

The colour of my skin – Real stories of racism (Reihe)
Shazmeen (Sendung)
46800772 (DVD-Signatur Medienzentren)

Filmskript: Shazmeen

00:06

I'm Shazmeen and I've experienced racism and Islamophobia throughout my school life.

00:12

I grew up in a very white, middle class area. So I lived in a small town.

00:19

My parents and my grandparents were from immigrant backgrounds.

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I always knew that kind of like I had a different culture just because everyone around me was white.

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I don't think I kind of noticed cultural differences in a way that kind of isolated me.

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I think the first time I did notice was probably in Year Two or Three.

00:42

I had a friend at school. A girl who I would play with every single day. You know your kind of best buddy in the playground.

00:50

One day she came up to me and she said 'I can't play with you today'.

00:54

'I can't play with you because my mum said I can't play with Pakis.'

01:00

I think that was the first time I'd heard that word used directly to me.

01:06

I immediately associated it as something bad and something that was bad about me.

01:15

At school, I would kind of erase parts of myself. I would pretend I didn't speak another language or I think I only listened to English music

01:23

And if my mom wanted me to watch an Asian movie or something I'd be like 'Well, no, I don't understand that'

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01:30

I wanted to be a kid, have a friendship group and do what all the other girls in my year were doing.

01:39

When I was in Year Nine, this was at the start of high school and this was kind of, I think this was towards the end of me kind of rejecting myself and rejecting my culture

01:48

We were in a history lesson learning about 9/11. We were watching a documentary.

01:53

There was a boy who sat next to me. I remember him saying really loudly that 9/11 happened 'because of people like you'.

02:03

For someone to tell me that it was my fault that a terrorist attack had happened and that hundreds of people died.

02:13

There were other times that stuff like that happened as well in the classroom and I'd just really not want to say anything because I didn't want the hassle.

02:21

I knew that the times that I had said something to a teacher, they hadn't really responded or done anything about it. So it didn't feel like I had anyone to talk to about it.

02:33

I would always have this choking feeling in my throat so when I would try to speak, I would feel like there was a lump, but it's because I was stopping myself from crying a lot of the time.

02:43

After my first year in high school, I think in Year Ten or Eleven, I started wearing my headscarf at school.

02:51

There's no point in me pretending to be someone else because it's not helping me. It's not making me face any less abuse where I am.

02:59

I think at that point I kind of wanted to be closer to my faith.

03:04

And I remember being in the changing rooms. There was this girl and one particular incident was we had just finished PE and she was next to me.

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03:13

She was doing her make up in the mirror and her friends were all stood behind her

03:18

And she leaned into the mirror and looked at me through the mirror and said, 'Do you think when I wear this much fake tan, I look like a Paki?' and they all laughed.

03:29

Because they laughed it kind of egged her on further and then she was like, 'Actually do you think people will be friends with me if I was a Paki?'

03:37

I think I just left crying and that was the first time I think I cried in front of people and just let it out

03:45

I think when I got sort of like sixth form one of my teachers.

03:49

He kind of was aware of the difficulties that I had and he would leave his classroom door unlocked, so that I could use it to go pray so that I could use it if I was upset and if I just wanted to be away from people.

04:02

It helped me kind of feel comfortable. I didn't like to talk.

04:07

I guess it was confusing because I would write so much. And I. You know, I had such a great knowledge of vocabulary and I was great at English, but I hated talking.

04:17

I thought that 'when I open my mouth, I'm going to cry.'

04:20

I think over time, especially when I started blogging and writing and writing poetry, it was kind of an outlet and to confront all of the messed up things that happened in school.

04:35

So that was kind of like me crying onto my page.