

## Pigeonhole Episode 12

[bright ambient music]

### Introduction

CHORUS OF VOICES: Pigeonholed, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole.

CHERYL: This the Audio Described version of my 2018 documentary "After Fairview." It took 3rd prize in the Free Our People Film Contest at the Center for Disability Rights New York State. I originally started filming Linda to support Real Choice Initiative, and it grew into a more intricate portrait. Audio Description by Mhairi Morrison.

### After Fairview

[mellow music]

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: A heavysset white woman with short hair.

LINDA: I remember that I was 16 years old, and I remember sitting up in my bed and saying, "I want my mommy!" Yeah, I mean, it was like that. I was scared. I was really scared.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: On a shelf, soft toys, dolls, and more family photos.

LINDA: They would tell me that I would never be able to leave Fairview, that it's always gonna be open and all that, you know. But the State came up there and went through there, and well, by the time I left in '92, it was closed.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: A photo album. The woman looks through the album. An imposing building. Below the roof, the date 1908. In front of the building, trees and a flag pole.

LINDA: Fairview was an institution. It was called the Hospital and Training Center.

My name is Linda.

I was born in 1950. So, people in the 1950s thought that people in wheelchairs and stuff should be shut away.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: The woman, Linda, looks through black and white photographs in the album. She threads an orange plastic bead through a purple plastic cord. She uses one hand and grips the cord with her teeth.

LINDA: You know what I would get, what would make me so angry was when somebody younger than me would tell me what to do. And I hate that. I really do. But they thought they were big shots and things. And I was probably older than most of them because there would be kids that would work there.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: In front of photographs on the wall, colorful bead necklaces hang. On Linda's lap, a box of beads. She carefully nudges a green bead onto a piece of purple plastic cord.

LINDA: I didn't like it very much, yeah, because, and what some of them really treated you terrible too. I mean, you know, so, and you knew you were smart, but they'd always call, some people would call you stupid and stuff like that.

[fast typing on a computer keyboard]

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: Typed lettering appears. Words read: "The Fairview Training Center May Have the Darkest History in Oregon, 2015. From Secrecy to Celebrity: The story of Molly Dally 2007 Erasing Fairview's horrors, 2010. Widespread Abuse, Neglect and Death in Small Settings serving people with intellectual disabilities 2007-2010 Here are the daily counts. 'February 24, 1917, 371 inmates' soon their number would exceed 3000." In yellow lettering words read: "People First. Label jars not people."

LINDA: When we were in Fairview, we all started We Are People First. And then now, it's nationwide. Yeah, so, I've been in trying to help people and stuff like that for a long time. Because I don't want them to be in an institution or anything like that.

Just because you're handicapped does not mean you can't do anything, you know.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: On an easel, an abstract painting and a watercolor set.

LINDA: I'm in the group, yeah, CareWorks and stuff. And what we do there is we talk about what we can do to help people get out and things like that.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: A sign in Linda's front window reads: "Oregon CareWorks. Affordable Care. Quality Jobs. Support for Families." A bus stop. Linda, in her power wheelchair, approaches the bus stop.

LINDA: It means a lot to me that I can go out when I want to.

I don't have to ask anybody to go, to do, to go out or anything like that.

It feels like I'm a real person, you know? I mean, I'm not just shut in all the time, that I can, that I can get out and stuff like that.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: Linda holds a bar of chocolate and grins.

LINDA: Well, I'm just glad that I got out of Fairview when I did. I got out like in 1969, I think it was. Yeah. I moved out of the group home in 1989. I went back home for a while until they could find me a place. And they found me this place, and then I moved up back up here in 1990. And I've been here since 1990.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: Paintings and tile mosaics on her apartment walls.

LINDA: The people I meet on the street, they treat me like, "Oh my god, it's a disease," or something like that. Sometimes I tell them, "Look, one of these days, you're gonna be in a wheelchair, and you're gonna need help too." They don't say much to me after that. [laughs] I think they think that I should just keep my mouth shut. [laughing] Maybe I should too, sometimes.

I think we all should be able to live on our own, with a little help, you know.

Wrap-up

[bright ambient music]

Every episode is transcribed. Links, guest info, and transcripts are all at [WhoAmItoStopIt.com](http://WhoAmItoStopIt.com), my disability arts blog. I'm Cheryl, and...

TWO VOICES: this is Pigeonhole.

CHERYL: Pigeonhole: Don't sit where society puts you.