Allen:

Adapted Podcast:

Hi, I'm Kaomi Lee. This is a podcast that centers the voices of Korean intercountry adoptees adopted people are the true experts in adoption. I was also adopted from Korea. Our voices are often silenced by adoption agencies, our parents, governments, and society that only wants a feel good story. This is our take back. In this next episode, we'll hear from a Korean-American adoptee about to embark on a journey in the second half of his life. Allen Majors is moving to Korea, in a sense, reversing the migration to America he made more than 60 years ago. Now, here's Allen.

My name is Allen Majors. I am 62, almost 63, and I'm in Champaign, Illinois presently.

And what was your Korean name?

Allen:

Well, my Korean name was Kim Bok Dong, but actually it was given to me after I was relinquished. So it's ki it's, it's pretty much a contrived name of kind of a sort of convenience to process me. I, in my, in my view.

Adapted Podcast:

Well, why don't we start with what your your origin story in Korea. What do you know?

Allen:

Well what I know is this I know we're not the air quotes. I was left at the police station on City Hall, or one of those variations thereof. I know that my birthdate on my adoption records is very likely not correct because I have dates on my adoption records, the processing of the paperwork that are a few days earlier than my air quote's birthdate.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, wow. How is that? Was that just, do you think it was a typo on your

Allen:

I think it's just sloppy paperwork by Holt, probably.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, and have you known this all along or is this a recent discovery?

Allen:

I, I've known it for a while. Yeah. Yeah. So to the extent that I, I don't know how much it really, practically speaking, it, it, it, it doesn't really make any difference. I mean, it's probably not, my birthday probably is an awful lot.

Adapted Podcast:

Do you know about where you were born?

Allen:

I don't, you know, my, my records are to be polite, very sketchy. <laugh>. Yeah. You know, one of the things they did that it's, it's really strange and I, I think this is maybe something that maybe slipped through the Holt crack, so to speak. my paperwork has the name of another family, an another party that was the num that was the first choice, and it scratched out and said, that won't work. And then Plan B was the majors family in rural Illinois where I ended up

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, you mean you were originally going to another family?

Allen:

Yeah, in Portland, Oregon. The, the family has a French name. I actually looked up, looked up some of the family. They adopted a, a Korean girl. Oh, a Korean woman, and I think she's already passed.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, so maybe the same year you were adopted?

Allen:

I don't know. I didn't look other than the person had passed away. And then it said that other people in their family had also passed.

Adapted Podcast:

So Yeah. How did that,

Allen:

But that's pretty weird to think about. Right? That's

Adapted Podcast:

Weird to think like you could have not been a Midwesterner, but been

Allen:

Right, right. A west

Adapted Podcast:

Coast.

Allen:

It's, it's frankly a a little unsettling and troubling to me. And, and yet maybe that's a little bit of a delusion on my part because, but for the stroke of the pen of where we were in the stack, or a number, who knows where we could have ended up. I have this vision of a, of a paper. Somebody opens a window and a paper blows off the desk and they pick it up off the floor and put it in the stack in the wrong order. <laugh>. Right.

Adapted Podcast:

I, I mean, we're all just a luck of the draw, really.

Allen:

Yeah. Right, right.

Adapted Podcast:

Did, did you ever ask cold what they interpreted?

Allen:

No, I, I, I haven't. Uhuh Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. But that's unsettling that they left that information on there or just scratched it out enough that you

Allen:

Could Yeah, I think it's a it, it's poor business practice to say the least.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. So you came through hold. How old were you when you were adopted?

Allen:

Yeah, so I was my, my parents Fred and Dorothy Majors of Ridge Farm Illinois, they initiated the adoption process in 1960. I arrived in U S A in January of 1961.

Adapted Podcast:

And how old were you? How old were you?

Allen:

Fourteen months. So my mom flew from Chicago to Portland. My flight from Gimpo went to Honolulu. They refueled in Honolulu. I still have my little visa pass. and then we flew onto Portland and, and mom met the, the plane with other adoptive parents in Portland. We flew back from Portland to Chicago and then drove to and a half hours south from Chicago. Pretty much due south to the small town where I was raised. Actually, I, my hometown is about 900 people, but I lived five miles outside of town on the farm.

Adapted Podcast:

And did your mother ever share with you what her first impressions of you were?

Allen:

She didn't talk about me necessarily individually, but she said the incident of the plane in Portland, having all these children and adopted parents coming forth to get their children was, was one of the most spiritual experiences of her life. She said it was very profound for her.

Adapted Podcast:

And were, are you their oldest?

Allen:

No. So my parents had a s a son. He's seven years older than me. Then they had a daughter who's five years older than me, another daughter, biologically, who's four years older than me. I was adopted in 61. I'm the youngest in the family, but they, but after I was adopted four years later, they adopted a Korean girl, not my biological sister, who is actually older than me. So, so we've got this a little bit of an odd dynamic or different in that birth order. I'm the youngest, but I was in the family earlier than she was. And so because she didn't know any English, she got here right after she turned five, I ended up getting ahead of her in school, otherwise we would've been in the same grade.

Adapted Podcast:

How old were you when she came, when she was adopted?

Allen:

I was four years old.

Adapted Podcast:

Do you recall any feelings of I, any feelings towards her at that time? Like,

Allen:

Yeah, you know, I, I have very clear memories of her arriving at O'Hare in Chicago. And dad slinging her over her shoulder and I was walking behind looking up at her. And I have memories of being at the airport. It was so fun. I was from a small town, and the flight got delayed from Portland by 24 hours, so we had to kill time. And I just had a blast running around O'Hare. And then when she arrived, she stayed on this little cot in mom and dad's bedroom for, I don't know, several nights. I don't know how many. And I remember her sitting on the floor playing with kitchen utensils, singing Korean songs. And, and I, I can't imagine what that must have been like for her at five years old.

Adapted Podcast:

Did you feel, did you feel some jealousy? I, I would imagine.

Allen:

Oh, no. I, I felt nothing. It was just another person in our family. Yeah. Okay. I didn't feel any jealousy at all.

Adapted Podcast:

So you accepted her right away?

Allen:

Well, yeah, I did with the asterisk being as much as a five a four year old kid can accept. Right. But yeah, there was no jealousy. There was no animosity, no malice, no ill will at all.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. And in the sixties, probably your family, like so many of ours had this kind of colorblind approach, or they really didn't

Allen:

Talk. That's one way to say it. Yeah, that's one way to say it. Yeah. How

Adapted Podcast:

Would you say it?

Allen:

Well, I mean, it was and I say this not an insulting way, but in a technical way, it was an ignorance. You know, I love the saying love is not enough. You gotta know some stuff. You gotta understand some things. Right. So, which, which gets into the next question you, you were gonna ask, I think. What were my parents like?

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah.

Allen:

Yeah. So my mom she had this zeal zest for life. She was always wanting to try new things and, and have a li little, a fun and adventure. she valued education. She taught school. My dad was a farmer. He worked hard. He was strong. I looked up to him. He had this can-do attitude, can do anything. And I learned, you know, like hard work and resourcefulness and an education. I got an education, good education. they had their challenges, you know, part of that though, <laugh>, I wanna, I want to give them a little bit of room because they were raised in a different time when they grew up. And, and frankly, to look forward, I hope that the younger generation, my kids or my grandkids, will also give me the same space. Cuz I was raised in a different time. You know? Kay. I can remember barely, but I can remember when JFK was shot. You know, I can clearly remember when, when Martin Luther King Jr. Was shot. And when Neil Armstrong walked on the moon.

Adapted Podcast:

What were you doing at the time?

Allen:

I was sitting in the living room when Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, I was sitting on the living room floor watching television. We watched it.

Adapted Podcast:

It. What was it? One step for Man?

Allen:

that's one small step for man, one giant step for mankind.

Adapted Podcast:

And it must have just felt like your world was exploding, right? Because just the possibility. Well, not,

Allen:

Not really, because see, I didn't have an appreciation for the gravity, that how profound that moment was. that came later. I lived a very sheltered life on the farm. My parents had friends they would not go...I'm speaking more about my parents, they were very conservative religiously. They had friends that would not go to a movie theater. They would not play cards.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, that was too risque.

Allen:

Oh, no. It's the work of the devil. <laugh>

Adapted Podcast:

<laugh>. Yeah. Well, paint us a picture on the farm. What was farm life like? What did you ra did your family raise livestock or,

Allen:

Yeah, so we had it was a typical Midwest farm. We had like 600 plus acres, mostly corn and soybeans. And we had a confinement hog system. We'd finish out between 2500 and 3,000 head of hogs a year. And we would have we had a small feed lot. We'd had about a hundred head of cattle, slaughter cattle at a time. I raised chickens when I was really young. We had a milk cow and a little pony. but I raised chickens, broilers, and sold them to neighbors. I plucked, I have plucked many, many chickens.

Adapted Podcast:

You did on your own?

Allen:

Yes, <laugh>. I pulled the heads off of many chickens.

Adapted Podcast:

<laugh>, you pulled the heads off. How do you, how did you, like when did you start doing this? At like, age six or something?

Allen:

No, no. I was probably in like early high school some time around then.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. How do you, how do you pluck a chicken? Well,

Allen:

The chicken's already dead, and you put it in a bucket of hot scalding water, and then the, the, the feathers come out pretty, pretty easily. But then you have to get the pin feathers out. It's like popping acne almost. You gotta squeeze 'em out of there and pick 'em out.

Adapted Podcast:

Wow. Okay. That's an image I can't get back. Okay. <laugh>. No, I'm just kidding. no,

Allen:

Well, I'll tell you, you know, a lot of people, I know people who they love their meat and their, their beef and pork, but they wanna have nothing to do with the the business end of all that, how it comes to the grocery store and to their pan. And I, I, I think that's a little, little intentional naivete and privilege.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. We want it in our nice little breast patty.

Allen:

Yeah. There's somebody there who's slaughtering that hog. Slopping manure. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, so you didn't go into farming?

Allen:

No, I never really wanted to go into farming, but I'm, I'm very grateful for the life there. I spent a lot of time on my own growing up, walking in the fields. I spent a lot of time on the tractors and combines and so on. And, and I, I think I developed a, a kind of a more contemplative nature. I remember many times walking along the country, lanes picking mulberries, looking at the birds. We had a walking with the dog. It was, it was a very good upbringing.

Adapted Podcast:

So you were adopted in '61, did you say?

Allen:

Yes, Uhhuh, 1961, just to be clear.

Adapted Podcast:

Right. So, so Allen, you must have been one of the first adoptees Korean adoptees in the States.

Allen:

Well, there were a few there. There's some in the in the late fifties. I don't know if you knew about this. we had, in 2016 in Eugene, we had a first wave reunion.

Adapted Podcast:

I didn't know,

Allen:

And I don't, yeah. And I don't know what the age quote cutoff was, but there were, I wanna say maybe 40 of us there. And actually, I have a group on Facebook a adoptees age 50 and over. And I think there's about 350 of us on Google.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, wow. And would you say the majority are mixed race or not?

Allen:

No, the majority are not mixed race. Okay.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. And there's, so there's probably many more mixed race adoptees that are not really in the community. I,

Allen:

I, I couldn't say, you know, I, I'm not aware of the community in that regard. Tracking that demographic consideration. Oh, actually, I did wanna say something about so at the at that event in 2016, we were talking about when some of us were talking about when we came from Korea, and I connected, we with two other people who came over on the same flight in January of 1961, we checked our travel visas.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, how fun. you were on the same flight?

Allen:

Yeah. Now, one guy, he's, I wanna say maybe three or four years older than me, and then the, the one of the, the woman, she's pretty much almost the same age as me.

Adapted Podcast:

Now, adoptees at that time, were they, was there a range? Did they range from like age 13 and down, or were they mostly around?

Allen:

You know, I really dunno. Most of the adoptees of which I'm aware were younger, I think like maybe toddler to, to kind of infant. Okay.

Adapted Podcast:

Age. Okay. Why

Allen:

I say that based on my little sample pool of my acquaintances.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. so Allen, why do you think your parents wanted to adopt from Korea? They had had three kids biologically.

Allen:

Yeah. So my mom had three C-sections, and they wanted to have more kids. And they were, she was told mom and dad were told that they couldn't have anymore kids and dad had been in the Korean War. And then, and then they had, they were very religious at very invested in faith. And I don't know how they came to know about Holt, but then they got connected with Holt. And then, then they decided to do under adoption. And then after they got me, they decided to do another one.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. A lot of us came from religious backgrounds. I, I, I wouldn't I'm also hold, so I wondered somehow.

Allen:

Yeah, that's because hold picked that demographic.

Adapted Podcast:

So they

Allen:

Really, that was part of the litmus.

Adapted Podcast:

They really kind of marketed to Christian families. I think that was a requirement, wasn't it?

Allen:

Well, I, I would say they didn't marketed, I would say they selected

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Like, I think they required families.

Allen:

Yeah, right. To be Christian. That's, now we're saying the same thing, kind of. In fact, my, my parents gave me my file and they, my parents had to have these letters of like recommendation or whatever you want to call it, that they're good parents. And it's these pastors that, oh, he's a, they're a good Christian family. He's a good Christian man, blah, blah, blah. I, I don't know what that means. And that's one of the aspects of the adoption arena with which I struggle because I've talked with a lot of adoptive parents. You, you kind of watch how they interact with their adoptive children, with other adoptive parents. And I, I, I think to varying degrees, k to varying degrees, but nonetheless, a significant component of, oh, I wanted to help. I had, there was a calling, but then there's this, I'm a pretty good person, aren't I? Right. There's this, as you peel the layer back, it's this kind of validation kind of thing. And I have a problem with that <laugh>. Right? I do. It lays the foundation for obligation of, of, well, look what we did for you. You owe us. And real gratitude can never be obligated. It can be only offered genuinely. but it can't be asked for.

Adapted Podcast:

Do you think you and your sister sort of got that message, maybe subliminally or, oh,

Allen:

I got it. More than subliminally. Okay.

Adapted Podcast:

Like, what kinds of things would they say are to make you

Allen:

My father? And let me be clear, I, I love my father deeply and very positive things. But there was a rough patch in our relationship, and he saw fit to say, after all we've done for you, how could you blah, blah, blah. And, and a again, he, he doesn't have the emotional wherewithal to understand that that's not really where you want to go.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. And you were, you probably also you know, comments of like, you're better off here, or, you know?

Allen:

Well I don't remember that specifically. Of course, in the wider arena, we hear all the time, I assume you have too, that, oh, you're so lucky you blah, blah, blah. Right.

Adapted Podcast:

Got got an education here in America.

Allen:

Yeah but you know, I have a problem with that too. On the one hand, you could say statistically maybe, but we never know the life we didn't have. All we know is all we know is the life we, we have. And every day we, hopefully we do well by the life we've been given and make the most of it. But that doesn't, that doesn't say mean to say that another life. Certainly it would've been different, but who can say if it would've been better or worse? To me, that's an invalid proposal.

Adapted Podcast:

But what I was going with before, with being adopted in 61 and, you know, arriving in, you know, rural Illinois, were, there must not have been many others like you that

Allen:

You saw. There was nobody there, there weren't even any blacks in our community. Yeah. It was all white, Midwest rural factory workers and farmers.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And so I suppose you weren't really equipped with language or even maybe you developed some self-hatred of being

Allen:

No, you know, actually <laugh>, so here, here, here's kind of the, the paradox of this. To develop safe self-hatred, I would've had to have had a certain awareness. <laugh>, you're giving me too much credit. <laugh>, I wasn't even that far down the road. Okay. Does that make sense?

Adapted Podcast:

So you really did, right. You really did feel like you were white or you fit?

Allen:

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. Yes.

Adapted Podcast:

And everyone around you knew your family and your story, so they Yeah. It never really came up.

Allen:

Right. Right. It was that Midwest politeness. Right. <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

But you probably, did you notice at certain times people would kind of stare at your family or ask

Allen:

Questions or? Sure, sure. I know dad tells a story that we were on vacation once, and we had Anne by then, so it was five of us kids, and he went to pay the bill at a restaurant. And the cashier said, oh, somebody else paid for your bill. That kind of a thing.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh. Like saying that, like, sort of approval of your family,

Allen:

Family or Yeah. Support or something like that. But I, yeah, I remember getting stared out a lot. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

And growing up, did you sort of feel like you were in a way older than Anne because you had come first and I did. Yeah. Yeah. And she, she struggled with that. and, and unfortunately I was young, immature now I'm not young, but in many respects I'm still immature. But anyway, and, and I we had different academic achievements and I was not kind about that with my sister.

I see. That's an interesting dynamic, cuz I, like you said it's a little unusual that you had been adopted first, but

Allen:

It is

Adapted Podcast:

Older than your older sister who came later and you were more, you know, you were fluent in English and

Allen:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

and she was as a ESL learner, basically.

Allen:

Yeah. It's another layer of complication. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

And it probably added to your relationship with her growing up.

Allen:

Yeah. You know when I was growing up, she was just my sister. But now that I'm more involved in the queen community and the adoptee community I, I, I do have a different relationship with her because of that. I won't say it's greater or lesser or more meaningful than my other siblings, but it is different.

Adapted Podcast:

And do you guys, do you bond now because of both being Korean adoptees? Do you talk about or go back to?

Allen:

We, we have some conversations, but frankly, she she had a more difficult time. And so we have some conversations, but I don't push it too much. I try to have those conversations on her terms.

Adapted Podcast:

Well, so now, Ellen, at some point in your life though, people would've had to ask you about, you know, where you're from or, you know, you started to understand that, you know, you're not this white kid from, so did at that time, did you shy away from wanting to learn about your heritage or, or identifying as an Asian,

Allen:

You know, that only started about the heritage search and identity and all that stuff, maybe around 2009 or eight, somewhere in there. So not all that terribly long ago. You know, I'm late to this community in this, this situation, and I am in awe and admiration and in some respects, in envious of our young adoptive friends who started this journey much earlier in life than I did.

Adapted Podcast:

What why do you think that is that you had this kind of delayed kind of

Allen:

Well, part of it was I was raised in a very sheltered environment, sheltered community. And then I got married at age 24. We had kids, I have five children, and once you start that, your, your nose is to the parenting grindstone? Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

You have five kids?

Allen:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, wow. From like, what's the age range? I mean, are they their age range right now? Well, the first one was born in 86. The la I got born in eighty six, eighty seven, nineteen ninety, and then two in 93.

Oh, you have twins?

Allen:

I do.

Adapted Podcast:

Yep. And, you know did that, did, does twins go come from your wife's side or your,

Allen:

Well, perhaps it certainly doesn't come from my side that that's a maternal consideration, right? Oh,

Adapted Podcast:

It is. Oh, twins is passed down by the Oh, okay.

Allen:

Without getting into, into the biology of it. See <laugh>. Okay. Do, do I need to say more? Can me?

Adapted Podcast:

No, this is how ignorant I am. So <laugh>. Okay.

Allen:

Okay. That's okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. So if there were fraternal twins, one fertilized egg could have split and then into two, and you get identical, excuse me, identical twins. But, but this particular, my, my twins are fraternal, not identical. So there were two eggs that month. Oh,

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. That got

Allen:

Fertilized. Okay. Okay. That's all on the maternal side of things though.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay.

Allen:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

All right. Thanks Allen <laugh>. That's

Allen:

Alright.

Adapted Podcast:

So, and then what did you do for a career? What, what's,

Allen:

Well I worked as a framing carpenter for about five years. In my mid to late twenties, I made my living with a nail gun, and we traveled all over the country during apartments and condos. Then from night I worked in a hospital in Phoenix for a couple years. from 1990 to 2000, I worked as a I was a school teacher in small rural community in eastern Washington state.

Adapted Podcast:

So I mean, I guess when you're talking about your kids, you know, some adoptees say that when they have kids, it kind of sparks this quest to know more about oneself or one's where, you know. Yeah. Did it, did

Allen:

It? No, that wasn't me. For you. That wasn't me. Yeah. I was just trying to put food on the table and we keep a roof over the <laugh> over the house. Right. and then, so if I could continue on some, so from 1990 to 2000 I taught school. Then from 2000 to 2021, when I retired, I was field staffed for a labor union.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, okay. What,

Allen:

And most of that work was negotiating labor contracts and representing people in adverse employment situations.

Adapted Podcast:

What, what, out of all the, the different jobs you've held, which do you think you, you enjoyed the most?

Allen:

yeah, it was my labor union work.

Adapted Podcast:

And why was that?

Allen:

Well, I think it was

Adapted Podcast:

You have a inner activist.

Allen:

Yeah. I was just able to do so many different things, training, political action arbitrations, grievances, kind of professionally, emotionally counseling people when they were making terrible decisions at Infin item. just watching people, the group dynamics of helping groups make reach consensus and then gauging technical legal financial documents before we counter proposed. It was, it's interesting work.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. Do you kind of wish you would've started it that earlier?

Allen:

You know, I really don't, because I started it when I started it.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. It seems like that's a philosophy you have, Ellen, that you don't ever regret many things.

Allen:

Well, with respect to time, I, I think most of us, we do the best we can at the time. I used to say to people, nobody gets up in the morning and says, you know what? I'm gonna screw my life up today. I'm gonna get fired from my job. Or they don't say, I'm gonna do something today that I'm gonna regret five years from now. For the most part, we do the best we can. Yeah. And I, I say that now with arrogance, but with a kind of a liberation that, that why beat up on myself if I kind of was doing the best I could.

Adapted Podcast:

Well, when did you start to dip your toe into the adoptee world?

Allen:

Oh, I don't know who, somebody told me about something in, I don't know how I got connected. I went to some event in Chicago, I think it was like 2008 or something like that. And then my first event, I think it was maybe 2008, I went to a, a mini gathering, ika mini gathering in Vegas. Yeah. And then from then on I've been pretty frequent. And

Adapted Podcast:

What was that? What was that like, your kind of your first time? Do you remember it well?

Allen:

Yeah, it was in many respects it was overwhelming. It was kinda like a kid and an emotional candy store. as you know, it's, it's a powerful validation to have people that have faces like us the rear on people. And and then of course the Europeans were there, the Danes, the Swedes, the it was wonderful. It was fantastic.

Adapted Podcast:

And did your wife go with you?

Allen:

She did not because I was not married at the time. I, I Oh, okay. Yeah, I was, I got divorced in 2002.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. Yeah. So, and have you remained close with, with her or not that close?

Allen:

No, we, we have little to no contact with one another. So an answer to your question in short, no,

Adapted Podcast:

<laugh>. Okay. And so you've got still these five kids. how is your relationship with them?

Allen:

Well, it's up and down. It, it's, it's strained in some respects. so it's, it's, it differs depending on which of the five.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Yeah. And so after you started meeting other Korean adoptees, did it just kind of open up something for you?

Allen:

Well, it, there was a kind of a, a comfort and also odd enough, a kind of a threat because everyone's, so we have this common experience in some respects, but we also, everyone has a different experience. And because the experience that we have in common is also can be very different and so closely emotionally held, people can be hypersensitive if their experience, this incident isn't validated in a certain way.

Adapted Podcast:

Right. I mean, there's, yeah, there's definitely divisiveness. And also it does seem like people's, for example, if if people have had not such a great experience in their adoptive families or feel politically like international adoption should end and then there's, you know, there's other adoptees that will say, well, they'll, they'll be threatened by that. Or, you know, perhaps they'll take it very personally. Like, my family's so great, so I I I don't want it to end. You know, it's,

Allen:

Yeah. We have a, we live in a time right now, and, and this manifests itself acutely, I think, in the adoptee community. getting back to if if a person's experience isn't validated, well, I'm an adoptee. I have separation issues, I have identity issues, blah, blah, blah. I, and, and you know, what, along a continuum that could be said for almost all of us or along the continuum, the trouble we run into, I think is when, when people clinging to, and, and because of this, my situation is worse than anybody else's, I deserve, I need all of this X, Y, or Z attention and, and validation. I'm not saying that's not necessarily true, but if you put that, that that supersedes everybody else's situations, then we've got trouble, I think because Kemi, everybody's got problems.

Adapted Podcast:

And what about on the flip side, Allen, what if somebody is just saying,

Allen:

Oh, so, so lemme lemme just finish so everybody's got problems. And, and if we say, but my problems are greater than everybody else, it becomes, I, I believe, emotionally indulgent.

Adapted Podcast:

What about, so, and the flip side of that is what if you've got folks posting or saying things like, my family's so wonderful and my parents, I have the greatest life. And look at how wonderful, you know? And would you say that's also emotionally indulgent?

Allen:

No, I mean, I would like to think we can, we can be supportive and, and validate one another along that continuum. Wherever we are. The, the, the issue I have is when people say, but my experience is more valid, should supersede everyone else's.

Adapted Podcast:

I see. Okay. Yeah.

Allen:

Now, because see, that, that, that's gonna, that's gonna stratify people and it's gonna cut off communication.

Adapted Podcast:

You know, this is interesting because this did come up with someone I know and myself that I mean, you probably know that I was abused in my, I was sexually abused in my adoptive home and estranged from my family by choice or my mother by choice. And, you know, just,

Allen:

No, I I didn't know that. You might have said that earlier. Ok. But I, I forgot. Sorry. Okay.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. So you know, I have, I have a lot of trauma from that. And I also feel like it's very difficult for me to, I mean, I just, family stuff is just, is just difficult.

Allen:

You said it, sister <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. And, and I did get into it with a, an adoptee who, you know, she's new to the community and also you know, was posting a lot on her Facebook page about how lucky she was to be adopted and, and grateful. All those kind of uhhuh words that are, can be triggering in our community, you know? Yeah. I mean, I get some people really do feel that way, but, you know, coming from where I'm, my perspective, you know, I just, and so I chose to just, you know, keep scrolling or just, you know, ignore, you know, that's, sure. But somebody posted, so the same person posted something about her father, like a a, a nice memory or a video or something, and then she tagged me in that post and some others to say, I'm sure we can all relate. And so that is what kind of tri, like, I, then I said something because I said, you know, that's kind of ignorant to say that we all had that the same experience that you're ex expressing. Yeah. And

Allen:

It's a, it's an indulgent assumption. Yeah. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

And I, so, and it was also just kind of, it was hard because we had kind of a, we sort of agreed to disagree, but, you know, she had made the point, well, isn't it my truth that this was my experience? So I have a right to say that. And, and yeah, I don't know. It was kind of a difficult conversation and I really didn't do the best job with it either, probably. But, you know, to me, I, I kind of, I just thought, well, you know, maybe it's just not having the empathy of knowing that there's many others that had really a difficult experience.

Allen:

Yeah. I'll, I'll use an analogy if I may. Kay?

Adapted Podcast:

Okay, sure.

Allen:

If, if I won Powerball, I would not buy a Lambo and go drive through poor areas,

Adapted Podcast:

Right? Yeah. That's exactly how I felt. It just felt like I rubbed it in.

Allen:

That would be insensitive of me. It would, to the extent that I was aware of what I was doing. It's even unkind, frankly.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. That's how it felt. And, and I guess her perspective,

Allen:

Because it can come cross, says, I'm okay, what's your problem?

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. And it kind of came off as well, I have a right to drive this Lambo. It's, yeah. It's, you know, so I didn't, anyway. Yeah, I know. What would you have done, and I mean, you're a much kinder, gentler person than I am. Allen, what would you have done if you were me?

Allen:

Well, Kaomi, I'm going to disavow you of that assumption. <laugh>, you know, I have, I have aspirations, but, but I, I struggle with things too. Yeah. I, I will tell you just a, a little detour here. Okay. I do try to do what I can to suspend judgment on people. And it's liberating because a, a and, and part of the reason I'm able to do that is cuz you never know someone's complete story. You never know their, their, their motives. Like if hypothe, if you, if I saw how you reacted, I, I, I could think, well, gosh, Kay, you're, you're, you're coming unglued, but I don't know your bad story.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah.

Allen:

All right. So, so there's that. And then

Adapted Podcast:

I also, like, I don't want to just trot this out every time I wanna kind of say Sure. To say, well, my opinion overrides everything because I came through this, or I, yeah. You

Allen:

Know, so, so that goes how we, to how goes to how we manage ourselves, right? And I'm gonna use an example out of my personal life. My divorce was, it was very difficult. It was acrimonious. And I never said anything negative about the kid's mother to the kids, or, or, or even very much to my friends. I kind of tried to guard my thoughts because I didn't want that to have a certain effect on me who I was to go down that path. So that was a little bit of this another layer of self-care. On the one hand, it might have been felt great to, oh, I'll, I'll call my, my my sister Kay. And I'll unload, she'll understand, and I'll tell her all about, yeah,

Adapted Podcast:

That's me. I would, I'd be on the

Allen:

Phone, my terrible, you know, ex blah, blah, blah. But, but what does that do to me? And I, I didn't want that for myself.

Adapted Podcast:

So it's a lot of self-control. You were able to tap into.

Allen:

I don't know if it's self-control or not, you know, sometimes it's one step forward, two steps back.

Adapted Podcast:

Mm-hmm.

Allen:

<affirmative>. But anyway, I,

Adapted Podcast:

I don't know. Well, that had to have served your kids well anyway. I

Allen:

Mean, I don't know. I think the jury's still out, frankly. K

Adapted Podcast:

Yep. Well, so when did you start going back to Korea?

Allen:

My first trip back I think was 2009. And I think I've been back now about 18 times, something like that.

Adapted Podcast:

Wow. So I'm not good with math, Allen, how many is that? Multiple times in a year?

Allen:

Yeah. Before the pandemic, about the five years or six years before the pandemic, I was going twice a year.

Adapted Podcast:

I would notice you would go, like on Christmas, would you go during the work holidays and, yeah,

Allen:

Because that's when I had vacation time. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay.

Allen:

How? But, but now that I'm retired, I'm basically moving over there.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. I wanted to talk about that. So had, how long had this plan been hatching

Allen:

For like six or seven years? I planned, I strategized, I <laugh> I looked at, I'm laughing at myself because this is a small, crazy, you know what Rodda knives are those little cheap. I bought some of, some of those off of Amazon, these little sets of kitchen knives like six years ago. And I had started a little, like, what I'll call it, my moving to Korea Hope chest <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, you made a hope test for yourself for moving just like household items you would need

Allen:

Yeah, yeah. And stuff. And actually just this afternoon, the A moving band picked up 23 boxes and it, they're on their way to Chicago. They're on their way to Seoul.

Adapted Podcast:

So are you, you've packed up everything and taking it

Allen:

Now I'm gonna keep my place here in Illinois. especially, I, I have no plans, but especially while my father's still alive, I'll keep a place here. And of course, I have my kids and my siblings and nieces and nephews here.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. Okay. So when did you, like, what sparked it that you decided six years ago that you wanted to move to

Allen:

Korea? it was just something kind of within me. I felt like I had to try to ex to experience.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Is it kind of like a reclamation?

Allen:

maybe it is in some respects. I don't know. But it, it's an adventure

Adapted Podcast:

Or like a rebirth. Do you feel like you're being reborn?

Allen:

I wouldn't say reborn. I would just say I'm, I feel very fortunate to be able to have another chapter in my life.

Adapted Podcast:

And it, what is the, the goal, Allen, do you, do you wanna spend the rest of your days in Korea? I mean,

Allen:

Probably for the most part.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. That's, there's something really kind of poetic about that.

Allen:

Yeah. And, and frankly I've already <laugh> not to be more, but, but I've already looked into like Memorial Park or burial options and that sort of thing over there too.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, wow. Are you gonna get the hill? You know?

Allen:

well, so to get the hill, you gotta have land. And to get the land, you gotta have connections and or a certain amount of resources.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh. So when you see that in kras or they're pouring soju, that that's people that, that's people with money that are buried there.

Allen:

Well, I know, I know. I have friends who, their relatives have the hill, they're not necessarily well off, but they have family land.

Adapted Podcast:

Land. Okay. Yeah. Yeah.

Allen:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

And so once you sort of decided this was gonna be the plan, I mean, how did you, besides kind of stocking up on things you might need, how did you prepare?

Allen:

Well, I, I, I, to be frank I, I maxed out my 401k and my Roth IRA for many years before I retired for several years before I retired. yeah, I was saving like between 30 and 40, 35, $40,000 a year investment.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. To make sure that you would have enough money just in retirement. Okay.

Allen:

Yeah. Right. And I, I planned on my I my career I have a retirement from that, and I strategized there financially. I wanted to make sure all the kind of the financial pieces were in place. And then when I was over there, I started looking around at places, and I got my alien resident card. I have a bank account now and all that nuts and bolts kind of stuff.

Adapted Podcast:

Well, congratulations, Allen, on a year retirement.

Allen:

Yeah. It's exciting. It's an adventure. But, but, you know, k i I I tell you, it's also, you know, preparing to, to be over there. And then I, I've been back here for about a month now, and it's very familiar and comfortable here. It's e life is easy here. I could sit here on this couch and, and watch YouTube and eat Hoen dolls for the rest of my life if wanted. Right. Right. But now I'm gonna go over there and I'm gonna deal with X, Y, or Z as the culture and, and language and so forth. But, but one big advantages I, I have is I don't have to earn money

Adapted Podcast:

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.

Allen:

So that, that's, that makes a, you don't have to different

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. You don't have to try to fit into a Korean work culture. Right. The higher the hierarchy and all of that. Yep.

Allen:

Okay. I have some independence and freedom. So

Adapted Podcast:

Ellen, you're gonna be, you're gonna be like, you know, this kind of very desirable bachelor over there with, you know you know, single guy with money.

Allen:

well, I don't know about that. <laugh>. Yeah. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. actually

Allen:

I'm our, I'm in a relationship right now anyway.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, you are? With some, with a Korean woman.

Allen:

Y y yes. Uhhuh.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Oh, congrats, Allen. Wow. This is kind of, this is exciting.

Allen:

It's good. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

How long have you been dating?

Allen:

well, we dated for about <laugh> about eight years, and then we were off for like four years. And now we've been dating for about 18 months. We're back together.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, okay. Okay.

Allen:

So we know one another very well, a

Adapted Podcast:

Long time. Okay.

Allen:

Yeah. Uhhuh

Adapted Podcast:

<affirmative>. So someone who speaks English, I, I take it?

Allen:

Yes. Uhhuh. <affirmative>. Bilingual. She's bilingual. Yes. Uhhuh, <affirmative>,

Adapted Podcast:

Bilingual. Yeah. Okay. Okay. Wow. Well, that's exciting. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. so how did you go about finding a place and all of that? Or did she help you in sort of

Allen:

No, she didn't really help me. she's, she's a little, little younger than me, <laugh>. So I, she's still working. I'm retired, so there's different time constraints she has and so on. But I just had people help me over there. There's these apps, you look at things and like, I would

Adapted Podcast:

Like other adoptees,

Allen:

Or No, not so much other adoptees. Well, actually one helped me a little bit, but the Korean, my Korean friends over there, I've been fortunate to develop a, a nice community of Korean friends over there.

Adapted Podcast:

How did you make friends just starting on your trips?

Allen:

Yeah, various various spontaneous connections. One lady had this cafe I got to know another girl in her family. I, I love them dearly. They have a little souvenir shop near COVID actually. and I just, we just started talking and kind of befriended one another. He wants to, he wants to take me to the ginger bong and scrub my back now. <laugh> the guy.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, wow. You guys are close.

Allen:

Yeah, we are close. Yeah. Yeah. He's, he's a little older than me, but not that much. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

When you can like Yeah. Scrape off the dead skin. Yeah, yeah. Off each other. Yeah. So what do you think, now that you've been, like you said back 18 times and now you're moving back there, what has been like your favorite kind of cultural experiences or what do you like best about Korea?

Allen:

You know, what I like best are these spontaneous, delightful moments where people invite me to events and then the energy there, the food, the, the the ambiance is just wonderful.

Adapted Podcast:

Do you think people accept you as, as being a Korean, as being one of them?

Allen:

You know, so that gets back to you know, this identity conversation we always have, right? So some of my Korean friends will say, well, you're not Korean, you're white. And then some of my white friends will say, well, you're, you know, Korean. And in the final standing, I do kind of lay claim to this, you know, cam, we get to say who we are, right? I do kind of hold to that, you know, I don't speak the language. and my thought processing, my, my mannerisms are not like typical Koreans. I, I, I know that, but they have my friends, they have been very open and accepting of me. And it's a, it's a profound gift, and I don't take it for granted. It's very meaningful. When I was getting this apartment, this guy, I don't even know him that well, there was a problem with my bank, and I had to wire a million Juan about $750 at the current exchange rate to, to the landlord. And I was not gonna be able to do it. And we had this meeting with his realtor, my realtor interpreter, blah, blah, blah, that. And, and my friend said, oh, don't worry about it. I'll, I'll do it. So, so he loaned me, he basically loaned me a million won on the fly. Wow. Yeah, I thought so. It was humbling. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Wow. Ellen, you've really made some good friends.

Allen:

Yeah, I have people who invite me to things. They wanna go hiking and, and yeah, this, this one friend of mine invited me to her house for dinner, and I got there and she had two other friends there. And they, they do tango together, something like that. And so I don't know if I'm gonna go tango with them or what.

Adapted Podcast:

And do you wanna be seen, do you ultimately, is that a goal of yours to wanna become as Korean as possible? Or do you really think like that's a not a goal of yours,

Allen:

You know, it, it really isn't a goal, or I wouldn't say it in that regard. It's, I just wanna explore have experiences over there with as positive of a mindset and open eyes as I can.

Adapted Podcast:

I mean, I know you're keeping your house here for now, is it kind of, but you know, when you move over there, you'll probably see your family less over time. Is it something that, I mean, you had to have kind of Yeah. Had to really in a way it's kind of goodbye, isn't it?

Allen:

You know, I don't look at it that way because my family two of them live in Minnesota, <laugh> Oh,

Adapted Podcast:

In my next woods.

Allen:

Yeah. Rochester. And then my dad's in Idaho. My dad and my brother in Idaho. My other sister's in Richmond. So we're already spread out. Okay. In fact, if when I'm in Seoul, I can get to dad in Idaho just about as quick as I can get to him from Illinois. Cuz he lives in a remote area. It takes a good two days to drive out there. Now,

Adapted Podcast:

Do you like the Korean pace of life better than the states, or it's just different?

Allen:

Well, you know, there's some parts of it to be Frank, this terrible thing that happened to Ewan last week, the, the body 153 or whatever. it didn't surprise me. I went to a fireworks show along the Han River like six weeks ago. And the egress from that was similar. It was a, i I wasn't scared, but I was right on the threshold of being a little concerned. I was in a wave, oppressive a crowd. You couldn't stop. And if there had been some kind of an a, a, a precipitating alarming event, things could have gone south very quickly. So I was raised in a small town. My graduating class was 40 people <laugh>. So I'm still in awe and, and in terror of the mega city that is soul. but I'm trying to live there and just experience new things. I, I feel very fortunate. People ask me a lot of times, what do you do over there? Well, whatever I want. So sometimes I've done this a few times, I'll look on the metro map, I'll just pick out a station, I'll just go out there and explore. It's wonderful. It's absolutely wonderful.

Speaker 5:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Wow. You, this is, this is a, I'm really envious, Allen. This is like the time of your life to live it up.

Allen:

Yeah, this one lady she's a little older than me. She connected me with these Protestant nuns and they have an, Abby and I went out there twice. I helped clean up a little bit, and I'm gonna go out there with some retreats and just it's a hauk, it's a beautiful Hauk building. And I, I'm just so fortunate to have these connections.

Adapted Podcast:

So Allen are you planning to get your dual citizenship?

Allen:

pro I probably will.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. So right now you just have your,

Allen:

I wanna get that I wanna get that free subway card <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

What? You get a free subway card if you're a citizen and when

Allen:

You're 65.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, okay. And so what other benefits do you get as a ci, you know, if you're a citizen?

Allen:

I think it can make certain transactions a little bit more straightforward. But there are also some responsibilities, even with my alien resident card. I'm, I need to get the Korean medical insurance.

Adapted Podcast:

You, you said you're, you, it seems like you explore on your own quite a bit.

Allen:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

What do people make of you as being non Korean, speaking Korean?

Allen:

I, I don't know. I, I I will say this, you know, we run into you, you've probably have this experience too, when we, we meet what we call Korean Koreans. Right. We know, right. You know, right. Yeah. Yeah. So, and they'll go, you don't speak Korean, you don't you know, like, how can that be? And, and I wanna say to them, well, have you ever worked in a nuclear chemistry lab? Have you walked, hiked the Grand Canyon? Have you studied Russian? Have you driven from Seattle to Phoenix? Well, no. Why would I? Exactly. That's why I don't speak Korean. I had a different life than you

Adapted Podcast:

<laugh>. That's great. I wanna, I wanna use that. Yeah. But you but you'd say it in English though. I mean, you couldn't that, you know. Yeah,

Allen:

I, I could use a friend or a Google translator or something like that.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Okay. And is it your plan to, to study more, just study Korean and learn? Or do you Yeah.

Allen:

Yeah. What do you think I'll study, but, you know, I wanna add one more thing. Okay. Because Okay, sure. On the one hand, you know, we're, we're not Korean. We're, and we're not necessarily American depending on the view of other people. And yet because of we're in between, we underst things, understand things about Koreans that they're not objective about. And we also understand things about white America that they're not objective about

Adapted Podcast:

Either. Yeah. I got this. I got it. So here's another one of my, you know, conflicts where, you know, I had a very I was really good friends with a Korean woman when I lived over there a few years ago. And I made a comment that, you know, it's just, there's a lot of drinking in Korea. The culture here is the drinking because it's, it's very different. I mean, you could drink to seal a business deal. I mean so j I mean, just everywhere everything is with drinking and, and it, it's Oh yeah. To the point where absolutely, you know, when people are getting of all ages are getting, you know, intoxicated on a regular basis. And it's like I mean, not everyone for but it's just the culture.

Allen:

No, it's the vast majority much more accepted

Adapted Podcast:

And it's, it's accepted just pass out on the street, you know? Yeah. and she was really offended and she was also like, no, she couldn't see, she said, it's not any more than the states.

Allen:

It's more than the states. And

Adapted Podcast:

So <laugh> it's, it's, it's those kind of things that sometimes we're not able to be objective about our own Sure. Culture, you know?

Allen:

Yeah. You know, I, I, I've asked some of my female friends over there who are like little around my age are a little bit younger. And one of the criteria for mate or partner is hopefully they don't have too much of a drinking problem, cuz the males, they got a problem,

Adapted Podcast:

Especially like Korean men of your close to your age. Yeah. They're all probably heavy drinkers. They grew up drinking.

Allen:

Yeah. And so, I, I, I'm an outlier there cuz I don't drink at all. I'm a teetotaler.

Adapted Podcast:

And so do people expect you to, to drink when you're out with them then? If,

Allen:

I don't know if they do or not, but I don't drink and I don't feel any pressure really to drink. Okay.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. Yeah. Another thing is, I mean, Korea for, you know, as, as you know, when we go to Korea to, you know, a lot of adoptees, you know, it's fun, the food, the party atmosphere, soul, you know, is alive. sure. It's all really, it's, it's f it's fun and exciting, but when you live there, it's, you know, it can ch it changes. when you start to sort of the everyday life. Did you find that you, you've lived there now, like maybe six months or yeah. About, about that eight, six or eight months did

You find Yeah. Right. That your perspective changed after you lived Yeah,

Allen:

Of course. Because otherwise you, you're a tourist on vacation.

Adapted Podcast:

Right, right. And that's the, that's the chore that most adopt DC

Allen:

Right. No, I, I see the the bank, five different banks telling me five different reasons why I can't open an account or people crowding and rushing in the subway in front of the wheelchairs and people falling down, drunk in the streets, having meltdowns. the police tussling at, I've got, frankly, I got videos of a lot of this stuff too. <laugh>, a drunk guy in the hotel lobby, he won't leave. But, but Kay. The, again, the most meaningful, the connections and experiences I'm having with my Korean friends over there are, are really so, so meaningful to me.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. I can really hear it in your voice and I'm really happy for you that Yeah. That you're having these, and I Do you think it's the, it's the people that are different than Americans? Or are you more open to the experiences because you're in a new environment?

Allen:

I, I think to a certain extent, k we find what we're, we're looking for <laugh> sometimes. Yeah. I was just on a web meeting last night with this lady who was airing various grievances, <laugh>, lemme say it that way. And I felt sad for her.

Adapted Podcast:

In the States.

Allen:

Yeah. Yeah. Here it was. It was this group, and she was talking smack about other people. It's like, don't do that <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

Stay positive, but

Allen:

Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. That seems like that's kind of your motto. You kind of try to stay, stay positive.

Allen:

I try, Naomi, I try.

Adapted Podcast:

I mean, it's rubbing off just talking to you. I'm starting because I feel a little lighter <laugh>

Allen:

Honestly, what it does to people when they indulge that, what it does to themselves. And I don't want that for myself.

Adapted Podcast:

All right. Well, we are getting to an hour and a half, so I think I'm gonna kind of close it out, but I did wanna ask you if you had some advice for another adoptee listening about, well, first of all, other adoptees, you know, in their late fifties, sixties. Are, have you seen more kind of conversations about moving back to Korea after retiring?

Allen:

No, not really. because frankly, most of the adoptees that are my age married white people, and so they're maybe more tied to the USA because of that, or to Europe or whatever. Right.

Adapted Podcast:

and it, it's hard work to move country, you know, sort of after 50. Yeah.

Allen:

There's some, it's an investment of time and energy and yeah. Some stress. But again, that comes with the territory. Right. Eyes on, eyes on the prize. Kay. Eyes on the prize. Right.

Adapted Podcast:

So what, as you said, you've been hatching this over six years. What would you advice would you give folks, you know, now that you've been through it? Sure.

Allen:

Very practically, live beneath your means and plan your finances accordingly,

Adapted Podcast:

And just sock it away. And save.

Allen:

Yep.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. Will you give

Allen:

And, and develop connections and ask, ask questions so you don't have to do everything at the last minute.

Adapted Podcast:

You've been, you've been seeding this for many years. You've been planning, yeah. Okay. And even the relationships there, over there. Yeah,

Allen:

I have. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Okay. Well, Allen, this is, this is so exciting. Yeah. I'm looking forward to just watching your life unfold. And

Allen:

Will you be at Ika as well? Kay?

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah, I'm, I'm planning on it so we can,

Allen:

Okay. All right. Sure. Sure. I know the future's hard to predict it is, right?

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. if wanna get in touch with you or follow you, or is there,

Allen:

Are you open to that? Nobody wants to follow me. Kay. That's very kind of you to say, but nice try. Okay. <laugh> No. Okay. What, no, if, if people wanna have any conversation with me about being over there, I'm, I'm open to that. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. How can they get a get in touch with you, Allen?

Allen:

Well, I'm on Facebook as Allen Majors. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Look you up there. Okay. Yeah. Okay. Well, thanks Allen. I appreciate it. I got to know a little bit more about you, and I'm, I'm really excited for you, I think,

Allen:

And thank you for your work and for your contribution to the community with these podcasts. K,aomi it's, it's, it's a meaningful contribution. It's important.