

Andrew: All right. If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints, or think that the research is negatively affecting you, you [inaudible 00:00:16] I will email you a copy of this script, and Doctor Connor's contact information after we have completed the interview. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Speaker 1: I couldn't understand a word he said.

Andrew: Hello?

Speaker 1: Hello? I'm here. Yeah.

Andrew: Okay. So let's begin. What was the most helpful thing you learned at the workshop that you attended?

Speaker 1: Nothing. Everything was excellent.

Andrew: Awesome. Was most of the information new information, or did you know most of what the facilitator was talking about?

Speaker 1: I knew the woman that was running it, but I wanted to winter [inaudible 00:01:09] once. I never went to a summer one, so I never knew... I know that water and electric really, you're not... It's very dangerous when it gets... But that's the first time I ever went to one where there was a water and electric one, but I went to the winter one. But I knew the lady that was running, the one that was teaching it though.

Andrew: All right. One moment. Okay. Was most of the information there new information, or did you already know most of what the facilitator was talking about?

Speaker 1: Well, I was shocked about the tour, with that new thing where you can put that bag on it for the flow of the water. I never knew about that.

Andrew: Yeah. I found that actually really interesting as well. It tricks you into thinking it's full, that there's more water than there actually is?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Andrew: Yeah. That was really interesting. I definitely agree. On a scale of one to five, five being excellent, three being good, and one being poor, how would you rate the workshop and why?

Speaker 1: Five. It was very interesting, and I did learn... Like I said, I like to go to these workshops to see, to learn about a [inaudible 00:02:29] you know what I'm saying?

Andrew: All right.

Speaker 1: Because you're going to need to heat the house, you know? What is the saying? A penny saved is a penny earned?

Andrew: So on a scale of one to five, a five being excellent, three being good, one being poor, how would you rate the workshop?

Speaker 1: Five.

Andrew: Five? Okay. And why a five?

Speaker 1: Because I learned from it, and it's nice to meet other people and go in different areas to see what's going on in their neighborhoods.

Andrew: Is there information that you wish was included in the workshop but was not covered?

Speaker 1: No, not really. No.

Andrew: And did you have any questions afterwards?

Speaker 1: No.

Andrew: All right. So what's your earliest memory of learning about energy as a house thing? When did you think about, "Oh, energy in my house" for the first time?

Speaker 1: When my brother had all the lights on in the house, and I told him to shut them down. My mother always taught me, "If you're not using it, turn it off."

Andrew: Okay. Nice. And has that been something that you've been doing ever since?

Speaker 1: Oh yes. See, I live here by my... I own my house. I live here by myself, and I keep only a few lights on. One light on, it's constant twenty four seven, and if I go in one room, I go in, I shut it right off. I don't want to give the electric company any more money than they deserve.

Andrew: I feel like that's a really good mindset to have, like you're not trying to let them get you. You're trying to be like, "I'm only going to let you charge me for what I use."

Speaker 1: Well actually, the electric company makes money on me because of the fact that I don't really use a lot of electric, you know? My mother always taught me, you should only have one light on in the house. You don't want to come into a dark house. So I put the energy saver bulb in my living room. As soon as I walk in my living room... I can walk into a lighted house. Never go into a dark house because you don't know what you're going to expect.

Andrew: Okay. What pops into your head when you hear the word energy?

Speaker 1: Cooling, heating.

Andrew: Okay. What do you know about your utility company? Have you ever had any noteworthy experiences with them, or interactions with them that stood out to you?

Speaker 1: No, not really.

Andrew: Do you know... I'll just go through your utilities, and if you could tell me the companies that provides if you know them... What's your electric company?

Speaker 1: Well, it's [inaudible 00:06:12] but I think I have Atlantic something. I did talk to somebody from Atlantic, and something about that they can get my [inaudible 00:06:23] or whatever you want to call that thing on your electric bill down, because you know... But like I said, a representative did come. He was going around, and I think I signed up with Atlantic something, but I [inaudible 00:06:38] pretty good with them, because [inaudible 00:06:39] send me three gifts every three, to six months. They've been sending me free gifts.

Andrew: Okay. They send you free gifts?

Speaker 1: Yeah. I mean, I got a box of 12 LED lights, I got a thing for the shower, I got a power surge. Yeah, every three, six months, they send me something in the mail.

Andrew: That's awesome. Were you aware of the utility moratorium which ended in April?

Speaker 1: No. What was that?

Andrew: It basically meant that once... So the utility companies wouldn't shut you off during the pandemic even if you didn't pay. You still have to owe the bill eventually, but they weren't doing any shutoffs.

Speaker 1: Okay. I didn't know that. Well yeah, see my electric bill is only like 30, 35 dollars.

Andrew: Okay.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So I mean, I have people running... I don't even use air in my house.

Andrew: Okay. Do you think you're able to switch to renewables with your utility company?

Speaker 1: No. No. Mm-mm (negative).

Andrew: No? Okay. Are you aware of any energy assistance that your utility companies provide?

Speaker 1: Oh yeah. I mean, the light, heat. I can get light, heat with electric, but I get LIHEAP with oil because I have oil in my house.

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Andrew: You have oil? Okay.

Speaker 1: So [crosstalk 00:08:17] If my bill was too high, I can always go... Even for the water, I can always do light, heat through one of them, but I don't.

Andrew: What do you know about renewable energy?

Speaker 1: Nothing. I'm being honest.

Andrew: No? That's all right. What do you know about clean energies like solar, wind, things like that?

Speaker 1: I was going to check into this. I heard about the solar stuff, but from what I heard... Some people... Somebody had to say they were not happy with it. They were not happy with the solar, the way it was. So weigh your pros and cons. It depends on I guess the size of your house and where you're putting it and all that. But I mean, I heard about it, but like I said, a friend of mine was not happy with it.

Andrew: Gotcha. What specifically about it were they not happy with?

Speaker 1: He didn't really... I think he was more expecting more than what he got. I don't like... He really didn't get into it, you know. Sometimes when you expect something more and then it doesn't happen, or maybe when he got the solar stuff on his roof, he thought his bill was going to be a lot cheaper, and it wasn't. So I mean, like I said, he wasn't too happy.

Andrew: Okay. How urgent do you think the issue of an energy transition is, or the transition to clean energy? Not on a personal level, like a countrywide level of us trying to move off of fossil fuels onto cleaner energy sources?

Speaker 1: Well, we do need to get out of the past and go into the future. I mean eventually, everything's going to have to go into the future world, you know?

Andrew: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 1: That's the only way I can answer that.

Andrew: Okay. What currently prevents you from being able to purchase using clean energy sources for your house, if you aren't right now?

Speaker 1: Nothing. I'm just happy with the way my house is.

Andrew: Okay. Have you had any energy service disruptions in the last year, power outages, loss of heat or air conditioning, loss of water, internet, or anything like that?

Speaker 1: We actually had two power outages last Friday. Last week. That storm, when the storm hit... Our power outage wasn't out long. It was out like a half hour, and then it came back on, then it went out again for another half hour, but we rarely get power outages where I'm at.

Andrew: Okay. And how did the... Those two power outages, how did they affect you?

Speaker 1: Well, one hit 7:00 at night, which was light, but then the other one hit like 9:30, and it was pitch dark, and I mean, you just get a flashlight, open your door, and look out the door, [inaudible 00:11:46] you know. But it came right back on. It wasn't out that long. But the first one, it was light out. The second one, it was pitch black. But I mean, it didn't affect me because I didn't have anything running. I didn't have no air conditioning running. As soon as soon as the power came back on, everything generated.

Andrew: And how did you handle the two outages?

Speaker 1: I just stood out on the front porch and watched the electric company come and fix it down the street.

Andrew: Okay. How have you been dealing with the extreme heat going on this summer?

Speaker 1: Just it's mind over matter. I mean, you think cool, you know... But like I said, I get comfortable. Like I said, I don't have air conditioning in my house.

Andrew: You don't?

Speaker 1: No. Mm-mm (negative).

Andrew: Really? Wow. No air conditioning?

Speaker 1: No. See, I live on a street where I have an alleyway, and I open my house up. My house, all my windows are all open, and I get a breeze, and it comes in. Plus I got a ceiling fan. Plus, I've got fans. Once I'm asleep, I don't care what happens.

Andrew: I gotcha. Do you think your home is energy efficient?

Speaker 1: Yes and no. I mean, I just got a whole new electrical system in my house, so I'm pretty good now because my house is pretty old. My house is close to a hundred years old.

Andrew: Yeah. Philadelphia has some of the oldest housing in all of the country on average.

Speaker 1: Right.

Andrew: [crosstalk 00:13:39] extremely old. Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And like I said, I think June, I got my whole house re electric'd. So I'm pretty good now because it was the old system, you know? With fuses and all that. So you know... But yeah.

Andrew: In what ways do you think your home is energy efficient?

Speaker 1: Basically it's the person who lives in the house, how they conserve energy.

Andrew: Okay. Do you know if your house has ever been weatherized before?

Speaker 1: Yes. Many years ago, because every time I do my LIHEAP, I hit weatherization. But the lady that runs it... Weatherization changed. It was every five years. Now it's every 25 years. So I mean, I did get my house weatherized, but now I can't get it done for another... Until 25 years, because if I try, they can look up and see that my house was winterized back then, but they changed that. It's every 25 years.

Andrew: I see.

Speaker 1: I think which is wrong, because I mean, you know... But that's weatherization for you. But I was glad, they came to my house, they winterized my basement, they winterized my front door, they did everything. It was great. I even got a refrigerator out of it.

Andrew: You got a refrigerator out of it? That's awesome.

Speaker 1: Yep.

Andrew: How'd you find out about the weatherization program?

Speaker 1: I do LIHEAP every year.

Andrew: You do LIHEAP every year? Okay. Let's see. Do you practice energy conservation?

Speaker 1: No, not really.

Andrew: All right. And in the spring, we asked respondents if they thought they had a right to energy. What do you think? Do you think people have a right to energy?

Speaker 1: No.

Andrew: You don't think so?

Speaker 1: I mean, if everybody has a right to something, they can say, "Well okay, I don't want to pay my water bill for the next six months, but I'll charge you a thousand dollars, but I ain't going to pay your bill. I'm not going to pay you because I have a right to right what I want to do." No, I don't... No. There's got to be some regulations.

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Andrew: Got you. If you don't think people have a right to energy, what do you think another term to describe our relationship to energy? Do you think it's like a luxury?

Speaker 1: Basically, well you could say it's a luxury because I mean, it's like supply and demand. We need it. It's a supply out there. We need it, but don't abuse it.

Andrew: Gotcha. Do you think people should have more options in how they choose to get their energy? Do you think there should be more energy companies out there, other than just PECO? Have you ever looked into alternative suppliers of electricity and things like that?

Speaker 1: No. I think... Well, I think we just should have one, and then we can sublet off of them, you know?

Andrew: Gotcha.

Speaker 1: Because I mean, somebody's got to be knowledgeable of the poles and how to do the wiring, where... You know.

Andrew: All right. Do you think there are any energy services that are necessary to succeed in modern day life?

Speaker 1: No, not really.

Andrew: Not really?

Speaker 1: No.

Andrew: Could you actually tell me a little bit more about your house? How long have you lived in there?

Speaker 1: I've been in my house since 1969.

Andrew: Wow. Really?

Speaker 1: Yes. That's why... Yes. 1969, I moved in this... Huh?

Andrew: How much would you say the house has evolved and changed over the years as Philadelphia has changed?

Speaker 1: Oh, well my neighborhood... Everybody goes through changes. My neighborhood went through a change, but you know... We have some good neighbors and all, but changes in my house, like you got to update everything. I mean, you've got a [inaudible 00:18:49] heater system. You've got to update the electrical system, but I mean, like I said, these houses are over a hundred years old, so you figure back then they used coal to heat their houses. You know.

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Andrew: Mm-hmm (affirmative). How has the pandemic [crosstalk 00:19:09] Oh, sorry.

Speaker 1: That's okay. Go ahead.

Andrew: How has the pandemic impacted your energy? Have you been using more energy, less energy during the pandemic? Has it affected any of that?

Speaker 1: No, it hasn't. Like I said, I'm only one person here, so if... Like I said, I mean, I have a TV on when I'm here, but you know... And then I have a refrigerator going, but whatever I'm not using I unplug. I don't... Anything that I'm not using I'll unplug. And I use a microwave, so I don't cook on my stove. I have an electric stove.

Andrew: Electric stove? Okay.

Speaker 1: I only do the top portion. So I mean, the most electric in the house would be the stove.

Andrew: Has the pandemic impacted your utility bills at all? Have you noticed changes in them during the pandemic?

Speaker 1: No. No. Mm-mm (negative).

Andrew: Mostly the same? All right. How difficult has it been to deal with the heat wave without air conditioning? Do you have fans? How do you usually keep your home cool? Is it well insulated? Anything like that?

Speaker 1: I just have fans. What I do is, I'll sit down, and I'll have a fan in front of me, and then I just drink a lot of water, and then just relax. I never got accustomed to air. Some people need it. If I had a, health issue I would put air in the house.

Andrew: All right.

Speaker 1: And I have two cats, so I can't shut doors because cats don't like being enclosed, and cats don't like air.

Andrew: So you have outdoor cats?

Speaker 1: No, I have two cats in my house.

Andrew: No, I mean, are they the kind of cats that go outdoors a lot? Or... Because I know some people have cats that they just... They'll always find their way back. They just let them go wherever.

Speaker 1: Yeah. If I shut my door, my cat gets mad, and they start scratching at it, so I can't close my doors.



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Andrew: Gotcha. Yeah. My dog is the opposite. He likes being outside, but he'll go on a walk for five minutes and be like, "All right. Time to go back in."

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah.

Andrew: But yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Some cats don't like being enclosed, you know? They want their freedom.

Andrew: Do you think having pets affects how you've chosen to weatherize... Not weatherize per se, but how you use energy in your home? Like-

Speaker 1: Not really because... I mean, I make sure I'm comfortable, but the... Cats don't need much. I mean, we need more heat than the cats do.

Andrew: Makes sense. Do you live with anyone?

Speaker 1: No.

Andrew: Gotcha. Has this survey kind of made you think any differently about energy or anything like that?

Speaker 1: Yeah. I mean, just observe what you're doing, and if there's something out there that's going to help the house, get a couple estimates. Don't jump the gun [crosstalk 00:22:49] and watch out... And make sure they're certified, and make sure they know what they're doing.

Andrew: I almost forgot a question. What's your earliest memory of learning about energy as a thing that we use, or like in your house, like energy in your house? What's the first time you really remember being like, "Oh, that's a thing?"

Speaker 1: Hm. I can't think off the top of my head right now.

Andrew: Okay. Do you have any questions or concerns about energy that you did not have before taking this survey?

Speaker 1: No.

Andrew: Great. Well, I think that's actually everything I needed from you. I really do appreciate you taking your time out of your day to talk to me. I really appreciate that.

Speaker 1: No problem at all. Like I said... As I said to... When it comes to the winter one, I'm going to go to the winter one, because the winter one is really interesting. I mean, a lot of people don't realize how to winterize your house and how cold air gets in, but I mean, in the winter time... My house is completely winterized, and my heat's only on 66 all year round for the summer. I mean, for the winter. And I make my own doggie doors.

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And anywhere there's a cold draft, I put newspaper down. I make my own doggie doors and everything else. So I make sure my house is nice and warm because like I said, I use oil heat, and oil heat is a little expensive compared to gas. But hey, this is what the house came with, which I'm happy. I don't like the smell of gas.

Andrew: Gotcha. Well, thank you. This was a really really good conversation. I really appreciate you having it. I hope you have an excellent day.

Speaker 1: [crosstalk 00:24:47] Like I said, I learned from it. Like I said, I observe everything. I mean, it's like supply and demand. I need it, but then I'm going to say, "Okay, can I afford it?" And it's like the back and forth thing, but I always make sure my house is nice, that everything is up to par. Anything goes wrong, right away I call somebody and get it fixed before the damage gets any worse.

Andrew: All right. Yeah. I've been kind of living on my own for the first time in a while. Or not on my own, but independently from my parents and dealing with electric bills, and bills. I've definitely been trying... A lot of this stuff that I've learned through this job has helped me a lot. Hello?

Speaker 1: I'm here.

Andrew: Yeah. I was just saying that. Anyway, yeah. Have a great day.

Speaker 1: You too. Thank you very much.

Andrew: Bye.