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My Experience Moving to the United States

Do you know the problems immigrant people face when they move to different country?

Let me start by telling the story of my life. I moved here to find a better life along with opportunities. Among my family members, there have been individuals who have already moved across the globe and experienced new beginnings. Well, it is not as easy as it sounds. Sometimes you want to blend in, and that can change who you really are. And nobody wants to change.

Including me. In my country, Ethiopian people usually say that “If you have a chance to live in the United State, your future will be so bright.” When I was in Ethiopia, a lot of people knew that I would be moving to the United State soon with my brother. In fact, they were happier about it than me. Moving to the U.S was good, but also it was not good. It felt in-between because there are better opportunities and you had to face something new it might be bad or good. For example, you will experience loneliness, you might have been “A” student now you are opposite etc. I did not know English at the time, and I am still learning. I feel like a kid since I cannot communicate with people outside of my family. I am happier when I get home because I feel like an adult again, and that is because I do not have to be that person who people talk to by using body language.

I remember the first time when I went to school, there was a girl who spoke the same language as me. She showed me around the school, took me to class and went back to her class. When I was with her, I felt like I was with my friends from Ethiopia because since we spoke the

same language, we can understand each other very well. One day she stopped hanging out with me suddenly. I asked why then she said, “Your teacher told me not to hang out with you, she said you have to learn English since we do not speak English to one another we can’t hang out with each other.” At the time, I was sad because she was the only one who understood me. After a few days, I made friends whose names were Sarah, Mylinh, Iman, Quetzali and more. Whenever we went out, they showed me around and told me how things work in Minnesota which helped me fit in even though I did not speak English.

I was not used to being the kid who has a tough time making friends. Back home, the whole class is your friend. But of course, there are those who you are closer to, which you call your best friends. There are differences in how classrooms function when comparing the classroom I attended in Ethiopia, to where I attended here in the United States. One difference is that in Ethiopia, the teacher is required to switch classes while the students stay put, unlike the United States where each subject is assigned a specific room. Another difference, which comes from personal experience, is that the students are kinder in Ethiopia. After a while I made friends, but I had a tough time communicating with them. I remember one time coming home with tears in my eyes. I never felt helpless like that before. What happened was the teacher was passing the test we took the day before I saw my grade, and I was barely passing. I used to be an “A” student. Just when I got done with math class, I was going down to my locker to get a book. I saw a girl open my locker and search for something in my bag. When she saw me, she took gum from my bag and left. But still I felt defenseless since I didn’t know English. I just stood there and watched her leave, and that even made my day worse than I thought.

Also, not knowing American culture helped me to make friends back then because I followed my culture until I learned the new culture. When I say this in Ethiopia people act like

they know you for long. Even if you are new to the state or the school, they welcome you with an open hand. So when I moved here, I just went out and talked to my classmates like I had known them for a long time. Back home, nobody in our class or neighbors are strangers. At the time, it was easy for me to make friends, but now, it has become hard for me to make friends when I finally learned the language and the culture. Because people in the U.S did not experience friendship the way I did. So, if I talk to random person, I do not know what is going on in their head.

People ask why others leave their country to move to a different country. That is because many people are having difficulty living in their native country such as overpopulation, jobless, war etc.. People from outside of the United States think there is peace, love, equality, freedom, free education, jobs, and decent food to stay healthy. The other reason people move to different countries is they think they can be rich and safe. But for me my parents died when I was a little since then my aunts, and uncle are the one who helps me, but they don't leave in Ethiopia they just send money for us. After a while they decided to take me to Minnesota. People don't move to a different country unless they are struggling with something or need help. Being immigrant will not be a perfect life as no life is as any other life it will have its difficulties, but I did it, and I notice that I have changed as a person. For example, I know what I want, I have control over my life, I know what is right and what is wrong for me and more.

If we look at the positive side being an immigrant, it will open your eyes to something you never cared or thought about. I remember when I was in Ethiopia, I was smart kid, but when I started making too many friends. I stopped caring about school, and nothing really matters to me. I knew I will move to Minnesota, but I didn't care to learn the language or the culture. Some people want to learn the language or the culture before they move to that country or the state. But

I didn't bother to learn any of those. I guess that is because I was happy, even though I do struggle with money. But now I have what I wanted, money and a better life but I am not happy as I used to be. I guess you can't get everything you wanted at the same time, that is the way of life.

Moving to a different country might be lonely and challenging at first but meeting new people with different experiences and a different culture will make it exciting. Moving to a new country is exciting because I will get to make new memories, make new friends, and learn something. Facing something challenging will give me more confidence. At first it is scary to move to a different country, but once I learned the language, the culture, I have no regrets.

At first it made me feel overwhelmed, hopeless, and lost even though when I look back now, I am amazed by seeing how much I achieved, how many challenges and fears I overcame. I am proud of myself for how far I have grown as a person, how much I have changed in these few years. Moving to the U.S made me stronger. These will show me what I am capable of and how much I can overcome anything. This is how I feel, and others feel the same.

I want to be honest when I moved here, I almost went back to Ethiopia, I did not know what to do or how I feel. I was confused since I never faced anything like this. It gave me a tough time. Then I thought about the things I like to achieve. I also thought about my family and how much I do not want to leave them. Not going to lie at first it was extremely difficult to fit in, but my family told me I can do this, and I can overcome this challenge. I know that every step I take they are by my side supporting me no matter what. Having a family who can support me in this kind of situation will make things easier. For those who do not have their family with them I recommend volunteering. Volunteering is a wonderful way to meet new people, connect with your community and make lifelong friends. Also going out will help to make friends.

