

Transcript of Insight programme edition titled “Changing a mindset” broadcasted on 8th of April on SBS-Australian TV

JENNY BROCKIE: Welcome everybody, good to have you with us tonight. Yeonmi, I wanted to talk to you first because until seven years ago you lived in North Korea, yeah? What sort of power did you believe that Kim Jong-Il had over you, the then leader had over you?

YEONMI PARK: He's a - man he's got like almighty power. So I thought that he can read my mind all the time. So I could not even think about in my mind he's bad, you know?

JENNY BROCKIE: So what, if you started thinking he was bad, what would you do and how would you feel if you had those thoughts?

YEONMI PARK: I could not imagine, I was too terrified to think about him as a bad person or bad leader because he's like the captain of this earth.

JENNY BROCKIE: What did you think would happen to you if you had bad thoughts about him?

YEONMI PARK: Maybe I can be killed by...

JENNY BROCKIE: Be killed?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, just police, yeah. I thought just he knows everything so I could not even think about any, you know.

JENNY BROCKIE: And did you know of people who'd been killed for having bad thoughts about him?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, it's like, one with of my best friends, her mum saw some like American dramas or like North Korean dramas and then she got caught and then they decide to like give her like punishment as like public execution. So I went there with her, my friends, and there I...

JENNY BROCKIE: This was to see your friend's mother executed?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, like public execution in a big stadium. I must be there, it's like I need to.

JENNY BROCKIE: So it was expected of you to be there?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, so like if I don't go there they check my name and you know, so it can be big problems.

JENNY BROCKIE: How old were you when that happened?

YEONMI PARK: I was eleven and I was with my friends. That was her mother and I just, I was like closing my eyes at the time but I could not even cry.

JENNY BROCKIE: And you couldn't be sad, you couldn't be upset?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: Because if you think that the leader can read your mind...

YEONMI PARK: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: You can't do anything? And you've described your teenage years in North Korea as not being able to see, smell or hear?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: What do you mean by that?

YEONMI PARK: I was like being completely no sense of my body. I could not, even though I see something I cannot see really what exactly it is. I did not know any truth because I thought just North Korea is the main country in the world and we were the best country and all the people was envious, you know, and I was like, no, I just - I had no idea at the time. I could not even think really.

JENNY BROCKIE: You were 14 when you left?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tom, during the 1990s you were the leader of one of the most feared and violent Neo Nazi groups in Norway. Tell me about your core beliefs, what you believed during that time?

TOM OLSEN: Well it was extreme ideology, focusing on Jewish world conspiracy and we actually did believe that the world was under Jewish control and that they wanted to mix the races and exterminate the white race, my race, as I looked at it.

JENNY BROCKIE: So were you solely focused on Jewish people for your hatred or did you hate other people as well?

TOM OLSEN: So where we hated, truly hated people with other skin colour than white, to be quite honest, and I'm sorry to say but especially when you look at people from Africa, black Africans, we didn't even consider them human. We looked at them as sub human, as, well, we compared them, not to laugh about it, as a Neo Nazi we didn't laugh about it but we did compare them with monkeys, that they had no capabilities like we, the white people have, to create technology, to feel empathy, we looked at them as animals.

JENNY BROCKIE: And what sort of violent things did you do on that basis?

TOM OLSEN: We would by chance attack people who we believed were anti-racist or leftists. We hated them even more we hated people of colour. But if we saw coloured people we could attack them too.

JENNY BROCKIE: How violent, how violent were you?

TOM OLSEN: Well, the most serious case was a stabbing which I did not do the stabbing but the person was one millimetre from dying when he was stabbed in the back with a knife from the main artery.

JENNY BROCKIE: Were you there?

TOM OLSEN: Yes, yes, I was a part of it.

JENNY BROCKIE: Did you support it at the time?

TOM OLSEN: Oh yeah, yeah and I motivated it. The guy who we stabbed, he was the owner of a gun store which we - at - a very short notice decided we wanted to rob. That was out of paranoia. We actually did believe that the UN would attack Norway, and you know.

JENNY BROCKIE: The UN was going to attack Norway?

TOM OLSEN: Yes. So we needed guns quickly. So it was like we were living on another planet.

JENNY BROCKIE: Good Lord, and you used to carry a Glock pistol around with you?

TOM OLSEN: The thing with the Glock was that when I was in Oslo I was attacked a few times, I was stabbed with a knife and I was hit in the back of my head with beer bottles and my - the back of my head I have a huge tattoo now but if you look closely it is like a European map, it is a - I had a lot of stitches in my head because I was so often attacked when I was in Oslo because I would - you know, I wasn't afraid of who I was, I would show it.

JENNY BROCKIE: You look like a neo-Nazi?

TOM OLSEN: Yeah. I had a swastika fetish, I had a swastika on every piece of clothing I had, even boxer shorts with tiny swastika. I was into the Swastika and I would wear that to show people who I was and I would have a big bunch of pamphlets also to give out.

JENNY BROCKIE: So you were a hard core neo-Nazi in Norway?

TOM OLSEN: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: Mmm. Lebana, you are 15 and you were born into a commune called the 12 Tribes near Sydney. What sort of rules were there there when you were growing up?

LEBANA ILICH: So there were so many aspects to it. You are not allowed to have toys and you are not allowed to talk to any kids, and if you are there you get punished. You get disciplined like at least two or three times a day.

JENNY BROCKIE: How were you disciplined?

LEBANA ILICH: They use like a rod, yes a rod.

JENNY BROCKIE: What sort of things would you get that for?

LEBANA ILICH: Really tiny things like if you didn't come like if someone said, "Come here.", and you didn't come straight away, yeah, they didn't allow like any imagining things, you were not allowed to ride bikes or anything.

JENNY BROCKIE: You are not allowed to imagine?

LEBANA ILICH: Yeah. Like imagine things like play babies and like stuff like that. They don't - they don't tell the kids like fairies and all that sort of stuff, like Santa. It is all not allowed and stuff.

JENNY BROCKIE: Okay, so no sort of fantasising about...

LEBANA ILICH: Yeah....

JENNY BROCKIE: About things at all? You got hit once for taking an extra piece of fruit; is that right?

LEBANA ILICH: Yeah. It was - it was funny because I remember I got disciplined by like three other people, just for that. And then like for the rest of the days going on I was like looked down on and shamed upon, yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: How did you view the outside world when you were in this commune?

LEBANA ILICH: They made it out to be the work of satan, so I was actually really scared of the outside world.

JENNY BROCKIE: Did you have much to do with the outside world.

LEBANA ILICH: No, not all. We weren't allowed to watch anything, never allowed to listen to radio, anything like that.

JENNY BROCKIE: Did you go to school?

LEBANA ILICH: No. Not public school. We had a training person who was in charge, like they have their own curriculum, like more strict, and they have like religious things as well.

JENNY BROCKIE: Who did you trust?

LEBANA ILICH: You can't really trust anyone in there. It is like the whole thing is like a snitching thing. So, even husbands and wives, you can't even trust them.

JENNY BROCKIE: What do you mean a snitching thing.

LEBANA ILICH: I don't know - like they tell you.

JENNY BROCKIE: Did you trust your mum?

LEBANA ILICH: I couldn't really have a relationship with my mum.

JENNY BROCKIE: Rose, your Lebana's mum. What was it like for you as a parent in this group?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: My motherhood changed, it was - as part of - my whole life was taken, it wasn't mine any more. I believe I was under mind control when I was there.

JENNY BROCKIE: Mind control?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Yes. What I signed up to, what I believed, the message that was preached, we are going to change the world and bringing a new age really, a new age of peace where God reigns and all this and we are going to be free to worship God the way we want, we will just get a bit of help, and...

JENNY BROCKIE: How thoroughly did you believe all that, when you were in there?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Well, I was totally believing the whole time I was there and I never wanted to leave. For 13 years I was in the 12 Tribes - I was in there. I totally believed everything.

JENNY BROCKIE: Did you hit Lebana for these sorts of things she was talking about?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Yes, before I never hit my children, never, ever. I wasn't - I never received any physical punishment myself growing up and I never believed that children needed that. But I did agree. I knew that when I joined I would have to apply certain measures and that involved disciplining - I was already under mind control when I started realising, wow, this is a lot.

JENNY BROCKIE: When you say "mind control", what do you mean by mind control?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: I say mind control but really it is your whole life, your emotions, your mind, your body, your time, everything comes under the control of the leader really, the top leader, and he is - he is -- his perception of the world and how you should live out your faith and - so you are not free to live out your faith. Everything is told - you get told how to do everything, and...

JENNY BROCKIE: Louise, you are a clinical psychologist with a particular interest in these sorts of situations. How wedded do people become to these sorts of beliefs or can they become to these sorts of beliefs? Because from the outside, you know, it seems to extreme, but how readily are people sucked into it?

LOUISE SAMWAYS, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST: If people are at a particular point in their life when they are particularly vulnerable, then pretty well anybody can be subjected to quite a sophisticated

psychological process where they can come to believe things that they otherwise would not necessarily believe and the key to it is that they are appealing to some very basic human needs, and that's for purpose and meaning in life.

So, that basic need in people is really what people are seduced by, and if you add to that the fact that a lot of these techniques are designed to change your level of arousal in a way that dampens down your capacity to think critically, you then start to control different aspects of the person's life. Then the more you start to control people's behaviour, the more you start to control the way they feel, and that's often not really well understood. People tend to think, oh, I wouldn't behave in a certain way if I didn't feel a certain way, but it is actually the opposite, that behaviour can trigger off certain beliefs and certain feelings about allegiance to the group and allegiance to a leader or an allegiance to a believe system.

JENNY BROCKIE: How do you even begin to shift that when it is really extreme?

LOUISE SAMWAYS: Mainly a lot of guilt, often a lot of phobias are created, people are told that if they leave the group or they leave the cause they will be responsible for terrible things happening to themselves or their family, or even to the world itself. But if something changes in what is said or the belonging to the group is no longer working for the - for someone, then they - doubt can start to creep in and then depending on the degree of control the group has to their total life, then they may start to try and think about leaving. The only trouble is that in the you have been in those groups for quite a while, leaving can mean you are literally totally on your own when you leave and you don't necessarily have the skills or capacity to cope very well and that tends to keep people in the group.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tore, thanks very much for joining us from Shanghai. You specialise in trying to change extremists and breaking up Neo Nazi groups. How do you even start to change their minds?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO, NORWEGIAN POLICE UNIVERSITY: Well, usually when they want to leave or they want to start to consider leaving, they are often disillusioned. They felt that leaders were manipulating them or they found that it was too much excitement. They were too stressful, they started to burn out so there are many reasons why they want to leave.

JENNY BROCKIE: Can you change somebody who, who you get hold of but who might not want to change?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: Well you need at least to have some kind of opening for change. If you just want to remain there is nothing much you can do but sometimes you can get through by talking to them, by showing them that there is an alternative, that perhaps what they were doing is not doing any good. There are such kind of golden moments when you can get through, but it's better and easier to work with people who are motivated to leave, then you can have a greater chance to make them really change.

JENNY BROCKIE: You do most of your work in Norway and I wonder whether it would include talking to somebody like the right wing extremist Anders Braivik who was

responsible for killing 77 of your countrymen and women. Is that someone you would talk to and try to change?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: Well I'm actually going to interview him in a few weeks but I do not have a lot of hope for him because he is very devoted to his ideology.

JENNY BROCKIE: What would you say to him to see if he could change, to try to shift him?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: So I'm not going to try to change him at this moment. It could be that a few years on from now he will be more open to change, but as I've got some letters from him and I don't think he is in the stage where that is possible. I think it will be a very difficult case.

JENNY BROCKIE: How difficult is it to change the kind of people in neo Nazi groups, people like Tom here, how difficult is it to get them to change their beliefs when you first come into contact with them?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: Well, he was a really hard core activist, he was very political, very motivated, had a very strong ideology, but there were some moments in his, his life when he started to have doubts because things were not quite as he expected. Our relationship is quite special because I was one of those public figures who was on his hit list back in 1997 and now we are very good friends. So he is a fantastic example of the potential to change.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tom, you were plotting to kill Tore?

TOM OLSEN: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tell us about that?

TOM OLSEN: Well, for us, you know, the threat on the streets where anti-racist militant activists, but Tore because he, you know, he wouldn't go out in the street and fight with us but he would, he would be able to change how the local authorities were approaching us in a way that would dismantle us. So he was a great threat.

JENNY BROCKIE: So how far down the track did you go with the plot to kill this man who is now your friend?

TOM OLSEN: Well, we knew where he lived, we knew where he worked, we of course knew how he looked and he was on our list and we were looking for guns.

JENNY BROCKIE: So what changed for you, what shifted your beliefs away from this group?

TOM OLSEN: One was that I was released from gaol in Norway and Norwegian right wing movement was in bad shape. Nelson Mandela was President in South Africa and I was told by my South African colleagues, you know, the people who shared my beliefs, that come to South Africa, it's going to be a civil war here soon and we need reinforcements so we need people to come down. So I jumped on...

JENNY BROCKIE: And you turned up in your Nazi uniform?

TOM OLSEN: Oh, yeah, oh yeah, I went on the plane to South Africa with a swastika on my arm and you know, it was some whites but mainly people of other colour. So you know, I didn't feel much comfortable there. I hadn't seen that many coloured people in my whole life so I wanted to go back on the plane but then you know, I saw the AWB guys with their arm bands and uniforms and they had a licence to carry guns so you know, I felt safe when I saw them.

JENNY BROCKIE: So tell us what happened that shifted your beliefs?

TOM OLSEN: Well I had no money for ten days, I was staying at a youth hostel in Joburg and again I only had clothing with the swastikas on and so everybody in the youth hostel knew that I was a Neo Nazi so of course nobody wanted to have anything to do with me, but the owner was a sympathiser, she came from Rhodesia she said, not Zimbabwe, so they left Zimbabwe when Mugabe took power and she let me stay there for free for ten days and gave me breakfast, but of course one meal in twenty four hours isn't too much.

So one evening I was sitting in a bar watching rugby and I heard a voice next to me saying two lager, two beers, and somebody gave me a beer and I turned around and it was this, a black African, not South African, he was from Zambia and he had a very friendly smile and he gave me that beer and you know, I thought to myself, is he insane, is he crazy? What's wrong with him, you know, so I turned around like this to show him that I had a swastika tee-shirt on me, you know? And he just kept on smiling and said drink up, cheers. And I thought to myself oh, my God, you know, he must be from the secret service, trying to kill me, it must be rat poison in the beer, you know, and the bartender he nodded and said it's okay. It's like they could read my mind and you know I was hungry and thirsty, so tired of drinking water so I took the beer and we got drunk together me and the guy. I woke up the next morning and I thought to myself oh Jesus Christ, what happened last night and I was thinking, you know, oh, yeah, the guy from Zambia, I thought shit, what happened? You know, and I couldn't get that out of my head.

JENNY BROCKIE: Okay, so you now try to change other Neo Nazis, you work with Tore here?

TOM OLSEN: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: The man you plotted to kill?

TOM OLSEN: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: To try to change other Neo Nazis?

TOM OLSEN: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: How do you try to change them?

TOM OLSEN: Sometimes they are maybe not motivated to change but they are open, maybe subconsciously they are open to change. But also I come in fairly quickly sometimes because the school centres and the municipalities around the country they are very quick to react. So this it was like this one day it was a kid who showed up at school, 10th grader with swastika on his back, backpack, and it was, you know, it created a situation at the school and in class.

JENNY BROCKIE: And what did you say to him? Did you talk about yourself?

TOM OLSEN: Yes, he asked a lot about me and I would tell him the brutal honesty, you know, what was good about being a Neo Nazi but also what was bad and why I changed, and I got through to him by doing that.

JENNY BROCKIE: He took the swastika off his back?

TOM OLSEN: Oh, yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: Mohamed, you're trying to deradicalise Jemar Islamiah members who are in prison quite often. How, you do that work for the Singaporean government. How do you even start to do that with a violent mindset?

MOHAMED FEISAL, RELIGIOUS REHABILITATION GROUP: I think first and foremost that they themselves have to change in terms of their policies, in terms of winning hearts and minds of those people who had gone into extremism and terrorism. So when we talk about Jemar Islamiah it's about religious ideology so you need religious teachers to understand this because a secular government does not understand.

JENNY BROCKIE: So you need these connections, those real connections?

MOHAMED FEISAL: Yes, you need real people, so the doors of the prisons were open, family members were met, spouses and children were able to, there is this bridge that was never there before. Suddenly we met human beings who have had this process of indoctrination. It's very interesting today because this kind of terms that they have been using is quite similar to what Jemar Islamiah members have been using. We were able to hear from God to save them to monkeys, within the minds and hearts that have spoken because that was that process of indoctrination. They had this issue of who to be loyal to, who to be disloyal to.

JENNY BROCKIE: You're suggesting here that it takes quite a lot of time to do this and I mean in a sense you've got a captive group, you've got a group that are in prison so what about trying to change the mind, shift the mindset of the people who are out in the community who have those beliefs?

MOHAMED FEISAL: We came to that realisation after doing, after focusing on the target audience of those who are in prison. And what we do in Singapore is we have community engagement programs, we meet families who have this tendency to have been introduced to such radical pathways and then we have programs to those who have not understood this in schools and everywhere else, and to get others to see the reality of the problem.

JENNY BROCKIE: Do they have to be willing to meet with you, to talk to you? I mean is that a prerequisite in a way?

MOHAMED FEISAL: I think the interesting thing that happened to me in terms of meeting with Jemar Islamiah, there were both cases, there were people who were willing to and at the same time Jemar Islamiah members themselves, they want such opportunity to meet with people like us because it's that opportunity to get us to sympathise to their cause.

JENNY BROCKIE: Yes, to convert you?

MOHAMED FEISAL: To convert us to those who believe and if you get religious authority to be part of the team that's more

JENNY BROCKIE: So sometimes they meet you thinking they're going to win you over?

MOHAMED FEISAL: That is that opportunity for them.

JENNY BROCKIE: So how do you start to change that?

MOHAMED FEISAL: I think firstly it's about building trust, that process, it's not about the ideology, it's not about who you are or who I am. It's about now you see me as that individual, I see you as another person. So that process building trust number one. Number two is trying to understand what are those that have made them to become indoctrinated - so what are the concepts, what are the values, what are the lifestyle?

JENNY BROCKIE: You keep pointing to Tom here?

TOM OLSEN: I see some similarities.

JENNY BROCKIE: I was wondering about that.

MOHAMED FEISAL: And suddenly we have become bonded because of this, so suddenly you understand you have a brother here that needs that helping hand and you feel him, you understand that he has felt some bitterness which you had been safe from not feeling it.

JENNY BROCKIE: So you present your life as being free of some of the trouble that his life has?

MOHAMED FEISAL: And not comparing it but understanding it, understanding that I have, you have that hand to walk together with, to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

JENNY BROCKIE: Is that what you do too Tom, that same thing?

TOM OLSEN: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: You two are going to have a big chat after this, I can just tell. Greg Barton, you're interested in counter-terrorism too of course, as well as deradicalisation. How difficult do you think it is to change a dangerous mindset, a mindset that someone has where they're bent on violence to achieve their goals?

PROFESSOR GREG BARTON, MONASH UNIVERSITY: Well there are no silver bullets, there are no simple solutions but if somebody is at a point of opening and sometimes you can create that opening, when you're in an exclusive group you think the rest of the world is just mad and bad. If you meet somebody outside your world and they're friendly and their opening, as Tom was describing, that forces you to recalibrate all your beliefs.

JENNY BROCKIE: And Rose you're nodding about this too with your experience, yeah? That happened to you?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Oh, yeah, the mindset I was on is the whole world is under the power of the devil and I was part of the chosen people that are bringing about, you know, the reign of God. So yeah.

PROFESSOR GREG BARTON: We focus on mindsets and ideas but ideas really follow relationships and relationships are about the group that we belong to, our sense of identity, who we are and then the ideas sort of reinforce that. So if you can connect with somebody it's a chance that they might actually reflect on their ideas, particularly if they can see themselves belonging to a broader human community, an outside world that they thought was an enemy but now looks friendly.

JENNY BROCKIE: I'm interested that you said you look for an opening and the opening idea has come up with everybody. Or you can create one, how can you create an opening?

PROFESSOR GREG BARTON: I think Mohamed expressed it very well. If you can connect with them as human beings and they can see that actually you're not really so different from them, that your faith, if questions of religion are important, is also genuine and earnest, but that you're compassionate and empathetic towards them, I think empathy is a key thing and listening to people's story is key.

JENNY BROCKIE: This of course is totally at odds with the punitive model that exists in every discussion about, you know, extremists, violence or anything else. I mean you're actually talking about getting to people and not judging them to find a way in to their stories. Yeah? Would that be fair summary?

PROFESSOR GREG BARTON: Yeah, and some people might say this a soft approach and be critical for that reason, but if you look at the work that Tore has done for decades or Mohamed has been doing, or that Tom is engaged with, you can see this is real the only approach that works. Being tough and judging people as being either mad or bad is to recreate the same kind of fundamentalist thinking that gets people in trouble in the first place.

JENNY BROCKIE: Rose, why do you think you and your husband joined 12 Tribes? What was the appeal of it?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Well both my husband and I were idealistic, and also we cared about the state of the world and saw many problems and wars and you just don't have the answers. Then the 12 Tribes had all the answers.

JENNY BROCKIE: And it was about belonging to something did you feel like you wanted a community?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Well everyone wants to have friends and have a family and both of our families are in different countries and we don't have that. So yeah, I guess that's one reason, yeah, it's the instability of the world too at the moment.

JENNY BROCKIE: I'm interested in this because I'm interested in what people have to leave behind in order to leave behind some of their extremist views. You know, what it means in terms of cutting off from things and Yeonmi, I know you had to leave behind twenty family members, didn't you, in North Korea?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: What was that like?

YEONMI PARK: Oh, it was terrible, yeah. I missed them but I cannot see them and I don't know when I can see them again. So....

JENNY BROCKIE: So that's a big thing to do when you're just 14, yeah?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: How long did it take for you to start thinking differently after you'd defected?

YEONMI PARK: So like when I was China and I met some people and they would talk about how bad he is and he's the dictator and then he made like labour camp and that he's like terrible leader and then I was like so bad to them. You know, you cannot say that.

JENNY BROCKIE: Because you were scared that he would know?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, yeah, and so I was like oh, I have to show my loyalty to him so he can see me, even though...

JENNY BROCKIE: This is even though you're out?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, each though I was in China I have to prove that I respect him, you know?

JENNY BROCKIE: Now you eventually spent three months in Hanawon which is a resettlement centre in South Korea. Dateline's Amos Roberts explains here how it works, how that place works.

AMOS ROBERT'S VIDEO PLAYED.

AMOS ROBERTS: After they arrive in South Korea, all defectors are brought here - the Hanawon Resettlement Centre. The government built this place in 1999 in order to deal with the large numbers of defectors who started arriving. Security at Hanawon is tight. During their three month stay here, they are given a crash course in life in the south and equipped with some of the skills they will need to survive.

JENNY BROCKIE: Yeonmi, what was it like in Hanawon for you when you got there?

YEONMI PARK: So basically my dream was really high and then I had a really big expectation of the South Korea and they was like oh, you know, I just okay.

JENNY BROCKIE: And you've said also that you felt brain washed all over again?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, like that's why I started to think that okay, I'm a loser, I'm a failure, I cannot do anything here. It isn't east. The South Korea kids, how hard they study, you know, and the competition is really hard, like crazily like serious and you cannot beat them all.

JENNY BROCKIE: Shieun, you're a psychologist and you used to work at Hanawon, you're now an advisor there, what do you think about this description of what goes on at Hanawon? Do you think it is a little bit not sympathetic enough to the plight of North Koreans where they arrive there?

SHIEUN YU: (Through interpreter.) I worked at Hanawon in 2001 and 2002 but at the same time South Koreans didn't understand North Koreans very well. Korea has been divided for sixty years, so we lacked the understanding of North Korean refugees. And as Yeonmi has just mentioned about Hanawon education, the textbooks used there have been put together by South Koreans, based on what they thought was necessary for North Korean people.

JENNY BROCKIE: So what do you focus now on trying to change when you come into contact with North Korean defectors?

SHIEUN YU: (Through interpreter) To help educate North Korean refugees, Hanawon focuses on teaching capitalism, democracy and programs that aim to help them adjust to South Korean society. And to help them deal with the trauma experienced in North Korea and China, they have individual and group counselling sessions.

JENNY BROCKIE: And what are the hardest things to change, to shift?

SHIEUN YU: (Through interpreter) They have had a certain mindset since they were in North Korea. First of all. North Koreans have a habit of being suspicious of other people and so they have difficulty understanding, trusting and maintaining solid relationships. They also worry about how they will compete in South Korea's competitive society and whether they will be able to success and get a job in South Korea. And if they miss their families back in North Korea, they often don't really know how to deal with the stress and depression associated with it. So these are some of the things we focus on.

JENNY BROCKIE: Do you think that's a fair description? Do you think that you were suspicious of other people when you arrived Yeonmi?

YEONMI PARK: I think that is really right. I think...

JENNY BROCKIE: So how hard was it for you to shift that thinking, that believe that Kim Jong-Il could listen to everything that you thought, could hear, understand, your mind, how long did it take for you to let go of that to see that that wasn't true?

YEONMI PARK: First of all I had to believe that he's dying, no, he can die, you know, because when I was in North Korea they always say his life is forever, everlasting, so he's not die at all and he's watching us like every day and so that's why I had to accept him as a human so follow that I can see that oh, he dies. So for me was like I changed my mind was like each like three years.

JENNY BROCKIE: Three years to shift?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, and I've got to the South Korea and I changed totally being South Korean the mindset, so I...

JENNY BROCKIE: And what changed you, what do you think changed you?

YEONMI PARK: Actually I could not, yeah, I read lots of books at the time and then the one book was like the Animal Farm.

JENNY BROCKIE: Animal Farm?

YEONMI PARK: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: Fantastic choice, what a great choice?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, so I read that book and I was like crying whole nights. After that book just my change like totally.

JENNY BROCKIE: George Orwell would be so thrilled, so thrilled. Rose, your husband wanted to get you all out of 12 Tribes but he didn't tell you he was planning to do it, did he? Why?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Well because I would have told the leaders straight away.

JENNY BROCKIE: You would have told the leader?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: That my husband has lost his faith so being a good brainwashed wife that I was.

JENNY BROCKIE: You would have dobbed on him?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Yeah, I would have said he's lost faith and they wouldn't have sent me to visit him.

JENNY BROCKIE: Raphael Aron, you describe yourself as an exit counsellor. Now you'd been planning this intervention for years after being contacted by Rose's family. What did you do, how did you get them out?

RAPHAEL ARON: What we decided to do was to take Matthew on my right as a key person having been a former member of that organisation, to be able to establish a bridge of trust with Rose and with her family.

JENNY BROCKIE: Because he'd been in the organisation?

RAPHAEL ARON: He'd been there and Matthew and I had worked together for many years and I was reasonably well known in the area and therefore if I would show up my face, then that would work against me and against Rose. So Matthew and I worked very closely together and together with Rose's sister in order to put together a plan which would eventually mean that she could leave the organisation and that plan was executed in New Zealand.

JENNY BROCKIE: And that was by getting them away from the place here to New Zealand and then you moved in, Matthew?

MATTHEW KLEIN: Yeah, fortunately, Mark had been sent away because their eldest son wasn't...

JENNY BROCKIE: This is Rose's husband who didn't want to be here tonight by the way, yeah?

MATTHEW KLEIN: Yeah. He was, he was not a model child for the 12 Tribes so they sent Mark away with his son and that gave me the opportunity to go and start working on Mark because I was very good friends with them when we were in the 12 Tribes together and although Rose says she never had any doubts, I used to watch her suffer greatly at the hands of everyone around us. And I was very, very concerned for their son as well and when Raphael contacted me I was just more than happy to help. So....

JENNY BROCKIE: Okay, so you devised a situation where they were all in New Zealand?

MATTHEW KLEIN: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: Now you used your then 14 year old daughter sitting next to you here who is no longer 14 in that intervention, why did you use her when she was only 14?

MATTHEW KLEIN: For Tessa to turn up, it just broke down the barriers and they...

JENNY BROCKIE: So you were the first person who turned up Tessa?

TESSA KLEIN: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: What was it like for you at 14 to do something like that?

TESSA KLEIN: Well, dad had asked me about it previously and like he's like we're going to New Zealand to help a family, but I briefly remembered them and I was like....

JENNY BROCKIE: Because you'd you been in 12 Tribes too until you were 5 I think?

TESSA KLEIN: Six I think it was.

JENNY BROCKIE: Six, okay.

TESSA KLEIN: Yeah, when he asked me about it I was like yes, I want to do everything I can to help them because I know that me leaving, like I was just so grateful for it and I was like man, if I can give that opportunity to them, like yes, I will go.

JENNY BROCKIE: So you were the first port of call person?

TESSA KLEIN: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: Who went in and tried to convince them to leave?

TESSA KLEIN: Well, I was sort of there to sort of diffuse the tension I guess because they were kind of scared of my dad, like they'd heard stories from the elders of him being violent and, you know, everything like, there was a tension.

JENNY BROCKIE: Because he'd left?

TESSA KLEIN: Because he'd left and because there'd been other sort of minor incidents that I guess had kind of been embellished.

JENNY BROCKIE: Rose, what convinced you to leave?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Oh, it's a huge process but for me the crack in my mind control was that I realised that the leaders thought really bad of me. It was over time, it took me a few months but I started thinking well, God doesn't see me like that and I still thought, they hadn't made me feel so bad about myself that I thought I was totally bad, you know. I still had some self-esteem and I thought well no, I'm not like that. They've got a problem. They've got a problem, you know.

JENNY BROCKIE: So that was where the crack started?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: That was what started you to decide to leave?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: Yeah, well, but it's not until I was physically out, when I was in New Zealand, when you're physically out you do have a chance to - for that mind control to break.

JENNY BROCKIE: Okay. Raphael, you say you're proponents of mind control, what do you mean by that with what you do?

RAPHAEL ARON: It's a very controversial area as to whether mind control really exists and I happen to be a believer in that concept, in that minds can be controlled by people and other forces outside the individual.

JENNY BROCKIE: So you fight mind control with mind control?

RAPHAEL ARON: No, absolutely not. The whole idea of exit counselling is to bring people back to where they were in the first instance and not to impose or to put upon them any particular views and I think it's really, really important that there's no religious content, it has no persuasive content in that respect, it's simply a matter to be able to bring people back to where they were. That's often complicated by the fact that today we are seeing a lot of people who are second generation cult members so there's no place to bring them back to because they were never out of a cult.

JENNY BROCKIE: But you are you dealing with unwilling people when you stage interventions? I mean we've heard earlier about people needing, you know, there needs to be a certain amount of willingness. Are you dealing unwilling people quite often?

RAPHAEL ARON: Essentially, yes, because nobody's going to invite you in to have them exit counselled. So what you've got to do is devise a strategy about what you can engage with that particular person.

JENNY BROCKIE: Louise, can I just ask you briefly what you think of this exit counselling?

LOUISE SAMWAYS: Well, as a psychologist of course there's all sorts of ethical issues surrounding that that would mean that I wouldn't be involved in that kind of process. I think there's also, my concern is that there often isn't a good understanding of some of the psychological problems that

people can have when they're leaving these organisations and I have certainly seen people who have left these groups, sometimes by outside intervention, where they actually have quite significant dissociative disorders.

JENNY BROCKIE: So you think this is dangerous, you think this type of thing can be dangerous?

LOUISE SAMWAYS: Potentially, if people are not aware and don't know how to recognise disassociation and some of the other problems that people have, and even skilled professionals often have difficulty recognising disassociation in their consulting rooms in a controlled environment, then yes, it can be potentially very dangerous.

JENNY BROCKIE: Raphael, can I get a response briefly from you about this? People are highly vulnerable in these situations, I'm just wondering what qualifications you have to do this?

RAPHAEL ARON: Well I think it's really important when you talk about this area that you're not working in isolation, you're working as part of a team. So you've got people, for example, who maybe psychologists or social workers or psychiatrists who are going to be involved in the process. None of us work in isolation, we actually work as facilitators rather than one man or one woman shows which means that all the issues...

LOUISE SAMWAYS: So are you saying that there are psychologists and psychiatrists actually present Raphael?

RAPHAEL ARON: We would say that we consult with psychologists and psychiatrists all along the way, we make sure that we are...

LOUISE SAMWAYS: But are they present at that initial meeting?

JENNY BROCKIE: Let him answer Louise.

RAPHAEL ARON: No, they're not present at the initial meeting but let's understand what happens at that initial meeting. As Tessa said, it's basically an exchange of ideas, an exchange of experiences. Matthew would have talked about what happened during the time that he was in the 12 Tribes and what that did to him and how that impacted on him.

JENNY BROCKIE: Yeonmi, you appear on a weekly South Korean variety show. Here is a clip of you talking about your sister who you lost track of in China when you both defected from North Korea.

YEONMI'S VIDEO PLAYED.

YEONMI PARK (Translation): I have come here today in the hope of finding my sister - I really hope my sister watches this video message. Wherever you are, don't lose hope. Stay strong and alive... Sister, your sister is here. Let's meet soon. I love you sister.

JENNY BROCKIE: That was a year and a half ago, what's happened since?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, basically 2007 I left North Korea with my mum and my father, without my sister.

JENNY BROCKIE: And where is she now?

YEONMI PARK: She's in South Korea now, she's in my - with us now. Yeah, just I found out that she was living in China for seven years and then she just got to South Korea last December so I met her at that time, so it was like miracle for me, so yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: And how is she, she's just been released from Hanawon from the resettlement centre?

YEONMI PARK: Like three days ago.

JENNY BROCKIE: Two days ago?

YEONMI PARK: Three days ago.

JENNY BROCKIE: Three days ago?

YEONMI PARK: Yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: Okay, how is she?

YEONMI PARK: She is very great now. Yeah, she was very like, very disappointed or like very like discouraged, like depression on her because she heard that South Korea is really a competition is really high and then the studies really hard and then she was like oh I want to go back to China. So we were really worried about her and we just keep...

JENNY BROCKIE: So how is she, does she still have those fears that you don't have any more?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, actually I was trying to get her to in the studio to do this.

JENNY BROCKIE: To come and join you here?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, but she just still believe that Kim family they got a power so if she say something wrong about them, she can be, you know, affected like....

JENNY BROCKIE: So she's still worried that if she came on this program with you she could get into trouble from the Kim family?

YEONMI PARK: Yes, so she's worried about that a lot.

JENNY BROCKIE: Shieun, when people leave Hanawon, how do they find life in South Korea do you think? What are the difficulties in adjusting?

SHIEUN YU: (Through interpreter) Firstly, there are family issues. Secondly, there are issues with their education and being in a competitive society. So young North Korean refugees, they have, like Yeonmi has just mentioned, concerns about their education because South Koreans are extremely competitive. And thirdly, they have cultural adaptation issues. South and North Koreans have grown up in two very different cultures so they don't know how to communicate and build a relationship of trust. They also don't know much of each other's culture so North Korean refugees struggle to adapt to the South Korean society. So because of cultural adaptation issues, they have difficulty with interpersonal skills and building relationships with others.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tore, what if you change the behaviour of a violent extremist but not their beliefs, does it matter?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: Well sometimes there are people who just quit their involvement in violence but maintain some militant and radical beliefs but as long as they don't act on those beliefs that is not so dangerous. But there is of course a risk that they may reengage, go back, and that is a problem with some of these people who have been involved with terrorism, for example.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tore, how can you be sure that any change is lasting?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: Well, we can see that both in the change of lifestyle and the way they behave, I think that's what we can see. I think time is important. Building new social relationships, establishing a new life, that is something which is tying people who have been involved in extremist groups, tying them to a normal life and normal social relations, getting a family, get a job, that is something which is tying them back to normal life.

JENNY BROCKIE: Mohamed, you were nodding about that, those connections, yeah?

MOHAMED FEISAL: I think this is a time for us to realise the reality of extremism today and for those who are in the midst of joining such group, extreme group, they need to understand that that is not the path that you want for their life. So if we do realise this as a parent, as a father, as a mother, as a brother as a friend and you see changes in your friends at home, you have a role to play. You need to talk to them. You need to bring books like Animal Farm for people to read, it's about understanding that everybody has a role to play and also expanding the horizon and believing that, believing for love to overcome hatred.

JENNY BROCKIE: And has love overcome hatred for you Tore in terms of this man here who plotted to kill you? I mean how do you feel about him now?

PROFESSOR TORE BJORGO: Now Tom and I are very good friends. We work together in some ways, we have a good relationship for a few years.

JENNY BROCKIE: Tom, how different are you now to that neo Nazi with the Glock pistol?

TOM OLSEN: Well, back in 2002 I was speaking a lot about my past in various universities and other places. And at the time I felt I was talking about myself and my development but then as some time passed on, I was talking and I felt I was talking about another person. So today I have, it's like, it's not like I'm seeing myself, it's like I'm talking about somebody else. It's hard to explain.

JENNY BROCKIE: Yeonmi, do you feel different, like a different person now?

YEONMI PARK: Yeah, I feel like, yeah I feel like this is true me and that was lie, you know, so yes, different person, definitely different, yeah.

JENNY BROCKIE: Rose, your eldest daughter Andila went back to 12 Tribes and you're effectively out of contact with her now. I think we've got a picture here of her and your grandchild and you took that photo, yeah, but you're not in contact with them regularly?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: That's the second to last time I saw her and her husband.

JENNY BROCKIE: Do you think you will see her again?

ROSEMARY CRUZADO: No. Now, well she doesn't live very far, but I'm not allowed on the premises and she says she's never going to come and visit, so yes.

JENNY BROCKIE: And how are you two now?

LEBANA ILICH: Like we can have a friendship with my with my mum and parents now, like I wouldn't be able to back then so yeah, it's good.

JENNY BROCKIE: So, we do have to wrap up here now but I do want to thank everybody very much for joining us tonight, it's been really fascinating, and that is all we can talk about here but you can keep talking of course on Twitter and Facebook.

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