

The Job of a forensic artist - Transcript

Today's program is about what it means to bear witness, from moments of intimacy, to moments of catastrophe.

Our first story features a forensic artist called Lois Gibson who is one of the first people you might meet in the aftermath of a traumatic event. It's her job to help people try and remember what they've seen.

If you were a witness, I try and ask you about stuff in your life that's good, that's gonna make you happy. I try to find out about your children or your school, your pets or just anybody that you live with, your husband. And then I find out what you like to talk about and I try to get the witness to talk, to blab, to just go on and on.

The day-to-day job of a forensic artist, it can vary. But 99% of the time, you gonna talk to witnesses who have seen some horrific crime. And from their memory, you're going to draw a portrait of the person that did that, the face of the person that they saw. And the hope is that the portrait is so good, it will help the detectives find that person.

You have to immediately get the witness to like you as much as possible which is really hard because they've just been through the worst thing in their life and then if it's necessary with a certain kind of situation, I'm gonna get the witness to cry.

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