

M- Hello, it is May 18th, 5:36 PM and we are currently at my house and I'm here, I'm Monica and I'm here with my friend Destiny and we're going to ask her a couple questions about culture. So the first question would be, how long have you lived in this area and have you potentially ever lived in another country?

D- I have lived in the Puyallup/Tacoma area for my entire life. My mom and my brothers, however, are from Minnesota and my dad's side of the family is mainly from the South, like the Texas, Louisiana area.

M- The second question would be, have you ever experienced or witnessed or even been the target of a microaggression within our own community here in Tacoma?

D- I know me and other black women have experienced a lot of similar microaggressions, especially around our hair. A lot of people would just come up and touch it without asking, and I think this is because it can be big and different than straight hair, and they can think like it's out of the ordinary and just touch it without asking.

M- Oh my gosh! Wow! So, what kinds of racism have you witnessed your peers experience? like at school or just within the community here?

D- I've witnessed them getting unfair treatment, being called racial slurs, being doubted, and people expecting less, and having lower expectations for them, just because they are a different race than them.

M- Do you follow or support any influencers that are an ally of social justice for people of color?

D- Especially now, recently, that I've been getting more into social media and I've downloaded more platforms, I follow many black influencers, who share their stories about their experience with social injustices, and try to educate some people, and just get their story out there and tell as many people as they can.

M- Yes that's good to get everyone stories out there about experiences with racism... so when was the idea of racism or race first introduced to you?

D- I know when I was little, people were touching my hair a lot and always commenting on me being mixed, but I didn't truly understand what that meant until I got older. but when I was little, and my brothers were in high school, (they're a little bit older than me) they went to a predominantly white school, and they would come home, and like tell my mom stories, of like how they were treated differently, and especially my one brother. he was dating a white person in high school, and people would advise her to not date him, only because he was black, and this is when I was really introduced to racism, and I knew how big of a problem this was, especially for us since we were mixed, and we didn't grow up around a lot of black people in our life.

M- So how do you identify ethnically?

D- I am mixed, I'm black and white. my mom is white. and my dad is black.

M- Okay, so how did this identity affect your childhood and especially compared to how you see children growing up today?

D- So for me personally, it affected me quite different than other mixed people, because my mom is white, and I didn't grow up with my dad in the picture most of the time. So my hair was something my mom didn't know how to do, because she is a white woman. So, I didn't have a lot of access to like the Internet, and like YouTube tutorials that a lot of kids now have today , that's where I learned how to do my hair today, now, is just YouTube and just tutorials on the Internet that helped me learn how to do it with, because my mom couldn't teach me.

M- How do you feel about participating in the Pledge of Allegiance, or the national anthem?

D- Personally, I don't stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. I believe it's outdated and isn't supporting our underrepresented people in America, and its values don't necessarily apply to everyone especially those individuals. The national anthem, I feel more inclined to it, being an athlete, and I've had family in the military.

M- Yeah, I see where you're coming from, so what type of emotions do you have tied to your participation, or as you said, lack of, in these activities?

D- feel hurt for the communities that are suffering every day because of the racism in America, but I feel grateful for the people who are serving our country, like I said, and protecting us. B ut I think there's a war within our country, targeting certain groups that aren't receiving the justice they deserve.

M- No, yeah I totally agree. So has there ever been a time where you stayed silent at a time where you felt you should have spoken up, regarding a racist event?

D- Yeah, many of times. I think mainly because of my age, I am less inclined to speak up, because I think people will see me as less competent, and unfit to talk about more sensitive topics or that I lack the intelligence to contribute to this situation as much as someone who is older than me.

M- So what is your personal experience with ideologies such as white privilege?

D- It baffles me their ability to, not be blind, but less aware of the systemic problems within our communities, and to be able to openly display racism, such as having confederate flags, or other symbols of racism, just out in the open, and not have to worry about how the color of their skin is going to affect how they display these symbols.

M- So what parts of your culture or ethnicity do you think you take the most pride in?

D- I definitely take a lot of pride in my hair, it's taken me a long time to learn how to properly take care of it and express myself the way that I have wanted to, since I was little, with my hair. and I'm learning how I can really come to appreciate my black roots, and really take pride in that part of my ethnicity.

M- Do you happen to have any type of relationship with an ancestral language other than English?

D- No, I've spoken English my entire life and all of my family has.

M- Okay, so are there any other cultural tradition that your family partakes in?

D- No, I've grown up with pretty American standard traditions.

M- What historical or recent events have had an impact on your life or your view on racism?

D- I think George Floyd is a pretty common answer for a lot of people, and a big- it had a big impact on a lot of people because of the awareness it brought. And it jump started a to call to action for, I think, a lot of people, and I think at this time I was finally old enough to see and fully comprehend people's behavior in reaction to certain things regarding topics like these, and it was surprising to me to see how fast people go all defensive trying to make excuses and feel like they have something to protect when people are just trying to get justice for what they deserve in our community.

M- Yes, I agree 100 percent! thank you so much for your time today Destiny, I really enjoyed this conversation about such important topics

D- you're welcome.

I think George Floyd is a pretty common answer for a lot of people and a big it had a big impact on a lot of people because of the awareness it broadened it jump started to call to action where I think a lot of people and I think at this time I was finally old enough to see and fully comprehend people's behavior in reaction to certain things regarding topics like these and it was surprising to me to see how fast people go on the defensive trying to make excuses and feel like they have something to protect when people are just trying to get justice for what they deserve in our community