

Elmira Melvin Pitchford--Interview Summary

Interviewee: Elmira Melvin Pitchford

Interviewer: Brynne Davies-Hackenberg, Lauren Petrone, and Maya Brown

Interview Date: October 26, 2016

Location: Hampton Public Library, Hampton, Virginia

Length: 1 audio file, WAV format, 1:39:51

THE INTERVIEWEE: Elmira Melvin Pitchford was born in 1948 in Newport News, Virginia. Growing up, Pitchford resided in Salter's Creek, in a segregated neighborhood. She attended Booker T. Washington Elementary School and Huntington High School, both of which were segregated. Pitchford became a nurse immediately following her high school graduation in 1966. Her first job in this field was at Dixie Hospital, now known as Sentara. Pitchford decided to go back to school in 2005, and graduated from Hampton University, summa cum laude. In 2009, she opened her own training school, Elmira Pitchford's Training School, in an effort to help young people find employment and further their education.

THE INTERVIEWERS: Brynne Davies-Hackenberg, Lauren Petrone, and Maya Brown are juniors at Christopher Newport University, in Newport News, Virginia. They have been working as part of the Hampton Roads Oral History Project, in an attempt to further public knowledge of the ways in which the civil rights movement affected Hampton Roads.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW: The interview was conducted in a study room at the Hampton Public Library in Hampton, Virginia. From the beginning, Pitchford was welcoming and very enthusiastic about the opportunity to share her stories. She had numerous notes written down and she did not shy away from any questions. Additionally, she described the numerous ways in which racism affected her everyday life. Throughout the interview, Pitchford was adamant that she wanted young people to learn from the past, so that they will not be doomed to repeat it. It also became apparent that Pitchford is very passionate about teaching young people, as seen through the establishment of her training school.

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START OF INTERVIEW

Maya Brown: This is Maya Brown, Brynne Hackenberg, and Lauren Petrone. Today is October 26, 2016 and we are interviewing Ms. Elmira Pitchford. This interview is taking place at the Hampton Public Library, in Hampton, Virginia. This interview is being carried out as part of the Hampton Roads Oral History Project at Christopher Newport University. Good evening, Ms. Pitchford. We are taking what is called a life history and we would like for it to begin--our interview--with a few questions about your childhood. Where and when were you born?

Elmira Pitchford: I was born in 1948, in Newport News, Virginia.

MB: Okay. What did your parents do for a living?

EP: My mother was a housewife, taking care of seven of us. My grandfather lived with us because he built our house. He also built the house next door; he was a carpenter. And my father worked at the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad.

MB: How was it living with seven other siblings?

EP: Very, very interesting. Everyday there was something. A fight every day. [laughter] I had to fight my four older siblings.

EP: Even though they beat me, [laughter] I learned how to fight [laughter]. No, but we were very endearing to each other so if someone messed with us, then they really had seven people.

MB: Okay. [laughter] Do any of your relatives or did any of your relatives at that time live in nearby cities or neighborhoods?

EP: In fact, most of us are in Hampton right now. Yes, we only had one brother who built a house in Richmond. And all of us are still in Hampton.

MB: That is crazy, that is amazing. OkY.

EP: It is. [laughter]

MB: Can you tell us anything about growing up in Salter's Creek? What was it like in terms of the racial distribution?

EP: We had three blocks that we called Salter's Creek, and that was Poplar, Maple, and Pine Avenue. And Maple had two blocks. Pine Avenue had two blocks. Poplar had one. As soon as you crossed 27th Street, that was the white neighborhood. And so, whenever we crossed that street, we would go to different stores there or catch the bus there. And sometimes, the whites would sic their dogs on us. Sometimes, they wouldn't do anything. Sometimes they would come out and they would call us "the N-word." Sometimes they wouldn't. One little girl, [laughter] came to the door, probably like this [gives confused look], probably six or seven, and saw me and called me an "N." And I said, "Baby, go get your momma." And so she came to the door and I said, "Why don't you tell her, 'Don't say that to someone, because she might be my sister.'" Needless to say, the woman slammed the door [laughter], so that little girl never said that word again [laughter]. And I continued on up to Buddy's--we had a little store up there called Buddy's. So, we didn't have fights with them. In fact, I had a little white boyfriend called Bobby.

MB: What?

Brynne Davies-Hackenberg: Really?

EP: My father was going to kill me. [laughter] He kept saying, “I am going to kill that daughter right there” [points to herself, laughter] because Bobby would still come down and, you know, that was my boyfriend, so I played marbles with him. Every day, Bobby came. Every day, my father said he was going to kill me. [laughter] My grandfather was very, very, very racist. So, trust me, racism is not just on whites and others. He was very racist. He would not let any insurance man come, not even in our yard. He would make everyone wait out there in the street and [said,] “I will come out and pay you for the insurance.” Back in the day, that’s exactly what they did. They collected the insurance money from house to house. So, that’s our Salter’s Creek. We were all--. We had the whites--at Halloween time--we did not have any problem. We could go and trick-or-treat there. Some of them were kind of ugly and mean. My brother went lots of places and he would come back sometimes and he might have a razor blade in an apple or something. But that was so far and few between. So back in my day, it was okay in the ‘50s and ‘60s. Yeah. It is a whole lot better. [laughter]

MB: Do you feel like the neighborhood was, like, close-knit? Like you were a family outside?

EP: Absolutely. We got beatings by everybody, we were reprimanded by everybody. So, you know, if the neighbors said it, “Stop, Elmira,” I knew that I was going to get a killing at home because that neighbor was going to tell on me. So we were raised by a community. We could walk in and out of the doors. No doors were ever locked.

MB: That’s amazing.

EP: It is amazing. But no one bothered us. Everyone had the same door, it was a skeleton key. So your skeleton key, it fit every door. [laughter]

MB: What did you all do for fun in the neighborhood?

EP: We played outside and inside. We did Hop Scotch, we did Double Dutch, oh we did, what was--? Jack Rocks. Our mother could beat us in everything. Our mother was very, very young. She had a baby at the age of sixteen. So whenever she went to school, she looked like a child. [laughter] So she would beat us in everything outside. We played Red Light and Spin the Bottle, so we did everything. We made mud pies and we ate them. [laughter] We played Buck in the Door. Have you all heard that one?

MB: No.

EP: That's a kissing one. [laughter] You had to go in there and call somebody back in and they would kiss you. [laughter] We were still out there. We played all these outdoor games. And then inside--. I was really not an outdoor person. I used to love to read. So, I would stay in my room and just read and read and read. That is why they considered me one of the "smart kids." Yeah [laughter]. That was my joy. I didn't want to get messed up, I didn't want to get dirty. As my sisters and my brothers were out there being athletic, I was cheering, "Yeah go, go, go." [laughter] Very prissy.

MB: So how was it attending the schools around Salter's Creek? Which one did you actually go to?

EP: We went to Booker T. at the age of six, Booker T. Elementary School. It was over a mile away, we had to walk. High school was even longer than that and we had to walk. And because we walked, we were very athletic. Just about all, I think just about one hundred percent of the creek happened to be our cheerleaders, and the other ones excelled in sports. And I think I sent you something about that. My first husband went up for Olympic trials, my second husband was a Lieutenant Colonel. But my brothers and all of them, they're in the hall of fame right now, for--yeah--for athletics. [laughter]. Yes, track and field.

MB: That's amazing.

EP: Yeah, holding all sorts of records in 1964--. And relays.

Lauren Petrone: That's awesome.

EP: Everyone was wondering why. Well, we walked. We were all very strong. We had to walk every place anyway.

BDH: Did you go to school with people from your neighborhood?

EP: Yes. Mmm-hmm.

BDH: Okay. What was your experience like at these schools? Like in terms of the teachers and the students and academics?

EP: The teachers and the students--. During our time, the teachers could spank us or beat us. They didn't care. [laughter]. You got to hold your hand out, they had paddles, and so we were very respectful. I was a little talkative so I got a whole lot of whippings. I got whole lot of spankings. I was reprimanded. I was taken out of class lots of times, but I was also a teachers' pets. So, it didn't matter to me. I said, "Okay, I am going to go ahead and do this, (cost the seven K house? 7:25)" and keep on going. [laughter]. But I knew that I was a favorite. But we got our whippings. So, in our school, it was the same thing, we actually had racism in our school. You know, if someone was much fairer or if someone had longer hair or whatever. So racism has been in existence for years and will probably still exist, and that is not going to change.

MB: Yes.

EP: You had wavy hair or long hair, every time there was a fight; someone wanted to cut my hair off, put it down the toilet. "Let's flush her hair." But because of my siblings, older siblings, I was able to scrap a little. [laughter]. So they stopped bothering me. [laughter].

BDH: While you were in school, were you involved in any extracurricular activities?

EP: Oh absolutely, yes. I was in the social studies club. I was president of the Future Business Leaders of America. I was on the cheering squad. I was in the Student Council. I was in the Nursing Club, obviously, since I'm a nurse. [laughter]. Yes. So yes, I was in several extracurricular activities. I loved it.

BDH: Did you have any favorite subjects in school?

EP: Yes, I did. I used to love spelling, English, and math. But, that history [laughter]. I think that was my only boring subject. And now, I love history because of everything that is going on now. That is what I am trying to teach everyone else and I saw on the back of this page about a legacy and that is exactly what I want these young children to do: learn their history, so that it won't be repeated.

BDH: Do you remember any educators who were especially influential in your life?

EP: Oh Lord, yes. I had a fifth grade teacher--. In fact, during summers, she used to call for me to come stay with her because she had a little cousin, who was about a couple years younger than I am and she wanted someone to play with her. So I would go there. I had a French teacher, Ms. Granberry. I had, oh my, Ms. (Curry? 9:26). Tenth grade biology teacher. This lady was in her own mode. There is nothing like her. [laughter]. In biology, she used to call me Madame Sunshine, so everyone thought I was getting all of these A's. This lady would actually put A's on my paper and then say, "But I'm going to give you a B, because someone else would have made an A but I expected more from you." [laughter]. One day, she told us to collect leaves, so my mother said, "Okay, we are going to get" (9:59) because my mother even knew her. She had been taught by Ms. (Curry? 10:03). My mother took me from Newport News all the way to Fort Eustis, stopping. It was not an interstate then but it was a nice drive. I was getting out of the car, picking up leaves. I said, "I am going to pick every leaf I can." I picked up all of these leaves; I

put it in a book. [The teacher said] “Someone else would have gotten an A, you’re going to get a B”. [I said] “Why”? [The teacher said] “Because you should have looked through the encyclopedia and drawn some leaves from other places.” I said, “Dear Lord, just let me get out of here.” [laughter]. And so--. But I will never forget that lady. Then, the parents would come. And, one day she gave us like a thirty-page composition or something to do. And I said, “Oh God, all I need is like three more sentences.” I said, “Let me hurry up and get to class, let me do this”. I looked up and I saw all of these parents and I said, “Oh my goodness.” [The teacher said,] “Madame Sunshine” and I said, “Yeah?” And I had just put a period at the end of those five sentences of my thirty-pages. [The teacher said,] “Bring your paper up here.” [I said,] “Yes ma’am.” Gave her the paper and she said to the little boy, “Share your paper.” And he had like two pages. His father literally beat him in front of the whole class. [He said to his son,] “You made me miss work? This little girl has thirty-pages, you have two?” She would do that anytime. So one time, we were dissecting the frog and she said, “Madame Sunshine, stop.” Because I was saying [to my classmates], “Here, wait a minute, you were doing that wrong. Let me, let me show you.” [They said,] “Well, leave me alone.” And I use this to this day, “Madame Sunshine, let them wallow in their ignorance when they don’t want to learn.” So I leave people alone when they say, “No, I don’t want your help.” “Okay.”

BDH: How were conditions at the schools you attended comparable to white schools?

EP: Back and when, we always got second books. Our books were always second hand. So we saw the dates on them, and that’s what we had. So, we had to deal with it. There was nothing we could change. And so yes, the whites got that, and it was something we just expected. But we weren’t disappointed. You don’t get something first, how would you know to compare?

MB: That’s true.

BDH: After graduating high school, what did you do?

EP: Went right into nursing [laughter]. I was in nursing in high school, and so as soon as I graduated, I mean we just took the boards. And I became a nurse and stayed in nursing. And then I jumped to business, then I jumped to law, and that is why I am a paralegal. And I got my own business. And I'm still in nursing, I still am teaching and I am a trainer and I am considered an expert in the state of Virginia for being a trainer.

BDH: That's amazing. What was your first job? I mean like as a child or--?

EP: Oh what was my very first job? I was thirteen years old, at the (Vanguard Fire Safety Corporation? 13:02), getting on the bus, leaving Newport News, going to Hampton, being a secretary. I tell you, at thirteen. Now, because at twelve, my mother sent me to Peninsula Business College, to learn how to type since my penmanship sucked. And it still does. [laughter]. So, even the doctors, whenever I say, "What is that"? They say, "Oh, no, no, no, no. You have got a nerve, the way you write." So I can't say anything about penmanship but now I can type up a storm now [laughter]. It was from there I was known as the Pied Piper of babysitters. The kids, still to this day, I do not know why, just come to me, gravitate. At the age of twelve though, I was taking care of an RN's newborn baby, now that scared me. But, she believed in me. But, she lived on my street and now all those boys are six feet and up and they go, "Oh, you are that kissy-poo babysitter." And I say, "Bend down and give me my hug and kiss." [laughter] And so they are doing great. And so from the babysitter, [I] continued on and then went right into nursing. I was licensed at the age of, what, eighteen.

BDH: Wow. Where was your first nursing job?

EP: At Dixie Hospital. Now it is called Sentara.

BDH: Okay.

EP: [laughter] Dixie Hospital was a hospital named after a horse named Dixie and it was a racehorse. But it is now Sentara. And to this day, that is one of the things I even want to teach you all, don't get upset on a job and walk out. Because, all they have now, from the '60's is my letter saying I was leaving and I wrote a glowing letter, "Thank you for everything that you taught me, etc." You know, during that time, integration had just occurred, so all hell was breaking loose. But, I wrote that glowing letter and they said, "Oh my God, oh look." And they give me this glowing reference. [laughter]. So, don't get upset on jobs. Players change, Supervisors change. So don't say, "Oh no, I already applied for a position," or anything. Go back again. Players change.

BDH: What made you go into nursing?

EP: I am not going to tell you a lie about that this was nurturing and I wanted to help someone. I saw this fine doctor. [laughter]. I'm not going to lie. He was my aunt's doctor, I was looking up at this man, and I said "I am going to become a nurse." And that is exactly what I did. That man's name was Dr. Cyrus Brown. That was a fine doctor. [laughter]. I am not going to lie to you all. [laughter]. That is what made me become a nurse.

BDH: Were most of the other people employed at the hospital white or black?

EP: Well, it had just become integrated so it was more white.

BDH: Okay.

EP: We only had, during that time, only one floor that blacks were admitted to. [laughter]. We had Whittaker Hospital for the blacks, so when that was full, then they would let blacks come on the second floor of Dixie Hospital. Once that was full, you almost just had to pray. There were more white.

BDH: Did you ever experience or notice discrimination in the workplace?

EP: Oh, absolutely. Oh, yes. But, okay--. So let me put you all at ease. My mother is white and Indian, so I'm able to get along with everybody. [laughter] My father is black. And so my grandmother is white. Great-grandmama, white. They all have Indian in them too. My daddy's black. He said he was coming after my mother because of that. You know, he was a little darker, he said "No, I had to lighten up this." [laughter] So my mother did not even know she had a boyfriend. All she knew, she thought something was wrong. As beautiful as she is--you all will see with some of the pictures, you won't know who she is until I tell you. But he said, "No, that is my girlfriend." So he would beat up all the boys--and she kept wondering why she couldn't get a date or anything. [laughter] So he had already chosen her [laughter] to be his wife [laughter]. So he is four years older than my mother. Both of them are deceased now. They are something. He is really something. If he saw you all now, he would be here saying, "You want my body?" [laughter]. He used to go in the hospital and I would go, "Oh, God."

BDH: Did you ever notice or experience discrimination in public facilities?

EP: Oh yes, yes, yes. We had the "Colored Only" [signs], yeah, in every place we went. We had the colored faucets, we had colored bathrooms, we had colored waiting areas. But it was something we grew up with. Now, in the later sixties, we got tired of it and that is when they started to protest and all of that. They would not let me protest and I am going to tell you, I am so embarrassed about it. Because I used to fight. I said "No, if somebody spits on me or hits me, it's on." [laughter] So they allowed me to disseminate the paper and type, do things like that so it was not my thing. [laughter] It was just not my thing. [laughter]. My mother used to say "Oh God, they are going to kill my baby." And I am not the baby, I still have two under me, so, yes. But no, there are lots of discrimination, even in the hospital. We had--. They had just integrated the cafeteria when I went to work. And so we started new (? 18:34). In fact, my two girl friends

were Maria (Madomba?, 18:35) and Sue Daniels. So, I had a Philippine and a white girl friend and we went everyplace and everybody would just look at us [like] “Huh, what?” [laughter] We went to the beach and everybody would look, so they were half naked and I’m all like this [covering herself up] because I already knew, in the sun you should be covered up. Who got sunburned? Me. [laughter]

BDH: Were you active in your church or other community groups?

EP: Oh Lord, yes. I was in the youth--not the choir because they wouldn’t let me sing, I cannot sing. [laughter]-- Usher, I was a youth usher. I used to teach Sunday school. I used to read all of the time in the Sunday school, until I almost got tired of church. We had to go all of the time. All of the time we had to go to church. So, if you didn’t go to church, you weren’t going any place else.

MB: What was the name of the church that you went to?

EP: Union Baptist and still go.

MB: What?

EP: Right on Maple Avenue.

MB: I know exactly where that’s at.

EP: Yes. Now make sure you got the right Union.

MB: Yeah there are a few down here, but I am going to go look for it again, because I am pretty sure, I’m from this area.

EP: In the three hundred block?

MB: Yes.

EP: Yes. Okay.

MB: [laughter]

EP: I still go to that same church.

MB: Really? Has the size of the church like changed any?

EP: Not much. [laughter] Still small.

LP: What was the process of integration like in this area?

EP: Slow. They came after the seniors, the so-called “smart” seniors. So, obviously my mother got a letter and she said, “They want you to integrate.” I said, “Not while I’m ‘Queen Bee’ of my school. I don’t have time for that mess.” [laughter] No. So, we had some of the people go over and it was really funny because some of the athletes that did not make it in the black schools became superb athletes in the white schools [laughter]. And that was really amazing to us because they just couldn’t even make the team. But that was very interesting to see that. No, I was not going to participate in that. I told you all, I had a little negativity going on and everything [laughter]. Everyone thought that I was just the greatest thing in the world because they knew my momma was white and Indian. But no, I was a little mean. And I smiled all the time, and still smile. And that is why students say, “Ms. Pitchford, you are really mean but you are consistent and you don’t show preferential treatment and you just stay mean but you help us all the time.” [laughter].

LP: Do any black or white responses from each community stick out in your head at all?

EP: Responses?

LP: Like just responses to integration.

EP: Oh yeah, oh yeah. We saw the signs, and they lined up and they were saying the “N-word” and we called them names too. I am not going to say we didn’t. [laughter]. We did. That’s why I said racism is not just from the white world. Yeah, we grew up being racist. Our thing is to just grow up and then mature and overcome and be tolerant of everything. No, you don’t have to do

what your mother and father did. You don't have to do what your grandparents did. Because, I am telling you, my grandpapa, he did let Sue in. And when Sue went over to my papa and kissed him, I said, "Oh my God, I do not know what grandpapa is going to do." But when she walked out of the door, he said, "That one is okay". [laughter]. So he only accepted one white person in the house. [laughter]. "That one is okay."

LP: [laughter]. In our class we learned a bit about the court order busing that took place in the seventies. Were you aware of this or were any of your family members affected by this?

EP: No, because we weren't bused. We had to walk [laughter]. So, I graduated from high school and all of that. No, we weren't ever affected by any of that.

LP: When did you open your training school?

EP: In 2009, I was a state inspector and I was leaving that. So, I just opened it up. I said, "Hey, let me just start this now." I wanted to do it in 2010. I was a state inspector so the state and I had a little conflict going on and I said, "Let me just go ahead and do it now." Should I continue it? I guess I am going to continue it. I'm here to help everyone. Otherwise, I could be megabucking it. I was offered a six figure job that I turned down because I'm sixty-eight years old. I said, "I can't do what you all want me to do" and that is to travel to four different places in the state of Virginia. So I can't do it. You have to say no to money sometimes. And, so they still offered me--not six figures now [laughter]--they offered me a nice amount of money. But my thing is, someone has got to teach you all. And without the teachers, you will not have presidents, you will not have CEO's, you will not have owners of businesses. I really admire teachers. I can only teach adults. I can't teach children. I will end up cursing at you all or burning buildings.

[laughter]

LP: Is there anything else you can tell us about what inspired you to open your training school and what you hoped to accomplish?

EP: Because of what I saw in the hospitals. Well, it was a fourteen-year old girl. I walked into the room and she had her baby, and she took that baby as soon as I walked in and she threw it in my arms. She threw it out of her arms, let me say. I caught it. And that was her second baby and she said, "I am tired of playing with this doll." And I said, "Oh my God, I got to stay a nurse." And at that time, I did not believe in abortion. "Oh no, people can adopt and you should not kill babies and you should not do this and that." You be there with reality and you see the dope and addicted babies. You see these children being abused, yes. Don't let them be born. No. I started believing in abortion as soon as she threw that second baby at me. Reality will check all of this greater than thou. I was heavy into church, and know that's just bad. But some people should not have babies. I knew of another girl--I was a counselor--and the young lady had twelve babies, by twelve different guys. And she told me, they said, "Pitchford, you cannot, you cannot tell her to get an operation." So I just said, "Well, when are you going to stop having babies?" She said, "I do not know, cause my thirteenth man might want a baby and I am going to give him one too." You cannot change people's mentality and that is why I wanted to continue to teach. I said, "Even if I help one person, I am going to be feeling good about myself." And I know I have helped a whole lot of people. In fact, I guarantee people jobs now from my training school. I have a 100% state exam pass rate. I know I'm bad, like Michael Jackson. [laughter]. So--. And I guarantee that you are going to pass and I guarantee that you are going to get a job. Not only will you get a job, you're going to have your choice of jobs. Because my name is out there. [laughter]. That's why I wanted to continue to teach. And I want to make money, I really do. But I would really have to give up that money just to be able to teach. When I left that, married to a

Lieutenant Colonel, we went on over to Kwajalein, Marshall Islands. That is eight thousand miles away from here. That is over twenty- two or twenty-three hundred miles away from Hawaii. So, I got off of the airplane, there were three thousand whites from Alabama. [laughter] And here I come. And so everyone just went, "Hello Ms. Pitchford, hello Ms. Pitchford." [I said] "Hello, hello, hello." Here I got my babies [laughter] and I am going, "Okay." And there were two black women over there, about to leave their families so I am going, "You are leaving me?" And they say, "Yes." But as I said, I have got whites in my family so it does not matter to me. And so they were easy to get along with, we really had a good time. The only thing, over there, they thought I was a Marshallese. The Marshallese--. Let me say this, I did look like the Marshallese. They would come up, talking to me, and I am going, "I do not know what you are saying." Then, they started speaking English around me. To this day, Judy Fisk, one of my girl friends from Kwajalein, Marshall Islands--and that was back in the seventies--she and I are in contact. [cell phone interruption] You got to turn this off, I don't know how. [laughter] And there was a mafia there. You all do not realize about mafia existing. Oh yes, there was a mafia there. So, I am walking [laughing] and this one lady that is the wife of the head mafia guy just would not speak to me. I said, "I don't know what I am doing." But then anyway, I just kept on saying "hi" each time I walked past her. You had to walk or ride a bike, the place was so small. It was like two by three miles or something where we could go. There was the Kwajalein Marshall Islands Missile Range, KMR, they called it. Bobby Kennedy tried to land there, they refused him. Now, you can go visit if you know somebody. But that is how secret this place was with the missile range. That is where the Japanese were when they bombed Pearl Harbor, they left KMR. And so, we were over there and I learned how to do the hula, and Tahitian, and belly-dance [laughter]. So, then the lady walked up to me after she saw me perform and she said, "Thank

you.” And I said, “Thank you for what”? [She said,] “Thank you for caring enough about our culture.” Then I was like her best friend. [I thought] This place is strange. The most crime that was committed--someone borrowed a bike, because you couldn’t ride it off the island. It was shark infested and surrounded and they were going to get like ten days in jail or something. And then you just go pick up your bike. But, what was interesting over there-- me, a black person, you, a white, you, white and Mormon, we had a Jew. All the kids played together. All of us got along. The (seaver? 29:38) woman played the violin. I used to listen to classical music, my husband used to think that that was embarrassing. He used to say, “Okay now, why don’t you come in the house now, ignore her music.” And I said, “It’s not embarrassing. I like classical music.” I did not care about Bach and Beethoven, I wanted to hear that and I danced with it. And I also did modern dance and yoga. Now, you all are saying, “How did she gain this weight”? Okay, so I will cut through and tell you that and then I will go back to Kwajalein. [laughter]. I gained the weight because I came back here to the states, got in a car, had three car accidents by being a passenger. Then I had this four hundred [pound] plus patient who had stopped walking. I went to her house, had her start losing weight, and she saw me coming back to the medical center and she was so excited because she had not been out of a chair in years. She saw me and decided to hug me. I went down again. So that was four times I had to go into the hospital on total bed rest. So, what do you do on total bed rest except eat? [laughter] Anyway, back to Kwajalein. All of my children played together. All of us got along infamously with the (seavers? 30:48) being Mormons, they weren’t supposed to be liking blacks. [They believed] Blacks were unintelligent; blacks were monkeys and all of that. I let my oldest girl, who is forty-eight now, and at that time, she was in third grade. I let her go to the Mormon Church. But we had fourteen black bachelors, so they always came to my house. They were, “No, don’t let your daughter go with her, don’t let

her go over there.” Best thing in the world that ever happened, because my daughter is so highly intelligent, they were going, “Oh my God, were we wrong.” So she went over there several times. Not only did the teachers, but also my neighbors came to me and said, “Teach my children.” And the teachers over in Kwajalein came over and said, “Will you tell us how to teach these children? Your daughter is so excelled above ours.” I have been teaching all of my life. I have been doing things that you all, they have named “PET” and “Time Out” and all of that. Now, I used to look at my kids and people when you say, “Look at--.” I’d be talking to you doing this [counting to three on her fingers]. Before I could get to three, those girls were running. [laughter] And the baby just followed her older sister. She did not know why; she just knew that she had to run when her sister ran. [laughter] So, there was no coming in here and being with adults. No, not at all. So, with the protocol that we were raised with, yes, you would be reprimanded, you would be spanked. And when you went around other people, you better not steal, everything belonged to them. You were going to be killed almost. But, you all call it abuse; we just called it being reprimanded--spankings--and it worked. None of us were ever in trouble, everyone trusted us, we knew how to act whenever we went around whites, Asians, anybody. We used to call it “pink-green” people, we didn’t care. Why would we? We were going around our white cousins and our Indian cousins. I used to take friends up to Charles City--and that is where my mother is from, Charles City, Virginia--you would see how they would intermarry. That, one of my cousins, yes, wanted to marry me. We were talking [he said], “Daddy, Daddy.” I said, “Oh God.” [laughter] [He said] “Daddy, Daddy, can Elmira be my, be my girlfriend?” [laughter] And Uncle Charlie is going, “You spend money on her”? [My cousin said] “Yeah.” [My uncle said,] “You take her out”? [My cousin said,] “Yeah.” [laughter]. [My uncle said] “You like her”? [My cousin said] “Yeah.” [My uncle said,] “Yeah, she can be

your girlfriend.” I said, “No, we don’t play that Uncle Charlie. We don’t play that in Newport News.” [laughter]. So, we had it there. They wanted to intermarry, they wanted to get the skin fairer and they wanted everybody to look pretty. So they thought being intermarried that you would produce these children. But yet, if you were too close, then you got the disabled children, the mentally challenged children. Sometimes you were just lucky and you would just get a pretty baby. [laughter] That’s all. So the racism was still in ours. Went to New Orleans. Have you all ever heard of the “Brown Paper Bag”?

MB: Yes.

EP: You have?

MB: Yes, I have.

EP: Okay. [laughter] So I went to New Orleans, out with girl friends--my best friend and I are together. My best friend is just a little darker than I am. So the young lady that was taking us around, talking about, “Well, let us go to this gala.” And [she said,] “But there’s no more brown paper bag.” You know we all looked at each other and said “What do you mean?” And you see, if you put a brown paper bag up and if you were darker than that brown paper bag, you were not allowed to get in. And she said, “Well, Elmira, you can get in.” And I said, “I am not going to get in.” [She said] “Oh, yes, you can get in,” and I said, “I am not going to get in because I am not going. I am staying with my best friend.” The racism is still in our own race. To this day, it is still in our own race. So you will find different areas, particularly in Virginia--. You all just don’t know about Virginia. You do not know about Yorktown either, with the Klansmen being out there. We had this fork in the road, they would say, “You better go down the right fork in Yorktown so you can come back.” [laughter] Yes. But you just learn how to deal with that because that is the way we were raised. And we were raised that prejudice was ignorance. And

prejudice is ignorance. We look at people now and we still say, what, if we see someone from another country? [We say] “Oh, they are over here taking our jobs.” No they’re not. We just want more money, and we want to do less work. They are not taking our jobs. I awakened my baby and, in fact, she teaches at Hampton University and she’s an attorney. Yeah, but, she said, “Momma, my own clients lie to me.” So, she stopped being commonwealth--Assistant Commonwealth attorney in Norfolk, so she started--she teaches law at Hampton University now. And my oldest girl is a medical doctor, she is the medical doctor for (the ? 36:08) Indians in Alaska. I told you all, I can make you doctors and lawyers now. I got a god-child that is an attorney, I’ve got a godchild that is a PhD, another one that has her--she is certified public accountant. I mean, megabucking it. She is a big time CPA. So I believe in education, and I don’t care--I can’t stand for someone who says, “I do not like that instructor.” I don’t care if you like them or not. What did Oprah say about Hillary Clinton? Have you all heard that little excerpt?

MB: No.

EP: What, it has been playing on (TV Jakes ? 36:47), it played today. People say, “I do not think I like Hillary Clinton.” [They] say, “I know I don’t like Donald Trump, but I know I don’t like Hillary Clinton.” She say, “You do not have to like her, she won’t come to your house.” [laughter]. She says, “Trust me, she’s not going to visit your house.” And that is the way you have to look at the instructors. How much of this are you going to tolerate? And sometimes you are ready to throw down.

MB: Yeah.

EP: You are ready to throw down. I told you, I had my biggest conflicts with my teachers in college, my instructors who happened to have been preachers, because they started talking about that Bible and I said, “Let me tell you something. I believe in the Bible. I’m a Christian, you all.

And don't think I'm an atheist, I am a Christian." I said, "But you start talking about that Bible. Who wrote that Bible?" Men. And so then they talk about women and most of the women in the Bible happen to be what? Prostitutes. Or someone that they went over and said, "Hey, I want you, you are my wife. I want you, you are going to be my woman too and I'm sending your husband out there to be killed so I can have you." And yet, if you did anything wrong, then you're what? Killed. So they had all of the power. I said, "Was there anybody good"? Of course, they would go right on back to Ruth, then you could name about three or four people. Okay, Mary was good and all of that. I said, "But women could not be prostitutes without whom?"

MB: The men.

EP: Men [laughter]. And they believed in it--about your brother should take care of your wife if something happened to you. You just learn how to live with some things and you breathe and you tolerate it. And so your main goal and yours and yours is to get your education and it does not matter who is teaching you. Go ahead and grit your teeth, bite your tongue. As my mother used to say, "Just bite the bullet, don't let it explode, keep it right between your teeth so you won't say anything." Don't let it explode. Get your degrees, get your degrees. I went back to school in 2005, and I graduated summa cum laude over all the children, and that is what I call you all, children. And in there, [laughter] I had this white guy in one of my classes with the rebel flag and everybody is like, "What?" I said, "Leave him to me." [laughter] Every time I needed some assistance with anything, [I would say] "Come here baby, come here." He would help me bring up all my stuff. Every time I went to class [he would say,] "You need my help going down?" [I would say,] "Yes." I had to do a project, [he would say,] "You need it"? [I would say,] "Come on." He was right there helping me with my computer, my videos, everything. So don't look at someone and just say, "No." My daughter that's at HU [Hampton University], ended up

going to--now it is not an all-girl school, but it was a summer program. And she went there and she saw this rebel flag and [felt like] “ahhh,” ready to just jump. I said, “Why, why are you upset?” [She said,] “I’m going to find out who that is.” I said, “No, you’re not.” I said, “You walk around with a Malcolm X poster.” I said, “So what is the difference?” I said, “Now, you don’t know if that little girl with that rebel flag had a grandfather or someone who died and that is representing that.” I said, “Look at something, stop having tunnel vision, you need global vision.” I said, “Now if they see a Malcolm X poster, they are going to think you’re ready to kick their butts. And yet, they do not know that when Malcolm X went overseas to Jerusalem, he saw real Muslims and he said ‘Hey, we’re wrong. White people are not the devils.’” He said, “‘Those Muslims over there helped me. They didn’t care if I was black, pink, or green.’” So, everything changed. Now, I look at people now and maybe because my mother is like that, and say what, we’re just all people. I can’t hate whites. My momma was white and Indian. I would be stupid. You’ve got white in you. You’ve got Indian in you. You know why? Because we’re all-- I call us a hybrid race. We are a newly created race. We’re not pure. We wouldn’t be here without being Indian or white. So, what are we going to do? Just hate that part in us?

MB: Yeah, you right. We can’t do that.

EP: [laughter] So look, we have the Afros. I tried the Afro too, had to have a hundred rollers in my hair and had to have two people try to help me get it out.

MB: That is what it took for me to get this [points to her hair].

EP: [laughter] So we tried all of that. The men would come up and still say things and they would still go and try to find someone that looked white. They did. I used to be teased about my lips. I used to be teased about my nose. [They would say,] “Oh you look white, have a ‘white nose.’ You have this and that.” I said, “I have my momma’s nose. I don’t know what you all are

saying.” [laughter] I used to walk around with my lips poked out so they would get bigger. [laughter] I did stupid things until my mother said, “You better love you. You love you as you are.” As I said, I did help them. I disseminated papers, I typed papers, they just wouldn’t let me protest. Over in Kwajalein though, if you did not get along and you are in a two mile by three-mile area, that would be about the craziest thing in the world. So that was something I really started writing about after I came back here. Now, as I’m about to leave, guess who comes? Two young blacks. [laughter] Two young black girls. I said, “Now you come when I’m leaving.” They were teasing me and saying, you know, “Colonel Pitchford’s papers got lost.” I said, “Oh they did?” [They said] “So you may not be able to go home.” I said, “No, he might not be able to go home. I am getting out of here.” [laughter] It is like being on Alcatraz, he had so much control. You could not buy your way off on Micronesia Airlines and you couldn’t go on the back-flight--the military aircraft--because I needed his permission. Now that was like Alcatraz to me. For one man to have that much control over me and my daughters--well our daughters, whatever. [laughter] I have always had a very, very interesting life. I cannot complain about it. I can’t even complain about my two ex- husbands ‘cause that is what they are. One is still alive and one is dead. I won’t tell you all anything about the death. [laughter] But he was over in Africa with some nineteen- year old girl. [laughter] [He was] saying that that was his wife. My poor husband, (whole lot of things? 0:43:50.9). They are waiting for me to do a Lifetime movie on him. Mmm-hmm, they really are. Let me see, went to New Orleans, still teaching, Kwajalein-. Oh, and I came back here. They wanted me to be the counselor, which I became. But before being a counselor, I am the kind of person [who] can’t stand being closed in. So, I don’t mind being closed in if I know I can be able to walk out any time. And so, they said, “Well, the counselor’s position had not started at that time,” and I said, “Okay, I’m going to drive the van.”

[And they said,] “You’re kidding me! You are overqualified.” I said, “I am not overqualified because I know how to drive. You do not have to be overqualified to go pick up some patients.” And so that is what I started doing too. I did not care about that. My daughter was a baby and at that time they charged five dollars an hour to babysit. But someone called me and said, “Elmira, look, you know this store over in Riverdale dealing with babies, infants? They want to do inventory, and so they would like for you to come on over. You want to make a buck?” I said, “Sure.” And it’s no--1099 [tax form] was not involved. So I awakened my daughter, and I said, “Come on, you are going to go over here and make five dollars an hour. I am not going to pay somebody five dollars an hour.” She loved it, absolutely loved it. She went over there. And so she said, “I was working beside my momma.” And she was every bit of, probably, about eight years old and we worked overnight. So I am saying to you, a job is a job. Don’t ever become so big-- I had another girl friend who was working for a white couple, they were moving, so they wanted someone to help move or clean or whatever. So, I went up there and as I am helping this lady, she just stopped me. She said, “Lady, stop.” And there were about three of us and she said, “Stop, tell me why you are doing this.” I told her, “My girlfriend, she said she needed some help.” She said, “I can tell that this is not your forte.” ‘Cause I was looking at this, she had the biggest, most beautiful portrait of an Indian. I said, “You know what, instead of paying me, could I barter for that?” She said, “See, I knew this was not your forte.” She did not give me that picture though, [laughter] even though I wanted it. She said, “I am just wondering how--.” Don’t get too cute. That’s all I am saying, don’t get too cute. Education should not make you pompous. You should be appreciative that you are able to get it. So many people died that could not become educated. So, I get very, very upset, particularly with young blacks, who don’t want to be educated. “Oh she doesn’t like me; I cannot understand what she is saying because she is a

foreigner. So therefore, I am just going to fail,” and yada yada yada. And I am saying, “Do you understand that people died, died during slavery time, to learn how to read and to write?” You are talking about a legacy. That is a legacy for you. Please continue with your education. No one can take it away from you once you get it. And have fun learning. With my grandchildren, I got a twenty-one year-old granddaughter. All of them--. And now I’ve got five, and now I have an extended family of three added. But with my babies, we have so much fun. I jump around, I ring bells. I jump up and down. I kick my legs every time they get something right. They are popping A’s. And they just love it. They will tell you in a minute, they call me “Big Momma.” [They say, “Big Momma. We want her to help us with our homework.”] [laughter]. And, I’ve got, see you don’t have the pictures. The two younger ones, their father is Japanese and black, and so one is very fair and the other one is a whole lot fairer than I am. And they just look--. They are wondering why is it people are saying ugly things at any given time. And they are looking at their skin color and--[saying], “I’m much lighter than Big Momma, what is going on here?” and then they look at my mother’s pictures and say, “Well okay, look at grandmama.” [laughter] “And look at Grandma Mary.” And my grandmother is called Big Momma, so look at Big Momma, the original Big Momma. And look at Grandma Mary, Grandma Nancy, and then look at Mr. (Krideck?, 48:24) who was a white man, ended up being great, great, great grandfather. And then you’re going to see a picture with an Indian and that is my great great--. That’s Grandma Nancy’s husband, and that is (Allen Atkins? 48:43.0). They’ve got all of this in the family, so they look at the other black children and the other black children are talking and I am saying to the black children, “Guess what? You all got the same thing in you. All we do is bleed blood.” Everybody needs to get along. Will that happen? No. You all already see that it is not happening now. And Dr. Martin Luther King came here. [sighs] I talk about Dr. Martin Luther

King and everybody all in the office kept saying to me, "Pitchford, he's in our history books." I keep forgetting how much older I am of everyone else. Even at, going back to HU, I was called, if we discussed the old people, they [would] say, "Ladies that write." So, my name was "Lady." If they said the word [students said] "Old, is that right? Elderly, is that right? Geriatric? Is that right?" And I used to say, "Yes!" So, it became a joke all around the campus. It didn't matter. Do you think that that is not--. That's called ageism. Yeah, do you all know any "ism" is against the law? And I didn't care-- yeah, if you say any "ism," it is against the law. So it's not just racism. It is ageism and guess what? Now, it's been reversed. They want older people to work because young people won't. The young people still think about partying and they are "in love" and all that. Older people, now, will come and work. They are dependable. They already have their homes. They have their cars. They already have their money, and they want to be productive. And they want to continue to give to society. So the deal with anything that you are dealing with, bite that bullet [laughter] and set your goals, all three, your goals should be your own goals, and how are you going to be, how are you going to get there. And anyone that's messing with you, and plucking your nerves, look at them [and] say, "You are not worth this, because I got my own goal in mind. You're not worth stopping me from what I want." Now, you might be a little obstacle. You might want to go get another instructor, and you, feel free to drop out of a class and go get, someone else, or go online and do something. If you can't do face to face. I did that in one--. I love English, and I did that in Hampton University. But, one of the ladies who really knew me said, "I want you in my class." I went to her class and I said, "Honey, I am going back to this other lady online, you are crazy." [laughter] That teacher was a tough teacher, that's a tough instructor, and that's in 2005, and so I just continued on with my education. That's--. Just consider them little barriers, not even obstacles. Take that detour. If you

can't get over the mountain, what do you do? Go around the mountain. Can't really get over it or go around it, what do you do? You drill through it. Maybe a little difficult, might be a little slower, but keep your own goal in mind. You all have me out here talking and look [laughter] for your oral project.

BDH: You mentioned your children earlier, how many children do you, do you have?

EP: Two girls, and so one went to Menchville, and one went to Hampton High and both ended up on the cheering squad. The oldest one--. She's just so brilliant. This young lady can actually look at anything, look at any instructions, she can put a motor together for you. Take it apart and put it back in. She was about to go into a classroom and they had this assignment that said, "Write about something." And, she had forgotten to do it, so she sat out in the car, and wrote her composition and won first place. This is how brilliant--. This is the one that's a medical doctor. So, she's always--. And that's what I love too. She's always liked to up me one time. So, I don't mind that because I think that is what success is. I am a nurse; she's a doctor. I am a paralegal, the other one is an attorney. So I always say, "That's what success is: be better than your parents." So I used to challenge her all the time. You were talking about integration, every time she would bring a white boy home--because she did, all the time--I would always say, "Give me a drink of wine." She would say, "Momma, stop!" [laughter] I just expected it. I was so shocked that she did not marry a white boy. I was really shocked. But, she is married to a Puerto Rican now [laughter] and she had been married to a black first, but now she is married to a Puerto Rican with that blended family. They are in Alaska, they've already told me, "Big Momma, if you get one school bus, you can put all of us on one." So just fathom, how many whites are up there. They get along with them beautifully, they always send me pictures of all their friends. Of course, they are the only blacks in there [laughter]. They are surrounded by whites, they deal

with them, they compete with them. Track. As I said, her father was about to go up for Olympic trials [in track], so she can run track--. That little thing is fast. She can also dance. She took her girlfriend to Kings Dominion when they were at University of Maryland, College Park campus. [She] took her girlfriend so the girlfriend could get into one of the programs to dance and perform. They chose her [her daughter]. So she was the only black in there with about three black guys or something and all of them were gay. I do not know how you are going to deal with that, but they were gay. [laughter] But it's your history report. And so she lived with them and she performed and she was a star. So I was looking at her at Kings Dominion in one of the performances, and all the parents were in the front, and one of the parents said to me, "Which one is yours?" I said [laughter], "That one out in the front." I didn't say "the only black one" because they had makeup on them where you couldn't even tell. But, I [wanted to say,] "Okay, I know that you all, you can tell in some kind of way." But, no, that was some good makeup, and I just, you know, the star is mine. She is so used to that. They didn't have it like we did. It wasn't blatant and, now, it is so shocking because it is blatant now. It is amazing to me that what they did in the dark now they are doing, and guess what? They've got the law on their side to do it. And the only thing I look back is, if you go far enough back, you might see that she is your granddaughter, and you just shot her or something. Because that is how we became, that is how we evolved, that is how we were born, because of the sex and everybody getting together. And you might end up killing one of your own relatives and they do not even know it. You all remember Governor Wallace? Or is that too old? Governor Wallace [laughter] was the governor of Alabama who, instead of integrating, he laid out in the street and said "The bus will run over me before I let you let the school bus in." He ended up getting shot, I think it was. I know he ended up in a wheelchair and now all he used to talk about was integration after that. See how

things evolved and changed? When I was in the hospital, I would walk in and I'm the nurse, little young pretty little thing [laughter] so. And they would look at me and say, "Okay, look, go ahead and, and dust my windows, and water my plants." You know, "Then you can go ahead little girl." And I just smiled and said, "Okay I am going to get that window sill dusted for you and I am going to get your plants watered, but right now I'm about to give you your medications." They go "What?" [laughter]. And so there is an elderly white woman who just--and she could not speak, she could not do too much of anything, but somehow she fell in love with me because I am lovable. [laughter] So, I walked in and this lady was supposed to have died, so the doctor called me and said, "Who is this lady's nurse?" Oh, he called me and I said, "I am." He said "You are keeping her alive, and we are wondering what you are doing?" I said "I am spending time with her." You know, she couldn't talk, she couldn't do anything, but when I was with her, I would rub her hand and her arms, and I would talk to her. I couldn't sing to her now, but I would talk, and I would read, and she would just light up so then the family wanted to meet me. So I walked into the [laughter] room and the family went like this [look of shock]. I mean their mouths actually opened, and when she saw me her eyes just twinkled, and I just walked right between all of them and started touching her hand and then rubbing her arms and I bent down and I hugged and kissed her. And the family is about to die, everybody in there turned red as a beet. [laughter]. And one of the relatives said, "We just had no idea." I didn't even respond, I just walked out. I ran into gay patients, so I had this white gay couple, and so her friend wanted to see who the nurse was because the patient kept talking about me. And so, she came over and [say,] "Who is Elmira?" And as soon as she saw me, she said, "You? My lady loves you. Why?" I said, "Go ask your lady, honey." [laughter] There was a whole lot of that going on. I actually got into a fight while being a nurse. I told you all I was bad. [laughter] I have not always been

professional, I haven't had all these credentials, I've been just like you all. And so when I went home and stopped by my momma's, [her mother said,] "What did you do?" Parents can read you then. I said "Huh? Nothing." [Her mother said] "What did you do?" I said, "I got in a fight at work." [Her mother said] "Are you crazy? You are a nurse." But, see, that's why I was saying, when you're at work, do your job, be a team, but cover yourself. Because I had already told everyone because they were white. I got in a fight with a black CNA. We were the only two blacks on the whole wing. I said "Oh no." Anyway, yes, I beat her. [laughter]. Here I am, five-two and a half, she's five-eleven and a half, she had no idea, no idea [about] all this fighting experience I had with my older siblings [laughter]. I threw her out [laughter] the nursing dressing room and then I told all the white peers, all my coworkers "And you better not say anything because you saw it brewing, and if you do I am going to take you down, and out the door with me." So, no one said anything. That is why I was saying I left that glowing note and I didn't leave after that. I still worked. But always leave a glowing note. "Thank you." All of that. They just looked at me because they were just so proud, like, "Oh, we got rid of her." They used to call me "Ms. Florence Nightingale." Because I would not mix with them. Break time, I went to one of my patients. I don't care what color they were, I went to one of my patients who did not have visitors. I read to them, and I sat with them, talked with them, and I'd get up and go to another one. That is why (1:01:05) everybody said, "Oh, Ms. Florence Nightingale. Everybody is always offering her gifts." And they did, and we weren't able to take gifts. I would have been a lucky something. [laughter] But, no. Then I always had the most difficult patients. I was pulled from floor to floor. Little bitty old me, I was about a hundred pounds wet. Still five-two and a half. But I was a bad nurse too. Again, Like Michael Jackson [i-negative?, 1:01:34]. [laughter] And this little, old white lady that was mean, that lady was so mean, everybody said, "Okay." My

[last] name was Melvin then. "Melvin, let's see what you are going to do with this one." And I said "Okay." I went in there, she was cussing and fussing [the old lady said] "You better get out." and the "N" word came all out. I said "Okay." So I gave her a basin of water, she took the basin, she threw it on me. At that time, we had the laundry down in the basement in the hospital, and my grandpapa was the so-called "lover." So, one of his girlfriends worked there and she always wanted me to look very prissy and I did. So, she said "Okay." I said "Look, I'm wet." She said, "That is okay, here is your starched uniform." I changed uniforms, went on back up to the same lady. Gave her some more water, she threw that water on me [laughter] so I went back down, I got me another uniform, came back up. This time, I took the water and I said, "You want me to throw this on you? And let me tell you something, I can out-curse you now." I said, "But I am not going to do that." I said, "All these people around here dislike you. They're not going to help you. They want you to stay funky, they want you to stay hungry because they are not going to feed you. I'm here because I want to be here. They pulled me, they transferred me over here." That lady allowed me to bathe her. I was talking to her, she stopped cursing. When she was about to be discharged from the hospital she was actually reaching out, screaming, "Will you please come and see me? And I love you." [The hospital staff said] "Ms. Melvin, what did you do to this lady?" That little white boy, oh that was a bad little boy. Screaming, "Nurse? Nurse?" I mean, screaming all over the hall. He didn't want anybody to do anything except what he said, and he had the meanest doctor in the world. He didn't want nurses in the room with him, much less anyone else. And so, [laughter] this little boy called, "Nurse? Nurse?" and they said, "Hey, go get Melvin." Pulled me from the floor again. I went on over there--we pulled twelve hour shifts then. So, we would work three days and we would be off--and I told him, "Let me tell you something little boy. You're going to be a hungry something if you wait for me to feed you."

And, he had a broken leg and a broken arm. So, we still had to make sure whatever they could do, they did. [The little boy said,] “I am not going to eat, and I am going to tell my momma, and I am going to tell my doctor.” I am going, “Oh god.” [The little boy said,] “And I am not going to bathe myself, you're going do it.” I said “No, you are going to bathe what you can, and then I am going to bathe the rest.” [The little boy said] “No, you’re not.” I said “Okay.” So, I took his food away, he didn’t want that. I took the water away. Brought him his lunch. [The little boy said,] “I am not going to eat, and I am not going to bathe myself.” [I said,] “Okay.” Took the water away. Took the food away. By dinner time, he was hungry. [The little boy said,] “Will you help me to eat?” [I said,] “Yes, I will.” Then in walks his doctor. Before the doctor walked in, I said, “Let me tell you something, I got you for twelve hours today. Your mother will come in and stay with you for thirty minutes and at the max, one hour. Your doctor’s going to come in and stay with you for five minutes. I am going to be here for twelve hours with you.” So, [laughter] when the mother walked in, I walked in behind her, the doctor walked in, and he looked at me, that's supposed to be, “You may be excused.” I stayed just like that [staring face] looking at that little boy. [The little boy said,] “Momma? Momma?” And he was looking at me and she was turning around [little boy said,] “Momma? Momma?” She said, “Well, what is wrong?” He looked at me and he said, “Nothing, nothing,” and then I walked out. He never said anything. When he was discharged, he came walking to me on a crutch. His mother said, “He said he would not leave until he saw you.” He wanted to thank you and he hugged me and he said, “You were my favorite nurse.” So, you just had to be by the book and still be a little creative [laughter]. Just a little creative, you can go outside the books, now. So, it did not matter as long as I was a nurse, and I loved nursing. At that time, yes. I still loved looking at that good-looking doctor. Who tried to date me, by the way, you all. [laughter]. I also went to this dinner

with a hundred black generals, and Muhammad Ali was there. That's a good-looking man. [laughter]. So, I am in there with this hundred black generals, we paid megabucks to get in there, and so I said "I am going up to speak to Muhammad Ali." Muhammad Ali stopped talking when he saw me. I stared at him and he stared at me, and the man was trying to talk and then he turned around and said, "Oh, we see why." I walked up to him and I am supposed to be bad, now. He said, "You are so pretty." What did dummy me say? I said, "So are you." [laughter] He got my name and everything and says, "Hey, I'm coming to Norfolk," we were in D.C. "I am coming to Norfolk next weekend." I knew that man was married. I wanted to go over to that club where he was going to be so bad. I said [to myself,] don't you, don't you, don't." I did not. I was nice, I did not go over there. But, that was a fine man, y'all. I can't say dated but, I was with Arthur Ashe for a week when he was at Hampton Institute at that time, when the tennis tournament came. And I was working at Hampton [laughter] Institute and they literally were paying me to sit in that tennis tournament. Because that is where I was with him. He was a fine man. He could say my name better than anybody in the whole world, and I was married. I didn't do anything with him. He did tell me to come be close (1:07:39) [He said,] "Elmira." I mean, he could say my name. [He said,] "Come, closer to me." I couldn't move, [laughter] I could not move. My husband heard about it [and said,] "Were you out there with Arthur Ashe?" I said, "I was just eating dinner with him every night." [My husband said,] "I am going to divorce you." I said, "No, you are re not." I said, "He will be gone in a week." (1:07:57). I will still be with him for this whole week. I have met lots of people. I have been with several entertainers. When I say been with, it does not mean sleep. You all don't know anything except sleeping. [laughter] You just go out on dates, and people were just drawn to me because of my quiet, shy, demure self. You know that is a lie. I am not any of those things [laughter]. Yes, I have been out with CEOs

and presidents and around them. Why am I working for myself? Because of this. Because I told many men, "I do not need you, go get away. I am not going to do what you want me to do. I will never be submissive." So if you want to go ahead and get a nice husband, a nice rich husband, don't be like me. [laughter] I am a very independent woman, and so when my husband who died and we were still divorced, but even before then, he used to tell me, "I wish you could be more submissive because I like for people to admire me. You know, because of my colonel status." And I said, "Well, if you're supposed to be king, I thought I was supposed to be queen." He didn't want a queen. So, he just had the wrong woman. We were together twenty years. Now, let me change that, we were married twenty years, we were not together twenty years. So he had ten years out there to have fun do what he wanted you to do. It was my first marriage. We were just young, that's all. And we were also married during all this tumultuous integration and everything going on. And as I said, he was a track star, so he was always on the go, and we were going places, and I had my little baby in tow. And so we just dealt with all of that. He was in the military. He was in a special program for athletes and so we were always given this preferential treatment, wherever we went. Military has its own community whether you all know it or not. They are very protective. They will help you do anything. Even though you have the racism in there, with him being a military officer, I was commanding officer's wife. And here I am, little young thing in twenties being a commanding officer's wife at Fort Bragg. And, he was jumping out of airplanes and he also--so he was considered airborne--and he was a ranger, also. They considered him almost crazy. Now, they can survive just about any place. So, I said, "I can't do these coffees and teas." Even though I went and bought the new, big canister. I called everyone [and asked], "Do you all want to do these coffee and teas every month?" They said, "No, absolutely not if you don't want, commanding officer's wife, if you don't want to do it." I said,

“Okay, well let’s not do this.” But, then, here it started. [laughter] I’m over at the Officers’ Wives Club, and there were two more, two more black officers with their wives. And, so, my husband’s father died. And so, we went to Chicago but before we did, they said, “Who would like to be the President of the Officers’ Wives Club?” And I’m saying [to myself,] “No, not me.” Alright, so this young lady named Elizabeth--but we called her “Ed”--she said, “I will be.” And so, Ed was considered the Officers’ Wives Club president [laughter]. When I came back first time in history we had two co-wives to be co-presidents of the OWC. I go, “Mmm, this is mighty strange.” [phone goes off] “See, you didn’t do something right.” [laughter]. In fact, we had visitors. We had major wives, colonel wives visiting us. And so I said, “I would like to say something.” Everyone got very, very scared because they didn’t know what [I was going to say]-- I said, “Wait a minute, just calm down, I am going to thank you all for the lovely flowers that you sent to my husband’s family.” Then I said, “And now, I want to know [laughter] what happened while I was gone that now, first time in history, we have two co-presidents of the OWC, Officers’ Wives Club.” Everything went hushed, everyone got mute. So Ed-- I looked at Ed and was like, “Are you going to say anything?” So she didn’t say anything and so then the visitors said, “What is this? We’ve never heard of this, either. Lady, what are you talking about?” So I told them what had happened and saying, “Now, all of the sudden upon my return, everything has changed.” So then all my little white friends start scooting. I am in a chair, they start scooting on the floor. [Her friends said] “I didn’t do it. Pitchford, I didn’t do it. I didn’t do it.” [laughter] (1:13:07) [Her friends said] “I did not do it. I wasn’t in it. I wasn’t involved.” So we were called out. My husband was written up for that, I want you all to know that. He was written up because of me. But he had a friend that had rank in D.C. They said, “You better get here and make a rebuttal.” They said, “They just wrote you up because of your wife and said you could not

control her.” Yes, they did. So, a black colonel called us, because at that time he was a captain or a major or something like that. Anyway, a black colonel called us, and he wanted to meet all of us. I went over there, everyone was quiet, and he says, [laughter] “Who is Elmira Pitchford?” And I raise my hand, here I am. Before I could say anything, Ed's husband started talking and said, “Wait a minute, sir, let me explain this. She started talking for my wife, and my wife hadn't said anything to her, and I told my wife to stay away from her.” And, that's what he told Ed to do. Stay away from me. He looked at Ed and Ed said, "Well, I am going to do what my husband said to do." And so, he [the black officer] said, “Well, Ms. Pitchford, tell us what happened.” I said, “All I did was ask a question.” I said, “I've got lots of questions to ask. I want to ask also, why is it we have to wear gloves and hats?” You ladies don't understand, this was during micro-mini time. I had pretty, fat legs, so I showed my little legs, because all you could wear were micro-minis. [I asked,] “Why am I walking around with a micro-mini on and wearing gloves and a hat, also?” And so, he said, “I want to tell you something, we are so proud of you because, you are finally letting reality out.” Now, Ed, her husband could have fainted at that time. [laughter] This is what, he is just looking at me, just like that [shows look of shock]. [The black officer said,] “We are very proud, thank you, because we know racism exists, and you bucked it. And now, they know that it does exist.” And I said, “Oh, you welcome. I don't have a problem with that. [laughter] I don't have a problem showing you what is going on.” Ed stopped being the OWC President, she bowed out [sighing sound]. The other thing that also wives would do, would say “They are saluting us.” No, they're not. They are saluting the car, because you had the decals on saying you are an officer. And they used to say that, “We are going to park in our spaces.” I said, “We are not in the military. Those spaces are for our husbands. Why are we going to park in those spaces?” [The wives would respond,] “Well, we are married to them.” I said, “But, we

are not in the military.” So, that’s how down to Earth I was before that. I wouldn’t park in the parking spaces either. So, they told me, I just did not want to act like them, and I was a commanding officer's wife, and I should not act the way I was acting. That I was trying to buck the system. But, I just felt that we were not officers. They were officers and so we should have left their parking spaces alone and we should mingle with the people and park where they parked. So, all the people then started loving me. So-called “average” non-commission officers and those who were privates, they just started loving me. But, we had racism in the military, also. So, he had to write a rebuttal for controlling his wife. Going through a line, you all have seen in the movie, where the commanding officer and the wives are right there and they have to greet everyone. Well, I had to go through a line. I was young, I didn’t know. And, so, the commanding officer's wife said, “Hello, how are you?” I said, “Hello, how are you?” She says, “Everything is fine?” I said, “Of course, what about you?” Everybody almost died. I was not supposed to say anything else to her except, “Hello, how are you?” “I’m fine.” and move on. And I said, something else like, “Will I see you at such and such a thing?” And she said, “[gasp] Yes.” [laughter] If you don’t know these things, someone should teach you these protocols. But think like if you are young, black officer’s wife. Because I was young and black at that time. I did not know the protocol in the military. Needless to say, he had to go have another meeting because of me. The protocols are there; the racism is there. They were still trying to explain to me why all of the sudden Ed was not the Officers’ Wives Club President. I said, “But, you don’t have to explain it to me. I just asked what happened. You need to explain it to Ed.” Ed did not want to know, she didn’t want to know me. Ed didn’t speak to me anymore [laughter]. So, you are going to get that. You think you are protecting someone; you might end up getting cursed-out. It is like jumping in a fight. If you see a man and a woman, and all the sudden, the woman turns on you,

and it happens. So, you have to think about all of those things. Your help may not be wanted. Your help may not be needed. In racism, you are going to find [pretending to be a racist,] “No, no. Dislike her, I want you to just dislike her. Just for the sake of it, because I don’t like her, and you know, I think she’s just a racist.” The things that Trump is saying, what is he saying? And I am not trying to tell you all who to vote for. What is he saying when he goes “very, very” and “great, great.” and “she is just mean.” What, what fact is he using? And, Hillary Clinton goes in [and says,] “And number one, I am going to do this, and number two, I am going to do--.” Bull. No. So what is it the people are really saying? Not only in politics but in religion or whatever. All they are saying is, “I want you to have my same idea.” Why? We don’t have the same brain. We don’t have the same goals. But, we all bleed blood, and I bet you it’s red, and if it’s not, I don’t want to know you. [laughter] You might be from Mars then. But, I do know, all the blood I have seen for fifty years has been red. And, I do know, all of us in here, are probably some kin. You know, they can say “seventh generation” or whatever, but we are all related in some facet, somehow. And, if we’re not related, our children might grow up and marry each other, and you’re really going to be related then. [laughter] And all these grandchildren are coming out, like mine. Being part Japanese now over here, and that was not one of my favorite people at one time, and they had done nothing to me. So, I knew I was being stupid and ignorant. These people had never, had never done anything to me. You know, [pretending to say to herself] “Oh, my goodness, why are these ‘Japs’ over here?” And the people were saying the same thing, “Why are these ‘N’s’ over here?” Or why is it, Archie Bunker [pretending to be racist,] “Why are these ‘Polacks’ over here?” Archie Bunker’s show is a great show, to this day, to show how prejudice is so ignorant. And that’s what he was showing. Prejudice is totally ignorant. Racism is just as ignorant, but you cannot stop it. One of my nieces, we just had a reunion. One of my nieces was

saying, "It's all in the education, Auntie." I said, "Education has a lot to do with it. To try, to tweak, and twist things around, but how are you going to change the little KKK two-year old who says, 'N, N, N' all the way through?" I say, "Is that child wrong?" She goes [gasps]. I said, "He was taught that. He doesn't know any better. He doesn't know any different." You cannot be angry and want to kill this child. My grandpapa was just as prejudiced, he was just as prejudiced as he could be. I couldn't hate the whites and hear my momma was white and Indian. What am I going to do? Alex Haley came out, he did one thing, one way, just the African part. People don't even know. When he finished that, he came back and had family reunion with his whites. Did you all know that? Big family reunion, all on the news, with his white side. It's a lot people don't know [laughter]. Therefore, how can you hate one and not hate the other? And, yes, I am pro-black and I am pro-white. We just have to be pro-people. And it's not easy. Don't you think that I don't get my jaws tight now when I look at that news and I see someone else black that has been shot, because I do. And then, don't think I didn't get my jaws tight because those two white officers were sitting in their car and got shot in New York. Yes, I did get my jaws tight. That was unfair. They didn't know what was going on. They hadn't done anything, they just happened to have been white, and they were killed because they were white. We are being killed because we are black. All that is wrong. What is it that I can tell you all except, learn your history, don't repeat it. You do not have to love everybody, but you have to live with everybody. [laughter] You have to live with somebody. Be cordial at work. Be nice in your classes. People used to say, "Okay, here she goes. All that smiling and that hugging and kissing. She gets on my nerves." And I kept smiling and hugging. What is it? Fourteen frowns for smiles, fourteen wrinkles for smiles, and like seventy-two for frowning or something. I didn't care, I say, "I'm going to smile." I don't want to get wrinkled up. [laughter] What is the worst thing, from you all? What is the

worst thing that you all can think of after talking to me that could happen to the human being, in the human being, or the human body, or whatever? That you all can't overcome?

MB: There is nothing that you can't overcome.

EP: Thank you, there are things that you do not want to overcome.

MB: Right.

EP: There isn't anything that you can't overcome. Very, very good. Yeah. [laughter] That is it: if you want to do it, you can do it. Education is not just for the young. I educated my daughters to become the doctor and become the lawyer. With my sisters and brothers, that you all have no gotten to yet. [laughter] Yes, my baby sister is now a judge, and she was a city attorney for Hampton, the very first one. My oldest brother has his Ph.D., he used to be a principal of schools around here. My sister on now, that is on television for proton therapy, Gloria Cox, you all are going to see her on the news tonight on Channel Thirteen. She will be at that gala for two hundred and fifty dollars, if you all want to go see it, two hundred and fifty dollars a piece [laughter]. At Hampton University, this Saturday. So, she is representing them, and she used to be a security guard. My other sister, Sandra, also worked in the school system, and my brother used to work at Fort Monroe, and he is retired now. That is the one that left us and moved up to Richmond. [laughter] Okay, and then it is me, and you see my credentials, and I pay to maintain all those things, too. I just paid a hundred and sixty- five dollars to maintain my food supervisors thing. A hundred sixty- five dollars, and I don't even cook, but they consider me an expert, okay. My other sister (Namy? 1:25:30) was chair of the Business Department at Tabb High School in Poquoson or in Yorktown, wherever Tabb is. So, yes, we all did something. And as I was saying, the baby is the judge. With all my credentials, then, I'm able to go around and to all the assisted living facilities and other places and teach just about on anything. If they say it

[laughter], “Food.” Okay, one man when I was a state inspector said, “Oh, Health Department comes in and inspects me, a white guy.” I said, “Oh, Lord. Here I go.” [laughter]. [The man said] “Not you.” He is not saying not me as a state inspector. He is saying not me as a woman, and not me being black. [The man said] “You are not going to tell me anything.” So, I said, “Okay.” I was saying how, “I am sorry, you got your eggs on the wrong shelf.” [Sound of disgust from man] [Man says,] “You don’t inspect this.” And I said, “Okay.” So, I left out the kitchen. And, I went to his supervisor, and I said, “Okay, call your man in here again, because I want to say this to him.” And she was saying, “Please don’t write us up, please don’t close us down.” So he came, I said, “Now, you said, ‘Who inspects you?’” [The man said,] “The Health Department inspects us, not you.” I said, “Well, the Health Department is city, I’m state, and when I close up this building, how can Health Department get in here?” [The man said] “I am so sorry, I am so sorry, I lost my mind.” [laughter] So, as a woman, you’re going to be ostracized, and we are trying to break that ceiling, and it’s still difficult to do. And, we are not being paid the same thing that they are being paid, either. So, we have several ceilings to come through, you with the racism [points to MB], and you don’t [points to LP and BDH] think that you are out of it, you’re not, because you are young. And, we look at you all like you do not know anything, and you want to know everything, and you think you know everything, and that’s why I say things have been reversed now. So, now they are hiring the elderly over you. They don’t even want to deal with you. I just heard that today when I went into a facility, I had to conduct a training. [The facility said,] “Ms. Pitchford, we need some medication aides, we need some direct care staff, we need some administrative assistance, and we don’t want anyone young.” So, what is that? Are you being ostracized? Yeah. Is that not equal to racism? Sure it is, because it is an “ism.”

Feminism, yes. [laughter] Any “ism” is wrong. They are not going to hire young people, they

don't want you, because they are scared that you are going to come in, you're going to party, and leave. Scared that you are going to be scared of the elderly people. Scared that you might be scared of the mentally challenged. And you're definitely going to be scared when these big men come up to you and say what they're going to do to you. And wait until the night, and if you show fear, they got you. As short as I am, they're all scared to death of me. I always say one thing, I call the cops first and then I say, "Cops are coming." Everybody else says, "If you do not do this, I am going to call the police." They don't care about that, but they say, "Ms. Pitchford will call the police on you in a heartbeat." [laughter] I call that police, "Hey." When they walk in [the police say,] "What, what did you say? What have you been saying?" [The patients say,] "No, no, no." So, yes, you've got some "ism's" against you all for being young. And they will say, "Don't bring me white girls. If you have majority black—". Because, you all might be scared to work, work with the blacks. I got majority white all in my corporate places. It's all, "We do not want blacks." Now, can you fathom them saying that to me? But, they don't see it like that. [The workers say,] "Can you get someone that won't cause a little chaos in here?" I'm going, "What does that mean? Tell me what that means." They will not say it. [The workers say,] "Someone that would get along with everyone." I say, "I get along with everyone." "Well, Ms. Pitchford, we know, but--." I'm going, "I dare you say it. [laughter] I just dare you to say it." And, guess who I walk in with? [laughter] I do it, I really do. "Go over there and apply for that position and put my name on it." And when they see my name as a reference, she will get hired. Wherever I put my name on, anyone, if I tell you all to put my name as a reference, you will be hired. That's how people think about me. Because, I definitely paid my dues all these years. Alright, any more questions? I see you all--

BDH: What do you view as the most important accomplishments of the Civil Rights Movement?

EP: Integration [laughter].

BDH: What do you regard as the unfinished legacies of the movement?

EP: Integration [laughter].

BDH: What are the most pressing problems with regard to race relations today?

EP: Integration [laughter]. No, we need true integration. We need to stop all this racism. We are just all one person. We are one people. We all bleed blood, and we need to love one another, and you can't love everyone, I am going to tell you now. Even your relatives get on your nerves. And, if you're in a dorm, your roommates get on your nerves. [laughter] That is called congregated living. You will get on each other's nerves, that's a reality. And, I do not want you all to ever get pregnant. But when you get pregnant, if someone says, "Good morning," to you, that's going to get on your nerves. Your hormones are going to be different. You just got to learn how to live with it. Say this, "More pros than cons, I am going to live with this person." That's it, everyone is not going to be perfect. You think I'm perfect? I wouldn't want to live with me. [laughter] Other people, I have more so-called adopted children, "Oh, you are going to be my momma, you're going to be my aunt, yada, yada, ya." They think it's the best thing in the world. My nephews and nieces wanted me to adopt them because I was so interactive with my children. And my children going "Hmm, you all just don't know her." [laughter] My mother said this, "Behind closed doors, reality occurs." And you don't know what is going on behind somebody's closed doors, and they don't know unless you tell them. So, get along with people, but they are going to get on your nerves, that's the reality, ladies. And, just say, "Hey, I am going to live, I am going to still enjoy this person." What is that song? Barbara Streisand, I love me some Barbara Streisand, and Gladys Knight. I told you all I am a very weird black person [laughter]. What is it? You know, Barbara Streisand and Gladys Knight did it, you all should

know this song. Yes, you do. I am amazed at you three. You know, you want to forget but you always remember something about all the loved ones, all the loving things they did, and then you can forget all the bad things. And when I think of that song, I am going to call you and say, “You all should be just embarrassed.” In fact, put a pause on here. That song, the way we were, is the way you need to think about people. At that time, that person could be plucking your last nerve, and then, if you all separate, you are going to say, “Wow, I remember the way we were.” And, so, you can live like that. And, you hear people saying, “I remember the old days, and I wish they were back” and all that, but you can make today the old days. You can’t change anything about the past, except you don’t have to repeat it. And, we think about the present, its p-r-e-s-e-n-t, it’s a gift. The present is your present. The future, don’t be scared of it, embrace it, do whatever you want. Make your children become anything that you want them to. You can call it “steering.” And, I did steer my children. I purchased medical toys for my doctor [laughter]. I purchased brief cases and business cards for my lawyer [laughter], and of course she had an aunt who was a lawyer, because I was working for my sister when I became a paralegal and went to the Supreme Court. So, it’s not steering, but just give them a little guidance, a little push, and you all can have that same guidance and that push, and I hope that I have helped you all in some kind of way tonight.

BDH: Yes. One final question. As a survivor of the Civil Rights Era, what is some advice that you can give to students now going through similar situations?

EP: Bite that bullet [laughter]. Bite that bullet. Do not shoot that bullet, you hold onto it, because that person is going to be out of your life. Those five minutes, that person’s plucking your last nerve. You are ready to kill them. You won’t even recognize that person tomorrow. You know, as I said, the players will change. So that person right there, tomorrow you might meet

somebody, say, “Hey, come on, you got a job, because I saw you on television, and I saw the way that you ignored that ignorant person. So, we need you in our company.” Just bite that bullet and keep on going. Remember your own goals. Don’t let anyone take those away from you. Keep your dreams, and guess what? You don’t have to have one dream. You don’t have to have one goal, you can have several. It doesn’t matter. I know I’ve got a whole bunch of them [laughter]. You can look on there [points to her business card] and see what? Some of everything. Name some of the things, look at them. [laughter] CCHC, Child Care Health Consultant, QMHP, Qualified Mental Health Professional.

BDH: PS, HCO

EP: Healthcare Oversight Nurse

BDH: LALFA

EP: Licensed Assistant Living Facility Administrator

BDH: LPN

EP: Yes, Licensed Nurse. I am also a licensed Real Estate Agent. You can turn on the back, what else? [laughter]

BDH: Activity Director

EP: I am an activity, qualified Activity Director. I paid for that, too.

BDH: Food Service Manager

EP: Yes, I just paid that hundred and sixty-five dollars to renew that. Yeah, so these things, you don’t have to do one thing, and that is what--people who know me will say that. Said [people say], “Pitchford is not worried about a job. She does so many things, she can walk from one place to the other.” And that’s what I did. When I left the state, bam, opened up my job, opened up my school, right then and there. Because I was already doing it on the side. You don’t have to

have one goal. Be anything, be the next President of the United States if you want to be, but they don't make that much money. So, go and marry somebody like Bill Gates [laughter] or find Warren Buffet's grandson and help in that business. And ladies, buy some stock, okay? [laughter] Buy stock, do you all know that you can buy stock at five and ten dollars a share?

MB: Yeah, I bought four or five of them.

EP: Okay, good. Instead of buying toys for all of your little sisters and brothers, buy them some stock. That's what I have been buying for my children forever. And, buy safe stock. There are such things as safe stocks. Did you all know that?

LP: [Shakes head no]

EP: [laughter] She said [referring to LP shaking her head], No. And, that is true, people don't know safe stocks. So, what would be one?

MB: Like Apple?

EP: Apple's not safe. I've got Apple, but Apple is not safe [laughter]. Where do the people go?

MB: Like, Walmart, and McDonalds, and Starbucks, and big places.

EP: Stock one-zero-one, go where you spend your money and where other people spend their money. And, I don't know about teenage stuff, so guess what I have to do? I have to go to my great-nieces and say, "What do you buy?" I have to go pregnant women and say, "Where do you go?" I have to go to mothers and say, "Where do you shop?" And, I listen to them, and that's what I buy. So, go where you spend your money. I don't even drink Starbucks, I don't drink coffee. But I buy Starbucks. But, guess what, guess what stock I have never lost money on? The Dollar Store. Never. I have lost money, Apple and all of them. I gained it back. I buy Google, I love me some Google. But, I have never lost money on Dollar, that Dollar Store [laughter]. So, you buy, buy yourself stock, just do that, do it for yourselves. What else do you all do? What do

you use every day? Every day, you cut that light on. Okay, so ladies, invest in your lives, use stocks, purchase annuities, and invest in your goals and your dreams.

BDH: Okay, thank you.

MB: Thank you.

LP: Thank you.

BDH: Thank you so much for your time.

END OF INTERVIEW

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