M: So let's just begin with when you say Don't worry about this yet. We'll get started later. But when did you first migrate to Canada?

Az: last year August -2018.

M: And what were the motivations behind you move?

Az: Love. My husband, hes here. We had the option of because I had a great career and focus on so we had an option for him to either keep coming down and visiting me while I was working in history in my career. But I just felt that that would be like, you know, we would have been like a year or two into our marriage and then I would move here and it would be like we're starting. I think it would just have mixed up our timeline. So I just decided to create a new year.

M: Alright, and yeah, what was the work that you were doing that what's your professional background?

Az: So, I work in non-profits. I started one of Pakistan's largest non-profit networks, which is called the free and fair election network which is based on democracy and governance. I worked in that area…the non-profit area for about seven years. I went to the States to study going back to Pakistan. I worked with a corporate for three years and innovation, digital innovation and change management. Then I moved to a news channel Hum News and I joined as an anchor person. But while I was there, I had met my husband, so I realized I probably wouldn't be able to go through and it was wrong to the channel. So, I changed my role. Oh, and so I was heading the Research Unit over there.

M: Oh, that's amazing. And what did you study like in terms of your education, oh, and

Az: my masters was an MPA - public Administration with a concentration in politics and my undergrad I did development studies with a major in gender studies and minor in economics.

M: So this was all in the States?

Az: No just my Masters was in the states.

M: and what are you doing now in terms of work?

Az: So I moved here in August I got my work permit in March and after that I started my own organization company which I do photography, graphic design using the photography I've done, and digital marketing for small to medium organizations and I give them the compete the face over basically a facelift. So I help organizations manage their customer experience based on the digital experience.

M: Oh, that's amazing. And so it's a lot of like, it's your own business to run the restaurant business. Okay. Awesome. And what about your husband? Like, I mean, so can you tell me a little bit about him where you met him?

Az: Right. So, he is here. He has his tutoring business with his brother so they do. They help McGill and Concordia students on their undergraduate students – their ubndergrad business students. How we met is our parents. His mom and my mom. Have a common friend, she introduced us to like she told them about us and then our moms just introduced us. They we just gave us each other's numbers. And from then it was our story.

M: Oh, great. And how long have you been married for now?

Az: A year

M: Okay. So Did you know Did you were you I mean, considering that you studied in the states before? Were you considering perhaps living elsewhere outside of Pakistan for the rest for your life?

Az: Yeah, yeah, I was already looking at Canadian immigration because I came here for about three months and 2017, I liked it. And I thought I might move but I and I was in Montreal for only three days. So, it was a consideration but my first preference was the states. Right. But once you've left, getting back in with a job is more difficult than yours there as student and continue to find work. But yeah, I think Just it worked out. I was going to apply for a Canadian immigration anyway.

M: And could you have lived in the states the time you studied there? Like could you have actually moved on to another visa and stayed there?

Az: No, I was on a Fulbright scholarship. So all right, I gotta go back.

M: Yeah, yeah. Okay. Okay, great. Tell me a little bit about your family and their role in your move. I mean, considering I'm introduced you kind of Yeah.

Az: Yeah, no, my mom always knew that. I wouldn't like none of us lives in books. And my brother lives in London, UK. You have to say that here because it's London, Ontario as well. My sister lives in Melbourne. So, even when I moved to the States, she knew that I wouldn't probably go back to Pakistan. one in every continent. One in every time zone. So, my father passed away when I was seven years old. And I've been raised more by my mom single handedly. So I'm a product of hermevery way. So yeah, So I am…I am the closest to my mom. My brother, my sister. Left, got married left, got married and left when I was in my teens. my brother left when I just shortly after I turned 20 I think so. Yeah. So it's mostly just been me and my mom.

M: And do you have any friends or community here before you move? I know you had your husband.

Az: In Toronto I had family. Yeah. My uncle and his kids daughters who I’m very close to so I had them but nobody in Montreal. It's the only family we have in Montreal is my husband’s brother and his wife.

M: Okay, great. There's some family. That's good. And in terms of the initial visa process, how long did that take?

Az: Oh, actually, well. I already had a visit visa for this 10 years when when because I had come here earlier. So I already had that and when I got here, we just applied to change that

M: And did you have to tell like was there? Did you have to let them know that I'm coming? Or you could just know by side?

Az: Well, initially, when I came here, we had actually thought that I'd come here, I would have a look. And then I would still decide if I wanted to just go back. So the initial one was actually a visit. So I did come on a visit visa. And then when I came here, i came early summer, so that's a good time to come to Montreal. Just grew on to me, and then I contacted my work people and everybody and I was just like, I think I'm going to stay here. I don't think I'm going to go back. So and we just checked if it was legal for me to do that. And it was so that

M: Oh, that's amazing. So pretty much right after you got married you.

Az: Yeah, like within a week. Yeah. Oh, that's amazing. And you're you got married in August. Yeah, yeah.

M: Okay, great. And last name in this question is basically about this research project is about skills migration. You don't have to be on a skilled visa like I clarified before, but how do you consider yourself to be skilled.

Az: Yeah, I did. I did do like when I was applying for the immigration initially, I did do the skills thing. So, I think I used to score something like, for Canada, I don't know what the minimum is. But it used to be something like 150 to 160 points, which was well above the average mean. So, I don't know what that means. If that answers your question. Okay, So in that sense, like, because I have a very diversified portfolio of work, so I don't have like, I don't I don't think I'd be able to say like, I have a skill in like carpentry or so but I do have like very strong editorial analytical skills. I have writing skills. I write a blog for one of these non-profits which works on mental health. I'm working with this other non-profit which works with foster children. So I helped to give them life skills such as just being a budget and you know, preparing the resume. So, I have those I have. I have mentoring skills. And so yeah, because I'm more of a generalist, it's something that I can I can fit in a lot of areas, basically. Yeah. So, I don't know, if I start to list them down. I feel like it's gonna be kind of like tooting my own horn. But also I know that it's multifaceted. Right so like I mean domestically I think it's I pretty much do everything I can I change the bulbs. I can I cook I clean? It's a Yeah, I don't think there's except for like heavyweight. I'm pretty adept at everything that goes on in our place. I'm also one of those people who changes like the electricity voltage things and like makes a three pin plug to a two pin plus do that stuff like that. So that and technologically I'm pretty good technologically just get it mixed up. So I like that's a natural inclination to it.

M: And what's the married life dynamic like living away from home? away from home?

Az: I don't think I feel that too much because I just I was very independent when I was home as well. So if you like, yeah, my mom came to visit and that was good. She was here for a couple of months. And that flew by pretty quickly. So I feel like I was already living one person then now I'm still living with one person. It's just different in the sense that this person I'm getting to know more and more every day. Yeah. And because he's a guy and I feel like in all of my childhood, because my father also passed away pretty early on the only male presence, I had was my brother’s. And he also left pretty early on like when I was just 20. So I don't really remember much about guy habits. When I moved here I was very like, interesting to me. And I thank God that I have a brother because when I used to visit his house in London like over the summers I get I'd start to clean up this place and then I'd have to stop myself that I'm on vacation and I'm here to do this. So, women generally I feel like just have a natural inclination to be more organized and more clean or like keeping a place a pretty good. Yeah, so what I moved here like my apartment was full of boxes. And I asked my husband if he just moved in. And he said, No. And he had told me before he came that he was cleaning up the apartment and because the lease was ending, so I thought he packed it up. But it turns out, that's how it used to be like, forever. There was just boxes everywhere. And, and I also realized that he has a very different way of organizing things. So, this is the closet. It's a closet. Now, it doesn't matter if it's in the kitchen, or the room or the bathroom. It's a closet. So, you will find things which will be like, Why is this here? And then you realize it's a closet, it doesn't matter where it is. So, there would be things completely like the kitchen drawer would have like tools in it, and I’d be like shouldn’t this be anywhere else except here. so I realized like it was a bulb which went off in my head when I realized that for him a drawer is a drawer. It's not where it is. It's just a drawer. It's a place to put things. So he, in general, he does agree that he's a bit weak at organizing, but he but for me, that was a completely new way. So I realized like, and for him, like, if it was messy, and he was fine, you know, he didn't really like even if it was a bit dirty. He was still fine. It didn't really matter to him basically.

M: So and your husband's from Pakistan as well. Yeah. Yeah.

Az: But he lived there for like, I guess. Max 10 years of his life. Yeah, he's been he was in America, and then he moved here.

M: So awesome. Great. Okay. So we'll go into the mapping part of it. I do want to clarify that at any point, if you don't want to answer something, or you think that you want to remove that from the transcripts, that's completely fine. We can do that as well. Okay. So, all right. So I'll basically as You two questions and you will just draw it out. And then this whole thing will be recorded, and we can talk through you talk through your drawing. Okay? The drawing is completely up to you; however you want to do it. So from the initial sort of point of leaving Pakistan, I I in your case, I suppose it is about going to study as well in the US, right?

Az: Well just to mention I grew up in Africa. So, I moved to Pakistan when I was eight years old. So, for me Pakistan never really felt like home.

M: Excellent. So let's put that on the map as well. So let's just talk about all of the places that you've been and all of the kinds of statuses like the visa status that you've been okay, I guess that's Let's begin with that.

Az: Okay, so all right. So lets just make like...That's Africa. That is Asia.. Here is your Australia and I have no clue what North America looks like it says this big blob over there. So, here is my.. Botswana. Yeah. And then here would be Pakistan…here is going to be Philly and then we're going to move Montreal so those are the four countries well that's a city where I have lived in USA, Canada should be in red. Okay, so that's that's Africa. Yeah, Asia. So, in Botswana I was there for zero to seven years. Pakistan, I moved in 1992 to 2011 and then from 2013 to 2018. Philly is 2011 to 2013. Canada is 2018 to now.

M: Excellent. This is such a great representation and loving it already. So you grew up in Botswana because your family was there?

Az: My father was working there before I was born. my mom was expecting me. So he moved there, and he thought it was was good. and then he was able to call us. So I was still like about three months or so when we moved there.

M: So yeah. And do you remember like what it was like?

Az: Oh yeah, I went back in 2012 to volunteer there.

M: Oh, you do. So yeah. Oh, that's amazing. Awesome. All right. Okay, now we'll talk about your sort of migration journey. I suppose this might have to do more with your education in the US and also with Canada and moving so I wanted to ask you about commercial services that you used throughout. So, things that you paid for, which are legends, lawyers, document translation services, language tests, internships, anything that you had to pay for in your move, maybe more recently, maybe either Canada or both Canada and us.

Az: Okay, so here [Botswana] it was not paid for. Yeah. Okay. And over here. This part is also not paid for [US]. Yeah, because you're Yes. And this part when I got to get here - GRE. And the TOEFL. GRE is to get into any school and TOEFL is because even if you had an English medium education, you're going from Pakistan so they need to be able to tell. So at some point, though, I know that I did take the IELTS X 2. Once way earlier when I was thinking of immigrating to Australia in around 2009, I think okay. And once I took it right now, when I was thinking of coming to Canada So I was twice because that's a requirement for Yeah. And then when I moved to Canada, we consulted with the lawyer twice. But I did all the paperwork myself. So just a lawyer fee, which was, I don't know, $200 for 100 for every time so it wasn't too much. So yes, but every country I have visited in my life. Yes. Okay. Visits is equal to visas paid for. And that would be about – because it’s a Pakistani Passport. So I pay for every country's visa, right. So it's going to be at least.. I paid for at least like 30 countries..30 times. So that's a cost, but I have never consulted anybody for paperwork. That's only in Canada – background checks. Because of my immigration. That's all because to the US, I was on a scholarship from the US Department. So, I got waived for a lot of the costs than anybody else was going to the US to study…they would have many more of the loops and hoops. So, for me till now it's the lawyer, the police, The medicals, not yet, if they asked me it's not necessarily for everybody. When you do your PR it's a spousal one so it depends. Some people …they skip. Oh, yeah, I did do it. For the Australian visa I did do the medical test for the visit visa. No, they made my mom do it. Not me.

M: Okay, and what about the immigration to Australia? Like, did you like what happened to that? Cuz considering that you were thinking a move in 2009 I got the in 2010.

Az: In 2010 I got the scholarship. So that fell through.

M: Okay. All right. We'll move on then. Tell me about the role of technology in your migration. And what I mean is everything that you use tech for. So online searches, what resources you used, what social media you used, your own a particular groups. Also what technology you use. Today maybe to navigate in a new place you know.

Az: So, all of this - 1999 onwards is all tech dependent. If there wasn’t tech, especially in particular internet, I wouldn't be here basically. So what I use right now - let's go backwards because it's more fresh - Now I use Facebook for Canada spousal group, spousal support group. Its excellent. Nobody posts any junk on there. Then theres an online support group. These guys on online support group you can just post a random question and but you may or may not get an answer back I'm forgetting what the name is but it's anonymous support group “apply Canada immigration” something like that yeah some days it comes up as a first search what you do it. After moving here or even before moving here so always flights are always looked up online, flighthopper is a great tool, visa requirements are always looked up online, college applications, full bright application, undergrad, all of that work, Almost, except for the employments I created myself on the, job applications. Even like when you find your way just general maps Yeah. Kajiji for a lot of shit. Even if like right now like the blog I work for a link to community management stuff that I do. I helped organize it's all Online. So, it's because I'm new in the city and I don't know many people. So, everything that we are finding and my husband is more of an introvert he doesn't know a lot of people. So, everything I do is like, by going online, do it. So if I didn't, that's what I feel like I feel like if I don't even understand how women did this by doing these moves before us. Like I don't know what they went through because they'd write home a letter in the received one like a month later. So I just absolutely have this amazing respect for what they’ve actually been through. If you're depressed. Are you looking for something else? You do this? You know? That's where you turn to either. Just place a search. The world's at your fingertips? Absolutely. So for me if there's no net, there's no life, basically. I mean, I met some people somebody, like, met through the net. I found like a job fair. I'm coming back and I'm going forward. So on the job for found one, I made one lead and went to one of their sessions. And that led to two leads. And that's how I think it goes through basically. So that's one and then one of the social works that I do. I found it was recommended by a friend who knew about them – Vent over tea. I love this place. Its mental health places. Basically, you go online, you book a venting session with somebody who's trained in active listening and you get an hour. I write a blog for them.

M: And do you think that language plays a role here because considering that Montreal being a very French part of town…

Az: I think when you're new here you think that French is absolutely essential. As you leave here more and more you realize it's not that essential. You see job opportunities and you get disheartened because most of like all of them always say bilingual, but you realize that through experience that is by law, there are required to write that on job descriptions. When they write bilingual they are actually looking for somebody who speaks English. So, but I have learned French. I am still learning and I manage to have a basic conversations like shopping in French, I can talk to people, I can tell directions, like shop for groceries or anything I need. So yeah, I think I've picked up the language

M: Great okay and where do you learn French?

Az: Oh, so first I was here at the YMCA for like two months and then I realized it wasn't helping me much. Then I joined one of the we works and that was all right. Now I move towards more government different places so I go to of archives national Quebec what's called a bank OBNQ. So, I go there for classes which are free once a week, which are only in conversation for French. And then I do at Dawson college, I go Mondays Tuesdays. The Dawson ones are not free, but they're almost like, what they asked for is very small. When I went to the summer, to the ones which the government offers, they told me my work permit did not qualify for it because it's an open work permit. But somebody I met just now. [Draws] This has saved my life. One of the persons told me that now they do accept it. So because she has just started it. So I feel like the meetup groups really helped. Again, I think if there weren’t meetup, I wouldn't have found a lot of people in a lot of places. The friends I did make though, I found them in my French classes. And so I just feel like the one or two people, friends in recommended, like, oh, you're going to Montreal. You know my sister lives there. And I was already a bit like, because I know me and my sister were poles apart. So, if somebody is her friend, most likely they're not gonna my friend and vice versa. Somebody who recommended me their sister and when I met her, I was just like, I'm friends with you, not your sister. I just it's not necessary. But another friend of mine, his sister moved here and we got along pretty good. So I think it has to do with the fact that he's a male and she's a female.

M: So I mean, I thought was kind of going to go into the next question that I had is about social connections so friends, family or greater community that have supported you in your move here. And if there's anything that from there that you want to put on your map

Az: So I feel like I am a very independent person. I have always been a very independent person and everybody was, more than advice, everybody was very sure that I'd make friends in no time and then again, you know, I'd be on my feet. When I moved here, I thought I would need friends. But initially, I didn't want to be friends, like look up or go seeking friends. Like, I just wanted to be on my own. Because it was not just a physical, geographical change, but it was also change in my marital status. So I wanted to, you know, understand the dynamic of this relationship I was going to be in. Nobody hands you a JD for how to be a wife. What is it going to be like. And you just pretty mimic what your parents did. That’s the only training manual you have. So, I feel like it would be very helpful if my husband has been more supportive, okay. And I feel like he should have had some tools to help him understand what I would go through…for example, well, because he has his life going on here. And, of course, nobody's asked to reorganize all his life here. But he, to understand that his presence would be important, and in a meaningful way, not just being physically present mentally absent. So I feel like something like that would have been very helpful for me. And if he had, I do believe that if he had known about a resource like that, he would have reached out to me before I came, so that just give me an idea.

[I'm gonna make a start up along those lines. So I'm thinking about multiple things think that you can use this paper if you want. Okay? Actually, I do keep making notes. So I'm just because I create things myself. That's what I do.]

So I think that's a great resource as well as for anybody who's new, for partners. So before they come in here, because it's it's like I had to find everything, you know, and because I'm a woman, like he just showed me like, heres the pharmacy, heres the grocery store. And the rest was just like, I'm going back to work. So who do I meet? Like, you know, and I feel like also because his and my personality styles are so different. Like, within one year, I feel like I've almost made more friends than he would even like to have, you know what I mean? Because he doesn't have many friends and his friends are not necessarily going to be my friends. And I would rather not because I would like him to have his time doing his thing. So yeah, so I think that it's just really important that does have to be and for me, I didn't know who to reach out to, if I needed support. So even when I went online, I didn't like and it's also I think some of the part of you doesn't really want to admit that you want support. Yeah. So you're, you're not willing to do that in the beginning. So yeah, so it's like any place it's not easy to move to a place when you when you're somebody who's used to having a like a full schedule, and like work, you know, all engines burning basically. And then you just move in this all really down to zero and you also have a perception that it's all French. But it's not. But for me, I like the French perception because it's kind of pushed me into learning a language I always wanted to learn anyway. And for me, it's not just to learn language I can get along it's for me to it's more like to read more books or literature in French and actually get an understanding because it just opened up a whole new world so I already do write like small stuff in French and I manage all right, because I write stories so I write those in French and I find myself thinking in French already. So yes, so language does play a role and I feel like either you would embrace it or let it deter you, and it's all up to you.

M: And did you actually have these conversations with your husband that, you know,

like in terms of support and in terms of

Az: Yeah, I feel like he does agree that he could have done a better job, but how he could have done it. He could he doesn't know. And so I don't blame him for that. We’re both lost.

M: But anyway, alright, cool. Um, how did your decision to move? But I suppose you've kind of answered that before. But do you have a very close connection with your family? And did that affect your mom, for example, that you were moving and

Az: My mom somebody who's like, I know that it didn't affect her, but she had, even when I was there, she had a routine. She has a very strong network of friends and family and she's she's…And she did 2 years without me any way. Two years without me when I was in the States. So she kind of like, already knew that. But the thing is, when I was in the States, she was still working. And she retired the year I got back. So, for her, but she still is very regimented. So, she’ll get up at a certain time every day. She has her whole routine. So even when I was in Pakistan, like, if I came back from work earlier, she was like, okay, you're home, but I have things to do. So, we're going to sit together at the time we sit together every day. So, like, and that was good to see because it just showed me that she's going to be fine without me and she is so she's a very, she's a she's a very strong and she's she's because she's so independent. She's always promoted us to be like, you know, raised us to be very independent individuals as well.

M: So that's great, okay. All right. So I suppose the mapping part of it is is kind of done.

I do have some more questions that you can potentially think about putting on your map. First, these regulatory aspects of your migration you did talk about police checks and you have put it already but any other government requirements that you have to fulfill so characters or points or health or immigration forums or anything that was kind of very government based that you had to let do get

Az: We did have to get like there was one stamp on our because we got our Nikanama in English as well. But there was one stamp in Urdu which we got translated. So, and the guy was like, very sweet. He's didn’t even charge us for it. We didn't even know him. We found him online. But he just said, we also wrote for him but the translation was, so he just had to stamp it. That was here. I mean, we did have to go through Of course, we had to do the PR papers, the PR paperwork and the work permit paperwork.

M: So the PR paperwork and the work so what's your status now? Are you on a work permit only or PR?

Az: My PR is approved in principle. Its called AIP and work permit is to 2021 which means my extension to stay and stuff I have my driver's license, health card everything by now. It took it's time, but it's here now. The paperwork itself is this one is the worst paperwork I've done in my life. I could have applied to five universities in that one paperwork – that’s how much it was because we've been married for less of less than a year when we applied we had to actually prove that this was a legitimate real marriage. It wasn't just done for the sake for getting an immigration. So, we had to give them like photos and they have a cap on photos so we had to be really like smart about the kind of… we had to thik really out of the box in terms of what we give them.. like actual evidence so like we give them photographers contract for the wadding, we gave them permission slips for wedding shoots. The good thing about Pakistan is now that it's pretty becoming pretty regimented and people give you like receipts of the cake, the wedding catering, and everything. So, we had that, and everything's in English. So we gave them the gym membership for here and then you know that we're both coming here together, opening a bank account they needed…they had absolutely required a joint bank account and me being on a Pakistani passport on a visit visa none of the banks was actually giving us that because they're just like, No, we don't give it to visitors even for joint, so that was like such a catch 22 because we just kept going round and round and I didn't even know which banks were here and then just searching that and thinking out of the box kind of thing. And I basically I think I thought of that only because I had lived in the US and I thought okay they should be able to give me a bank account based on my own nationality and sort of my visit visa and that's how I thought of like an International Bank. So this paperwork’s a bitch, I swear, we have had so many fights and doing this and almost when I went on the support group page, all couples have had fights doing this so we were thinking they should put a checkbox underneath and saying, how many fights did you have one completing this because you're not gonna do this for anybody unless you really love them to be honest. It's that bad. And even though I’m doing inland I think Outland I don't know how land is because you stay away from your spouse most likely for like two years and that is probably hell added on hell. For us because I was hearing a reason you can only set stay at six months stretch. So the deadline was approaching. So it was more like we do this or goodbye. So we were able to like keep our eyes on the prize in terms of like, No, we mean more than the paperwork. This is a mountain a molehill, and a mountain in the way, and because we've been another long distance relationship for six months before we got married, so we, we'd already done that, and we didn't want to go through that again.

M: Are you are you on top of immigration policies do follow news, the regards to immigration policies? And do you have anything to say about that? No, no, I didn't really follow them. I was.

Az: No, I don't, I don't really unless they do something like crazy. I don't really follow it too much.

M: Okay, great. And I suppose you did kind of mention this, maybe this might have been your biggest challenge. But overall, throughout your journey, looking at your map, what was some of the biggest challenges or obstacles that you would want to point out and put on your map.

Az: I feel like in getting here I was pretty okay because I was already like, pretty sick of where I was and I knew that I had to move so in getting here there was not like, for me it wasn't an obstacle to choose like, Oh, you know I love this place too much and I cant give it up. It never felt like home to me and I was perfectly fine moving away. So, and surprisingly the only city in the in my entire life I've lived in four as you can see, and Montreal has actually felt like home pretty instantly. But I feel like the biggest obstacle I felt when I got here was because I have seasonal affective disorder. And the fact that the winter here is pretty harsh and as much as I love the winter actually, s.a.d, plus, my husband's I don't know, lack of awareness of I don't even know how to put it in a good way like, because I don't blame him for it, that's the thing and I don't hold it against him. But his kind of like the fact that his ignorance and him having a full load of work kind of like timed at the same time as winter hitting in, you know, so because his work is very seasonal. And this and the next semester are his main two semesters. So, I feel like his his business or his life carrying on basically which I cannot absolutely grudge the person or Yeah, so his business plus sad so the timing of that was probably like the worst combination. Yeah. And this year, like as it starts to become when you get close to winter, I almost dread it because it's almost traumatic to think that this cannot be a repeat of the last year. Yeah, right. So see, so a lot of people just say that we have winter blues. All right, okay. Right. But then people who have seen winter blues is something like almost everybody faces because the sun is nowadays are getting shorter to get less sun time and everything. But seasonal affective disorder is when people actually almost move into a depressive state. And you have to like, like I had learned to manage it in Pakistan as well because I would you know, up the ante on my physical activity and everything but here there were some essential vitamins which I wasn't aware of, and I should have started taking them…I should have started way earlier. So, I feel like that affected because they affect the chemistry of you. So that and the fact that you know, I didn't know anybody, so I didn't have a motivation to get out of the house. So, I mean, I mean, when it's snowing everybody wants to stay in any way. Right. And it's beautiful from inside, but I feel like it's beautiful outside as well. But if only if you have like, a purpose to get out, yeah, I just didn't have a real and like for me because I mean, I was living right here is a good thing and a bad thing. Because if I had to go to the gym, I would just run from there to here. Right. So I didn't even have to wear any winter gear on something. I just sprint and I'd be in here then I just went out. But I came here I went to the gym. I didn't really talk to anybody. And the fact that I had very low human interaction, and somebody like me who's extroverted really needs a lot of human interaction. So that and then so the human interaction factor, like very decreased and then the time zone change because everybody back home was like, 12 hours at a difference from you. Yeah so even if I go on everybody it like my friends and you know the fact that you know you you're not there and you see lives moving on basically. Yeah, you have that's the negative of Facebook, and social media that you're able to see things happening and you're not there. it's a con in that sense, the connection is not there. Like, your friends are meeting up the way they used to, like you see their stories.

M: Any bad advice - In your move through your move after move?

Az: Yeah, I think everybody was kind of like now that you mentioned like, I've never really thought of like any advice I got. But when you mentioned it, like, I don't think I got good or bad advice. I just didn't get advice. And I think that that itself is not a good or bad thing. Like it may be more of a bad thing, because I just didn't get any advice. I think I feel like either. Everybody just looks at me and thinks that knowledge. Yeah, because I've learned from a very young age to steer my way. So, either everybody's perception of me Is that she should be fine or are they just don't know what to say. So yeah I don't think. I feel like there should have been some something. I feel like my sister in law was had moved to London from to be with my brother. And she like only now like after a year she mentioned that yeah, it feels like you're just you're just reborn you have to do all these driving test again you have, you're basically starting your life is scratch and I feel like, something, a conversation along those lines with somebody would have been helpful. And any of his friends wives that I met, were also not too forthcoming. Now they are not earlier because they didn't know me, or they didn't know him too well. And they didn’t know what to say basically. So, so I feel like it would have, I just feel like there wasn't much conversation happening. That's why I'm taking notes because I am considering of building this on on a side of talk to one of these organizations as well, where I can actually hold workshops and have mentors and stuff. So I’m thinking of doing something for women who are or even men who are place like me. I feel like I've got like so much like, that's what my first blog was about, like how to prepare for the winter, that's exactly what it says. It's about winter blues, basically. But I there's a disclaimer about SAD at the bottom. So, it's basically trying to give those tips to people that I do do now and that have worked for me. Yeah, so it's so I do find a way to like, say those things and communicate them because I just feel like if I had that information, it would have been much more helpful for me.

M: And I suppose now do you do you ever plan to bring any of your family members here like your mom? Do you think she would ever move here or I will your mother in law maybe or..

Az: I think my parents in law are not too keen because they have something which is called a super visa for Canada coz two of their sons are here. I have no clue what that means. I asked my husband and his brother multiple times, but none of them either knows what that means. But they just say it's a super, super visa. That's a really cool name for a visa. I know. This was a super powered visa. Yeah, so I have a super visa which I don't know what..

M: and your mom you'd like to bring her at some point.

Az: I would really like that because she also has her brother here . They're here and she could, you know, I just feel like because she travels so much between Australia, London and here, that I just feel like if she had access to that without needing to apply for all these visas it would be really easy. But I feel like my brother is also more intent on taking her there. So I'm just waiting till I get my PR and I'm able to sponsor somebody. She’ll get more points for her brother being here. He cant sponsor her, I can. So, I'll just I'm just waiting it out to see what the situation is. Yeah, but right now we're a bit like okay, because we know she has a multiple visit visa for the next eight years. So at least that's good. But I think before that gets expired, we’d like to think about it, but not sure at the moment. So, let's see how that works out.

M: Great. And would you consider migration elsewhere?

Az: No, I think going through all that stuff once in a lifetime is pretty much enough.

M: So when is it expected? When is your PR expected?

Az: January, January. That's good. That's close. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that's nice.

M: And I suppose let's talk about future plans. Next step. So that's kind of the final question here. Really, what do you think? What are your sort of immediate plans and long term plans being now that here that you'd like to put on the map?

Az: I think it would be somewhere along the lines of like, so these are going to be like more aspirational. So aspirations would be you know, lets see like, getting a house, like being ownership would be…That's very high for me. Family, but that's a big maybe for me. I don't think in this situation with the climate change and stuff, It's a good idea to bring another life in the world. I would prefer to adopt actually.

M: What about your husband?

Az: He's fine with anything or nothing. Yeah, he's open to adopting as well. I would rather adopt. We have a kitten now. His name is Pause the PAUSE coz he doesn’t stop..he keeps moving. So, he feels like a son. He really already does. It's just crazy how that happens. I never thought I would be like a pet as a child but he does feel like a child and He's very childlike. Yeah. And low maintenance child. So I think for now, he's keeping us happy. Yeah, I do think I would like to like, find a job. Only because I think what I have, because I'm just so used to doing so many things. I feel like when I have a job in addition to what I'm doing, it just helps me. The more things I have, the more focused I become. And like you can see I'm sleep deprived right now, but it makes me it just gets my juices flowing, or else I can keep sleeping. I'm somebody who can who has slept for more than 24 hours straight. It's like I was sleep deprived. I was working like crazy. So I went to London on my spring break to be my brother. And he arrived at 7am. He took me for breakfast, went to work. I went to sleep at 10am at 3pm I'm getting like a message from him saying, Are you okay? What's wrong with you? Like, I just fell asleep. He's like, yeah, it's 3pm The next day, the next day, my God, wow. I was like, Oh my god, I have so much work to do. But I needed that sleep. I'm a nocturnal person just yeah, I'm a very productive at night. Oh that's great so that's why I stay up like three or four and I'm getting a lot of stuff done but also my sleep is less like four hours of sleep and I am good. I can also break it into two and two.

M: I’m interested in what you generally feel about your map.

Az: I'm not too sure if this is actually really reflective of all the things I have actually paid for. Okay, you know, and I think that's an important part because these things are expensive. It's not like they're not expensive. Yeah, you know, just the fees itself is very expensive for the paperwork. But like, I feel like so for me, something that I like about myself is that my education, my entire education, which is 18 years or so, has almost except for two years, it has all been free. So I think that is not like something which other people get. And good education especially right, like I went to an Ivy League school. Yeah, a private school like that. It's, it's so coming out of that debt free, you know. So, the only two years I paid for was two out of four years on my undergrad when I was not on scholarship. So, but I feel like if you don't have all of that education, you would pay much more for it. In all the things that I have done, and a lot of my trips have been paid for. Of the 30 countries I've visited, I didn't pay for those airfares. Most of them were paid visits, either through my work, or through my school or something else. So, because you're educated, you know how to get things. You know what I mean? Like if you want something but you don't have the money at that time, but you have a very big asset, which is education and awareness. And you find somebody who's gonna pay you to do that. I really wanted to go back to Botswana. After like 20 years, having left it as a child. And I went to Penn, I saw the Penn as a Penn and Botswana partnership. I applied for the summer internship and I could have checked all the countries in the world on that actually, and I only checked Botswana and I said, this is the only one I want to go to. If not, I'm going to stay back and I had two internship offers in Philly and I said I'd stay back and I do that. And then they contacted me and said your waitlisted, not shortlisted. Would you like to be waitlisted? I said to myself, hmm waitlisted means no, but I said, I'll take that chance. And, and that's what happened. Somebody jumped out and I made it, you know, I went. So, my 3 months over there were paid for it. You know, so what I'm just trying to say is somebody else would have to pay much more, even if I paid for those visas in many cases. I didn't. even pay for the visas. It was coming from somewhere else. So, I'm just saying that this cost is not reflective of more than average people. This is like an outlier in terms of cost. My brother in law he has, I don't know if this will help you in any way. But he's working on internet for all access, like his mission is to make the entire world have free access to internet, based in San Francisco, and he went to the US on the “genius visa” was the genius visa. It's given to Absolutely exceptional people is a very few brother in law as in your brother in law, my husband's sister's husband, husband, sister's husband, okay. So he, he is he actually is a genius and he was he works with all the start-ups and everything inbox on as well. And so kind of uses like he's our age, but he is a phenomenally inspirational person. That's amazing. So that is his goal. And this this awareness is something that he brought to me that a lot of people, a lot of things I do is only because I have access to internet Yeah, just not having access to them, but also knowing how to use it. Absolutely. So that is an absolute privilege…that's why I just wanted to like give that disclaimer at some point that of the GRE, I took the GRE four times. How many times did I pay for it out of pocket, two times? The only trip I paid for, for the first time in my life was my own Umrah trip in 2009. Before that, I'd been to the US to Nepal to like, other Australia, all these other countries that I'd gone to. They're all paid for by somebody else. And after that, as well, I have there are very few trips in my life I've actually paid for.

M: And how's your husband travelled as much as you have as well? Like, has he gone to these places that you know,

Az: No, I think he's travelled to he's lived in more places than me. Yeah. Like he lived in more places like within Pakistan. He lived in, I think three or four cities in okay. In the US, he's lived in more than that. But I have travelled the US more than him. Like I've travelled at least 20 states in the US. He hasn't travelled as many states even though he’s lived longer than me. Even in Canada. I have visited more places than him. Some of the places he’s visited, I haven't like Europe. Yeah. Um, but apart from that, in general, I have visited or travelled much more than him.

M: And do you have travel plans in the future?

Az: Well, until I get my PR, it's all inside Canada. And I'm liking that. I want to discover more of Canada. So yeah, I mean, we've done my Yukon which very few Canadians have actually done. Yukon is a province. Whitehorse right on the west coast. Yeah. So we went there for our honeymoon. We did the Northern Lights and. We don't all have that so bad. And then we've done like Banff and Calgary. This winter. I'm trying to find something else, place to learn to ski.