

BLUE EYED

Transcript

FIRST FRAME OF PICTURE = 00:00:00

SPEECH OF MARTIN LUTHER KING = 00:03:50

INSCRIPTIOIN = 00:05:29

Jane E:

What does that say?

M:

Name.

Jane Elliott:

What is your name? Can you read that?

M:

Sure.

Jane Elliott:

Well, I can't. Cross it out and write it so I can read it.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

What does that say?

M:

Louis A. Wright.

Jane Elliott:

Cross it out and write it so I can read it.

M:

I'm done.

Jane Elliott:

No, don't pat me number one, and number two you either follow the rules or you leave.

Now, put your name on there so I can read it.

M:

That's -, they were asking for my signature and that's it.

Jane Elliott:

Write your name on here so I can read it.

M:

No, ma'am

Jane Elliott:

This man is out of here.

F:

??

Jane Elliott:

This man is out of here. He isn't going to follow the rules, he isn't going to stay. Get out of here.

F:

??

Jane Elliott:

Are you the security person? This man is out of here.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

Sign in here according to eye color. Sit down.

M:

All the way out?

Jane Elliott:

All the way out.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

You go in this room.

Sign in here according to eye color.

M:

Well, I guess I'm over here on the left, I'm not brown eyed.

Jane Elliott:

Sit down.

Jane Elliott:

Go to the meeting room C and stay there until we come for you.

What color are your eyes?

M:

Green.

Jane Elliott:

Sign in under brown.

M:

The gentlemen have one question. The question is, which you want them back.

Jane Elliott:

I don't want them back. I don't want them back. This is not a question of want. If they can come back and conduct themselves according to the rules, they can come back. But I am going to put them out if they don't follow the rules. It is not their choice.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

This is not their choice. They either follow the rules or they are out of here. That's the only choice they have.

M:

all right. Thank you.

Jane Elliott:

You want me to tell them that?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

I would be perfectly happy to do it.

M:

No, I can do it..

Jane Elliott:

Well, bluey, did you sign in? Sit down!

Sit!

Go to meeting room C and stay there till we come for you.

Jane Elliott:

Sit down.

I'm going to give you a piece of advice. Whether or not you like what is happening here, you either follow the rules or you're out of here. You have a choice.

Now, get rid of the gum.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

Now! There's a waste basket right back there, put it in there. Well, go to the meeting room, seat and stay there until I come for you.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

So you do print. Sit down.

Move your legs. I don't have to straddle your leg.

I'm going to warn you - you may be big and you may be tall, but you'll do exactly what I tell you to do today, do you understand that?

M:

Well, I don't have a problem with that at all.

Jane Elliott:

Good for you.

Speech of Martin Luther King: 00:09:41

So even we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow. I still have a dream: It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up

and live up the true meaning of this dream. We hold this truth to be self evident, that all men are created equal.

In seminar Orange: 00:10:17

Jane Elliott:

I want every white person in this room, who would be happy to be treated as this society in general treats out citizens, our black citizens. If you as a white person would be happy to receive the same treatment that our black citizens do in this society - please stand! - You didn't understand the directions. If you white folks want to be treated the way blacks are in this society - stand! - Nobody is standing here. That says very plainly that you know what's happening. You know you don't want it for you. I want to know why you are so willing to accept it or to allow it to happen for others.

In the workshop: 00:11:19

Jane Elliott:

The purpose of this exercise is to give these nice blue eyed white folks the opportunity to find out how it feels to be something other than white in the United States of America. And these people today are going to learn more than they want to know. The purpose of this exercise is to help these people walk in the moccasins of a person of color for a day. What I'm going to do is assign to these people on the basis of their eye color alone all the negative traits that we have assigned to females, to people of color, to gays and lesbians, to people who have disabilities at any kind, to those who are obviously physically different. We are going to assign to these people all the negative stereotypes that we have so easily assigned to those groups. We are going to lower our expectations for these people and we are going to force them to live down to our expectations of them.

F:

How have they been prepared to come in here?

Jane Elliott:

Not at all. We just sat them into a room in which there are three chairs for seventeen people -

F:

It's hot in there.

Jane Elliott:

It's hot in there. Is it hot in there? Well, then it's probably smelly, isn't it, because blue eyed people sweat a lot and you know they don't smell good, so I wouldn't want to be in that room

after they have been in there. And we don't tell them anything, we just send them to the holding room.

Jane Elliott:

A new reality is going to be created for these folks this morning. Now, we are going to treat these people negatively on the basis of the color of their eyes. And the reason I use eyes is, because eye color is caused by the same chemical that skin color is caused by. If you have lots and lots of Melanin in your hair, your skin, your eyes, you have very dark hair, dark skin and dark eyes. If you have only a little Melanin in your hair, your skin and your eyes, you have light skin, light hair and light eyes. Now, having light skin,) the first people on this earth, the first human beings on this earth, evolved near the equator in subsaharan Africa in about 280.000 years ago. They needed lots and lots of Melanin to protect themselves from the raise of the sun. That's what Melanin does for you. As people migrated farther and farther north, their bodies were exposed to less and less sunlight, so their bodies produced less and less Melanin. So people in northern climates have much less Melanin in their skin, their hair and their eyes than people in southern climates did evolve at that time. Now folks, as people's hair and skin got lighter, it didn't have a bad effect on their brains, but as their eyes got lighter, it allowed more and more light to enter their eyes, pierce their brains (out), damage their brains. And that's why people blue eyed people aren't as smart as brown eyed people. Makes sense to you? Why are you laughing? It's ridiculous, isn't it? People, it is no more ridiculous to make that statement about eye color than it is to make the statements that we traditionally have made about the skin color. If it makes good sense to judge people by the amount of Melanin in their skin, then it makes equally good sense, more good sense, to judge them by the amount of Melanin in their eyes. And that's what we are going to do this morning. All we are going to do is spend about two and a half hours treating these people negatively on the basis of a physical characteristic over which they have no control. Now, they aren't going to like this. If you do your job right, they aren't going to like this. Is that going to make me happy?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes, yes. Because I want them to be uncomfortable and I want you to help them to be uncomfortable.

HOLDING ROOM = 00:15:17

M:

Keep the noise down! Keep the noise down! I'm not playing. Everybody keep the noise

down. I'm not playing. Who ever messed with the door - leave it alone. Who was this?
Keep the noise down!

M:

I think we should sing "We shall overcome".

F:

O.K., what actor school do you guys come from.

M:

Do you see what this badge says? I'm not an actor.
Keep the noise down in here.

IN THE WORKSHOP: 00:16:12

Jane Elliott:

Blue eyed people aren't as smart as brown eyed people. I can prove that to you by giving you and them the ...-intelligence test. Now, this is an intelligence test, that is developed by a black male a number of years ago and the purpose of this test is to give white folks the opportunity to find out how it feels to take a test about which you know virtually nothing and have your IQ based on your ability to pass the test, about which you know nothing, which you have learned nothing about. We do this with people of color and with immigrants in this country all the time. We base (their,) - our judgment of their IQs on their ability to response to items about which they haven't learned. The blue eyed people aren't going to know many of these answers, because they aren't very intelligent, because they haven't had to learn about people who are different from themselves, because they have only had to learn about white culture. This is a test that is based on the black culture of a number of years ago in this country. These blue eyed people won't know many of these answers, because they aren't smart, they aren't caring, they aren't curious, they don't fell that they have to learn about those who are different from themselves. That's the way they are. You people, you brown eyed people, are going to know at least half of these answers, because you are smart, you are caring and you are curious about those who are different from yourselves and you've learned a whole lot about those who are different from yourselves. And I'm going to give you the even number of responses. Now, this is not cheating, people, this is called reinforcing our position of power in this room. Everybody understand that? We do this all the time in the public, private and appropriate schools in this country. It is one of the ways we teach people who the superior people are. We give culturally biased tests on a daily basis in this country, make no mistake about that! We use culturally biased textbooks, we have culturally biased pictures on the wall, we teach a culturally biased history, our maps are culturally biased. And they are culturally biased in favor of white people. Make no

mistake about this, people, it's what we do. I know how to do it, I've been doing it as a public school teacher, as a public schoolteacher for twenty-five years. I know how to teach culturally biased and I know how to teach racism. All you have to do is use most of the textbooks that are available in schools today. Now, I'm going to give you the even number of the answers of this test. I want you to circle the letter of the correct response. For number two - circle letter 'E'. Number four - circle 'C', number six - 'D' as in dog, eighteen - 'C', twenty - 'C', twenty-two - 'B' as in bluey.

Now, people, when you take this test, put an answer on every line on the left side of this page, put an answer on every line. Don't just leave those answers circled, because if you do that they will look over at your test and they will say "See, you cheated". Now, we aren't cheating, we are simply reinforcing our power. It has nothing to do with cheating, it's just the way society is. Put your paper underneath your pad. When you take the test, move your chairs back, so that they can't see your answers. Because if they can see your answers, what will they do?

M/F:

Cheat.

Jane Elliott:

They will copy them, because that's the way they are. You just have to realize that. Now, we are doing this for their own good. We expect them to be grateful.

Jane Elliott:

The rules for the day are going to be that you will not look at these people unless you either frown or smear at them. It's all right to laugh at them but do not laugh with them. How many of you have friends in the blue eyed group? - Let me put it this way: How many of you used to have friends in the blue eyed group? - Now, some of these people are going to leave here very very angry. Make no mistake about this. That is there choice. When they leave here and they say they're angry, you need to be prepared to say to them "Wait a minute, you had it for two and a half hours, your home wasn't threatened, your family wasn't threatened, your job wasn't threatened, your income wasn't threatened, your future wasn't threatened. And you had it for two and a half hours and you knew it was temporary. You knew it was going to be over at least by six o clock this afternoon. Why are you so angry? And if you are so angry after two and a half hours, can you apply that the way you feel about that anger what it must be like to live with this for a lifetime.

In order for this exercise to work, it takes your cooperation. Now, how many of you are going

to cooperate with this exercise? Raise your hand if you are going to cooperate.

Why are you so slow getting your hand up?

F:

Because it sounds like rude behavior and I would normally not -, it would go out of my way not to be rude. So I'll have to try to do this.

Jane Elliott:

Do you normally go out of your way to prevent other people from exhibiting these kinds of behaviors towards people of color and people with disabilities and gays and lesbians and -

F:

Go out of my way to prevent that treatment?

Fifty:fifty. I mean yes and no. Yes, sometimes I do -, sometimes -, no.

Jane Elliott:

Is that good enough?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. People, the only thing necessary for perpetuation of evil for good people is to do nothing. And for the most part we white folks do nothing. So we can say "Well, we didn't do it, we aren't responsible". As long as we do nothing, it is like giving our approval to those who are going to do the negative things. It is not enough to do nothing.

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT AT HOME: 00:22:09

Jane Elliott:

I got the idea of the blue eyed-brown eyed exercise from reading about what the nazis did during what has become to be called the holocaust. Hitler was going to found a nation of people, of arian people, who were going to be blue eyed and blonde haired and fair skinned and they were going to rule the world. And one of the ways they decided who went into the gas chamber during the holocaust was eye color. I decided on the day after Martin Luther King was killed that I would do what Hitler did. I knew it worked for him, I thought it might work for me. I decided that I will pick out a group of people on the basis of a physical characteristic over which they had no control and I decided that it would be eye color. I didn't know for sure that that had really happened, I had read about it, I had heard about it and I had seen movies about it, but I wasn't sure until I read the book "Mengele" and also the book "The Nazi Doctors" and realized that, yes, in deed, this was true. And in the book

"Mengele" - which I have here and which is one of the really scary books I have ever read. It talks about him doing these experiments without benefit of anesthetic either chemically or surgically on people of all ages to find a way to change people's eye color from brown to blue. So if they found a brilliant brown eyed Jewish person they could (put that) change that person's eye color so make that person a member of the master race. Now, this was one of the most civilized societies on earth, some of the greatest philosophers the world has ever known came out of Germany. And here this man with this intelligence taught us all that if you have enough brain and enough power, you can kill other people who have a lot of brains, who have no power, and you can do it on the basis of a physical characteristic over which they have no control or a religious believe with which you disagree. That's a scary, scary thought. It has happened before, it will happen again, unless well-meaning people read things like this and realize that this wasn't a monster, this was a man who was doing what he thought was right and had the power to do it. This is an interesting book, here is another interesting book called "The Nazi Doctors" that tell you exactly what it took to get people of intelligence and education to go along. It's terrifying, it is absolutely terrifying. And the terrifying part was that in fact ultimately it was so easy to get them to go along - intimidation works.

IN THE HOLDING ROOM: 00:25:05

F:

So what's going to happen for the rest of the day?

M:

Well, I mean, we are really not afraid of anything happening here to us.

F:

We know realistically nothing is going to happen to us if we walk out the door. But we will still play the game.

M:

Yeah.

F:

Right.

F:

Right. We want coffee, we want air -

F:

Air would be good.

F:

There has nothing happened that we can't have that. We are just empathetically sitting here, because we are good people and they asked us to.

IN THE WORKSHOP = 00:25:35

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely. We are going to call these females girl, honey, sweet, baby, chick darling - what are we going -, what call we males?

M:

Boy.

Jane Elliott:

Boy. Boy, and you don't say 'boy', you say 'boy'. When it's properly said it's a two syllable word. Boy! And we use 'boy' to keep black males in their place on a daily basis. All we have to do to lower someone to the age of five, to twelve, is call him a boy. And we do it to accomplish black males over the age of seventy. And we get away with it.

Now, for two and a half hours we are going to make these people look inferior and feel inferior. How many of you think these white folks can take this? - Now people, think about what you've just admitted! You've just admitted that you think that adult, sophisticated, educated white males in positions of some power, in a couple of cases I think real power, can't stand for two and a half hours what you expect the child of color to live with from the moment he or she is born. Do you really believe that? Do you really believe that these white people can't stand two and a half hours of being treated verbally the way they treat other people for a lifetime? Because if you do, you've just admitted something extremely interesting. You have just said that people of color are stronger than white folks. That we have created a situation in this country in which we have built tremendous strength into people of color and in which we have not built the same tremendous character strength into white folks, particularly white males. Does that bother you at all?

M:

It's called survival.

Jane Elliott:

It's called survival, absolutely, it's a survival skill.

Keep in better mind that these people are in their child ego state and that's where they are going to stay, because people are most -, are easiest to control when they are in their child ego state. So, these people are being treated like children and they are going to act like

children and it's what we do with females in this country every day. We treat them like children and when they act like children, we say "See, you're acting like that, because you are female".

Now, people, if you are tempted to look at some of these people and wink at them to let them know - without me catching you - that you really don't mean any of this, I'll change your eye colors so fast as it'll make your heads turn. Let me catch you looking at your tall white friend, just let me catch you doing that, let me see your eyes. Oh, you'll join quick, right away. Do you want to be with them? O.K., brownny, you are going to be a bluey. It will not make you comfortable. Do not give these people any kind of reinforcement. Do not smile at them, do not look -, if you're sad for them, don't let them see it. And some of you are going to be sad for them. You look like you are sad for them already and we haven't started yet. You aren't sad for them?

F:

Not at all.

Jane Elliott:

Not at -? Good for you! That's the right attitude.

M:

So I don't want to be one.

Jane Elliott:

Now, people, all I'm asking you to do is - act white. That's all I'm asking you - just act white. You white people know how to act white, you can do it all your lives. And people of color know how to act white, the way to get ahead in this society, if you are a person of color, is to act as white as you possibly can. Now, am I exaggerating here? Is that the message that this society sends?

M:

Assimilate.

Jane Elliott:

Assimilate really means - act white. Assimilate means - be as similar to the power group as you possibly can be, which means act white. And you can turn intelligent, bright, committed conscientious, ambitious people into people who act lazy and slobbery and stupid and slow and unmotivated and you can do it in fifteen to twenty minutes and that's what you're going to do this morning.

HOUSES IN OSAGE

HOTEL NEON

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT ON TERRACE = 00:03:50

Jane Elliott:

Martin Luther King was killed in April 4th, 1968, I was teaching third grade in an all white all Christian community. I needed to explain the death of Martin Luther King to my students. I didn't know how to do it except by allowing them to walk in the shoes of a child of color for a day. The first time I did it no one knew until my students wrote essays about it and those were published in the paper. And then the Johnny Carson Show called and asked me if I could come and do the Johnny Carson Show. Then people in the community found out about it. Then all kinds of unpleasant things happened. I got vicious calls in the night, we got probably between 500 and 600 letters, a third of them so ugly and so obscene that I couldn't share them with my third graders. In that fall when people came to register their children for school, their offspring for school, 20% of those who had children coming in the third grade said to the principle "Don't put my kid in Elliot's classroom". Every year after that the same thing happened, only sometimes parents would call in and say "I don't want my kid in that niggerlover's classroom". And the principle never had to say "Which niggerlover do you mean?", because we all knew there was only one. My children were beaten and spit on, my own offspring, we have four children, they were abused by their peers, by their teachers, by the parents of their peers. My parents lost their business, my father died totally isolated three years ago in the community in which his great grandfather was one of the first settlers - isolated because he had raised the town's niggerlover. I've learnt a whole lot about racism.

Jane Elliott:

I wouldn't trust that bluey, but you can if you want to.

Now, I want those collars on the outside of your clothes' collar or dress collar or blouse collar or shirt collar or whatever it is you're wearing and I want the collars taken good care of at all times and I want the pin under your chin. Put the tag of her dress in, would you do that, she got half dressed this morning.

Now, people, before - you can arrange that properly?

M:

I guess not.

Jane Elliott:

I guess not. Fix it! Get the sunglasses off your head. Put it in your purse with the rest of your junk.

Should we have to tell her that?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Why do we have to tell her that?

M:

Because they have blue eyes.

Jane Elliott:

They are unmotivated?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

They are lazy? - They're disinterested - Now, do you have any physical problems that will be made worse by sitting on the floor for an extended period of time?

M:

I doubt.

Jane Elliott:

Don't give me "I doubt". Yes or no?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No back problems, no hip problems, no leg problems, no heart problems, no high blood pressure, nothing like that. How about you?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

How about you?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

You?

M:

You care?

Jane Elliott:

No, but I have to know, because if something happens during this, you're able to file a lawsuit so I want to know going into whether or not you have any problems. I don't want to make them worse, because I don't want to have to take a lawsuit out of this. Do you understand that?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No? You don't understand that, while your low IQ is another one of the problems I'll have to deal with today.- Now, do you have any physical problems that will be made worse by sitting on the floor for an extended period of time? Yes or no?

M:

I say no.

Jane Elliott:

If he is going to 'say no', does that mean he doesn't have or does that mean he is going to say no now and later he is going to accuse me of having made him -

M:

You can trust it.

Jane Elliott:

Can I trust this man?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. Is he playing games? - Yes - Am I going to put up with it? - No. - Do you have any physical problems that will be made worse by sitting on the floor for an extended period of time? Yes or no? Do you or do you not?

M:

You don't care.

Jane Elliott:

Honey, honey, if you want caring, go to your mother. Do I look like your mother to you?

M:

She's dead.

Jane Elliott:

Then go to some other nurturing female in your environment. That is not what I am about. Do you have any physical problems that will be made worse by sitting on the floor for an extended period of time? What is difficult about answering that?

M:

There is no sense in it, if you don't care.

Jane Elliott:

The purpose of this is to find out whether you are going to be in worse shape physically after this is over as a result of sitting on the floor. I don't want you to be. I care, because I don't want you suing me, so there I care.

M:

That's what I wanted to know.

Jane Elliott:

Now, I care. Do you or do you not?

M:

No, I'm fine, thank you.

Jane Elliott:

Oooh, friend, I don't care about you, you need to understand that I don't care about you, I care about me.

M:

Then you need to realize maybe I lie to you.

Jane Elliott:

I care about me. If you lie to me, we have it on tape that you said 'no'. So now, if you try to sue us - forget it! I care about the repercussions for my sake, not for yours. Understand that.

M:

But I care about me.

Jane Elliott:

Good, good. Then don't make me spend my precious time messing with you any more.

M:

O.K.

Jane Elliott:

All right., all right Turn around your face to the front of the room. Turn around your face to the front of the room. Now, I know what you are thinking. I'm going to see how far I can push this woman. I'll tell you how far you can push me. You can push me this far as you have pushed enough already. You either turn around face to the front of the room or you leave. You are going to follow my rules or you're out of here. Turn around, face the front of the room. Once again - do we care?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Do some people like being treated like babies? - Yes.

Do we have to take care of them?

M/F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Do we have to see to it that they are sitting in the right place?

M/F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Do we have to see to it that they are facing the right direction?

M/F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Why do we have to do that?

M:

Because most of them are stupid.

Jane Elliott:

Because most of them are stupid. And where do they spend most of their time, in what ego state?

M:

In the child ego state.

Jane Elliott:

In their child ego state. Have we seen examples of people spending time in their child ego state already this morning?

M/F:

Absolutely.

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely. This boy wants to know that you care. Should it matter to him, one tinkers damn, whether I care?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. Does it really matter to him? - No. - No. But does he want me to force me to care about him? - Yes. - Can he do that by behaving the way he did? - No. - No, people, that is not the way it is done. And women know that it is not the way it is done.

Now, when people act the way this one just did, he is in his child ego state, he has gone to the age of about seven. I want it my way and I want it now. I don't have to do it unless you care about me.

Now, I'm going to teach you the listening skills. Since you have already indicated that you have difficulties remembering things, I'm going to ask you to write these things down. Take out a piece of paper and a pencil.

Write exactly what I say exactly as I say it.

Number one: Good listeners have quiet hands, feet and mouths. Write it down quickly before you forget it. Write it, right now.

Good listeners - now what does yours say?

F:

Good listeners have quiet hands, feet and mouths.

Jane Elliott:

How many commas do you have in that sentence?

F:

None

Jane Elliott:

Why?

F:

I was writing fast and left the commas out.

Jane Elliott:

Give me your paper.

How many commas do you have in your sentence?

M:

I have none.

Jane Elliott:

Why?

M:

Because I heard you saying that.

Jane Elliott:

He heard me saying it, oh sweet Jesus, - well, now, sonny. You have a period on there, don't you.

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Did you hear me say period?

M:

I did hear it in the sentence.

Jane Elliott:

You did hear it in the sentence, but you didn't hear me in the sentence say commas. Is your reasoning a little strange here? - You are right. - Yes, are you looking for excuses for failure? - No. - Yes. And are you trying to bring your failure on me?

M:

No, I'm blaming it on...

Jane Elliott:

Yes, and blame it on yourself, now, get some commas in there. Do you need a comma after quiet?

M:

Well, that could -, no, I doubt.

Jane Elliott:

No, is that a mistake, too?

M:

Yes. I made a mistake.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Have you made several so far this morning?

M:

Yes, and I'll make more.

Jane Elliott:

What was the first mistake you made? "Coming to the workshop, big mistake".

Now, where are you going to put your commas?

M:

After hands, feet, period and after mouths.

Jane Elliott:

Good for you. What about you dummy?

How do you spell 'quiet'.

F:

Not like that.

Jane Elliott:

How do you spell quiet? Spell it out loud for me right here as you have it right here.

F:

Q-u-i-t-e

Jane Elliott:

Quite, that's quite good, isn't it? It is not quite quiet, isn't it? How do you spell quiet, well now?

F:

Q-u-i-e-t.

Jane Elliott:

Quiet Why did you spell it this way today?

F:

I was writing fast.

Jane Elliott:

Because you were writing fast. When you write fast, you don't think as well, right? Then I hope you drive slowly on the way home. Cross it out and get it right. Remember it does not run with bright. There we go. Now the second ...

M:

Excuse me Ma'am I have a question.

Jane Elliott:

I was just talking and you interrupted me and started to talk? You are a real poor case, aren't you?

M:

Sorry, but I have a question.

Jane Elliott:

What's your question?

M:

I was going to say: If I could have my paper and pencil back, so that I could take it and get to my adult state.

Jane Elliott:

Now I'm going to give you a piece of advice. Every time when I look at you sitting there with that sick smirk on your face if you can't look up without smiling. The next time I see that smile, I'm going to come down on you real real hard. O.K., you will feel like a cowpatty on a hot rock. So if I were you, if you can't hide your smile, drop your heads where I don't have to see it. Just look down when I'm going towards you, so I don't have to see that smile. Does that makes sense to you?

M:

Yes, it does.

Jane Elliott:

If you have a nervous twitch, you can't help smiling, put your face down so that I can't see you doing it, because I'll take exception to it and that's not good for you. You understand that?

M:

Yes., I do .

Jane Elliott:

Yes. If you are going to get through this workshop, you are going to live down to my

expectations of you. As if you don't live down to my expectations of you, we are going to call you an uppity bluey and we are going to ride your tail until you do live down to our expectations of us. How do I know how to do this?

M:

By your observation

Jane Elliott:

Of what?

M:

Of what happens in society.

Jane Elliott:

That's right. That's right. We in the power position in society know how to keep people in their place by lowering our expectations for them, by forcing them to live down to our expectations of them. And we do it by such ways as: when president Reagan signed the decree that's saying -, establishing Martin Luther King's birthday as a national holiday, as he signed the decree, someone said "Mr. Reagan," - he signed it in front of the press - "was Martin Luther King a communist?" And he threw down the pencil and said "Well, we will know in 30 years, won't we". So you see he hold out the rose with one hand and he yank it back with the other. "We'll give you this day, but we don't really want to." And that was on -, that was television. Everybody saw it. Did that send a message to the black community?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely. Did it send a message to the white community? - Oh, yes. What message does it send to the white community?

F:

We'll keep them quiet.

Jane Elliott:

We'll keep them in their place. We'll go along with this, because there is something to be gained for us by it, but not because we really honor the man, but because we want to cool things down. Does that bother you at all?

M/F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Did you think about that when you did it? Do you think about it differently now? - Now, why do you want this paper and pencil?

M:

So that I can remember the things you've said.

Jane Elliott:

Because you don't trust yourself to remember them, do you?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Now, did I teach him something?

F:

Yes, you did.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Was it a valuable lesson?

F:

Yes, very much.

Jane Elliott:

No, it wasn't! No, that is not a valuable lesson to teach people to submit to tyranny. Get real, that is not a valuable lesson. That is a dastardly lesson and you need to realize it. You need to realize that what I just did to him today, Newt Gingrich is doing to you all the time by saying people who think like him are normal and other people are not. And you are going along with that. You are submitting to tyranny in order to be called normal, for god's sake. You'd be better off to be called subnormal. I didn't just teach him a valuable lesson, I taught him to go along to get along, I taught him to submit to oppression, I taught him the same lesson that we teach females and people of color and those who are other than Christian and gays and lesbians and all those who are physically different all day every day. And he is going along. Because he is going to be more comfortable, he goes along. Is there any way he can win? - No. - Did he win just now? - No. - He thought he did for a minute, didn't he? - Mmm - And you all thought he did for a minute, didn't you? - No. -

The second listening skill is: Good listeners keep their eyes - what are you doing? - Good listeners keep their eyes on the person who is speaking. Write it quickly before you forget it.

Good listeners keep their eyes on the person who is speaking. Good listeners keep their eyes on the person who is speaking. What are you doing? You haven't written?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Why not?

F:

Because my hands are still quiet from the first skill.

Jane Elliott:

Didn't I say, write it down?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Write it down!

F:

And violate the first skill?

Jane Elliott:

Write it down! I said, write it down. Do it! Do it now!

What are you waiting for?

Now I'm going to warn you about something: In case you don't recognize it, I'm messing with your mind. Now, I told him to conform and then I said it was stupid to conform, so then you decided that you wouldn't conform. So now you're in trouble! Now, what did you better do?

F:

You never know what to do.

Jane Elliott:

That's right, that's right. Just the minute you think you've caught onto the rule, what did I do?

F:

You changed the rule.

Jane Elliott:

I changed the rule. People, am I good? Am I good, do I know how to do this? - I'm a white

female. I learned how to do this at my mother's knees. I know exactly how to do this. I can turn you every which way but loose and there is no way you can win. And we can do this outside this room and our society does this on a daily basis. We build people up and then we tear them down. We are doing with Colin Power right now. We are going to build that boy up - and that's what we are calling him, that boy - we are going to build him up and then if he gets anywhere near where he wants to go, where he doesn't really want to go - but we're flattering him into going there and about the time we get him up there, what are we going to do?

M:

Kick the blocks out

Jane Elliott:

We're going to kick the blocks out and let him slide right down that suckers ? unless I'm very much mistaking. Do you really think that this country is prepared to vote in a black president?

M/F:

Ha ha ha.

Jane Elliott:

And do you think this country is prepared to voting a female vice president?

M/F:

No.

MAPLE TREES

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT IN THE CAR: 00:47:02

Jane Elliott:

This town calls itself the city of beautiful maples and these are hard maple trees lining both sides of most of the streets in town. In two weeks they will all be in gorgeous yellow and orange and red and gold colors. And people will come from miles around to see the color in our trees. And this city is just so proud of that wonderful wonderful color in these trees, but they do not want people of color to come and reside in this community. We love color in our trees, we do not want it in our skin. And it breaks my heart, because it is so. This is a beautiful little community and they are very proud of their feelings for one another, the size of their churches, their churches are full every Saturday, every Sunday and every Saturday night, it's wonderful, it's a wonderful place to raise children - as long as you don't want to raise children of color here - it's heartbreaking.

The first time I did this exercise in 1968, my parents sold 42 lunches in their little hotel lunch room in Riceville. The day after it was shown they sold 2. They never sold more than that again. I was the end of their business. Their business was killed by what I do.

Somebody has said "Good deeds won't go long unpunished" and I found out how very true that is. I learned a lot about racism in a short time. And I wouldn't have -, it wouldn't have bothered me as much, if I had been the only one they exposed to that kind of behavior, but nobody confronted me in all those years. To this day, no one other than my peers one time, have confronted me, but they got at me through my children and my parents, and I find that very very difficult to forgive. The Jews have a saying, they said "You have the right to forgive others for what they do to you, you do not have the right to forgive them for what they do to others". I can't forgive them for what they did to my children. My children have to do that.

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT ON TERRACE = 00:49:46

See, in retrospect I know that I could have made life easier for my parents, could have made life easier for my father, could have made life easier for my husband and for my children.

It took me a long time to get over the feeling that I had done something wrong. I wish it hadn't been that way for my parents, but I could not change people in Riceville and their attitudes towards them. I wish it hadn't been that way for my offspring, but I couldn't change what people did. I could have stopped doing what I did, but there would have been a whole lot of learning that didn't take place and there would have been some good things that didn't happen to my offspring, and if I had stopped, it would have been saying to my kids "When things get unpleasant just stop what you are doing, just go along to get along". That wasn't the message I wanted to send to them.

IN THE WORKSHOP = 00:50:51

Jane Elliott:

It's a new experience for most of you, perhaps not for this one, but for the most of you it's a new experience to have to just be submissive. Just get your poop in a group and keep your mouth shut. Just do the very best you can, so you don't call my anger down on you. Now, this is just for a little time, I think you can do this for a little time. I'm not sure that all of you can. This is going to be a good learning experience for you. Remember that in this situation you people have no power, absolutely no power. So quit trying to exercise what you don't have.

Quit trying to run the show.

You need to decide how big a risk you want to take, let me tell you something.

I will not soon forget the female who looked a lot like you, which is unfortunate for you, in Denver/Colorado, who decided when she came in as a blue eyed person that she was going to not conform and she wasn't going to go along. And she went up and down the two rows of blue eyed people saying "Come on, brothers and sisters, come with me and defeat the oppressor, come with me and refuse to go along with this, do not go along with this, do not take this abuse, come on, we can demonstrate, we can make a difference."

She made a total fool of herself. The rest of the blue eyed people felt that there was an opportunity here for them to learn something. She didn't want to learn it. She in fact was saying to people of color "If you would protest, these things wouldn't happen to you. If you do what I'm doing these things won't happen to you."

When people of color have protested in this country - what have we done to them?

M/F:

Kill them.

Jane Elliott:

Kill them. But you've seen as a white female in that situation, she was in no danger whatsoever and she could walk up and down that line protesting and demonstrating until the whole thing was over and she knew that she wasn't going to be put in jail and there were no dogs and there were no grips and there were no fire hoses and there were no guns in that room and she had- and no gas chamber - and she had absolutely nothing to loose. And when you have nothing to loose what you do -, when your risk taking was nothing to loose that is not a risk.

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

So what she was doing was an absolutely insulting to every person in that room. And I didn't want to touch her and I didn't want the security people to touch her, because that was a corporation and I didn't want her to sue the corporation. She finally - I said "Get this woman out of here". She went up and lay down on the floor in front of the room I said "All right folks, here is the way it is. We are going to vote on this. If she stays - I go.

Now, I'm going to leave the room and you participants vote on whether she stays". Now, I was getting paid for being there. This is a risk. She is being paid nothing. I walked out of the room and I took all my stuff and walked out of the room. And I stood in the hall and I thought you dummy, you dummy, what have you just done? You have probably just lost a large account. I stayed out of the room. Pretty soon two people came out, one blue eyed and one brown eyed, one on each side of her leading her out of the room. And they voted for her to leave. Why?

F:

Because she was keeping them from their process of learning.

Jane Elliott:

She was keeping them from learning and she wanted to keep them from learning and she wanted to be the power in that room. And was I going to let her be the power in that room?

M/F:

Absolutely not.

Jane Elliott:

No. Would that have sent a bad message to every person of color, every gay, every lesbian, every person with a disability, every older person, every person who wasn't blonde in that room. Would that have sent a bad message to them?

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely. Was I going to let that happen?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Was the rest of them going to let that happen?

No.

Jane Elliott:

Who was responsible for them voting what I thought was the right way?

M:

They were.

Jane Elliott:

They were. They were. And this constant arguing only says, I as a white female, have the power to argue in this situation, because I know I'm really not taking a risk at all. I'm simply being seen, I'm simply playing "Look at me". Third graders play "look at me": see me, see how cute I am, see how funny I am, see how I can disrupt the process - that's what she's doing. Therefore - what is her mental state at this point? What is her ego state at this point?

M/F:

Child.

Jane Elliott:

She's in her child ego state. Now you have a choice to make. You can either be in your child ego state or in your parent ego state or in your adult ego state. And when you are on the floor it's going to be real hard for you to be in your parent ego state as you will have to look up at me. I would suggest that you get into your adult ego state real real fast like Like- in standard.

F:

It's my intent to be an adult.

Jane Elliott:

When are you going to start?.

F:

It's my perception that an adult does speak up, but I think your point is well taken.

Jane Elliott:

In this situation is it a smart adult thing to speak up?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. But is it a smart thing for a blue eyed person to speak up at this point?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. What does it do overtime a blue eyed person is disrupting at this point?

M:

Makes them all look bad.

Jane Elliott:

Makes them all look bad. Does it reinforce all the negative things we've said about them?

M/F:

Absolutely.

Jane Elliott:

She is proving all the negative things we said about them, isn't she?

M/F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Do you want her to do that for you? Oh but you are going to be asleep anyway. You weren't telling me that you were taking a tranquilizer. Do you want her to do that for you? - Do you want her to do that for you?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Do you want her to do it for you?. - Do you want her to do it for you? What about you? Oh, yeah, you do, it shows that she cares. Right? It shows that she cares. I'm not going to do you a favor. Change places with him.

Now, the second listening skill is - Now, I want you to talk to him -, oh, I think you're in the wrong place. You change places with him.

Now, the reason I put you back here is - when you're beside her, her behaviors rub off on you. And your behaviors rub off on her. And you support and reinforce one another. And I don't want that to happen. So, in order to keep that from happening and keep you from getting into trouble, I put you back here where that won't happen to. Did I do this to be mean to you?

M:

Probably in your mind not. You were helping me.

Jane Elliott:

No, no, I am helping you, and how should you feel about that?

M:

I, in fact I think I should be grateful.

Jane Elliott:
And are you?

M:
No.

Jane Elliott:
Why not? Because you are ingrate, because you are getting this support? You are willing to take the support even if it means getting you in trouble.

M:
Yes.

Jane Elliott:
This man likes to suffer?

M:
He doesn't know any better.

Jane Elliott:
You like to suffer.

M:
He is a martyr.

Jane Elliott:
Does martyrdom appeal to you?

M:
No.

Jane Elliott:
No. is there any way you can win here?

M:
Not under the present rules, no.

Jane Elliott:
Have you won yet?

M:
Not yet.

Jane Elliott:
Am I going to let you win?

M:

You don't want me to win.

Jane Elliott:

Am I going to let you win? -

Where is the only place you can win in this situation?

M:

I can't.

Jane Elliott:

Can you win in your mind?

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Yes.

M:

So, within me I can

Jane Elliott:

Within you, you can win. But will I know that you have won within you.

M:

Yes. - No.

Jane Elliott:

No. I won't. And neither will they, because we will use everything you do against you.

I won't know that you have reinforced yourself inside yourself. But will you know that?

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Is that valuable to you?

M:

Absolutely.

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely. Is that going to be hard for you to keep on doing that while I keep on badgering you?

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Are you going to have to keep working and working and working to make that happen?

Is that fair?

M:

Every day.

Jane Elliott:

Shit, no, that isn't fair? Did you think this was going to be a fair day?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. Do you think what goes on outside here is fair?

M:

Absolutely not.

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely not. Do you spend a whole lot of time outside here, holding it in and winning inside yourself even though society doesn't want you to?

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. And do you?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Who, do you think, spent more time in that endeavor? You or that man right there?

F:

Probably that man.

Jane Elliott:

Probably that man right there.

M:

Probably?

Jane Elliott:

What I'm doing to that man and to you happens to his children, unless I'm mistaking in the school on a daily basis. Am I mistaking?

M:

- all the time.

Jane Elliott:

All the time. And when you watch that happen to your children and know you'd better maintain a low profile if you want them to get through the school year. What does that do to you?

M:

It tears me up.

Jane Elliott:

Tears you up. What does it make your sons think of you?

M:

It's a difficult situation.

Jane Elliott:

A difficult situation. And who makes that situation difficult?

M:

You know who makes it difficult.

Jane Elliott:

I know who makes it difficult, you are damn right, I know who makes it difficult. I make it difficult and people who look like me make it difficult. And do we spend a whole lot of time feeling badly about it?

M:

And we talk a lot about it.

Jane Elliott:

If we didn't enjoy it what would we do?

M:

Stop it.

Jane Elliott:

We'd stop doing it. We'd stop doing it. Are you folks on the outseated brown-eyed people having a better time here today than they are.

M/F:

Yeah

Jane Elliott:

Yes! You have more fun than they are? Have you had fun yet?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Why not?

F:

Because I'm one of the blue eyed people

Jane Elliott:

Yes, and what -, as a result of being a blue eyed person what is going to happen to you?

F:

Being treated differently.

Jane Elliott:

That's right. Is there anything you can do about it?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Not one thing. Is there anything you can do to change my behavior?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Absolutely. Did his tears bother me?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

His wanting me to care about him bothered me? - No. His embarrassment bothered me? -

No. Does the embarrassment that females suffer in the workplace bother the powerful male in the workplace?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

No. If it did, what would they do about it? - Put a stop to it.

M:

Immediately.

Jane Elliott:

Immediately. Does what happens to people on reservations, on native American reservations in this country, bother the people in power in this country?

M/F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Not one bit. We are going to increase that pain instead of ending it. Do we care? Do you care?

Now, you all could have learned something in the last hour or hour and a half that you have been in here. You could have learned something about how discrimination works and how it feels to be on the receiving end of it. You could have learnt about society and society's rules. You could have learned about how hard it is to be in control when you have no control. You could have learned something about power and the use and misuse of power and the reality that you have never experienced, I think, before. Most of you, I think, have never experienced reality that you are experiencing this morning. Have you? - Before this, have you?

M:

Not for the situation of color or race or -

Jane Elliott:

Have you? - You? - You?

F:

Not in this country.

Jane Elliott:

You? - You? - I like the way you were saying "not in this country". You? - You? - Have you? - Have you ever experienced anything like this before?

F:

I experienced discrimination because of being a woman, yes.

Jane Elliott:

Hahahahah. Of being a white woman. Do you think that this discrimination is being visited upon you as a woman is the same as the discrimination that is visited upon her as a woman?

Her reality and your reality in this country - you don't live in the same country as she does. You live in the United States of America, but you do not live in the same country as she does. And neither do I. And neither does she. And she says she has never experienced this, this kind of treatment in this country. How many of those of you who are brown eyed have experienced this kind of treatment in this country, "the land of the free and the home of the brave" in which you are citizens.

APPLE TREES

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT = 01:03:30

Jane Elliott:

You are going to interview some students tomorrow, some former students of mine, who were in my classroom the third year that I did this exercise, they were in the film called the "Eye in the Storm" and we took still photographs of those children each day of that exercise - one when they were on the top and one when they were on the bottom - and I have some of those here.

The interesting part about these pictures is, you can take a child who is a perfectly happy normal human being on one day and by putting a collar on him and telling him he is inferior, you can turn him into a frightened, vulnerable, intimidated, suspicious child who can not succeed on the day he is in the wrong place. This is like the powerless and the powerful.

This is Rex on the day he is on the bottom. You are going to meet Rex tomorrow. This is Rex on the day he is on the top. All these students that you are seeing now and they're in the film "Eye of the Storm" are moderately to severely dyslexic. None of them were supposed to finish high school. Rex now has his MA in Elementary Education and Administration. You are going to talk him tomorrow. He is going to be teaching children to make a difference.

This is Sandy on the day she was on the bottom. And this is Sandy on the day she was on the top. Sandy is the one who said, when we did our reunion five years after they graduated from high school. - I asked Sandy whether, having had this exercise when she was in third grade, had changed her life at all. She is the one who said "Yeah, now when I hear one of those bigoted remarks, I wish I had one of those collars in my pocket and I could take it out and I could put it around that person's neck and I could say: Now, you wear that for two weeks and see how you'd like to live that way for a lifetime."

Rex is the one who said "I have that collar in my pocket for the rest of my life, I can't get that collar out of my pocket".

This is how Laurie - you are going to meet Laurie tomorrow - this is how she looked on the day she was on the bottom in this exercise. And this is how she looked on the day she was on the top. Now, if you think about, this is just one day in these children's life - and look at the difference. Why does she have to live this way - if she expected to live this way for a lifetime. You would soon begin to doubt her intelligence and so would she.

I don't think I had a picture of Milton in there, did I, but this is Milton's - every day of the exercise, each day of the exercise, the children had to draw themselves as they felt that day. And this is how Milton drew himself. This is the day he was on the top. And they drew these and colored them. And Milton has an eye for drawing like I have only seen in one other child in all the years that I've taught. And because he was dyslexic. he got no respect from the school, and so his life is down, it's just a wash. It breaks my heart, because he was probably the most talented child I have ever seen artistically.

But this was all in yellow and there is an angel on his head on the day he is on the top. On the day he is on the bottom, this is all in black and there are flames, red flames up in here, and there is a little red devil on top of his head. But if you feel like this when you go to school in the morning every day or if you feel like this every morning when you go to school are you going to do a better job than when you feel like this.

See, if you can create a situation in a school or in a society in which 11% of your society feels like this. And the rest of them feel like this. Which would you rather feel like? Which part of the society would you rather be in? Would you rather be one of the powerful or one of the powerless? And how dares society make force people to live this way.

DONNA = 01:08:01

It has been over twenty years now and this is -, looking at these pictures and talking about it is just as if it happened yesterday. It is very much in my mind, as I started reading a book again, and it brought back a lot of tears. I remember the things that kids said to each other and how they treated each other and, I mean, best friends were now fighting and we hated our teacher. We had to draw a picture of her and I'll never forget that, 'cause we all drew like a picture of a devil. And we had to stand in extra for recess, we couldn't like go back for seconds and some of the kids and we couldn't share our food, because, you know, we are dirty people and we had to use a cup to drink out of, because - we had to use the same cup all day - otherwise we were wasteful, but I remember her when she said that brown eyed people were slow and they were dirty and smelly and, you know, I was like ... , you know, here is this teacher, you loved this teacher and she is telling you all these things, it's like "I thought you were my friend" you know. And to go through this -, even though we all knew it was a project that we were doing, once it started, we forgot it was a project, it was such a reality, that it is like "I am really going through this, this isn't funny any more, it's not a joke".

When they had the collar on, you just felt like, you know, that poor little dog outside who wants to go in and nobody will bring him in. But -, and then to take them off, you've just felt like you'd won the lotto, you know, it's just really good.

The exercise has a lot to do with how I feel today.

It was just a one day thing for me, but it has stayed with me all these years, but, you know, a black child has to live with this the rest of the life.

IN THE WORKSHOP = 01:10:04

Jane Elliott:

All those who have a total of two right, please stand! - You have two right?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

You have two right? Who checked your paper? Where are the numbers on this paper?

F:

They are not on there.

Jane Elliott:

Did you know that when you stood?

F:

All I thought was that she said that I got two correct, so I was relying on that.

Jane Elliott:

Did you know you didn't put the numbers on this paper?

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes. Did you know you were wrong when you stood?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Did you hear me say those numbers? Did I say: write number three first.

F:

I guess I didn't hear that.

Jane Elliott:

Are these right?

F:

I guess not.

Jane Elliott:

Do you have two right?

F:

I guess not.

Jane Elliott:

How many do you have right?

F:

None.

Jane Elliott:

None. Are you taking credit for something you didn't do?

F:

Evidently.

Jane Elliott:

And are you going to blame her for checking it wrong?

F:
No.

Jane Elliott:
Whose that fault for you standing there when you don't belong there.

F:
I am.

Jane Elliott:
Put a zero on the top of that page and cross out the two.

F:
O.K.

Jane Elliott:
Well, all those who have a total of one right, please stand! - You thought I said one night stand, didn't you. Give me your paper.
You want to check yours to be sure that's right before I look at it?

Well, that is right, you did get one right, you have 25% right.

M:
75% wrong.

Jane Elliott:
75% wrong, you're right, I keep forgetting.
What's the third listening skill supposed to say? Remember, what is the first listening skill supposed to say?

F:
Good listeners listen from the beginning to the very end.

Jane Elliott:
Is that what yours says?

F:
No, I left out 'very'.

Jane Elliott:
You sure left out 'very, didn't you?

F:
Yes, I did.

Jane Elliott:

You have one right here?

F:

I should have zero correct.

Jane Elliott:

That's right. Do you have one right here?

F:

Yes, I do.

Jane Elliott:

Is there one right.

F:

No, there is none.

Jane Elliott:

Should you be standing?

F:

No, I should not.

Jane Elliott:

So, what are you going to do?

F:

I guess sit down and change that to zero.

Jane Elliott:

Good idea.

So, two of these people got one right. None of them got them all right. This is too hard for blue eyed people?

M:

Mhm.

Jane Elliott:

This is a lot of work for blue eyed people to learn four simple sentences and then have to respond to them in a few minutes.

Now, what stress are you suffering from at this point?

F:

You are changing the rules

Jane Elliott:
Changing the rules.

F:
You turn the voice and just talking down to people. You are setting it up, so that you are making people look dumb, like if Marc makes a mistake that's bad ?? good. You are standing over some people.

Jane Elliott:
And that is stressful to you?

F:
I think to this group, yes, and to me.

Jane Elliott:
That's stressful to you?

F:
Yes. You are also going too fast.

Jane Elliott:
Going too fast. Anything else is stressful to you?

F:
Those are the big ones.

Jane Elliott:
Those are big ones. Those are big ones for her.

M:
That's not, compare that to me and my wife in Independence right close to where she lived getting told to walk away from the house that we couldn't rent because it's occupied and we drive around the block and come back and see a white couple going in there, right here. You are under no stress.

Jane Elliott:
Would you consider that more stressful?

M:
I didn't even say that's stress, I consider that just devastating

Jane Elliott:
Were you devastated by it?

M:

I tried to explain it to my wife and stop her from crying. There was no explanation that worked.

Jane Elliott:

No, what's big time stress to you? If you don't mind telling.

F:

Every morning when I get up and go in my bathroom and look in my mirror, that's where my stress begins. Because I go to a school where I am one of two black teachers.

Jane Elliott:

Out of how many teachers?

F:

Sixty.

Jane Elliott:

Two black teachers in a school with sixty teachers and you're one of the two.

F:

One of the two. That's stress.

Jane Elliott:

And are you treated differently on the basis of how you look in the mirror when you get up in the morning?

F:

Sure I am.

Jane Elliott:

And you know it is happening.

F:

Sure I do.

Jane Elliott:

And you recognize it.

F:

Yes, I do.

Jane Elliott:

And you can identify it.

F:

Sure I can.

Jane Elliott:

And if you describe it to your white peers, what do they say?

F:

Oh, Linda, please, that's not happening. It couldn't be happening, this is 1995.

Jane Elliott:

What about you, is this bigtime stress for you as far as you're concerned?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Do you get stress like this?

F:

Oh, yes.

Jane Elliott:

Do you have to perform in spite of it?

F:

Yes, I do.

Jane Elliott:

You have to do your job whether the stress is there or not.

M/F:

Right.

Jane Elliott:

If you give into the stress, what do you have to give up?

M:

My job.

Jane Elliott:

Your job. This looks a lot of stress to you?

M:

Very much.

Jane Elliott:

It does?

M:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

Do you think these people are stressed a lot?

M:

Well, they're stressed, but not what we go through..

Jane Elliott:

O.K., so is this big time stress compared to what you say?

M:

No, very very low.

Jane Elliott:

What about you?

M:

It looks like a game.

Jane Elliott:

It looks like a game. Did it feel like a game to you?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Does it feel like a game to you? Are you playing a game? Are you playing a game?

F:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Did you come in here prepared for a game? - Did you think this might be a game? - Did you think this was going to be a pleasant little day, off work or - spend your Saturday this way?. Does this feel like a game to you?

M:

Quite a bit different.

Jane Elliott:

Quite a bit different. Why?

M:

Because we were on the spot, you are coming and changing roles and -

Jane Elliott:

That's right. Now let me make something perfectly clear here this today. We are not going to reverse this today. Yesterday I heard a couple of women say "well, I kept quiet, because I thought she was going to reverse that she'll use what we said against us". I had no intention reversing this, because if I reversed this it would no longer be reality. That would be like saying to people of color "After we white folks have been on top for a while, then we are going to turn the tables and you're going to get your chance". See, if it's a game, then everybody has the opportunity to win. In this situation and in society at large not everybody has the opportunity to win, we do not have freedom and justice for all. We have freedom and justice for some, but not for all. This is not a game, because not everybody in this room is going to have the opportunity to win. You're never going to win, Maggie, if you keep writing while I'm talking. This is not a game and are you role playing?

M:

Me?

Jane Elliott:

Yes.

M:

In a sense.

Jane Elliott:

In a sense you are. Your memory is bad, because you are pretending it is bad. Are you having trouble remembering things?

M:

No.

Jane Elliott:

Are you having trouble getting things right?

M:

Yes, of course yes.

Jane Elliott:

Yes? Why?

M:

Because the deck is staged against us.

Jane Elliott:

Because the deck is staged against you. So, knowing I'm out of pretending is going to get you to pretend that you got those written correctly, isn't it?

M:

Right, correct.

Jane Elliott:

Correct. No role-play, hey, forget that. It's like Shelby Steel saying as a black man "I have transcended race". Now in your heart of hearts all you people know that I'm lying to you about blue eyes. There is nothing wrong with having eyes of a color other than brown. And you know I'm wrong. Does that give you any satisfaction whatsoever - to know that I'm wrong? Is that making it all easier for you to go through this? - No. You can transcend your eye color. Can you transcend my behaviors on the basis of your eye color? - No. Can you transcend my eyeism? - No. Can you change what is happening in here to you, because you know that I'm wrong? - No. All you can do is sit there and take it.

Tell me what stress is.

M:

Stress is -

Jane Elliott:

Now, wait a minute. He volunteered to tell me what stress is. I do not ask people of color to bleed all over the floor for white folks. I don't do that. You want to tell us? Go ahead and tell us.

M:

Stress is knowing that when you send your son or daughter to school, that they have to start learning how to be the best and no matter what they say or what they do it's never good enough, 'cause "I'm always going to find something wrong with you and to the point where I'm going to make you so frustrated that you get into a situation where you become unstable and you can't be taught, so now you have to go over here, now we have to test you, we are going to tell you what is wrong with your child. We are going to make him into a statistic, we are going to keep him in the back row continuously" and you have to, day in and day out, talking to him, it is nothing wrong with you, you can do it, you can do it, you can do it. And he continues to come home, hurt, sometimes in fights, and you have to continue to keep doing it over and over and over. And the sad thing about that is that we

waste so much time in trying to keep the self-esteem up that we lose the time when we could be learning. And they know that. Now, that's what stress is.

SAXOPHONE

REUNION AT SCHOOL = 01:19:54

Jane Elliott:

Oh, my gosh, Donna, I'm so glad to see you. You got taller. No, you shrank. - Oh, my god, you all look so great. I'm so glad to see you all.

Donna:

You know, I ran into you once in Riceville just that one time, you guys were sitting in the car.

Jane Elliott:

Long time ago.

Donna:

I haven't seen you since.

M:

All I got is your kids turning loose at our house.

All:

Hahahahaha.

M:

I got the third one now.

Jane Elliott:

Yes, so now we can have more fun. Oh, my gosh, you all look so good. Oh, where is Laurie? Working, they said? Oh, shoot. Well, oh, I have something for you. Take this. This is blue eyes ... of evil. Hey, I need all the help I can get. So, I brought you each one.

Donna:

Oh, neat.

Jane Elliott:

You see, these come from Saudi-Arabia by the way of Sarah. When you wear them, think of Sarah in SA where men are men and the women laugh at them.

All:

Hahahaha.

"EYE OF THE STORM" = 01:21:33

SONG

Jane Elliott:

It might be interesting to judge people today by the color of their eyes.

You want to try this? Sounds like fun. Since I'm the teacher and I have blue eyes, I think maybe the blue eyed people should be on top the first day. I mean the blue eyed people are the better people in this room.

Child:

Oh, no.

Jane Elliott:

Oh yes they are, and blue eyed people are smarter than brown eyed people. - They are cleaner than brown eyed people. And if you don't believe it - look at Brian. You brown eyed people do not get to use the drinking fountain you have to use the paper cups. You brown eyed people are not to play with the blue eyed people on the play ground, because you are not as good as blue eyed people. The brown eyed people in this room today are going to wear collars so that we can tell from a distance what color your eyes are.

Children:

When we were down on the bottom it seemed like everything bad was happening to us. Mrs. Elliott was taking our best friends of us.

Jane Elliott:

What happened at recess. Were two of you boys fighting?

Boy:

Russell called me names and I hit him- hit him in the guts.

Jane Elliott:

What names did he call you?

Boy:

Brown eyes.

Jane Elliott:

What's wrong being called brown-eyed?

Boy:

It means that we are stupid and that we are not that.

Boy:

Oh that sure is -, it's like other people call black people niggers.

Jane Elliott:

That's the reason? You hit him, John. Did it help? Did it stop him?

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT = 01:23:44

Jane Elliott:

The first reaction I get from teachers, who see this film or from hearing, - hear me discuss what I do say to me "How can you do that to these little children? How can put those little children through that exercise for a day?" And they seem unable to relate the sympathy that they're feeling for these little white children for a day to what happens to children of color in this society for a lifetime or to the fact that they are doing this to children based on skin color every day. And I'm only doing this as an exercise that every child knows is an exercise and every child knows is going to end at the end of the day.

"EYE OF THE STORM" = 01:24:24

Jane Elliott:

When you take these collars off - what would you like to do with them?

Children:

Throw them away.

Jane Elliott:

Go ahead, go ahead.

INTERVIEW WITH JANE ELLIOT = 01:24:40

Jane Elliott:

This older woman in the middle of this group stood up and said "Mrs. Elliott, I came here to tell you how much I hate you". I said "O.K., go ahead, you know, this isn't a new experience." She said "I am Jewish, I was born and raised in Germany", she said ""We went to a Jewish school. Every morning when our headmaster came in we would bow and say 'Good morning, Her Headmaster'." She said "One morning he came in with two SS-troupers. And one of the SS-troupers said to us "In the future you decadent Jews will no longer bow and say 'Good morning, Her Headmaster', you will salute and say 'Heil Hitler'." She said "I watched those of us who valued their life more than their faith, salute and say 'Heil Hitler'." She said "Those who valued their faith more than life itself continued to bow and say 'Good morning, Her Headmaster'." She said "They disappeared and we never saw them again, but we know what happened to them". She said "Your students are very fortunate. They will never allow to happen in their society what we allowed to happen in ours. They'll see it

coming and put a stop to it." Then she said something that frightens me to this day. She said "The atmosphere that you created for your students in your classroom with your blue eyed brown eyed exercise reminded me of the atmosphere and the environment that the nazis created for the Jews in Germany."

Now, people of color, particularly blacks, who see the film "The Eye of the Storm" which was made in my classroom the third year I did the exercise, say to me when it's over "That's the way I live every day of my life." And that in what we call "the land of the free and the home of the brave". We have created an environment in this country for 11 to 12% of our population in which they feel the way the Jews felt in nazi Germany. White people say to me "I don't see it that way" - of course they don't see it that way, they don't live it that way. We do not live the same reality in this country. White people do not live as people of color do.

IN THE WORKSHOP = 01:26:25

Jane Elliott:

Now I need to know - how did you feel about what you went through this morning. The words that you've written came out of your feelings, right? Nobody else's. O.K., read your three words.

M:

They looked frustrated, confused, angry.

Jane Elliott:

Frustrated, confused and angry. That's the way they looked to you during this exercise.

Now, people, listen to these words, that these brown eyed people have written and see how many of them are the words we usually use to describe females. Read yours!

F:

Confused, sad and some humor.

Jane Elliott:

Sad - any of you people sad this morning? You look sad, what were you sad about?

F:

I was sad, because I had to stay on the carpet, I didn't get any coffee, I didn't get any donuts.

Jane Elliott:

Valley girl? - like "wow, man".

And I'll tell you something else.

F:

Yes.

Jane Elliott:

I'm going to give you a really valuable piece of advice. Get over cute!

F:

Aha, O.K.

Jane Elliott:

Now, I'm absolutely serious about this. Get over cute, because you'll be cute until you are about 45. And then at 45, you won't be cute any more, you'll just be an old broad. There'll be whole bunch of 18 to 40 year olds there who are cuter than you are. And at that point, you'll say "I want that promotion". And somebody will say to you "Well, let's see, I don't think of you as qualified, I just think of you as cute". And then you're going to howl "sexism".

Females, get over cute! Get competent! Get trained! Get capable! Get over cute! And those of you who are called Patty and Debby and Suzy - get over that, because we use those names to infantilize females. We keep females in their little girl state by the names we use for them. Get over it! If you want to be taken seriously, get serious! Get over it!

O.K., read your three words!

F:

Confused, lonely and uncomfortable.

Jane:

Confused, lonely and uncomfortable.

Yours! Did anybody in here feel lonely during this thing. What do you mean when you say lonely?

F:

Just like bareness.

Jane Elliott:

All alone?

F:

Yeah.

Jane Elliott:

They had no support group.

F:

Right.

Jane Elliott:

Here all these blue eyed people are together, but there is no support group. And each of them knew, there was no support coming, didn't they? Did they catch onto that real fast? - You didn't even seem to expect help from one another. Would you have appreciated some defense?

M:

Well, yeah!

Jane Elliott:

Where is Gerald? Where is Gerald?

Don't you say another word, before I'll get my husband in here. Because you are so like my neighbor, I can't believe. Well, yeah! You would have appreciated defense?

M:

Yeah.

Jane Elliott:

Yeah, did you resent the fact that none of them stood up for you? Or did you think they got to take care of their own asses.

M:

I figured that they knew that if they tried to come for my defense that you'd point your guns on them and so, I figured, that's the reason that they weren't.

Jane Elliott:

When I was picking on her, why didn't any of you males defend her? Of course I wouldn't defend her either, but why didn't any of you defend her? Why didn't you defend her?

M:

It's like if you are picking on her, you are not picking on me. That's all by the rules I kind of saw it's like I'm just going to sit back and lay low.

Jane Elliott:

And let her do it to them. It's what makes racism work, people! It's what makes homophobia work, people. It's what makes sexism work, it's what makes ageism work. To sit back and do nothing is to cooperate with the oppressor. As long as you folks did nothing, I was free to do whatever I chose to.

Read yours!

F:

They looked intimidated, confused and scared.

Jane Elliott:

Scared - any of you people were scared this morning? What were you scared about?

M:

I was -, I think the thing that made me most scared was when we talked about the -, just doing this for a day and how it really is a lifetime thing for so many folks.

Jane Elliott:

Why did that scare you?

M:

It scared me -, I really got in touch with the incredible injustice, that I'm a part of. It really scared me.

I was really aware of my stomach and I was really aware what -, once I really allowed myself to begin to really understand and really accept, you know, the full impact of this, you know, it started to make me really sick. I just really felt physically sick at the -

Jane Elliott:

Now, you felt sick to your stomach this morning in a two and a half hour exercise. Could that have anything to do with why so many black males die nine or ten or fifteen years before white males do. And so many of them have high blood pressure and problems with heart and all kinds of problems that kill them early and have nothing to do with violence. Could having to confront this and deal with it or not confront it and cope with it all day every day for yourself and your wife and your children and your parents and your grand parents make you sick?

M:

I guess part of the biggest thing is that it's really hard for me to believe that one person can make a difference.

Jane Elliott:

Have I made a difference in you?

M:

Yeah.

Jane Elliott:

How many people do you think I am?

At the end of the second world war when they cleaned out the concentration camps in Germany, a Lutheran minister said "When they came for the Jews, I wasn't Jewish, so I did nothing. When they came for the homosexuals, I wasn't homosexual, so I did nothing.

When they came for the gypsies, I wasn't a gypsy, so I did nothing. When they came for me, there was no one left to do anything." - Now, think about it. Think about that!

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR:

I still have a dream.

It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream, that all men are created equal ...