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Door activities…You know, had to do something. And then, you know people were happy to pay. Because they wanted to meet other people they hadn’t seen for ages.

*Do you remember, did you have, people from your class there?*

Oh yeah yeah, quite a lot.

*Yeah.*

In fact, I’m quite in touch with quite a few of my class mates anyway.

*Yeah? Even now?*

Even now. So I've got quite a few, some of them has gone to Canada. One of them is in America, but we still like, in touch. And er, one, couple of them are in Hounslow, and…one in, reading, and Leicester, so we sort of like, we wanted to get together, you know, class, our class, em…get together.

*Yeah.*

Unfortunately, we couldn’t do it because er, one way or the other we couldn’t make it. One makes it, the other one can’t.

*Yeah.*

…so one of them…never, materialised. Every, actually, one of our aims was to all of get together, even from people from Canada, America…

*That’ll be nice.*

Yeah. One, one event we wanted to organise it. But because I’ve got business, I’m, I’m XXXX tied down, tied down with families, and stuff like that, we can’t drop it. And now you know, with the business it’s very difficult.

*How long has this business been opened?*

Twenty six years.

*And it’s always been this location? Cos it’s very popular, even though I’ve just been here ten minutes, XXXX customers, and I was walking around, there’s a lot of African, products aswell…that’s why I thought maybe XXXX Uganda…*

I've got quite a lot of Ugandan er, products here aswell.

*Was it like that in Uganda as well?*

Uganda, we had a small shop. You being XXXX, a Student, we never cared about shopping.

*You don’t look, yeah, of course yeah.*

But em, em…it was a small shop. They use to give a list to the guy, and they use to just send stuff at home and at end of the month they send you the bill.

*It’s quite handy. [LAUGHS].*

But I get, one good thing about most of the Ugandans, I would say about eighty Ugandans, or…you know, they work, they are hardworking, they, what they, happened was people realised that they came with nothing, they had to build themselves up. So, whatever the culture, whatever the cir…circumstances, like people who has never even cleaned the floors started doing anything and anything they can do it. So…all, majority of Ugandans, have built themselves up. And like, from nothing, which they came with nothing, but some of, you know most of them are well settled. You know, you’ll find few families, but most of them are well settled, their, they all made sure their kids got an education, they, kids are in good positions, stuff like that. You know, like if we had everything, then I don’t think any of us would have bothered to, work or stuff like that, but because we came with nothing and we like…most of were, even ashamed of taking benefits. They’ve decided right, hard work was the only way out.

*Was that the attitude, that, they, you think, you had as em…you had even in Uganda or you think just because when you came here, that was, it pushed, it pushed that value more?*

I think more here, because I guess, er, you know, em…there we, you know, like for me, I was, student, so…how my parents coped, it didn’t bother, me, because I…for them , it wasn’t my problem. When I came here, and I know my parents were struggling, and I knew, we had to live with our means, we all started working, which ever work we got. Whilst we’re working we, er, summer holidays, you know, all of us worked…to b ring in the money, to get back to…normality. And I think the value of money become more. Because there was no…

*When you came here?*

Yeah.

*So how, do, was there any time it was, you found it very difficult, having to start work straight away? Because you were obviously quite young and you see the, perhaps the other young people you were, were probably out socialising em*…

I didn’t even have chance to think about that.

*Yeah.*

You know because like, em…it was more important to get the money into the house, than was er…socialising. And…because of our background, like socialising, you know, is nowadays, you think about socialising but then, we you came, em…there was no such thing.

*It wasn’t a priority?*

Priority was different. Completely different.

*Can you remember like, any like cultural, clashes that you might have had when you was at college or…*

I think only once I had somebody…in a…going, I was going through an estate to go to my Uni. One guy called me ‘Paki’, and I …at that time you can actually turn around and hit the guy and nobody would said anything. He called me ‘Paki’, and I turnaround and I, I grabbed him by the collar and said never, ever call me that. And actually the people came out and supported me than supported him.

*So other white English people came?*

Yeah. You know.

*What was that like, it must’ve been a bit weird because you know, you’re not from Pakistan but they associate any Asian?*

…any Asian from Pakistan, that s what they do anyway. That’s, you know, and I guess, obviously they…they didn’t want any Asians, and that in the their town but then XXXX afterwards, you know you make friends and…even the guy who called me ‘Paki’, he turned around and he was different.

*Really?*

And you know, you know like, they don’t know the difference and I guess, he, you know, his best mate, use to come to our house, basically everyday

*[LAUGHS]*

With my brother, and er, things like that so…

*So they, slowly change once they get used to you and…?*

XXX positive attitude I guess, but culture difference will be there, whenever but you know…I, touched wood I’ve never had it, as bad as some people would. You know, because when I use to work for ministry of defence I was, working for Americans and they have different kinds of people there.

*You mean the Americans attitudes, towards em…towards XXXX?*

It was XXXX different at all, you know it was even better.

*Oh OK.*

Because the…obviously, XXXX they can’t.

*You were saying about the Americans.*

Yeah, you know because we, like in America, management you get all kinds of different backgrounds, people, working…so it was like, I…I was employed by XXXX, working for American airways so…I just sort of like mixed, a lot. When I got married I worked for education. So you…was like in an environment that er, mixed race…people. I've never worked in an environment where there were mixed race people. So…now, XXXX.

*Yeah.*

…culture of people.

*I guess maybe it was only you was working with em, in Tesco, in Huntingdon it was only the time, em it was…*

Yeah, you know I had a good friends.

*Yeah.*

I made good friends there. And they you know, even my English wasn’t very good at that time. The…the people explained to me… and taught me to speak and, get the different er…ways of saying things like, crisps instead of chips.

*Yeah.*

Stuff like that, so…it was a different…

*Yeah.*

But they taught me kind of thing. So I, it never, I never felt I was left out. You know.

*Going back to Uganda what was like your most favourite , em…memorable experience…there, can you remember like, as a…from your childhood?*

After so many years.

*[LAUGHS].* My memory is…I still remember the house I was born in, XXXX

*What was your house like? Cos I…em, from what XXXX.*

It was a Miranda in the front.

*So it was round?*

No, no, no…

*I mean like the houses are…*

It was a square miranda.

*Yeah.*

And then it’s the front room, and there’s a big Miranda, big massive store room and a kitchen and the bedrooms at the side. And the at the backroom there was a big massive, backyard and a store room and then at the back it was the house. Em…you know the house keeper’s house.

*Did you have a maid, or like a servant?*

Yeah. He was with us since, he was seven or eight.

*Was he er, African? Er Ugandan, African?*

Yeah.

*What was his name?*

Er, Jo…oh god. Juma!

*Juma?*

[LAUGHS]. His wife’s name was Theresa.

*Did they live with you?*

Yeah.

*Did they have children?*

Yeah.

*What were they like?*

Very friendly.

*Yeah?*

He was like part of our family, because he basically, he grew up with our family.

*Yeah.*

So.

*So now its em, its forty years now since…em, since Idi Amin…*

Yeah, yeah.

*Expelled the Asians. How do you think it should be remembered…the experience Ugandan Asians in the UK.*

Er I don’t think anybody remembers him, everybody hates him more than anything.

*Yeah.*

If he didn’t do it, things would have been different for Uganda, you know, because Asians, were the hard work…Ugandans identity was Asian. You know, like er, now it’s coming up again but its majority, Asians has gone back there asking the XXXX to come back , but even the Ugandans Africans hate them, hate him. Basically because he, he ruined the country more than, because it was prosperous country.

*It’s the reason why everybody was attracted to Uganda.*

Yeah.

*What about the contribution of all the, all the Ugandan Asians because like you said, a lot of the ones, the majority of the ones, that have been here they’ve worked hard for a long time and that’s been recognised a lot in the press, and in like parliament.*

Yeah, yeah most, most of the…er I know, quite a lot of people they are tax payers so you know. None of us, like, were ashamed to even take a benefits so, and they, open businesses, some of them are bigger than us, you know they actually are doing, er, bringing money into the country you know, em…other way round. Most of our, employed people so, XXXX paying tax. I guess most of us, like some are better than us, some are er, smaller, bigger than us. But either working or whatever they all paying…

*Tax.*

Taxes. So they are actually contributing, one way or the other to the country’s economy, whether it’s not very good at the moment

*[LAUGHS].*

[LAUGHS].

*Do you think, do you think, more people know, need to know about the story of Ugandan Asians?*

Oh there are some who’s done extremely well and they’re um…doing quite a lot for this country, so…I’m sure, I can, you know, there’s a few people who’s done very very well.

[PAUSE].

[INTERVIEWEE SPEAKS TO CUSTOMER].

*So in terms of home, I know earlier you said you feel you’re Ugandan?*

Yeah.

*But in terms of home, where you feel you know…?*

Britain…is here.

*Specifically Hounslow?*

Er…

*Do you live around this area?*

No, my business is here.

[TELEPHONE RINGS].

*Yeah.*

But Streatham is where my home is, but yes definitely. Em…Great Britain, I would not call… I love Uganda, I would not call, home, now. Because I've moved away from it, for so many years.

[INTERVIEWEE ANSWERS PHONE].

*OK thank you Mina.*

OK thanks.

### The End

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