

The British library	Oral History section
Ref. No.:	Wav Files: Refs:
Collection title: The gift of Togetherness	
Interviewees surname:	Title: miss
Interviewees forenames: Fahmida	Sex: Female
Generation: 2nd	DOB: 30/05/1965
Occupation: Teacher	
Dates of recordings and tracks (19/6/2014)	
Location of Interviews: MMU business school- Room 6.33	
Name of interviewer: Dr Amna Khan	
Type of Recorder: Roland	
Total No. of tracks: 1 48khz	Reading format: Wav 16bit
Mono or stereo: Stereo	
Burned to CD/DVD: No	
Interview Duration: 56:10	
Additional materials: Photos taken	
Copyright/clearance: Received	
Interviewers additional comments: To be transcribed by Rahbaan/Amna only.	

[0.00]

Hello, thank you for coming here today, could you just tell us your name, your age, your ethnicity and what generation you are?

Hi, my name is Fahmida, Fahmida Khan and I'm 49 years old and what was the other question?

What ethnicity you are?

I'm a Pakistani

And what generation?

I'm second generation.

Ok, could you tell us a little about yourself Fahmida?

I do a lot of community cohesion, lots of social work, I do a lot of voluntary work so I have got experience in vast areas and I'm also a community champion for domestic violence and I've worked with various political parties I've worked with Kashmir movement, I've been to the houses of parliament, lobbying to change like change what do you makkalit like change stuff about Kashmir for them to get more help because they need to, basically they need more women on their side basically. I've worked for radio stations, I've worked for Bury council at the moment I'm doing voluntary work at an adult learning college in Bury and ... I think that should be enough.

Ok, and are you married or?

I'm, well I'm in my second marriage, I was married before, I was married for 20 years and then I was separated for about 4 years, then I remarried and I've been married for 2 years.

Ok and do you have any children?

I've got 2 boys ... Rahbaan and Hamza Khan, my eldest is 23 and my youngest is 19.

Ok... So you do a lot of social work, I notice from what you say is that important to you?

Because I feel, you get a... You feel rewarded when you help people so I always been wanting to help people ever since I was little and I used to be called a grandma for it, 'oh she's a granny she helps everybody', so you get a sense of achievement basically. I feel satisfied when I'm helping people, even when I'm out for example when I'm out and doing my shopping in a supermarket say if an Asian lady if she doesn't understand anything on a product she'll ask me something in Urdu she'll ask me in my language, I feel so good about it I feel so good afterwards. Just little things like that, so I help people and I also, well I'm a strong believer in empowering women as well, giving them empowerment you know, helping them to feel empowered.

In what way?

In all aspects like from knowing their rights to speaking up for what's right to making a difference in the community because everybody has a skillset we just need to tap into it that's what I believe but because being a female I'm more passionate about the female issues. But generally I like to help everybody, I've worked with the police I've worked with the fire station I've worked with a lot of different organisations.

So you talk about empowering people, is it people of a certain ethnicity or is it women of every ethnicity?

Well if you look at the bigger picture every ethnicity it's not just limited to every ethnicity but a Pakistani being a south Asian myself I get more joy out of helping my own ethnicity. I suppose I don't know maybe its just natural, a natural feeling but yeah.

Why do you feel more rewarded when you help south Asian women?

Because I feel generally that they they're not that empowered, there view isn't taken into account that much by families and by the men of the house because the... I mean I have grown up like that there were five girls in my family there were five sisters, well four sisters and two brothers my dad my mum didn't have much say and I've always been a fair person so I used to think that... I've always had this thing in my mind that a husband and wife are supposed to be equal, they're supposed to talk about their feelings to each other and they're supposed to be equal and they're supposed to share everything whereas my dad used to make all the decisions and my mum was like... She used to abide by whatever she said and I felt as though that didn't seem right it didn't seem like an equal partnership.

How did you feel when your dad would make decisions and your mum would like...?

I'd always... I'd always, always intervene; I would say that 'well that wasn't fair da, did you ask mum?' and so as I was growing up in my household I got labelled as a rebel due to that.

Ok, did you find that with your own marriage was that equal or...?

My own marriage well it was a different case, my own marriage because (deep breath) my own marriage it was... My ex-husband is a sociopath so basically even though I was, I thought I was having my own say, I was being manipulated by him. Basically because I got married at, well I got married when I was 23 but I was quite immature. I was 23 but because I had a sheltered upbringing so I was always, even now, you might not believe this but even now I'm socially illiterate because of that upbringing because I had a very sheltered upbringing because my dad was quite strict so anywhere we'd wanted to go he'd take drop us off in his car, he'd pick us up so ... What was the question again? I'm going off track?

Yeah that's fine... What's a sheltered upbringing?

Sheltered upbringing basically is when, because there were 5 of us sisters and two brothers so basically my father he, we weren't allowed to have friends because we had each other he would say we had each other we weren't allowed to go to interact with other unless we went to school with other people, our friends we had to keep in school we couldn't bring them home or anything so we weren't allowed to go to anything, to town you know what you do as a youngster. I mean I'm not resenting that fact; it's just the way it was. I mean every parent do there, every parent does there best the way they know how they think you know how so I did go through a phase where I used to think you know I used to think that... I kept a lot of anger inside me thinking that you know my parents did wrong and mum should have spoken up and my dad should of done this my dad should of done that. But now at this time at this moment in time in my life I'm at peace with everything you know every...you're parents bring you up the way they think is best... The best they can so you can't really complain it's not easy being a parent.

You know you said that when you were growing up you said that you had a lot of anger in you, why...?

Because I saw the way that my dad used to treat my mum and I used to think that... What would I do because I know if... It's not even, it's not even a question that I'm going to find my own husband, you knew that your parents were going to find someone for you, it's just it just comes naturally...So you knew that yourself that

you're going to this is what happens you grow up you get married and then you please you're husband because I've seen my mum do that but I was a bit different because I thought that's not life that's not normal and so used to think what if my husband is going to be like my father I would not be able to put up because I wasn't like my mum I was totally opposite to my mum.

How did you feel about that decision where you're dad makes the decision about the marriage?

Well I had a force marriage this was back in the day about 26 years ago where you weren't I mean, this year I think it was a couple of days ago it was on the news that force marriages are they're illegal. So I was so happy, I text everyone I knew (laughs) I mean back in the day you couldn't do anything about it you just you just you know went along with it. You either stuck your ground regarding marriage or you lost your family so I wasn't strong enough to do that so I just went along with my dad's arrange marriage what he arranged for me... And my husband was from Pakistan and I didn't want to get married to anybody from Pakistan because I feel I've always felt that they're from two different worlds, two different upbringing and even though having said that my first husband was he was very liberal he was very liberal compared to people in Pakistan but he had his own agenda so you know every case is different so he had his own agenda basically and even though he didn't like he wasn't like my father he wasn't strict with me he let me do whatever I want, wear whatever I want, go wherever I want but he had his own different issues... That's the thing.

Shall we move onto your gift?

Yes.

So what have you bought for us today?

Well I've brought his teddy he's called Hamza (laughs) and the reason behind it is when I split up with my husband in 2009 my youngest son Hamza decided, can I just explain what the teddy bear looks like?

Yeah.

It's quite big and cuddly. It's got a big head it reminds me of a bit of Hamza my youngest son, he's got a lovely ribbon on him well it's pink but it's only a little pink ribbon but it takes a real teddy bear to wear a pink ribbon (laughs) and he's sort of like beige in colour and he's got like a little nose and little brown black eyes. If I look at his eyes they don't look very happy. He doesn't look very happy with his eyes...and he's got little nice lovely ears and he looks a bit confused to be honest with you...anyway that's my teddy bear Hamza and the story behind it is that in 2009 when I split up with my ex-husband, the whole family was going through a difficult time and then in 2...end 2009, beginning of 2010 Hamza decided that he wanted to stay with his father, he wanted to try it out and see what it was going to be like living with his father so when Hamza went to stay with his father in 2010 I used to miss him, so I used to cry for him and I used to miss him and so in... on mother's day in 2010 in March, Rahbaan my eldest son he was he went to town to buy me a present for mother's day so when he saw this teddy bear he told me that it reminded him of Hamza, it reminded him of Hamza and he goes 'I thought I'll by you that so when you miss Hamza you can cuddle up to him'. So that's the that's the sort of like quite deep behind that's the deep meaning behind that's why I mean I've got quite...I like I like receiving gifts who doesn't but this is this gift is special to me because of that so I have it in my bedroom even now. I mean Hamza's come back since, he stayed there for a few months and he's come back since but everything's resolved and everything is sorted out we're all at peace you know at the...we're at a good place at the moment so (stretch) but so that's why I'm very you know attached to this teddy bear and it has a special meaning.

How do you feel when you look at him?

Before when I used to look at my teddy called Hamza I used to be sad but now I've embraced that and I've turned it into a positive turned it positively into happiness and when I look at it I smile and it makes me happy...yeah.

Where do you put it?

Well it's next to my bed, in my bedroom

Does it have its own place or?

It does yeah.

Where about?

Not on my bed, between my wardrobe and my bed next, on the floor in the corner of my bed and that's the only teddy I've got.

Ok and does he get looked after, do you play with him?

Ooh yeah sometimes, I'll sometimes put him on my bed at night and I'll cuddle him but I've got the real Hamza to cuddle now.

What did you used to do with him when Hamza wasn't at home?

Well I used to cuddle him, I used to have him in my bed and cuddle him.

And since, what do you do since Hamza has come back?

Since Hamza's come back you mean with the teddy bear?

The teddy bear yeah. (laughs)

The teddy bear? He still stays in my room every now and then I will cuddle him I will cuddle him and go to sleep.

Do you do anything else with him?

I just, every time I look at him to be honest with you I get a smile on my face now.

Why?

Because I think of the, I think of the dark time that we went through the gloomy times and I look at how we turned it around how it was turned around and so I look at the positivity of it all and the outcome and that's why I get a smile to my face.

Why was it is a gloomy time?

Because we were all because we were all because I recently separated from my ex-husband at the time my husband at the time, and I separated from him and we were you know we all had our issues to deal with the separation and you know with a situation like that you're not I mean I can talk about it now my judgement was cloudy and I wasn't thinking straight and I think I was a bit I was being a bit selfish as well, I was just thinking

about me, me, me and I at the time I didn't realise how much of an impact it was having on the kids as well even though I sort of have part metallised everything in one compartment my head I was thinking oh he's done a terrible thing to the kids it's not right for the kids he's done I was very I had a lot of hatred a lot of anger I suppose its natural I suppose people women in my situation do go through that and I my own family I dint; have a lot of support from my own family which was even harder to deal than the situation itself because I have always, always been there for my family and for them to be there for me like I'd like them to be there that didn't help matters and then we were having problems with like the way kids were handling things the situation that was a bit you know there issues with the kids as well they were playing up I mean it's to be expected but at the time I think i was think between then and now i have become more wiser and more mature and gone more cooler and calmer. You know they say you need one thing to appreciate the other and that's exactly what had happened you know.

Why didn't your family support you?

Again it goes back to my father most of my family was there but they were very distant I mean I can say that my mum was scared of my father so she did because my father's old school because when you get married to someone you stick with them through hell or high waters and I'd actually left my husband of 20 years which was a big thing and because of the way my husband was he was quite manipulative you know he messes with your mind plays mind game so the way he was he was a likable personality and everybody liked him and the fault was all in me and because only I knew what I was going through and my kids knew what I was going through you know they say people shouldn't judge you unless they have walked a mile in your shoes so nobody was there at the house when things were going on between me and my husband only my boys were there's people tend to judge families are the same I think my dada didn't wasn't me to leave my he wasn't accepting it even though he knew that he couldn't force me to stay with him so that's the reason I think he didn't support me I mean I understand he's old school and what can you do he won't change my dad's got big ego a very, very big ego.

What does this gift mean to you?

I mean I've had loads of gifts in my life but this gift means ...it's very special to me because it teaches me how to turn things around. It teaches me not to stay in the doom and gloom phase all your life and get out of it. So it means to be positive. It represents being positive to me.

What would you do if you lost it?

I'll look for it (laughs).

[20:01]

If it went missing or someone took it?

Well in the beginning I'd struggle a bit because I'm very attached to it as my boys know and I suppose I'd just learn to let go of it...I'm quite I'm quite a rational person I'm quite a practical and you know person so but I would be devastated. I'd want to know who took it though I'd want to know why, I'd turn into Colombo (laughs).

Do you take it everywhere with you?

No, no, no it's, it has a special place in my bedroom and it stays there.

Ok so if you like went abroad...

Oh I'd leave it in my bedroom I don't take it everywhere with me no, no you know like you do with your teddy and stuff, I don't do that no, no, no.

Has a special place.

A special place yes the fact, what's also special to me is that Rahbaan saw that gap he saw that I was missing Hamza and e happened to see this teddy bear that because you've seen Hamza my youngest son he's got a big head. So the fact that it remind him of Hamza as well he knew I'd be happy with it he knew that ... in his own way he was trying to console me so you know that means a lot.

How did you feel when Rahbaan bought it for you?

Well I was crying I was in tears 'boohaa boohaa' (laughs) yeah I was crying is in tears I used to cry a lot then but I've learned to, I've learned to rationalise my emotions so that's another thing I've learnt over the years as well so I rationalise my emotions now.

Ok in years to come what will happen to Hamza the teddy bear?

Hamza the teddy bear is going to stay...unless someone steals him (laughs) he's going to stay me, he's going to stay there, even when he's rugged and old he's going to stay there.

Will you pass him down?

I probably will I probably will and because my children also know the importance of Hamza the teddy bear they'll take that on board.

Ok so you mentioned about the present when was given to you, Hamza the ted bear?

Hamza the teddy bear was given to me on mother's day 2010.

Where were you when it was given to you?

Well I remember I was in my bedroom because in those days I used to spend a lot of time in my bedroom due to my depression feeling down, so I used to spend a lot time in my bedroom and I was actually in my bedroom on my bed...when Rahbaan came in and really cheered me up. Well he cheered me up I was crying as well because I was feeling nostalgic but I thought to myself how sweet of him to consider that.

Who else was there?

I was on my...own because there's only there's only well there was only four well there was four of us and when their father left there was only three of us when Hamza when to live with his dad there was only Rahbaan so there was Rahbaan who came in the gift and I was alone in my bedroom.

How long did you cry for?

Oh, I'd say about half an hour... I cuddled it and started crying.

What was your emotion when you were cuddling the teddy bear Hamza?

I was just thinking of Hamza....my son Hamza.

Any particular thoughts?

Well I was thinking I hope he comes back soon I hope when is he going to come back and I hope he comes back soon ...I want to cuddle him because he's never been my youngest son Hamza he's never been a cuddler and a you know like Rahbaan he's always cuddling me and kissing me but with Hamza I'm the one who had to run after him to cuddle him and kiss him but he's gone a lot better compared to before but still you have to initiate it yourself.

Ok you talk a lot about you know I noticed you were speaking a lot about your mum your dad, are there any differences you know are they first generation your mum and dad?

My parents are first generation yes.

Are there any differences in the way your mum and dad give presents versus the way you give presents?

My parents...my parents would mainly give money, so you can buy whatever you want to so that's being practical as well so and what I would with my children is ask them what they want so I'm because I'm practical I don't know if that's to do with me being first generation or second generation but I'm a very practical person everybody tells me that and I think it makes sense in life to be practical so I would always ask them what they wanted to even take them with me and by it instead of surprising them with something they didn't like.

OK, (laughs) are there any similarities in the way your parents buy gifts and you do?

My I suppose my parents are more traditional in buying gifts...

So what would they buy?

They would buy me if they were to buy me something they'll buy me Asian clothes or some a piece of gold jewellery or you know something quite the norm not outside the box and it was my birthday in May and I happened to be in Halifax at my parents and my dad took me to Asda and he goes choose a cake (laughs) chose your birthday cake?

Why do they always buy you gold or clothes?

I think it's to do with the tradition into it? Because they're more traditional and it's an Asian thing. I suppose with gold everybody all women like gold and it can be an asset as well times hard times as well and you know we like our clothes as well we like our Asian clothes but they do give me money instead of gifts as well because they think because they're elderly now and they can't go out and physically buy stuff as well so that could be part of it as well yeah.

Do you buy your parents gifts?

I do, I do. My parents they have you know Alhamdulillah they have everything they need and want but you still want to buy them gifts and this and that like I know my dad likes perfumes and stuff so I tend to buy nice, nice colognes and stuff, my dad's favourite is Jazz so he likes Attar as well you know perfumes oils and stuff and because my mum has lost her sense of smell so even though she wears perfumes and stuff but I don't see the point with me being practical so I don't see the point so I like to buy her something she can see she's got loads of clothes she's got load so everything's I like buying her flowers and I like surprises you know her sending her flowers through the post as well so I do stuff like that just to make their day cheer them up.

Just for the record what is Attar?

Attar is like perfume oils and like really concentrated perfumes and you can get them in different smells.

Are they purchased in western stores or?

The oils are purchased from like eastern stores like religious shops and Islamic shops you can get them from there and you can get them from various different shops and markets and stuff.

Is there a reason why you buy this Islamic perfume?

There isn't a for me personally there isn't an Islamic purpose behind it it's just that they smell nice and they last long you put them on your pulse points you rub them on your pulse points and I just love perfumes, love the smell of perfumes.

You talked a little bit about the gifts that have been bought for you and the special gift that was bought by Rahbaan. Just out of interest what gifts have you bought from Rahbaan?

For Rahbaan in the past I've bought him, I've bought him Xbox when he was younger then gift I've bought shoes I've bought him clothes I used to buy him designer stuff a lot before but I've sort of like cooled that down a bit. Bought him watches, bought him perfume you know the normal things that the youngsters like electronic gifts and mobile phones.

Why did you buy him those gifts?

Because that's what he wanted like I was saying earlier I'm a quite practical I always ask them what they wasn't you know on the occasions like birthdays and Eid because I think that we don't celebrate Christmas but we celebrate birthdays and Eid and Mother's day and Father's day you know things like that.

[30:00]

So you say you don't celebrate Christmas so does that mean you don't give presents?

No, no we don't celebrate Christmas we never have done but we do obviously we welcome the holidays but we don't like officially celebrate Christmas. We have like on Christmas day we do have roast chicken and turkey we like try to make it special like that but we don't actually exchange gifts we find it strange we never have done so if we start doing it now we'd find it strange.

Do you give gifts to anybody else that might not be part of the family on Christmas?

Yes I used to give my neighbours, my doctors, my gym everyone you know people I associate with organisations I associate with I used to give them gifts on Christmas and Christmas cards I've changed that from Christmas to Eid. So what I do know is instead of Christmas I do it on Eid ...if you know what I...

I don't understand?

Right with regards to the white British people that I know, my neighbour and my associates on Christmas I used to especially give them gifts and cards and stuff but now I do it on Eid just on Eid not on Christmas. The reason is because we don't celebrate Christmas so I thought what's the point in giving because we celebrate Eid so what we do now is that they give us presents on Christmas, the white British associates, and I give them presents and cards on Eid and they do it for Christmas.

Ok so you said you used to do it for Christmas why did you change?

Well I tried, I started becoming a bit religious for the past 2-3 years I wore a hijab and I was studying my religion and so one day I was sat there and thought hang on a minute let me just turn it around a bit and let me do it this way and see if it works and it actually works.

What was the reason from changing it the way...?

Because I wanted basically to highlight to them when it was Eid because a lot of them weren't even aware of Eid so just highlight our celebration to them because everybody knows Christmas is on the 25th December but because Eid it goes with the lunar calendar so it varies from year to year it's a way of making them aware of what is and if they wanted to ask me any questions about it they would asked me my neighbours have asked me in the past as well. So it's a just educating them in a bit about Islam as well. So I just turned It around I just thought one day, I just thought I'd try this so that's what I did.

Did it work?

Yeah it did work. I get presents of them at Christmas and they get presents then they know that it is Eid time as well because it's not really highly advertised Eid like Christmas is.

Was that important to you?

It is yes, yes. I mean it is now it didn't used to be in the past but it is know.

Why?

I just feel as though I'm doing something for my religion you know...because I don't know whether I'm allowed to say this or not because Muslims haven't had a lot of good press they have not very good press over the years so it's just to show people, the non-Muslims, that you know that we are human we are just like you there's no need to be... because you know they're portrayed in a very negative way Muslims and Islam so just to bring that, bring a bit of positivity to them because it starts with the individual, we can't just think that other people are going to educate them, other Muslims are going to educate them we start from ourselves first so that was part of it as well that was part it... and then they do start asking you questions the question they think they're going to be offensive they think that re going to be offensive to you which might not be to you so I've had people asking me when I sued to work at the radio station I've had a lot of white British people asking me lots of questions and I was happy to answer them. I was more than happy to answer them because its educating them because you know and they need for example, I'll give you an example they wanted to know why Muslims, non-Muslims, weren't allowed to go to the mosque so I told them that you can go to the mosques just to visit just to see what it was about its not as though you're completely barred from it so you know things like that. Little questions that they had in their mind so it's nice to educated them, to let them know that were not all terrorists and we are not all like that even though nobody condones its inhumane to do stuff like that, so no religion in the world including Islam tolerates that kind of behaviour so it's a complete no no.

Ok so are there any gifts that you give to Hamza?

Same with Rahbaan. Hamza would like similar with what I do with Rahbaan clothes, shoes, watches, and phones you know stuff like that shoes, jackets whatever they want even today coming here I was saying to them we need to sort your Eid clothes out and...

Oh Eid clothes! What do they wear on Eid?

Well a lot of people, a lot of Muslims wear like it's nice to Muslims to wear like the traditional clothes like the

salwar kameez but my children don't wear the salwar kameez but it's nice to see them wearing something different. So even when I used to force them to wear salwar kameez they'd wear it for an hour so then they'd wear like English clothes like jeans and whatever they wanted to wear?

Why didn't they want to wear salwar kameez?

They're not used to it as well they find it impractical because (laughs) they used to call it salwar they used to call it 'Ali Baba' pants and the khusey they used to call 'Ali Baba' shoes the ones that used to curl up they found them quite impractical.

Ok

But I think there warming to the idea now, like my youngest he'll wear it willingly.

So they went through a period when they wouldn't wear...?

No, no all their lives they've worn like they wear it for a bit they'll dip in a bit like say if you have to go to an Asian wedding and they'd dress the themes was they had to wear kike you know the kurtay like Shahrukh Khan used to wear in films before they used to struggle with that 'I'm not going to wear it, I'm not going to war it' but I'm not going to force them if they don't want to wear it I want them to be comfortable I want them to enjoy themselves so I wouldn't force it on them but slowly slowly they've like we went to my one of my friends daughter's wedding recently and the theme was they had to wear the salwar kameez and the kurtay and the scarves, they were sort of like they warmed to the idea and they looked very nice and well okay so yeah.

So they wear something different, when they don't wear something, when they don't wear Asian clothes on Eid what do they wear?

They wear like a new pair of pants that they wanted a top, t-shirt depending on the weather t, new jacket, and new shoes.

And who purchases that for them?

Well I purchase that for them for Eid.

And how do you make the decision about what they get?

Well I've always been a very fair person, I've always bought what I've bought for one child I mean they are older now so its bit different, slightly different but until about a couple years ago they both had the same amount of socks, same amount of everything. If I used to kiss one I'd kiss the other because I never saw that growing up and I was very strong on being fair I never saw that with my parents because my parents would always warm up to my brothers. I think it's an Asian thing I don't know like when they had... I know this is going to go on for a bit, when they had the boys because my parents had 5 girls before, one of my sister passed away when she was born so they had 5 girls before they had 2 boys... I remember when I was little my parents used to say to me, my nickname is baby, so 'Baby pray that you have little brother, a little brother you can play with' so I used to sit they praying with my little hands praying so my little brother came long and they got a bit greedy and they asked me to pray again...

[40:00]

...and then my other brother came along and then they weren't satisfied so they got extra greedy and then they asked me to pray gain and then (laughs) what I did was I was my dad hit me for some reason he tapped

me on the head or something for some reason I can't remember and then I got a bit angry I goes 'you're not going to have little boy this time you're going to have a girl and then my little sister (hysterical laughter) I mean it's just one of those things kids do that say that kids but they really took whatever I used to say they used to take that on board as though I'm you know I'm someone that predicts things that was a bit scary 'awww don't upset baby don't upset her' (laughs).

So are you the youngest or...?

I'm from the youngest lot because my parents had 5 girls and then they had after 5 girls they had 2 boys and a girl so I was in the youngest batch but one of my sisters died so technically I'm in the middle and the middle child always struggles. Always remember that (laughs).

So what number are you then?

Right 1,2,3 I'm the 4th child and the 4th child from the...There was another sister after my eldest sister so then if she would have been alive I would have been in the younger group, so I've got the youngest sister then there's 2 brothers then there's me then I've got 3 sisters.

So ...

Right as I was saying that my you know I always felt strongly about being fair because I never saw that growing up I always saw my brothers my 2 brothers being they preferred, what they did they were more lenient with my brothers than they were with my sisters the girls and I always used to say to them 'you shouldn't do that it's not fair' you know even with food my mum used to save the nice piece of chicken for my brothers used to say to her that 'you shouldn't you can never be judge because you'd give the wrong sentence' and is used to say to them that what did I say to them yeah I used to say to them I would never do that with my kids you know if I had kids when I have kids I would never do that with my kids and I can understand from a male point of view if my dad did it because he's a guy and he's doing it you know taking the boys side but my mum was the same I mean my dad wasn't forcing my mum to do that was he? And she was the same and I used to say to her mum you should you know ok don't take the girls side but you can at least be fair because she was a female as well.

Why did she do that?

I don't know... that's a good question I'm going to ask her next time go down, that's a very good question you know. Because when I go down to my parents I go after every 6 weeks and I stay there for a week and I spend time with them because my dad's elderly and my mums elderly and I don't want to have any regrets when they pass away so I I want to be content so I spend lots of time with them I talk to them about their when they were young back home and there nice stories and my dad loves talking about all of that and so that's a god question I'm going to ask my mum but my mums starting to suffer from dementia so she started to forget a lot of things so I will ask that it's a really good question but I think I think it's a traditional thing what they do I've seen a lot of I know a lot of families that do that they you know prefer the boys they give them preferential treatment and it's just I mean I can't I can't physically show a difference because I've only got boys but if I ever had girls I'd still make my boys cook and clean and wash up and there and mashalalah my boys can cook, they can clean when I go away on holiday they look after the house especially Rahbaan because my eldest one because I don't have lan aorta of worry he steps into my shoes, I mean Hamza my younger he's lazy but he can do it if it he wants to he's just lazy so I people a lot of people say to me its because you haven't got girls but I can't; show to them that even if I had girls they'd still be doing their chores the boys would be their chores like Rahbaan washes up Hamza puts the dishes away I do the vacuuming so I always say to them there is no I in team and it'll be good because you shouldn't marry I don't want them to get married just because they want servants for their house you know women to look after their house they should marry because they want

to spend the rest of their lives with their companion they want companionship not because they want a servant. Its not right is it, I meant I wouldn't want to be that so I wouldn't want their wives to be that either... so it's all about being fair as well. I don't see a lot of that in the Asian community having said that because they always prefer the boys over girls its bot just my family I know a lot of families that do that hmmm.

You know this gift giving behaviour you've talked about are there any traditions in the way you give gifts in your family?

Traditions, well the traditionally on Eid everybody gives each other money because it's a traditional thing that it's a traditional thing. On Eid we all exchange money put it in envelopes fancy envelopes so that's traditional now how much do they give that's another question isn't it that s another story (laughs) but yeah.

Do you give money?

Yes yeah, I do.

Who do you give it to?

I generally give to the one the people that are younger than me like my sis younger sister my brothers even though you know it's nice I think it's nice an you know it creates more love as well and I think these a hadith about that as about giving and receiving gifts creates harmony between people as well and I think Asians the Asian community is more generous as well.

In what way?

Well I can give you an example, use d to di some voluntary work for cancer research and they use to have you know the container they give to put money in I don't know what they're called anyway i put one at my local video shop you know the Asian one and I put one at my work place which was Bury council work place which was a children's centre now the one at the Asian place use dot fill up in about a week but the one the one at the white British place sued to take months and moths to fill up so from that it's like a little research rely if you think about it and form that I came to the conclusion that Asians are more generous... and even when I've done like raising funds, raising money for organisations for like earthquake victims and this and that I've always received more seen more generosity from the from the form my own the Asian community rather than the white British community so I've come to conclusion that they're more charitable

Is that possibly because you're one or part of the Asian community?

Maybe yes...

So going back to the...

But can I just say something I've just realised when I had that money box at the work place they didn't know people didn't know who put it there did they...? They didn't know that an Asian person put that there...for all they know it could have been non-Asian, so ...yeah.

Ok you talked about the Eid giving tradition and the money, is that tradition maintained from the first generation onwards?

Yes yes and from before then and also like sweets, you know mithai and flowers and but mithai is very traditional as well but you just tweak it int it if they don't want mithai you give them a box of chocolates (laughs).

What are the sorts of people that don't like mithai?

because people can be fussy as well and especially we tend to go to my parents house on Eid and theirs only my mum and my dad there, my sister and my mum and my dad are diabetic and have got heart disease so they shouldn't be eating a lot mithai anyway so we either you whether take what they like because they eat they don't watch their diet anyway or you take something in its place like nowadays you can get mithai for diabetics as well. So you just go that extra mile and try and find that as well.

[50:02]

You know this Eid tradition how is it maintained? In the modern era?

What do you mean how is it maintained?

Like everybody gives money so Rahbaan is your son in years to come how I will that tradition be maintained or would it be maintained?

i think I think it's quite strongly embedded it think I personally think it will be because even now when Rahbaan and Hamza you know when they go to Halifax on Eid they'll give money to their little cousins so I find that very sweet and I encourage it as well and I find it very encouraging.

How do you feel when you give money to you know you're younger people in your family?

It feels good, you feel you just... because you just feel because you're happy anyway because it's Eid and all the family is there and you're happy anyway so 've always liked giving things rather than receiving but it's good to receive as well (laughs) yeah you feel good.

Do new members of the family follow these traditions of the way that you give gifs?

Yes every single one every single one we all everyone follows it even the new ones.

Eid traditions?

Eid traditions yes.

Are there any other traditions that they might follow related to gift giving; do you have any in your family?
Not really just the family gets together it's like Christmas really int it any holiday like my one of my brothers he he lives on Essex s he's the one who lives furthest away because my parents are in Halifax so due to his job the nature of his job he finds it difficult to be there all the time like all the holidays and stuff so when he's down on Eid so that's very special for us when he can make to come on Eid so that makes it special so we don't because we don't get to see him a lot.

When you think about gift giving, like you're ethnic group south Asians are there any gifts that you wouldn't consider giving to your ethnic group?

Any gift that I wouldn't consider giving...well I wouldn't consider giving my mum a bikini. (laughs)
Why is that?

Because my mum, because it's inappropriate.

Why?

Because my mum doesn't wear a bikini, I'd give it to my sister (laughs) she'll wear it yeah. But gift, like I said for me it's a bit difficult I've done that in the past like I've bought clothes what happens is all the way from Manchester I'm buying clothes I see cute things I'll buy it, Gap this you know little sweatshirts, pretty dresses and I mean I used to do it all the time before but then it's wither no the right size or not the right colour or too small or whatever then I'd have to come all the way back because they don't have a Gap in Halifax and so I was finding that quite tedious so I thought no 'm not going to do with this I'm not going to do this because you know you see things when you're shopping and you can see your little cousin in it or your sister in it but then that's what happens and you think oh god so I used to do that but I found it very tedious so I thought no I'll have to just money's best and then can but whatever they want.

Are there any gifts that are forbidden? That you won't give to people in your ethnic group?

Any gifts that are forbidden? (laughs) yeah but I mean regarding alcohol I wouldn't even go there I wouldn't even think about you know buying your own alcohol like you do at Christmas and stuff so it's not something that would even pop in my mind really...alcohol that goes without saying really

Why?

Because alcohol is alcohol and you don't drink alcohol you wouldn't buy alcohol so why would you give it on a special occasion?

But why wouldn't you buy alcohol?

Because as Muslims you don't drink alcohol so because you don't consume alcohol were not going to buy alcohol even though, even though having said that we do buy wines and beers and stuff...non-alcoholic because they do taste nice and we do like it. I mean so we, you can get that around Christmas time so you will see me in the alcohol aisle at Christmas (laughs).

And do you buy alcohol for non-Muslims?

Alcohol for non-Muslims? in the past I have done that well I've won bottles of alcohol in raffles and stuff and I've given it to my neighbours but I've started to question that because I'm thinking if were not allowed to consume it is it ok to give it to you know not especially go out your way to buy it and give it but to win it or something am I ok to give it to non-Muslim people who drink alcohol? So I I don't think that's appropriate either. I don't know but I don't think that's the right to do if you know what I mean. So I wouldn't go out my way to buy alcohol for a non-Muslim neighbour or friend.

OK.

