M: So we'll just start with When did you first arrive to Canada?

Si: 10th of October so we're just 2019. So that's very recent.

M: And what were the motivations behind your move?

Si: I wanted to learn a new technology. So learning new technologies that was basically my motive. I'm doing to specialization in big data.

M: And this is where back this isn't in your India you're studying in India prior to this?

Si: I have a work experience of 10 years into data handling so Im abusiness intelligence consultant and worked on this domain for eight to nine years, right. I worked as a trainer as well as consultant. So from last two, three to four there is a lot of hype regarding huge data is getting accumulated. And there should be ways in which how you're going to handle the data. When I talk about business intelligence, it is all about whatever data which you have, and the previous data, how the previous data can be used. So, this particular business intelligence model, it only helps us to predict how to work with previous data. But what about the data currently, which we have and how we will predict the future of the data? So that is what is your data science and big data technology. So I was keen into learning the next level as a having them of experience. So I want to evolve from one profile to another. So I'm over here to learn Big Data.

M: What was the sort of factors that made the decision of coming to Canada like what else were you thinking of? Couldn’t you study in India?

Si: When I think about countries outside like when I think about other countries than India, I'm into this technology space so I know what are the roles available in India for this particular technology. We are we don't have that much projects. Even if I join any any organization and work on onto this technology, I will be considered as a beginner beginner in the sense like I won't be getting profiles or I won't be I won't be getting directly to work on data. I'll be doing some documentation parts so I won't have an appropriate to work like as per my knowledge or As for my the technology, which is which is there in the industry right now. So countries like US, Canada and North America and US and all all these countries, they have advanced technologies, and they are already working in this space. So even though I'm learning big data so Canada, must be the technology space or the education space in Canada must have been ahead. It is talking about artificial intelligence and it's talking about emotional intelligence as of now. After big data there is artificial intelligence than there is now people are talking about emotional intelligence whereas in my country there is nothing no concept called as emotional intelligence. Till now, so, emotional intelligence is spoken by only a psychologist and people are related to medicine field, but not not this medicine plus technology is not it is not at all like, integrated as of now. So, I wanted to study abroad and I selected Canada

M: Are there other countries that you considered?

Si: I found the process visa process for Canada easy. And, I selected Montreal as my friends have already done the course from this college so I had… I knew the feedback of this college I knew the feedback about the feedback in the sense…the living… and living conditions in Montreal. So it is always better if you have some people around in that same city and they're telling the guide you that these are the things you need to do in six months, one year, two years. So if I have a Guided approach. I was considering Toronto but there it was 2 years, 3 years of study and I’ve already done engineering. I've already done like 10 years of work experience into education industry only. So I have like lot ot… my profile also study and teach, study and work. And also I wanted to study much. So I just wanted one year of a specialization and then get into my space, like the technology space, how it works out and all that. I’ve seen Toronto but there was no 1 year course and as for my expense and budget, it was not that suitable for me. So, I selected Montreal. I gave a thought about studying in the same thing in 2019 Jan and I was about. So I just thought my friend friend told me that there is there are the admissions happening for June 2019 intake. So I just applied, I gave my prerequisites all the prerequisites… I gave my English test. So by March, March, and my academics, everything was done. I send the application and I got a letter of application by April end so I was supposed to come in June, but since I have been I was working and I do wind up that process. So I couldn't join in June. So I had to come here in the October intake. Like what Im thinking…. what is my mindset now… I've got an opportunity to learn and advance specialization. So I will be more keen into this technology related to data gathering and data handling. So, I'm going to just see what are the options that are available after studies after one year so at that time I will consider as well as per the requirement and all that what all countries I can travel to and work in from working based. So when I was doing your research about Montreal, and also there are many universities offering this. So, I might go into the Masters in the same space.

M: Okay. So like in terms of your ethnic background, you are from India, always been in India always lived in India?

Si: Yes. And this is my first international experience, okay. Always been in Mumbai.

M: Professional background?

Si: Now Im not working. I was working till June year. So, I got my visa July end. So then I resigned and then do the packing and all so I took a break.

M: So in terms of planning your migration, how long have you been planning it?

Si: It started from jan jan 2019. So it took me around seven to eight months. Things went in place. The proper flow happened. The factor is, though, the course which I will be joining, I will pretty much knew that I wanted to do, whatever work experience I have, I want to go to the next level. So, for the next level, I need to be skilled. So if Montreal did not have the college or this course, I would have opted for another, like another city, also Toronto. So I would have taken a two year or three year course. But luckily I got the same course for one year over here.

M: So can you tell me what the course is about and what are your current skills?

Si: My course is about business intelligence and visualization and analysis. And it has specialization in big data. Okay, so this course has two specializations. One is big data and another one is business intelligence. So, I already have 10 years of work experience in business intelligence. So, I selected big data.

ML So was there a test that you had to pass for this course or was it really represents the prerequisites?

Si: The prerequisite was relevant work experience and since I had enough working…like more than required work experience so easily I got the offer letter.

M: And what about the sort of other considerations in terms of finances and living and all of that sort of stuff?

Si: Finances…umm… so since I am a working professional, whatever student finances are required, like paying the fees, and then does it go to deposit which is required for student to that was handled. And my fees is being handled by my family. So half of the fees will be sponsored by them, and half of the fees, I have paid it. So sponsoring is… is like a backup. So in case if I'm not able to get a part time job and all and I'm not able to manage my expenses then my family will come into play. I'm looking for part time work over here. Into the same skillset… like I have training experience so there are a lot of colleges over here, lots of universities over here, and if they'll allow part time work, I can work as an instructor. If it is something related to technology courses, I can work in a lab assistant. So depends what type of requirements they have in case if they have it and if the allow part time.

M: So in terms of your family, like can you tell me a little bit about your family like what was their reaction to your decision to move?

Si: They wanted me to move. My my mother, she's a retired professional professional in the sense, she was a principal in one of the school. My father… My father was a working In the government, he’s a government servant. My parents both were working.. Now they're retired. I have two younger brothers who both are into IT and the other one is into CA. So, like my family is a working family and, like, educated family. So, even though I'm I'm 33 right now and single, they allowed me to take my own decision and they said and it is your choice - you decide. If you want to be independent, go and live your life, do whatever you want. There was no pressure at all to get married and all. There was no pressure at all since, since if I talk about my mom… after getting married. At that time, she had just completed her graduation. After she got married, and after five days, she went for higher studies. My father and my father family allowed her to go do her higher studies. So two years she was away from her family. [Laughs] And she is the first person at my in my native to be a teacher. Like 30- 35 years back. So, we belong to a Maharashtrian community. I come from Mumbai so Mumbai is a part of Maharashtra and I come from a Maharashtrian community where we have mainly farming and so even in my native place, there are very few people who are educated and from my native theyve come to Mumbai. So, My father has come to like 35 or 40 years back. So, there were like 10 to 12 people... mainly guys only who moved from that city and they came to Mumbai, and then they started working and. The native city is Sangli.

M: So in terms of friends, so family, you told me friends and community so did you have any friends here prior to you How did they help?

Si: I have like, two of my best friends, school friends. They moved to Toronto, two years back. So but they didn't have any idea related to educational institute and how… what is the process and all but my friends, friend … a colleague, since she is working in Toronto, so she had, she had this particular friend. He studied in the same college, he completed his course and now he has moved to Toronto for work. So she told him that my friend is looking for some study opportunities in Canada so can you help her out? She's into the technical field and all and he said that why don't you consider this particular college since you don't…if you don't want a long term studies. You want a one year course only. So this college offers one year course. So ask her to go to through the website and check it out. So she told me.. On 5th of Jan she told me about this. I checked the website and all. She spoke to me in the morning around 10 to 11 o'clock. I just surf the website I spoke with my parents and they were like go ahead. So, in one and a half hour I decided which course I want to get into. I spoke with the college, like I wrote a mail to the college stating this all I'm interested into. Is there any seat available. So the college sent me a list like you have to go through this particular process, then only you will get an offer letter and so by March end and I completed the requirement like giving the English test and gathering my documents and paying the registration fees and all. So the moment I got my IELTS result.. I got it in first week of March. Though I decided in one and a half hour about the college, but I took time to first understand the city, what are the different options regarding the same course, what other colleges are there. So I didn't find those that are… like there are colleges like McGill university, it is very much famous in history. But again, it didn't offer one year course. So it was offering a master course, two years, of course, and one year of work. So I spoke with my parents said, you already have a engineering degree. And you already have 10 years of work. And it depends upon you if you're selecting a 2 year course. And then again, one year of work experience, so my mom compared it with her experiences. After marriage, she did 2 years of studies and then she worked. So she told me what are the problems she faced, when you were studying and you are already married? And in my case, I was not married, I'm not married. So she said what are the problems, What are the things you will face so you decide whether you want to take a one year of studies, like a gap, one year full of concentration on studies. And then you decide to take your life ahead - marriage, ofr work which city, what you want to do and all instead of spending three years on education and then deciding. So, by the time you will be 38-39. So, what will be the life ahead? One year is fair enough for me to explore the city to understand myself and see how I take my life ahead.

M: Yeah. So, when you were making this decision, was there an inclination of Yes, I would like to move here maybe settle here like, because you know this, you can migrate to Canada as well.

Si: So, what this course offers is one year of studies and one year like the post-graduation work permit. So, after the studies, very obvious, I will be applying for the post-graduation work permit. I will get the one year work permit. As the rule says one year, one year of permit, two years, two years of permit… I will have to see based on the type of profiles I get. I would be interested in, migrating to this country and settle over here. But it all depends upon after my studies, the work permit I get and depending upon the work opportunities I get. As of now for one year my whole and sole concentration will be on the studies.

M: Is this a Master's Course

Si: It is not a master course. It is what you can call it as a diploma course or a certificate course because the same college it has two years if master’s course also available. But since the college is offering this kind of course to working professionals who already have some working experience. So, instead of spending two years on the same course, they are like you take the certificate program and it has some 10 months of learning and then two months of internship…a project to do it and you are industry ready to switch from one role to another role.

M: Right okay and is it is there a language barrier somewhere I mean, considering the euro and the French speaking part of town, do you find that that is the case?

Si: So, as of now Im only into it for two three days. So, what I have observed is in trains and all the instructions are also in French. Even the bill which we get the grocery bill, those are also in French. So, the technology is so, what do you say, it is helpful you just download google translate into you know, French dictionary and you come to know what it is exactly. But what I feel is if you are migrating from one place to another place, you should be adaptable to that particular place. So, I should have done a French course earlier… I should have done it, at least the basic so that by communicating... I would be able to communicate with people or when I when my roommates and they're applying for a job. So, they are also like technical people. So, when they are going for some job opportunities, they go they do the interviews also and then in the end they come to know that they need bilingual people. Which is also pretty much perfect. Why? Because if they are working for a, working as a customer sales representative and if the client is speaking in French, and if they're not able to handle their query, so then what is the point? So they need to be equipped with the language also. So that is a problem which they are also facing so that the government is providing French education. So for students, for immigrants, free education is given. So we can take help from that. We are into this country, the country is also giving us so much facilities so it should not be a problem.

M: Are you gonna take French courses now that you're here?

Si: Yes, I'm going to apply it depends upon the availability in the sense that the batches are limited. So I don't know when I will be getting the batch. But if I want to stay into this country and work over here, I need to be equipped with whatever is their prerequisite. So I will be doing the classes.

M: And in terms of visa applications, like were you looking at different types of visas that were available to you or student visa was in your mind. I mean, could you have come directly on PR?

Si: Yes, I thought about PR. But I just I did a research on it. I'm single. I'm 30 above. So, my CRS, my score, which is required, it is not. It is not matching with whatever the current score is. So, I knew after doing a one or two day research, I knew that I won't be getting a PR because my match my score won't be that high. So I'll be doing if I'm considering for PR, I need Canadian work experience and Canadian study experience. So, to bring the score up. Yeah. So if I'm, since I’m on study visa, I'm getting a one year of study experience. I'm getting one year of work experience. So the PR process will be easier after two years or three years. I can consider like I can consider for PR.

M: And how long did you take? In arriving?

Si: The visa process… I took time. I got my offer letter in April end. But I applied for my

study visa in July. First week of July I applied it and then it took Four weeks to get it. I've done everything on my own. So I didn’t hire any consultants to do it.

M: Tell me how you consider yourself to be a skilled migrant?

Si: A lot of opportunities are available for skilled migrants. Im skilled – you go into any part of the world, you are into technology space, the world works around in different domains. So whether you are coming from an Asian country or European country, if you are, you have a background of a technology, the technology is going to be same everywhere. It might happen that that country might have an advanced technology. But there might be some places where the basic is required. So according to that, I do consider myself that I am skilled. In my country, I might be at the higher post, but over here, that particular profile, I won't be getting into this country, the profiles. The technology which is being used, it might have might have gone to the next level. So I can join from the starting level. I think even if I'm switching from one role to another role I need to start from scratch only. I can't say that I was Highly skilled at this role. So when I'm switching to the next role role, give me give me the position at that place, like at par. It can't happen. It never happens.

M: So what were your options?

Si: In my case, what I did after working in the industry for 10 years, I wanted a freedom kind of thing, I didn’t want to do nine to five jobs. So luckily what I did I worked for an NGO. So I worked for NGO for one and a half year. And so, over over there I understood what is the exact need of like, imparting technologies like what will be the use of technology. When you're working into the industry, you're working for another client, those are also technology driven. But the NGOs, they are not that much as par with the technology. So, they are into like basic, below basic level you can say. So, these are the people these are these are the sectors which needs to be, what you say, brought up. So, luckily I worked for 2 NGOs. Then this particular opportunity came up. So then I said that you have given enough time for the NGOs. And now let's consider, let's go to the next level, move from one place to another place, then let's, let's explore life. So, 10 years of, you can say, machine life, then one and a half year of new new life in the sense …into an environment which is not technology driven, social life, social life. So, over there also I faced problems in the sense that there were people who were not that much technology driven so they need to be explained and then then they were supposed to understand each and everything. So again, it was it was difficult. It was stressful because for them to know, the scrums and all, that is all new but for us we are used to it. When you're working we are used to it and then we get irritated, like “why I have to explain you each and everything again and again”. But for them it is new. So, I found those kind of problems over here, but then I learned patience. Actually, I have learned patience. Like how to understand how to explain a layman. What all things you're doing day in and out. So, I thought the same thing I tried with my family. I thought first I started explaining things to my dad. This is how my life has been for whatever new thing I have to get into, my family was like lets first explore, first understand it so that when you when you step out in the world you know that you will know what are the things, what are the problems that you will have so let's discuss in the family. Yeah so luckily I have that kind of family. My parents are they know what are the future things like what are the future problems my child will face so they used to prepare us in that way so from school colleges and all. In school also like while going to the college This is how the world is already in the most to travel, these are all the things you need to do on your own. So they started preparing us two years prior only and then they told us now go and step into the world. So they're [parents] calling every 15 minutes. So for them, they also sleep as per Canada time. Theyre worried. But now that they're like… before coming here I spoke to them and they were like “very good, go out and speak and meet people and understand them”. And let's see. For the, it is always like they should be, they should be aware of what she is doing and whatnot. And for me, it is like, for the first time was like an independent life. Though there were no restrictions. But always I knew that if I'm stuck, I have my brother. I have my mom and dad to help me. But now since you said that you share the Google Map and I will not know how to understand it and all. And so then I thought of connecting with my brother because what is that you did? But I landed over here. Like in Mumbai, we are used to Uber. So I was just looking at the options but then I realized that I don't have the data pack. I don't have the internet and so I just did my roaming. On roaming, so he just called me and he said what? I don't know. I will just wait and I will let me understand it. Then he texted me that these are all the steps are supposed to do and this is how I landed to this place. So at times also when when I'm in the room, there it India also it would pretty much be the 5 of them so mostly speaking to them only. I have less friends. So you're also sometimes like sometimes like ….most of the time I feel lonely, like no one to talk to. But then through whatsapp and facebook, theyre connected to me. So ideally what they will do they will record a message…they will record a video and they will send me, like “what you're doing and all so that I don't feel lonely that I would feel that yes Okay. So in a night It's morning over there over there so I'll keep on doing those videos so that I don't feel homesick. So it is like when you have a conversation, a telephonic conversation so that during that part when you have those people contact. But they decided this idea of having a video recording, the video every now and then. So even after the conversation is done like after one hour or two hours you feel lonely again, just go and see the video. So, you feel that he is he is there in front you.

M: so first, tell me about the visa categories that you were considering at the time of your move. Now, in your case, it was very straightforward, right? So basically, what you want to put there now is your visa status, including how long it took to wait for the visa. Visa processing time so so for example, you may start from January where you started planning it and how long did it take to get the visa..

Si: So Jan 2019 I came to know about the option, the study option. So that same time I thought of considering the work option, like work visa, if I could get a work visa since I have the relevant experience and about PR, PR option as well. So work option, not possible from the home country. I didn't apply. I have friends working over here and they said that you need a Canadian experience and then only you can get an opportunity over here. And so I didn't give a thought about it. So not possible from home country without local work experience. And PR – current score – so mainly age factor – then I had the marital status. So when youre married you get your partner's points, like primary applicant and secondary applicant and the scores can be added up. So because of these two factors, otherwise the rest of the factors were good. But these 2 factors affected my score. Then I considered studies.

M: And tell me I mean, I think this goes into the next question pretty much. So what did you do for your study? So I know that you said that you didn't hire any agents or consultants, but anything that you paid for. So think about document translation, IELTS, medical, any process that you have to do that you have to pay for commercial.

Si: Nothing. I didn’t pay for anything. The website is very much clear. They mentioned what all you have to do. So, I didn’t pay for anything. Neither for my visa process also. I just applied for the IELTS, there are a lot of materials available on internet, A lot of forums which you can print out. Okay for the exam I had done the payment, but not for the training. People are paying for the training. The visa fees I paid, the medical test fees I had paid. So for the study option I need to get my transcript. I got the transcript in 2 weeks so in Jan itself I got my transcript. Then I did my IELTS registration so the fees I paid. This happened in Feb 2019. I got my result in... I cleared my IELTS exam. This happened in March 2019. Then I submitted all the documents…submitted relevant documents I will write…to the college April 2019. And I got my letter of acceptance…acceptance I got in April itself. So after I got my letter of acceptance, then the college had mentioned those steps that I need to follow after getting acceptances I need to take permission from Quebec so there is one documentation, CAQ certificate you need to get. Quebec province says that if you want to come to our province, then you need to have a permission. So, you need to have the certificate. So I applied for the certificate and in total four weeks to be processed and then I got the acceptance. This was like $5000 or $6000 rupees. So it’s the ministry of Quebec. We need to write that we are intending to come to the province for studies since this is a French speaking province in the country so – rest all the provinces, they are majorly English speaking. This is the only province which has the French as the major language. So they need from like, they asked people the permission. So then they gave me the permission saying that yes, you are allowed for studies. So I had to do the CAQ… applied in April in 2019. I got a reply that was positive. I got it in May 2019. After that I was asked to pay fees and then the security funds. GIC loan. Paid half or 6 months tuition fees. That I did in May itself, May 2019. Paid my GIC amount. This is an investment certificate which we need to as a student you're supposed to do. Well you're saying that this is the fund which I have. So in case, its kind of security fund which you are putting in, so that in case is in the future if you don’t have any funding, you don't rely on government for funding because government provides facilities to PR to their citizens also. But we are coming from outside countries as students so they cannot accommodate us to have any support. So this is $10000. It is self funded. So there are Scotiabank and there are some other banks also. One other bank has started it otherwise before it was Scotiabank only. So $10,000 which we are paying, every month the government gives us back. So, this is divided into 12 months. So government gives you back so that you can bear your expenses and everything. It's not like you’re relying on the government. Like youre not homeless, you don’t have anything to do and all. The government has decided that youre coming to the country, you’re coming for your studies, you pay the security funds and then utilise that when you’re staying here. So it took one month to get my certificate and all. So after May, one month I took a break because I had everything, I just had to apply for my visa. For my visa I had all the documents and all, so I took a break, I went to see all Maharashtra. So I explored the different cities in Maharashtra. It was awesome. I never knew in my life that there was all these cities. I went to Aurangabad, and Sherdi religious place and I explored Pune with my family. It was a family holiday. Then my native place also, Sangli. Then met all my relatives at all before moving out of the country. So I met everyone. Then I applied for the visa in July… and receive visa in July itself. I applied on the 3rd of July. I got it in three weeks.

M: So we'll move on from those questions. Now. We'll ask you. I want to know I mean, it's somewhere here. You would have done a medical test as though right?

Si: Yeah. medical test. I did it. Umm so last week of May I did my medical test. Like two or three days prior to my appointment was on third of July. So it takes only one day for the medical. That's a half day. So I did it on 27th or 28th of May. So here also theres something called the biometrics which we have to do. That was done on the same day, when we apply for the visa through VFS. So I applied it offline. So I had an offline process. So then I came under this non-SDS category. This is for working professionals. It's like there are two things SDS and non SDS. There are students who complete their higher studies – like 12th standard or graduation. Those who don't have gap any gap between their studies, they they come under SDS and those people who have a gap after studies they have one year of experience two years of experience, they will come under non SDS. So, this is suitable for people like working professionals. This is the student direct stream. So you have a certain level of education and then afterwards you're coming for a masters or a PhD. So you have done your masters in your country and then the next one, you are coming over here so you don’t have any work experience. So non SDS is for working professionals or those who have a gap. Since I did offline, so I had to do my biometrics. Same Day and submit my files. This I did from from VFS global. it is easier for the for the visa team to process. So when you say non SDS, they will ask for work experience documents. So, it is like the the form… the form which is created. Here you need to show gap letter. If you have a gap after your studies, so the gap can be working or else relevant clarification. So those who are working, they will show their work experience like joining letter, leaving letter and all. I showed my work experience because I was working till June.

M: So let's just work on these maps. Now you pretty much will be basically keep adding information in the same map, because now the questions are about these processes in a little bit more detail. So in terms of let's talk about technology. So how has technology supported your migration from the initial stage till now? Technology meaning, conduct online research, what resources or websites used, social media that you used, and current social media that you use in your journey now as well even to maybe stay connected with your family, for example, or maps or things like that.

Si: So basically I used Google website, college website, CIC website. So source is nothing but Google. So basically CIC website is good enough. What I found if you go into the forums there are multiple people who will put their questions. So you will find lot of discrepancy because their experiences and your experiences, there is a lot of difference. So instead of getting confused, you go to the CIC website and then and you have they have a questionnaire and answers provided. So you can do that. CIC website. For transcript, I connected with my college, my college website to understand how I will get the transcript and all. This I got from British Council. I gave an offline exam so it took 14 days for my result to come. So I submitted my documents. My college had sent me the link.. so here they have a Google form. They have that drive Google Drive on that you are supposed to submit the documents. CAQ also I was supposed to create an account on the website…on the government website. Plus, they mail you the letter. Post the letter. So you have a physical copy. So what happens when they send you an electronic copy it can be editable. Here it is a certificate. So the certificate can be mishandled it can be edited and all. So they send a physical copy. So this copy is required at the airport, it is required at the immigration and all. When I landed, I have to show it at the airport then I was directed to the immigration section, because this is the permission. I used Facebook for understanding the city – city knowledge. Lot of information I got from Facebook for instance it is a historical place, regarding the weather, what are the different places in Montreal, how is the weather, how to cope up with the weather. They have videos which have been posted. There are hashtags. I use Facebook, Instagram, I follow the mtl blog. Im following the account of my college so I was pretty much updated about things happening other activities are happening in my college. I came here on 9th of October so 1st of October they had a visit the college whichever student they had for June intake and all.. They took those students for a city tour so I got to learn about all this activities, extracurricular activities, colleges networking activities, that I came to know from their Instagram handle. So college and MTL blog – these are the 2 things that I am following. Plus I'm very much into yoga. So the people who are in this city who does Yoga and all, Im following their accounts and then this one thing I follow – Sri Ravi Shakankar – Art of living. This is one Instagram handle. So what they do they conduct a meditation and yoga session. twice in a week, like bi-weekly. This coming Sunday they have a session. So FB and Instagram is more than enough. WhatsApp – video and voice call. So instead of using Skype and all Whatsapp is really good because for Skype the other person needs to have it and all. With Whatsapp your phone is registered and off you go. You have Google Maps very much essential when you are traveling to other country and the city, the country from where you come, you have good transportation facility like train, you have cab you have rickshaws available. But it is not necessarily these facilities will be available in the other country.

M: Okay? All right, let's talk about social connections on the map. So now like I said, you just build upon this same map.

Si: So this is self-funding then sponsored by dad. That’s it. Since he’s retired, he has his retirement fund so that is being utilised. Yeah lot of, umm, when I thought of studies like when I confirm with studies, I wanted to know the culture… like how is the technological culture in the city. So I enrolled to meetup. Yeah, went to this app …meetup app. On that I connected with Montreal Analytics team. Then I connected with women in machine learning and artificial intelligence. This is one community which is doing good work. We're working on this. So, these are the apps that keep on posting the meetups that they conduct. So these are the 2 groups. This is an NGO. So, when I'm when I'm in the city, and I don't have things to do on weekends, or whatever, I need to meet with people, I need to understand the culture I need to understand the technology space. So I'll be going to these meetups and I will be interacting with the people. Oh, that's this is that because Did you go to any meetups yet? Not as of now. I have like I said yoga. Yeah, art of living. So that is happening on Sunday 20th 20th of October. So I'll be going over there. But it also helped me to find out the relevant accommodations and all. Ill be meeting people who are already in Montreal. Students who are already in Montreal. They might help me out. For accommodation, what I have observed over here…whichever buildings are there, so they have already posted if there are vacant flats that are available in that building. So the posters are already available, you just scan the code and physical posters are there, you just scan the code and it redirects you to that website and you come to know if there are rooms available in this. You just connect with them or fill the form and then accordingly, they will reply. So maybe QR code will come somewhere and at the end here, looking for accommodation. So this is all before arrival. Now I can create a map after arrival. So for arrival I will start with airport. So at airport what was required is a token needed to be created that is a profile is created yeah profile of passengers are created. Then the next your CAQ is checked. Your visa is checked. You are redirected to Immigration Department. And then you get your visa permit, here you get your visa – after the immigration. You don't get a visa until you actually arrive. The work permit is after studies. The college mentions that since you are studying over here you can work part time so that is implicit. 20 hours a week. VFS just provided with the visa…visa number. See that is just a number. So, when you come to their country and whatever number you have, based on that number the immigration team understands that these are students, these for study, these are for work, these are for PR. Then they give you the documents. So I got a stamp saying student. So I got my study permit and I was out… out of the airport [laughs]. So very much clear process and staff is very cordial. You need to create your own profile. So there are 15 to 20 computers available. You can do it in five to seven minutes your token is created you after that you have two people who will be checking your certificate, the check it, they tell you to go to the immigration and immigration section there are seven to eight people desks, so even if there are 20 people, each persons check is done in 5 minutes. This is very good over here. They do ask… the immigration people do ask what is your accommodation? Where are you going to stay? Where are you going to go from here? So that is being checked – accommodation and address is checked. We call it as reference. So yeah this would go before. Submitted my file. Visa was approved in July. It takes 2 days to come from Delhi to Mumbai. So, after that I connected with my friends for temporary accommodation. So, I had two months – August, September. So it happened that earlier I was supposed to go to another place and there, there was no vacancy. And in September's first week, it was already occupied. So, then I had to search for another place. So eventually this is the 3rd friends room where I have a like, they accommodated me. 2 months it took me, like I was I was in a dicey position, like where I will stay, where I will stay.. Firstly I was searching for accommodation on Facebook, Kijiji app, Airbnb and all. But eventually I got it through a friend. Accommodation and then I got a cab, Because the address was already given to me. And from airport, this location, it takes 20 minutes. And then they came to receive me near the entrance of the building. Everything is on your mobile phone. Just imagine if you don’t have an internet connection, you are gone. I did my international roaming but I didn’t use the data services. So I did that now, like I got my college registration done, my bank accounts, Then I've got my phone, took another SIM card here and I hot my social insurance number also. I went first I went to the College. So, what I did, in one day itself I did everything - services. So, I had my college registration, in that same building, so college registration is on the first floor, Scotiabank at ground floor. Then there is mall over here. Eaton Mall.. there I took my SIM card, so which is like five minutes away – Sim card - and then I went to Service Canada for my sin number. So this all happened in a span of three hours. So that is the beauty of government working over your. Actually, this is on do in your country. In 2-3 hours, you cant do it. You need three days and all these places are very much nearby. Otherwise in my in my country or my city I need to travel from one place to another place. So, traveling is like 30 minutes, one hour, two hours.

M: Have you looked at immigration policies in general? Do you keep it? Do you keep check on it? And what do you think about immigration policies in Canada?

Si: It is, it is pretty much clear that this immigration…like permanent immigration can happen provided whatever is the score at that time…after two years, or after one year of studies. What is the immigration status, so it all depends upon that time, but I know the basic basic thing that I know if I want to immigrate to Canada, there are certain things, rules in the sense.. So age factor, marital status, your Canadian studies, Canadian work experience, So after completing my studies, if I if I fit into the age factor, if I fit into the marital status so that point is going to be constant. My Canadian work experience might add some points my Canadian studies will add some points. And if I get a score, and that score is as par with the CRS score, So I can get PR. It all depends upon future.

M: Relationships?

Si: Moving to another country and as a single person, it is very obvious you would like to interact with people, you would like to get into a relationship, but it all depends upon how it happens. And since there's a new country, new place, basically Montreal – this is like a French speaking province, so there will be a language barrier. So I don't know how it will happen.

M: Would you have to marry an Indian person only doesn't matter where you?

Si: It doesn’t matter and it didn't matter when I was in my country also. In fact it would be very good if I didn’t marry an Indian person [laughs]. Because when you are thinking of settling, you have already taken a decision of moving from one country to another country. So your mindset is about exploring the places, so why not exploring relationships and why not exploring this aspect of your personal life also? Like, in my case, 33 half of my life I've spent in one country and didn’t do this… I was in a relationship and things couldn’t work out. So I couldn't take our decision to get married. So now, now, my mindset is here I have like, I don't have a burden of working. It is pretty much clear that I'm studying I have, so I will be having some time on the weekends. So it all depends upon my study schedule and how it is, I need to have, like, I have to say, in my bucket list, I have made sure that I'm going to go out and meet people, which I have not done in my work life, like for 10 years, or employed so that I have to do it over here, because what I feel is this is the one year which I've got. I've got it from my family as well as the opportunity I've got to understand myself and take a step on it. Tinder I have used in my country. It is of no use and the app has a very negative response and all. I don't know about other apps. On Facebook, you guys come to mobile lot of apps and all like, okay, okay. Okay. See the love that you have. But I don't want to rely on those apps. What I feel is if you start socializing, you start meeting new people like I have an opportunity to. I can meet someone in my college also. And I'm like, I'm a big fan of Shahrukh Khan. So I will tell you one experience Yeah. So like from I'm a die hard fan Shahrukh Khan. So before coming on the last day for my friend's birthday, they prepared one slam book. So the last page was Shahrukhs pic and my pic. So they had written a message that hope hopefully you will, you will meet him some day. So what happened when I went when I went to my college for registration, my college is at the first floor. So there was one guy. I just entered the lift so there was myself and two guys who live. So one of the guy he spoke to another guy, he said… he was greeting him hello. So the other guy told him Do you know me? He said yes, we met at Apple. So then he introduced himself, “I'm Shahrukh” [laughs]. So when he introduced himself he said “Im Shahrukh and Im from Pakistan”. And Im like Shahrukh!!! [Laughs]. After 10 minutes I just messaged my friend I said that you wrote in the slam book that I will meet Shahrukh and I met Shahrukh in my college. So you know Bollywood movies? So Shahrukh’s last movie was jab Harry Met Sejal. So in that, the tagline and what you seek is seeking you. [laughs] So, my friends, everyday they message me and say – did you meet Shahrukh? I am like, no I haven’t gone to the college again but I'm very much eager. So what happened after the lift… I went to my college and did all the process. Then I have one of my student is working over here. So he told me that why don’t you come to McDonalds? So, I went to McDonalds and Shahrukh had come to McDonalds as well. So I was telling my friends that you’ve written in my slam book and I have met Shahrukh. It is not Shahrukh Khan but it is Shahrukh. I am following him… not following him, like seeing him but he doesn’t know that this girl is looking at me. So that gives me a high point over there okay fine. I can look around people and I can meet people and people oh you're a very positive, very cordial…like they speak… they are very friendly. Even at stores, I went to all the government offices and the life was very easy. Otherwise when you go to a government office in your country, first of all you feel scared then the second thing is you’re already scared, and then people don't talk properly. They talk rudely. And also First of all you’re scared, you're not that ready you take elder person from your family to go to the government office and then your attitude and their attitude dont match. So it's your family members always say that whenever you're going to a government office make sure you're taking an elder person who has very good high level of patience because its a government office. If you speak rudely and if you speak with your attitude, the work is not going to happen. So take someone who is elder and who has very good level of patience. That thing I didn’t observe over here. It was a good thing and I was little bit sceptical.. if they ask some questions that I'm not able to answer or it might happen I might get hyper and all. Even my family was amazed that in three hours you did all these things and that too being alone. Im like yes, I did it. [laughs].

M: Okay I supposed to mean I'm look I'm done in terms of like the only thing I think I want to ask about now is whether your family will also come here at some point to visit you or to see you if, if and what your future plans are in general like what you would not like to do next next steps.

Si: My family – I don’t think so they would be coming over here because my stay is, as of now, it all depends on my year one year of completion. Then again there will be an approval for the work permit. I have go through an approval process. So as of now I don't know, in my mind is only studies study like the one year of studies. Then our next I don't know like, if I'm calling my family what is the process and all …I suppose it is visit visa now. But again, again, there are some there must be some prerequisites for visitor visa and all. I have not given any thought about it and my family's also not thought about it. So that would be in future if I get a work permit again. What are the criteria for family coming to the country and all? No idea.

M: Okay, looking at your map, how do you feel about it? Is there anything that you want to add to it?

Si: Touch wood - my flow was very much clear and it was step by step because when I see other people, like my roommates also, they had a very tough immigration process in India. So, they had their visa rejection also happened and all. So in my case, what I observed is they, they were not having that much knowledge. So, luckily, in my case what I did before applying even everything, I made sure that I have 75% of the knowledge regarding what I'm doing next. So, even I was thinking that 25% I might go wrong, but 75% I have a knowledge about this. This also.. the government work and all… I made sure that I read proper content and then I went to them, again French people in the offices, there were talking in French. So, I made sure that how to greet them in French. I made sure those I know those words their accent I need to understand and all what I observed when I went to Service Canada My name they pronounced in another way. Even there were people sitting so the pronunciation of the name was very much different so there were some two three people the name was called several times but they couldn’t understand that their name is being called. So its all like how adaptable you are and how you're prepared… t

M: What has been the biggest challenge?

Si: The biggest challenge observed was in Frankfurt – in my layover. So my flight was delayed from Mumbai. So, I had a span of like 30 minutes to move from that, that section to my boarding session, so I had to run like anything. So I thought that Oh my God, if I missed this flight, what was going to happen? I didn't knew what what would be the next options and all and the funds are not there. So even in your country, if you could happen that you miss a train, a flight or a bus, you know that you have funds, you will do something about it. And no internet or no internet connection. And the mind was also not working like what am I going to do. Like, I met a guy. He helped me because he was also moving to that same gate. So he helped me. He helped me a lot into that. We both were running and all and like in 20 minutes I reached there. Even the airport staff, they were good. But they also couldn’t do anything because I had to run anyhow, I had to rush. That was the biggest challenge. Because at that time even thinking now is like if I couldn't make it in in that 30 minutes then what next. Those 30 minutes were like, something… Then when I was sitting in the flight I was thinking, what if I missed it. When I came over here and shared this with my family and my brother was like there is no problem. You are supposed to go to the airport authority the whichever like I came from, I took Lufthansa, So just go to their section. So then they will book another flight or they would have contacted India or they would have… like something could have been done. I was like this option, at that point, I wouldn't think of. And this was the first international flight so I never knew that this all options are there. So its good that I am moving out and when other members of my family will move, they are well equipped with all this possibilities. They also helped me a lot. And I'm like lucky that they knew that these all possibilities would come. So they were prepared with this and we were doing it because they also connected with their friends and they did the research and all. I was very much relying on my family that yes, if nothing could happen, yes, they are there they will help me anyhow and they will do it.

[this process of your move has become your family’s process]

So I tell my friends that I have a very progressive family literally, moving at this age, it is not at all possible. I have my friends who are single and they are also giving a thought about coming to like moving out of the country after working 10 years, 12 years, they spoke with their family and they got a clear rejection. Its like you're not allowed to go. Its their mindset. They don’t want them to move out. Just because you're not married, you cant move out. Like two of my best friends, they are very much keen, not only to this country they're they're like… they wanted to move at least from Mumbai to somewhere else in the same country. But theyre not allowed.

M: How do you feel about drawing the map because this is a new thing that I'm trying to do.

Si: Its like revisiting the days from the last eight to nine months, eight months, It feelsn Nostalgic. This all information, I would like to help others also, like I was telling my friends only. But their family is not keen. So I decided I would speak to them, but I will speak after two to three months and when they when they realize that, how happy and how I'm able to execute it. So it all depends upon how I face things over year and how I go from one level to another level over you, then they will get the confidence that yes they can send their daughter.