

TAPE # BL 001 IV
Brian Lyons, November 6, 2004
JIM WHITAKER, Producer/director
PROJECT REBIRTH

01.00.30 PICTURE UP

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

JW : I'll let you start for a change.

01.00.44 BRIAN LYONS : We're talking about 3 years later, right? (~I~) The uh, things starting to affect me now, that uh, you know, you're out of the hustle and bustle of Ground Zero. It's about, well, it's over 3 years, right, 3 years an a few months?

01.01.00 The I'm starting to get effects of uh, what happened the first few days, starting to think about you know, walking up some of those dark stair towers. I think about a couple of weeks ago, for a whole week, I couldn't get like these images out of my head. I didn't sleep good at night. Uh, you know, very graphic type of things and on top of you know, some of the buildings, some airplane parts.

01.01.28 Some you know, different things from uh, you know, I don't know how graphic you want me to get into this (~I~)

JW : I'd like to know what you're thinking, and I can always edit.

01.01.38 BRIAN LYONS : You know, there was torsos that we had to walk over, and uh, some of those images I just could not get them out of my head, like last week. Now they're gone, but. Uh, you know, I felt that you know, some of these things were starting to affect me, so I, I called up Project Liberty and uh, I made some appointments with uh, you know, a therapist to make sure that you know, I can get checked out, which is like next week.

01.02.06 Uh, I, I go for my first appointment. To uh, you know, make sure everything's ok mentally with you. I, I think they do treat you uh, you know, physically, they're gonna send you for some blood, some more you know, lung tests, that type of thing. But you know, now it's a

little, it, it might be 3 years, but for me it's time to like, you know, look inward, make sure that you're fine you know what I mean, that you know, you don't have any long-lasting problems.

01.02.34 Or if you do, you're probably gonna have, you have to deal with them appropriately, you know? So uh, that's one thing I'm working on, trying to uh, you know, look inward and uh, you know, try to get better, if you know, there's some major things wrong. You know, make uh, you may not be able to see it yourself. People might be able to see from, from the outside. So I, I want to, you know, try to take a look at that, and see what, what's up with that.

01.02.59 You know?

JW : Had you had anything before last week, and what were the circumstances?

01.03.12 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, I don't know, I guess uh, it's been time past. You know, during the hustle and bustle of the recovery and the rebuilding afterwards and uh, starting a new project like this time last year. Uh, after the train opened, you know, you're not thinking of much.

01.03.29 But uh, I guess you know, when your mind has come to ease, you know, you get just a 40 hour week and uh, you know day to day events, then all of a sudden, things just started happening, started, you know, dreaming about different items and uh, different events that happened uh, at Ground Zero. Which is hard to remember, you know, there's a lot of things that are hard to remember. That's why good thing that some of the stuff is all on tape or recorded or something.

01.03.56 Because you know, some of those drastic items seem to uh, you know, leave your short term memory type of things. I guess that's a product of stress, from what I've been reading too. You know, it's hard to remember exactly what happened. I get flashes of like little certain items, like climbing a staircase, seeing what you seen on the rooftop, a piece of an airplane wing, body parts uh, that, that type of thing, you know? You know, the digging up of uh, bodies and human, human uh, remains, you know?

01.04.31 If I see an old shoe or something that's ripped up on like the side of the road, that's like whoa, I get like just a, a reminder of you, we, we'd see a lot of that down there, when you were excavating. You just, you know, you, you know, you get that. What, what it's doing

internally I, I don't know. So I, I really want to get checked out and uh, you know, there is some programs that are available, so I'd signed up for one.

01.04.57 Let's see what happens with that, hopeful can't hurt, you know?

JW : Was it just last week?

01.05.05 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, a couple of weeks ago, a few weeks ago (~I~) just like that, just like that. Sleeping and actually and well, (?) and a few weeks ago, that was October. I think 9-11 probably had some stuff to, to do with it. You know? The, the last you know, 9-11 and everything was fine, probably 'til a week or so after that.

01.05.29 I, I could tell you what, when I was, I went uh, I told you I gave that tour down at Ground Zero. Man, very (?) when I, when I first got there, even though I was there at 9-11, right? So it was probably a month later. It was like October 11th or October 15th or something like that. So a month later we were down there. And I could feel myself getting very emotional. Holding back tears and stuff like that just for like no reason. So (COUGHS) that was about the same time I was having those uh, that dreams and stuff like that.

01.06.02 But now it's kind of like hitting you, 'cos I could always go down there, and uh, you know, have a very good uh, you know, defense mechanism, if you will, of not, you know, not breaking down or being you know, very, you know, forceful of your emotions and so on. But uh, you know, this, that was probably like a month ago, middle of October. You know, I could, I could feel that you know, emotion coming out of me.

01.06.30 And trying to hold it back, hold back tears and stuff. I don't know, I don't think that's good from what I can read. It's not good to hold back your tears or emotions, so, I'm, I'm gonna try to you know, sign up for this program and see what I can do with that. You know, see if they can maybe if you vent some of that stuff, you know, that will help you a little bit, you know?

JW : We talked about your family history in the beginning without getting emotional?

01.07.30 BRIAN LYONS : Some of that I think is military training. Like you, you can't get emotional when you have jobs to, to do. And during those first couple of years, I, I had a job to do and

you know, I felt there was a job to do. We were doing recovery and then we were doing the initial rebuilding. And to get emotional and, and show emotion, you know, uh, it wouldn't be appropriate or it's not, not that it's not appropriate. It's just that it would take away from the focus of the job at hand.

- 01.08.02 So now, now I'm not there, so it's uh, pretty quiet down there. So uh, you know, now probably some of this emotion you know, is, is coming out, you know what I mean? It's like you know, there ain't days that don't go by I don't miss my brother. This morning I had to go to Home Depot, two brothers pulled up right next to me, got out of the car, going in to get plywood or something. Right away I missed my brother. You know, I would enjoy that.
- 01.08.28 Sometimes we would go to Home Depot, we'd get out, I would help him with something, or you'd talk about things. You know, it was just this morning right away I felt that, that emptiness this morning, you know? Just got to move on with that, that's all. You know?

JW : Have there been a lot of experiences recently?

- 01.08.48 BRIAN LYONS : That happens all the time. That's happened since the beginning, you know, you're driving to, you know, to work or driving home, you're always thinking about different things that you would want to say to him, or you know, stuff that you confided in somebody and uh, you know, he would be one that you know, I would talk to about, you know, the same things that I have in common.
- 01.09.08 You know, construction or you know, sports or, or whatever, you know? You know, you (?) that's probably a given and (?) it'll probably go on and on like you know, when uh, you know, the Yankees are playing Boston and they you know, win a game, you know, you're calling your brother up, hey, they just beat them 18-1.
- 01.09.32 You miss that. When they would win or they would lose, there's no one to call. I have other brothers, but it wasn't like uh, the same type of thing. You know, that, that's always constant, you know what I mean? There hasn't been a replacement for that yet. Like a friend or whatever might have happened with that, you know? Even though I did go to a couple of Boston games. I had guys with work, they were friends. It's just not the same. Not the same type of thing.

JW : How did you find out about Project Liberty?

- 01.10.03 BRIAN LYONS : Well, that's always been uh, public knowledge for guys that were working down there. It was always handouts, phone numbers, you know, groups, guys went. It was something that you know, that I knew about. I even had got workers I had working for me, I would give them the number and stuff like that. It's abandoned now, but when you call up the Project Liberty number, they refer you to uh, a community group in the city that you live in, pretty much.
- 01.10.31 It's like a 1-800 number, but the funding is pretty much washed up for that, so. (COUGHS) There is you know, I have health insurance that will cover some of that. There is one small group called CREW, Center for Rescue and Emergency Workers. And that's what I'm going through right now, signing up through that. There is some small funding for that. But uh, you know, it's, it's a common thing. And even in my profession you uh, you (?) know which groups and stuff.
- 01.11.00 You have guys that work for you that might need help or they have person (LAUGHS) problems and all sorts of things. You try to guide them, you know, in the right direction. You know?

JW : What about the days after finishing the PATH train station and did you have a sense of loss then?

- 01.11.24 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, absolutely. And when you uh, you know, especially at Ground Zero, you know, you, I was there from the recovery and then another year and a half doing the, the PATH train and uh, you know, the day that train opened, it was like a, the greatest accomplishment, you know, of uh, uh, of my work in history. You know, and uh, you know, I stayed on board another week or two and then I went to another job. But there's (?) absolutely, there's a feeling of emptiness there. That uh, you know, you, you have camaraderie with you know, different organizations down there, the Port Authority.
- 01.11.58 Uh, different contractors, different designers. Uh, you know, you become friends with some people. They, they've had some experiences with the 9-11 events. And uh, you know, it was like a small little family that was, it came to an end. It dissipated that day. And uh, you

know, and, and there's a lot of big jobs that are like that. You know, if you're building a big building in Manhattan, there's a group of people that are there for two years, and finally when the building opens, everyone's gone on their merry way.

01.12.26 And uh, depending on what job you go to or you know, what, you know, brings you afterwards, you know, it depends, that really has an effect on your emptiness, you know what I mean? So for me, yeah, sure I went to a different job. But it was uh, very low-key and there was only a few people there. So you know, this, you know, that job you would have a meeting with 50 people. So it was uh, you know, you, you definitely have an empty feeling of uh, takes (?) and that, and you get over that. And I, I've been in that situation a bunch of times with different, bigger jobs.

01.12.58 It takes a month or two to get over that, and then you, you're moving on.

JW : The circumstances are different this time?

BRIAN LYONS : Oh, absolutely, yeah, yeah.

JW : Was it stronger? Did you find that it's been different?

01.13.16 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, you know what it really what helped it was that uh, I probably would have felt more emptiness if work started at Ground Zero and I wasn't a part of it. Whereas, I left and work stopped there, pretty much.

01.13.31 So nothing has really happened since I left. So even though I was down there, like at 9-11 and in October, you're looking around, nothing's really changed from the way I left it. So there's not a bigger void. What would happen is if you went down there and they were building things and other people were in charge, and they were doing stuff, then you would feel like the, you know third wheel, left out. You know, you probably would be depressed that you weren't really involved with that kind of thing.

01.14.00 I'm anticipating some of that. Uh, I would think that just 'cos I'm with a construction company doesn't mean we will receive a bid to work, do any of the work down there, so. When work does start down there and (?) there is a bunch of activity, and you're not

involved, I can anticipate a very empty feeling, absolutely. That, that's probably gonna happen, you know? Definitely gonna happen.

JW : What about the tour you gave, and where things are at the site?

01.14.50 BRIAN LYONS : The uh, I was just down there like a month ago, giving uh, a tour. And uh, you know, nothing's happening. So uh, you know, the first couple of years, it was a lot of press. There was uh, master plans developed, this memorial that was uh, finalized and voted on and you know, all that stuff. But the reality is, is uh, you know, there's not gonna be nothing built there or, or finished there for years and years to come. I know the Port Authority has a preliminary plan, like to be finished by 2015, but that's really just uh, some of the infrastructure work there.

01.15.31 There's PATH station connecting to Fulton Street uh, transportation hub, tearing down one of the bank buildings, redoing some slurry walls. There's no word of uh, any of the other buildings or the beginning of any memorial construction. So uh, you know, probably some of it is funding and, you know, some of it is uh, probably some still architectural uh, you know, differences in things.

01.16.00 Even the Freedom Tower that's starting you know, that the corner stone was laid July 4th, you know, that's not moving forward as fast as people thought it might have been, so uh. It's still an empty site down there. Just very vacant, wind howling through there, it's very, very clean, which I was happy to see. Expressing myself to the Port Authority guys about that. It was very organized and clean, so that you know, there wasn't a lot of rubble and garbage laying all over the place, or left over construction debris.

01.16.31 Obviously it was probably cleaned up for the 9-11 events, but you know, now that it was cleaned up and you know, no one was there, and uh, you know, I did a tour around the outside gates and stuff. There were still a lot of tourists looking in. But uh.

JW : How do you feel about that?

- 01.16.48 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, don't like it, don't like it. There's still vendors there on some of the corners. And uh, it's a shame people want to sell memorabilia of what happened down there, but.
- 01.17.01 Uh, you know, this is New York, though, but that's, that's, this is what happens. It was you know, there was guys on the corner with signs, you know, about the war and, you know, there was other people with signs about stop terrorism. It's just, it's a magnet for people to come and get attention from, so. You know, if people still come from (?) all over the world, it's still a lot of people there uh, during the day. Just to come look at the place, so. And it, it was an average day, like a Tuesday.
- 01.17.27 So uh, you know, it's uh, it's a common thing that happened down there, and uh, you know, it doesn't bother me that people come from around the world to look at it, but when you get the people trying to make money off of it, it's uh. There's a guy, he stands, he tells a story about like what happened and this and that. And you know, you pay him \$2. He's got like a donation out there. Like he knew everything that happened. He probably wasn't even there. You know? It's just like, you know, shake your head when you walk by those guys.
- 01.18.00 But the tourists don't know. You get people from Ireland, they come by, see this guy talking. He's got all sorts of signs and, and uh, medals and pins and all sorts of stuff there, and they sit and listen to the guy for ten minutes. You know, they have no other place to get information from, I guess, so they you know, one's serving the other, I guess, there. But you know, that's America (LAUGHS). (COUGHS)

JW : What about 9-11 this year? Last year, you were in the middle of things?

- 01.18.57 BRIAN LYONS : This year was a little taken back. It was uh, you know, you know, I guess I found out when I was down there, this was the last time also they were gonna go down into the pit area. You know, anticipating construction next year, probably. You know, uh, you know, I thought that was a little strange. I mean, obviously it has to be done, you know, you're not gonna have family members all going down there when uh, there is uh, construction going on. I'm in a little different boat because I, I can get down there, I have access to get down into the site.

- 01.19.27 Even prior or after 9-11 events. But uh, you know, I was glad to be in the honor guard. I was in the honor guard from uh, the construction company I work with, which is uh, uh, you know, an honor to do that. My wife comes with me every year, so she uh, she didn't go out to be honor guard this year. She sat in a tent. But uh, you know, it, it was interesting. The uh, it seemed to be uh, what's the word I'm looking for?
- 01.20.03 Almost the same as the year before. It was just like they ring a bell, they start the names, people come down. They end the names, the ceremony's over, have a nice day. So that, that and, and that's probably (?) the way it's gonna be for 100 years now, you know, it'll be whether you're down in the pit or there'll be a memorial, you know, there'll be a thing, you know, at, at 8:48 in the morning, they'll ring a bell.
- 01.20.28 They'll be saying the names, and uh, you know, people will move on. one thing I really notice was there wasn't as many people. That was absolutely sure, especially family members. There were definitely was not as many people, and, and I could see that happening. The first couple of years it was all small family units. Now people have moved away and gone around, and people passed away and you know, people are older, and you know, you're not gonna have that uh, thousands and thousands of people (?) uh, family members that'll come year after year down there, you know?
- 01.21.03 So, you know, the better part was when I went to the (?) well, I went to my first uh, I went to the first firehouse my brother was at, Engine 44. It's on 75th street. The guys were all upstairs watching TV, blahblahblah. They have a memorial down on the first level out of stone with a plaque for my brother. And uh, that, you know, that's there. We put some flowers there.
- 01.21.31 But uh, you know, there was a lieutenant, he's in charge of the guys there that day. And uh, you know, I went in and I was with my wife, and we're like, oh, yeah, I'm Michael's brother and blahblahblah. It was a couple of guys that were stationed with them then. And uh, but uh, you know, they, they didn't want to know anything. They were like missing like, uh, you know, afternoon football or something, so they (LAUGHS) went back upstairs. And then the lieutenant was like trying to apologize for them. And I was like you know, no apology to me. I just came by to see the memorial.

01.22.01 You know? Which is another day at work with them, which I think some of the fire departments, that's what they try to do. They try to just make it another day at work. Not like uh, something special, but you know, and then we went to (~I~)

JW : How did that make you feel?

01.22.16 BRIAN LYONS : That was fine with me. The uh, you know, what am I gonna do, you know? That's their job, that's what they got to do. I'm in their firehouse. I'm glad there was a memorial there. You know? He was apologizing, but I, I told him, you know, it's no big deal for me. When we went to 41, Squad 41 uh, you know, they were definitely more receptive.

01.22.35 There was some guys that they didn't even know my brother there, but you know, I uh, he brought us in the kitchen right away, they made some food, made coffee. We sat down and talked. They got us some stickers and tee shirts, and they made a beautiful memorial, which I had never seen before. So it was very nice. When you went in the, when you went into the squad, where they have like the watch booth, which is where they have like the orders come in, have the radios, they log in everything.

01.23.03 They had made this whole thing about of beautiful oak and cheery wood, the guys made it with, with hand paintings of each fireman that was killed there. All fancy woodwork and a bench and a, and a platform. And it was uh, it was very, very, very nice. Oh, beautiful. And uh, it was all well-respected and, and shined up every day, and you know, the brass was shined every day on it.

01.23.30 And uh, you know, we well-received at that firehouse. You know, not that we weren't at the other one. But the, these guys were uh, you know, 41 definitely had uh, you know, a, a better, a better handle on uh, you know, what had happened. See, 44 didn't lose any people. They lost my brother, who had just got transferred out of there. But 41 actually lost the 6 firemen, so. You know, they (?) were more involved with that, you know?

01.23.57 And then, you know, later that evening, we went to the nighttime vigil at a volunteer firehouse, which is in my brother's town. Which Michael was a member of that. And excuse me, and his wife is a member now with the Women's Auxiliary and his sister-in-law is a member there. And the guys really chip in and help her out. She lives a few blocks away

from there. And uh, but there's a different chief this year. See, there was a chief that was there last year. He was there for two years, or he was there through 9-11 and last year.

01.24.30 So this guy, he was like new and he really didn't know what to do, so they had like a very small ceremony. It was only like 5 or 6 guys that showed up for it, I guess. And uh, you know, they had two guys holding a flag and two guys holding an ax and you know, that was, that was about it. But it was a very, it was very nice gesture that they had. And they had food afterwards and stuff, you know? And uh, you know, they give us an opportunity to speak. Uh, the three brothers.

01.25.01 My (?) second youngest, he wasn't (?) there, he's in, he's in Cape Cod, he couldn't come down. My older brother was there. But uh, it, it's all about the (?) the never forgetting now and the children now. 'Cos the kids are much older now. Even Michael's kids. One is like 4, and the other one's like two. So now they understand what you're saying. So you know, one of my things is if, if 9-11, if I get to speak or talk, it's all about the children and letting them know what happened, and keep memories alive now, you know what I mean?

01.25.34 You know, and now dwelling on the past or Afghanistan. That was like the first year, everyone wanted to like kill everybody. You know, it was terrorism and let's you know, blow everybody up and you know, we're going to war and stuff. So now it's like you know, it's just a remembrance to you know, to make sure people don't forget and you know, let the children know and make sure they move forward in life, and, and you know, some of the good things the kids did, you know?

01.26.04 So uh, you know, (~I~)

JW : Such as?

01.26.06 BRIAN LYONS : You know, talk about them, you know, what's her name made her first communion, and this year and you know, she got an A on her math test. And that's, I was trying to make them feel good, you know what I mean? And, and making them being picked out when there was people around, so they felt important type of thing. You know, it was about, it's about the children and the nieces and the nephews and so on, you know what I mean?

01.26.33 The, the same uh, adults come, you know, they, they know what happened. But it's just an opportunity to get the kids more involved with the family being together and, you know, giving them some motivational type of things to uh, keep them going forward, you know what I mean?

JW : It's important to you?

01.26.53 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, absolutely, yeah. so you know, and, and that was a, that was a nice tribute at the (?) the nighttime vigil, you know what I mean? See, before they had the candles. This guy doesn't have candles so I said next year when I go, I'm gonna call the whoever the chief is the day ahead of time and maybe give them some insight on what happens on a vigil, you know, a vigil. Some (?) you know, some people, you know, they have a nighttime vigil, John Lennon died you know, or somebody died and people have different things they do. They say a prayer, they have candles, they you know, have a ceremony.

01.27.27 Three people talk or (?) whatever it was. This one was not as organized as that. When they probably didn't know what to do, so, you know, I said, I said to Elaine, you know, like next year if they are gonna have it, and maybe there's, if there is a new chief or not a new chief, just talking to him for ten minutes a couple of days ahead of time gives them some ideas, and then they might realize that they could add that to the agenda. You know, just, you know, you're all outside with chairs and stuff, and there's adults.

01.27.57 And then the ceremony's over in 90 seconds and then people are gonna have a hotdog. You know, you're getting everyone together. It just uh, the inexperience of them having the new chiefs having uh, like a vigil like that. Was uh, you know, to get everybody there and stuff is a lot of work so you might as well just be a little bit more prepared with the agenda. So I'm gonna try to get involved with that next year.

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

JW : Where do you stand on the memorials?

- 01.29.19 BRIAN LYONS : The uh, no, no, I'm, I'm for them. I'm for uh, you know, I'm, I'm all for that kind of stuff. The uh, I definitely know that it, that uh, it all falls by the wayside, like year after year it gets, it gets uh, less and less important to people, you know what I mean?
- 01.29.40 Even family members. Some people don't want to even bothered. You know, I've had, I've had it, I'm done, I don't need to do that. They've moved on with their lives and that type of things, you know what I mean? Fortunately, for my brother's sake is he, he was (?) from the beginning, from the first couple of memorials, you know, people uh, took hold of his memory.
- 01.30.06 Like the fire department and Squad 41, and there's a couple of places in Canada that come down. And, and they have you know, embraced that memory and, and they get involved during that 9-11 part of the year, to keep that memory alive. Whereas, you know, a guy that was working on 104th floor, whatever, no one knows nothing of the guy, you know what I mean?
- 01.30.33 But he, he was lucky enough, he be a uniformed person and, and then there were certain individuals and he was involved with you know, different volunteer agencies that you know, they embraced it and they have put plaques up and, and different things. And uh, you know, his memory will be, you know, more memorialized than many, many, many other ones. So uh, I mean, I think that's good. I think it's good for his children to, to know that.
- 01.30.59 You know, I, I thought about definitely getting some more information and (?) this year and, and, and part of the thing is I, I'm uh, I don't have enough ump right now. Uh, maybe it's part of some depression that's coming on. Usually I can do 8 things at one time. There's some things I want to do in the next couple of years that it has been hard to get done. But uh, definitely make either like, not writing a book or something, but just writing things down and getting all the stories straight.
- 01.31.30 So when his children get older, and, and even my children. They're younger, but uh, then I would be able to tell them stories that are accurate, of the time and the place of what had happened. They really want to know what happened, or you know, the way he was or the way things were. I want to try to encapsulate that somehow to, to pass on to them. You know, and pass on to other people. So you know, this year, maybe when January comes, I get a new year's resolution to try to, to make some of that a reality.

- 01.32.03 You know, there's this uh, thing I want to try to build with my brother's uh, fire gear that I wore down there, and I found the haligan, and I, I want to try to make that some type of uh, uh, what's a good word for that, in a (?) hopefully it might go to a museum, but a uh, uh, you know, put it in a display, I would say.
- 01.32.31 That could be looked at, for people to look at, to see what was involved during that time period, and what was found. You know, like I think the uh, week before 9-11, uh, I was out to dinner with all the guys from work. The, the executives from work, and we go out to dinner every Wednesday night. And uh, they were all you know, very involved with the 9-11 recovery and so on. They know what, I lost my brother there.
- 01.33.00 But they didn't realize I had found his haligan. So after dinner was over, I told them, listen, uh, 9-11's like in a couple of days. I have something in the car I want to show you guys. And uh, you know, I came in and I said, you remember how hard, how, how much stuff was there that we were taking out, thousands of ton truckloads of stuff. I said, sort of and I put on the table my brother's haligan that I found. And I said look, this is what I was searching for the whole time I was there. It was like finding a needle in a haystack.
- 01.33.30 It's like the pinnacle of focus. I found it. You know, and they were, you know, they were all stunned. They didn't realize I had found that thing. You know, they were all looking at it and stuff. But uh, you know, that, that's the type of thing that should be, it's like invaluable. Like it's not even worth \$10 million. It's worth whatever. It's, money is not a value on that thing. So if you lost it, it's priceless, you know what I mean?
- 01.33.57 So I want to try to put it in some type of display and you know, encased and should be in a museum pretty much. You know what I mean? Because that was something that was searched for in, in particularly. There was a lot of coordination that people didn't even realize that they were doing that when I was asking them questions. But I knew he had irons, which meant he was carrying a haligan that day. That's what, if you have, if you're assigned irons on a, on a fire rig, that means you're carrying the haligan and the uh, sledge hammer.
- 01.34.30 If you're assigned roof gear, you're carrying the saw and a rope. So he was assigned irons, so we knew, I knew I was looking for a haligan. So you know, and then once again on St. Patrick's Day we, we uh, found that, and uh, it needs to be displayed and then probably when his kids get older and stuff, you know, they, you know, they can have it. You know, I asked

Elaine right now, I'm (?) keeping it, you know, as a memory. And uh, we'll see how that goes.

JW : That was your single focus?

- 01.35.07 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, well, I'll explain this to you. What, what happens is, what happened was uh, we knew from the beginning that the rig, their rig, was found on Broadway and Fulton Street. And that's all you know. No one knows what building they went into, where they were at. So you're, you're left with you know, trying to find this stuff out.
- 01.35.30 So you're hearing bits and pieces. You're trying to talk to different squad members, and they might have heard something over a radio, while they were (?) responding after the buildings fell down. Did you hear where Squad 41 was dispatched to, and you know, no one really knew anything. So you know, a couple of visits to the firehouse, you know, I could see on the wall he was having irons. So you know, obviously during the recovery, we were looking for fireman's tools, firemen's jackets. Helmets. Any type of gear.
- 01.36.02 So for 41 we knew they, they were a squad. They were a (?) special rescue unit. So they had special tools. They had like elevator (fluck and priers?) and you know, all, all sorts of different things like that. But I knew that my brother was carrying a halogen because he was called irons. So I was always looking for haligans. That (?) there was haligans found, you know, different areas, and you know, it never turned up to be you know, 41's.
- 01.36.32 But on this, on (?) St. Patrick's day afternoon, standing right next to the machine, the (?) a piece of metal flew out, came 6 feet away from me. That was a haligan. I picked it up, it was Squad 41's haligan. That was Michael's haligan right there. So then we dug with that and ended up finding more 41's uh, tools.
- 01.36.57 Like an elevator pry bar, something head of another ax, you know, different things. And (?) I think another haligan or two. And stuff like that. So you know, definitely, you know, that was something that you know, I don't know it's like you're finding needle in a haystack. You see pictures from the first day with two towers and a big mound on fire, and finding that haligan that he carried you know, definitely big accomplishment. You know, and (?) I'd like to get it displayed properly and, and so on.

JW : Were you emotional at that moment?

01.37.30 BRIAN LYONS : Oh, yeah, yeah, (~JW~) yeah. Yep. And uh, it was very, very cold. By this time, it was like 4 or 5 in the afternoon we found it, and I dug with it 'til about midnight non-stop. And I had some uh, screens made up so we could sieve through some of the material. And uh, you know, we sieved through some of the ash and found some tools and some bones and, and all that type of thing, you know?

01.37.58 So and in all due respect, I gave uh, it's actually the firehouse's haligan, so I actually gave it back to them, which I really didn't want to do. But (?) out of respect and courtesy of their beliefs, as a firehouse, I did that. And then they all voted on it and gave it back to me, so. Otherwise it's just gonna sit in their basement, probably, so. That, you know, that, that was a nice gesture for them.

JW : Have you had a chance to emote over the past?

01.38.40 BRIAN LYONS : No, no, no. No. you know? I don't know why, but you know, just uh, very strong-willed person, I guess. You know? (COUGHS)

JW : How's Michael's family doing?

01.33.00 BRIAN LYONS : Well, Elaine lost her father this year. The girls are bigger. Uh, Mary's birthday was just the other day, November 2nd. She was, she's 3 years old, yeah. it's like very quickly it went by. So she's 3 and uh, Caitlin's 4. She'll be 5 this year. So uh, I mean, the girls are fine, right? They don't really know. I, I know the uh, Caitlin she's gonna be five, she's starting to realize now about her dad and stuff like that, that she doesn't have a dad.

01.39.36 And uh, you know, Elaine, I think she's still hurt. She, absolutely, it's only 3 years. Definitely hurt, still. You know, she lost her father. She has a family support. Her mother lives right next door, her sister's there. She has some brothers. You know, we go by there. But you know, childhood sweethearts, so uh, you know, very, very hard to get over, you know?

01.40.00 Money doesn't solve everything. You know, she has fireman widow funds that come in, and this and that, but you still have the every day task of you know, raising children. They get a cold, someone's got to bring them to school. You know, you miss the father figure. So I think it's still very difficult.

JW : What about your family?

01.40.34 BRIAN LYONS : Right, right. I've been trying to make time like that. I don't have to work on the weekends, so uh, but I'm building an extension on my house, which is not going as good as I like, you know. It's, I'm a little (?) I don't, I can't go as fast as I would like to. The wind yesterday blew down one whole side of my wall. That's not a good thing. I had, I had the logs up with the peak to about 32 feet.

01.40.57 I was gonna tie the ridge beam in today and we had very heavy winds yesterday. And when I came home, the whole section blew over. I didn't have it tied back. It was, been nice weather, and uh, it's very heavy, the logs. I didn't think there was a problem there. Yesterday, we had such bad winds, it must have worked on it, worked on it, and then blew the whole top section over. So today I had some (LAUGHS) guys up there today, we're refixing that section (LAUGHS). The goal is to get it all closed in by winter.

01.41.26 So you know, get the roofs on and stuff before heavy winter sets in. So I think I'll be able to do that.

JW : We want to come up there.

01.41.35 BRIAN LYONS : Yes. It's actually coming out nice, very nice. You know, so. I'll be glad when that's all over. Construction never ends. I'm building my house since uh, well, the first house, I, I built it in '95, right? So around '98, '99 I finally finish pretty much everything. So you could come home and sit on the porch once in a while. But you know, I, around 2001, just before 9-11, I was deciding well, I'm gonna put an extension.

01.42.02 I need a garage, I might as well do it while the kids are younger, so I wanted to get that done. And then we started that, then I had this whole 9-11 thing. So that dragged some stuff on, so. Since the beginning of the year, I, I've accelerated that, you know, I refinanced to get the

logs, and built the garage, and did the foundations, and now we're just trying to get the, the roof on before winter. You know?

01.42.30 So uh, we'll see. And (STUTTER) that takes a lot of time, you know, you, everything is all busted up and your stuff's in the driveway, and you know, still takes time to get rid of all that stuff. You know?

JW : The bridge washed out?

BRIAN LYONS : Oh, god help us with the bridge. (LAUGHS) it was terrible.

JW : What about the family fiasco?

01.43.01 BRIAN LYONS : Well, the girls (?) the girls are in Irish Dancing, which is good, and they do Girl Scouts and some gymnastics. You know, and uh, you know, and now Laurie has a little more time to herself because Patricia's in school full time, you know, from first grade. So she's catching up on stuff this year. You know, we still got the construction of the house going on, so it's like a mess 'til uh, you know, you can get it all buttoned up.

01.43.26 But you know, uh, you know, we, we went, we're going to uh, uh, northeastern (?) northeaster championships in uh, Philadelphia in Thanksgiving time. The uh, you want me to tell the story about the uh, thing? There was this one uh, event that (~JW~) happened like a couple of weeks ago. Uh, the schools advertised that they were gonna have a uh, that uh, UPN 9 was gonna pay the school to dance, they needed an Irish dancing school, so you know, they were picked to do some dancing as a fundraiser.

01.44.03 So they, they needed some prize winner dancers to go and their parents. So uh, we volunteered. It was a thing saying \$10 to get in. When, when we got there, supposed to start at 7. Couple of hours later, they tell us it was really not a dance show but it was one of the, one of the mothers and her daughter was getting a makeover by this, by this show uh, Ambush Makeover. Which turned into, to, to a fiasco, because no one even showed up there 'til like 11:30 at night.

- 01.44.36 And (LAUGHS) uh, the kids were all tired, and it was a big uh, you know, big disaster downstairs. No one knew where to put cameras and, you know, no one was organized, and now it's like 1 o'clock in the morning, and had young kids down there, anywhere from 3 to 9. And they were all falling asleep. And uh, we got bamboozled by the school (LAUGHS).
- 01.45.00 So and then we got a bill from the teacher for \$20 yesterday for uh, for the two parents going there. I ain't paying that, I'll tell you that right now (LAUGHS). So uh, you know, that's part, part of (?) the school thing. So uh, you know, it's just one of those things with uh, your extra activity, whether it's girl scouts or dancing school or gymnastics, it's uh, you know during fund (?) like if you're gonna have a fund raiser, you know, who's selling the most cookies.
- 01.45.30 And you know, what they get, who didn't sell cookies, it's all like you know, you know, social, social uh, event. But uh.

JW : how are the kids in general?

- 01.45.43 BRIAN LYONS : No, no, kids are, kids are good. School is going fine, you know? Next event is Christmas, right? So they all look forward to that. You know, they like the wintertime is here, we get snow and sleigh riding and all that stuff, so. You know, they're having out with their friends, and uh, you know, everything is fine.
- 01.46.01 I guess. The uh, just normal, normal young kids, thank God of that. You know? And my wife is doing fine, you know, she uh, you know, has a little more time that Patricia's in school full time. So they can uh, you know, she can go shopping and, and do a couple other things. But you know, in general at home, it's fine. You know, I, by the time I get home, I'm very tired, though. I, I think I'm too tired. That's why I, I'm gonna go try to get this uh, this uh, to this therapist or this, this uh, this Project Liberty, get checked out this, to see what happens, you know?
- 01.46.37 You know, wintertime in general, it gets dark early now. It's 5 o'clock. By the time you get home from the city it's 6, 7 o'clock, you know, your night's over. Help the kids with the homework, which I like doing. You know, Elizabeth likes me helping her with her math.

You know, which is good. She's very good at English, which I'm not at, so that's good. So uh, she can you know, write her own and, you, you think you know math.

01.47.03 But when they bring home 4th grade math, it's like you, you know how to do it, but you have to do it the 4th grade way. Which is not the way that she knows how to do it, so. You know, everything gets all tense because you think, you know, if you're multiplying something it's like yeah, ok, this is the way you do it, or division. They're like no. Teacher said you got to do that, it's long division, with the thing, and you've got have remainders and you know, all right.

01.47.30 Hold on, what did they teach you in school today? I don't know what they went over. You know, so you got to watch those type of things. They get very sensitive on that. (LAUGHS) you know? What's simple for us they're (?) learning the long way, like you forgot, but you know, you just got to watch how that goes. (LAUGHS) you know?

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

01.47.56 END OF TAPE # BL001

TAPE # BL 002
Brian Lyons, November 6, 2004
JIM WHITAKER, Producer/director
PROJECT REBIRTH

02.01.00 PICTURE UP

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

02.01.50 BRIAN LYONS : My older daughter's 23, right? She's from Laurie's first marriage, but like I raised her from she's like 3 or 4 years old, and it's just like (?) done. It's over. So I (?) I try to uh, you know, make time to do all those little things. Take them fishing, build a fort. Any, anything you possibly can do, you know what I mean? Read to them. Like I used to carry them upstairs all the time. My wife would get so angry. Leave them alone, you're spoiling them. I'm like you know what? Sooner or later I ain't gonna be able to carry them upstairs.

02.02.28 And now they're too big, I don't carry them no more. It's over. The little one used to sit on my lap every night, eating dinner. Aggravating my wife. And that's over now. Now she ain't doing that. Too big. She has to sit on her, you know, she sits on her own chair now. She's never gonna sit on your lap again to eat dinner. I would have her every day, I don't care. I, even if I couldn't eat. She's like, you can't eat, put the kid down. Like I don't care if I can only eat with one hand. She's only gonna (?) it's gonna be very quickly, very quick, and it's over already, you know? Over already. Yeah.

JW : Are you more tired?

02.03.14 BRIAN LYONS : Right, right. Like even, even stuff at the house, you know, you know, I have a house in the country. There's lots, you know, I got land and there's things to do, close the pool, do this, put up a fence, fix the thing. Building the house, put the stuff in the garage, take out the Halloween stuff, put the Halloween stuff away.

02.03.30 Take out the Thanksgiving stuff, put that away. Put out the Christmas stuff, put that away (COUGHS) I'm already tired just talking about it, all right? (COUGHS) But that's what

happens. It's like oh, man, it's like I can feel myself not, not having the initiative to do that, you know what I mean? There's a, 'cos it's like, there's a couple of things that I, I wanted to do this year that I you know, I was on a newer job.

- 02.03.56 It, it was pretty fast paced with some uh, uh, I guess if you want to call it construction uh, headaches. You know, there's union problems. There's a lot of coalition people, you know, there's a lot of things that happened in the day that takes a lot of energy out of you. But you know, going home, you know, I, it was a few things I, I was supposed to do this year, like uh, I wanted to make that display, right, which I didn't get to do that. Uh, it was a few other things, you know, financially I wanted to redo and do this, and that, and that just takes time from phone calls and, and uh, you know, paper work, which I, which I didn't get to do.
- 02.04.41 Uh, I have two vehicles in the back of my house that I need to sell, vans and some an old car I got which I haven't even started them up which I need to do and get that out of there. So hopefully in the beginning of the year, I can make these uh, you know, make an agenda and try (?) to get those things solved.
- 02.05.03 There was, there was one thing that I started working on in uh, was probably in February, where uh, I (?) started filming some stuff, when I started the project (COUGHES) on 56th Street. It's a, was fairly, it's a fairly big project, and (?) civil-engineering wise, not a lot of that stuff all happens on the same job.
- 02.05.28 Like we had to excavate down to the bottom of the old Hudson River bed, which was underneath an old building that we were in. And you know, we were uncovering uh, stuff from the mid-1800's, bottles and, and different times that would come out of the ground. So we also were getting infiltration of the Hudson River water, so we had to do special de-watering.
- 02.05.56 And then we had buildings that were next to us that were moving, so we had to underpin them. Then we had a, one that had no foundation. We had to do some special grouting systems that's never really been tried in the United States, let alone New York City. And uh, I had all these special drilling machines, and special excavators. So, you know, one of the things I do enjoy is watching TV at home, that it's the Discovery Channel, Extreme Engineering, where they show you they, how they built a uh, thing out in the middle of the ocean, an oil rig or, you know, they, they built the Big Dig.

- 02.06.32 You know, different things like that. So what I was interested in doing was trying to capture some of those things that happen every day on film, like dock builders, drilling a hole and, and filling it with concrete. All in an 8-hour day. So uh, had actually talked to uh, uh, this guy I know from Great Projects. He, his office is like 2 blocks from that job.
- 02.07.00 Uh, you know, about something like that, being uh, let's say an achievable thing to happen to make into like a 30-minute show that would be on like Discovery channel, something like that. And what happens is they have done some documentaries and you, and, and you see what happens. It's like uh, extreme engineering. They, they show you how they build this oil uh, rig. Now the thing took three years to build. Or five years to build, ok?
- 02.07.30 So you (?) filming this thing for 5 years. So it's a lot of time, a lot of overhead. It's, it's a long thing. And then when it's all put together as a production on a tape, someone's gonna buy for you for X amount, and they're only gonna pay X amount, so you know, it depends on your production costs how long it took. So we had run some things where as uh, I came up with some small items that would happen in New York City like uh, you know, you're putting a tower crane up, and these things could be done in like 2 days, because it only takes two days to put a tower crane up.
- 02.08.05 But actually how they put it up. With the iron worker there, bolt-ening it together. This is the piece they're putting in there. This is how they put the carriage on top. So when people are driving in Manhattan, they see a tower crane over there. It's like no one really knows how they get it up there, and how it's put together and what it actually does. So uh, I was interested in making some of those type of small production things.
- 02.08.32 And you know, getting them into uh, you know, a 30-minute show, which was fine. And I did all the legwork like in one week's time, the beginning of the year. But then, you know, I just never had the enthusiasm ever to, to, to finish or follow-through with that. You know, I've made some contacts, and then besides the house and these other things, you just don't have that initiative to get these things accomplished, so.
- 02.08.59 And, and I believe some of that could be the depression after, after the fact of getting, you know, out of the mainstream at Ground Zero and starting a new job and then, you know, now these things are hitting you and uh, you know, you know you don't know what they all are. That's why I'm trying to, you know, maybe go to therapy and see, you know, what, what these things are all about. You know, maybe there is some depression there and you have to

get treated for that. You know, you're always tired or you know, you, you're getting stress in your neck or, or you know, whatever, whatever it maybe, so. (COUGHS)

02.09.32 I'm very interested in getting uh, that looked at and (?) getting some professional help on it, and see you know, what might happen from there, you know? Even my wife is like, you know, you come home, you go to sleep. I'm like well, I'm tired. But there's only so much times you can be tired, you know what I mean? So there's got to be something there, probably. So I'm very interested in, in having that looked at.

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

JW : Is it affecting your kids at all?

02.10.07 BRIAN LYONS : Uh, I didn't know. See, I don't, I don't think it is, but. You know, you never know, you know? It's hard to, you're inside, you know, you're not outside looking in, so maybe the, you know, we can get some of that to happen. My wife said she would come you know, and find out if they wanted her to come and uh, you know, a family unit obviously is affected by things that happen in your family.

02.10.28 So you know, uh, you know, not, people don't just knock on your door and say hey, you guys are acting like idiots or why are you doing that or you know, no one really knows, you know? people if anything, people talk behind your back about that family or this person or whatever. So you really (LAUGHS) don't know, know if there's a lot of things wrong, you know what I mean? I would just know that it's not normal for me. I usually do more things and have achieved goals more and more, and I've noticed this year I did have some, and a lot of them didn't get accomplished.

02.11.02 And it's already almost the end of the year. So uh, you know, in between the 9-11 thing and having some of those dreams uh, you know, I felt that it was time to (?) get some professional help and take a look at that, you know?

INTERVIEWER : What do you see happening in terms of building at Ground Zero?

- 02.11.48 BRIAN LYONS : I know that there was a cornerstone laid, right, for the Freedom Tower, which I didn't get to see it. I was down there the other day and they must have took it. You know, they must have put it there and then they took it away. But that's actually happening, the building's on the corner of Vessey and West Side highway.
- 02.12.04 Which there is now a part, the rest of Building 6, their parking garage is slabs and stuff that need to be taken down for that building to go up. So know they're working on that, but there's only a couple of people working on it, and so you, you would have thought by now, I, I know I took a lot of that down myself, and I had a crew of uh, 30 guys, maybe, to take a lot of it down. I, I looked up there a couple of weeks ago, there's only like two guys.
- 02.12.30 So uh, to me that's something's on hold there or you don't know the whole story or something, something's happening there. But uh, from what I know is the, the train was continually run, that uh, you could see it when you're in Ground Zero, you can see the PATH comes in, out of one tunnel to the station and goes through the other tunnel. Which is, that's one of the inhibitors of the Freedom Tower. The (?) PATH train which is functioning and has to keep functioning, the Freedom Tower has to be built over that while the train is still operating.
- 02.13.07 And when they redo the station, which the Port Authority ahs a plan to do. I think they're gonna do it in four increments. Whatever, pre, pour and place walls, and then moving slurry walls back, and then building the interior of the station and then connecting it to the hub, something like that. That all will be done with the operating railroad in progress.
- 02.13.31 It's the same way they built the Twin Towers anyway. The H&M line stayed in operation while they built the towers, and then when the towers were built, they actually made the loop. I don't think there was a much, much disturbance through that at all. I don't know exactly what it was, but I'm sure it wasn't more than a week or two that they actually had to disturb to make the final uh, loop back, back to the other uh, other tunnel.
- 02.13.58 Uh, I know there's a building that's gonna come down that the uh, the Deutschbank building, which is structurally sound. I don't know why they have to have that come down, but it's another political thing with uh, insurance monies and uh, what they want to do with that property, but. It's like a 45-story building that, that is structurally sound. It hasn't, it has mold and all these things inside that are outdated, but the structure itself is sound, so I don't see why they couldn't redo that, you know what I mean?

- 02.14.32 Building 7 is going up. It's all topped out and they barely have like a quarter of it rented out. So that's not a good sign (LAUGHS) You know what I mean? It, they're gonna be in a couple of years the thing will be open for business and they, they don't even have a quarter of it rented yet. They, they still have the same problems down there in, in Lower Manhattan. The uh, you know, getting people there. It, it's not a, it's not a dynamic transportation area. Midtown, you've got all sorts of trains coming from all suburbs there.
- 02.15.03 And uh, from the Tri-state area. Downtown, you don't. So uh, you know, that, that's still a little bit of a problem. You know, I'm envision uh, I would like to work on some stuff down there, but unless our company gets uh, involved with that right now, that, I don't see that happening. And uh, you know, I, I would see, you know, the Freedom tower, if that's gonna go that has to be built over the train. Uh, so then you, now you have two buildings that are built, 7 and the Freedom Tower.
- 02.15.31 That has a lot of office space in it. And you have all these other buildings that they plan on doing and they don't really have tenants to go in them right now. And uh, they really have to be built before we can build the memorial, which is supposed to be on the inside of those buildings, over the footprints. So I don't think there's really a plan for that yet, from what I, from what I know on that, so. Uh, I see Ground Zero now as a, as a slow-moving evolution.
- 02.16.01 Ten years, 15 years. So you've got 2015, that's eleven years for Port Authority. That's just infrastructure work, right? Unless you, I would say good 15, 20 years by the time you get transportation and new buildings down there and whole, whole bunch of things, I could see that happening. Three years went by like that already. They just picked up the garbage (LAUGHS) from down there, that's all I could see happening, right?
- 02.16.30 It's 3 years gone by. Went by very quickly. You know, 3 ½ years will be here by the time spring arrives. You won't see much work down there, yet. There's no press on it so uh, you know, you don't really know what's gonna happen down there.

INTERVIEWER : What else would you like to talk about, anything that you might not think is interesting?

- 02.17.00 BRIAN LYONS : Well, I, I one day uh, (COUGHS) I was after, I, I gave the tour to the uh, dean of Notre Dame. The dean of engineering (COUGHS). They all went home, and then I, I

spent about a half an hour, I went to the entrance of the PATH train up on Church Street. And I just stood in the corner in the back, and just watched everybody go by. And I was just taking that tin a little bit.

- 02.17.27 And it was, it was just very interesting. I, I was watching a lot of the people, you know, couple of people asked me some questions, where's that, where's this, you know? Uh, mostly tourists it looked like. It wasn't during rush hour. So uh, there wasn't a lot of commuter people coming out of the trains. 'Cos it was about 10, 11 in the morning, so. Was just regular uh, New Yorkers or tourists all around. And uh, you know, I was just reflecting on what happened a year ago, the train opening, you know, what this looked like.
- 02.18.02 That happened to be one of my command post areas during the actual first couple of weeks, 9-11, right there by across from the Millennium Hotel. So I was trying to remember some of that. Uh, it was very interesting. I, I stayed there about a half an hour. And then I just walked into the crowd, up into Broadway, got a slice of pizza and got on the train and went back up to my (LAUGHS) other job. So uh, it was very interesting. You know, I was by myself and uh, you know, I, I took, I'm glad, I took some time just to take that in a little bit.
- 02.18.36 You know what I mean? And uh, you know, it was very interesting. It's, it's very, it's not like, you know, when you're down there, you think, some people think of it as, well, what it is, is, it's different because when the Twin Towers were there, a whole different you know, buzz. Because uh, I've stood down there at the same time. It's like it was all like a business buzz, you know, there was big towers, it was marble uh, concourses, you know.
- 02.19.09 There was uh, you know, fountains and so on. and it was like a whole like different thing. That, that's definitely gone. It's just like it's uh, it's like, it's not like a graveyard, but it's just like it's in a back alley ware house type of thing now uh, you know, feeling when you're there. It's like it's not like, it's that big urban city type of thing.
- 02.19.36 You know, shiny building, towers were very shiny on a sunny day. And outside was aluminum, whatever. And uh, you know, marble, marble promenades and stuff like that. Solid granite sidewalks. So it was really, I've been in both situations. I, I when I was in the service down there in the Coast Guard, I used to go up there once in a while and hang around there. You know, I got engaged on the top of the Twin Towers.
- 02.20.03 And uh, you know, now I had, went through that whole event, and then I was just sitting there watching, you know, basic commuters coming up and in and out of the PATH train

station with a lot of tourists just coming to look at the empty hole, which you can't really see (LAUGHS). You can't really see Ground Zero from any of the fenced areas. I mean, the, the bathtub area. It's very hard to see from like church Street or West Side Highway, you can't see anything, so.

02.20.31 It's not like the public really gets to see the actual bathtub, it's very hard to see from public access.

INTERVIEWER : What were you thinking of primarily?

(SIMULTANEOUS CONVERSATION)

02.20.44 BRIAN LYONS : I was just trying to take it in. Just trying to watching people's faces when they were walking by, different people, you know? You know, even in Midtown. You know, you just, I, I just, I enjoy it, took, sometimes, even uh, where I work now. Is at lunchtime I would pull up to 8th Avenue and I just watched the people go by.

02.21.03 You know, you see a couple of weirdoes going by, you see families, groups, different guys with their own mission, you know, guys standing there reading the Bible for like 3 hours, you know? Now some people think that guy is crazy, but it's just like, you know, this guy's standing there for 3 hours, reading the Bible. He's got, you know, I don't know, stamina, I don't know, he's got something, you know what I mean? (COUGHS)

02.21.30 You don't want to get too close to those kind of guys, but it just, you know, you know, it's New York. I mean, that's, some people don't experience those type of things, you know? So you know, you take some of those things, and there was a guy there that day, rambling on about something, I don't know. The world's coming to an end, you know, those kind of guys. So uh, it's very, very weird. You know, and then you know, people you're not supposed to pay attention to them, no one does, people just walk by them, you know? You know, and then there was tourists and uh, you know, nothing out of the ordinary.

02.22.01 But you know, it was nice, it was nice to take it in a little bit.

INTERVIEWER : You didn't tell me you got engaged?

- 02.22.08 BRIAN LYONS : Oh, no, no, no, I got engaged on top of the Twin Towers. Very big thing. The Twin Towers was a big part of my life. When you're a kid, and I was into, you know, building and stuff, you know, those two big buildings, man, were like an icon for people like me, I guess. You know, I grew up around here and uh, yeah, I got engaged uh, September 12, 1990. No, 1989 on top of the Twin Towers.
- 02.22.35 I got down on one knew. My wife said, what are you getting sick? My girlfriend. And I said no, no. we ate at the Windows of the World, which the food wasn't that great. And uh, you know, we went out into the lobby. They was, they was like a bar, like a disco thing there just before we went in there, I, I did it in the hallway. So actually the year before that, and that was September 12th.
- 02.23.00 So this think happened September 11th. So September 12, the year before, which was our tenth anniversary uh, we went down and we had dinner again, up uh, actually we didn't have dinner, we had dinner in Midtown, and we went up for cocktails just to look out the window and stuff that night, September 12th, 2000. And that was the last time we were there. So then the following year, which was September 11th, that's when they had the attacks there.
- 02.23.30 But uh, you know, we got engaged on the top of the Twin Towers, and uh, you know, it was ironic, too, that it was September 12th. (LAUGHS) You know? And uh, you know, my brother was the best man at my wedding. Michael was my best man. And uh, you know, I was in the service, I was my last couple of years I was stationed at Governor's island. And uh, you know, when you took the ferry over from Governor's Island, you were like right there at (?) The Battery for the Twin Towers were there. So we, you know, I used to walk up there sometimes.
- 02.24.05 And uh, you know, just take that whole environment in. So it was very nice. Uh, but you know, it's totally different now, there's no buildings there. You're surprised that they even fell down. You know?

INTERVIEWER : Anything else?

- 02.24.39 BRIAN LYONS : The uh, well the election's over now, right? The uh, well, the Iraqi think, obviously we like to (COUGHS) have that thing closed up a little bit, but uh, I mean, one good thing that people probably don't even realize is.

- 02.24.56 There's some terrorists or some bad people that don't like the Americans that are all, wherever they hang out in the world or whatever, they, they might be generated from over there, but they're importing themselves to Iraq now, just so they could kill Americans. Which is probably good for us that say, say you had a guy that's 25 years old that was trained and (?) he don't like Americans and he wants to kill everybody or whatever, so. Instead of him getting enough money to try to sneak into America, which is pretty hard, he can get (?) he goes to Iraq to try to shoot at us.
- 02.25.34 All right? So we're getting all them there so now we can attack those guys. So hopefully even if you get one of them, that might want to come to America to put a bomb in a subway. You try to you know, at least we have a better chance of fighting them on, not on our turf but on, on someone else's, someone else's land, which is, which is the way I look at it a little bit, but.
- 02.25.56 The uh, you know, hopefully they can uh, uh, square away some of the (?) insurgents over there so they can have an election, so we can you know, go down to some reasonable amount of troops. I, I know we spoke (?) about terrorism. We, we don't want to like wake up every morning and have like terrorism on your minds, like, you know, we got to do this and that, 'cos if terrorism I got to do this and that 'cos we're not safe. You know, we want to get it blended in to the environment that yes, you do have to be safe.
- 02.26.28 There is some bad people out there, but we, we would like it to be, you know, not the, the focus of every, every day of your life, like you know, I'm not gonna ride the subway 'cos there might be a terrorist there, you know what I mean? So there (?) there's gonna be bad people, and it's lonely at the top. If you uh, you know, whether you're a big country or a boss or uh, head of a fucking division or whatever it is, it's uh, human nature is people don't like you.
- 02.26.59 Whether it's the United States of America or you're a boss. 'Cos I'm a boss and I know people don't like me because you're their boss. They don't like to be bossed around and they don't like to do things, and uh, you know, whatever your policies are, and you know, I guess from America it's a lot of peel that don't like our policies, so, you know, I would like, I would like to see it uh, you know, finish up over there. And it's not gonna be over. We're gonna, someone else is gonna have nuclear weapons, and then threaten us and then we're gonna have to go in over there, so.

- 02.27.27 It's just I, I wish I could get involved somehow. Like deeper. And uh, I, I guess the way I would want to bring it up is that, you know, I have children, so one of my goals would be, you know, when they get older, to have some part of the world or, or (?) the world focused in some way that you know, they're obviously safer than they would be now, or protected or have an opportunity to do something that they would, wouldn't normally be able to do if, if things were uh, not the right way.
- 02.28.08 And uh, when you look in general about people in the world, right? Even in government, even, say, even say the new president's government. All right? Even his top aides, all right, and the people that are in charge of the war and in charge of the defense department and you know.
- 02.28.31 There's not that many people that are the sharpest tools in the box, no matter where you go. Whatever, whatever group you're in, whatever division you're in, there's only a certain percentage, 10, 15 percent, that are really people that you know, really dedicated and, and can make good decisions and follow through and make those things happen, and communicate in a group to accomplish goals, all right?
- 02.28.58 So in my mind, probably, you know, even the United States government and all people attached to it, there's not that many, you know, competent people. There's only a small group somewhere. So I would like to have some type of opportunity like that to be involved with that so I would, I could personally be attached to making those decisions or making those things happen. You know, so that my own family could be safe or, (?) prosper or, or whatever, so.
- 02.29.30 Don't ask me how that's gonna happen, but I mean, I, I could look, I could look at it that way a little bit, you know? 'Cos you know, it, it's big government. You look at it like, you know, who uh, how do you get involved with, uh, you know, finding Osama bin Laden in some mountain range uh, I don't know (LAUGHS). You know, how many people are involved doing that, you know what I mean? It's uh, big bureaucracy. You know what I mean? It's uh, people don't even think about it sometimes. You know what I mean?
- 02.29.58 It's uh, it's crazy.

INTERVIEWER : How would you describe yourself right now in the process of healing?

02.30.27 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, I don't think I even started to heal yet. Like I just started to open the envelop saying, yeah, I think there's some problems here. Got to start to try to heal a little bit. Start to look inward, see what's going on. I, I think I got a ways to go. You know, people had an opportunity to do that, I was involved more. Down there still, for a couple of years, which people don't really realize that, you know? So I think I'm in the very beginning stages of that, of healing. And uh, you know, I look forward to try to make that all happen properly. You know? Hopefully, a year from now I'm sitting here saying, yeah, you know, we found some problems, working on some things, this is what we did to do that.

02.31.17 And uh, you know, I've cleansed myself of all evils (LAUGHS). Internal evils. (COUGHS) The world is not coming to an end, you know? (STUMBLE) and that's where, you know, probably something, and you got to, you know, and the more you talk and if you have a therapist and if you can talk and open up and, and get all that out of you, and you know, see where you're at, you know, uh, I'm sure that will help. You know?

INTERVIEWER : Any thoughts about the future?

02.31.55 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, well, you know, looking to uh, you know, try, try to get myself back on track. Important in this family, you know what I mean? No matter what, what you're doing, you got to always think of your family. There's a whole you know, bunch of people counting on me, you know, to uh, you know, help them through some things, too. So uh, you know, as you know, little kids, little girls, they're not around long, boom, boom, boom. Off they go. You know, it's a treasure to your life, just to even, you know, say hello to them.

02.32.27 So uh, you know, I'm gonna make, I have to, one of the things I notice is, and, and part of the, I (STUMBLE) I'm like 25 pounds overweight. You know? And uh, it's, it's not that I, I shouldn't be that much, but uh, you know, I'm not like going to go to the gym every day. But tried a couple of different diets. That stuff just ain't working. So even some part of depression is weight gain, and then that tires yourself down and you get more tired, so.

02.32.57 Want to try to lose weight so that you have more energy for your, for your family, for your kids, for the goals you want to make. I definitely want to do that, you know? It's hard to do, like hard to like very hard to eat right. People uh, you know, people know that. You know?

it's easy to eat two slices of pizza and sausage and pepper wedge, man it's hard to eat like you know, piece of lettuce and some uh, you know, tofu or something like that, every hard (LAUGHS). (COUGHS) You know, easy to eat those slices of pizza, man. It's like especially in New York, so, you know, that, that's a big thing.

02.33.30 I, I think that's a big thing, you know? you diet and you know, exercising and stuff, which I need to probably do a little more at. So that's like one of the goals again in January. Try to, try to do that. Get a little more energy and you know, keep things balanced somehow. You know, that's what I'm, I'm looking forward to doing.

INTERVIEWER : Do you think things are fine?

02.33.58 .BRIAN LYONS : Yeah. Well, that's part, part of uh, me signing up. You, you want to get your lungs checked out again. They do some type of (toxology?) test on you. A lot of people have had all that stuff done. I just really never had the time or wanted to do that. And some people I think took advantage of that. You know, like they did all that and then they claimed it for work purposes so they don't have to work. Or, I don't know if it's true or false, I don't know. I mean, knock on wood, you know, I was down there on the pile in the smoke and I'm really Ok right now.

02.34.31 But you never know what the long term effects could be, you know what I mean? Could get affected ten years from now, don't know. So you know, we're gonna get some more blood tests done, I hope and, and then a lot of stuff get checked out. Best, best we can. You know, they, I had some of the initial ones done so far, everything's fine. But want to go through the whole, the whole scope of stuff again. They, and I have to talk to my own doctor, but maybe talk to doctors that were (STUMBLE) that have been doing those type of testing and so on.

02.35.01 Well, what, one of the other things I'm very interested in doing, still, is my brother's remains have never been identified. Ok? Part of that thing on St. Patrick's Day when I found the haligan and we dug for you know, tools or remains, and we made sifters out of some screenings, we found like 400 bone fragments. Ok? Now, initially we have no uh, positive ID for Michael, all right?

02.35.33 Out of, out of the six guys at Squad 41, there's 3 guys that have not been identified, and there's 3 guys that were. The three guys that were, we found them half in their bunker gear.

They were not in the burnt area. The three guys that we found in the burnt area, and I say guys, because we found their tools that they were carrying and, and metal devices that were on them.

- 02.35.57 That's all we found, and bone fragments. So in my mind, those are the three guys that were missing. 'Cos their tools were there. Uh, you know, I've been to the uh, medical examiner's office a bunch of times. They have a meeting, they had a meeting once a month for two years, they stopped last Christmas. Because uh, with family members. It was on uh, Wednesday nights at like 8 o'clock. Now they had stopped at Christmastime because there was nothing else to do.
- 02.36.28 They, they've retested and tested all the remains so many times. So in the year 2000, they said they weren't gonna have any meetings, and they, they had one like in June that I went to. And they went over some of the other scientific types of DNA testing that they're gonna do and so on There's still 13 tractor trailers full of body parts at the medical examiner's office in, in refrigerated (STUMBLE) in refrigerated tractor trailers. Of the remains. There's 19,000 remains that haven't been identified.
- 02.37.00 Some of them could be pieces of people that have already been identified, but there's not enough DNA in those pieces to be checked. Or there's no DNA that's been matched to them. So that's why they're still there. Now, Michael's DNA, the baseline DNA for him is, is perfect, because he had a bone marrow sample taken. He was a bone marrow donor through the fire department, which they just did a program like a month before 9-11.
- 02.37.31 So he actually has a vial of his blood frozen in a bank. I think it's in like West Virginia or somewhere. So when this had happened, the medical examiner sent away for a splotch of that, and when they did the DNA, he has you know, 14 out of 14 perfect points of his match. So the idea would be is if you could find any body parts that would match those things, it'd be fine. 'Cos he had actual blood.
- 02.37.58 There was some people that you know, they went to work everyday, they don't have any blood, they're (STUMBLE) DNA matches came from their toothbrush, their comb at home. You know, doing their wife and kids, and subtracting numbers, so they might only have 11 out of 14, which is fine. I think they need only 10 out of 14 to give a positive ID. But Michael had 14 out of 14. So one of my goals is to, those bones, bone fragments, we brought them to the medical examiner's office.

- 02.38.34 At 8 o'clock the 18th of March, because it was the 17th we found that stuff. We worked all night long to try to find anymore stuff. So about 2 in the morning, we had stopped and we waited for daybreak and we had a little ceremony with a gurney and walked up the thing about 7 o'clock, and then we delivered those bone fragments to the, to the medical examiner's office about 8 o'clock.
- 02.39.03 And what happens is you, you know, you're gonna, you go in there and you say look, I think this is my brother, and they're like ok, ok, ok. Give them number, see you. You know, that's number 800,372, stamp it and off it goes. That's kind of the way it went. So there's a catalog number somewhere for each of those pieces. So I've been working with this nice lady at the medical examiner's office.
- 02.39.29 My goal is right now is, and (STUMBLE) this is one of the things I was talking about, that I wanted to do this year that it never really got to do. The goal is to go there, and get the records from the 18th of March's morning, that says Ok, this arrived at 8 o'clock. There were so many pieces. They categorize them and they tagged them and they gave them numbers. And it's not like everyone was coming in like, you know, 8, 8:15, 9 o'clock.
- 02.40.00 So there's (?) a certain chance that within a good window of 4 to 6 hours, those are the only things that arrived there. so we'll be able to identify 400 category numbers, for example. So now I want to look at those 400 category numbers, and they've all been tested for DNA. Did any of them come up with DNA? Did any of them, you know, what were the numbers, where, where are they at?
- 02.40.28 Where is Michael's thing, you know? We want to send for another sample of blood to redo his DNA test, to redo the 14 numbers, to make sure. Because when they sent away for the blood, it was like you know, 4 days after 9-11. They sent away for like ten of them and they were e-mailing and they were faxing, they were Fed-Ex-ing. You, you don't know. So one of the goals was to try to retrace those things, send away for a blood swatch, get a whole new DNA thing done.
- 02.41.01 Get the category list of those items that came in, see exactly where they are. What, what amount of points they have for DNA, were some of them no points at all, was there some that had like 9 and you're just missing one, you know, what, what, I want to, I want to go through every single one, and because people at the medical examiner's office, you know, they're

looking through stuff, and what happens is they have computer system says Ok, test this, this is the number, they put it through there. doesn't match anybody, off you go.

02.41.41 Me, I want to do a little more detailed search and, and try to see where we are, and if there's any that match, and then I could say well, these are close to Michael's and then let's look at something else, and I, I don't know. Just something. To just keep moving forward, to try to get his identification done.

INTERVIEWER : Was there a broad search done, 14 and whatever they had? (~ovlp~) You want to get in there and take the most matches?

02.42.11 BRIAN LYONS : 'Cos when you start talking to the scientists there, they, they have all these other, there's a (?) I'm making it very simple. But they have all these other things that, that they bring up about uh, well, there's so many points and you need these two to match those two, and uh, you know, this bone fragment.

02.42.32 Maybe because it was too hot, doesn't have those two, there's, there's just a lot of different things that, that could work out or maybe not work out. You know, I, don't know. (?) And they have been very diligent. They've done a million things. But I want to know exactly that those, those things that we dug up that night, that I know were on top of my brother's stuff, it's not like we found some stuff, you know, in Oshkosh, and uh, we said, you know, check this out, this might be uh, you know, Michael Lyons.

02.43.05 We found a, tooth, teeth there, there was a wedding ring there. you know, there was all these things, you know what I mean? It did turn out that the tooth was a civilian. That's rumor. Now, I don't know like, and those are the things that, that I don't know and we don't, we don't, you know, I'm, I've heard and they've told me and I've heard from the firemen, and so I really want to know for myself.

02.43.31 And then, when his children are older or and Elaine and they (?) if they really want to know any of that stuff, I could tell them. And, and you know what? They, you could do that. So there's stuff to do still. It's not like it's like nothing to do, you know, like we didn't find anything and we don't know, we're just waiting, you know? (?) I have that thing that I still can investigate.

- 02.43.55 So if, if it can be investigated still, I want to investigate it. The other thing is that, and I've spoke to Elaine about this before is that blood that's in West Virginia or somewhere, is Michael's blood. That's more than a lot of people got even when they got ID'd. Someone might have got ID'd just from a flock of skin that was in with other things. That they pulled that out, they did a DNA, there was good fluids in there, and it matched uh, it gave 14 points of DNA. They put it in the computer, and it said look, that's John Doe's DNA.
- 02.44.33 He's identified. So when they had a casket and they buried it, it could be the thing that's this big. No one even, you don't even know. And probably there are some that were like that. Whereas, Michael's, there's actually some blood that came out of him that's actually his blood that's in a bank. That could be used and buried and (?) then the kids could go to a uh, a cemetery. Right now they can't go to a cemetery.
- 02.45.00 No one's ID'd. So to me, that, that's still a puzzle that for me, I was there personally, I found that haligan. I found the tools, we found the bone fragments. I know that that was him there. His Gerber knife is there. We know that that's him. It's like on Star Trek, they were incinerated (?). There was just metal devices.
- 02.45.27 When the firemen took all those metal devices, they went back and laid them all out in the basement of the firehouse. And it turned out to be 3 individuals. Metal devices meaning rings from their bunker gear suspenders, belt buckles. Shoe, shoe shanks, steel toes, all that stuff. They took and they separated it all. And turned out to be three different, you know, types of you know, suspenders. So we know that that was their stuff.
- 02.45.58 So that, that's definitely one thing I got to do, and there's another thing. I'm too tired, I don't have time to do it. It's just something that needs to be done, and I really need to focus and do that. And uh, and I want to accomplish that. Absolutely I'm gonna (?) accomplish that.

INTERVIEWER : It seems very important?

- 02.46.16 BRIAN LYONS : Yeah, absolutely. you know, I mean, even just talking to people. People would think the way I'm explaining it to people, it's like yeah, you know, that, you should be doing that. That's what needs to be done, you need to look at that, you need to look at those type of things. (?) if it's something that can be accomplished and something that no one else has done, really, anything, you know that every stone has been overturned, at least.

02.46.40 You know, in my mind, and they're very willing to help you do that. So that's not a problem with. There's no bureaucracy that's holding you back, basically. That they'll, they'll help you whatever you want that you can do.

INTERVIEWER : What's the primary reason of importance?

02.46.53 BRIAN LYONS : For, for his family, for the girls, probably, to get that positive ID. See, I went down there, 9-11, to find my brother, right? And in, even after two weeks, it was like ok, uh, there's no one alive, but I want to find his body, I want to find something, so we can have a burial. Have closure, that type of thing. You know, you really need to have that closure. Go to a cemetery, be able to do that type of thing. You know, I guess closure, closure would be the thing, you know? You want to have some closure you on that.

02.47.28 I personally have the closure myself. I really have that closure. It would be important for, for the girls, his young girls to get that closure, you know? You know, because what happens is, you know, they're younger now, and even my daughters, you know, they ask you, you know, uh, Michael doesn't you know, are we gonna go to the cemetery, you know, they, they don't know about that yet. So what'll happen is, when they get older, all they're gonna know is, he was never identified. All right?

02.48.01 Unless I, and even if I explain to them that whole story, it really won't sink in as, as much, you know what I mean? So that's if we could get some, some type of, some type of thing. And uh, I believe in science and science is, is very important to me, and it's been very important to the world. And the science of DNA in the past 3 years has, in the past 10 years, you know quadrupled in the information. So you know, it, it's (?) there's a friend of mine, John (?) Cartier, he lost his brother there.

02.48.34 He was identified, though. But he is one of the leading uh, members of the family groups that pushes to keep those body parts refrigerated and kept in a safe place, and maybe brought to Ground Zero and put in a refrigerated vault. So that members, that family members could eventually some day have some identification for their, you know, lost ones, you know?

02.49.01 There's 19,000 body parts that haven't been identified. Nineteen thousand, you know? It's a lot. And uh, you know, it's one of the goals I got to put down on my list for January. See how that goes. (COUGHS)

INTERVIEWER : Any closing thoughts?

02.49.28 BRIAN LYONS : No, uh. Just look forward to next year's interview. I'll be 40 pounds lighter lifting weights. (?) Deeper voice for the sound guy (LAUGHS).

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

02.49.58 BRIAN LYONS : There was a guy at that makeover thing, the husband, right? They brought the husband in. So they want to interview the husband. It's like oh, come on over here, you know, we're just gonna interview you. So what do you think your wife's gonna look like? He breaks out into like a sweat. Oh, I can't do this, I can't do this, I can't do this. Uh, he has to go sit down. He can't even get interviewed. So they're all like trying, no listen, you're the husband, you got to at least say you know, what do you think your wife's gonna look like or can we put you on camera? No way, this dude was out, man. Take the camera away, nothing. They got like his grandmother up there to talk.

02.50.30 And she, they brought her up, what do you think, you know, your granddaughter's gonna look like? Uh, couldn't even do the husband. He's breaking in sweat and everything. I guess he got, he got nervous or something, I don't know.

(OFF CAMERA REMARKS)

02.50.55 END OF TAPE # BL002