



# Illaine Premo

*Great Basin Indian Archive*

GBIA 024



**Oral History Interview by**

**Norm Cavanaugh  
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Owyhee, NV**



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Interviewee: Illaine Premo

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P: My name is Ilaine Tybo Premo. My mother's name was **Ada** Cortez Johnson, and her mother's name was Ida Cortez. And Ida's dad's name was Cortez Charlie. They're from the Cortez area, and then they moved down to Beowawe, and then from Beowawe, they moved down to Battle Mountain. And from Battle Mountain, they moved to Elko, and from Elko to South Fork, to Lee. And that's my mother's side. My *huttisi*, my grandma, she was born and raised in Austin area. Austin area, and from there she moved on to Battle Mountain, where she lived. And my grandpa Jim Tybo is from around Big Smoky—I guess that's what it's called, Big Smoky. That Smoky Valley, I guess, where Felix is from. That's where my grandpa is from. And my dad's from Austin area, also.

C: What kind of work, or what did your family do, prior to moving? Or did they move to find jobs?

P: I think they just migrated from Austin down to Beowawe, probably looking for work on the ranches. Because my dad was a, worked as a sheepherder, I heard, as a young man. He herded sheeps for some big sheep ranchers. And my grandma, my *huttisi*, she went and worked in the same ranch families raising their children. Raising their children, I guess, the owners' children. Raising the **Marvos** from Battle Mountain, Tom **Marvo** and his family. She raised those boys, all of them. And they looked up to my grandma as their mother, that she raised them. And my mom, she worked in Battle Mountain in the restaurants. I don't know, probably washing dishes and so on. Grandmas just stayed home. And that's just about all I know. That's from, in Battle Mountain. Then from Battle Mountain, we migrated. From Battle Mountain—now, we were real little—no, I'm getting ahead of myself. [Laughter] That's before we were born. And then my mom and

dad met each other, and then they got married in Battle Mountain, I believe. And then, they were—then four of us girls were born. We were still little when we were in Battle Mountain. We hardly remember the story. But then, after that, my dad got a ranch in Lee—Lee, Nevada—and he moved up there. Moved my mother and us guys up there. We were little tiny girls then. And then, left my grandmas behind in Battle Mountain. And then, along the way, my mom and dad divorced when we were still little. He was in the army. He came out and found somebody else, and he divorced my mom at a young age. And then, we moved back to Elko with my grandma, Lucy Cortez. We lived with her. And my mom. We lived there for a while. We were still little then, and then my mom died from sickness, and then a year after that, my grandma Lucy died from loneliness because my mom died. She, it was loneliness that killed her. So, we went back to Lee with my dad. We were little yet. And then back and forth, we went to my *huttisi*'s place in Battle Mountain on the Greyhound. When we're little, we get shipped back to Battle Mountain, back to Lee, back to Lee. And that's where I knew about my grandma Minnie. She was a medicine lady. And she delivered most all the kids around the Colony. She had delivered them, and then she was—every night was her ritual. Every night, she would bless us with her eagle feather, because she was a medicine lady and all. She blessed us with her eagle feather so we will not get sick, all four of us girls. We never got sick. And then she had sagebrushes in a little glass of water that she has by her bed day and night, day and night. And she dipped the sagebrush, and, "*Mei mapuisi*," [5:08] she blessed us with it every morning, early in the morning and at night. And she prays *all* the time, morning and night, morning and night. And we never got sick as little girls. *Hakapi e ha napan'ni* [Shoshone at 5:20] I don't want to forget.

C: So you guys used to ride back and forth on a Greyhound, from Lee to Battle Mountain.

P: Uh-huh, yeah. We were little then. We were just put on the Greyhound, and we would travel all by ourself over there. And *Huttsi* would meet us over there in Battle Mountain, and that's how we traveled, back and forth. I guess we were—I don't know why. Well anyway, *Huttsi* was very interesting, because she was real traditional. Very traditional Indian. And we drank all those Indian medicines—sagebrush, really. *Antapittseh kwana*. I don't know what the *taipo* name is for *antapittseh kwana*. But we'd, we grew up on that, and sagebrush. Drinking sagebrush liquid, all the time. And we hardly ever got sick—especially me. I never got sick. *Huttsi* said I was tough like her! [Laughter] Ah, but, um—and then, we lived on jackrabbits a lot. Because everybody's poor in the Colony, and not everybody had jobs. And there was a lot of jackrabbits around in the desert, I guess, behind Battle Mountain. They hunted a lot, and then occasionally deer. But mostly, we were raised on *weyempi* [**wi'ompi**], you know, that buckberries. That Grandma used to go down on the **Marvo** ranch and get. We'd have buckberries, and that's what I grew up, and I really love it, buckberries. She'd make pudding, and put—make Indian bread, and just break the Indian crumbs into that, that would, sometimes we'd have it three times a day, because there was nothing to eat. And, *Usen kia* [7:02], let me see, my *huttsi*... So in Austin area, my dad's side, and my mom's Cortez, *nemmesen Tosawihi*, now, White Band. White Band Shoshones. White Knife, White Knife band. [Shoshone at 7:16] Cortez [Shoshone at 7:18] Beowawe, and Battle Mountain's also considered White Knife *nemiya*. Carlin, that area. [7:27] *Nemme setai kimmate*. So, then we go back to Lee. Back to where I grew up, were going to school over there in Lee, from first grade to eighth grade, and then I was shipped off to Stewart,

where I stayed for four years. But in Lee, it was—oh, it was a good life over there, too. My dad ranched back there, and we lived the furthest from the school, a real long ways. *Way* down there. Just *mananku*. And we'd go to school on horseback all the time. Winter, we'd have a barn back there where we'd tie a horse. And we'd run, and race up the hill. Race up the hill [8:12] *nemna' punkukate tea*. You know, all three of us, that's Lilly and me, and Joanne—but mostly me and Joanne, because Lillian's older than us. Irene Diggs, she, my *huttsi* raised her in Battle Mountain. And so, I remember the incident, you know, when we used to come down the hill toward where Raymond Yowell lives now. That's, his grandparents used to live over there, *Muumpittseh* and his wife, *Muumpittseh Hepitto*. *Muumpittseh Hepitto* [Shoshone at 8:39]. We'd come down that hill, and there's a gate right by her house. [Shoshone at 8:46], the bareback through her house. And then, and I guess we leave her gate open, I don't know! We get [Shoshone at 8:55] with her apron. I always remember her. She'd come on her porch, waving her fist at us. She said, “[Shoshone at 9:02]!” “I'm going to tell Burt on you!” But we laugh and just race through there without shutting her gate! That is awful! [Laughter] But we grew up like that on horseback. And then, at Lee, we had good teachers. One of them was Norman Thompson, and his wife—*hate nanihante?* Norman's—Ellen. Ellen **Bea Roth**. And they were teaching us over there, for quite a while. And then, we all talked Shoshone over there. Hardly any English. Mostly Shoshone over there. And those *taipo* kids that went to school with us, like the **Kanes**, Marilyn Kane, Bob and Bill Kane, the brothers, two twins. Twins. And Charles and Linda **Dran** were our neighbors back there. And Elbert **Berrenega**, he's a Basque from under the mountains. [Shoshone at 9:52], they know how to talk Shoshone. Because we all talked Shoshone, and then Marilyn Kane and them

rode horseback with us going home. [**Shoshone at 10:01**] every night, we race, you know, up the road. Race real fast, and we leave her behind, Marilyn-*ha*. Then she'd cry, said, "Don't *nukki*! Don't *nukki*! Don't *nukki*!" [Laughter] "Don't run! Don't run!" [**Shoshone at 10:12**]! [Laughter] It was—oh, we had fun up there! [**Shoshone at 10:20**].

C: So who were your sisters?

P: Oh, my sisters. My oldest sister is Lillian Garcia now, still lives in Lee where we used to live. And Joanne Manning, and Irene Cota. And my half-brother's Milton Tybo. And that's us.

C: So at one time, did your Grandma Minnie tell you stories of what she recalled, or anything about what her childhood was like?

P: Yeah. Well, she told us real stories, because my *huttsi* was a real good storyteller. Every night, we hear stories. But I'll probably just tell you one of them. But we heard a lot about *tsoo'apittseh* in the hills, and of course *Itsappe—Ish*. And the water babies, *pa'ohaane*. And—because they lived around that river in Battle Mountain. *Paohaane*. And then, she told a story about *Toya Tuineppe*, the Mountain Boy. That's where I come from, the Mountain Boy, I was one of the descendants. Mountain Boy. *Himpa—Huttsi* used to tell us that when they used to go from pinenut hills to pinenut hills long time ago, because they didn't have anyplace to live, they just migrate from hill to hill, and they live in camps. Probably, I don't think it was tipi, it was just those willow huts, I guess, or something. She never really went into it. But they moved from area to area, pinenut hill to pinenut hill. And she said that *Toya Tuineppe* was always around, *tepitsi atsatsi* [**11:53**], he was a real naughty boy, she says, a real mischievous, very naughty. And he'd come down the hill, *akka toyama* [**12:02**], but he'd slide down the hill, down the hill, and

he'd holler and laugh. You can't see him. They never see him, but they know that he's a little boy because it's got the voice of a little one. They'd see him coming down the hill, making dust down the hill, and they'd say, "Oh, there's *Toya Tuineppe* again!" *Toya Tuineppe*, Little Mountain Boy. Then, when they'd camp and go to the pinenut hills to get pinenuts, they'd come back, their camp would be all destroyed. That *Toya Tuineppe*, Little Mountain Boy would kick all their food all around, ashes all over from the campfire. They know it was him, because he's mischievous. And they hear him laughing in the trees, *Huttsi* said. You know, he's always doing some kind of tricks to them. And sometimes, he's good, too. You know, he blesses people. He blesses people, even though he's kind of bad. And that's what I remember about Mountain Boy, because he's my descendant. One time, after I married Willis and moved to Duck Valley, I got really, really sick. And Judy Jackson, my aunt, was still living here, so she said, "Alec Cleveland's going to be here tonight." [Shoshone at 13:09], because I was sick. I don't know the for—probably stress, or, I don't know. And then, I went over the [Shoshone at 13:18] Alex, [Shoshone at 13:22]. And I'm one of those persons who grew up kind of funny, [Shoshone at 13:27]. That's what got me sick. You know? I'm always scared at nights, I don't know why. Even though I was little and grew up and got married, I was still scared, because my husband used to wake me up, Willis used to wake me up, and I was talking, talking, and crying, and wake me up from that. But I always knew it was my mother. Somehow, I knew it was my mother, doing that to me. [Shoshone at 13:52] *Neweh nohimpai*. Then it got me sick, because I was always worried in my house, you know, looking for her, looking for—over here, at my house. And so I got sick, and Judy said, [14:03] "*Attik tai puhane* to come on over tonight," so I went over there, and *Attik*

said, [14:08] “*Tsatta em pii*. Your mother’s bothering you all the time.” Because you know—I probably was her favorite, because she used to take me to Starr Valley or Ruby Valley for work, you know, on ranches? And she’d take me all the time, I don’t know why. But I was little, she always took me with her. And **Attik** said, “She wants you, that’s why she’s bothering you. [**Shohone at 14:29**],” he said, “You have to get after her!” In the olden days, old people cuss them out, you know, spirits. [**Shoshone at 14:37**]. Tell them to go away and leave you alone. Said “That’s the only way you can get rid of her, is just tell her to leave you alone! Cuss her out! Be mean to her! She’s trying to get you. She’s *going* to get you if you don’t get after her! [**Shoshone at 14:58**]. That’s why you’re sick,” he told me. And I always remember, because **Attik** doesn’t know me. You know, he’s from here, I’m from the other area. And he said, “Always remember that [**Shoshone at 15:10**],” you know, “You’re a descendant of *Toya Tuineppe*. So every morning when you get up, drink a glass of water three times, face the mountain, and pray”—[**Shoshone at 15:24**]. Pray and bless yourself, every morning. [**Shoshone at 15:29**], and you’ll get over that sickness, over your mother. And so I said, “Oh, that was all that was wrong with me, I guess! Her haunting me all the time.” And I was really sick. So I came back, and she was still haunting me. [Laughter] And the latest was, she was haunting me, and I heard her downstairs in my basement, and I got up, and I done what Alec told me. I went down there, and I cussed her out in Shoshone, and told her not to bother me, and told her leave my kids alone, because my kids were down there. My girls were down there. And not to bother them, because some are bothered by her, too, some of them. And so, I said, “Don’t bother me anymore!” in Shoshone, and I threw down whatever I can get. Shoes, clothes, I just threw it down there

real mean like that, where I couldn't see her, but I knew it was her. After that, she went away for good. Never bothered me up to this day. She never bother me again. But that was one, I guess you can call "superstition" or something, I don't know what it is, that happened to me. So that's how I grew up. Was in Lee. I don't know what—*hinna tease*?

C: When you guys lived in Battle Mountain, was there a lot of pinenuts?

P: Up in Austin area. From Battle Mountain, we go up to Austin on wagons. We go up there and get pinenuts. Or else some other relative will bring it down to us, because it's too far. But when my *huttsi* was growing up, they lived up there in the Austin—on the pinenut hills. So that's where they got their pinenuts, they lived on pinenuts, all the time. And so did my mom and them in that Cortez area. They live on pinenuts, too. And they walked. They never used cars or wagons, because they'd—before, when my mother was growing up, they didn't have any horses or wagons. They usually walked long ways for food and roots, hunting, and getting pinenuts. That's what they done. You know, when we went to Cortez last week—whole bunch of us from Duck Valley went. Gerry Brady and us guys went, and she said, "Just think, our old people used to walk these hills for many miles—and look at us getting tired already!" [Laughter] You know, we're climbing the hill, we're real tired and breathing real hard. We got to sit down every once in a while! And they used to roam these hills walking. [**Shoshone at 17:59**]. But that's what they done, I think, that Old People.

C: So is there still pinenuts left there in Cortez?

P: Lots. That's a pinenut hills. Pinenut hills. But the mine, the new mine's going up. That's how come they invited us, because they said most of the descendants from Cortez is Duck Valley White Knives. So that's why we were invited over there. And there's lot of

pinenuts. But there's a new mine going up there in that Cortez mine. Great, big giant one. We went to visit that one. Plus, there are old mines. And the new mine's going to be *so* huge. I don't know. And that pinenuts, some of the pinenut hills they're going to destroy. They're going to cut them down. But they're going to save some of the young ones, I think, that's what they were saying. The younger pinenut trees. So, the mine is really expanding.

C: So what kind of mineral are they mining for?

P: Gold.

C: Gold?

P: Mhm. I don't know, but that's where my mom is from. And they said that used to be a real big Shoshone settlement at one time. **Rehabi** Whitney was telling us that, at one time—or was it Felix Ike? That was the biggest Shoshone settlement in that valley, Grass Valley—over the hill is Grass Valley. That's another valley *Huttsi* used to talk about [**Shoshone at 19:32**]. She used to say “Grass Valley”—but you know, in Shoshone—“Grass Valley,” “Grass Valley.” And we never paid attention to her. It's over the hill from Cortez. Big Shoshone area. From there, they migrated different areas, like Duck Valley, Fort Hall, Ruby Valley, other areas. But I really grew up in reservation, in reservation life. And a little bit in Elko, not too long. Because we were just little girls when we moved to Lee. So we grew up on a ranch.

C: So, do you remember any of the stories that your Grandma told you, many about the *Tso'apittseh*?

P: Oh yeah, *Tso'apittseh*. [Laughter] *Tso'apittseh*. Yeah, she told lot of stories of what her mother and them told. I don't think it was when she was young, I don't think, because I

think *tso'apittseh* was *way* back there. And she said they didn't—they were still wandering around the pinenut hills, living here and there in the hills, and they used to sit in the, by the campfire, and tell stories that, you know, *Newene*, the Indians would sit around the campfire telling stories. All they do every night is tell stories. And then they hear from *way* back, *Huttsi* said—because she was going to scare us, now, because we were little girls, they always thought we were naughty, and she tells us scary stories so we can go to sleep and be quiet, I guess! [Laughter] And then, she said, well, they were sitting, talking, they would hear *Tso'apittseh* away just miles and miles away. [**Shoshone at 21:05**], he'd be crying a lot, coming to the camp, and everybody's getting scared now, trying to hide their kids. And—[**Shoshone at 21:13**]—he was singing that song, “[**Shoshone at 21:17**],” was getting closer and closer. Finally, he just squatted down that campfire. And every time he leaves—I don't know whether this is true, or it's just to scare us—she said he takes off with a kid in his [**Shoshone at 21:31**]. You know, that little—a little basket behind his back. He's supposed to be a rock man. Rock, I think, made out of rocks. But he's got a basket in the back that was coated with pinenut sap. [**Shoshone at 21:47**]. Big enough for an adult to go into, [**Shoshone at 21:51**], he'd take one of the kid and take off with it. And he'd go crying away, [**Shoshone at 21:59**]. After he steal that kid, and everybody was so scared of him because he'll always find them wherever they're at. Even if they move or run away, he'll find them. So they just stay put, because that *Tso'apittseh* was around. And then, one time, she said he came again. They were sitting down, they heard him crying, and he was coming again, and this time he sat down and talk Shoshone to them, and asked how they were doing and all that stuff. Talking and eating with them, whatever. And finally, he kept looking at this one young

man, she said. A young man, not a baby or a little boy. He was a young man, I don't know how old he is. He kept looking at that young man. Finally, he got up and grabbed that young man, and threw it behind his big basket and took off. Took off, and that young man was old enough to know what was happening. So when the *Tso 'apittseh* was running along under the pine trees, he thought real fast, and then he—when he was running along, crying along, that *Tso 'apittseh*, he grab a limb up there, and he climb up on that limb and *Tso 'apittseh* didn't know it. Kept on crying down the hill until he got where he was going, probably to his den. And he found out that young man was missing. So he turn around crying real loud, coming back again to the camp, looking for that young man. Young man was up there waiting for him, she said, with—he made fire out of rocks or something, I don't know. He made a little fire. When *Tso 'apittseh* was right underneath him, he threw that fire into that basket, that sap, and that burnt real bad, and *Tso 'apittseh* ran away crying. [Shoshone at 23:42] down that hill, he was just crying and panicked, you know? And it burned him up. It burned him up, because he never bothered the Indians again. That's *her* story about *Tso 'apittseh*. He never bothered them again. I guess he burnt to death, or something happened. His big basket burned up. [Laughter]

C: So what did he do with those kids? Did he eat them, or what did he do with them?

P: That's—according to her, [Shoshone at 24:08]. He tears the head off, I guess he eats the head. That's what she said. But maybe different people have different stories about *Tso 'apittseh*. But he does kill them, the kids. So... There was another story about—*Huttsi*, she told us so many stories about the Cottontail. Of course, that's simple Cottontail. There was another story about a big bird, and I believe she called it *Ish*. *Ish*, that bird. But *Ise* was supposed to be the *Itsappe*, *Ish*. But she called this big bird *Ish*, too.

[**Shoshone at 24:44**] *Pia* \_\_\_\_\_ *kwina*. Like an eagle, but it wasn't an eagle. It was a real big bird. **On the** island, *ka nakkān*, some island, middle of the water. He live over there, and he come every now and then, fly to the Indian camp again, take people and take it over there to eat, I guess to the island. Back where he live in a great, big nest.

[**Shoshone at 25:05**]. And, I guess long time ago, he stole a lady. And that lady grew up to be a old lady. And she slaved for him. Cooked for him. He demanded this and that, demanded she cook his food. Whatever he brought home, she cook it for him. Mostly humans. She cooked that food for him, and over the many many years, just getting real old, just getting tired of that big bird doing that to her. And there's no way to get to that place except—wasn't no way to get there. It's the middle of a big river, open ocean, or something. And so the old lady was getting tired, and was getting mad at the big bird. So she finally thought, "Well, I am going to get rid of him." In Shoshone said she's going to get rid of him. "[**Shoshone at 25:55**]." And so, she got some kind of flint. *Uten* obsidian? That black flint? She chipped it real fine, chipped it real fine, and so he came back with whatever he had. And—oh no, it was a young man he brought back again, a young man. So she got really upset, the old lady. She wasn't going to have him kill the young man. So she got some flint, and chipped it, and put it in a bowl for him with soup [**26:23**], before he killed that young man. She made him some kind of soup because he was so demanding. And then soup, she put it in front of him. And he started drinking the soup. But every time he was drinking the soup, he would put his big [**Shoshone intermittently after 26:38**] in the air like [**26:39**]. And he'd kind of like gurgling sound in his throat, kind of choking because that thing was already working on him, that flint. Gurgling, gurgling. And she watched, she sat there and watch him. The bird wasn't saying

anything, he was just eating and doing that gurgling and choking and so on. Her and that young man watched that bird. Finally, he couldn't stand it anymore. He got up, and he flew away. He *yetseko* [27:04]. And he flew away up the middle of the water, and [27:08] behind, say they never saw him again. That was another story she told.

[Laughter] I believe she called him *Ish*. And I always say, "Why did she call him *Ise* when *Ise* is supposed to be *Itsappe*'s brother?" So, that's one story she told.

C: What about the water babies?

P: Oh, water babies! Yeah, Battle Mountain [Shoshone at 27:30] water babies. Everybody's scared of them, because they hear them crying, you know? *Babiesne*. [Shoshone at 27:36] used to always tell that all the time. My uncle Willie Johnson, he used to tell about water babies all the time. And he also took babies away from mothers that was fishing on the banks—you know, with their baby, and their—[Shoshone at 27:53]. And he just snatch them off of them and take the baby underwater [Shoshone at 27:58]. The baby's lost for good. But one time, he done that to another young man—[Shoshone at 28:05], and that somehow, that young man—I don't know this story too good. But somehow, the young man killed that water baby, and came back again. But all the Indians know about water babies. They say they're still alive—I mean, you can still hear them. And you know what that—I forgot to tell you about this. Mountain Boy, *Toya Tuineppe*, they say you hear him in any mountain. He lives in any mountain, high mountain. And sometimes, you can hear him whistling at you, whistling. Sometimes, you think it's a bird, you know. But it's *Toya Tuineppe*. And a lot of times, I go hunting with Willis way up in the mountains, way back there [Shoshone at 28:48]. And I'd be sitting there waiting, because he walked a long ways. I'd sit there, wait for him. [Shoshone at 28:53], whistling, [Shoshone at

**28:55**]. Then, I thought it was, you know, a bird. And then I remembered what **Attik** said to me: “If you go in the mountains and hear some whistling, that’s *Toya Tuineppe*. He’s whistling at you.” So that’s—he said it happens with anybody. Any Shoshone. You go up to the mountains and hear him whistling at you. So if you ever go hunting and hear somebody whistling? It might be him and not a bird. [Laughter] *Huttsi* was telling me some, another good story... Oh, I forgot! What was it about, now? Wait, ask me another question.

C: Do you know anything about **[29:41] *Toyantsi***’ that live out there in Ruby Valley? That you could talk about?

P: *Osen kwai*, yes. **[29:46] *Suteen Toya Tuineppe naa***. What did they say about *Toya nukutsi*?

C: They take care of the wild horses there, and the wild sheep?

P: Oh.

C: Yeah. [\_\_inaudible at 29:57\_\_]

P: Oh, that’s probably *their* story from that area. Oh! Hm. That’s interesting.

[Break in recording]

P: When he died [**Shoshone at 30:08**], we go up to [**Shoshone at 30:11**]. And we’d, we meet our ancestors up there. **[30:16] *Tammen naa supai akka nupuwiiha***. Milky Way [**Shoshone at 30:19**] you know, Shoshones **souls have the** dance in the Milky Way. That’s why when you see the Milky Way, it’s all dusty-looking? That dust, when they’re kicking up their heels, kicking up their feet, and all that dust, dancing, because that’s what they **do**. That **was their routine up** long time ago, to the Shoshones, was Round Dance. They sing in their old language, and so they’d sing a Shoshone song, telling

stories and their music. And the Milky Way is where we go to to dance when we die. That was a Shoshone belief. So when my daughter died, I always look at the Milky Way. [Shoshone at 30:55], she's dancing up in the Milky Way now, with her grandmas, and her aunts and uncles, her dad. Because I believe they came after her when she died that night. They all came, picked her up, and took her away, and now she's up in the Milky Way. *Osen tammen* belief, you know, we're dancing up there. That's one of the Shoshone belief that I grew up on. So, *hinna tease*?

C: So, in the dancing of the Milky Way, are they going someplace? Is there a belief that the people are going—are they traveling, or are they just dancing?

P: No, I think they just dancing. They go up there to be happy up there. You know, they're free. Free of all kinds of worries and stuff. And so, they just go up there to Heaven to dance. Dance up there. So when we look at them, we see them up there, we're supposed to see them up there dancing. Sometimes it's so pretty, you know, up there. The Milky Way. Another belief that I was told long time ago is, take a star for your loved one that died. A star. And I always look at the star and pray to God for that star to take care of your loved ones. So I picked a star for my daughter Francine. The Evening Star. [32:13] *Sokka nabuite*, and then I always *nanisuntehai*, I pray. Because, you know, I really miss her. And so, that's one of the beliefs. So everybody's dancing up there. And I believe—that's my belief, I don't know whether anybody else believe like that, but I believe we all go to Heaven. Everybody, good or bad. Everybody goes to Heaven! [Laughter]

C: Well, that's a Shoshone belief. There's—everybody goes to the Spirit World.

P: Mhm. Yeah. So, that's one of the stories.

C: Were there very many medicine—or healers in your family? You mentioned your Grandma was a healer.

P: Yeah, her stepfather was a real powerful medicine man. [33:00] *Himpaise ma nanihante* Sam Wilson. Sam Wilson, *nekka*. Is it Sam? I believe from the Austin area. A old man that was like a hermit. And he was married to my *huttsi*'s mother, Katie. Katie Wilson. I don't know what their maiden names were—because a long time ago, they only had Indian names, and when they worked with a white man, they change all their names. So, Katie Wilson and so on. Indian names. Like, my [Shoshone at 33:30]'s name was *Paampokompi*. Like, “water currant.” *Paampokompi*. And from there, they were changed to Lucy Cortez. And so, anyhow, [33:45] *himpai nani* \_\_\_\_\_?

C: Oh, healers.

P: Oh, that Sam Wilson! He's a powerful healer, Shoshone healer, up in Austin area. Was so powerful that he had, that Katie Wilson, his wife, had two daughters: my *huttsi*, and Davis Gonzalez and their grandma. Their grandmother, Nellie Woods. Nellie Woods. So Katie had two daughters. Katie Wilson's really Sam Wilson's daughter. Sam and Katie's daughter. My *huttsi* is a half-breed; her dad's half white. But somehow, Sam Wilson chose her—my *huttsi*'s more Indian because she's got more Indian belief, even though she's half white. She's real traditional. But keep her with him as assistant. You know, assisting him with preparing things when he's going to doctor somebody? [34:44] [Shoshone at 34:44], it was **for a young girl, that was just job for the girls**—that's what my *huttsi* told me, that I used to [Shoshone at 34:51] *kumaitte mia*. I go with them to help them prepare their roots and the medicine. And she listened to him. All the songs and stuff, she listened to him, and it got into her. So she became a medicine lady. Not as

great as Sam, but she still know what she was doing. And then *Huttsi* used to tell me, when she used to come visit me at my house when I had all my kids, she'd say—well, nowadays, nobody took after Sam, you know, that powerful medicine man. But some day [35:24] **there's going to *im himpa***, emerge a medicine man from one of your family. Our family—you know, the Tybos, I guess—our family's going to emerge some day. A powerful medicine man. It might be your kids. If not your kids, your grandkids or your great-grandchild. "Some day," he said, "*himpa tipitsi Newe wepekanai* [35:46]. It's going to come." I don't know when that's going to be! [Laughter] But that's what she always tells me. Because of Sam Wilson. That's the only one I know. The other medicine lady that I know is *Satii Nap* from Ruby Valley. Her name's Sally Brigham, I think. She's the one that raised Anna Premo. Sally Brigham, and I knew—we call her *Satii Nap*. Nowadays, she's **dead**. *Satii*, she used to come down to our Colony in Elko, to our little—and doctor my mother, because my mother's really sick. Doctor her all the time. Was a *very* powerful medicine lady. I remember her. She's real tall and skinny, had long gray hair. [Shoshone (?) at 36:29] and every night at midnight, she opened the door, and then she'd pray to God, I guess. [Shoshone (?) at 36:34] up to the Heavens. Then she'd come around and doctor my mother again. But my mother didn't get healed, because it was tuberculosis that killed her. It wasn't other kind of disease, sickness. And so, those two I remember really good. *Satii Nap* and Sam Wilson. And of course, *Atikko* here in Duck Valley. That's all I know.

C: So these people that were healers, they were blessed with the power? Or, I mean, they didn't go to school for it.

P: No, it was blessed by power. They had it from the ancestors, from way back. I guess it just came to them from way back. And—no, they didn't. They weren't taught. It was just in them to heal people. And they really did heal people, you know, in the old days. Nowadays, we have this young modern medicine—claim to be medicine men. I think they're just out here for the money! [Laughter] Money, you know, they're not really healing people like the old people. They're all dead now.

C: What kind of medicine did they use? Were they all different, or—?

P: They're all different. Like, sagebrush was the main one from that area, Battle Mountain, Cortez, [37:56] *kwaiya*. It was *pohovi*. *Pohovi* and *totsa*—*totsa*'s a lot, too. *Antapittseh kwana*. Those three I know.

C: Is there anybody that still uses those kind of—

P: Medicine? I do. We do. I taught all my kids that, you know, my girls and my son? We harvest *totsa* up in Scott Creek back in the mountains every fall. And that heals anything. You drink it—but it's real greasy. Like, greasy? I really don't like it. But some other lady told me to make it kind of mild, put more water in it, and strain it, and then you can drink it. But it's supposed to heal your insides. Any sickness that's inside of you. Stomach problems. Some people even says cancer and other kind of dreadful sickness. It cures that if you're very faithful to drink it every day. Like, *Huttsi* used to drink, like, a half a cup a day. So I guess... But I don't do that. I use mine for sores, when you get cut. Like, for animals too. Like my dogs get run over and cut or something, like, I boil that *totsa* and make it real mushy—you know, that real mushy—and then I mash it with my hands. And I cool it, and I take that pulp, and I just put it in the dog's wound, and it heals it immediately. Or anything. Horses, anything. And humans also. And you can smoke it,

too. You can smoke the *totsa*. Just pound it up to a little tobacco, and roll it up, and smoke it. My *huttsi*—again, Grandma Minnie over at Battle Mountain—she used to roll up *totsa*, and she'd smoke it every wintertime. She's sitting by her stove, smoking *totsa*. And she'd always make me wrap her *totsa*—you know, her tobacco, in the little paper. So I wrap it for her, and then she would give me one, just for so I won't get sick. Because it's *totsa*. And that's where I started smoking little bit, because of her! [Laughter] And I used to remember that. I was the only one that smoke among my sisters. I had fun with my *huttsi*, although she was *really* strict, too. Really strict with us. So... We were taught how to get up early in the morning to do our chores. Every morning, my dad done that to us when we were growing up. We got up, she made five in the morning. I still now, to this day I get up at that time. And that was good teaching. We done all our chores early in the morning. And we didn't have no electricity. We had to haul our water from a well, or from the river. And a lot of hardships, you know, when we grew up, and nothing—outside toilets, no water. Had to wash your clothes out by the river. Or in a tub with washboards. That's how I grew up. Nowadays, we have it easy.

C: What about the *antapittseh kwana*? What's that used for?

P: *Antapittseh kwana* is a real powerful healer, too. More powerful than all of the other medicine, according to *Huttsi*. And it grows up here around Cleveland Trail, back here. Cleveland Trail? Because she used to tell George **Blackett** to get it for her every fall. He goes over there, [**Shoshone at 41:34**], he's still walking way off from where the plants are growing, and he'd be singing. [**Shoshone at 41:40**]. In order to get it, he has to sing and pray to it. So he'd go over there and get whole bunch of it for *Huttsi*. Some long, tall plants. And then she'd boil it, I guess, and then drink it. Again, drink it. And then it's also

good for healing, like the *totsa*. You know, you'll get it pulpy, boil and get it pulpy, and put it on sores or whatever. Cuts. And that's supposed to be real powerful. But it's hardly any *totsa* around. I mean, hardly any *antapittseh kwana* around. I've heard that they're gone, now. And they don't grow anywhere, just rare places. But I rely on the *totsa* now. And mostly *pohovi*, I love *pohovi* yet. And I walk along, and I break a piece of *pohovi*, young *pohovi*, young one along outside my house. I just have it, smell it, and feel it, and inhale all the good medicine inside of you. I love *pohovi*. And [\_\_inaudible at 42:47\_\_], that's, I was raised with *pohovi* and *totsa*.

C: How about cedar? Did you use cedar much?

P: Not the Battle Mountain area. I never heard of them burning cedar. Did you?

C: Well, I hear people talk about it.

P: Yeah, some, I guess. But I never heard my Grandma talk about cedar. Only when I got over here. So I burn the cedar now all the time. It's good to bless your house with.

C: Uh-huh. Okay, we've got about ten minutes now. Is there anything you want to wind up with, or tell at the end here, about things that maybe your grandchildren, or if you were to tell them what's important in life, and what's important in terms of tradition, what would you think of would be the best thing it is to say to them?

P: My grandchildren. Well, I would tell them to get up early in the morning, because nowadays, those young people stay in bed, stay in bed 'til ten, eleven. And that's not good. Because I notice some of my grandkids are like that. And I try to make them get up early, but they're spoiled, I guess, in the modern world. Because I didn't raise them, their mother raised them. Their mothers raised them. If I raised them, it would be different. It would be different. Because I raised one granddaughter—that's *Nammi* up at the

hospital—I raised her. I made her get up early in the morning, do chores. So she works all the time. She gets up early. She does her work. But the other grandchildren, I don't know. Well anyway, so I tell them to get up early in the morning, work, and make a living, and be honest and giving to people. Talk to all the elders. Respect elders, and respect all people, animals, everything. And to—and not get involved in alcohol and drugs, because that's killing people nowadays. And that's what I want to pass on to them. That tradition is—keep up the medicine. Keep up the medicine, the *totsa* and the sagebrush. And just pray. Mostly pray. Pray, in the Indian way. Most of my grandkids and my kids doesn't talk Shoshone. They understand it, my kids understand, but they don't talk it. And grandkids are even worse. So—but they hear me talk all the time. So I just tell them what I know about living a good life. That's what I want them to do is live a good life, free of drugs and alcohol. And that's what I want to pass on to them.

[End of recording]