

**Topic:** My parents struggles, life, and my success.

**Abstract:** I'm a Mexican-American, who's parents immigrated to the United States from Mexico. They had a hard time trying to adapt to the life in the United States when they got here. They only new how to speak Spanish and couldn't communicate much. My parents worked in the fields to provide my brother and sisters with food and shelter. They have done such a great job raising us here and continue to be support in every way. The best way to thank them for all they have done is by graduating from college and doing something productive with my life.

**Key Words:** Mexican-American, Education, Grandparents, Parents, Tradition, Immigrating to the U.S., English and Spanish, Parents, Religion, Struggles, Success.

I've been raised as a Mexican-American all my life. Both my parents were born in Mexico and immigrated to the United States for a better life. My mom's great grandfather and grandmother came from Europe from both sides of her family except her mother's mom was a mestiza. My dad doesn't know much of where his side of the family came from. My mom and dad were both born and raised in Mezquitic, Jalisco. Mezquitic is a small town a couple of hours away from Zacatecas, Jalisco. My dad was one out of eleven children that my grandparents had. My dad would always help out my grandpa by planting sugar canes on their fields. My grandpa and dad would sell them to make money. My mom grew up working in a ranch my grandparents owned. She would milk cows, collect eggs from the hens, ride horses, and help out my grandpa with anything he ever needed.

In the year of 1975, my parents decided to come to the United States. My mother was 21 years old and my father was 22. My mom had my older sister with her when they decided to come over here and she was only one. My mom's aunt was already living here in Gilroy for a while and before my mom my uncle came to the United States. My parents didn't have much of education in Mexico. The highest grade my dad went to school was to the fourth grade and my

mom only went for a year. After arriving in the United States my parents didn't really have a better choice but to work in the fields. They didn't know how to speak English and that was a struggle for them.

My parents met a couple that spoke English and Spanish that helped them out so much a couple of year after moving here. They learned a little bit of English and started to understand it more. Her and her husband even helped my parents buy their own house for the first time. My mom even started to speak a little bit of English. A couple of year later the woman and her husband ended up moving away and my mom stop speaking English and ended up forgetting how to speak it. Till this day my mother and father still own that house. They have worked so hard for so many years to be able to live a good life in the United States. Years after my parents came to the United States, my moms parents came over here too. My grandpa was a U.S. Citizen since he was born in Chicago, Illinois, and when my grandma and him got married my grandpa also got my grandma U.S. Citizenship.

Living In the United States my whole life doesn't change the fact that I'm Mexican. I have met people who are Mexican and are ashamed of being it. I don't understand why. I love listing to the music and dancing it. I don't mind having it on full blast in my car while driving either. A lot people do it so why shouldn't I. I am proud to show my ethnic background. I am not ashamed of being Mexican.

Since the only language that was spoken at home was Spanish, that was the first language I learned to speak. My siblings are all older than me would talk to me at times in English, but Spanish was still my primary language. After attending preschool I was enrolled in a class that helped me learn better English. I started to practice it more often and soon spoke it well. Now I

speak more English than Spanish because I only speak it Spanish when I'm home with my parents. Its hard for me at times to be able to translate English to Spanish for my parents. I just end up speaking "spanglish" to them.

Both my parents are Catholic. My dad side of the family are very religious Catholics and attend church every Sunday. My moms side of the family is the same. My parents baptized all my siblings and I when we were babies. Then when we were older in about middle school we all had to do attend classes on Saturday at church to do our first communion. After doing our first communion, we would have to attend classes again on Saturdays to do our confirmation. After that a Quinceanera is also celebrated for a little girl now considered a lady, when they turn fifteen. My parents also believe that one is not to live with their significant other unless they are married. All my older siblings have done the same thing with there children and I also plan to follow my parents foot steps.

Being raised a Mexican-American has some great advantages. The food of course and the way we celebrate the hoildays. One of my favorite dish has to be enchiladas with my moms famous rice. Being Mexican-American we celebrate our Thanksgiving and Christmas with both Mexican and American dishes. We all help out my mom make some delicious posole, and champurado. My sister and I make turkey, potato salad, stuffing, cheesecake and many more. My family celebrates Christmas Eve and we open our presents at midnight unlike most American families open on Christmas Day. We also celebrate Cinco de Mayo, since it is also my neices birthday its a better reason to celebrate it.

My parents have been through so many struggles in life and they have over come so many obstacles. They have worked so hard to get us where were at, and have done everything in

their power to give us what we need. One of my sisters is a registered nurse in the ER and has finished school but is going back to get her bachelors degree. She didn't go to college right after high school but she did end up graduating while raising four kids from Gavilan College. My other sister has her bachelors degree and is going back to school to get her masters degree. She also didn't go to college right after high school but she still managed to graduate. She graduated from Mills College which is a all girls private school in the East Bay while being a single mom of two. Knowing all the challenges they had while trying to finish college and still being able to achieve it makes me really certain that if they can do it so can I.

Who I've become is all thanks to my parents. They have taught me so many things that I don't know how I'll ever be able to repay them. My mom and dad have never let me down and have always been here for me through thick and thin. My parents have worked hard to give us everything and I can say that they did a great job doing it. I plan to make everything in my power to make my parents proud of me. My plans are to keep coming to school and to transfer to a four year college after. I don't plan on, getting married or having kids of my own any time soon. I want to be able to have a really good stable job before I ever plan on doing that. I want to prove to my parents that I can finish college without having kids nor getting married till after I graduate. I'm striving for nothing but success and majoring in becoming a registered nurse like my older sister. I have always been interested in working in the medical field and I'm sure becoming a nurse is exactly what I want do. My other sister have made my parents very proud on everything they have accomplished. I am the baby in the family so I'm the last one to prove to my parents that I can make them proud just like my other siblings. After all the pain and suffering my parents went through to get here, I plan making them proud for making the right choice of raising their children in the United States.