

**Interview with Tania Garcia on April 25, 2023**

0:00:02.340,0:00:05.580

Good afternoon, Tania. So nice to see you.

0:00:06.180,0:00:07.740

Hello! Good afternoon.

0:00:09.600,0:00:13.500

I am very happy that you're here today to share your story with me,

0:00:13.500,0:00:16.440

with the future viewers of this video.

0:00:16.440,0:00:24.300

I'm going to begin with a short introduction, I'll read your biography.

0:00:24.300,0:00:26.700

I'll tell you a little bit about me and about the project, and then

0:00:26.700,0:00:28.980

we'll have a conversation about your life, okay?

0:00:28.980,0:00:29.640

Okay.

0:00:29.640,0:00:30.540

Great.

0:00:30.540,0:00:32.520

All right. So let me read your bio.

0:00:32.520,0:00:37.440

Tania Garcia was born and grew up in Jiquilisco, El Salvador.

0:00:37.440,0:00:40.200

She moved to the United States in 2020,

0:00:40.200,0:00:44.700

and now lives with her family in District Heights, Maryland.

0:00:45.420,0:00:51.120

She speaks Spanish and English. Tanya has been a student at Montgomery College since 2023,

0:00:51.120,0:00:55.500

and is majoring in Early Childhood Education, and Special Education.

0:00:55.500,0:00:59.280

Her career goal is to become a special education teacher.

0:01:00.060,0:01:03.120

In her spare time she enjoys spending time in nature,

0:01:03.120,0:01:07.740

going hiking, and going to the beach and reading about history.

0:01:08.820,0:01:09.720

Wonderful.

0:01:09.720,0:01:12.840

As you know, my name is Heather Bruce Satrom,

0:01:12.840,0:01:17.340

and I teach in ELAP English Language for Academic Purposes at Montgomery College.

0:01:17.340,0:01:20.580

This project is called History In the Making:

0:01:20.580,0:01:25.020

Documenting Stories of Immigrant and Refugee Students at Montgomery College.

0:01:25.020,0:01:28.980

The goal is to help others better understand the

0:01:28.980,0:01:32.280

experiences of immigrants and  
refugees in the United States.

0:01:33.060,0:01:36.180

And telling your story, will enable others to

0:01:36.180,0:01:39.900

better understand the challenges  
that immigrants and refugees face

0:01:39.900,0:01:44.100

and better appreciate the resilience and perseverance of people in your community.

0:01:44.100,0:01:46.740

I am grateful for your participation.

0:01:47.760,0:01:50.100

You had a chance to read the questions in advance,

0:01:50.100,0:01:53.160

but please note that all of  
the questions are optional.

0:01:53.160,0:01:56.520

If you want to skip a question  
that's fine just let me know,

0:01:56.520,0:02:00.900

and at any point you would like  
to take a break, that's fine too.

0:02:02.280,0:02:04.980

And the interview will take about an hour.

0:02:04.980,0:02:13.140

So today is Tuesday, April 25th 2023.  
Could you please tell me your full name.

0:02:14.040,0:02:18.840

Okay. My name is Tania Melissa Garcia Manzano.

0:02:18.840,0:02:21.720

And do I have permission to record this interview?

0:02:21.720,0:02:23.040

Yes.

0:02:23.760,0:02:24.720

Great.

0:02:24.720,0:02:30.180

So let's begin by talking a little bit about the place where you were born and where you

0:02:30.180,0:02:36.120

grew up. Can you tell me about the small city or town where you grew up in El Salvador?

0:02:36.780,0:02:43.620

Yeah, so I was born in Jiquilisco, 27 years ago, and

0:02:44.220,0:02:49.740

that's not a big city, and it's close to the coast

0:02:50.400,0:02:59.400  
of El Salvador, the Pacific Coast. So it is famous because of its bay. There is a

0:02:59.400,0:03:06.120  
bay close to my house, where I can go there like in 15 minutes out there. And

0:03:06.960,0:03:09.000  
the weather, that's something

0:03:09.000,0:03:13.920  
important for me. The weather is

0:03:16.140,0:03:16.800  
I don't know,

0:03:16.800,0:03:20.280  
how will you describe that?  
But it's not like here.

0:03:21.000,0:03:21.720  
so..

0:03:21.720,0:03:24.900  
-It's a very chilly day for April.  
-Yes!

0:03:27.000,0:03:28.440  
But it's nice.

0:03:28.440,0:03:34.200  
It's a nice place to go and  
see what you can find, or

0:03:34.200,0:03:36.360  
sometimes weekends.

0:03:37.860,0:03:47.460  
The people of the community they make local market. They sell food, prepare food, fruits,

0:03:47.460,0:03:50.100  
handcrafts and things like that.

0:03:50.100,0:03:52.920  
It's a very touristy place, too.

0:03:53.700,0:03:56.280  
It sounds.. It sounds like  
a lovely place to grow up.

0:03:56.280,0:03:57.240  
Yeah!

0:03:58.200,0:04:02.040  
Can you tell me a little bit about your family when you were growing up. Who did you live with?

0:04:03.300,0:04:07.800  
I lived with my parents and  
my sister, my mom and my dad.

0:04:11.580,0:04:17.280  
We lived there all the time. So my  
parents moved there when they got married,

0:04:18.180,0:04:21.840  
and because of my mom's work,

0:04:21.840,0:04:30.060  
it was easy for them to live there. And that's the only place that, I

0:04:30.960,0:04:33.060

lived my entire life.

0:04:33.720,0:04:36.900  
Tell me a little bit about the  
work that your parents did.

0:04:38.580,0:04:40.310  
My parents are teachers.

0:04:41.160,0:04:46.140  
My mom, she works at a local school there. My dad,

0:04:46.140,0:04:52.800  
now he's working at the administration area, but he's still in education.

0:04:54.300,0:04:55.080  
So,

0:04:55.080,0:04:59.820  
they have been working for 45 years in that.

0:05:01.260,0:05:03.180  
And you want to become a teacher, too.

0:05:03.180,0:05:07.980  
Yeah, almost all my family..  
All my family is full of teachers.

0:05:08.640,0:05:11.580  
Almost all of them.

0:05:12.540,0:05:18.900  
Tell me a little bit about your education growing  
up in El Salvador. What were your schools like?

0:05:21.300,0:05:27.300  
I went to the local school  
in my city, but just for about

0:05:27.900,0:05:37.860  
five years, and then my parents moved my sister and me to an only girls school in another city.

0:05:37.860,0:05:41.880  
So we finished our

0:05:43.500,0:05:50.820  
elementary school there. So and then I went back to my city to finish high school.

0:05:52.020,0:05:58.380  
And after that, I went to the capital  
city to study at the university.

0:06:01.740,0:06:03.360  
I lived in a

0:06:04.380,0:06:10.020  
dangerous city there, because it  
was close to where I was studying.

0:06:10.620,0:06:13.860  
So I finished my degree there

0:06:13.860,0:06:18.600  
five years. I graduated in 2018.

0:06:21.300,0:06:24.660  
So you graduated with a degree in education?

0:06:24.660,0:06:29.040  
No, no, it's in tourism.

0:06:29.040,0:06:30.360

Oh, interesting!

0:06:30.360,0:06:31.140

Yeah!

0:06:31.980,0:06:35.700

And what made you decide to go in a different direction?

0:06:39.140,0:06:42.480

I like to interact with children.

0:06:46.860,0:06:48.240

It's something that I..

0:06:48.960,0:06:51.540

I always was interested to do,

0:06:51.540,0:06:57.240

but I don't know why I chose to do something different when I went to university.

0:06:58.680,0:06:59.940

But I liked that, too.

0:07:00.600,0:07:01.740

You liked tourism and education?

0:07:01.740,0:07:03.180

Yeah.

0:07:03.180,0:07:08.760

Well, when people are tourists they're always learning, too, so, it's like education, perhaps.

0:07:08.760,0:07:14.160

Is there a particular reason why you wanted to focus on special education?

0:07:16.440,0:07:17.880

What led you to that decision?

0:07:20.520,0:07:25.740

There is not a particular reason. I just find that area interesting

0:07:25.740,0:07:29.640

but I like to underst-

0:07:29.640,0:07:32.160

I would like to understand how kids

0:07:32.160,0:07:35.820

act the way like they are, or why they have

0:07:35.820,0:07:37.560

certain problems.

0:07:37.560,0:07:45.540

And because I always listen to my mom, "this child has this problem", and

0:07:46.200,0:07:49.200

my mom, she's not a special education teacher,

0:07:49.200,0:07:53.220

but she always tries to help them

0:07:53.220,0:07:56.340

to understand what's going on with them.

0:07:56.340,0:08:00.480

Maybe something that is related

with their family, or maybe not.

0:08:00.480,0:08:04.560  
So that's why I was maybe interested in that.

0:08:06.000,0:08:11.100  
There's a big need for special education teachers in this area, so it's very good

0:08:11.100,0:08:16.680  
that you're interested in that. I have no doubt you will find a job working in special education.

0:08:18.180,0:08:24.600  
I'm curious about what circumstances led you to decide to move to the United States.

0:08:24.600,0:08:30.120  
You have a family. You described a really beautiful hometown. You had a degree in tourism.

0:08:30.120,0:08:34.920  
But something made you decide to leave your home

0:08:34.920,0:08:37.440  
country and come here. Can you talk a little bit about that?

0:08:39.000,0:08:39.900  
Yes.

0:08:41.880,0:08:49.320  
When I finished my education in El Salvador, I tried to get a job. I got into something

0:08:49.320,0:08:58.140  
not related to my career. So, I just stayed there like for three months and,

0:08:59.160,0:09:01.320  
also the other thing is

0:09:01.920,0:09:05.940  
I don't like the insecurity in El Salvador.

0:09:07.020,0:09:12.300  
As I told you before, when I was starting, I lived in a

0:09:12.840,0:09:16.920  
it's supposedly one of the most dangerous city in El Salvador.

0:09:17.820,0:09:20.400  
Never bad happened to..

0:09:20.400,0:09:21.000  
never..

0:09:21.900,0:09:27.600  
I never had a problem there. Nothing bad happened to me, but I saw

0:09:28.440,0:09:30.060  
bad things to other people.

0:09:31.920,0:09:34.560  
I lost my phone

0:09:34.560,0:09:35.760  
twice

0:09:36.360,0:09:37.980  
and my wallet.

0:09:37.980,0:09:42.900

and because I used to take the  
public transportation there, so,

0:09:43.800,0:09:47.220  
one day I was my with my sister,  
and I said, "where is my phone?"

0:09:47.220,0:09:51.900  
I have my backpack, and "my phone is not here" like "my wallet is not here?"

0:09:51.900,0:09:55.200  
Somebody stole it, but

0:09:55.200,0:09:56.400  
nothing

0:09:56.400,0:10:01.800  
dangerous to me but I saw things  
in front of the university.

0:10:01.800,0:10:03.600  
Something that happened.

0:10:05.520,0:10:06.600  
I used to live in

0:10:08.040,0:10:09.720  
dorms, like you say here.

0:10:09.720,0:10:16.500  
There, so the university was across  
the street where I was living,

0:10:17.340,0:10:24.060  
but was.. the people who are in that place,

0:10:24.060,0:10:28.260  
the administrator of that  
place I don't know, maybe?

0:10:28.260,0:10:30.420  
They used to tell us,

0:10:30.420,0:10:38.640  
"when you come back from class, call us so we can go there and and help you to come back here."

0:10:39.480,0:10:46.500  
Or "if you are leaving to class, you have to tell me because something bad may happen."

0:10:47.160,0:10:48.960  
So we used to do that.

0:10:49.920,0:10:53.460  
We used to tell this person, "I'm leaving to class.

0:10:54.120,0:10:59.700  
Can you come with me and take me  
to class?" Something like that. So,

0:11:00.660,0:11:01.980  
that was,

0:11:02.880,0:11:07.020  
I think, two of the reasons. I didn't feel safe there.

0:11:08.100,0:11:12.120  
And also I didn't find my place there

0:11:12.120,0:11:16.560  
and where I'm going to work now.

0:11:16.560,0:11:19.980  
What I was doing there, it was

0:11:20.640,0:11:22.920  
10 hour.. I worked 10 hours there,

0:11:23.700,0:11:28.560  
spent the entire day inside of an office,

0:11:28.560,0:11:34.560  
just taking phone calls  
all day. I don't want that.

0:11:34.560,0:11:37.620  
I want to do something  
different, spend time with people

0:11:37.620,0:11:41.520  
not just taking those phone calls and just that.

0:11:41.520,0:11:45.720  
What kind of business did  
you work for in El Salvador?

0:11:46.800,0:11:48.900  
It was a call center.

0:11:50.460,0:11:53.760  
So the place call center, where

0:11:53.760,0:11:56.160  
people call customer service.

0:11:57.540,0:11:59.400  
Customer Service, but

0:11:59.400,0:12:02.580  
there are different companies there.

0:12:03.540,0:12:08.520  
The company that I was  
working for was from Canada.

0:12:09.720,0:12:16.200  
So, that was in French, because  
I also speak a little French. So

0:12:16.200,0:12:23.340  
we are the ones take those phone calls and help the people to solve their cellphone problem.

0:12:23.340,0:12:24.540  
I see.

0:12:25.320,0:12:26.940  
A telephone company.

0:12:29.340,0:12:33.480  
Were the customers sometimes  
grumpy or impatient when they call?

0:12:33.480,0:12:40.620  
Yes, or maybe, that was not my case, but there are some people that they had to sell

0:12:40.620,0:12:44.220  
things, "I want to send this package for you."

0:12:44.220,0:12:48.000  
Maybe a phone call company  
wants to sell you this, or

0:12:48.780,0:12:51.000



a hotel, or anything.

0:12:51.840,0:12:56.940

So you found yourself living in a city where you felt that there was a lot of crime,

0:12:56.940,0:12:58.320

and you didn't feel safe.

0:12:58.980,0:13:02.160

And you also were unhappy  
with the work opportunities

0:13:02.160,0:13:04.800

that you had. You were not working in

0:13:04.800,0:13:09.540

tourism, what you studied. You did  
not enjoy your job, it sounds like.

0:13:09.540,0:13:11.640

So you had an idea, then,

0:13:11.640,0:13:13.860

to move to the United States.

0:13:13.860,0:13:16.920

Can you tell me a little bit  
about how you were able to come?

0:13:16.920,0:13:21.480

Did you have extended family here? Or did you come as an international student?

0:13:21.480,0:13:22.920

How did you..

0:13:24.240,0:13:25.800

What was the process of coming here?

0:13:26.520,0:13:32.280

Well, I have family here in Maryland, in different parts here in the country.

0:13:33.180,0:13:36.300

But the way that I came here it wasn't because..

0:13:36.900,0:13:38.520

It was because,

0:13:39.540,0:13:42.540

I got into a cultural exchange program.

0:13:43.440,0:13:43.940

0:13:44.460,0:13:47.100

So when I came first here, for..

0:13:47.100,0:13:49.440

in that program, I went to Colorado.

0:13:49.440,0:13:53.640

So I lived there with an American family..

0:13:55.080,0:13:55.860

Interesting!

0:13:55.860,0:13:57.240

for a year.

0:13:58.320,0:13:59.820

And after that,

0:14:01.860,0:14:08.040  
well, the family, they decided that they don't need me anymore, because my work there was

0:14:08.040,0:14:10.260  
to take care of the children.

0:14:11.880,0:14:16.380  
Well, in that case they were almost babies. They were two years.

0:14:16.380,0:14:21.420  
So if the case is, if they are going to school, I had to take them to school,

0:14:21.420,0:14:23.340  
help them with homework,

0:14:25.320,0:14:28.140  
and feed them if they are babies.

0:14:29.640,0:14:32.760  
So that family decided

0:14:32.760,0:14:33.600  
to..

0:14:34.200,0:14:36.240  
They left the program.

0:14:36.240,0:14:38.820  
So I moved to

0:14:38.820,0:14:40.260  
another family.

0:14:41.040,0:14:42.420  
Were you an au pair?

0:14:42.420,0:14:43.620  
Yes!

0:14:43.620,0:14:46.860  
Okay! So you were an au pair in Colorado? Interesting.

0:14:46.860,0:14:51.120  
Yes, and I stayed there with them just for a year,

0:14:51.660,0:14:53.460  
and after that I went to California.

0:14:56.580,0:15:00.120  
I went to Connecticut with this last family.

0:15:02.160,0:15:05.160  
I finished my two years last year,

0:15:06.120,0:15:09.120  
in November, I went back to El Salvador

0:15:09.120,0:15:13.320  
for two months, and I applied for the student visa,

0:15:14.460,0:15:17.460  
and then I came back here this year.

0:15:19.620,0:15:25.800  
But since the beginning I had in my mind to come here as I said, save some money,

0:15:26.520,0:15:27.900  
and

0:15:29.280,0:15:32.040  
go maybe where my family is.

0:15:32.040,0:15:33.720  
So my first

0:15:34.380,0:15:37.140  
place of the list was Maryland.

0:15:37.920,0:15:40.740  
I have family in Houston,

0:15:41.280,0:15:44.040  
but I don't like that place much.

0:15:44.040,0:15:47.460  
So I came here

0:15:47.460,0:15:53.760  
to visit them when I was an au  
pair. I saw the place, I liked it.

0:15:54.300,0:16:00.840  
And then I came back last year with  
my sister too, to see again, and

0:16:01.560,0:16:03.000  
that's how I am here.

0:16:03.000,0:16:04.080  
So it's..

0:16:04.080,0:16:07.320  
It's interesting to me that  
you've had the opportunity

0:16:07.320,0:16:10.260  
to travel to different states in the United States,

0:16:10.260,0:16:14.640  
and have an experience in Colorado.  
Did you say California as well?

0:16:14.640,0:16:15.420  
Yes

0:16:15.420,0:16:19.620  
And you went to Houston,  
Texas. So you got to see

0:16:19.620,0:16:22.620  
different parts of the  
country and different regions,

0:16:22.620,0:16:26.040  
but you decided to come to  
Maryland for your education.

0:16:27.360,0:16:31.680  
What was it that appealed to  
you about living in Maryland?

0:16:31.680,0:16:39.720  
I have my family here, and I'm close to them.

0:16:40.260,0:16:46.140  
So, since I came here I used to talk  
with one of them almost every week,

0:16:46.680,0:16:51.420  
and she used to tell me I need you to

come here. This is a good place,

0:16:51.420,0:16:56.820  
and that we can live here  
together. I live with them here.

0:16:57.540,0:16:58.260  
So..

0:16:58.980,0:17:00.720  
When you say, "my family here,"

0:17:00.720,0:17:06.840  
do you mean extended family? Like aunts and uncles and cousins?  
-Yes cousins.

0:17:06.840,0:17:07.860  
Yeah, my cousin..

0:17:07.860,0:17:09.120  
You're living with cousins now?

0:17:09.120,0:17:12.660  
Yeah, with her, her husband and

0:17:13.200,0:17:19.380  
children. Well, they are my  
age now. She is about 50, I guess.

0:17:20.460,0:17:20.960  
Yeah.

0:17:21.720,0:17:24.960  
How did you first hear about Montgomery College?

0:17:27.480,0:17:30.180  
When I was looking for information

0:17:32.880,0:17:34.500  
for colleges here in Maryland,

0:17:34.500,0:17:38.340  
this was the one..

0:17:38.340,0:17:40.680  
The first one that came to my list.

0:17:40.680,0:17:46.020  
I just found this on the internet. I didn't know anything about Montgomery College.

0:17:46.020,0:17:48.240  
So..

0:17:48.240,0:17:49.680  
and,

0:17:49.680,0:17:51.240  
I found this

0:17:51.240,0:17:52.560  
college

0:17:53.820,0:17:59.580  
interesting for me, and I said,  
it's close to my family's house and..

0:18:00.360,0:18:03.180  
yeah, I don't know, and then I read the

0:18:04.560,0:18:08.640  
the careers and I said,

"oh, okay, they have

0:18:09.480,0:18:10.680  
this degree,"

0:18:10.680,0:18:13.860  
and I saw the options that

0:18:13.860,0:18:18.420  
I was able to get into. That  
was interesting for me.

0:18:18.420,0:18:20.580  
Did your work as an au pair

0:18:20.580,0:18:26.160  
lead you to the decision to work in early childhood education and special education?

0:18:26.160,0:18:32.340  
Do you think that connected that experience and made you more interested in learning about  
education?

0:18:32.340,0:18:32.840  
Yes!

0:18:34.740,0:18:40.920  
Because I went to three different families, and the three of them, they are different.

0:18:41.940,0:18:46.320  
So I found interesting. The first  
one, well, they were two years,

0:18:47.040,0:18:48.840  
but they were twins.

0:18:49.800,0:18:57.240  
They were different and one of them,  
the boy, he has special needs, so

0:18:58.020,0:18:59.880  
he wasn't in school yet,

0:18:59.880,0:19:05.880  
but I knew what was his situation. And then I went to this

0:19:06.420,0:19:07.500  
family in California,

0:19:07.500,0:19:12.840  
two boys, two completely different situations,

0:19:12.840,0:19:17.640  
and differing ages. They..

0:19:17.640,0:19:19.980  
they are in school.

0:19:21.420,0:19:26.580  
And the last family in Connecticut, it's a boy, too.

0:19:27.900,0:19:29.280  
That's another story.

0:19:29.280,0:19:35.340  
And this summer, I'm going  
to Connecticut to see them.

0:19:38.820,0:19:39.720  
That was..

0:19:39.720,0:19:41.820

I think, that was one of the

0:19:42.780,0:19:43.560

0:19:43.560,0:19:47.460

the reasons that I moved to this, because before..

0:19:48.000,0:19:49.380

before to

0:19:49.380,0:19:50.220

be an au pair.

0:19:51.120,0:19:52.470

I always said..

0:19:52.470,0:19:56.220

I used to say, I don't want to be a teacher. I don't want to.. I don't want

0:19:56.220,0:20:00.660

to do the same as my parents and my aunts and all of them.

0:20:00.660,0:20:04.260

I want to do something different, but

0:20:05.040,0:20:07.980

when I came here and

0:20:07.980,0:20:10.140

started working as an au pair,

0:20:10.140,0:20:12.000

I changed my mind.

0:20:12.840,0:20:19.140

It's a very challenging work. To work with small children, especially children with special needs.

0:20:19.740,0:20:22.500

It requires a lot of energy and attention.

0:20:23.340,0:20:27.060

It's.. but it can also, I imagine, be a very rewarding job.

0:20:28.740,0:20:30.660

How did you..

0:20:30.660,0:20:33.660

What was your experience like working with children?

0:20:34.560,0:20:35.400

Did you find it

0:20:36.000,0:20:37.860

enjoyable? Did you find it

0:20:38.700,0:20:41.520

challenging? Tell me about it.

0:20:42.300,0:20:42.900

Both.

0:20:42.900,0:20:48.120

Both, yes. It's challenging, because

0:20:50.040,0:20:53.340

sometimes they are

0:20:55.200,0:20:56.580  
energetic. Yes.

0:20:57.240,0:20:59.640  
But there is something else.

0:20:59.640,0:21:05.340  
Maybe they are not getting all the  
attention that they want, or they need.

0:21:06.000,0:21:08.880  
So they start acting

0:21:09.600,0:21:12.600  
aggressive or something like that.

0:21:14.640,0:21:18.360  
In my case, that wasn't a good experience

0:21:19.320,0:21:22.440  
because I had to deal with all these situations.

0:21:23.460,0:21:26.880  
Aggressive things

0:21:26.880,0:21:30.780  
coming from the children, and the parents

0:21:31.320,0:21:32.280  
do nothing

0:21:32.280,0:21:33.960  
when they see that.

0:21:33.960,0:21:37.560  
So that was hard for me to understand.

0:21:38.340,0:21:40.500  
Why your child is

0:21:41.040,0:21:45.540  
hitting me and you are not doing anything. You are not saying anything to that child.

0:21:46.260,0:21:49.020  
That child is saying bad things to me.

0:21:50.400,0:21:51.480  
Things like that.

0:21:51.480,0:21:53.100  
That sounds very challenging.

0:21:53.100,0:21:54.060  
Yes!

0:21:54.060,0:21:57.480  
But you're going to see one of the  
families in Connecticut this summer,

0:21:57.480,0:22:00.420  
so was that experience more  
positive with that family?

0:22:01.680,0:22:02.460  
Yes!

0:22:02.460,0:22:06.120  
Do you want to tell me a little bit  
about that? Your experience with

0:22:06.720,0:22:08.580  
the third family or the second family?

0:22:09.480,0:22:10.560  
The third family..

0:22:12.660,0:22:17.280  
This is a single mom and a boy. He's six now.

0:22:22.080,0:22:23.460  
I always say that

0:22:25.500,0:22:27.180  
when you are a parent..

0:22:28.860,0:22:32.640  
Because I heard this from this mom in Colorado.

0:22:33.960,0:22:35.340  
She told me that,

0:22:35.340,0:22:43.140  
she is afraid to raise her children alone because her husband died.

0:22:44.520,0:22:46.200  
So she told me,

0:22:46.200,0:22:50.640  
"I don't know how I'm going to  
do this. I'm alone with them."

0:22:52.260,0:22:54.720  
But I remember that I used to tell her,

0:22:55.440,0:23:00.900  
"yes! They just have you, but if you do your job..

0:23:00.900,0:23:03.000  
your job as a mother,

0:23:03.900,0:23:07.680  
to give them, all the love or

0:23:08.340,0:23:10.680  
attention that they need,

0:23:12.480,0:23:14.820  
I don't think it's going to be hard.

0:23:14.820,0:23:18.420  
I'm not a mom, yet. So maybe I'm not the best

0:23:19.080,0:23:19.740  
person

0:23:21.060,0:23:25.440  
who can say these kind of things, but

0:23:26.580,0:23:28.380  
my experience with

0:23:28.380,0:23:31.200  
those moms that are single moms,

0:23:31.920,0:23:33.600  
I think was good.

0:23:34.620,0:23:36.000  
Because I don't..

0:23:36.000,0:23:38.280



I don't know if the fact

0:23:38.280,0:23:40.800  
that they are single is..

0:23:42.480,0:23:44.700  
is making the difference between

0:23:44.700,0:23:47.820  
how the child behaves

0:23:48.540,0:23:52.920  
and how the child is

0:23:52.920,0:23:53.880  
in school,

0:23:55.020,0:23:57.780  
or how the child treats a person.

0:23:59.400,0:24:02.580  
Because I found the other side with

0:24:02.580,0:24:05.520  
this family where mom and dad is there,

0:24:06.480,0:24:09.480  
but children are

0:24:10.860,0:24:13.320  
it's like they don't have a parent.

0:24:14.520,0:24:15.600  
It seems that,

0:24:15.600,0:24:18.180  
maybe they come from,

0:24:18.180,0:24:22.800  
I don't know where, but they are  
these aggressive children, and

0:24:22.800,0:24:24.840  
where are the parents?

0:24:26.100,0:24:27.120  
That's interesting.

0:24:27.120,0:24:33.060  
Of course every single family is  
different right? But I imagine that,

0:24:33.060,0:24:36.780  
having the chance to live with  
three different American families,

0:24:36.780,0:24:38.820  
you had an experience that

0:24:38.820,0:24:43.560  
many other people from other countries don't have. The chance to actually live

0:24:45.240,0:24:50.220  
with the family on a day to day basis, to see the routines and the family interactions.

0:24:53.340,0:24:56.700  
What did you notice about living  
with American families that struck

0:24:56.700,0:24:59.820  
you as particularly interesting compared to

0:25:00.780,0:25:03.060  
family dynamics in El Salvador?

0:25:03.660,0:25:07.320  
Did you notice something different  
about attitudes towards raising children?

0:25:07.320,0:25:12.180  
Or about parental involvement, or about discipline?

0:25:12.180,0:25:15.000  
What struck you as particularly interesting?

0:25:18.060,0:25:22.020  
The way that they talk with the children.

0:25:23.220,0:25:24.840  
Say more about that, that's interesting.

0:25:27.780,0:25:29.460  
In my case, for me,

0:25:33.120,0:25:35.400  
I was raised by Mom and Dad.

0:25:37.020,0:25:38.880  
But for them it's..

0:25:38.880,0:25:42.540  
Yes, I remember my mom that used  
to talk with my sister and me,

0:25:43.560,0:25:49.800  
and I remember that they always say that,

0:25:50.520,0:25:53.760  
when they were children, something was..

0:25:53.760,0:25:55.500  
everything was different for them.

0:25:57.080,0:25:59.580  
Spanking in El Salvador is common.

0:26:00.420,0:26:04.440  
And yeah, my mom, she used to do that with me.

0:26:04.440,0:26:12.120  
And not in a bad way, but I  
know that there are cases that

0:26:12.120,0:26:16.200  
that's terrible. Yeah, I know, I know that.

0:26:16.200,0:26:20.100  
And here that doesn't exist here.

0:26:20.100,0:26:22.740  
They just talk with the child,

0:26:24.300,0:26:25.620  
or they explain.

0:26:26.460,0:26:28.440  
I like that way.

0:26:28.440,0:26:29.580  
That where..

0:26:31.260,0:26:35.520

They explain why they cannot do something, or why they are going to do it.

0:26:36.060,0:26:43.800  
And I find that interesting,  
and I like that way. Also,

0:26:46.260,0:26:49.440  
the time.. when they spend time together,

0:26:50.700,0:26:56.700  
I find here parents are more into

0:26:57.420,0:27:01.140  
that, the dad and the mom.

0:27:01.140,0:27:03.060  
In my case it was,

0:27:04.320,0:27:07.080  
if I had to do something like

0:27:07.680,0:27:16.740  
go something else, it was with my mom. My dad, he wasn't there. He would say, "well, I have to work."

0:27:17.580,0:27:21.960  
And we used to spend more time with Mom than Dad.

0:27:22.980,0:27:24.540  
And here I see that

0:27:25.260,0:27:26.700  
they try to go together,

0:27:29.100,0:27:32.820  
and they try to take the kids

0:27:32.820,0:27:40.020  
maybe weekends "let's go to the park," and "let's go to have an ice cream," some things like that.

0:27:40.620,0:27:48.060  
In El Salvador it's more "yeah, we go to the beach, but let's wait for vacation, holidays."

0:27:48.060,0:27:53.760  
Going to the park is not common.

0:27:55.200,0:27:59.100  
That's really interesting. So did you find that

0:27:59.100,0:28:05.160  
American fathers are involved with their children? Was that your experience?

0:28:07.140,0:28:10.860  
Yes, I think. Yeah.

0:28:12.060,0:28:13.440  
And would you say that

0:28:14.160,0:28:19.740  
the American families that you spent time with, they prioritized family time on the weekend?

0:28:22.140,0:28:22.920  
Yes.

0:28:22.920,0:28:25.740  
Weekends are..

0:28:29.040,0:28:30.420  
special here,

0:28:30.420,0:28:34.260  
because it's the time where  
they can go out together.

0:28:35.100,0:28:37.740  
They don't work. Yeah.

0:28:37.740,0:28:40.440  
You know, you mentioned in your bio that you

0:28:40.440,0:28:44.100  
really enjoy being in nature.  
You mentioned the beach and

0:28:44.100,0:28:48.780  
hiking. You had an opportunity  
to live in some really beautiful

0:28:48.780,0:28:53.160  
places. When I think about hiking, I  
think about Colorado and California.

0:28:53.160,0:29:00.180  
Tell me a little bit about the natural places that you discovered in the United States

0:29:00.180,0:29:04.980  
that you found particularly beautiful,  
or places that are meaningful to you.

0:29:07.860,0:29:08.460  
Well,

0:29:09.120,0:29:13.800  
in Colorado I used to go  
hiking there most of the time,

0:29:13.800,0:29:17.160  
and there is a place called Garden of the Gods.

0:29:17.160,0:29:18.960  
-Oh, in Colorado Springs.  
-It's famous.

0:29:18.960,0:29:19.410  
Yes.

0:29:19.410,0:29:24.176  
Yeah, I know that area. That's a really beautiful area with rock formations in Colorado.

0:29:24.176,0:29:27.600  
-Yes.  
-Garden of the Gods. Tell me more about that.

0:29:28.620,0:29:33.900  
I went there three times, and that's a beautiful place.

0:29:34.800,0:29:39.780  
And.. I think Colorado  
is more going to the

0:29:40.380,0:29:41.280  
mountain.

0:29:41.280,0:29:44.340  
Mountain? Or do hiking.

0:29:46.380,0:29:48.660  
I didn't find something else to do there.

0:29:51.660,0:29:57.180

But.. and then in California  
there is more to do there.

0:29:57.960,0:30:02.460  
I always wanted to go to  
any of those national parks.

0:30:02.460,0:30:10.440  
Like Yosemite or Yellowstone but I didn't have the opportunity yet, and I lived in

0:30:10.440,0:30:15.120  
San Francisco, which is, I think,  
three or four hours from Yosemite,

0:30:15.120,0:30:17.280  
but I couldn't go there.

0:30:17.280,0:30:20.340  
But there is a place there named Angel Island.

0:30:22.320,0:30:24.060  
Which is an island..

0:30:24.060,0:30:26.340  
It's a State Park, I guess,

0:30:26.340,0:30:32.280  
and that island was used about 100 years ago.

0:30:32.280,0:30:34.800  
They used to send immigrants there

0:30:35.700,0:30:39.000  
to do quarantine or something.

0:30:39.540,0:30:42.360  
They came here and sent them there

0:30:43.320,0:30:45.420  
for I don't know how many days.

0:30:45.420,0:30:51.960  
And there are buildings there were  
these immigrants used to

0:30:51.960,0:30:54.120  
live during that time,

0:30:55.560,0:30:58.620  
but since it's close to

0:30:58.620,0:31:04.320  
San Francisco, from there  
you can see the Golden Gate,

0:31:04.320,0:31:07.560  
Alcatraz, and the city.

0:31:07.560,0:31:09.840  
it's a beautiful place there.

0:31:11.100,0:31:12.660  
And how about in this area,

0:31:12.660,0:31:16.320  
have you discovered any natural  
places that are important to you?

0:31:20.880,0:31:23.520  
Oh, I..

0:31:24.060,0:31:27.960  
went to Block Island and Martha's Vineyard.

0:31:27.960,0:31:28.980  
Yes.

0:31:30.240,0:31:34.260  
Those are beautiful places. Did  
you go bicycling in Block Island?

0:31:34.260,0:31:34.920  
No!

0:31:37.680,0:31:39.600  
.. Block Island.. Yes..

0:31:42.060,0:31:43.440  
And here..

0:31:44.220,0:31:50.400  
with this family in Colorado, I went to  
South Carolina because they live there now.

0:31:51.900,0:31:54.420  
We went to the beach there,

0:31:55.260,0:31:57.000  
Myrtle Beach, but..

0:32:00.000,0:32:04.680  
I always say beaches here  
are not like in El Salvador.

0:32:04.680,0:32:09.060  
I went to Block Island too, and  
Martha's Vineyard, and it's different.

0:32:09.060,0:32:14.160  
How is it different?

0:32:16.260,0:32:20.520  
I think it's the weather. In  
El Salvador it's tropical.

0:32:22.200,0:32:24.600  
You can see those coconut trees,

0:32:25.320,0:32:29.880  
the sun, the water is warm.

0:32:30.660,0:32:32.220  
It's not cold like here.

0:32:32.220,0:32:37.320  
The beaches in New England are definitely colder for sure, the water is colder, absolutely.

0:32:39.540,0:32:40.620  
So I imagine that

0:32:40.620,0:32:46.440  
before you came to the United States, you probably had some ideas in your head about

0:32:46.440,0:32:51.960  
what America would be like. Often students tell me that they have seen American movies,

0:32:52.800,0:32:57.900  
or they have seen television programs.  
They have this idea about America.

0:32:57.900,0:32:59.340  
And then when they get here,

0:33:00.060,0:33:02.520  
it's different. Was that your experience?

0:33:06.360,0:33:12.300  
I remember I used to watch those movies like Christmas movies

0:33:12.300,0:33:15.660  
are famous in El Salvador, and..

0:33:17.760,0:33:24.600  
before to come here as an au pair, I came to visit my family, but I just went to Houston,

0:33:25.860,0:33:29.640  
so I didn't see much. But,

0:33:29.640,0:33:35.400  
I had the idea, because my family  
here they say how the life is here.

0:33:36.660,0:33:43.860  
But I think that living with  
your own family here,

0:33:43.860,0:33:47.730  
the experience is different than living

0:33:47.730,0:33:49.440  
with an American family.

0:33:51.060,0:33:56.040  
Because you change the food that you eat.

0:33:56.040,0:34:00.480  
Now that I live with my  
family, I eat Salvadorian food.

0:34:01.080,0:34:05.880  
And when I was living with this  
American family well I had to.. eat

0:34:05.880,0:34:12.080  
to change some things, and..

0:34:12.080,0:34:14.700  
yeah, it's like a..

0:34:14.700,0:34:17.400  
here is more..

0:34:19.740,0:34:22.140  
You need a car to go somewhere,

0:34:22.740,0:34:24.480  
not like in El Salvador.

0:34:25.380,0:34:30.960  
We didn't have a car in El Salvador until five years ago. We used to

0:34:32.220,0:34:35.280  
to use a public transportation to go anywhere,

0:34:35.820,0:34:38.640  
even to go to the beach. That was..

0:34:38.640,0:34:42.840  
that's something, different that

0:34:44.400,0:34:45.570  
when I came..

0:34:45.570,0:34:51.000  
first came here, this family told me, "the car is there, if you want to go out, you can use it."

0:34:51.000,0:34:54.780  
But I was afraid to do that,  
because how I'm going to do this?

0:34:55.800,0:34:59.100  
Because I had to drive in the highway,

0:35:00.240,0:35:06.060  
and that's something that in El Salvador is not common. There is no highway in El Salvador.

0:35:06.060,0:35:07.920  
So,

0:35:07.920,0:35:10.800  
after a week I

0:35:10.800,0:35:14.460  
just took that car, and I drove to the store,

0:35:14.460,0:35:18.600  
and I just went there for 30 minutes, and then I went back home,

0:35:18.600,0:35:21.420  
and that was something good.

0:35:22.620,0:35:25.620  
I said, "I can't believe that I did this."

0:35:27.780,0:35:29.160  
And I see that you're in a car now.

0:35:29.160,0:35:31.560  
I am in a car, my car.

0:35:32.940,0:35:36.660  
And do you sometimes drive on the beltway now?

0:35:37.800,0:35:39.780  
I do! Every day.

0:35:41.400,0:35:43.800  
You feel less afraid now, more confident?

0:35:43.800,0:35:44.640  
Yes!

0:35:45.900,0:35:47.940  
I think the car culture is

0:35:48.840,0:35:52.860  
certainly something that a lot of  
students remark upon when they

0:35:52.860,0:35:54.780  
come here having to learn how to drive.

0:35:54.780,0:35:56.940  
I mean, there's public transportation here, but

0:35:57.480,0:36:01.320  
it is hard to get around without  
a car, in the United States, in general.

0:36:01.920,0:36:04.620  
I think that's an interesting  
observation, for sure.

0:36:06.780,0:36:11.340



The DC area and the area in  
Montgomery County, Maryland,

0:36:11.340,0:36:15.300  
we have a very large Salvadorian community here.

0:36:16.140,0:36:20.400  
So, I think, it's interesting when  
you mentioned that now that you're

0:36:20.400,0:36:22.980  
living with extended family, you have a chance to

0:36:22.980,0:36:24.900  
eat Salvadorian food.

0:36:24.900,0:36:28.620  
Sometimes my Salvadorian  
students tell me about how

0:36:28.620,0:36:32.640  
Pupusas are so important to  
them. Is that a food that

0:36:32.640,0:36:35.880  
is one of your favorites?  
If you would would pick one?

0:36:35.880,0:36:36.480  
Yeah?

0:36:36.480,0:36:37.680  
Yes

0:36:37.680,0:36:40.200  
Can you talk a little bit about Salvadorian food?

0:36:41.820,0:36:43.380  
I think Pupusas are

0:36:44.700,0:36:49.560  
the common thing in El Salvador. You can find them everywhere.

0:36:49.560,0:36:51.450  
Everywhere you go,

0:36:51.450,0:36:55.380  
there is a person making Pupusas and you can buy.

0:36:56.940,0:36:59.262  
I like almost all of them.

0:36:59.262,0:37:02.940  
I'm not good with Pupusas I'm not good making that

0:37:06.720,0:37:08.700  
I make Pupusas for

0:37:09.300,0:37:13.140  
this Colorado family, and

0:37:13.140,0:37:20.040  
they liked it. The boy, he has special  
needs, and he has a special diet.

0:37:20.760,0:37:24.300  
So that was something that

0:37:24.300,0:37:27.690  
he used to ask me every week,

0:37:27.690,0:37:33.960  
"Can you make Pupusa for me? I want Pupusa."  
And that was good for his diet, too.

0:37:33.960,0:37:37.260  
That's a nice way to share your culture with the family.

0:37:37.260,0:37:47.160  
Yes, and she told me.. the mom told me that she tried to make Pupusas and the boy said

0:37:47.160,0:37:49.920  
that he didn't like it,

0:37:51.000,0:37:54.720  
because those Pupusas wasn't like mine.

0:37:54.720,0:37:58.920  
You made authentic Pupusas.

0:37:58.920,0:37:59.820  
Yes!

0:38:00.660,0:38:01.620  
And..

0:38:04.980,0:38:10.620  
There is more more food that we eat, like let's say..

0:38:10.620,0:38:14.100  
something that is made out of

0:38:14.100,0:38:15.660  
dried fish.

0:38:17.100,0:38:19.860  
It's common during Easter.

0:38:19.860,0:38:24.540  
We don't call it Easter in  
El Salvador, it's Holy Week.

0:38:24.540,0:38:25.740  
Holy Week?

0:38:26.280,0:38:30.060  
Yeah, that's a religious celebration or holiday.

0:38:31.200,0:38:32.880  
The entire week is

0:38:33.840,0:38:36.180  
for the people who are Catholic.

0:38:36.180,0:38:42.420  
They do these things and about crucifixion,

0:38:43.020,0:38:50.700  
Jesus crucifixion, and people prepare food, like this thing they call

0:38:54.660,0:38:55.380  
fish..

0:38:56.040,0:38:58.080  
I don't know how to say this in English.

0:38:59.460,0:39:01.740  
It's like..

0:39:01.740,0:39:04.980  
Eating fish on Good Friday? Is  
that what you're referring to?

0:39:04.980,0:39:05.820

Yes!

0:39:06.780,0:39:08.100

Not eating meat.

0:39:10.920,0:39:14.580

But there are more things that they prepare during that week.

0:39:15.420,0:39:16.980

Sweet things, like

0:39:16.980,0:39:21.720

with mangos, bananas,

0:39:25.200,0:39:30.480

all mixed together, they make something sweet that is called Conserva.

0:39:31.620,0:39:34.200

And there is also some.. I don't know remember,

0:39:34.200,0:39:36.420

my mom, she doesn't prepare that,

0:39:36.420,0:39:39.420

but it's called Torrejas, it's made out of bread, sweet bread.

0:39:43.680,0:39:45.720

They use this sweet thing

0:39:46.560,0:39:49.320

too, that is kind of brown.

0:39:50.160,0:39:51.120

Those are good.

0:39:51.900,0:39:55.680

And for Christmas it's more..

0:39:56.720,0:40:00.180

chicken.

0:40:01.620,0:40:02.700

Like here..

0:40:03.840,0:40:05.100

What is that.. Thanksgiving?

0:40:05.100,0:40:07.980

You prepare the turkey and things like that.

0:40:07.980,0:40:12.120

So it's similar, Christmas..

I mean, people prepare

0:40:12.120,0:40:16.500

chicken, or some of them turkey for dinner.

0:40:17.580,0:40:22.020

And a lot of fireworks in El Salvador

0:40:23.520,0:40:24.420

all night.

0:40:25.860,0:40:28.020

And New Year's too,

0:40:28.020,0:40:33.960

the same fireworks all night.  
Music everywhere, every house.

0:40:34.740,0:40:36.180  
If the

0:40:36.180,0:40:42.240  
person is religious, you won't find  
that. Well in my case, my mom, she's

0:40:44.040,0:40:46.140  
Christian, she's not Catholic,

0:40:46.680,0:40:52.140  
and my dad, he was raised in a Catholic family, but he doesn't go to church.

0:40:52.140,0:40:56.520  
It is not because he doesn't believe, but

0:40:56.520,0:40:58.920  
he doesn't have time to go.

0:41:00.180,0:41:04.260  
My mom, she goes to church almost every Sunday.

0:41:07.620,0:41:13.260  
The celebrations, like Christmas and New Year's celebration in my house, it's just dinner.

0:41:13.980,0:41:16.140  
And when I was a child, there was

0:41:16.140,0:41:20.220  
those fireworks things, and just that. Now,

0:41:21.900,0:41:24.420  
we don't spend our money on that,

0:41:24.420,0:41:30.240  
because my mom said, "that's a waste of money; buying fireworks, and then,

0:41:30.240,0:41:34.500  
it's like you are throwing that money." So,

0:41:35.460,0:41:42.780  
the pollution during that week is bad, because the smoke of the fireworks, and if you are..

0:41:42.780,0:41:49.080  
If you have allergies, it is not good for  
you. I always get sick during that week. So,

0:41:49.740,0:41:56.160  
I don't do that. Because of the smoke, I had to spend the night in the house, not outside,  
because

0:41:57.300,0:41:59.640  
there is a lot of smoke everywhere.

0:42:00.600,0:42:03.840  
You mentioned that your mom's religious faith is

0:42:03.840,0:42:07.800  
very important to her. Do you also  
feel that that's important to you?

0:42:09.540,0:42:10.440  
Yes!

0:42:12.060,0:42:16.800  
Before I come here, that  
wasn't important for me.

0:42:18.360,0:42:21.120  
I didn't say that to her.

0:42:21.120,0:42:25.140  
But now, that I came here,

0:42:25.140,0:42:26.820

0:42:27.720,0:42:30.600  
yes, I'm not going to church now.

0:42:31.620,0:42:35.640  
When I was in Colorado, I used  
to go to a church every Sunday.

0:42:36.960,0:42:42.600  
Now I think differently.

0:42:43.560,0:42:44.520  
And..

0:42:45.900,0:42:48.960  
Sometimes when I go to church, I feel

0:42:49.500,0:42:53.280  
different. I think that's something that made me feel better.

0:42:55.140,0:42:57.420  
It's not because I..

0:42:59.340,0:43:02.640  
I want to do all the traditional things that

0:43:03.720,0:43:05.880  
they teach us in church,

0:43:06.960,0:43:07.560  
but

0:43:08.160,0:43:12.720  
going to church is something that  
is giving me sometimes peace.

0:43:14.340,0:43:18.000  
Yeah, a lot of students have talked  
about that. About how.. in the interviews

0:43:18.000,0:43:22.080  
that I've done, about how their faith  
community is very important to them.

0:43:23.400,0:43:28.380  
And here in this area, of course,  
as we started talking about earlier,

0:43:28.380,0:43:30.960  
there's a large Salvadorian  
community, so have you..

0:43:32.340,0:43:36.900  
Is it important to you to be a part of the Salvadorian community here, either through

0:43:37.860,0:43:39.660  
a church or through

0:43:42.060,0:43:48.420  
extended family, or through organizations? Do you feel like here you have an opportunity to

0:43:49.380,0:43:54.420  
still be a part of your Salvadorian culture because of the large community here?

0:43:57.780,0:43:58.560

Yes!

0:44:01.860,0:44:10.020

Church.. I think that I had to find the right place, because if I don't like something, I..

0:44:11.460,0:44:12.180

that's just going to

0:44:12.180,0:44:15.120

make me feel that I don't want to go there again.

0:44:16.440,0:44:21.600

So, I would like to go to  
a place where I can feel

0:44:21.600,0:44:26.280

like in my country, or talk with people about

0:44:26.280,0:44:30.360

things that we do in El Salvador,  
or do things that we do there.

0:44:31.320,0:44:32.700

And..

0:44:34.920,0:44:38.460

now I didn't find a place  
where I feel comfortable going.

0:44:39.120,0:44:40.260

0:44:40.800,0:44:44.340

I just came here this year.

0:44:45.240,0:44:53.160

I didn't have the time to look for a place.  
But my family here, they go to church.

0:44:55.080,0:45:00.000

They go every week, same religion as me,

0:45:01.020,0:45:01.920

but

0:45:01.920,0:45:05.880

I didn't find that place that is my place.

0:45:05.880,0:45:10.440

So that's why I stopped  
going there. I didn't talk..

0:45:10.440,0:45:14.580

I didn't say anything about  
that to them. But, yeah!

0:45:14.580,0:45:18.780

I think this idea of finding  
your place is an interesting one.

0:45:18.780,0:45:24.300

A lot of students talk about the  
idea of home. What is home?

0:45:24.300,0:45:29.760

Some students think of the place where  
they grew up as home, in their home country.

0:45:29.760,0:45:33.360

Some students now feel like  
they've found a home here.

0:45:34.620,0:45:38.280  
When you hear the word home, what do you think of?

0:45:41.760,0:45:46.260  
I think of my family, my parents,  
especially my parents and my sister.

0:45:48.420,0:45:49.500

0:45:50.580,0:45:55.440  
I don't think that I can call here home,

0:45:56.700,0:45:57.540  
because..

0:45:59.580,0:46:00.120  
well,

0:46:01.800,0:46:04.920  
I just came here, like two years.

0:46:05.940,0:46:06.960  
And..

0:46:08.760,0:46:12.960  
Of course, that I would  
like to learn from this country more

0:46:13.740,0:46:15.420  
on this country, and..

0:46:17.160,0:46:18.900  
and try different things.

0:46:19.860,0:46:22.260  
And maybe if I even

0:46:22.260,0:46:24.360  
10 years, I'm still here,

0:46:25.980,0:46:28.740  
maybe I will call this country home.

0:46:28.740,0:46:36.420  
But now I just think home, okay my parents,  
my house back in El Salvador and that's all.

0:46:37.020,0:46:38.520  
Do you envision

0:46:39.420,0:46:44.400  
completing your education here, and  
then working in the public schools here,

0:46:44.400,0:46:48.720  
and building a future here in Maryland,  
or somewhere else in the United States?

0:46:48.720,0:46:51.780  
Or do you imagine going to school,

0:46:51.780,0:46:55.620  
maybe working for a while, and then  
returning to your home country?

0:46:55.620,0:46:57.240  
Or do you not know?

0:46:59.940,0:47:00.540

Well,

0:47:01.860,0:47:02.700

I don't..

0:47:02.700,0:47:07.140

Well, I would like to.. I have to say this, I would like to stay here,

0:47:08.940,0:47:11.940

but something that I learned during

0:47:13.140,0:47:18.660

these two years it's, I don't know what's going to happen next year or next month.

0:47:21.300,0:47:27.900

I came here, I went to Colorado, and then, eight months later, I was in another state,

0:47:27.900,0:47:31.860

and then I went to another place, and I'm moving..

0:47:32.940,0:47:34.260

moving all the time.

0:47:35.580,0:47:37.920

-It's a lot of change.

-Yes!

0:47:37.920,0:47:39.420

Moving all the time.

0:47:42.360,0:47:45.900

Yes, if I stay here, I would like to work in a public school here.

0:47:49.020,0:47:53.040

I have a family here and friends that they are teachers, too.

0:47:54.240,0:48:00.420

Moving from place to place can be very exciting and interesting, but it also can be stressful.

0:48:01.080,0:48:02.100

Yes!

0:48:03.120,0:48:08.460

Have you found that the process of adapting to new places has been challenging?

0:48:11.220,0:48:18.300

Yes, it's exciting, because if it is the first time that I am going there,

0:48:19.740,0:48:23.040

good, because I'm going to

0:48:23.040,0:48:26.640

go to that place, and that I have never been before, and

0:48:27.540,0:48:30.233

stressful because I don't. Maybe I don't know,

0:48:30.233,0:48:34.080

I have no one there, I don't have friends there. Like Connecticut



0:48:34.920,0:48:41.280  
I like that place, beautiful  
houses everywhere and views,

0:48:42.720,0:48:49.200  
but I don't have friends there. All I know is this family there,

0:48:49.740,0:48:51.240  
but just that.

0:48:51.240,0:48:59.880  
So, if I think going back there,  
maybe live there, I don't want to do that.

0:49:00.780,0:49:04.020  
I didn't find a place for me there.

0:49:04.980,0:49:08.040  
So going there is more

0:49:09.120,0:49:12.420  
a week, two weeks, and just that, to see

0:49:13.260,0:49:15.180  
friends and that's all.

0:49:16.620,0:49:19.260  
But I think I want to stay

0:49:19.260,0:49:25.200  
in a place where I know people, like  
my family, or people from my country.

0:49:26.520,0:49:27.840  
And..

0:49:29.340,0:49:30.060

0:49:30.060,0:49:34.680  
Move to another state now? For me,  
no. I don't want to move again.

0:49:35.520,0:49:36.420  
I don't blame you.

0:49:37.740,0:49:38.240  
I think

0:49:39.240,0:49:44.220  
something interesting that you said  
earlier was that when you lived

0:49:45.240,0:49:46.560  
in your home country,

0:49:47.400,0:49:50.520  
that you at times felt that you were not safe.

0:49:51.420,0:49:56.220  
Do you feel safe here? This country  
also has problems with gun violence,

0:49:58.080,0:50:01.260  
so do you feel safer here, or do you feel that

0:50:02.040,0:50:05.640  
there are also challenges  
related to safety in this area?

0:50:08.400,0:50:12.600  
I don't feel 100% safe here,

0:50:14.460,0:50:18.300  
and it's not only because

0:50:18.300,0:50:22.260  
there are shootings all the time.

0:50:23.160,0:50:24.060  
It's just..

0:50:26.280,0:50:28.440  
something that happened to me now is..

0:50:30.240,0:50:32.760  
I'm with a friend here,

0:50:32.760,0:50:38.280  
who speaks Spanish, but I don't want to speak  
Spanish in front of other people that don't,

0:50:39.660,0:50:46.200  
because I know that there are people here that if  
they hear a person speaking another language,

0:50:46.920,0:50:52.900  
they treat that person bad, just  
because it is a name they heard,

0:50:53.400,0:50:57.360  
and what I do is not to talk.

0:50:58.080,0:51:00.300  
I don't want to talk in front of those people.

0:51:01.380,0:51:02.220  
And..

0:51:05.460,0:51:09.360  
When I came here.. the first  
time that I came to class here,

0:51:10.560,0:51:14.700  
I saw this sign in the building,

0:51:17.220,0:51:19.860  
saying "what to do when

0:51:20.400,0:51:21.960  
an attacker comes here,"

0:51:22.620,0:51:28.260  
and I said, "this never happens in El  
Salvador in that way, the shooting."

0:51:29.640,0:51:33.300  
There are no signs like that  
in schools in El Salvador.

0:51:34.140,0:51:36.420  
But there are other things that

0:51:37.320,0:51:38.760  
don't make me feel safe.

0:51:40.560,0:51:44.460  
I know those signs that you're talking about  
"what to do if there's an active shooter?"

0:51:44.460,0:51:45.180

Yes!

0:51:45.960,0:51:52.020

And I never saw anything like that  
in El Salvador. So I think,

0:51:53.280,0:52:00.120

killing people in front of my house, something,  
that was stressful for me in El Salvador

0:52:00.120,0:52:03.780

about eight years ago. I used to

0:52:03.780,0:52:08.760

see through the window  
in front of my house if..

0:52:09.660,0:52:12.240

in front of my house there is a church

0:52:13.020,0:52:17.760

and these guys they used to  
stand in front of the church,

0:52:18.840,0:52:26.820

just waiting for people to pass by  
them and stop them and ask for money, or

0:52:26.820,0:52:32.520

they will do anything to them if  
they don't give them money. I used to watch

0:52:33.900,0:52:36.060

before to go out to see

0:52:36.060,0:52:44.400

are they there or no? Because sometimes, even  
if you live in that neighborhood they don't care.

0:52:45.060,0:52:48.600

They are going to do anything to you  
if you don't give what they want.

0:52:50.100,0:52:59.520

I have a family in Canada, and my cousin and  
my uncle they went to my house to visit us,

0:52:59.520,0:53:03.480

and I remember that my cousin, he was outside

0:53:04.740,0:53:10.620

in front of my house and one of those  
guys was in front of the church.

0:53:12.000,0:53:15.420

So when I saw him coming to my cousin,

0:53:16.920,0:53:27.240

I just said to my mom, "ma he's coming  
to him" and my mom came out, and

0:53:28.380,0:53:30.660

she didn't say anything. He..

0:53:30.660,0:53:36.720

She just came out of the house and  
to stand in front of him to stop him,

0:53:36.720,0:53:42.180

because he was about to do  
any.. something to my cousin.

0:53:42.180,0:53:43.800

He was about to do something.

0:53:44.580,0:53:48.660

And since that time, they  
didn't go to El Salvador.

0:53:48.660,0:53:51.960

They're not going to El Salvador.  
It's been like eight years ago.

0:53:51.960,0:53:54.540

They said, "we are not going again."

0:53:55.740,0:53:57.900

-That sounds like a very scary experience.  
-Yes!

0:53:59.940,0:54:05.280

You mentioned that sometimes you don't want  
to speak Spanish in front of other people.

0:54:05.280,0:54:09.180

Do you feel like there's discrimination against

0:54:10.440,0:54:13.560

Latinos and Latinas in this  
country? Or do you feel

0:54:13.560,0:54:17.940

you're stereotyped sometimes? That people have

0:54:19.020,0:54:22.320

false ideas or generalizations about

0:54:23.100,0:54:27.960

immigrants or about people from the  
Hispanic community? Have you faced that?

0:54:30.420,0:54:33.780

No, personally, but I have

0:54:33.780,0:54:35.280

watched videos

0:54:36.300,0:54:40.020

that.. about those situations, and

0:54:40.740,0:54:42.780

that's why I feel

0:54:45.420,0:54:46.860

uncomfortable

0:54:47.760,0:54:51.300

talking Spanish, speaking Spanish  
in front of other people.

0:54:52.140,0:54:54.810

And..

0:54:54.810,0:55:05.040

There are people here that think  
that immigrants are bad, or that

0:55:05.640,0:55:11.220

they come here just to do bad things,  
or they are stealing jobs here.

0:55:11.220,0:55:13.080

And..

0:55:15.120,0:55:22.260  
well, I don't know, my family came here.. My  
aunt, she came here about 34-35 years ago.

0:55:23.640,0:55:32.576  
There was a Civil War in El Salvador,  
or before that, I guess she came here,

0:55:32.576,0:55:36.720  
and she has been here for  
all these.. all that time here,

0:55:38.160,0:55:39.360  
and

0:55:40.500,0:55:46.200  
she just came to work because  
she had two children in El Salvador.

0:55:47.160,0:55:51.000  
And yeah, all my family that came here,

0:55:51.000,0:55:56.400  
they just came for that reason;  
Civil War in El Salvador, and some of them..

0:55:57.720,0:56:01.200  
Well, the job here of, my cousin because

0:56:02.220,0:56:05.280  
insecurity, or they want to help

0:56:05.280,0:56:11.160  
their families. Because I have a cousin  
in San Francisco, that she came here.

0:56:12.360,0:56:16.200  
She is a refugee here

0:56:17.520,0:56:21.240  
and she came here with her son,

0:56:22.740,0:56:25.080  
but her daughter was in El Salvador,

0:56:26.220,0:56:27.900  
almost all her family.

0:56:28.740,0:56:29.580  
And..

0:56:31.260,0:56:38.040  
it's been like five or six years since  
she came here, but since she came here,

0:56:39.060,0:56:42.120  
she was sending money all the time to her family.

0:56:44.100,0:56:45.540  
And now,

0:56:45.540,0:56:52.680  
almost all her family is here, only her mom  
and one of her sisters are in El Salvador.

0:56:53.520,0:56:55.500  
She brought her daughter,

0:56:56.940,0:57:00.360

her sister with her husband and child,

0:57:01.200,0:57:08.280  
and her three brothers are here too. In five years, all of them are here.

0:57:09.600,0:57:10.440  
And..

0:57:11.580,0:57:17.400  
She is the kind of person that  
she can't go back to El Salvador.

0:57:17.400,0:57:22.200  
She can not go there, and it's not  
because she was doing bad things.

0:57:22.860,0:57:29.040  
Sometimes you can't trust a person  
in El Salvador because you don't know

0:57:29.040,0:57:32.460  
what that person is doing, or her family is doing.

0:57:33.900,0:57:40.620  
And my cousin, he had a girlfriend,

0:57:41.640,0:57:45.300  
and his girlfriend's brother was

0:57:45.840,0:57:46.560  
in gangs.

0:57:48.780,0:57:52.320  
She wasn't in that thing..  
He wasn't doing those things

0:57:53.400,0:58:01.980  
but he was almost killed in El Salvador  
because his brother in law was in those

0:58:03.180,0:58:07.800  
things and he didn't know that.

0:58:07.800,0:58:11.640  
The same day that that happened to him,

0:58:13.080,0:58:16.140  
that was.. he just ran away from the..

0:58:16.140,0:58:18.780  
from the town, where he was living,

0:58:20.280,0:58:21.840  
and he came here.

0:58:23.520,0:58:27.660  
He didn't stop to anywhere.  
He just came here because

0:58:29.220,0:58:30.840  
the..

0:58:30.840,0:58:33.780  
the police there, or

0:58:33.780,0:58:34.710  
the gangs

0:58:35.940,0:58:42.900  
that are from the other band, they know that you  
have family or friends that are in those things,

0:58:44.700,0:58:50.760  
they are going to try to do something  
to you. So with her that was the case,

0:58:50.760,0:58:55.860  
and her brothers, too. They were

0:58:55.860,0:58:59.820  
kidnapped in El Salvador or the military

0:59:00.840,0:59:01.800  
and

0:59:04.680,0:59:11.100  
they have a friend there that they told.. I mean, that friend told them where they were,

0:59:12.480,0:59:19.380  
and that's the only reason that..  
that's why they knew about them, and

0:59:19.380,0:59:26.520  
I don't know what they did to get them  
back, but they had to move from where

0:59:26.520,0:59:31.740  
they were living to another  
place, and then they came here.

0:59:34.740,0:59:38.940  
I'm glad you shared that story, because  
I think it's important for Americans to

0:59:38.940,0:59:45.600  
understand the conditions that lead people to  
leave their countries and to start a new life.

0:59:45.600,0:59:48.180  
And so your description of

0:59:48.180,0:59:54.840  
the gang violence, and the fear, I think that's an  
important part of the story that you share it. So,

0:59:54.840,0:59:58.380  
I'm glad that you did that.  
I think it's important for

0:59:58.980,1:00:01.980  
American people to understand those conditions.

1:00:02.760,1:00:08.100  
Is there anything else that you think is  
important for American people to understand about

1:00:09.360,1:00:13.740  
the Salvadorian experience, or  
about the immigrant experience?

1:00:15.060,1:00:16.560  
Anything that you want to share about

1:00:16.560,1:00:20.340  
the difficulties of coming  
here, or starting a new life?

1:00:25.020,1:00:29.400  
When we come here we had to  
leave our families there, so..

1:00:31.740,1:00:37.260

I think that I am a blessed person  
that I came here in good situation.

1:00:38.280,1:00:41.760  
I don't have a.. I don't  
have problems going back to

1:00:41.760,1:00:45.360  
El Salvador, but I don't want to go back, because

1:00:45.360,1:00:50.700  
I don't feel it's my place. And

1:00:50.700,1:00:55.260  
sometimes when people come here,  
they have family, children there,

1:00:55.920,1:01:00.600  
and they had to leave them, and they don't  
know if they are going to see them again.

1:01:02.160,1:01:03.180

1:01:03.180,1:01:09.720  
My case is different. It's not like that,  
because I am able to see my parents;

1:01:09.720,1:01:14.880  
they can come here. My sister can  
come here. I can go back there.

1:01:14.880,1:01:21.060  
It's not a problem for me. If something  
bad happened to them, I can go there so. But

1:01:21.060,1:01:27.960  
what happened with those people that they come  
here, but they cannot go back. If they go back,

1:01:28.500,1:01:34.200  
they won't be able to come back here,  
because they will have to do this..

1:01:34.200,1:01:39.480  
all the same trip from the country  
to here, spend a lot of money,

1:01:40.440,1:01:41.760  
and..

1:01:41.760,1:01:43.800  
yeah, that's hard.

1:01:44.820,1:01:48.000  
It's a lot of upheaval. It's very challenging.

1:01:49.560,1:01:57.840  
Something that you mentioned earlier, it  
had to do with language, and I find that

1:01:57.840,1:02:04.080  
interesting and sad that you don't want  
to speak Spanish in certain contexts.

1:02:05.580,1:02:09.480  
Because I think being bilingual is

1:02:09.480,1:02:12.780  
something important. To be able  
to speak more than one language.



1:02:14.400,1:02:16.620  
So I'm curious about

1:02:18.540,1:02:23.160  
your experience learning academic  
English at Montgomery College.

1:02:23.160,1:02:26.280  
It's different than the kind of English you might

1:02:26.280,1:02:30.540  
need to work as an au pair in a  
family, right? So are you taking..

1:02:32.100,1:02:34.980  
Are you taking you ELAW 980 now, the writing class?

1:02:36.840,1:02:38.145  
I..

1:02:38.745,1:02:39.960  
at 990.

1:02:39.960,1:02:43.860  
You're at 990? The different Capstone course, okay.

1:02:44.400,1:02:46.200  
Let's talk a little bit about how

1:02:46.920,1:02:53.760  
that course is helping you with your  
academic English. Is it challenging?

1:02:53.760,1:03:00.360  
I don't find it challenging because

1:03:02.760,1:03:08.700  
when I was in the University of El  
Salvador, I used to take English classes,

1:03:08.700,1:03:16.500  
academic English, too. So I used to do what we  
are doing now in this class, I used to do that

1:03:16.500,1:03:20.160  
back in El Salvador, so

1:03:20.160,1:03:21.540  
it's not easy,

1:03:23.160,1:03:29.220  
but I have an idea what to do.

1:03:30.120,1:03:33.840  
But i'm still learning. I have been learning

1:03:33.840,1:03:36.480  
new things in this class,

1:03:37.080,1:03:40.920  
and the way that

1:03:42.600,1:03:45.960  
people teach here is  
different than in El Salvador.

1:03:46.980,1:03:54.720  
And it's not only in this English class..  
Math. I'm taking Math too and it's..

1:03:54.720,1:04:00.180  
I like Math now than before.  
So it's different, the way..

1:04:01.140,1:04:02.280  
The system is different.

1:04:02.280,1:04:08.100  
Can you describe a little bit, the differences  
that you've noticed? You said that the way

1:04:08.100,1:04:10.200  
people teach here is different?

1:04:12.420,1:04:15.600  
Yes. Well, I think El Salvador is more

1:04:16.320,1:04:18.900  
teachers are old school teachers.

1:04:22.980,1:04:25.020  
And maybe it's because

1:04:26.160,1:04:27.300  
they don't have

1:04:28.740,1:04:30.840  
the skills or

1:04:32.040,1:04:34.320  
all the supplies to teach.

1:04:34.320,1:04:41.280  
My mom is a teacher, and every year she has  
to face different things. She doesn't have

1:04:42.420,1:04:44.760  
things like

1:04:44.760,1:04:46.320  
materials,

1:04:46.320,1:04:47.760  
or activities,

1:04:48.480,1:04:51.720  
or the space.

1:04:51.720,1:04:55.140  
The classroom is in bad condition.

1:04:58.740,1:05:00.960  
Well, the weather is not helping.

1:05:05.820,1:05:12.120  
I think in El Salvador people don't  
take too serious the education part.

1:05:13.020,1:05:14.880  
Not only government,

1:05:16.140,1:05:21.660  
also parents, too. Because if  
the child tell the parent,

1:05:21.660,1:05:25.020  
"I don't want to go to school," they just  
say, "okay, you're not going to school."

1:05:25.980,1:05:28.680  
Just because the child

doesn't want to go to school,

1:05:31.440,1:05:36.780  
or if it is raining, "okay, you are not  
going to school because it's raining."

1:05:39.240,1:05:42.840  
You mentioned that you were.. it sounded like you

1:05:42.840,1:05:46.800  
were surprised that you enjoy math  
now. Do you think that's because

1:05:47.700,1:05:52.080  
there's a different approach to teaching math  
that you're experiencing at Montgomery College?

1:05:53.220,1:05:56.340  
Yes, and also because I had a

1:05:56.340,1:06:00.960  
bad experience in El Salvador,  
with my teachers in El Salvador.

1:06:01.740,1:06:07.140  
It was hard for me to go to that  
class and try to understand.

1:06:08.640,1:06:10.980  
And it's..

1:06:12.420,1:06:18.240  
I don't know what they think or how  
they try to teach math, but it's different.

1:06:19.080,1:06:22.020  
I come here, and it's.. we are

1:06:23.340,1:06:26.340  
in this class, taking.. doing

1:06:26.340,1:06:35.340  
basic things like adding or subtraction and now  
I know that there are different ways to do that.

1:06:36.120,1:06:40.680  
Not only one, and I am just..  
I didn't know that.

1:06:41.340,1:06:43.560  
I didn't know many things

1:06:43.560,1:06:44.400  
before this class.

1:06:45.240,1:06:50.460  
What has helped you in your education at  
Montgomery College? What has been useful to you?

1:06:50.460,1:06:53.340  
Do you, for example, go to the Writing Center,

1:06:53.340,1:06:58.500  
or do you get math tutoring? Do you  
use the Academic Success Centers, or

1:06:58.500,1:07:04.500  
the library? What kind of resources do you  
use to help you be successful in college?

1:07:08.340,1:07:09.360

The Writing Center.

1:07:10.500,1:07:13.920  
I think that I still need to build that part.

1:07:15.000,1:07:25.140  
And math.. I'm not that good in  
math, but I think I'm doing good. So,

1:07:26.520,1:07:30.840  
yes, I use.. I have never been to a library, yet.

1:07:32.520,1:07:40.920  
I was taking this psychology class, and they sent an online book, so I didn't go there, yet.

1:07:41.820,1:07:46.740  
And something that I like from here that

1:07:46.740,1:07:48.660  
there is,

1:07:51.000,1:07:52.140  
what is it called?

1:07:56.040,1:07:59.280  
I forgot what is it called when the teacher

1:07:59.280,1:08:06.840  
has the time if I need to  
go to office hour.  
-Office hours.  
-Yes, that.

1:08:07.620,1:08:10.020  
The office hours I think that's

1:08:10.020,1:08:12.720  
something that I like here, too. Yeah.

1:08:12.720,1:08:16.740  
Do you feel welcome when you go to office hours?

1:08:16.740,1:08:17.240  
Yes! Yes!

1:08:19.500,1:08:23.880  
Is that something that's offered  
in Salvadorian Universities?

1:08:23.880,1:08:24.840  
No?

1:08:26.220,1:08:26.720  
Well,

1:08:27.240,1:08:30.660  
they say, if you need.. if you have a question,

1:08:30.660,1:08:33.600  
you can come here, and I can  
help you, but it's not

1:08:34.260,1:08:38.280  
something they are open to do it, all the.. no!

1:08:38.280,1:08:47.400  
So, in general, do you feel like Montgomery  
College professors are welcoming and helpful?

1:08:48.420,1:08:50.820  
Yes. I love it!

1:08:50.820,1:08:57.540

Do you have any advice if you met  
a new student at Montgomery College,

1:08:57.540,1:09:04.920

what advice would you give him or her to be  
successful in their pursuit of education?

1:09:08.100,1:09:09.840

Try to use all the..

1:09:11.460,1:09:12.480

all the..

1:09:14.700,1:09:16.140

all these things,

1:09:16.140,1:09:17.700

what do you say? Sorry!

1:09:17.700,1:09:18.660

-Resources?  
-Resources.

1:09:19.680,1:09:21.960

All the resource, ask questions,

1:09:21.960,1:09:28.440

office hours are important, too, because if  
there is something that you didn't understand,

1:09:28.440,1:09:32.640

during class or something that you miss, you can go and ask the teacher.

1:09:35.280,1:09:37.260

And be positive.

1:09:41.040,1:09:43.140

Another question that I had that

1:09:43.680,1:09:47.760

is related to supporting family back home.

1:09:47.760,1:09:50.460

Sometimes students tell me  
that there's a lot of pressure

1:09:50.460,1:09:55.260

on them to send money back home.

1:09:55.260,1:10:00.600

Do you feel that kind of pressure  
to help out your family back home?

1:10:01.860,1:10:02.400

No!

1:10:04.920,1:10:12.180

No, maybe, I.. maybe because my parents they have a

1:10:13.980,1:10:24.660

good financial condition there. It's not  
important. And all these two years were for me

1:10:25.800,1:10:28.920

to explore here. I go

1:10:28.920,1:10:36.420

everywhere and I don't feel  
like that. I would like to do it,

1:10:36.420,1:10:42.360  
at some point. I can't do it now, maybe in

1:10:42.360,1:10:44.520  
three or four years.

1:10:45.120,1:10:46.980  
But I don't feel that pressure.

1:10:47.880,1:10:54.180  
If you imagined your future, where you will be,  
and what you will be doing five years from now,

1:10:54.180,1:10:57.240  
what do you imagine or hope for?

1:11:01.200,1:11:04.200  
Working as a teacher,

1:11:05.220,1:11:09.300  
or maybe something that I want to do is to

1:11:10.500,1:11:13.680  
validate my degree from El Salvador, too.

1:11:14.820,1:11:23.880  
So I can have two options here. And yeah.  
Maybe here in Maryland. I don't know.

1:11:23.880,1:11:27.420  
But that's something important to finish..

1:11:27.960,1:11:40.620  
finish my major here. Maybe if had the opportunity  
to go to university, I'm going to do it and

1:11:41.580,1:11:43.560  
find a job and to settle.

1:11:46.260,1:11:50.460  
When things feel challenging,  
or you feel discouraged,

1:11:50.460,1:11:53.880  
what helps you to keep  
going and to stay motivated?

1:11:57.120,1:12:00.180  
Now, I just think..

1:12:01.380,1:12:06.660  
yes, some things are hard to  
do, sometimes you have hard

1:12:06.660,1:12:08.100  
situations, but

1:12:09.480,1:12:14.880  
I just think nothing is impossible. I  
just say it's not impossible to do it.

1:12:15.840,1:12:20.040  
It's just going to be a little bit hard, but  
I'm going to do it, I'm going to get there.

1:12:21.660,1:12:27.960  
And what emotions are you feeling now telling  
your story about your life? How do you feel?

1:12:32.280,1:12:33.540

I feel

1:12:33.540,1:12:36.780  
proud of myself because

1:12:37.680,1:12:42.120  
being here

1:12:43.560,1:12:47.640  
alone, not with my parents, is

1:12:48.480,1:12:54.420  
something that I never..  
came to my mind before.

1:12:55.560,1:13:02.340  
So I'm here.. I feel proud. That all this time,

1:13:03.120,1:13:05.700  
I was, yeah.. just me.

1:13:06.900,1:13:13.020  
And now I live with my family here but I feel like

1:13:13.020,1:13:16.440  
it's still just me, because

1:13:18.480,1:13:20.580  
my parents are not here.

1:13:20.580,1:13:22.620  
You're becoming more independent.

1:13:22.620,1:13:23.760  
Yes!

1:13:24.780,1:13:27.960  
That's a good feeling. I imagine.

1:13:30.300,1:13:33.720  
-Yeah.  
-Is there anything else you would like to share about

1:13:33.720,1:13:37.440  
your story that you haven't mentioned,  
yet? Anything about your home country,

1:13:37.440,1:13:43.200  
or about your reasons for coming to the United  
States, or about your experiences here?

1:13:45.440,1:13:47.040  
No!

1:13:49.620,1:13:50.520  
That's all.

1:13:51.240,1:13:56.220  
I did have one last question, and  
that is also related to language.

1:13:57.420,1:14:00.660  
When you're learning a second or third language,

1:14:01.800,1:14:06.600  
it's really important to practice  
it a lot, right? And if you live

1:14:06.600,1:14:15.120  
with extended family, who speaks to your first  
language, and if you have friends, who are also

1:14:15.780,1:14:16.920  
from your home country,

1:14:16.920,1:14:22.200  
or if you live in a community with a  
lot of speakers of your first language,

1:14:22.200,1:14:26.280  
does that make it hard to improve your English?

1:14:27.000,1:14:27.840  
Yes!

1:14:27.840,1:14:32.760  
Yes, it's hard. Even here I have a friend,

1:14:33.300,1:14:35.100  
she's from El Salvador, too.

1:14:36.360,1:14:41.760  
At the beginning, well, I didn't know  
that she was from El Salvador, so we were

1:14:42.960,1:14:44.940  
speaking in English.

1:14:45.600,1:14:49.380  
Then she say, "where are you  
from?" "I'm from El Salvador" "Oh,

1:14:49.380,1:14:54.720  
okay," so and then everything changed. So  
we don't, we don't speak English anymore.

1:14:55.620,1:14:57.360  
So that..

1:14:57.360,1:15:04.920  
yeah, that's difficult to improve,  
because yeah, if you are, around

1:15:04.920,1:15:05.760  
people

1:15:05.760,1:15:13.680  
who speak the language, you are going to speak  
that language more and improve it more. So, yeah.

1:15:14.340,1:15:19.320  
It's challenging because  
it's so easy to speak with

1:15:20.220,1:15:26.460  
another native speaker in your own language,  
right? It's just comfortable and easy.

1:15:26.460,1:15:31.980  
I remember I had that experience when I was living  
in France in my twenties, and there were lots of

1:15:31.980,1:15:38.220  
Americans there, and it was so easy if I spent  
time with them, to just speak English. But my goal

1:15:38.220,1:15:45.300  
was to learn to speak French better, so I  
had to discipline myself and force myself

1:15:46.320,1:15:51.600  
to continue to speak French and to try to read it.



1:15:52.740,1:15:58.012  
What do you do to try to force yourself  
to immerse yourself in English here?

1:15:58.012,1:16:00.960  
Or do you? Is that  
something that's important to you?

1:16:02.340,1:16:04.200  
Yeah, it's important.

1:16:04.200,1:16:10.320  
Try to look for English speaker friends.

1:16:10.320,1:16:18.600  
Yeah. yeah, that's the only way,  
because I'm not a person who's going to..

1:16:19.500,1:16:25.980  
to get into a class just by myself. I  
know that now there are those apps and things.

1:16:26.940,1:16:29.220  
I'm not that person.

1:16:31.620,1:16:35.160  
It's more like.. yeah, If I  
have a person, a friend, who speak..

1:16:36.420,1:16:40.860  
I'm going to do it, or if I had to  
take.. if I had to take a class,

1:16:41.580,1:16:46.440  
well, I want to take the class,  
but if it is optional, okay, no.

1:16:48.360,1:16:52.020  
Are you making friends from other countries?

1:16:52.020,1:16:56.160  
Montgomery College is so diverse. There's so many different countries

1:16:56.160,1:17:00.900  
represented at Montgomery College. Have you  
met people from different parts of the world?

1:17:01.560,1:17:02.700  
Yes!

1:17:03.240,1:17:09.720  
The English class.. there is this girl from France.

1:17:09.720,1:17:10.620

1:17:10.620,1:17:21.820  
-And where is she from, Cote d'Ivoire?  
-Cote d'Ivoire.  
-She speaks French, from Cote d'Ivoire. Yeah. And Ethiopia.

1:17:22.920,1:17:26.720  
So are you learning about other cultures  
in addition to American culture?

1:17:26.720,1:17:29.160  
I just talked with this girl from Cote d'Ivoire,

1:17:30.060,1:17:34.020  
and I told her, "I speak a little bit of French,"

1:17:34.020,1:17:38.280

and she the next day, she  
came to me, and speaking in French.

1:17:41.100,1:17:48.060

There's lots of opportunities at Montgomery College  
to keep working on different languages.

1:17:48.060,1:17:51.300

Interesting. Have you made any lasting friendships,

1:17:51.300,1:17:55.560

or important friendships here? Or  
have you gotten involved with any

1:17:56.220,1:18:00.120

student life activities or  
any organizations on campus?

1:18:01.080,1:18:04.200

No, not yet. But I would like to do it

1:18:05.700,1:18:11.160

Great. Well, I hope you do. Thanks so  
much for taking the time to talk with me

1:18:11.160,1:18:13.500

today. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

1:18:14.040,1:18:15.120

No, that's all.

1:18:15.720,1:18:17.100

Great. Thank you so much!

1:18:17.100,1:18:18.660

You're welcome.