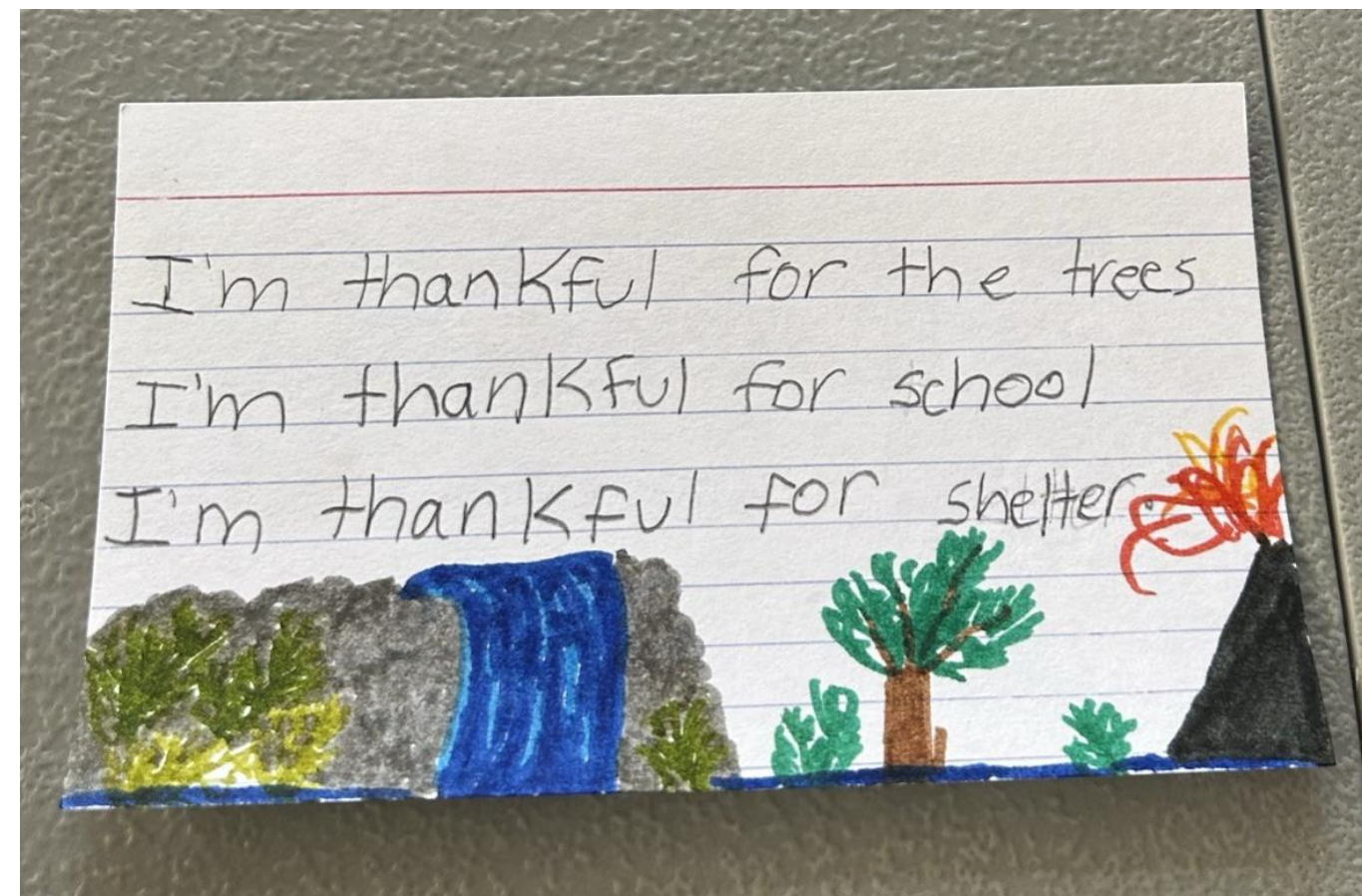


Theme 1: Why we call Lahaina home

The importance of bonds with the social, built, and natural environment, and a unique cultural context.

Community and connection



And it was kind of like, well, **this is ours. Like, we're not selling the land. And that's something that a lot of people have been echoing,** especially in the beginning. Like, don't sell your land. Don't accept those calls, etc. So, it almost felt intuitive, like, this is our childhood home. Like, my 5-year-old handprints are in that driveway still.

It's different beauty. God's creation is definitely different down there... **The closeness. Like, my job was close. You know, the beach was close.** You know, my son used to call Baby Beach his Baby Beach because we actually live right across the street from it. So, **watching my kid outside playing with his friends. That community, you know what I mean?** The multicultural. I grew up somewhat prejudice in a prejudiced kind of setting. You know what I mean? Now it's seeing my son of that descent. So, like, everybody just as one. Like, it doesn't matter anything.



I love Maui, I love Lahaina. I can't think of any place else I'd rather live. So, I'm just gonna give it my all and try to make it work. I don't know how I'm going to afford it. I've been pushed to a place that I was financially secure and made the right decision so I could retire and live simply, and that's kind of gone with this cost of a rebuild. So, I'm just doing it. **I'm just going to rebuild and if I can't afford it, then I'll hit that obstacle. But I'm staying and I love it here. My hair is wet because I just got out of the ocean. I just love it here. I love our community. I love my friends. It's a great place to be. There's no place like it.** So good. I can't afford it, then I'm going to have to figure something else out.



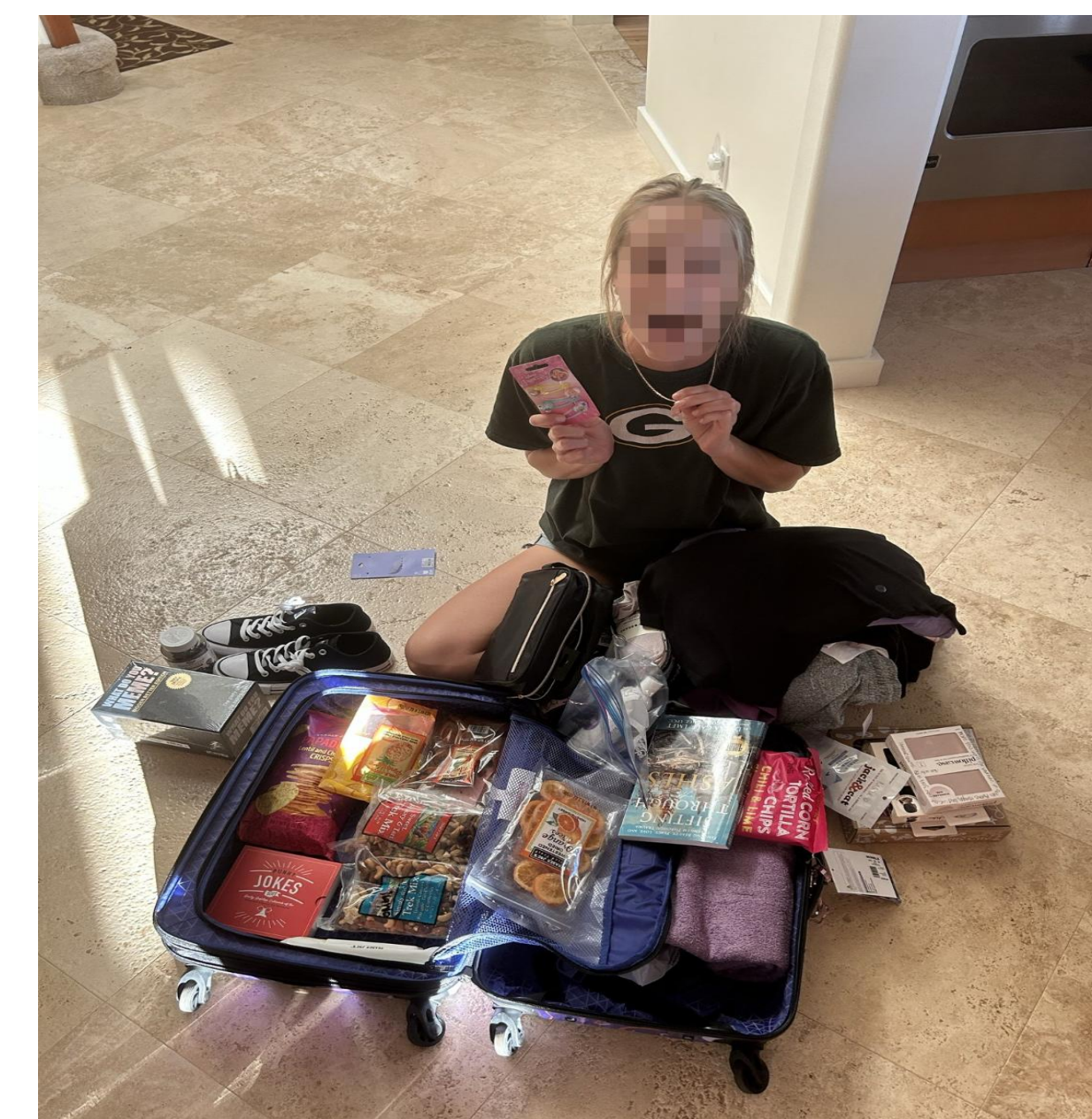
I was born and raised in Lahaina. I'm just from there. But I had moved to Oahu [as a teenager]. But then I had just moved back home to Lahaina after the pandemic. Okay. Because I wasn't I wasn't able to see my family for a long time, **and I just thought it was time to go back home.** So, I was there for like maybe, two or three years before the fires happened. So, my whole family pretty much lived [in Lahaina]. **But also, like, [where I live now] is different. Like, here, no matter where I go, what I do, I don't know anyone. Like, I never see the same people. But in Lahaina, I knew everyone. I knew their sister, I knew their brother, their mom or their dad. It was just a small community, but it was a family, more like a family.**



What was so special? You know, where we lived was, like, just right outside Lahaina town. So, literally, I rode my bike. I had two jobs. I was a part-time teacher, and I was part-time working [the] front desk at [a] restaurant. Literally lived within a mile and a half radius, but outside of town. **So, for me, I just, you know, would get on my bike and ride to work. And the fact that I could do that was amazing. It was pretty special. And then, you know, you just know people in town. And it's still a small community.** And then my husband [has] same thing. He just had his routine, got to do the same thing every day that he loved, and we just raised our kids there.

A community of helpers

[People in our neighborhood] understand what happened and we help each other out. Sometimes we have people donate furniture and sometimes we don't use it. We give it to them and sometimes they don't have, they don't use it. They give to us. We can exchange everything. We were helping each other. We know that we have survived from the fire. And they were very generous, and **we were very generous with each other. We help out.** If I know somewhere, donation stuff, I let them know and their kids know. So, they have time to go pick up, you know, very nice because I know I don't want to live somewhere that people rich or something and they don't look at us down, you know.



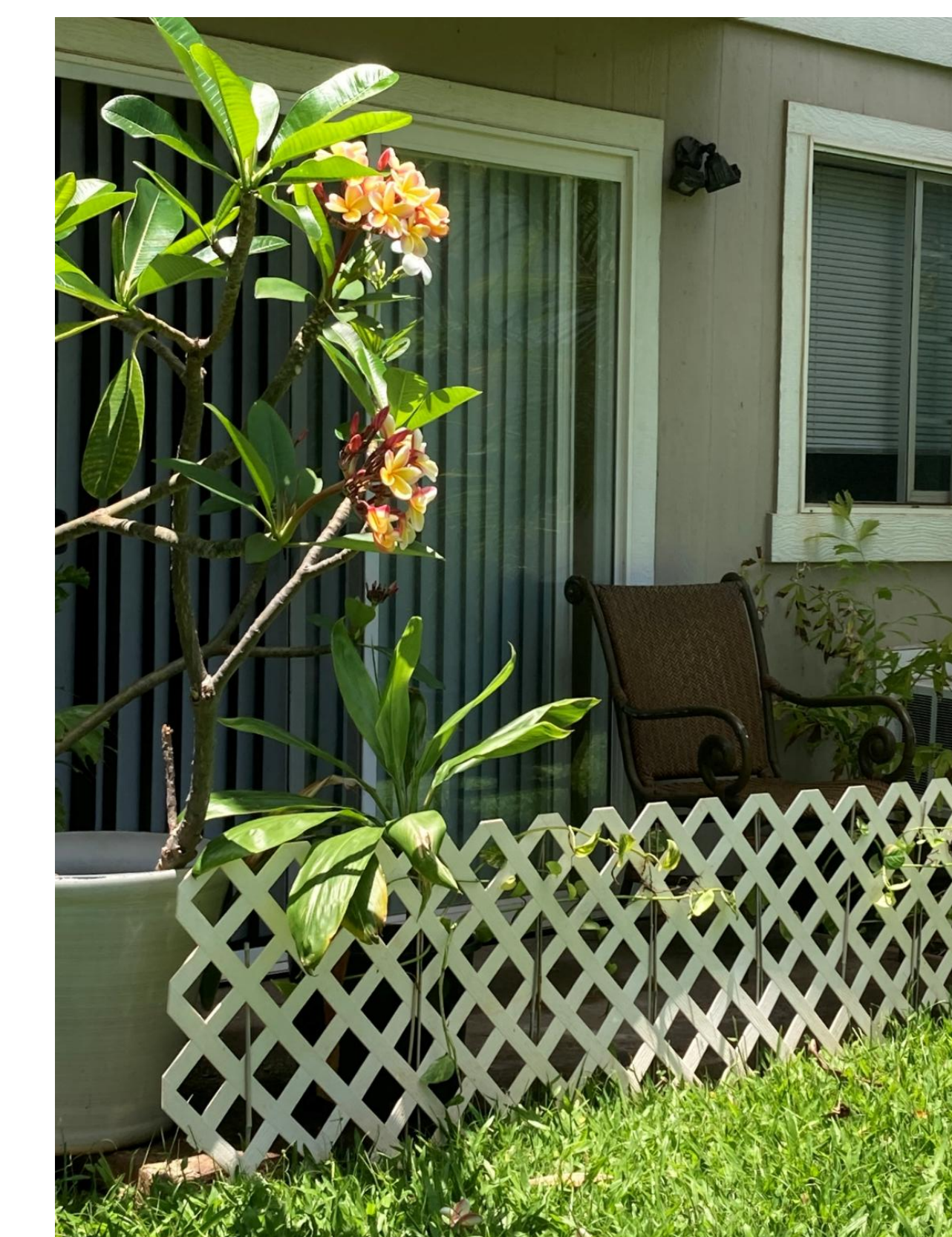
you had the physical loss or just the emotional loss of the community is pretty equal.

I'm a member of Rotary and all the things that we did for the community with gas cards and gift cards, and we do a vocational sponsorship, which helps people that lost their businesses or their tools and just a constant giving back to kind of support everybody as we build up. And I think that because there's still support and connection, it's just making the foundation stronger for when the physical part comes back. **And that comes full circle to the resilience. Is everybody helping each other? Yeah, it's everybody wants to be a part of Lahaina, and it's more than just, again, the material of homes. It's the community.** So, whether you know,

So, the goal of school didn't feel like it was teaching curriculum anymore. The goal felt like it was loving the kids, making sure they knew that they were safe, making sure that they knew that they were cared for, and giving them something to have a semblance of routine and fun. What was cool was that we had a lot of people come visit, like we had a comedian come, and we had these people come from Texas who do what's called a comfort club. It's like a weighted bear. And they gave one to every kid, and we had people donating stockings around Christmas time. **I mean, it was just this mixture of chaos and beauty and love and fear.**



Deeply rooted



So, I'm very attached to Hawaii. I'm very attached to the climate. I'm very attached to the lifestyle. I just, just me, you know, that's, that's me. **So, Lahaina was my place always. And I just wanted to be there.** So that was, that was, I spent over nine years living in the same place. And then just Lahaina is, is, is my place in my heart... **I will always choose Maui, and I will always choose Lahaina. At one moment, I will get back to Lahaina side for sure.**

In some way, it's kind of hard to put into words because I didn't realize it was so special until I lost it, because I was kind of spoiled by being able to walk wherever I wanted to. **Like, even as a kid, like, my parents trusted me to**

walk directly from school to home because what's gonna happen on Front Street? Um, and my dad actually sold art underneath the banyan tree, so I could see him there. It was just nice that every single place I went, I had a connection to. Like, it wasn't, Oh, this part of Lahaina's my home. It's like, oh, no, the whole thing is something that I am, like, deeply rooted in.

I was offered the apartment at [a different community], and I couldn't visualize my life there. I felt like I had been just completely rejected from everything I had worked for. **You know, it's not easy to, you know, plant yourself here. Uh, it's really not. Even in the normal economy, you know, it took me several years to,** and I'm deeply rooted in this community. You know, this is my heart. This is where my deepest friendships are, my church...

