M: Alright, great. So, let's begin with when you first came to Canada, when did you first arrive?

Me: In 2016? Okay, April 24 2016.

M: and what kind of what was the motivation behind your migration?

Me: Um, my husband, I got married three years before that, and my husband lived here. So that was the motivation. Okay, just stop, you know, quit work and just move to Canada.

M: In Canada. Okay. And before that before so you got to you got married two years before you came here. So what happened between the two years? Was he visiting you all the time?

Me: Yes – he was visiting me all the time? Yeah. Visiting every month. Every month he was visiting me. We dated for at least I think a year. year and a half. Yeah. Desi dating – aunty uncle dating. Laughs. So he used to come. A mutual friend introduced, okay. She knew him. And she told me about him. So she was like... she said he lives in Canada, and you know, he has a similar situation as mine again, he was divorced also. Love marriage and then got divorced. He have three older kids again, and then. And I have two older kids and I was divorced also so but I was like, it's not gonna work. You know, he lives in Canada, and it was a love marriage and then divorce and here, so, friends were more like, no, he should talk to him. So I was like Okay. So I talked to him, and we clicked. We clicked on our first conversation, After that I was a mom that never texted. And suddenly I was texting him. I was texting, like 100 messages a day. Yeah, we just clicked. You know, it was the same jokes and we had the same situation with our divorce. He had a hard divorce and I had a very hard divorce. Kids were depending on me, my kids were on me, his kids were on him. So then that, we understand that, we had the similar stories. Yeah. So basically that and then, yeah, with him, I laughed more. I was myself. You know, usually I didn't know if I could talk to anyone. I didn't know what to talk, you know. Because we're so sheltered. with him. I was more of myself. And so we, so he used to come every month. His company in US. He lives in Montreal. So he visits his company in Chicago every month. And then from there, he would come and see me. Yes, he have stories like, you know, the plane that he travelled and you know, on those small seats and four hour flight and three hour flight, so yeah, he would come every month to see.

M: Oh, that's great. And that's after the wedding or that's before the wedding as well. You were dating,

Me: Yeah, yeah, before the wedding too, I think every every month because he was able to come to Chicago and from Chicago, he would come to Houston.

M: Right. Okay. So you did it for a year and a half, and then you got married, and then two years after you moved here. Okay. Great. Awesome. That's a really good story. And tell me about your background. So you're from Pakistan originally. And your husband's from Pakistan?

Me: Yes. Yeah. He's from Pakistan. I'm from Pakistan. And I'm from Hyderabad. Sind. there is a small town, village called Tando Yousuf. so I'm from there. I've seven, six siblings other than me so we are seven all together. And yeah, I moved to America in 1987. When I was 20 years old, I got married and once I that was my first marriage. So once I got married after a week, I just moved to America - Seattle, Washington. And then from there, we moved to Huston from Chicago, Chicago to Houston and then I lived in Houston for about I would say Jami is 31 now, so probably, yeah, until 2016.

M: Okay, and how many children so you said you have two? Yes.

Me: Yes. So I have Jami, who's 31 and then Naz, my daughter. She's 28. she's in DC she's working on so Okay, great. She is the consultant as well. And Jamal is also. So she she lives in DC and Jamal lives in Chicago. And then my my siblings live in Texas, San Antonio and Houston. all my six siblings are here in US - most of them are in Texas. One is in Virginia.

M: Right. And your husband's kids, are they with you? There are moved out as well.

Me: When I moved here - 2016 – two of his kids were living with us. And they are older. His oldest son. He is 28 Yeah. Then he had a daughter was 24. Yeah. No, another son who's 24 and then a daughter was 25. Yeah, so our kids are kind of like the same. We have a new Brady Bunch. Desi Brady Bunch. So two of them were living with us, his oldest son and his daughter was living with us at that time. They just moved out this year.

M: Oh, wait. Okay, cool. Awesome. And can you tell me a little bit about your sort of considerations to move to Canada? Was it ever? Was it ever a choice between that you will ask him to move to the US? Or he will ask or you will definitely have to move to Canada. Was there ever a discussion about that?

Me: Yes, there was a dispute. He actually wanted to live in US. But his circumstances were a little different and difficult for him because his parents are living here. So he's won. His father just passed away this year. Yeah. He was 86 years old. So and then his mother's at 86 as well. And and she well know his mother's 88 years mother's age. So she's still with us.

M: Okay. She lives with you.

Me: Yeah. lives with me. And so for him, it would it was hard for him to move there. Because..because of the healthcare. His sister lives here, but she wouldn't have able to take care of them by herself. So, I moved here left my job. I was working for 22 years. Yeah. And yeah. So that was understood that he wouldn’t move. And how was that for your family like your children as well or your other family that you were deciding to move? What role did they have to play that this.. Yeah, it was. It was very interesting. My kids, even though they are older, and they were the one who pushed me to get married because they moved out. You know I was living on my own and the cat, and you know us didn't have every time tornado or hurricane come you know they are more worried about me so they were pushing me “No mom you need to get married and it was funny because I would say between all three of us Let's see who will get married first” laughs. It would be like you know somebody would say, you know, you should think about yourself you know your kids will find somebody but you need to think about it then I was thinking okay, you know, I need to find people and you know that butterflies was in my head and then somebody will say “no, no, you don't think about you… think about your daughter. She needs to get married.” So in my head I was like I am an older person I need to think about my daughter. But my kids were very much supportive. They love Ijhtaba. My daughter talks to him about, about any mashwara [advice] and everything, you know, even though they were both were fine, but yeah, it was hard for them. It was hard for them. And I'm finding out now that my daughter when I was married, and I was moving, I was selling my stuff. She just... she was working at the time, but she started acting up. Yeah, she would not let me hug her. Like she was angry all the time. Because, you know, it was her house and now she doesn't have a house there. Yeah, I'm, I'm the house and I'm not there. So at that point, I was realizing but I was planning to move here. I and I was going through my own emotions. When I was getting married. I didn't think I didn't sleep for like three months. You know because I'm Leaving my job and I'm leaving my house… So she got into that and, and for months, she would not let me hug her. She just closed in. And I didn't know what to do because I was moving and then when I was moving, she left her job and she went to Europe for three months. Backpacking. I was kind of worried but then she is very strong headed and she has a good head on her shoulders. I trust her completely you know. But there was so much going on.. so many pieces were moving that I couldn't even you know, focus on one thing, but she left for three months. She quit her job. And between that time I moved to Montreal. She came back to Montreal to me. And then she was just depressed. She didn't have a job, she spent her savings and it was and this is not her house, and before I was completely hers, but now I have a husband. You know, so he needs as much attention as she does. And so she would not get out of the bed and then after literally yell and say, you know, you need to do something. And I know she wanted to stay here with me, but she couldn't because she couldn’t work. She doesn't have her health care. She was getting depressed and depressed, and depressed. It was very hard. It was very hard. And his kids were, even though they were older, but the other piece was with me that I'm here in their house. Its not my house. So the next morning when I moved here, I was like, I sit on the sofa and I'm like, Okay, now what do I do? I feel like I'm a guest, because this is not my house. But what do I do now? You know, things were not in right places, you know because they were just living. So it's just like, but I couldn't change things like this because I have to still feel that it's their house. I am the one who's coming from outside and then my daughter came and she's depressed. And so, yeah, I mean, it took about a couple of months for her to just move. She went back to Jami in Chicago. They both start fighting because it was just a roommate situation, you know, they she, she was just not…she became a little difficult and as well Jami became difficult and I was in the middle and I got this new house going on…New family, but then she found a job so she was okay. And then I recently found out that Jami was not Okay. He felt like I had abandoned him. So… and I just found out recently…he's seeking therapy. Naz is also seeking therapy and they want me to go for therapy also. Theyre like mom, it's really good because you gotta go you know, get your issues out because when the things happen I was always taking care of them, you know like the divorce. And instead of having time for my depressio. I was taking care of them. So they both are fine now. But in our therapy is they tell them to you have to go and confront people…tell them what's not right with you. So he did, he confronted me. (laughs) and, and I could you know, it was a time when he felt that I was not there, but I was there but he was so depressed that he didn't see me in the house and I was so depressed that I didn’t see him in the house when we were going through the divorce. And he, he told me that, you know, he felt like I abandoned him, but I was like, No I didn't abandon you. We were just too depressed to see each other. He's okay. But we figured out Naz was always the one who would scream. “I want this… why you're not looking at me.” You know?. And Jamal was always quiet. So, he bottled up, and I was thinking he's okay, we have to handle Naz. She's the crazy one. But apparently, she's not the crazy one. We all know we were the crazy ones, we were bottling up everything but anyway. So yeah, it was. It was amazing journey. So he's okay now because he just let it out. And I'm glad that he did that because if he didn't tell me what was bothering you him about me, then I would not know this all my life and I didn't know. I would not know why he's upset. Yeah, at least now he give me a chance to explain myself to say, you know, this is what happened to me, you know?

M: No, no, no, that's all right. That's totally fine and those issues I mean, did they also are they in touch with their dad as well? And

Me: Yeah, they are in touch with their dad but they try not to. So it's, it's hard for them because he he is very difficult person that he doesn't think about other person. He keeps telling Naz that she needs to get married because she's getting old. Shes 28…And nobody will marry her. And, you know, she's losing her. You know, her time to get married. So you will find people, kids, boys, that just want a Green Card and just want to to move here. So he would tell them no see, your time is going you will never get married because you're old, you’re getting too old. So they don't talk to him. They don't need this.. They still call him to ask him how he's doing. He had two bypasses. He almost was going away and then we came back. He's going very strong now so so yeah. You know, they don't talk to him like Jami had confronted me. He did not confront his dad. you know, and I'm fine. So I think that he took twice on me because he couldn't, you know, yeah, the other part. So, which is okay, you know, but he would get worried about his dad if you hear tornados coming or hurricane came. Yeah. And he would be like, Oh, I have to talk to pap, you know, see how he's doing. So the connection is still there.

M: So dad's also based in Houston?

Me: Yeah. He has remarried. And it was funny because I met his wife. And she is very simple, very simple woman, you know, and she told me, she said, you know, kind of like “aap to janti hain na” you know.. yeah. She was, she was trying to tell me that she's in trouble with him, right, like I was. But she's not telling me in complete words. what she's saying that you know how it is, You understand, kind of like, Yeah, I was so sad because I couldn't do anything for her like, yeah, you know, I understand. So, He's married. He's in Houston.

M: Okay. And so you the first time you move to the States, it was because of a marriage visa as well. So you kind of got married. Have you moved there?

Me: Yes. I had a marriage reason. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So it's it's kind of interesting because one husband asked me American nationality, the other one is getting me Canadian nationality. Laughs

M: Well, if that's it, then that's it. Right? Like what are you gonna? Yeah. Okay, so. All right, I suppose. Let's talk about your family back. Do you have mom and dad back in Pakistan? Your own parents?

Me: Yeah. Yeah, I have my mom and dad both. My mom is a US citizen. Oh, great. Okay. My dad is not because he has remarried. So he have two wives. We are from the older wife, not older – the first one. So he, my mom is with him now because he had a stroke so he couldn’t move his body right. He can only move his hand and he cant walk. But his second wife with who he was all that time passed away oh so then then you know after he had a stroke my mom kind of went back to him.

M: right okay and when was the last time you visited them in Pakistan?

Me: Oh my god long time ago I don't go to Pakistan that often I only been there twice. So the last time I think is was 2000. that's a long time ago a long time. Yeah, my father was, you know, fine that that time and my mom she comes and goes so see her more often. I haven't seen my dad yet and talk to him on the phone here and there.

M: Awesome. And let's just talk about your I suppose now your skills that the research is about and so, and I when I asked about skills, what are your skills? I don't just mean professional skills. I also mean life skills, you know, like what, what makes you somebody who's skilled, how can you contribute your skills to this country?

Me: So in the US, I was working as a, I started my job as a pharmacy technician, I have a Pharmacy technician certificate and I have an associate degree. Just a general one, you know, I took some classes at a community college. So then I started working as a pharmacy technician and that was my first job ever, never worked before ever. And it was Baxter I was a pharmacy technician and then there we had pharmacist and technicians. And manager, and General Manager. And what happened that we had a FDA audit and it didn't go well, because the paperwork was not completed. You know, nobody was doing sign up and nobody was actually checking. They were just doing things. So we had a big fine with FDA and at that time they needed a person to see paperwork from outside eyes - not to be involved in the room or anybody. Before the drug goes to the patient. So I used to when I was a technician, in my break, I used to ask my manager to give me filing, you know, something that I do differently. And, I don't know, it's, it was just me. And then they thought about me, you know, so I interviewed for that position. It was a documentation clerk, and they hired me, and it was very interesting because one day I was with the pharmacist and the technician and I was working under the pharmacist, under their license. So they say yes, and then I start, you know, filling up drugs and this and that. The next day, I was a got this position. So I was sitting outside and checking their batch record, oh, telling them that I'm not producing this batch because you didn't sign for area clearance, or you didn't sign who performed it? And they would be like, no, because, you know, you know, they did it. They just forgot to send I'm like, I'm not signing this paperwork, because if I sign it, then it becomes my responsibility. And then like, No, you don't know and under white guys, you know, big guys, and I'm this Pakistani. Laughs. And I would cry and then the manager would literally yell at my head, you know, they would just go against me, you know, but I'm like, No, I can't you know, because this is my position. I can't release this batch and I would keep batch close to my, my desk and I'm like, No, I'm not. So yeah, I bumped a lot of heads and I we used to cry, because, you know, I wanted to do that, you know, I couldn't release it. And, and later on I mean, they they started and my manager was not actually in Houston, my manager was in Chicago. So it's not like somebody was protecting me. I had to protect myself. I had to be the guy. So then, yeah. Later on, they were all they understood, because when FDA comes in, they are not the one who's explaining. I'm right in front of them. Like I'm sitting with you. And I'm explaining to you why I signed this paperwork and why I think this batch was correct. So at that point, I realize that I can fight you know, I can be you know, I can put my foot down and I never knew I had that part. Anyway, because in Pakistan, my education was not that I did Inter. And since my, there were issues with my mother and father and my father got remarried and all that, and there were seven of us. somewhere we got forgotten, you know. So, you know, at that point, I was an authority, even though I was just pharmacy technician, but I was authority with the pharmacist because I can't rely, you know, it's up to me to release the batch. So I realized that part in me, and then they they got used to me. And then it was funny because I was not a manager, and the manager would come as a quality manager over me, but they would be so scared to get out of their office and knock on the door because they have to, you know, confront people. And I would be still the one who’s on the floor. But I felt that I felt that even though and I worked very hard, I worked two shifts, I worked there 10 hours, I would not get paid for 10 hours. But since I started the quality, it was my baby. So I was kind of like, you know, and the managers, they would just sit in their office and would not come by the manager would just sit and sleep in his chair because the light will go off on its own because this had motion detector on it. And he would be sleeping and I'm the one who's facing the pharmacist and the manager, the audits and everything. So at that point, I was working too many hours and since I was having issues at home with my husband, that was kind of my refuge. And I remember I bought books from library saying how to handle a difficult situation because I was facing that at work. And my husband, my ex would get mad. He thought I was trying to control him. So, you know, so I was dealing with that part, you know, and he got jealous of me because I was not having college degree. I was doing so good. And he was not doing that good. So I was kind of like, you know, in that situation. And then I mean, I did spend a lot of time at work. I did night shifts, I did morning shifts, so I would do two shifts at one time while I was going through my divorce also. And I know I neglected kids but that's the only thing I knew, you know. And I know my company used me a lot because they didn't pay me overtime. They were like go your supervisor you supposed to do that. But then I later much later on I realized that no, the other supervisors were getting overtime. I would spend weekends there. You know, I would just go there at night and make sure everything is okay. Yes, I'm Who's facing FDA and I know they used me and I know I did neglected my kids at that point but that was kind of my refugee, you know, refuge kind of thing that I was somebody there. So then, um, so I always wanted to, to do a business. I would always think okay if I… if I didn't have work, you know I would do a business and with 22 years of service, I had 401k plan I had stock I had a house. Financially, I was okay. My kids went to college… they both finished college because I was like you do whatever you want to do but just finish college because I knew I didn't have college I would work twice as much as the person. So thank God even though our situation was not great. But my both kids Finished college. And I think that was the motivation to get out of the house. So I had, I had management skills even though I didn't have a manager title, but I never had manager, So I was the one who's managing a lot of different personalities, you know, so and then so then when I moved here I was Yeah, I was thinking what am I gonna do? Okay. Part of me wants to just retire. you know, because I work 22 years. 22 years.Yeah, very hard job. Part of me just wanted to relax. You know, because I was always I used to I remember I used to walk. And I would never know how I made it to point a to point b because I used to walk fast. Yes, with the FDA. You know, you have to make copies you have to, you know, you have to be like this. And my mind, start moving very fast. So it took me a long time to calm my mind down because I'm it's always on. So now when I'm here so I do bring a lot of different skills. I never really realized that I have different skills I thought okay I'll get a job as a quality or in pharmacy or something. I came here and I wanted to relax the first year but the language was the main thing here that you have to have a French. I started taking French classes 2016 …completely boggle my mind because it was just like vern, grammar, and going back to the school and you have no idea what is the chair the teachers are talking is in French and I'm like, okay, explain to me this and they're explaining to me in French. I don't understand them. So it took a couple of months and then I took time off from that because I guess I don't need French, you know, because I'm in West Island. And then a friend of mine sent me this job posting at Simwa. Simwa is a government organization and they give French classes and job assessment for the immigrants in West Island. So she sent me this job posting that they are hiring recruiters to recruit students from, from South Asian community for French classes. So now, you know, I got this posting. So then I got into that job mode, you know.. I used to do interviews, I used to take interviews. So I'm like, okay, you know, so I did, went and did the interview. And they were saying that you don't know French. I'm like, well, you don't need French. Because the people who I'm talking to, they don't understand French. You're looking for somebody like me, just recently come and came and don't, you know, need to take French classes and I know why they are not taking French classes. So, you know, that's how I can connect with them. So they hired me, I did really good interview. I convinced them. I was like, okay, you know, I would tell them. If you have kids, and you don't know French, and your kids will know French, they will have secret language. Your daughter will talk on the phone in French and you have no idea where she's going and meeting. They hired me on the spot. So I got this position and others. And I didn't realize I always thought I didn't know how to talk. I mean, I'm talking now. But I didn't know that. I can talk to strange people because now I'm in that mode that this is my job. I have to provide, you know, in 16 weeks, I was supposed to give them 100 students. I give them 100 students in one month because what I realized is, with South Asian community, they're scared. So you go, you tell them they have no idea what's out there. They have no idea it's free. You know? They're like, Oh, it's free. I don't have to pay anything. Yeah. So then I got more. You know, I went to Mandir, I went to Masjid I went to go Gurudwara, went to the Buddhist temple, I went everywhere, you know. And, and this part of me, I'm a more of open minded with religion, I always find very peaceful in all different religions. And there was my plus point, because there was other person with me, and she would hesitate to go to Mandir. But I would be going to church and attending the things and go to, you know, Mandir, and I was handing out flyers and I remember in lunchtime and there was a guy who asked me, he said, Oh, so what part of India you're in I'm like, I'm from Pakistan. And everybody turned around and looked at me. But no, they were very nice. Yeah. So um, so yeah, so I didn't realize that I have that. And since I had a background in quality, I was. I did hundred it's not like Okay, I'm done. You know, in one month you got you, but I did, which they didn't have and now they're realizing that part, and I am very happy about it because they should realize it. But what I did was a student that I brought in for them. I started tracking them, right. Okay. What class they are in, you know, if they left Why did they left? Yeah. So they, they had no idea so I propose to them. I said, You know what, I've got those people here. I need to know where they are because if audit comes in they should know what happened to them. There was a government officer who came in who wanted to see the program. So, he met us and I had no idea about French Okay, I mean, he this guy was there for two hours. My manager was there for supervisor everybody speak in French. Yeah, I have no idea what they said two hours I was sitting. Yeah, after that. And my manager, she would be like, Oh, you know what he said, right. I was like, I don’t know what he said. I was so mad. I was so like, handicapped. You know. Anyway, uh, my contract ended with them. I mean, till the end, I was just giving them you know, that whole sheet that I've made in English and I give them all their registration forms around every couple of them I couldn't find so I emailed to everybody. So, I left. They didn't rehire me because I didn't know French. But now I'm still in touch with them. And now I, I've, they've told me that now the government is asking them to give them all the registration information about the students what I was giving to them, but they have no idea. So, um, so but then so once that happened I was like okay, everything on the side, I have to learn French, so I'm taking full time French classes. So, and then the friend of mine I told her about simwa recruiting so what are my skills in recruiting. So she…she asked me to recruit for her. She works as a director… as a director is for agency called a microcredit Montreal. So what they do is they provide microcredit for new businesses. And they are giving workshops for women to become an entrepreneur. So she said, Could you do that for me, for me and, you know, recruit students so I can come in and give classes here in Montreal. I said, Okay, so she's paying for my time I'm doing part time for her. And this is what I do. I go around and I to church to organizations and I talk about you know, what this is, how important it is for women to be independent even do a part time job or you know, business. And I think it's good for me because I wanted to a business but I don't know how so this workshop will be good. So um, so yeah, that's so my skills would be management skill. I'm very good in managing people. Organizing, making sure procedures are followed. Communication. That's my story strong I can I can, you know, in my French class, I was telling them about the microcredit Montreal program and I got about six people signed up. Six people signed up. So far. I have 10. She told me that she needs six for her to start the class. So, I have done I need to get some more because January's the class time.

M: No, no, it's good. It's good. This is really good. Alright, so we'll go into the mapping part now so that we can get started. So you can draw this like I showed you examples, however you like. I will ask you the question. And each question that I asked you needs to be represented on the map. So normally, people do it on one sheet of paper, but you can take more paper if you want to know I'm sorry to keepIt's not it's totally fine. I am. This is the recording. I mean, this is all recording and this is really good. So it's good. Don't even worry about it. Okay, so me about all of the visas that you were ever on. Now, and I'm not and I'm not talking about visit visas or wherever you probably visited in your case, I suppose I'm interested in the US and the

Me: you know what? I was on visit visa. From, from Pakistan to US. Also? Yeah,

so that's one visit visa. And then we got married Pakistan. Okay living. So Pakistan is one. And left Pakistan and to 1987 Yeah. So 1987 to 2016 Okay. All right. And then I was here in Montreal 2016 to present. This one I got my immigration while I was in us. Okay, so you already got your PR Yes, I came on my PR. Here I came to the US on visitor visa. Then we got married and then we converted to marriage visa. That you would you then converted to a marriage visa right.

M: Yeah. Oh, then you got married. And then you convert that to a yes. Okay, no worries. So and how long were you married? Like as and how long did that process take? Do you remember like, getting your green card or?

Me: I think it was a year.

M: and how was your husband day already? Like he had he did he?

Me: Yeah. He was. If he came, I know he was a citizen. I think he came on student visa.

M: Oh, really? Okay. Well, you studied there.

Me: Yeah. He studied there.

M: Yeah. Okay. And what about your current husband has he been living here all his life as well or he came here with his family or

Me: he came in when he was married. He came on.I think he came on PR also, they did a lawyer in Pakistan.

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M: Oh, really? Okay. And what part of Pakistan is he from? From Karachi from Karachi as well. Okay, great. Well, you're saying that. Okay, let's talk about commercial services. This is probably going to be in the most recent case. Right. Okay. What sort of services did you use that you had to pay for? So think about lawyers agents?

Me: Yeah. So we paid to lawyer. A lot of money. It was a lot lot but I think it was $5000. She helped us getting our application in there with the government, and just getting me a PR…making sure that my process went smooth because I got my PR in six months. It changed that I got it with my PR quickly. Okay. But we could have done it on our own. It would have been easy process and not that much money but we were kind of scared that might, you know, the way things were going because Trump was coming as a president and we just didn't want to, we want to make sure that things went smooth. So, we thought it's better to get a lawyer. We don't it's not like delay in the process. And we didn't do this form. We did that form kind of thing. So that's why

M: Okay, so you got a lawyer? Yeah. Any other services that you paid for any consultants or document translation services or language test or any anything that you may have paid for?

Me: No. Medical. We paid for Medical. I had to do a medical test. Yeah, I have to do medical tests. It was part of it.

M: Right. Okay. And, uh, tell me a little bit about this lawyer as well. How did you find the lawyer and what sort of documentation Did you provide to the lawyer?

Me: We found this lawyer here. Ijhtaba found it – my husband and - The lawyer, we provide the education like we're going to school, this my certificate. My passport, marriage documents would be one thing that we provide her that and…yes, the full… how, how did we meet? What restaurants we went to, where what was the first time we met? And what did we say to each other gifts, any gifts we have given to each other. So, we are I remember taking pictures of that. How many times he had come and visit me. So, we had to, you know, the itinerary, print out all of those. How many times I went there. Even though when she did her, she documented everything. And then she sent us. She sent us the whole thing to sign and my husband just signed off but then when I got to read do it, there was so many mistakes. So, the dates were not right. And you know, because I have a quality mindset, just like okay, I cant just sign this one. I got to make sure that everything is fine. And it didn't match. I could have written better. Yeah, but yeah, so those dates we have to provide, birth certificate. I had to provide my birth certificate. It was so funny because I couldn't find my birth certificate. So I had to provide birth certificate I remember that. I didn't I didn't know what happened to my birth certificate. So now because now the whole process has changed now there's some some kind of NADRA, some kind of organisation.

M: can you tell me about technology? So how do you use technology in your migration process? So for example, a lot of

Me: so Yeah, a lot of technology. So we used Viber. Yes, we use fiber because that's the and we were so glad we had Vibber because we would text each other so many times call each other so many times. Emails… we used email also. Email. Yeah. So those were the two things that we used. Texting - viber for texting. And this is to mainly stay in touch with each other. I used Facebook. Yeah, we used Facebook also. Umm, yeah how cold it is. Yeah. Because I had no idea. I've never seen that cold before, and all really doesn't get this cold. Okay, Houston. You know how it is right now? I'm saying that's our cold. This is December, January. Yeah, that's it. So I had no idea and I remember I google Yes, I did Google shoes. Because he told me snow boots. And I was like yes I have my long boots and I'm okay. But he's like, No, that’s not gonna go. You need snow boots. So we Google that. es. So we move on to that goes on the map. And then some snow jacket no and shoes and. It was funny because I could not imagine you know that people wear those shoes I couldn't imagine in cities you know you look at those shoes and you think of okay, like Alaska…that's the thing comes to your mind. Like Igloo. I mean, it looks magical. I love it. It looks magical but my God, you know, you just…like the heavy jacket and then boots snow boots heavy ones, then hat, scarf, like going out you need at least five minutes to get ready you know, I mean thinking making yourself okay I gotta get out you know I have to wear all this.. and then coming back in you just have a lot of things to take out. It was funny because I went to us like I went to his friend's house for in Toronto in April. They did my dawat, you know, so I went to a friend's house and all of a sudden I see these Pakistani ladies, theyre all wearing shalwar kameez and you know, and I'm like, Oh, that's nice with the really pretty shoes, the sandals and everything. So when they were leaving and outside in the Snow. So when they were leaving, they took the shoes out, the sandals out, and they put it in the bag. And then they've got the snow boots and they put those on. They all carry their shoes with them. So that was a new thing. So that was the same month I was going back. So that April here it was snowing. In Huston it's April… there's no snow there's like, summer is coming right. So I was going back to Huston and as like, okay. It's going to be from airport to the plane so I don't even have to go outside. So I go in my chappals/sandals. So then I'm at the airport, Toronto airport. And they say, okay, the plane is ready. But it's 10 o'clock at night, but we have to go walk outside. And I'm looking at my chappals and its snowing outside, and I couldn't believe that in April it snows here. So then I walked into the snow here. So yeah, so then I walked in. I was moving this guy's arm because he was like, I'm gonna slip slip, just hold me and then went outside stairs to the plane and then went it was..

M: Yeah, I think I'll miss the big snow part. I think I'm gonna go before that. OK, so now on the map. Oh, so let's talk about social connections. So before you moved to Montreal Did you have any friends or family I mean your as your husband was here but friends family greater community that that you had here anybody that you could come in? I mean did you have to make friends did you have to make friends

Me: I had to make friends. In Montreal I didn't know anyone. It was very different because when I moved to America I had kids there so you you kind of connect with the people who have kids right? So you connect with everybody? Yeah you just like you know make 100 friends there because they all have kids and you're just like going you know, doing dawat and all that, picnics because of the kids. Here I don't have kids. So I have to make friends and I got to used to in Huston - having my own group I didn't have a lot of friends then either either later on in life, you pick and choose and you just Just have to small group of people. You know, and that's it, you just meet. So. And here, I didn't know how to make friends. And there in Houston, I had my family, my six siblings, so I didn't really need to. If I want I could just go to their house. Here, I had no idea what to do. I had no idea what to do. And I was…the only people I know is my husband and his sister. And my husband knew someone and we would go you know, but he was, he was divorced. You know, the people don't invite single guy. The families you know, they just like to.. so he was kind of outcasted also. So he knew one or two people so we went to their house. But it's not, you know, people, they they just don't say okay, yeah, you know, well, we'll do davit.. come over, we'll do this, we’ll do that… and everybody in our age is very reserved, you know… we just got used to have our environment and now I had to make friends. So what I did was I posted on social media. There's a there is a Facebook page one Pakistani woman in Montreal, right. So now before that, my sister in law is connected with South Asian woman Community Center in downtown SOC. So she is connected with them. So they had events and she invited me there so we went there. And then my husband would be going with me also, you know, because he didn't have any friends. And now I'm his friend. And then I'm not used to of having my husband because for very long time, I was just going by myself. So poor thing he would just come with me. So, me a couple of people there and I kind of used to go there for to meet people. There I met Maya. And she told me about Pakistani women in Montreal. So then I did that. And there I posted that, you know, I'm new in Montreal. I just came here and…Do we have any meetup groups for Pakistani women or you know… I didn't have any response, but I got one response. Theres a lady, she said, I'm here new also. And, you know, we can meet or you can come to my house and she has a day care in her house. So, I just went there and she lives right close to my house. So, I kind of met her. And then we used to meet for lunch. Yeah, and she's very nice lady. Then she invited me for Eid party with a couple of other people which I'm gonna…. see in this age you don't get friendly friendly with everybody. The kind of you know, you pick and choose. So she invited me two other places, you know, other friends, but I never got that close to any of them. And then I got one person I like…so I kind of talk to her and I invited her, and then my husband knew a lady, and she told us that she does TCF work (the citizens foundation). So she had event for that. We went to that event. And then still, I didn't know anyone, you know, most of the people. So then, there and then some new little bit here and there. And then my brother came and I like to sing, you know, I always wanted to say my, my brother can sing my father can sing, but I was a closet singer and I am a closet singer, but I have dreamed that I will be a singer one day. But um, so my brother said, Why don't you know, now you have time, why don’t you take classes for that. So then I called someone and she said, well, there is one lady and she sings really good. And she gives, you know, classes also. And apparently she lives close to my house… walking distance. So, I went to her house and start taking lessons from her and then she started inviting me. So now she is from India. So now we have… now I have a good group of people. Mostly, I don't know some for some reason I get along better with the older people. Okay, you know, I don't have young friends that many but older than me just like Auntie's in their 70s or 80s. And I would like to talk to them. So then, yeah, so then I have a very different group. I have Indian, Pakistan, Bangladeshis… everything mixed because my husband is…you know, we just don't go like okay, this is, you know. When I was taking French classes I've made couple of friends there. I made two very young girls 24 years old. I think now there probably are 30 and one is South Indian and the other one is the Punjabi Sikh. And they both are my friends, but they are like my kids age. So, I'm kind of like them, mother. So, both of them got pregnant. Both of them have babies in this month in October. One had a baby boy and the other one had a baby girl. So, I’m knitting, I’m crocheting… I just finished a blanket for the baby girl. So yeah, so that's how, that's how I made my friends.

M: And, and then this is again, this is a question about, maybe not so much about the map, but how was it navigating dynamics of the home like, you know, having a man in your life again, how was that?

Me: I'm still dealing that. Actually, actually, it was very good. It's very good. He is very nice, very open minded, and I can talk to him about anything, you know. I mean, we can be sitting in the car, not saying anything, and we still enjoy each other's company. Yeah, it's different because I was used to just going by myself. You know, to these parties and then or, you know, anywhere, but now I have to let him know where I am, you know, like, I'm going here and come back here, you know, things like that. Or, you know, if somebody is coming to my house then you know, he has to be okay with that, too. I just have to let him know that You know, these people are coming. Friendship - I mean, I have to think about him also that we both have to get along with people because he, you know, with sometimes people… I did have to face the situation where we go into somebody's house or a gathering and then there would be a conversation about too much religion, religious conversation, and he was just like, look, I don't want to go there. So then I had to think about him. Should I invite these people over, you know, to make my group and so, you know, he's so yeah, so it's it's a different we have to. It's different in a way also because now I have to think about him, you know, making plans with my kids also, you know, going to the US, you know, how many days you're going, when are you going to come back? So, I think we both kind of appreciate each other because I never I never had a husband… you know, my sisters would be like, you know, fighting with their husband and then talking to them the next day, you know, lets go there, we went to shopping together. I never had that. I never had that. He was 18 years older than me. So, and but I didn't mind that as long as as long as there was a respectable relationship but there was no respectable relationship. There was more of I tell you to do this and you do this, So, so I never had that I always used to distant from him, you know. I was very scared of him like he can say anything or do anything. But with him, I can say anything, its more equal, you know, he's very supportive of me and we'll just hold hands in public, you know, and so, it's, it's, yeah, but uh, you know, it's funny because my friends would be telling me Oh, aap ka to honeymoon khatam nahi ho raha [your honeymoon isn’t ending]. And I’m like “haan buhdape ki shadi hai” you know, “ab kya karen” [we got married at an older age, what to do]. It was hard, because you know, divorce is a never thought in my, you know, mind that I will ever get divorced. I thought we will get old, and then kids will grow older and then he will mellow down, you know, but as much as he was getting older, he was getting crazier. The kids were going their ways. You know, and I was like, Okay, my son is not home on weekends, he's going to his friends house and then my daughter get to this age, she'll go out also. I had to take that step. You know, I had to, I had it was not easy. You know, I had to take that step. And, you know, and I never I never thought that I may meet someone because you know, in this age dating is not easy. I have met so many crazy uncles, you know, *chichore* [sleazy] uncles, you know, it's just like, eww

M: so would you like, so before you met him? Did you meet other people or?

Me: Yeah, yeah, I did go on, you know, social, you know, that dating applications. You know, Desi marriage.com and all. And they were crazy men, you know, the white hair. You know, I mean, they're older. I'm looking for older guy, you know, but then they would just act very crazy. Just think about a desi uncle being chichora [sleazy]. He was somebody that….he is somebody that I proudly say “this is my husband. Have you met my husband”.

M: Challenges in Moving here, in moving here and settling here.

Me: Okay, I think the biggest challenge I had, have is is what my future is going to be. like a career. Where would I end up, you know, because right now I'm going with anything that's coming to me, you know? What will happen? You know, I think that's… right now that's the biggest challenge. I'm enjoying things but at that time when I moved, I think the biggest challenge was to make my community you know, to make my friends to have a good circle, which I have right now. I think at that point, that was the biggest challenge because I you know, so…okay, if the spelling is not right…Uh, yeah, yeah, biggest challenge was first one was…making friends. Making like-minded friends. Yeah, not just any friends. like minded friends. And the second one is career, business, Yeah, and the other challenge is… the main challenges to keep….I just realized one thing it's funny how while I'm talking I'm pretty much realizing about myself. Okay, you know, the other challenge is…because before in Houston it was just me and the kids. two people I have to think about. I didn't, you know, don't have to think about me but yeah, to think of kids. Now I got mine two, his three, and then him, and then his, mother. You know, Challenge is to hold everyone together as a family.

M: And do you feel like a lot of that responsibility is yours?

Me: Yeah. I've feel that. Yeah. I've feel that because…because I see where he's not doing things, right. I'm in the house. You know, I'm more living with his kids, then I'm living with mine, but I'm not their mother. And I want to do things this way to make sure everybody is is equally treated. But I think he treats some someone different than the other in his kids and then I think there's issues with that part. But since I'm in the house I have to… at one point I was involved in it… I was like okay do this do this do this. But now I'm like no I can't do this because I get frustrated because I cant you know, I face that I'm an outsider. They're not my kids because I can you know…with my kids I can just tell them whatever I wanna tell them. Like when Naz and Jami were having issues I'm like no, Naz is like, Mom Jami is doing this to me. I'm like, Okay, tell me what Jami has done. You know when you move there, he has done this. No, I'm not taking sides… If Jami isn’t doing this, he has done many other things that are right, you have to see that also, you know. So I think that's my biggest challenge now. I'm there, but at the same time I have to put that glass wall that, you know, I shouldn't be involved in it. So it's keeping up with two families… Family family crisis, two family crises.

M: What about the financial aspects of your relationship? Did you learn did you put your finances together?

Me: Oh no we have our separate accounts. Okay, good. All right.

M: What are your next steps in your life?

Me: Our next step in my life would be I think, career, it would be one thing..To be somewhere financially. That would be my next challenge. And do you have kids get married. So career would be one thing and business.

M: What kind of business do you want to do?

Me: Something different. Okay, I want to do something different. I want to do probably something in food and food. But catering. I was never a good cook before. I never cooked. But since when I moved here now I'm cooking more. So I think now I started liking cooking. So, I think I'm going to do something with food, but not like a regular catering or you know restaurant is something I want to do. But I don't know what I'm going to do. But it has to be something different and fun. something that freelancing, which I can do, and I can stop at the point when I'm taking vacation or something and then going back to it. Yeah, you know, something like that. So yeah. That would be my turn. But now since I had this microcredit Montral classes and workshops going to start in January, then take that and see how to, you know, get the idea. Explore an idea for business.

M: And do you actively seek people for your children?

Me: Umm. I tried. But it didn't work out. You know, because my kids are more of Americanised. And people that I was looking for, you know, on the website and stuff like that, you know, there's some Facebook pages for… So I think they're more of a the mothers trying to match their kids but I think my kids are more like they want to talk to the kids. And the mothers are like balance of Deen and Dunya [Religion and Society], you know, kind of like that. I think my kids are more for Americandised and more dunia than deen.

M: Um, do they? And is there a Do you do care if it's not Pakistani girl or if it's not a Muslim girl or do you care about those things? Okay, well, I think as long as your boy Yeah,

Me: As long as they're happy because I was married to a Pakistani Muslim guy and, yeah, that didn’t turn out well. So, as long as they're happy, and that's what I tell my kids, you know, as long as you can talk to that person, that person listens to you. That's all you need. So, you know, don't say my mom, I'm an outdoor person. He does like camping and I can be like camping. Who cares? You know, as long as you can talk to them.

M: And do children like do they share with you Like fatness about their partners or stuff like that …

Me: Okay, well, sometimes, but now you know nothing now they don't tell me. Sometimes they tell me when they get excited but now I start to ask “kya haal hain uske, baat ki us se? You know, acha milwao to sahi, you know. So, they're getting like no mom because mom goes after like shadi shadi shadi. Mom goes like, beta Doctor hai! Laughs.

M: If there's anything that you think that I should have asked that I did not ask

Me: My fears… that im here, in this new country and what happens it didn't work out? I don't feel feel it that much. I don't feel it but it's back of my mind that what happened if something happens, you know, I have to go back. You know, what am I gonna do back there that kind of you know it's in the back. I mean there's nothing going on as such that that I will go back or something like that. But that's something that I think you know my kids are there. I'm here and I stay here because of the…because of the healthcare. If I go back there without a job, I don't have a healthcare and…So still it doesn't seem home. Yeah, it doesn't seem home. it doesn't feel home you know, even though I'm trying to make it as my home and I really like it and I'm thinking this is better because at least there is a healthcare, you can go into your doctor anytime. But at the same time, I'm thinking, you know, my kids are there you know. So that's, that's my fear and yeah, I think that's that's it. Okay. [Ageing in-laws] Its challenging because they both, my father-in-law and my mother-in-law, they were 86 and 87 at that point and they were living on their own because they had been here a very long time and they had a very active life but now when I moved here, it was hard for them. Very quickly, it was very hard for them because my mother-in-law, she cant see. She has a eyesight problem and my FIL couldn’t hear So they had to move with us. I think within a year, they moved with us. So that was a big challenge because I used to be living on my own. The whole house – it was just my house. Now I have to like, they cant, I have to give them food in a plate, they cant see, you know, or they would be, or my MIL would want me to sit down with her, or watch dramas with her. And I think at one point I did that because I was excited also that I have someone at home. I never had MIL or FIL living at home. Then it gets too much, you know. And then, that part, I still would be very respectful but at the same time I would just close the room, you know and I think that was the challenging part, and then my FIL passed away and now my MIL is by herself and shes more needy because she cant see so she gets frustrated and she… yeah that’s a responsibility. My husband is close. Since he works from home, he would take care of them, he would give them food. He is close to his parents but at the same time he gives me room also. You don’t have to do it, I’ll do it. So, Im glad he is like that. He’s not like, well you have to take care of everything. He’ll take more… but I’ll do it because you know, what goes around, comes around. I don’t want things like that. But it was challenging because we both cant fight because if we fight then they get upset. They think that there’s something they did that we are fighting about. If im not in a good mood today then my MIL start crying and she thinks that she did something and I’m not in a good mood… maybe we are fighting because of her.

M: Future?

Me: I think I’m eligible this year. I think I should get my citizenship but at the same time I want to check if I can still keep my American citizenship as well as Canadian. Here, I don’t think it’s a problem. I think it’s a problem in US. Somebody told me that so I have to talk to a lawyer about that. I have to find out what it is because I know if I do not have the Canadian citizenship, I will not have the, I will not get assistance from government once you get old – old age assistance. Hopefully I’ll keep both but my husband was telling me that somebody had both and the border inspector took the American passport. So that’s gonna be my challenge. I guess challenges are more than future. This is what I am realising doing this map. Look.

M: Travel?

Me: We want to travel. Grand kids, yes. Now we are enjoying our life you know, we can travel. Yeah, travel is another one. I like to travel. I like to be more social. More social activities. More volunteer, giving back to the community because now I got two organisations, I am handing out flyers for that. In a way I am giving back. So south Asian women community centre... so there also, I am trying to have one of their events here in West Island coz a lot of women, they don’t know that they have help out there. A lot of people they just don’t know… There are women out there who are having issues at home but they don’t know who to talk to. So they, SAWCC – they have Indian, Tamil, Punjabi… What I want to do, is I want to have a place where all the south asian.. new immigrants or anyone like I was. I needed a meetup group. So something like that where they can come, and talk to people and know there are others also.