

**LJH18 9.6.1989**

**Lucinda**

Q. ... Have you spoken to any of the others about what we've been doing?

A. No...

Q. I mean, basically what we're interested in is just to talk to young women about their relationships, how they feel about them and what they think about them, and so I was thinking of asking you to start up, what is the most important relationship that you have at the moment, any kind of relationship?

A. ...

Q. Well maybe I should go one back. What are the important relationships for you?

A. What, for me? Is this like between boys and girls or -

Q. Well, just sort of relationships - could be any sort of relationship - your parents, girlfriends, boyfriends.

A. Well, my best friend really. That's the most important relationship to me at the moment.

Q. Yeah. What's that like?

A. It's not perfect, it has its flaws, but I mean I'm able to communicate with her and everything really easily; we seem to know what each other's thinking anyway. The other relationship that - well I've had, was very good, was between my boyfriend... that's about it.

Q. ...

A. ... type of relationship with my parents at all.

Q. You don't?

A. No.

Q. You don't get on with them?

A. No.

Q. Are you living at home?

A. Yeah... eighteen ...

Q. What's been the problem with your parents?

A. Maybe it's 'cos I'm too westernised, that might be a problem, 'cos they come from India, too westernised. I mean they're not exactly backward either, my parents - my father was brought up here and actually went to the school across the road... They let me out occasionally, but I'm that kind of person wants to go out all the time and have a good time, but I can't be stuck at home all the time. We just don't get on at all.

Q. Yeah.

A. Plus... which totally ruined me a couple of months back.

Q. What was that?

A. I had an abortion.

Q. Did you?

A. Yeah. Which went wrong. And they told me I may not be able to have children.

Q. It's very difficult to take, isn't it. But do you think - I mean they may be - they may be wrong, but do you think that they're right?

A. I don't know.

Q. Yeah. Hard to tell.

A. I mean I haven't told my parents about it.

Q. At all?

A. No. They've got no idea at all... That's how my friend actually helped me a lot, 'cos she helped me through it.

Q. Have you spoken to anybody else about it, did you find it difficult to -

A. I don't find it difficult now 'cos I've kind of come to terms with it now, but before, at the time, you know, when I was pregnant I was like crying all the time. And now if I look at small children, I always think oh no, you know.

Q. Well it's very recent isn't it, I mean -

A. Yeah.

Q. What about - what happened with the boyfriend then, I mean was that -

A. He never found out, he never knew at all.

Q. You didn't tell him?

A. Well actually I did tell him afterwards, about three months after I told him, he was pretty hurt that I hadn't told him at the time, but I said I thought it was my own, my own thing to do, and it's my decision, and like I've been thinking now if it was - if he had something to do with it.

Q. What... Was, I mean how was the relationship at the time that you became pregnant, I mean was it okay, or -

A. Well it was a very sudden thing anyway, we weren't thinking about actually having a relationship like that, we just got carried away one night, I found out I was pregnant, by then we'd split up.

Q. How did you feel about splitting up with him, I mean -

A. Well, I - at the time we split up I didn't know I was pregnant, and I was pretty happy about it.

Q. Yeah. You weren't too keen on him then - well, it's a difficult situation isn't it, I mean -

A. But, I don't know, we're sort of mates now.

Q. Yeah. Was that the boyfriend that you'd had a sexual relationship with?

A. Yeah.

Q. And you just got carried away one night -

A. Mm. And I regret it all.

Q. Yeah? Who was he, was he somebody that you knew as a friend before?

A. Yeah, someone I knew as a friend, yeah.

Q. Yeah... A difficult sort of thing to ... isn't it? Well I hope it's gonna be okay, I mean it would be good to speak to - I mean are there any people here at the school, counsellors, people you could talk to about it?

A. No...

Q. Yeah. Well it's as well not to sort of bottle it up yourself, to find somebody you can talk to - I suppose that's where your girlfriend comes in -

A. Yeah. She comes - I talk to her about it - I don't know, I find that I can relax after talking about it. But sometimes I feel that it's something that I just have to sort out on my own.

Q. Mm, yeah.

A. ... It actually helps to - it sounds stupid, it's just a place, but it's my place, it's where I go to sort out my problems.

Q. Where's that?

A. I don't know - just up there -

Q. ... Heath.

A. Yeah. But I sit up there on the hill and I get really relaxed and I sort out my problems. I don't know why, it's only a stupid place, but I do.

Q. No, that's quite nice, I mean I like the idea of - it's like nature or something, there's nothing else around. Yeah. Well I hope that's gonna work out, I mean it's hard to know at this point, probably later on... feel better, or what the situation is, I mean actually having children - had you planned to have children or...?

A. I've always thought that I'd like to have children.

Q. Mm.

A. Can we change the subject please?

Q. Yeah, certainly. Well let me ask you about AIDS. A lot easier. One of the things that we're interested in is finding out what young people know about AIDS and how they feel about it. How - has it affected you at all, have you thought about it?

A. No, I've just thought ... use a condom, make sure he uses a condom. And - well I'm aware of it but - there - I don't know that much about it, just that if you sleep around a lot you have the risk of - not if you sleep around, if you don't use anything, you may be risking yourself.

Q. Where did you first hear about it, can you remember?

A. Oh, I don't know, there was a week of it when the TV, news, everything was talking about it -

Q. Yeah.

A. - but now it's gradually got slower, not everyone's talking about it, and it's just the odd - the odd advertisement on the telly or -

Q. What did you think about those advertising campaigns?

A. I thought they were pretty good.

Q. Yeah.

A. But it was just like one full week of them -

Q. Yeah, there was a hell of a lot.

A. - and that was it, then it suddenly stopped.

Q. Yeah. There are a few going now in - in newspapers and magazines, there's the one with the very beautiful young woman where it says, you know, this young woman is HIV-infected, she could look like this in five years' time, and you turn the sheet and she looks absolutely... Have you seen that one?

A. Yeah. I think I haven't actually. I've seen the one with the bloke though.

Q. Yeah, where as soon as sort of the -

A. Yeah.

Q. ... But - but do you - I mean what sort of stuff do you know about it, what do you think it is, AIDS, for example?

A. It's a virus, isn't it, that you can catch just through having sex with someone, nothing else? You can't get it from drinking from the same glass or anything, or a toilet seat, just from having sex with someone.

Q. And what about the difference between the virus, which they call HIV virus, or sort of immune deficiency virus, HIV, and AIDS itself?

A. Sorry?

Q. Do you see any difference between HIV, the virus, and AIDS?

A. Aren't they the same thing?

Q. Well, not exactly. The virus you can have in you, but you may not necessarily develop AIDS. AIDS is a sort of set of diseases that you -

A. Oh, I see.

Q. - catch when your immune system is disturbed by having the virus there. So you could be HIV-positive and not necessarily -

A. Not have AIDS.

Q. - develop AIDS, yeah. But it's the virus that's spread, as you said, by sexual activity, and it's also spread by blood and that sort of thing, if you ... Did you learn anything about it at school, I mean did they do much about it at school or -

A. I don't think so.

Q. Not that you know of.

A. Not that I know of. But they might have done it to younger kids, like in their biology lessons and that.

Q. Some - some - when it first became noticed that the disease existed, people had various ideas about what the sources of it were. Did you have any idea about that, or the kind of people that would get it?

A. Well, anyone can get it.

Q. Mm. It's just at the beginning there were sort of ideas that it was a gay plague or something.

A. No. I find that if you're gay, lesbian, whatever, you're still the same person. I don't think it makes any difference. I mean - I mean I know people who are gay and lesbian and I don't think it makes a difference, but they're people, like, if I introduce them to someone, and they'll be fine with them, and they'll say in conversation something, it comes up that they're gay, it's like oh, you know, and they'll move away from them, and I think that - I think that's horrible really, it's really nasty.

Q. Have you got - are many of your friends gay?

A. No, only one person.

Q. Mm, yeah. No, certainly - I mean that was one of the ways that was sort of - the issue presented, which was probably earlier than when that - that ... stuff... thought of as being a gay sort of - do you think many of your friends worry about it at all, AIDS?

A. Not really.

Q. It's not really... -

A. No, not anymore. It was before.

Q. Yeah.

A. But not anymore.

Q. So you don't think they would have changed their behaviour or anything like that?

A. They're not exactly sleeping around much at the moment.

Q. That was another question I was gonna ask you, I mean sometimes when I talk to young people, especially with schools, they say there are some who are in a group who do that kind of thing and there are another in a group who don't.

A. ...

Q. Mm?

A. There's nothing like that in people that I know. If they've got a boyfriend that they feel they want to have a sexual relationship with, then they do. If they don't, they don't.

Q. Mm. It's just a personal decision.

A. Mm.

Q. The same as it was with you.

A. Yeah.

Q. Rather hasty from the way you were describing it.

A. Yep.

Q. Well, how do you feel now about future relationships, I mean what kind of relationship would you like to have in the future?

A. I don't know. That's not really a question that I can ask, I mean if it happens it happens, but I don't know. If a relationship comes along it comes along. I mean I had a really stupid - I mean after ... the other week ... this stupid relationship with this mad guy who was working in a place that I'm in, and it was like - we were friends, and then a friend of ours mutually said, well I think he likes you, do you wanna go out with him, and I said no, I think of him best as a friend, and I mean when you go places and that and I see him as a person then I'm not seeing a different kind of person, a person that I can talk to and get fond of in a different way, and that's how our relationship started, it wasn't anything sexual. But I felt like - like I was going out with someone, and it was a sexual relationship and it wasn't.

Q. Yes.

A. And I did everything.

Q. Yes.

A. And it was really weird.

Q. Yes. I was gonna ask you about that. We had a question - maybe you noticed on the questionnaire, we had sort of a list of the types of relationships you could have, and whether they included sexual intercourse or not, because as you say, I mean a relationship can be sexual -

A. ...

Q. - without necessarily including sexual intercourse. I mean it's clearly that type of relationship.

A. Yeah.

Q. What sort of things would you do in that relationship that would make you feel it was?

A. Well we used to like hold hands and get off with each other and that - I don't know, this wasn't the right thing to do... I don't know what happened in that relationship. Now he's gone back to COUNTRY or something, 'cos he moves from country to country, he's that kind of person -

Q. Yeah.

A. - and he's moved on and that, and that's the way I see it, he just moved on.

Q. Yeah. You wouldn't have minded the relationship continuing had he stayed - or was it a foregone -?

A. I don't know. But it was just such a sudden kind of relationship to happen. I knew he was gonna go abroad anyway. So I was ready for it, I'd prepared myself for it already, that's why I didn't get too hurt.

Q. Yeah, mm. So it's you who made the decision, that was something else I was gonna ask you, like if you're feeling - I mean that first relationship you talked about where you both made the decision, a bit speedy sort of thing, whereas this, that second one, it sounds as if you were having some control over what was happening.

A. I usually do, I'm that kind of a person, I usually hold power over blokes.

Q. Yes.

A. I don't know why but I do.

Q. How do you think that happens?

A. I think it's just my personality. A bit loud and I tell them what to do and they do it, and I really feel bold doing things like that, because a bloke is supposed to ask you out, and you're supposed to do all that in the traditional way, but it never happens to me, never...

Q. Mm. So do you feel in a way that you'll - you'll be deciding what happens in terms of the sex in your relationships?

A. I don't know, 'cos in the last one it was a mutual decision, we both decided it at the time, and maybe that's the best way to go about it, you shouldn't ever have a sexual relationship when one partner doesn't want it, that's something which I think is totally out of order actually.

Q. Mm, yeah...

A. And whether you wanna go further or not.

Q. Yeah. When - talking about the AIDS issue, there was a lot of stuff during that publicity campaign, or various publicity campaigns, about safe sex. Did you hear much about that?

A. About condoms, yeah, whether you should - I always think you should use condoms anyway.

Q. Yeah.

A. But it's not a definite way of contraception, because it can always burst, whatever, but it's good against AIDS and other -

Q. - sexually transmitted diseases. I mean, would you worry, in having sexual relationships with people, would you be worried about pregnancy -

A. From now on, yeah. Well, I don't know.

Q. I mean coming ahead of AIDS so to speak...

A. Yeah.

Q. What about - I mean - one of the questions we're asking young people is about physical activities in general, I mean do you see sex, I mean sex has been a little bit risky for you, hasn't it -

A. Mm.

Q. Did you think of it that way before?

A. No, I had this stupid idea in my head, I don't know why, but it's basically a moment of your life when bells go off in your head and things like that. At the time, I don't know, it was just stupid, I mean this is just something you do, it's nothing that important, and I mean we didn't just do it the once and that and - it was something that we both enjoyed like we'd both enjoy watching telly, and we enjoyed doing this as well, but - it wasn't like watching telly, it was different, but it was something nice, we both enjoyed it, we both felt after we'd actually done it that we were closer than we were before.

Q. Mm, yeah. Were you using condoms then or -

A. No.

Q. You weren't, never?

A. No. Didn't think of it.

Q. Yeah.

A. Well the first time we didn't think of it, after ...- 'cos it struck me after I got pregnant...

Q. Well - so I mean it's been slightly risky, and you see it as being a bit risky -

A. What now?

Q. Yeah.

A. The future?

Q. Yeah. I mean apart from - I mean if it's true what they told you about your abortion, but I mean you don't know...

A. Yeah, but I mean - that's what I mean. I haven't had a sexual relationship since then. I don't know if I would have one ... in the future.

Q. Yeah, yeah. What about other risky activities in the rest of your life, do you think you take any - I mean some people think smoking and drinking is risky.

A. Part of my life. Yes, I - I can't really say anything about that. But I mean there's always a risk to everything, and it sometimes - I don't know why it gives you a buzz, oh dear, I shouldn't be, you know? -

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. - and it's good to have something like that in your life now and again. I know if my parents caught me smoking, that was it, I'd be dead, but it's something that I do and - I mean at the moment my parents - our relationship is totally not bad at all, so at the moment I ...

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. ... but that's the truth.

Q. But they might react strongly if they found out -

A. Oh, they would, yeah, they'd hit the roof.

Q. Yeah. What about drugs, do you have any drugs at all?

A. Are you sure I can tell you all about this?

Q. Yes, totally confidential, I should have said that right at the beginning...

A. Yeah, I just take the odd spliff, which gives me a good buzz, and nothing else...

Q. Mm. Do any of your friends?

A. No.

Q. What kind of things do you do with your friends?

A. We muck around, have a good time. I don't take hard drugs, because I saw what a friend of mine - going through it, and he didn't recover.

Q. Yeah?

A. Yeah. So - I don't know why but my life is full of tragedies.

Q. Yeah. Sounds it.

A. That's why I wouldn't touch the stuff. I mean, I think it's really bad... so that's why I see it as - I'm dead against it.

Q. ... Yeah, yeah. What other horrible things then?

A. That's about it.

Q. What - When you say your life seems to be full of tragedies -

A. It is. I mean, what happened to me a couple of months back, and GAV - I don't know, everything comes - like a friend of ours buys a motorbike... car accident a couple of months back, and that was pretty sad, I didn't go to the funeral... that's about it.

Q. Mm. It does sound pretty terrible. What about something more cheerful - what are you thinking of for the future? I mean, what are you doing now at school?

A. I'm going to...

Q. Yeah.

A. And in September I'm going to either [NAMES OF COLLEGES], but I'll be doing a B.Tech.... And after that I don't know... straight to work... travel agency or something.

Q. Is that what you -

A. My ultimate goal is ... but I don't ... 'cos my parents are against it.

Q. Mm.

A. But I mean if I leave home in a year ... but then again if I leave home, I may not have the money to ...

Q. Yeah. Would they support you - I mean they would like you to go to university, would they?

A. They would like me to, but if... totally...

Q. Mm. Have you got any brothers and sisters?

A. I've got a younger sister and a brother. And that's why sometimes I think I can't go, because what will their life be, ... won't be allowed to go out anywhere, do anything. So that's why... maybe I can't go.

Q. How much younger are they?

A. ... she's in the third year, and my brother's in the second year.

Q. ... third year...? So you feel a sort of sense of responsibility towards them?

A. Yeah.

Q. What - I asked you on the questionnaire, what did you say, about what you think you'll be doing in two years' time? Oh, ... go on to ... ultimate aim... history... Let me ask you another thing, thinking back to the idea about the - people's sex lives and stuff, which is about the double standard. When you were talking about your relationship with your first boyfriend, it involved mutual deciding what you would do, but do you think in general there's a kind of double standard that expectations of what girls can do and what boys -

A. It's a - it's a - a lot of people go by it as well, that a boy should ask a girl out, a girl can't - but I don't see it, I see what you wanna do, you do it, no one can stop you, but there are people who listen to it and that and they decide, well, I can't ask him out...

Q. Mm, yeah.

A. Why should you always listen to what everyone else says, do what you want to do all the time, and that's it.

Q. Yeah. I was thinking of expectations of behaviour as well, I mean it's okay for a - if a boy has sex but it's not such a good idea if a girl does.

A. I think that's actually changed now, it's not that much anymore, it used to be a couple of years ago... saying that there are some people who do say, well she - I saw her with him, so and so, and all this but I think there are people who still accept... and that people do what they want. If they're enjoying themselves, that's what matters.

Q. What do you think about your friends, I mean are the people that are your closest friends would agree with you on this or -

A. Probably not.

Q. Haven't checked them out -

A. Some would, some wouldn't. Some... some of them wouldn't be, they all have different, different - what's the word -

Q. Different ways of thinking about things -

A. Yeah.

Q. - different ways - yeah, different perceptions of what's going on. Are you meeting most of your friends in school or out -

A. Some in here, some out of school, some at work. I work in NAME OF SHOP as a cashier there. I've had a lot of hassle there actually, they think I've been thieving money.

Q. Yeah?

A. Yeah. They thought me and my friend took money... fifty pounds. The thing is they're luncheon vouchers, so what am I supposed to do with luncheon vouchers...? Apparently they let my friend off now and said well you couldn't have taken this, so that takes me off, 'cos they can't say that I've done it as well. But I've lost that kind of trust with them, I think they've lost it with me, so I'm just gonna look for another job.

Q. Mm. Was that just a Saturday job or Saturday and evenings?

A. Yeah, two nights and Saturday - I've been there two years now.

Q. Yeah.

A. And for them to... on me like that, that really hurt me.

Q. Yeah.

A. I've got an interview at (?) DEPARTMENT STORE tonight actually.

Q. Yeah?

A. I (?) can't take it this year. But now anything like for a full-time job that I can do during nine, ten weeks ...

Q. Right, yeah... What about - is DEPARTMENT STORE a possibility for a full-time job?

A. No - well there is... but I'd like a couple of jobs where I meet new people and that...

Q. Are the school any help in that kind of thing, finding -

A. Finding jobs, well, not the school so much, but my careers person in Kentish Town, they really are good -

Q. Yeah?

A. They've found me a lot of jobs and that and they've helped me over the last two, three years with what I was gonna do in the future, and they always seem to point me in the right direction, so -

Q. That's the careers office in Kentish Town?

A. Yeah, they've been really good.

Q. Mm. But you haven't had a lot of help from the school particularly or -

A. Well... they do try but - I don't know, school is school... I don't know why, I don't understand.

Q. ... Let me ask you a question about your image of yourself, you've been talking a lot about your image of yourself, can you put it together, what is your image of yourself?

A. Oh, I've just been doing this with my students and I couldn't do it,... image of myself. Just a down tread person I suppose. I mean, this world, the way it's going now, you just can't - can't just be yourself, and I myself just ... person that gets on with each day as it comes.

Q. What about your friends, I mean how do you think they perceive you, do they have the same idea -

A. I don't know... No, I don't know. I get on with all of them and that and they have arguments with themselves, but I don't have arguments with them... They're just okay. They see me as I think a normal person... they see me as a lazy person to start, they're always complaining how lazy I am, that's about it.

Q. Are you lazy?

A. No, I don't see myself as lazy. I just like to sit down a lot, that's all. That's about it.

Q. How about your schoolwork, how's that been going?

A. It's - I'm really surprised 'cos I didn't think I'd done any of it, but I've done more than I did before, I finished all of it, so it's ready to hand, I've just got to give my portfolio, make it up today, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday... then I've finished.

Q. Then (?) ten weeks off. Not bad.

A. Brilliant. I'm loving it.

Q. Had you taken exams different ways other than this - what were you doing, GCSEs -

A. GCSEs I did last year.

Q. Yeah. And ... this year.

A. Yeah.

Q. How did they compare, the -

A. I thought they were alright, but when you're in the fifth year and you ... exams, I mean what difference do they make? Like you do it and then afterwards you come out and get your results and think, oh God, how am I gonna get myself into college now, 'cos I haven't got the right results, and then you start panicking, then you have a CPE or a YTS which helps you a little and you can always go back to college afterwards, which is what happened to me. I got two Cs, two Ds, two Es and one F. I think they're reasonably okay grades, they're not brilliant, but they're okay, and now I've got a good CPE profile so I should be alright in the future.

Q. Yeah.

A. ... And I don't like exams. I hate sitting in a room with loads of people trying to work out sums and things, I can't do it. I think that's why... 'cos the two Cs that I got was in English, so that was mostly... which I can sit down and do in my own time, I don't feel I'm being hassled or anything. When there's a two-hour limit period I can't cope, it goes straight out the window.

Q. That's what I was wondering really, 'cos you have experience of doing it both ways. 'Cos - the exam way, get in, terror, and you go in there and try and pour it all out in a couple of hours sort of thing, so I wondered - it sounds as if it's much better if you can do it over a longer period -

A. It is, it is a lot better ...

Q. Yeah?

A. They let you do - they don't let you do what you like, but you have assignments and things, you have a date when you have to give it in and that. It's ... like the night before trying to finish it off. But it's good, I think it's really good, it's a good course, plus ...

Q. Mm. It sounds very promising. I've been interested in that kind of stuff in the last... what happens in school ... what work ... Did you find that you had - how did you make a decision that you were going to do the sort of course that you've been doing?

A. Well it's 'cos of my GCSEs weren't that good, I got the results and I thought, oh God, I can't do A-levels. I think in the back of my mind I didn't want to do A-levels 'cos I knew I wouldn't be able to commit myself to do that much. College - again, I applied for a B.Tech. Business and Finance, and in the back of my mind I didn't really wanna do it, sort of mum and dad were pressuring me to do it, but I really don't wanna do that. And like my mates were ...GCSEs and that and I thought I don't wanna do that, I've already done that, I'll probably get the same result, so I thought why not go into this, this is something new that I don't know much about, sounds okay, and it's over a period that you get assessed... so I'll go for this.

Q. Yeah. And it's something which was suggested at school as a possibility, yeah. And where did this idea about being an air - air stewardess come from, have you had that for long or -

A. ...

Q. Your secret dream or something.

A. Yeah... plus all my work experience, three weeks at ... Head Office... and they tried to say, don't be an air stewardess, it's not that good as they make it out to be. I goes to them, well I know it's hard work and that and I'd be ready to do that, but it'd be the job satisfaction that I'd get'd be out of this world. I'd love it.

Q. Mm.

A. 'Cos it's something working with people, which I love, it'd be okay.

Q. ...

A. ...

Q. Yeah. Cheap travel as well.

A. But the pay for it isn't that good.

Q. Yeah.

A. A lot of drawbacks... really good.

Q. Where would you like to go?

A. I don't know. I don't really like to go to places where there's loads of tourists though, a place I wanna go - the deep heart of Mexico... like you see in all the Western movies and things like that.

Q. Yeah.

A. ... I mean like people say I wanna go to Paris and Barbados and like... I mean the Costa del Sol, it's just like Britain but with a bit more sun really, that's what I think.

Q. Yeah... exotic... Are there any - any questions that you'd like to ask me, about anything at all but maybe about the AIDS thing as well? I mean, do you feel that you know enough about the AIDS thing?

A. I think students don't know a lot about it, they just hear something, and they think ... they don't know the true facts about it.

Q. What do you think would be helpful?

A. If teachers actually like - biology lessons like you have in the third year, it's compulsory I think, they should actually tell more about it then, but plus, again, ... they should revise it and in the sixth form they should definitely do it. They should have large meetings and small groups and tell people about it and make them understand it and make them aware of it.

Q. More information about it.

A. Yeah.

Q. I didn't - I didn't ask you whether you had anything about sex education here at school.

A. I think we had it in a (?) PSE lessons in the second stage here, biology lessons, but they went into quite good depth about it, I mean I don't think anything came up... - my girlfriend, she'd told me everything wrong. It was alright. What sex education in the school, it was quite good...

Q. What, from people that you talked to?

A. Yeah. They explained it pretty thoroughly, you know. But - but - I mean you get to know a thing anyway, from your mates and that, and you read books about it yourself

and you understand it, or your parents tell you, some of the teachers tell you... but I was talking to my brother the other day, and he was going, we had sex education at school, I goes oh, what did you learn, he goes, he goes it's really weird and that, he didn't understand it; I was going, go back to the teacher and ask again. But they're pretty shy of going back to the teacher and asking with things like that.

Q. Mm, yes.

A. And the teacher had a really stupid way, like putting any questions you've got into a box and I'll answer them for you, which I thought was so stupid -

Q. Did you?

A. How can you - yeah, that's what he did -

Q. Yeah.

A. - he picked out a letter, a question, said it to the class, then said well, this is the answer. I thought that was stupid, that's not the way to teach...

Q. No, I mean exactly. That's quite helpful if people want to ask questions but they're too embarrassed to ask them directly, they can write them down and -

A. The way they should do it ... three or four people just in a room. But, you know, at that age they're quite young, aren't they?

Q. Yeah. What about having it... single sex school... What do you think about having sex education, boys and girls together?

A. A lot more fun. (laugh). No, I think it's okay, 'cos boys do the same, exactly the same thing as girls, so it's good that they should know about each other's bodies.

Q. Mm.

A. That's what I think anyway. But some people say they wouldn't like it ... embarrassed in front of a boy. I mean, I don't, but I can understand their feelings about it, you know.

Q. Mm, I think some people do, yeah. And I suppose sometimes they think they wouldn't be able to ask the questions they wanted to ask. I suppose ideally you'd have separate and then together so you could sort of do the things you'd be embarrassed at separately and then exchange a bit of information together.

A. ...

Q. Well I suppose they've got set ideas about the way certain things should be taught.

A. Yeah, set ideas, they never seem to change them though. They always have these set ideas... especially the older teachers.

Q. Yeah.

A. The younger teachers... they're fine, they understand us and that, but you get some old bags.

Q. So you think they've got some very definite ideas about -

A. Yeah, I mean just, you know, the kind of varied attitude to what kids are doing at the moment, and what they think is right and what the teacher should tell them and that, but teachers have this set - some older teachers, not younger ones, older teachers have a set idea that you're supposed to do this and you're supposed to do that. I mean ... that I went to when I was about second year, third year, ... pick the options to know what you wanna do, that I wanted a (?) CVT and I wanted to be an engineer or something, but this old rotten bag kept telling me no, boys do those kind of things, you must pick something more your style. But when I came back like I'd changed my mind anyway. So - but it was her attitude was really bad.

Q. Yeah, yeah. What do you think might have happened if you'd decided to stick it out, you know?

A. Well, I'd have enjoyed it, ... get one back at her. Couldn't let her...

Q. Yeah. Do many girls do (?) CVT here or is it -

A. I think they do, yeah, they do now.

Q. But you just hit one discouraging teacher -

A. Yeah. She was an old teacher, I think that was why. She didn't think a girl should be doing it.

Q. Mm, yeah.

A. But when it's a single sex school so why have CVT teachers in there if you don't want them to carry on? That's what I thought...

Q. So how do you feel in the end, I mean how do you feel now. I mean you talked -

A. About what?

Q. ... a bit down 'cos of bad things that happened to you. What do you think about the future?

A. No more bad things are gonna happen to me. I'm just gonna leave home, get... but then again I can't 'cos I always think, what about my brother and sister?

Q. Yeah. What about them as well? I mean you might be having a bad relationship with them now, but what...

A. ... I might have to stick it out... For now I can, but I will have to... But school, education-wise I'm fixed, I'm fine, you know. My relationship... That's about it. There's not much you can say about the future, I just let each day as it comes. Maybe I'll meet someone tomorrow, I don't know. But at the moment I really don't wanna meet anyone -

Q. Yeah.

A. - 'cos it would just be one thing in my life that would add on to all the others that I've got... I don't need any hassle... hassle... I think that, it's just another person...

Q. Yeah.

A. But I mean some of them can be a great laugh, yeah, but some, I don't know. Once I really like a bloke, yeah, I really want to - I really want to get to know him and that. And you've got him and you think, I don't want you any more, I've got you now, you know. I don't know why I've got that kind of attitude to boys, sometimes I have.

Q. What about if they play hard to get, do you go for them more if they're hard to get or -

A. Yeah -

Q. - like a challenge -

A. Yeah, it's like a challenge -

Q. Yeah.

A. You know, so... But I don't know, I think I've grown out of that now.

Q. Yeah.

A. It's like when you're about fifteen, sixteen you think... can't go around like that.

Q. I don't think that necessarily stops with that kind of relationship.

A. You know, but no, but I'm gonna stop that. I may be looking for - I don't really want a serious relationship, maybe that kind of relationship which goes on but is nothing too serious.

Q. Yeah.

A. But if it comes along, it comes along, if it doesn't, it doesn't.

Q. Do you think the problems come when the sex comes in?

A. Well that's -

Q. ...

A. ... mutual decision. You don't have to do it, if you wanna do it, you do it.

Q. So it's not so much... I mean it's not so much them telling you what to do, because you tell them what to do.

A. I tell them straight away -

Q. Yeah.

A. - ... If you want it you can go away... I tell them straight, I don't see why I should, just because I'm a girl, back down...

Q. How have they been reacting? I mean do you have many boyfriends...?

A. No...

Q. Yeah.

A. But I mean, I don't just go out with boys because my mate's going out with a boy, so I have to have a boyfriend... If I like the boy and he likes me then we go out. So he's got to try and understand, you know, my parents have a lot of say, 'cos they don't know that I smoke, drink, go out with boys or anything, so they have to understand that sometimes I can't go out.

Q. Mm. So you do - I mean you fit it around your family...

A. In a way I hate it, but I can't... 'cos of my brother and sister... And it feels like I'm setting my life aside while they grow up a bit older and have it easy and I don't. And I don't know whether that's right or wrong and whether I should stay or I shouldn't.

Q. Yeah.

A. I'm trying to sort it out.

Q. Being the first one is always a bit tough, isn't it, I was... you know, you're forging ahead and getting permission to wear stockings instead of socks, or whatever it was in my day, and your sister who's years younger is doing it the next week...

A. Mm. It's difficult really 'cos my mum's the youngest and my dad was the oldest and they don't seem to know that if you're the youngest... They seem to, like, forget everything. And I hope - I hope to God that... kids... I think watching a child grow is fundamental, watching them grow from a child to a young adult and then... I don't know, it's really weird. I've got weird feelings on things like that, I think, really weird feelings. Why is - why is the grass green... why does the world go round, why does the sun go round or whatever... Why do we have night and day? I don't believe in God -

Q. No.

A. I mean, if there was God why does he let bad things happen ...

Q. ... What about your religion, is it not really -

A. ...

Q. Just a sort of social thing, is it, really.

A. Mm, I mean I must admit I love (?) wearing traditional clothes, I love that ... silk and that... I won't ever forget my beliefs of my life, religion, what my parents hold... I think there's a kind of - you become - ... I won't forget that I am Indian and that but, I don't know, it maybe is the person that I am, that I've been too westernised and that, I probably see things differently...

Q. ...

A. ... I don't understand like... swear... and she'll swear to me in (?) Greek and not realise.

Q. Don't you think you can be - teach someone both?

A. Teach them what?

Q. Teach someone both the...

A. I am actually... I am pretty (?) mixed and it's a mix that's nice but shouldn't be there (unclear) or shouldn't ... one or the other, 'cos you get too influenced in either way. I mean I... forget about it...

Q. Thank you very much for talking, I'm very grateful. What we were thinking maybe - well, two things we were thinking of, one was to see whether people would be interested in keeping a diary for us for a little while, maybe a couple of months -

A. I can't do that -

Q. No?