Fall 2017

Oral History Conversation with Yasmin Alkhal

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I'm Elona Bebla at the University of San Diego. Hi I'm Nicholas Del Mundo. I am a senior at the University of San Diego. Hi My name is Yasmin Alkhal.

I'm a new immigrant to the United States. I just moved three years ago. Nice meet you guys. Nice to meet you, too. So we kind of want to start to just kind of get a little more background about your time in Syria like maybe growing up. Could you kind of share with us?

A memorable story or a good memory you have from Syria maybe something you tell regularly to people you know your first meeting like that are from America and want to learn more about Syria. Yes. Like what kind of memories?
There's something that pops into your head would be cool. It's

a beautiful country. I love Syria. We grew up in

a safe place. Beautiful. We had beautiful childhood

but I had this decision to move to United States of because of my kids'

future here. How many kids do you have? I have two kids. Boy and girl. Nine years old and six

years old. Oh that's wonderful. So they came with the right time. Adam was

six and Talia was three. Do you want to tell us about your kids

a little bit? Adam is very smart very smart and he's hard

boy to convince about anything. Always wondering and asking him to

want to understand everything and then even when we moved here he had

a lot of questions. He was he was six years old he asked me like
a very very important question about
religions about culture about yeah.

You can’t imagine. None of my friends’
kids would ask the same questions, but I’m

happy I answered him. And because

you have to prepare your kids prepare
yourself at the beginning to fit

a new, into

a new country new culture then to prepare
the new generation. I agree it’s totally

for them it’s more
than more than us it’s easy. But

for but also as well because
some some families immigrants.

What I see from my friends experience.
That of the family lead their

kids like fit in their community, in the
country, in the new culture by themselves

without is little bit of guidance
let’s say. They were separate

from their families, but I’m not saying
that they have to live like back in
Syria or wherever they are. No, I'm saying it's the balance because the balance when

when we make the balance in the kids' personalities it's

much easier for them for us for us and they will be more stronger because

they will be proud of who they are. So what are kind of like your hopes for

your children in the future? So you told that you came from their

future, what do you kind of envision the future to be for them?

Adam should be a lawyer. He should be. He knows that. They tease

a lawyer or whatever it happened in the house or whatever like by example something

from I don't know I can't remember but it's something from the government something

happened yeah because of my papers because it was pending case and he, Adam,

is very sad and always like it's
a problem for him to be honest. That at the beginning I didn’t explain to

00:04:19.760 --> 00:04:25.380
him because you were too young that we came here and we applied for asylum case.

00:04:25.390 --> 00:04:30.120
We didn’t think me and my husband it will take that long.

00:04:32.970 --> 00:04:45.420
We did the first interview, were happy, and then we explained to Adam after maybe

00:04:45.430 --> 00:04:55.950
almost two years this interview because he would he kept asking, “When we’re going to

00:04:55.960 --> 00:05:02.200
see our relatives? When we can see our grands?” Then I said

00:05:02.210 --> 00:05:48.100
there are some papers we are waiting when we get them we can leave and visit like

00:05:48.110 --> 00:05:57.000
Turkey or whatever place we can see them. And after the first

00:05:57.010 --> 00:06:32.100
interview and they ask us for

00:06:32.110 --> 00:06:55.700
a second one. So he kept asking when we’re going to leave and I said it’s

00:06:56.010 --> 00:07:18.900
pending mama, it’s pending. Who is not giving us this paper? And I say it’s

00:07:19.100 --> 00:07:28.740
immigration. Sue them. Yeah he kept
always saying "sue them", so I said you have to be a lawyer.

Yeah. If you would be so kind, would you mind walking us through what you were thinking and feeling when you decided to come to America and what that was like for you and your family. It was a hard decision. Let me tell you, because I have a sister in law who lives and forty years ago are not thirty years ago or almost she is now in Tennessee I have a brother last maybe twenty years ago here so my husband, his family, most of them they visited the United States except him. He went to all Europe when he was young and then when we moved to Qatar we applied for a visa because he wanted to visit
his sister. He wanted to see

00:06:31.970 --> 00:06:38.200
the United States. It was a dream for him. I wasn't that curious like him, but he

00:06:38.730 --> 00:06:44.490
was because his family lived and visited here, so

00:06:46.730 --> 00:06:53.380
he had the idea to get the visa. Two thousand and ten it was my

00:06:53.390 --> 00:07:00.160
last visit to Syria. Every year when I lived in Qatar, every

00:07:00.170 --> 00:07:07.070
year they... I mean

00:07:07.110 --> 00:07:13.870
we used to visit Syria every vacation every summer. Two thousand and

00:07:13.880 --> 00:07:20.040
ten it was the last time. Two thousand and eleven I get pregnant with the Talia, so

00:07:21.330 --> 00:07:26.830
where to go because I delivered Adam in Syria. I went to my family. Then I went

00:07:26.840 --> 00:07:33.710
back to Qatar. For Talia, he said let's go and visit my

00:07:33.750 --> 00:07:40.000
sister in law and United States. Then we came here I had Talia here in two thousand

00:07:40.100 --> 00:07:46.880
and eleven. And it was beautiful. We visited

00:07:47.380 --> 00:07:54.040
we visited her and then we
came to San Diego. Then it was

00:07:54.660 --> 00:07:54.880
it's

00:07:54.890 --> 00:08:01.940
a beautiful place San Diego of course. It's it's

00:08:01.950 --> 00:08:07.050
for tourists, so we enjoyed
it. But it's different it's

00:08:07.060 --> 00:08:13.900
way different from vacation place in United States to place your living

00:08:13.910 --> 00:08:15.390
in. Especially as

00:08:15.400 --> 00:08:22.380
a starting for us. That time we didn't decide to

00:08:22.390 --> 00:08:27.460
move of course. We went back in two
thousand and twelve. We came as

00:08:27.470 --> 00:08:33.710
a vacation me and my husband. We left
the kids in Qatar. Then the third time we

00:08:33.720 --> 00:08:36.900
came also all together as a family for

00:08:36.909 --> 00:08:42.690
a vacation. Then two thousand and fourteen,
two thousand and thirteen, actually, this

00:08:42.700 --> 00:08:49.420
is interesting story. He was convincing me
to move here. I wasn't like, I'm happy

00:08:49.430 --> 00:08:50.390
there because Qatar is

00:08:50.400 --> 00:08:57.250
a nice place. It’s stable. You
can make good money but it’s not

00:08:57.570 -- 00:09:04.480
stable as much as you’re looking
for as a Syrian let’s say because after the

00:09:04.490 -- 00:09:10.980
war started in two thousand and eleven
things changed for us as a Syrian. Like my husband

00:09:11.040 -- 00:09:13.870
was thinking we have to think of Plan B

00:09:13.910 -- 00:09:19.160
if something happened because you have
no rights wherever you lived there, so

00:09:21.160 -- 00:09:27.940
he said if something comes up usually
when you when you left your job

00:09:28.100 -- 00:09:35.010
or they fire you in the Gulf area you can
go back to your country or you can change

00:09:35.760 -- 00:09:42.390
the country from Dubai to
Qatar to Kuwait or whatever. Now I mean in

00:09:42.400 -- 00:09:49.140
the war time if you moved
from where you were terminated

00:09:49.150 -- 00:09:55.670
from your job you can’t you can’t obviously
you can go to back to Syria. And they

00:09:55.680 -- 00:09:56.220
won’t give you

00:09:56.230 -- 00:10:03.100
a visa to any country. The visas is hard
for so I think he was thinking well
let's think of Plan B.

If something happens, we have kids.
Two thousand and thirteen

when we came here we visited the kids Museum.

So my kids were too young and they were playing.

Even though they were in international school in Qatar

but I saw things in kids museum and he was convincing me, trying to

convince me all the time then I looked at him if you ask him I said I need

my kids to grow up here. In kids museum.
Yeah because this country it's not

about me. It's hard or what I was thinking it's hard for me and my husband

in our age to get into

a new culture. It's hard to new start when we were already established for eight years.

In a new country, I don't want to move. But it's not about
us. I was thinking of moving for more than one and a half year in Qatar. Should I do it or not? And he said I cannot make the decision by myself, you have to help me. So at the last at the end of taking my decision I was thinking of one thing. Should I go or not? I was studying what's the benefits and what's the difficulties. The difficulties on me, not my kids. So should I be selfish? Because I’m having like good life there and I’m established.

Or should I start a new beginning for them, so I took the decision. I have to do it for them that’s why when I saw the kids museum, it was amazing. This country is made for the new generation. Yeah.

So we moved. So you
kind of mentioned that it's hard. It was hard the first year it was very hard

I talk told you because maybe I'm not that to young. Don't ask me about my age.

But because me and my husband we lived like very Arabic lifestyle. Let's say, it's not the fast circle of life.

Here it's something when you wake up from the morning until the evening you keep running. No stop. There is no way to stop. So this, in our age it's something that will happen, we will get to it. But it takes time. It took time for us. For me especially. Like I kept sitting one year in my house in a culture shock. Even though my husband was pushing me. "Don't sit."

Go outside like communicate. Your friends are only Arab. You don't have to do this.
And I believe like he said “go take some courses whatever whatever,

00:13:49.630 --> 00:13:56.170 volunteer, anything. Don’t sit.” I believe like

00:13:56.620 --> 00:14:03.460 because your kids as an immigrant, I saw that in my in Adams eyes one

00:14:03.480 --> 00:14:09.410 time. When they kept asking me “mama volunteer volunteer.”

00:14:10.630 --> 00:14:17.280 The first year I didn’t volunteer because of something in my paper I don’t

00:14:17.290 --> 00:14:22.130 know I can’t remember but like I was relieved that I’m not volunteering anyway

00:14:22.140 --> 00:14:24.070 because I was

00:14:24.080 --> 00:14:30.860 a little bit isolated myself.

Let’s be honest. Then

00:14:30.870 --> 00:14:36.250 next year they kept asking you have to volunteer. I said OK there’s no way and my

00:14:36.260 --> 00:14:41.820 friends advised me you have to volunteer at the kids’ school. OK. I went there.

00:14:43.030 --> 00:14:47.140 My kids, their kids in Poway, so it’s

00:14:47.150 --> 00:14:53.860 a very good district there that’s why we lived there. The
community was very welcoming, nice people but even though deep inside me, I feel, let me say, I was isolating myself, yeah.

He was very proud and very happy whatever I do in his class.

Then one time I had a neighbor. She's from England and another from Mexico and other American and another Iranian. And her friends they used to do, my neighbors, they used to do a movie night in their garage so Adam came in tell me "Mom they invited your for movie night for kids." I said "OK OK I need time. So enjoy your night." So he told me that there is a lot of mothers. You have to come and he kept insisting.

I had my drink I went outside. There were also her friends, mixed
countries, sitting there and they opened the conversation with me. "Where are you from?" "Syria." "Interesting, they start asking about Syria and our war. I saw Adam like he is very proud when he saw me communicate and telling people about my story and and everyone was looking at me and I have the attention. I was telling our story and how we moved and back in Syria and he kept coming to me and hugged me and kissed me. So I felt like if I’m strong, they will be strong. If I’m isolated, they will keep feeling in this country that they’re strangers to the end of their lives. It’s working on us as a parent more than them. They will fit. They start laughing at my language now. Wow yeah that’s great.
So kind so it sounds like you’re making steps to get more ingratiated in the community here and things like that, so kind of like thinking back to you know the community left in Qatar you, so you left Qatar to America? Yes.

Are there people that you left behind in Qatar or Syria that you’re still close to and have you had a chance to like communicate with them at all? In Qatar? Yeah yes sure I’m communicating. I have a sister in law there and we have a lot of friends, so we’re communicating with them. It’s hard to over there right now.

There are terminations from there it’s you know it’s hard. So my husband two days ago heard about news in the Gulf area and said "See we took the right decision all right." I think you should listen to me.

And then you kind of went over it a little bit
but if you wouldn't mind. Can you tell us about the asylum

00:18:25.300 --> 00:18:31.970
process? I know you came here and I had views
to interviews and still pending I didn't

00:18:31.980 --> 00:18:37.790
get that quote to. All graduation
on the approval I didn't.

00:18:39.800 --> 00:18:45.130
Get it get approved it. So it's been think
whenever we called them my husband went
to every. Wednesday maybe they
said it's pending and also

00:18:52.060 --> 00:18:57.170
many times they said it's it's very close
some of them because they knew have.

00:18:59.660 --> 00:19:06.410
You will you will hear the good news very
closely but wouldn't you think it is not

00:19:06.420 --> 00:19:12.920
pressuring you are like of course.
A lot. Sometimes it's frustrating

00:19:13.130 --> 00:19:19.550
sometimes it's for Adam and sometimes I
ignore it I just ignore I want to forget

00:19:19.560 --> 00:19:26.070
about it but the problem is OK I'm leaving
here anyway I'm leaving. But the problem

00:19:26.080 --> 00:19:27.930
is the main problem is.

00:19:32.910 --> 00:19:38.240
That. I want my kids to see relatives.
Aunts Uncles Grant parts grandma whenever he heard about any relatives he's going to visit weekend for a little bit he gets on that whenever. Like I don't have and you would you know I don't have uncle or aunt to spend time like it's very very my husband when. We had a conversation about like Kip his personality you know I was telling him it's my husband's name is Isa So. I said there is part it's missing in our kid's life like when we used to get mad from our parents when I just used took care to collect my my stuff and run away to my grave beds with it with no with a plastic bag. My clothes say my mom's when you go I'm going to my. So this part in their lives in their personality they feel strange I remember that I
with Yasmin Alkhal

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00:20:48.890 --> 00:20:55.520
feel strength because of my grandparents
because they blame my parents

00:20:55.780 --> 00:21:02.740
don't do this. So it's give
us something my kids does and

00:21:02.910 --> 00:21:08.210
it. Doesn't. So I want them at least just.

00:21:13.040 --> 00:21:19.680
I'm mature enough to
understand that this is this

00:21:19.690 --> 00:21:26.570
circle of life and. This time
I'm going through seven years I

00:21:26.580 --> 00:21:33.500
didn't see my parents seven years they
didn't make my my daughter so I know it was

00:21:33.510 --> 00:21:39.120
hard decision because of my kids' future. But they would think.

00:21:40.450 --> 00:21:45.350
So now but now you know and they're here
do you think that you are around him in

00:21:45.360 --> 00:21:51.290
Kandahar and Syria will also come to America
or if they get the chance of course

00:21:52.200 --> 00:21:58.870
I have never Phew I raised him he's like
my son he's now eighteen years old.

00:22:00.280 --> 00:22:06.960
He just going to read it from high
school he went to college. Now just so.
I wish like this is from my dreams
so bring him here to me to live with

because after he graduate from.
College he will go to the army

there's no way you have brother so he's
going to be and I don't want him to be

it's yeah you have to like I
wish I can I have anything

I can give you. He's one
of the main people I

want him to to be with me more
than my parents believe it or not.

Because because my parents
we advised them when

Aleppo went very crazy in two-thousand
and thirteen I think we said "Please,

please I have a sister
who lives in Dubai

a brother in Turkey." So we tell them please
go out, you have to go out, there's no way.

You stay there and it's very dangerous
in Syria. In Aleppo especially.
So they said no we will not leave our house, our bed, our memories. No. If something happened in our age, let it happen. They won’t leave their homes and also I have sister who is married there with her kids. It’s hard to move for her and they said we can’t leave your sister. We’ll stay with them.

So you know it sounds to me like family is very important to you, something you value a lot and so when you were thinking about coming to America for your children, did you like consult any family members to talk about your decision to them. My father knew. All of them are supporting. My husband, I remember the last conversation we had in two thousand and fourteen before I left. I was packaging in Qatar. Already I didn’t see him from two thousand and ten it was four years and I knew
when I'm moving here with my case
it will take minimum two years.

00:24:38.660 --> 00:24:45.650
So I called him and I would cry. I was
crying and he said, "Why are you crying?" I

00:24:45.660 --> 00:24:51.370
said, "Because I'm leaving and I know
that I'm not going to see you for

00:24:51.380 --> 00:24:57.630
a while." I don't know what time and my
parents are not young.

00:24:57.670 --> 00:25:02.760
My father now is
eighty-three. So he said,

00:25:05.370 --> 00:25:11.580
"Either way, we didn't
see you since four years. Go.

00:25:12.360 --> 00:25:17.260
Don't look back. Build your kids'
future. Don't look back. We're fine."

00:25:19.670 --> 00:25:25.390
Yeah even
though my father is very attached to me,

00:25:25.660 --> 00:25:31.100
very, and my mother says I moved
here like every couple days she had

00:25:32.010 --> 00:25:38.930
a dream about me. Yeah.

00:25:40.040 --> 00:25:44.740
So like doing a transition
it's been hard and all that. So besides

00:25:44.750 --> 00:25:47.720
like your children, wanting to be
strong for them, what has made it

00:25:47.730 --> 00:25:52.340
a little bit easier to transition from
life in the Middle East to American life?

00:25:52.350 --> 00:25:58.600
I don't find anything difficult
because they're young, they're young. Yeah.

00:25:59.050 --> 00:26:06.020
I told you it's not hard. It was the
right time for them to move. It wasn't hard.

00:26:06.770 --> 00:26:11.340
Is it different for Talia than Adam because
she was

00:26:11.350 --> 00:26:18.210
born in America?
Different? Yeah. Different like what?

00:26:18.510 --> 00:26:25.170
Like what field? Do you see in your family
a difference because she born here and is a citizen?

00:26:25.180 --> 00:26:30.390
And Adam has always had questions that he's so intuitive? He recently

00:26:30.400 --> 00:26:37.390
just recently he realized that
she is American and he said why?

00:26:40.850 --> 00:26:46.500
Because you're born here. We couldn't
go to Syria because it was war in two

00:26:46.510 --> 00:26:53.440
thousand and eleven. He didn't
consider it an advantage for her and

00:26:53.450 --> 00:26:53.640
that's
a good sign. I'm very relieved for this because I always wanted him to be proud of who he is, so he didn't take it as a privilege, but he just want to travel. To see his relatives.

So kind of pivoting a little bit, you told us, you know, recently, you started working about

a year ago but you've been here for about three years.

What led up to you beginning working again? Let me tell you a story. I forgot to mention this, very important. We came with good savings, me and my husband, but we lost everything because with our pending asylum they left us one and a half year. Let's say, the first two years

there is one and a half year without work permits. We couldn't work. Me and my husband, David,
so we couldn't make money.
So we kept spending from our savings.

In the third year,
stayed in Gap also without

work permit for almost six months.
So from almost three years because of

their one and a half to two years with

no work permit. So once you got those did
you start working? Yes,

exactly. At the beginning,
I was volunteering. I met with the

Syrian people and there I occasionally saw

friends mine
and they said there's

a lot of refugees who's coming
to San Diego. It looks like

San Diego is going to
have a big number.

They said that they were
volunteering and collecting donations and
stuff. Most went to the families who live in El Cajon and City Heights, so they went there from Syria. One Syrian family to guide them.

They showed them to others. They said "Do you want to volunteer?" I said "Of course I want to volunteer, so I started collecting donations in my garage and I went there every couple weeks maybe.

Like our cars were so full that you can't see in the mirror. So we when they're volunteering then we had realized there are needs way more than donations, first. Second, we want to know how many families there lived there because we felt like when we, from time to time, find a family after a couple of weeks maybe you feel guilty because they were sitting on the ground,
they have nothing, and you don't know where they are, so we think

00:30:24.900 --> 00:30:31.500
that we have to find a solution. We have
to know all the families, all of them.

00:30:31.720 --> 00:30:37.800
Addresses. Like when they are
arriving, who is coming next.

00:30:38.730 --> 00:30:45.670
We contact one of the organizations, first a
Jewish family, then the other and there are four

00:30:45.670 --> 00:30:45.990
coming to San Diego.

00:30:45.100 --> 00:30:51.260
resettlement agencies here and they said like
all in all there is two hundred families

00:30:51.280 --> 00:30:58.200
And on the
following few months

00:30:59.120 --> 00:30:59.540
there are

00:30:59.550 --> 00:31:06.960
a huge number going
to arrive at the same time, so the

00:31:06.970 --> 00:31:13.690
resettlement agencies are responsible
for things. There are other things that

00:31:14.580 --> 00:31:20.570
when we sit with them like OK
they have to buy for them beds

00:31:22.040 --> 00:31:28.330
and some items for the
kitchen.
Also there is government assistance. It’s not covering the rent and these people from the place they come from, they stayed in camps, most of them for six years almost. And then most of them they have to work as laborers, let’s say, but even the laborers need cars, transportation.

They need a little bit of English to communicate language,

so these things need time for them. The father cannot support his family and he don’t have self-transportation and he don’t have zero English, so we establish our organization as a nonprofit as a part of SC and Chicago under their umbrella.
There is many amazing ladies in our team one of them she did

00:32:50.080 --> 00:32:57.010
a big fundraiser, the others start collecting grants from places,

00:32:57.420 --> 00:33:01.990
so we supported two hundred families with rents.

00:33:04.350 --> 00:33:08.130
Most of them now we’re closing the cars issue problem.

00:33:10.580 --> 00:33:17.360
Furniture maybe sometimes used sometimes new, it depends

00:33:17.680 --> 00:33:23.950

00:33:24.750 --> 00:33:30.720
Sorry we’re talking about financially everything we support them. And so this is

00:33:31.320 --> 00:33:36.660
something you helped start? Yes, so when I was volunteering I was looking for

00:33:36.670 --> 00:33:42.750
a job at the same time we I got to work permits and one of the team she called me

00:33:43.040 --> 00:33:49.930
and I attended the meetings with their organizations. Most of our team

00:33:49.930 --> 00:33:56.610
is volunteering, yeah, but she said, "Yasmin I know that you are looking for

00:33:56.630 --> 00:34:02.820
a job and do you like to stay
with us as not volunteering as

00:34:02.840 --> 00:34:07.750
a case manager in El Cajon?” I said, “yes
of course I would love to.” I started with

00:34:07.770 --> 00:34:14.580
a part time job. It was nonprofit.
It was nothing to support my

00:34:14.590 --> 00:34:21.110
family, but I accepted.
Many people blamed me

00:34:21.120 --> 00:34:25.909
because I need to support my family. It was

00:34:25.929 --> 00:34:32.860
a challenge for me, but it was

00:34:32.870 --> 00:34:39.580
a message for me because let me say
that because I back in Qatar, the

00:34:39.590 --> 00:34:45.929
war affected me very very very bad.
I stayed my maybe one year one and

00:34:45.940 --> 00:34:51.420
a half year like in shock. I was crying in the nights and my husband said there is

00:34:51.429 --> 00:35:08.370
no news for you anymore because it was, it
was very bad for me and he said you have

00:35:08.910 --> 00:35:02.170
little kids you can’t do this.

00:35:05.840 --> 00:35:12.170
And I did nothing to my
people. Nothing to my country.

00:35:12.890 --> 00:35:19.520
Even donations, let me say, because to
be honest like there is so many good

00:35:19.530 --> 00:35:25.380
people, but there is so many. We
knew that there is so many people.

00:35:26.800 --> 00:35:33.480
If you donate something you can't guarantee
it will reach down there, you can't, so

00:35:33.490 --> 00:35:40.000
I am supporting my family of course
back in Syria. You have every Syrian

00:35:40.010 --> 00:35:46.800
man, every Syrian person, I
mean. Every Syrian person

00:35:47.180 --> 00:35:53.790
has a relative who was destroyed
by the war.

00:35:54.450 --> 00:35:59.420
He have to support every Syrian person. You have to support someone from his

00:35:59.430 --> 00:36:05.050
relatives there. So when you want to support
you always can find someone to support

00:36:05.060 --> 00:36:08.810
from your circle you know, but

00:36:12.910 --> 00:36:17.810
I didn't do anything in person,
you know, personally, so when I came

00:36:17.820 --> 00:36:24.350
here and started volunteering, I reach out with
these people who came fresh from

00:36:24.360 --> 00:36:30.840
war, from camps, from suffering
I feel very blessed, relieved,
to help them, so when I took the decision to work with the SC.

And at the beginning it was hard when I went there with a part time job it was the minimum. It was nothing for me, but I need to support my family as well. Most of my team, they volunteer because they are established since they born here or twenty years ago.

It's different for me. It was a message also for my son. I took him many times to the store, to pick up stuff, to drop it to the families, to give them aid, gift card, whatever. Whatever it takes I let him do it because he have to see what what his country suffering from how he can help. On many fields because on some level even he’s Syrian but he wasn’t raised in Syria,
so he can't feel his people.

00:37:46.250 --> 00:37:51.900
He feel the homeless people, by the way.
He feel the poor people over here, but I

00:37:51.910 --> 00:37:58.630
reach level with him that he didn't feel
his people what they're suffering. I don't

00:37:58.640 --> 00:38:02.150
know why, so I let him feel that.

00:38:05.770 --> 00:38:12.260
Wow. Yeah. So I think it's probably
going to be like our last question

00:38:12.920 --> 00:38:19.630
because we're kind of running low on time
but this been awesome. Thank you, your

00:38:19.980 --> 00:38:22.550
story is so incredible. So imagine I was

00:38:22.560 --> 00:38:27.950
a potential someone who was coming over
from from Syria or wherever or from Qatar to

00:38:27.960 --> 00:38:32.810
America. Is there some like advice
or motivation? You have kids or not?

00:38:34.960 --> 00:38:41.190
It depends. It's different. let's say
maybe like potentially both.

00:38:41.200 --> 00:38:45.600
Imagine I have kids
and imagine she doesn't.

00:38:48.600 --> 00:38:55.180
If you have kids. This is

00:38:55.190 --> 00:38:59.110
harder for you from single one, first. Second,

00:39:03.800 --> 00:39:10.540
Volunteer. Work. As fast as you can
because it’s, I told you at the beginning,

00:39:10.550 --> 00:39:15.460
it’s something that affects you. It’s
reflected to your kids. When you get used to

00:39:16.110 --> 00:39:22.130
get into this culture of this country. I
was always I feel these people, by the way,

00:39:22.170 --> 00:39:25.470
the refugees because
sometimes when I meet

00:39:25.690 --> 00:39:31.700
a family that is suffering and the
father is in depression. He’s in his sixties

00:39:32.310 --> 00:39:38.650
something like this and he
he said "Why they brought me here?"

00:39:39.550 --> 00:39:46.420
it’s hard for him to get into, but I
always advise them. I tell them my story

00:39:46.770 --> 00:39:53.130
and I said it’s not about you now. It’s
about them. Your kids when they

00:39:53.420 --> 00:39:58.760
when they learn the language, the
culture, the everything, they will guide you.

00:39:58.800 --> 00:40:05.570
They will help you. Don’t worry, it’s not
going to be difficult as you see now. Just

00:40:05.580 --> 00:40:05.960
give them
a few years. Your kids will guide you later, so I feel them because I told you

at the beginning I stayed even educated, I went to another country, I know English

so I know I'm strong personality, but even though I stayed in a truck for more than one year. How about them? So I advise them what I told you right now from the first of our conversation. I told them the same, I told them my story.

It's important because it's very very very important when you get into the system the culture that the country here, you will build strong kids. This is my point. If they saw you, because I saw many people, let me say, I was looking at the immigrants and I met people that they have been here since maybe fifteen to twenty
years. The parents, their English is nothing till now.

I saw weak kids, yes. And of course the language is the key. Of course the language is the key. For single,

it's it's way easier because as a parents we have many many things to think about.

Life is hard you have many difficulties but as a single you think about yourself to build yourself. I wish, not I wish, I mean if I were like my life would be completely different.

I would study college and I'm planning to study, by the way, I'm planning to study when I have time. When my husband can stand up on his feet to support us completely and he doesn't need me, I will study. And I will study photography as well. Yeah this is my
dream. I will do something for me in this country. The beauty of

00:42:41.330 --> 00:42:47.350
country it's totally opposite of our country. I love Syria, but there is

00:42:47.650 --> 00:42:53.740
culture here. It's different but when you reach like forty years old you're

00:42:53.750 --> 00:43:00.390
half dead. You're too old, but here it's the beginning. Forty years old,

00:43:00.430 --> 00:43:07.170
it's the beginning. I'm not forty don't ask me that, not yet.

00:43:07.180 --> 00:43:13.990
You can do whatever you want whenever the age you are. Yeah. This country like this so it's

00:43:21.000 --> 00:43:26.220
not too late for anything here. I mean this is the good side.

00:43:27.830 --> 00:43:33.560
Yeah. Awesome, so thank you so much. No problem, thank you so much for

00:43:33.570 --> 00:43:38.850
having me guys. I hope my story, my English, was helpful for you.

— End of Transcription —