

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Growing up, I used to get bullied a lot, because I wasn't one of those kids that were the flyest, or had the newest kicks. Because you know, poverty hit my family at a young age.

When I was growing up in the foster care system, from the ages of 14 to like 17, I was bullied consistently for like three years.

I remember being younger and being in foster care. I used to get bullied a lot because I was kind of different. And at that time, I really wasn't aware of my sexuality. So some of the other kids used to pick on me all the time about it.

I can say my mother bullied me, because she didn't like my gender identity. So she would torment me, and like kick me out the house for days, and then allow me to come back, until finally, that's when she kicked me out for good.

I wanted to join the football team and I wanted to be a cheerleader at the same time. So basically, I would play football, and like half-time, I would cheer for myself. And when I was in the locker room, I kind of got, like, physically attacked by some of team members. And they were like, oh, that I'm the F-word, and like, boys don't cheer for themselves, and all kind of nonsense.

I was tying my shoe outside, and this girl came up to me and kicked me in my face , and then threw a paper bag at me and ran off. So that was one particular time that resonates with me. Because every time I see her when I got to Harlem, all I can do is stare at her and wonder why she did it.

Being raised in Christian home, I was-- you know, being gay wasn't accepted. And it still isn't accepted. So I was pretty much antagonized and made to fear that if I would continue on being gay, that I would go to hell.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

If I wasn't bullied, I would have grown more as a person, and I wouldn't have to play catch-up in my adult years.

If I wasn't bullied, I would be more happy, I think.

If I wasn't bullied, I wouldn't have the same state of mind I do right now. I think very freely. I'm like a free spirit. But, I mean, that's all because I was bullied when I was younger.

If I had never been bullied before, I probably wouldn't know what bullying is now, and I probably wouldn't be able to help my brothers and sisters.

If I wasn't bullied then, I would definitely be more articulate with how I express myself with words, with-- I feel like what I would want to do would be more crystal-clear. I feel like now there's potential, and I am growing, but there's that kind of wall, you know, that you kind of feel like constipated in life. You're trying to get through it, but you just can't.

If I wasn't bullied then, I would probably have like a lot more confidence in myself as a person.

I think if I wasn't bullied then, I just probably would've-- I would have had-- I probably would have had less inner demons to face.

[MUSIC PLAYING]