

Aaron Rubin: Hello Larry, dear. It was so good to get your tape, and it was really wonderful, wonderful to listen to it, and to learn a lot from what you told us about where you are. Even though the disappointing news was there, still over all, it was so good to hear you bright and cheerful and happy that both of us felt so wonderful listening to you. Me—this is very awkward for me to talk to a microphone and what I would like to say to you, I don't know whether I will be able to do it effectively because I feel very, very clumsy at this, and I don't know how things are going to work out us talking like this to you, but I'll do my best and I hope that I'll be able to make myself understood, because with all this mechanism in front of me, it puts me on edge a little bit, and I'm always afraid what I want to say won't come through good, but we'll see, dear, we'll see. First place, dear, like I said before, I'm very happy that you're happy where you are, and I'm very happy that you feel you are doing something that you want to do, and this is the main thing: as long as you are out of physical danger, and as long as nobody is going to molest you or harm you, then I'm happy. I guess I can say the same thing for your mother about that. And I do wish, though that you had chosen a different type of work but, well, that's water over the dam or water under the bridge, I don't know—I don't know which one applies here. Now look, dear, there's so many things I have to say, and I do—I was looking forward to talking to you face-to-face, man-to-man, so I can hear your response and see how you feel about these things that I'm going to bring up, and, believe me, it's not very pleasant for me to do this, especially under these circumstances; and, like I said before, please forgive me if I don't through or I hit the wrong note under your present circumstances, but I'm trying to do the best I can under very, very awkward set of circumstance for me. Now, I, I think the biggest problem we have, or you have, dear, is with your writing, dear. I—you tell me from your tape that you are licking the thing, but I really hope you do because I feel that this is the one drawback that's holding you back, and I feel you would accomplish a lot more in every which way if you could overcome this mishegas, or neurosis or whatever it is about your writing, and I, I was seriously thinking, when I would speak with you to ask you about the advisability of getting help with this thing at school. I don't know whether it could be done, or they have people there but I, I'm sure that there must be other students with this same problem. Like I say, I do hope that down where you are you have beaten it completely and that there won't be such a burden—won't be such a monkey on your back for writing your reports and everything else. I mean, even though you tell me that, that, you know you're licking it—your beating it—but still that you don't write to anybody or anything, and I know it's not because you don't want to, but, it's just this business of being so tough to sit down before a piece of paper and fill it up with words, and my solution, as much as I know about the problem would be for you to ask for help at the school and to stay at school until you have beaten this thing down until it no longer presents a problem to you. And, I feel it should be done at the very first opportunity, Larry. I, I hope you don't delay it. That even if you feel that you have beaten it yourself you should get some help with it, because, thinking back now over the years, I can see where this thing was growing, growing, growing, and I didn't realize at first the nature of it, and if you can beat it yourself, wonderful, but if not, dear, please get some help on it and solve this thing, and even if it takes more than three months, make arrangements to stay at Antioch 'till you have completed whatever you have to do to rid yourself of this problem, because you don't want to carry it with you because it will hamper you no matter what field you want to enter in; and I don't want you to make any decisions with this

problem, and knowing that the decision might be based on the fact that you don't have to face this problem. Do I make myself clear, dear? I mean, it's, it's a—I don't think it's a very common thing, but I'm sure that other people have, have this same problem, and get, get help on it, dear, and it will help you so much. It will make—maybe make school life and school work so much more pleasant, the way it should be, and not the—not a thing that makes you upset and cranky and everything else. And while I'm at it, dear, I, I do hope that when you get back to school, darling, that you eliminate these ac—outside activities, and concentrate more on you school work with the help that I hope you get—you'll be able to be prepared to enter into any graduate school that you choose, and I do what you to go to graduate school. I don't know what field you want to take up. I was hoping myself and, knowing you so well, I, I know that in the psychiatric field, the field of mental health, I feel that's your field, but, of course, that's up to you. I mean, even if you wanted—you decided to become a teacher, or, or whatever you'd want, I'd, I'd be fine with me as long as the decision is made after very careful consideration from you, and not a split-second thing. You know what I mean, dear, I, I don't have to go into it, but I, I do want to, to—in the near future to be able to go out and do the type of work that you want to do, where you won't have to be dependent on anybody for your financial wellbeing, that, that you'll be able to do the things you want to do because you'll be able to earn the money to do them. And this, this is something that everyone has to face, especially boys like you. I mean, you know, we're just working people, your parents, and were getting older, dear, and its—we have enough put away for a little while, dear, but if there's nothing coming in, why, that, that would disappear so quick that, that—it would just set us back on our heels. See—I mean, about the, you know, going to school and all, and—yeah, you know the way I am, dear, I don't expect you to be Number One Student or anything like that, 'cause we both know it's—might be meaningless, but, the marks should be high enough, dear, that you could get into graduate school, the graduate school that you want to go to and not something that—not a school that you might not be very happy in, because if you got marks good enough, then you have a choice, otherwise you don't have a choice. It's like that—life itself when you are on your own: the fellow who's prepared, who can do things, or who can do one thing very well, he has a choice. The people who aren't prepared, they don't have a choice, really and truly. They just do what's offered to them, and what's offered to them is a small choice; but if you do have your degree and do have your knowledge, and I know you have the capability to do anything that you really want to do, and it might seem like a big sacrifice right now, but these years pass so quickly, dear. They pass, they're the quickest part of your life, and you, you've got to utilize them now, dear. That—that's why, with these outside school activities that take up so much of your time, dear, I feel that you're making too great a sacrifice for what is involved in them, and if you—you would benefit yourself and benefit society—benefit everyone if you spent—if you cut out these activities, even if you cut them out completely and concentrated on school work and licked this problem with writing that I, I feel you would be much happier and relaxed and you would get much more out of life, dear, because, these things, these issues and stuff [end of Side One].

[Side Two] Well, I finally got the spool in place. It took me a good twenty minutes and I'm running the film the other way. I hope I'm doing it right and I hope that everything turns out good with this tape. It's one of the very few I've made, and I, I've made one so long ago I don't remember exactly all the mechanics of it. Well, dear, I'm afraid I lost a train of thought. I was talking about it—what I was talking about before the tape ran out, but, believe me dear, everything that I said about—everything that I—I don't know how it will sound to you, dear, but this is the way people live, dear. And, don't, don't lose the precious years, darling, because they might—they might seem to be very fruitful and worthwhile to you, and later on you'll, you'll wish that

you did something else, maybe. I, I don't know, dear. I'm just going from my own experience. And, I know myself: I'm very, very bitter about all the years I spent doing s—one thing when I should have been doing something else, and maybe it applies to you too. I don't know, sweetheart, but I mean, there—there's still a few fundamental things that don't change no matter what, when, where, or how. Everybody's got to be prepared, dear. Remember the good ol' boy scout motto. The—there—there's a lot of—the, this is the true—this is really the truth, and I know you're sensible, dear, and I know that you can think things out. The main thing, dear, is that sometimes you get so involved that—you get so tensed up—that reality might sometimes escape you, dear, and then the end of the term comes and you might be disappointed in the marks and lots of other things, dear.

So, please, dear—couple of main things, even if I have to repeat myself, which I don't like to do, but under these circumstances I forget what I said a few minutes ago about your writing, about cutting down or cutting out the outside activities, and about preparing yourself to go to a graduate school be—because I feel this is the type of life that you should lead, and if you think about it calmly and clearly, you'll see that its really and truly a good life, no matter what profession you choose, dear, whether it be teaching or mental health or anything that you desire, but I, I want you to have a meaningful life, darling. You, you know that. You know that I, I'm not the—we're not the kind of people that want our sons to make a million dollars in three years or anything else. But I would like to know that my son is financially independent, or will be when he gets out of school—that he'll be able to stand on his own two feet and make his own decisions, because, otherwise, any decision you make isn't really your own. I think I went into that.

Oh, no look, dear, about these tapes. I know that I, I must be [unsure: (0:16:05)] or rub you the wrong way, but—maybe face-to-face if we were talking it would sound better—but, that tape you sent us, dear: I don't know if you realize it or not, but you have the whole—or I would say 85% of your term report for that, that teacher that taught you that course and didn't give you a mark. And I was wondering, if it's alright with you dear—and I'm not going to do anything until I hear from you—if we type that information up that you gave us, and we put it down and type it up neatly, and if we mail it to you—you might have to add a few finishing touches on it—and then if you mail it to the—that teacher in New York, who, who promised if you sent him a report he'd give you a remark—a—would give you a mark for that course, that, I feel that a good bargain like this should not be missed, but I won't do anything, or I won't let your mother do anything unless you say so because—I mean more than anything else, dear, I don't want to upset you about anything. I don't want you—I don't want you to feel that I'm prying into your affairs that don't bother me, and this, incidentally, is—I feel that this is not justified by reality either. I feel that this is all part of this business about writing. And, I feel it will all be cleared up, but this one thing about the report: its such, such a wonderful offer that I hate to see it lost, because I know you're going to be very busy, and you're going right back to school, and you may not have time to, to type up the report or organize it or anything else; but, from the tape itself—I mean there's so much in it I, I—like I said, it's nine—ninety percent of the report that you would make is right on that tape, and all we have to do is play the tape and have your mother type it up and correct the spelling, and I could send you the paper or—if you want—and you could put your name on it or add a little bit to it and be done with the damn thing and you get the term's credit for work that you did. And, again, we come to this nutty thing about writing reports, and I think if you let us help you this way, dear—I mean, I'd—but please don't be upset about it. I mean, please don't be angry because I suggested it. It was only because it was such a good offer. It was such a nice offer I thought perhaps that this would be a wonderful thing for us to do. So, that's up to you, dear, if you—if you feel that we should do it, please let us know in your next

communication, and please, darling, try to write to us. It's better than the tape. I know the tape is wonderful but I want to see for myself that you are able to write to us, dear, 'cause I—then I can go back and reread it and reread it and, you know, it's better. It's a better record than a tape, but of course that's only a tiny, little detail. Well, I still got just a few more minutes so I'm going to tell you a few things that happened. I got a request to come in for an examination for that teaching job that I told you about. I'm still not sure whether it would be a good thing or a bad thing for me, but I know it would be a lot easier work, although a lot less money. I, I don't know whether I should take it or not, but I don't know if I'm going to take it. I'll know better after December the thirteenth when I take my examination on it. And, this has been the big thing, you know, with us, and then Bobby's wedding is coming up. Otherwise everybody is alright, dear. Your mother and I talked it over and we both—we consoled ourselves that, that you're not coming up. It's, it's going to be rough, and, like I said at first, I was preparing in my mind how to tell you the things that I told you on this tape. And I was putting it off until I would see you and talk to you face-to-face, but if I'm—won't be able to do it in time—I do wish that, dear, that you think about what I told you. Think about it calmly and objectively, and know that whatever I tell you it's from love, dear, and not—it might sound like nagging to you, dear, but believe me it isn't, dear. It, it never was, dear—not, not never, but I know about relationship between parents and children and sometimes the best intentions go sour because the parent know or the child doesn't know and then there's a lot of conflict and turmoil which shouldn't be. I love you, darling, and I'm going to sign off in just a minute, and I'm trying to think of something to say. Okay, darling. So I, I'll, I'll really sign off—there's a few more feet on the tape but I, I don't know exactly what to tell you. Now, I'll know what to tell you as soon as I finish the tape and all, all the space is used up. Then I'll think of a hundred things that I want to talk to you about. But things are going along smoothly, dear. This old shop where I'm working, now they had a big layoff there, and strangely enough, they kept me on, and some of the men that were there when I quit the last time, they laid them off and kept me, so this is—along with the teacher's job coming up, it's got me in a little bit of a perplexity. I don't know whether I'd be doing a wise thing or a foolish thing by taking a teacher's job because, if I work for about seven months a year, I make just as much as if I worked at this school system for ten months. See? So, so these are the things I got to figure out, and what's—you know, what's the best thing for me physically, health wi—[cuts off] Larry Rubin: Robert E. Lee, who is the mayor of Leesburg. Whose family has been here for generations. That who has robbed and stoled his land from Negroes. Who has exploited the people of Lee County tremendously. Lee County is his county. The niggers here are his niggers. We're trying to change all that. We're in real-backwoods country. We're not riding on a road but on a—well its like a dirt road [sound of car horn—double honk]. There's chickens in the road. We just honked the horn at a chicken. I don't know whether you heard the honking horn. Cows walking by. Hogs. Just passed a big hog lying on a [stish? (0:25:10)] over by the side of the road. Surrounded by poverty. And houses that we're—that we're passing and looking at are—must have been here—must have been the old slave quarters on a slave plantation owned by Robert Lee's grandfather. Still being lived in. We'll were working to change all that now. Mama don't—hasn't stopped talking about that conversation she had with you. She giggles and says, "you mom and I had a fine conversation, Larry. She must have repeated word-for-word everything you must've said in the las—about [end tape]. (0:26:04)