, you know, I I was furlough for two months and I had time to clean my high house out. And I went, you know, I collected all my junk and went to this landfill. And after I noticed there were these two older there were these tall people, obviously they were a couple and they were struggling to unload their trailer, their, these leaves and branches that you can tell. And they were looked, they were looked like they were in their seventies. Right. And so, and it was getting hot being in Arizona. And I, I, after I unloaded mine, I parked my truck and I went to offer to help them, you know, really you would've been to be honest, you know, five minute job for me and, and to help them out. But I, I, I definitely, I got a really bad reaction from them. This was during, you know, beginning, you know, kind of beginning of the COVID and, you know, this is when the world, you know, China flew and, you know, was a come flu and, and, and China virus, those words were going around and they, when I offered, they first refused, then they start backing away from me and

Ray Trom ([00:39:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=T1YQXRVnXycJxLRPzd623z-SznFvxQ28z1zr1FSuhn63fZ_9UEtKoc6K4cq_O1wnOZUATwnCLADaNYv8xEpEpFBRtaw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2351.06)):

Okay. And I got in the truck and driving away and that's when it hit me. Okay. I get it really, I get it. I get it. Maybe before I had blinders on and, you know, try not to acknowledge it. It doesn't, you know, it doesn't change how I view society, but I think it changes how I view myself little, you know, in a different way. It almost kind of took me back to when I was 11, 12, 12 years old being here that, that I know I'm different. Everybody's looking at me, you know, like I know when I came here going to, you know, Harbor store, you know, these kids will be looking at me like they, you know, like, oh, who is that? What is that? You know at the time he didn't really mean anything. He was just, you know, but it definitely weighs heavy, heavy in my mind lately, especially with my daughter you know, a future she's gonna have, you know, as she gets she's growing up. Yeah, but that's more of a kind of social, social consciousness that, you know, comes up that I kind of connect with my past as well.

Adapted Podcast ([00:40:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=x3EGc1m_yqPUK8n2kll931BzIKl1edocdH4kcBDZ3dawqoRUZyae0mKmigBnkVk-4th16YCoE9faGFcOfN04AxDKjC8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2440.2)):

How did you fall in love with food?

Ray Trom ([00:40:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3ZTjo6C7lmdxY6CS_5dQVf06xZqdiF8eGCkTlDT3sp60u4lPanH9ZhxyEoD9nPf1SS7D4vdCEh58R3EGPxaeh0lf-M8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2443.25)):

Good question. So when I first came here completely different food, obviously very excited, you know, hot dogs and hamburgers and all these food that, that I, we just dreamed about, you know, when you're in Korea, like that's the food now. Right. So after that excitement was over, obviously you, you starting to miss the food that you ate with, you know, all your life.

Adapted Podcast ([00:41:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=OUseuxHIGqmxGvw6yOMLQVRDjfG5X37U3jvF1YP2TO6tYQVR7ujKFpvy0lX2HH1WX4jC8ssz8-6DhRQT3hks6TzPfVs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2469.26)):

Can I, can I ask you for a second, when you first got here, did you eat quickly because you were used to?

Ray Trom ([00:41:15](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Tuup17apOVRmDd1phVp5_Cv2sILGVKe9GqzMscz5gmBpTDqWl1Gql3F8MayWVLSiDa0vsP6GOh9-n1uhr8FX5rbsxvA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2475.56)):

I, I, I still eat very fast and I, I gotta tell you, my brother and I, we sweat profusely when we eat. And we feel that that was part of experience we had in orphanage where we, it was, it's a moment of, we gotta go, we gotta go. It was like, we either you eat or you don't. And that's definitely I, I subconsciously it comes up definitely.

Adapted Podcast ([00:41:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=r7UxtmQDonuOTEXrtcezItNzqZqSZCZM-ElvXkBv3xI729XUnmB6QTHEYa-lZrLyhajSYD-juuDiyKUA4psxDtA9FEs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2504.91)):

Yeah. Like you get kind of probably anxious and like yeah. A context.

Ray Trom ([00:41:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RO5AM0L2qAHt16fXXHZYmyK3Z92Fn04De3eHdGUcd-HA5lx1EuoWBzEHgnTamm3ExeHWx7Wthacbz3Q4A5dLe9Il0Xk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2509.719)):

Yeah, exactly. Like you're gonna, it's like going to a battle for a, for us. And, you know, my friends make fun of me that I sweat even eating ice cream sometimes, but it is my mind. I notice, like my mind gets really, like, I get in this competition mode, I gotta eat. If otherwise I'm not gonna get my food. You know? And I definitely think that that started, you know, obviously I think it started when I was an orphanage, but when I, yeah, my mom bless her soul, but not a good cook, not a good cook. I realized that when she, she used microwave chicken lakes for us for dinner. So figure that out. <Laugh> so naturally, you know, I've auto surviving, this thing I will cook.

Adapted Podcast ([00:42:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=dJn_EUl0sGSaYr0nf33XkXxae7jzf14hCr_5K2Uzkc8I782tnbh6IVt8LNDUzqmNzcsp-hnXP_t2os1Vsdj5Zss9V6I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2557.489)):

Did, did you ask her for kimchi eventually?

Ray Trom ([00:42:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=bQugF94VyEyUBsDOiqsYO9cqPhFfpO4Tg329dfIV9_s-BgFYjdJl1tOZKPy2cvxiDkgHX0m0hHhyyYT64mWhGALZ25E&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2560.59)):

You know, my mom tried to make kimchi for us. She really did. But you know, it, it wasn't done traditionally. But she, I remember she took us to this grocery store, curing grocery store in Minneapolis. And, and I, em, I remember walking in, it was like Disneyland for me. And I remember grabbing all these food. It was like, and I didn't even know how to cook. Remember, you know, I didn't have to cook in Korea. Right. It

Adapted Podcast ([00:43:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=6JCCgFcUzqf4Gcz5S3lBT2aOsBA71qypLLq6jCKVYY1Jkxohk1sIxymUN4xQ10DC0A9MPvbwFHgGh3AbKtdkHDqMYrU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2589.07)):

Smell. Did it smell familiar?

Ray Trom ([00:43:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=44uQUcQX8qQMfxS4hTGctWShC-4fmS1RtmZh7Ma1hBr6qBafOIML6nzW99TcynmGmtdm_E7_WkM6kHFanmTfmyu9q-8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2592.02)):

Yeah. You know, that fish, dry fish and you know, that, that smell, I mean, I'm grabbing off the shelf, just grabbing and not knowing what, how to make those, you know, how to even cook. My mom, when, when they came out to get us in Korea, they, she grabbed this one cookbook. It's a Korean food, food cookbook. I still have it. And it it's my book, very simple cookbook, but it, it started for me, it it's laid a foundation. You know, I, I was able to read a cookbook and kind of relate to what I remember the flavor and taste and, and I experiment and it never turned out well for me, but my brother to my brother was, I mean, he would eat it up like crazy, you know? And, and so eventually not only Korean food, just food in general where, you know, my family was gravitate when I made more dinner than my mom.

Ray Trom ([00:44:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=pSoOEIwAkjm2En3jgfIm9QTUtX695HUI-3TEQjYMFlrIn9xf9fOWJN3TTR4UlIBmrlYtPx10aBN22b1P9W5OR2scBTQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2653.219)):

So, but my mom is just, she makes it up with her heart <laugh>, you know, but you know, I, I think that's when my cooking skill just on, you know, just kind of came to me. And when I was contemplating about my career, I was thinking, you know, I like cooking. Why not? You know, and, and I was very fortunate to get a job cooking at a hotel, which is very, not usual to, you know, if you don't have experience, but I was able to, I got promoted and I got raised on my very first day and I worked 14 hours and I, I was so excited. I couldn't stop, you know, and that point on it was what is, it was what was given to me as a talent came to me naturally. It, it has been doing really well.

Ray Trom ([00:45:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yHPQSC4F_Fbvx_ZC8ma4Wf3WLbWKwAMBGnqmtsPTjPDj3gAPyeZDfvv6HbublKJIix4W-MPTLvfREv03XJabPP0_K8I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2708.27)):

I really like incorporating a lot of Korean flavor and techniques and ingredients with all types of cuisine. I don't cook anymore really much. I obviously we're building this resort, so I'm not, we're not in operation, but, you know, I, you know, I haven't been out in the kitchen for the last five years. I've been more of a running the hotels and that, in that nature, but yeah, and forever in my heart, I'm, I'm a cook, you know, I'm a cook. And it's funny when I went to Korea I think in Korean society, they look at, I think it's different now, but at least back then, you know, being a chef or a cook, is it wasn't as you know, it's not as, you know, glorious, it's more of necessary somebody who's gonna cook dinner for you. So I, I kind of got that notion when I went to Korea, like, oh, they not as excited as I think, you know, I thought they would be <laugh>, you know,

Adapted Podcast ([00:46:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1XFJf7_KgpYFLb-24M2cIeJS2R6xeZT0TtECCu4_9rpeMVlhWuXFwQ4SH2IPNfZPAmNZsSjktyyZGwTLf59XsCX1rHU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2767.54)):

What do you think now with all like the celebrity chefs, like David Chang and, you know, like these, these Asian celebrity chefs?

Ray Trom ([00:46:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=6wJ9rTh96D7dBGaTUF2ZaRU2xul-acaDfLj2pI8E9hmDLRFSxnLZc8Gny1D8mpFq4mG2zUlfBkaBbr8l8ssQhjpGZwc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2776.02)):

Yeah. They're I actually work for two of them. I work for chef Mingay he used to have TV shows in food network and he's a, quite a figure in Boston area. I work for him in Boston, great experience, great, great soul. He, he's a great person. And then also I work for a chef named Nobu in New York city. I was very fortunate to go in there and, and, and opportunity to work all the stations on the hotline. My I, my wife got pregnant at the time. So we, we held on there till about, she was eight months pregnant and we moved back to Omaha where her family was. But yeah, I did work for two highly respected Asian chefs. And you kind of you laid a foundation for me as how to, how to go about your profession and, and, and, you know, paying attention to your quality.

Ray Trom ([00:47:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ZVwWNaBDMIIHn28bSrGnjlfeWk0XUseutS_iznL1kj7gia062ciCovG3bMCjAn9nxlAkbW5odVZ9FdPoQcaY_D3IWXg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2838.73)):

And yeah, it just, it taught me a lot of things. My perspective on chefs I think Asian chefs, celebrity chefs I think that's great. You know, they're not only, I think not only because it's food, but it's a good way to get society, get comfortable with more Asianness for me too, you know, they're on TV, they're on Instagram, they're on commercials. They know they, and, and I think that only helps all of us and also, you know, it brings that flavor and, and cuisine, you know, Korean or Filipino or Vietnamese that, that I think food plays a big role in how society connects, you know, if food plays part in do you know what I mean? You know, if I think food becomes a good tool to connect people and I think those, I think cuz of that perspective, I think these are great things, you know,

Adapted Podcast ([00:48:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QL5zU7j-9grRxKxFCSLJKwEyGW46vcw1Id9PKnN9r0hiw7za00x3yN7vALfNhrmeiAaviEfOjMC_dSpGka_1SktQSFQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2896.64)):

And also like the flavors, the taste, the smells is something that you didn't lose, you know, you brought with you

Ray Trom ([00:48:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kEWP_-CZ1yeyPEenjdxsn-4konvwuechSNQUzgSA6bd4ft-Oah8Nun2nV_ilC9Yp-Ke-zNUlHWPGiVUxotDQBOKQEn8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2905.489)):

Kid. Yeah. Yeah. And, and I, yeah. And it's, it's funny, I try to incorporate a lot of those into your traditional, like hotel food here. I don't know why more hotels aren't doing it. You know, I got quite the reaction. People were loving it, you know, even, even serving like I used to be being pop in my, my menu. If you knew, you knew and you got it, you know what I mean? If you knew people who knew it, like, oh my God. But people who tried it, I mean he was just kind of waited, you know? Wow. That is awesome. And he kind of, you can tell that led to another thing to led to another thing and led to another thing that come back and say, now I make my own Korean food. Thanks. <laugh> you know, so I think food is very important tool and it also, for me, it's also helped me to connect with my past, you know, every time that flavor or that smell, it takes you back to certain places in your life, you know? And, and you know, I do have many fond memories when I was very little of with food and with the grandparents and people and, and he does definitely take me back to those places at times. Definitely. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:49:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-W8OMuCmEFI3DFyit4VvU5i8PHvsHAuUHlrPnMy8a-lG4Z9gWnXoJdfRc0we2_dyB5DucEzBjfpJPVcAgaqY0gIBxKM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2985.16)):

Yeah. When you were in New York, right. And learning to cook under these Asian chefs and yourself being Asian, did you feel like you had a little imposter syndrome sometimes did people kind of look at you and just assume, you know, you had all this knowledge from, you know, your family, did you struggle sometimes because maybe you didn't know how to prepare all the Korean dishes or, you know

Ray Trom ([00:50:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nL37b2ACfchVK-S0cZqVmQGZcH-_m4nUWSAn9xfQI1Oj6wjIcI8xAQPgk7z2WDwvd3Hxf3RWP3yKjHnl9XXO183bj0w&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3017.7)):

Yeah. I mean, there is definitely it was definitely challenging environment. There were a lot of great, great chefs in that especially Nobu cooks and chefs very intimidating. You know, I know we took turn making family meal once a week and I made Garby one time and it was a hit, so I had to make Garby once a week. <Laugh> all the time. That's good. It's good. But but what he did was he really helped me to connect with other cooks and chefs and also sushi, sushi chefs were mostly Japanese. And at the time <laugh>, you know, you know, how, you know, Japanese and Koreans are. And at the time there was definitely, there was some of that stigma still going on with older, you know, sushi chefs at that, in that establishment. And there were, we had Filipinos in that building and, and, and other Asian and Japanese.

Ray Trom ([00:51:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hg3YxsxQ7bsiGENMe2qYFDGrXBAxZUvc8_cGDHl0QcvpS-FbBay41CRRQ6VOQjCb4JcuMFZENhSJpHEPK2WUhttqDGs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3085.31)):

But I, I feel like when I, I made Korean food, he kind of brought everybody together if you know what I mean? Cause he, it was different than let's say somebody made a spaghetti meatballs for a family meal. I feel like when I made Korean food, he was just kind of brought everybody together. And there was there wasn't these D different layers of, you know, you know, sushi chefs eating by themselves and cooks body them by themselves kind of the, so I think, you know, that that was great. Great way to connect. Once again, it was just another evidence for me that food is a great tool to, you know, get people connected.

Adapted Podcast ([00:52:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=HCO-OyKMt3xoCsHz16fhwdI1adxSQe3ybPCFNtzXtKogTYQqdLgb5qHBMzD9mXDjwg0uBlIzDZHlXtG9QuEQUwq0r5g&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3126.95)):

So, okay, so you never felt like your adoption was somehow it kind of kind of you are an imposter Asian.

Ray Trom ([00:52:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=0WVJwr_2c_s6FJvOpyoZ21G6mk2YAZwt3D6udSZHB3fC0lnjRYK5YCzoy11IXhg6x1YggZuANrCAuLe1IsoU1PrNEKU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3136.45)):

No, I don't not professionally. No, because you know, you're not, I mean, first of all, I think you don't really have a time to, you know, sit and ponder. But no, I, I think, you know, like I say, generally speaking, you know, you don't think about that every day as you live, you know, that I was you know, adopted but no, I, I, I think it's more of a social level that I struggle time to time, you know, personal relationship and not career, you know, work, work wise. I think when people get to know me and then they hear my story is just kind of, it's a double pad for their, you know, way to say, wow, you know, you, you know, I like, I, I didn't, I'm a good person, you know, I I'm, I'm a very respectful I'm I'm, you know, I rather take it and give and

Adapted Podcast ([00:53:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ym4W9uIC9OVXfIYg3fKOOeIXT5KclWaVNBGqyUUPobuv_Nff9cIKvjm9-bZEu9n7hq6-M7NI3LercNvN1UZYYRFtfsw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3197.469)):

But people, but people didn't expect you to say you're from Minnesota or that you grew up on a farm. Right.

Ray Trom ([00:53:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=A5LFq-SxyBJtbJ1LSKy2umQeYspmVRQ7aNAEaFOkDcMbLNt0NbmoxwhmWnTVBQj8Gl27arYGXO-o9CbGZ5OLtv2qTUg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3204.01)):

You know? No, not whatsoever. I even heard when somebody said, what country is that before ask me, you know, I'm from Minnesota <laugh> and what country is because everybody's expecting different answers. If you get what I'm saying, where are you from? And, and I'm from Minnesota. And and I'll tell 'em I grew up on a farm, you know, of course, you know, joke back in the day was, no, it was not a wild rice wild wise farm either, you know? But yeah. <Laugh> so yeah, I said that <laugh> but yeah. So,

Adapted Podcast ([00:54:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hVZPgX5sqO9e1Bjl2ZNFWlKqGmpbFGA15OxvfanhhOxErJuPPKg1caQgKglmA6wkc88O0_RfRQAtasBk_jdWSy1-Ol8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3242.96)):

So you, you met your wife in Omaha?

Ray Trom ([00:54:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RhVU-nNPEpR087GFZW8zV1yIw4Vw5gnhL1l6OD1smYAz-hVL8CDEQMual0qzQl89DDbfkf_453QX0HpAQUjNbL3ep54&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3246.34)):

Yep.

Adapted Podcast ([00:54:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yZYIeSI2kuAo2ectVw0sHkUGROZelo4btdxYQO0RnZcqXTzKoOjiRIjJt0HZ251A5Z5Vf42O-2JhOhUxk3MQmIjE-54&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3247.21)):

Okay. And she's white.

Ray Trom ([00:54:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Oz9GJK38HhU8LNFCq3WXbEs6r-r0MTFhENEHkcDSetQY74AuNdtRsiyKKFxq-5REyY-GO_0v8b-Gffz_Pjp2vj-OWRM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3248.57)):

Yeah. Okay. Yeah, I would, I, I describe her. I will tell people she's white as conflict. <Laugh> she's pretty white. Yeah. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([00:54:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ann9jtgAi7gQCAHz_Feo7kiRBH32mLzRdX5fiS7hVOUsb9U4XrQHqXpdE0gN86Fj8fAZDcFKc7guVRpNYaliZ9Lhd6A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3259.83)):

Did people do you feel like you sense that being an interracial couple, did that cause any problems or do you feel like people?

Ray Trom ([00:54:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nbsUUmETzBjHuEJa01vSUvRXm5bLjxNhGxzMbWIJB_kQc2rzp4kXLZhV0CFQfc4ODV7WXHimP-LxABTIOrvcpfRf3Jk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3270.04)):

We, if it did, we never let it bother us. Sure. There was, you know, you know, different than, you know, you're being Korean walking around in a small town, I guess there was definitely stigma, but I think we're more focused than just us being us. It never really bothered. It never bothered me really. And I, I know it doesn't bother her. You know, I do, she does come from a very small town in Nebraska, very small town. And I do get luck when I go to the town <laugh>, you know, definitely. But no, she's, she's wonderful. And she, those things aren't doesn't bother her. You know, he, you know, she, her mother was a wonderful person. She passed away from Alzheimer's several years ago, but that she was a wonderful lady and she always, you know, taught my wife, you know, to accept, you know, people for who they are regardless of color.

Ray Trom ([00:55:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=w3EGmUhivgmIfd32s50584EJvlD9Mp2-ZS6U4fpAWtNQqL43NCuVXjoR45MPsmupIJIuwpscDL3VqKg2pJPbgVKJE_A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3332.65)):

And my wife is just always been that person from day one. Yeah, very, very grateful. I, I have a lot of guilt that I didn't, you know make my marriage as priority during my launching phase of my career. She played a big part on getting my career going when I was going to culinary school in New York. She she worked, she's a nurse. She worked hard, so I didn't have to so I can focus on school. Yeah, she made a lot of sacrifice for me. And then when we came here at the work kind of consumed my time and yeah, we drifted apart and, but we're, we're gonna, we're trying to work it out now. So very fortunate. I, I, you know, I I've, I feel like, you know, not having that foundation for me as a, you know, growing up with parents with house and, and, and coming to that proper path, I don't have that obviously. And, and I do have a guilt sometimes that I can provide that for her, you know, to have, you know, going through that phase to, I, I don't, I don't know how to put it, but, you know,

Adapted Podcast ([00:56:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-_NBuMJvKyfsI4zncsI-oyLw9HlwwSDbVfaIufc2qL1usaNZouMafZX-NVQdVZrq_SOmL2klJz4c8PHhFhsCp92Ii6Y&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3411.1)):

Like you have some self-doubt that you can provide security because you didn't come from security.

Ray Trom ([00:56:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=VqcLhVwI07g7MkSw0820qRoF71kLomwybWfFxApSELKzvnFBZXechw_lQ_3a3CeHAnQMtsGCnIj75Rp8QqJEewyquC8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3416.739)):

Exactly. And in the past, I think you don't think about that in that, in that perspective and you just live a life. But like, you know, I'm still thinking, I'm thinking about it now, starting to think about those things in my past and little things. And, and, and I think list, like I said, listening to your podcast with, you know, other adoptees with similar experience you know, my priorities, I'm grateful and blessed, but that's what it added to me is, but there is other layers that, that I need to figure it out, cuz I still have, you know, I hope the good portion of my life to live and I want to make sure that I make the best and the most and, and but I don't, you know, dwell on, I'm not gonna, I don't let my past, you know, dictate what I'm gonna do, but it's, I think, you know, how I perceive, you know, every day. But I think keeping that in back of my head is very important. I do how I perceive other people in my relationship and, and you know, how I lay down, you know, lay out my,

Adapted Podcast ([00:58:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=lLKI0Gw2S3a0OnrcXbnxHFP5LOVBQF_Xs9H3J9z3TwldHqEzvSNX8hmzvWUZYFuT6fooGffLJ-LvhNrg_jFjfS8zDco&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3485.11)):

My life. And I don't mean to like psychoanalyze you, right. <Laugh> oh, that's, you know, I'm just like a listener, you know? And, and I also can relate to a lot of your experience, even though I didn't spend time in an orphanage like that. I came as a baby, but it almost but in growing up for me, I also had a lot of turmoil in my family life. And I wonder if almost like sometimes if we co we've we've had chaos in our childhoods and, and maybe forced, well, you know, abandonment and, you know, kind of being forced to unattach from people. You know, if, if that almost we, we fear permanence, you know, or when someone gets too close we almost like sometimes we're our own worst enemy. We, we create the chaos because that is familiar. That's what we learned.

Ray Trom ([00:59:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=AQ2mjr4Ffh8Nfe9zVus2r7YDfbLckUsDeKqGhsbjYskOdZ921OoLV8_2LT2cxs2tlEuR5ZzGwo9fwz3MLnHdtI9-y60&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3545.12)):

You're right. You did, you, you nailed it in the head. Definitely. Yeah. And, and, and that's, yeah, that's definitely, I have some of that. Definitely. I hear you. And yeah, I don't know, you know, it's I like to think sometimes I'm too busy to even think about it. You know, I don't know if maybe I live my life that way, just keeping myself busy and say, Hey, you don't have to think about it and just get up and do it again. And again, and again,

Adapted Podcast ([00:59:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=dyEaOMPY2Ft-zt_-idX-vJk1jbSfbEfnAltnUUDjNh68fKxQPN-W7KFyaJBKlurPaDz0S3fsxF-sUJSawZcxmiCtZoQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3573.81)):

Maybe that's how you coped with the, the pain, you know, even as a kid, you probably just, okay,

Ray Trom ([00:59:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=OtAx6hqzioG1pqLV5stOWCqZCm7a6BToy5UmZwAngnfX6QZHT_Rko4f-2GCl2i1X8pRlspy-9XLmqaXm-sPMH2nJx0o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3579.91)):

Gotta

Adapted Podcast ([00:59:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7y7mBoxF4gM4cBOHUvf3KP1nGnzeTS8YODpUzMRzm0K5Y0EZ7Rhy0nxlq9n_N6BUKvTt_jZqWy6zu49TOxhZAPYr8qo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3579.97)):

Go, gotta go.

Ray Trom ([00:59:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=niNdRye7_wAG1ccKvHsoa0nuhTyXMua3iEmZkd9c1FN9yc3xxUM8Rixt5hPHxTMeJZR3OHhoQ1gRCz0LXt-1QHT7Hi0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3581.87)):

Yeah. But you know, it's, I step out from who I am and just look at who just look at me as a third person and things got, you know, what I've gone through. Yeah. It's not fair, you know, it's not that life isn't fair, but I'm not gonna say sit here and say, it's not fair and I'm gonna live my life that way. But yeah,

Adapted Podcast ([01:00:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=GTC64tbAzV919NH2SiCXg0ClFrdy9ResKn_Yk61Rx9YLK42gLG9UBvoMb_wU6Rbr8_U9G4E36Lk6aFLcvdTPFEM3t5o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3605.48)):

It sounds like you've reflected you, you're going through a period of reflection of, and thinking back of your relationships and maybe some of the people that you maybe harmed.

Ray Trom ([01:00:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=fEEVWxNdIpFAyX8hRrcox08xwe2wqTYk9EdoUSW8rHI3utxnzdxJS-an3t9uTqjYuWXBKFMeQA5mfmVBk1WGPcMUxfM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3616.92)):

Yeah, definitely. I, I, I, you know, I, like I was saying, telling you about, you know, my relationship with my wife, you know, I, I just don't, you know, it's not having that grounded, you know, background when I was, you know, growing up, I just definitely, like I said, I always have, am I doing the right thing for her or my daughter, am I being the dad that, you know, that neighbor, you know, guy next door is being, you know, am I, you know, am I, am I, am I, I ask that a lot of times, or maybe I think am my job is just to go to work and make money and bring it home and pay the, you know, mortgage and, and, you know, have these things. And I, you know, there is definitely Korean, you know, that built, you know, rooted in me and those things, you know, the, the ownership and responsibility, I gotta work, work, work for my family.

Ray Trom ([01:01:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=HK_9JeAoaQ-j9yJs6kQ94UI33Pad0cv5MlGhQU_9prsRzD90Vg_S5qskBEr7ASmCbeyxd5rsIrrxSJNuGiGkMoihIzQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3673.96)):

At the time maybe feel like he's doing the right thing, but you know, you look at kind of after all, it was not the best thing, you know? So the guilt, yeah, definitely there about, am I doing the right thing? Am I being the am I being the good best dad? Am I being the best husband work wise. I know I'm doing my best and, and, and I do it well. Yeah, and, you know, I emotionally another part I'm guilty about is that, that I'm not so good at expressing myself emotionally, you know, part of, I think that once again, Koreanness, you know, dealing with west senior plate and, and, and my personality and my environment, and then I grew up, I, it's not, I'm not always I don't always express my emotions well, you know, and, and I know that creates some chaos in people's minds sometimes, especially my wife.

Ray Trom ([01:02:15](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=oGzvzuIj1I-IQQhTiJzhfwlfat3qcsQMLUy1UumftoprfgBovPq6VYadjk5ozjnISh26iJVR0oxXW_smiPwC78pmDBs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3735.89)):

So, you know, and, and sometimes I don't know how to reset to say, okay, go back to being a being Ray, you know, but yeah, I, I, you know, I I'm, I feel fortunate that I came here when I was 12 and I have that experience and, and memories of being in Korea and like yourself coming when you're infant, and you're not having that memory, I don't know. What's worse. I really don't know what's worse. I know, you know, that the classmate I had in, in, at the high school, she was, I want to say she came when she was an infant and she had no information about her back past. And it was really, you know, we had conversation one time. And you know, she was telling me, I don't know anything about my parents. I don't know anything.

Ray Trom ([01:03:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=vJTQ-o85b5p9UYen7Nt8pnsOJfyqQH31OV0LyNTCHVn53Z8aUfEHk3DDUw8P5YyP29cnGCbAmi6sMtQQPwsKjAkNylk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3794.18)):

I don't know anything about who I am. I don't know. I look different. I have no idea where to go look. Meanwhile here I had, you know, 12 years of memory of, you know, being Korean and I kind of wish that I didn't, you know, I almost wish that I came when I was infant, so I didn't have that memories, but then I, you know, listen to people like you and her then is it, is it, I don't know, what's better, you know, not having that memories or, or, or I, I can't speak, obviously, you know, I can't speak for everybody. I just don't know what would be better, cuz you know, obviously I'm not, you know, per se in your shoes to say, you know, you don't, I don't, is that better to not know or no, you know?

Adapted Podcast ([01:04:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Lar3zSEoMQX5D8JXPg5Muw1ogQVdQKcwTW9gLcR9XSgteSF6rTWY4nqHawA8eM2Lgll10LnmDF7__dbGWZgLHhX04kI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3863.63)):

Yeah. It's a hard question. And you know, maybe it's not really fair to compare because equally there's probably some pain there, you know? Yes. For what you know, and for what, I don't know, you know, there's, there's still pain. So tell me you went back to Korea.

Ray Trom ([01:04:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=E80FmsiOG8_wnIYJbVfCAmtqSlOcy4TdNq4da0OIYo87AhI2u3S1x95DwbnpHTolZpy9vUrPcTOdF19X6nP80sUEbPI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3886.78)):

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([01:04:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=b3p4WkkyMPbaDGq3rhHbT6HW7JJCzHOOPsYkkyz6DyqyE-JhwlKvtmhJOZD5vj5faKDiW6yPQY8-zz96q0m5l83BT7I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3887.38)):

What was that like? And when was that? Was that

Ray Trom ([01:04:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=N7et5JgWpm0S39SlJYZ9chWlXadtv-IJl8mEkqBPC48uGQ9vEY9hzKjtFF0HsSWocaKFm3E2JhgWbd04Ek4l3WLFpWc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3891.1)):

I wanna say there was 2000 oh one was 2012. I wanna say. Yeah. About 10 years ago it was, I was watching winter Olympics and one of the Korean skater figure skater on a gold medal and they're playing the Curry national Anthem and I know the Anthem, I mean word by word. I mean that sound and hit me really hard. Like man, you haven't back, you know, honey done. Right. Yeah. And you know, how come you haven't back being back to where you're from and them actually, I, I, it was very emotional for me to listen to that, you know, and pointing I about plane tickets, <laugh>, you know, I bought it and next morning I told my wife, Hey, and I think I really need, I want to go back to Korea and I gotta, I gotta go back. And she was fully supported bought a ticket that next morning.

Ray Trom ([01:05:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=V5u-NoPCaUmbNO-ZDTAO_uywYsXMAb6juylaPyWVQuK8CKGTEWrCrJgB2qqy2CewrDJpf2cG_bV9xzsnL5F0goVXcew&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3951.09)):

I'd even check with my work. I'd say I'm going. But everybody around me, everybody knew me, was very supportive about what I was about to do, you know, they know. So I went, I had no idea what to expect. I I do, like I said, I do have my family there. My mom's side and my dad's side and I contacted my mom's fam my SIS my aunt, my mom's sister. And stayed with her. I got to the airport. I, when I landed an inch on I walked around to Concourse for like 40 min, like 45 minutes. I couldn't get out. I just couldn't, I didn't know. Cause everybody was waiting for me on the other side. I knew, you know, but he, I couldn't, I didn't know how to deal with it. I, I walk, I walk. So you

Adapted Podcast ([01:06:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=jJ58Z0TBr7Wsyla1ZpTiUrnfQMJUNfLtx0hctJjTDvj54mhODB6yhcgrgrEHDjTg1drPP85ZXFMPSfcJTjmp3fjo4Fo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4002.2)):

Mean like from the, when the doors open

Ray Trom ([01:06:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=WH1d73RBbfKpZK-hXDijl2xJJfcZlBIgQHHNsp_r6DN4oKiBxC59jCPY58fog0b8wMXGf7npmp20kbYsn3Cjm4UGo4M&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4003.74)):

And you see, yeah, I, before door was opening, I was walking around. I, I, I didn't know how to, I didn't know what to, I, I just, you know, I think booking and planning and coming that excitement, I never really had a chance to think about all the stuff, you know, emotions I had to deal with. It took me a while to walk through that door. My family was waiting for me there and it was very emotional meeting. You did contact them? Yeah, my my aunt, my mom's sister. And also my dad's family and my uncle's dad. Two of the uncles that I lived with who used to I used to get physically abused quite a bit by these two uncles from alcohol abuse, obviously, you know, I was a, I was quite the punching bag a lot of nights from, you know, them coming home drunk.

Ray Trom ([01:07:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=X-KZHxRvKZ-_PcrBMlKX5Wk-92cZxAvTvVN69JqJGnbPfJfdqCJUHO5xjO3SR43aYp6Ub-u00y7xsAT8SDFn7ArzULc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4062.79)):

So there was very emotional time went really fast. I, I, I can't believe I only did it for a week and it, it was, it was so much, you know, and first of all, country was completely different. It was so modernized and so advanced that, that I felt like we were living in a third world country, you know, when I was in soul. And and there was a little RIF between my mom's family and my dad's family. Cause my dad's family's one who sent us here. And my mom, my aunt if she could have, she would've kept us, she went not to take us on, but she had her own kids and she couldn't. So there was some, there was some tension between them. They were fighting over my time, you know, who's gonna, you know, I was stay with, we went to, you know, where I went to the orphanage.

Ray Trom ([01:08:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ShAkoah9GyUEVMxBqsG14csnN-vhIJRQsB-iHQnltm6ShcfSMVF6nXWBeIHMd76QxcxUt6DqUD0zyjeowNtwqkomAbY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4117.75)):

It wasn't orphanage anymore. It's a Catholic church. In fact when I went to orphanage that that CA church was getting built and we actually slept inside the church, our room, the boys section was in the church and <affirmative>, and so that I was a, they were able to help me to connect with these PO and Christina, are these couples that Rand orphan for father Ben? They're retired. I was able to connect with them. They, you know, it's all super remarkable, but they knew exactly who I was when I called them. They have sent over thousands of kids. They know exactly who I was when I called them and they they wanted to come and meet me. Right. And they would lived in island pretty far away. And they're pretty elderly coupled, but they, they made their way in that day.

Ray Trom ([01:09:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=UINqdqXi7aPpSF5r7yoDK_lqd6X_RBRkVhxFZbM4JziKqpe4MkMww5mhA4XANtJCnm8Ql3hJesiA0WOXgAe2vuV4eYQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4176.42)):

And they brought these catalog with, with kids' information, you know, including mine obviously. And that's where I got Tony's information from. It was able to connect with them and I thanked them for all the sacrifice they made and you know I think they, you know, for them seeing somebody like me coming back and thanking them, that's their joy, that's their payback to them. And I went to also house that I grew up in little village housing village. And also I went to a farm where my dad died. Cause I was right there when he passed away or at least he got hurt to get passed away. And so, and went to their grave grave site. And, and

Adapted Podcast ([01:10:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=qFmRUISDDX7Sk66R8TxxHYlXPR8dD8pJkJECPJga5AX0udgUXD4NIKkar9t6IF7yBbzMNek_oGTmncJIPq3ouETWngo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4227.63)):

Did you pour the so

Ray Trom ([01:10:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Y6ixbtEPh5z0pgiTDQzMaT4BVeRvGwqYWFcgjgJju71JXY39vkE0KML5qaDyiEsOh9lwo0UYLn3MKqgazQUzdmps1O4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4230.07)):

Makkeolli I drank so by the way, <laugh> but you know, food was great. My aunt and my cousins made sure that I had full experience with food being a chef that was whole focal point of visiting. You know, how Koreans are with food buddy was they made sure that I experienced different things in Korea. It was all good until I was on the way to, to the airport to leave. It was really hard. I like that feeling of when I left Korea, you know, you all came back like, oh my, I haven't been back since I'm gonna take my daughter and my wife. Next time we go. But yeah, I, it was you, you, you know, you, you just, you put those things away, emotions away and it comes out and with time like that, and it really, they hit me really hard on the way to the airport.

Ray Trom ([01:11:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xu2uXP7ZwUVpCqjjD84AeBVb2FvtdmM_qVlE1CYmrSQ5lLvoydE6_rxcjHTVgIkR1cs57D-VulVveOtxj_szQzaQEwA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4292.189)):

I couldn't, I remember just you know, my aunt and my cousins were in the, you know, we were all bawling. Like all three, all of us were just, you know, crying away and you know, and leaving was obviously I was leaving in different terms, but he was hard again when I was in that plane again to leave just, you know, all that came back, you know, when I left, I know when I originally left Korea, you know, even as 11 year old Kurt, I remember as we were taking off, I was so excited because we were on a plane, never rode a plane before, but soon as I remember, we took off, I just remember bawling, like crazy, you know, that, but yeah, I like to go back. Definitely I like to show my daughter where it came from and I take great pride in that I am a Korean, I have a Korean flag tattoo and a, and a tattoo of a, these old picture of a painting of these tiger.

Ray Trom ([01:12:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=aoAEC803GZJUsdq2N0U6tpBObKiRXHsFH--E9JWpn1ixGqh6taNKEPoRz9UaHf9XeFXS8c5N2NX2yVQgvvOiEV8QuXc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4363.38)):

That's a shape of a blend of Korea. I'm sure Koreans know what picture I'm talking about. Those, those are part of me and my body that to remind me that I'm, you know, to, that I take pride in who I am, where I came from. But also I am very proud to be, you know, an American here too. And, and, and but most importantly, I, I'm very grateful, you know, for where I am at and that perspective, but yeah, I like to go back to Korea, not the food itself is just, I don't know, <laugh>, it's, it's crazy in Korea, how food is now, you know, they, they're, they're setting the tra and they're doing things that, that, you know, I we're looking at from here going, wow. You know, who came up with that? How do they think of that? And so yeah,

Adapted Podcast ([01:13:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=PyQmkz7SWPEZRAtWL7w9a5nOa0c5jOD6T6eeT2_2Am8Gjq8VPWbJLeq567k6_htO6x4b6bRvxniTw3kuBAT3AtKXBEc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4417.16)):

Sometimes when, when people reunite there's the, I mean, there's, there's, there's joy sometimes, but also sadness because of you lost them,

Ray Trom ([01:13:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=OStGtj_nmCfgOi9OcA5Qqgc5lxwr2q9ert15vPTTUMUMzgM2bmXkgB1_8vyUxdEdfWdHgC8HIAQOztyX-q-xgS5cyTc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4430.53)):

Right? Yeah.

Adapted Podcast ([01:13:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1RFM_ozzAYdRZ6_tBDETrjg7RHvGG6DISeGK_99blF3e4Uac7bMIF5AE9uSKohRjhfZHeAh70pC51_WtVeMXYg47eU0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4433.25)):

Did that hit you when

Ray Trom ([01:13:54](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=N0l6j2GOSUybxlqjAJRFNcNIcycR-bL8Y1CppJXfOuL6p55Dyh4WT81NvemRjHEDBKN363w3i3ixlWhUEmyXs_QsJmE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4434.15)):

You were? Yeah, it definitely mostly with my aunt, she was very emotional the whole time. She had a lot of guilt and also my dad's family, like I was telling you about those uncles that, that I live with. And, and then grew up in an environment that I should never have. There was some guilt in their part. You can tell you know, I told them that, that I am very grateful for what they've done. You know, the decision was hard. They had to make it. But I thank them for the decisions they made, cuz I do be believe that that was the best decision for us. And yeah, it was, and also the people who care for me, my family, like my uncle's wife she was really play a big part in my, you know, she really took me in, kind of showed me at times when my uncle came home drunk and, you know, I became the pension bag and seeing her brought a lot of emotion too, cuz you know, I realized that kids at that age shouldn't be going through that and you know, and she was part of that, you know, memory, but she always, it was good part cuz she always trying to be there for me.

Ray Trom ([01:15:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=_d3Xx5hU_v4M4XJ8bokmHOd6efnW4qL-0iQCTh-oIufAiou05RgzUlDG4XAY2TuDBSQs2AvM7d0SQBn633Acp2pCebY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4517.31)):

So that was really that was very emotional for me too, you know, when I saw her. But

Adapted Podcast ([01:15:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=8Bjjbh3EByKmp3tnsAjwPthl3ZpsAfB8pEhExDep9341UkCkxM4huunbiI7YKhjvSYBLsSVsoAEFfl3YnuTO4otwB38&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4525.72)):

You, you forgave them?

Ray Trom ([01:15:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NAl3pDp-7JdBBWktEog17wRLovkKBKXtK7pykLj3CYXL4N7jXXyuR47r5rBxpccz1ZJ_1yZjmGn-cW57c_kvf5S9iUI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=4527.4)):

I forgave them. I, I, it is it. Yeah. I basically told them I forgive anything that's done to me. I don't know, maybe because I wanted them to feel like they should feel guilty, I guess in a way. I don't want people to use, you know, feel like that I'm ever burdened. I think, you know, that's, that's one thing about me and maybe I just don't, I can't hold grudge against people. I don't, you know, I read, you know, I just not cuz my experience and all the people who care for me in my life, I evolved to being a person who I'm a very forgiving person. As even as a boss, I think he did me well. Because I wasn't always just that boss, you know, supervisor or chef, I was always had that connection and always show that, you know, carer and that, and then I always take ownership to that person. You know, if they work for me, I, I, I have to take care of you. So I'm a, you know, that's kind of what evolved to that whole experience evolved to being who I am. So yeah, I, I can't be that person and still be mad at the past.