

Jesse Taken Alive - Being Thankful for Elders - OSEU

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And I really always thank our elders for maintaining the truth, if you will, maintaining the language, the sacrifices, everything that they did so we can today talk about how our language is coming back, see the involvement by young people in our ceremonies, which were outlawed, if you will, until August 11th of 1978. So we see all those wonderful things happening, and it's just awesome to be a part of, I could still hear my great-grandfather, who didn't speak English, giving me advice.

When I worked at a public school here on a reservation, I'd walk home and I'd stop by and see him, and he did not speak one word of English, and I'm really truly gifted to have learned a speaker language to be able to converse with him, and the sage knowledge, if you will, the Lakota understandings of life that he impressed upon me.

I try my best to do that likewise with young people and those around me, and it's a think back about those, other elders, my parents, of course, and now me getting a chance to be a, my missus and I, I should say, we're getting a chance to be grandparents, not only parents but grandparents, and how do we do that, you know, and we had some awesome teachers, awesome teachers, and of course what we call the creator, Tunkashila, which means grandfather, when our grandchildren call me, they don't say Tunkashila, but they say the derivative of it, it's a lala, and it's a humbling, my spirit is humbled when they say that each and every time, whether it's in public, at home, or whatever, because it's humbling because of the word itself, they're, in our language, which is spiritual, they're referring to me as the person on this earth that they expect to be that grandfather, so that's why it's very, very humbling for me as a Lakota man at my age, I'm not old, but I'm not young, I'm stuck in that gray area right now, but I hope to be old, it's still walk the earth.