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Uncuffed My Mixtape: The World I Know

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[00:00:00] **JAY:** What's up? This is Evans from the Heavens, a producer at Solano State Prison. And it's time for the Uncuffed My Mixtape.

[00:00:16] **MONTAGE:** Uncuffed. Uncuffed. Uncuffed. Uncuffed. My mixtape. My Mixtape. My mixtape. My mixtape.

[00:00:26] **JAY:** Today we're going to hear from the smooth-talking Bryan Mazza about one of his favorite songs. Alright, take it away.

[00:00:43] **MAZZA:** This is Bryan Mazza, and my song is The World I Know, from Collective soul.

I listen to music to bring up my spirits, and sometimes, I know that all of you may relate, at one time or another, music gets you through some hard times and dark places.

And back when this song right here was playing on the radio. I don't want to date myself, but it was 1995. I was still Rambo. I was out there, tearing my life apart, and at war with the world, and myself, and everything else.

I got involved in yet another altercation with the police. I don't want to glorify it or anything, but it was car chases, and gunfire, and everything else, and I ended up in the hospital. Being hurt the way I was, and having that near death experience, it opened up my eyes to a lot of things, and this song right here was playing on the radio. And it touched me, because I was in a place where I wasn't quite sure whether or not I was going to be able to make it through.

If you ever face things like that when you're locked in a cage, and your body's broken, and your life seems to be over, it affects you in a way that you need to hang on to something to persevere. I listen to these lyrics right here.

I was in a place of my own creation, and I was in a dark spot, and, but this song helped me to understand that there was hope, you know? You can laugh at it too, and just try to persevere and overcome.

And I was in a, you know, lockup, recovering from a broken leg and, you know, punctured lungs and everything else. There was this old death row cop named Gums. Who could ever forget a name like Gums, right? He was a cool old dude, and he knew I was suffering, and he'd be coming in there, and he'd go, Mazza, no matter how hard it seems right now.

Everything's gonna be alright. And at that point in time, those words, whether they were meant out of kindness or apathy, either way, I hung on to that. And at that point in time, I figured I was gonna cling to hope.

[00:04:09] **JAY:** That was Uncuffed producer Bryan Mazza talking about The World I Know by Collective Soul. To listen to more mixtapes, check out our website, WeAreUncuffed.org, or you can subscribe to Uncuffed in any podcast player. Thanks to the team at KALW Public Radio: Ninna Gaensler-Debs, Angela Johnston, Sonia Paul, Kathy Novak, Eli Wirtschafter, James Rowlands, and our sound designer, Eric "Maserati-E" Abercrombie. And thanks to the team at Solano who make this possible, especially Lieutenant Guerrero who approved this episode. Uncuffed gets support from the California Arts Council and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Tune in next week for another brand new episode of Uncuffed.