

1 = Interviewer

2 = Interviewee

1: Hi there. How are you doing?

2: I'm good.

1: Do you want to tell us a little bit about yourself.

2: Sure. I am a 51-year-old immigrant, female, from Romania and I will be soon celebrating 30 years of being an American within the next couple of weeks.

1: That's awesome. Congratulations. OK. So, let's get down to it. So, the purpose of this interview and ultimately this project is to basically get a bunch of people from different walks of life and figure out how they have overcome their obstacles in life as well as find out what resilience means to them specifically. So, what does resilience mean to you?

2: Well thanks for the question. If I must answer that it would be resilience and the ability to see positives. While the negative things are happening and having the strength to push through towards the end goal.

1: So, kind of like being able to delay the instant gratification so that you can further the betterment of your life or the lives of others.

2: Certainly. That's a good, insightful way to put it. Yes.

1: So as an immigrant has there been any sort of experiences that you had when you were coming here or while you were leaving the country that you exhibited resilient traits?

2: Certainly. Now that you ask the question, one specific situation comes to mind which was very real and very painful for myself and my current husband to go through. He was my boyfriend at the time when I left Romania. We had been together for about three and a half years and we had decided that we were going to get married. Unfortunately, the political situation and the way the visa system worked and the fact that Romania was a

communist country and the fact that I was coming to America for political asylum did not allow us to get married to Romania because that would have been an immediate prohibition of me leaving the country or being accepted in the United States. Once the child turns 21 or the child under 21 gets married, the primary family is no longer the parents. That relationship is severed in the eyes of the immigration service because the person has a new primary family in their husband or wife. It was one of the hardest things that I had to do. The resilience part surfaced because we realized that we would have to raise our children in a communist country and the country that we were living and finding living there unbearable. So, we decided that ultimately it was better for, not just ourselves, but particularly for our unborn children to put our desires and love, so to speak in terms of being together, on a second priority and have our priority for the betterment of our family. Unfortunately the immigration system even at that time 30 years ago was very delayed. So, I came to America in 1987. But my husband was not granted a visa until almost three years later. So, for three years we were separated. We had different lives.

1: So, it was hard to say the least. What kept you guys going through those long, obviously arduous times when you guys were across the entire planet away from one another?

2: If I had to answer in one word it would be love. If I had the time to go into all the details, it would be the excitement, the happiness, the wonder of being and living in a free country and simply the fact that I could look for a job. And that kept me going. And despite the heartache and the difficulty and the depression and sometimes anger and sometimes even doubt that the move was the right move, love and excitement kept me going.

1: Was there was there any other situations as being an immigrant that you believe you showed resilience in. Perhaps later after you got a little more established.

2: Yes, there was one other situation. So, I was a college student in Romania when I came to America and there was no such thing as transferring from an international institution at the time. Remember, its communist Romania. And so, I started by going to a college. And I started taking night classes because I really had to have a job. I had to have the means to support myself and contribute to the household where my parents

were trying their hardest to also find jobs. I also needed to save some money so that when my husband would eventually come over we would be able to live together. So, I had to have a full-time job which I secured almost immediately after coming to the United States in great part since I was fluent in English. . I started going to school. It took me almost 10 years to get through and it took every ounce of my resilience that I could possibly muster. I was advancing in my career. I started as a teller in a bank and I ended up being a manager of a credit underwriting department before I graduated from college. I had two kids in the meantime

1: Wow that sounds like quite the workload. What was your motivation to keep going through all that?

2: It wasn't love, it was ambition. I really truly I remember with such passion that I was thinking that I was given this opportunity to come to this country. I was going to make something of myself and I thought that combining experience in the workplace with a solid education to be able to mesh those two would give me the results that would satisfy my ambition. It was ambition. I wanted to become someone I wanted to leave my mark somewhere. I wanted to have a meaningful job. I wanted people to admire the work I did, and I wanted to really be good at my job. And that's where my motivation and resilience came from.

1: Awesome. Well I really appreciate it. Thank you so much for your time.

2: I appreciate you asking me. Thank you and good luck.