

**Topic:** Mother's journey in the U.S before and after marriage.

**Abstract:** My mother was raised in a poor class family, she dropped out of middle school to help out her family. At the age of sixteen she decided to come to the U.S to make a better living. She married my father that she met while working in the fields and had three children. She found herself raising three kids on her own and playing two roles at the same time. More importantly, my mother worked hard to provide food and shelter for my siblings.

**Key Words:** Working conditions, Education, Value, Communication, Sacrifices.

### Mother's new life in the United States

My mother was born August, 18, 1961 she was the third youngest out of 8 kids. My mother was born in Mexico City but raised in a little town named Santana three hours away from the city. My mother described her childhood as being poor and not having money to spend on clothes and toys. They only had enough money to buy food and pay bills. From what she remembers her childhood was spent working in the fields with my grandmother growing and picking different types of vegetables such as onions, jalapenos, cucumber to sell to others to make money to buy food. As for my grandmother she was a stay at home mother only worried about working in her field and raising the children as for my grandfather he was a Valero is what my mother told me which means a type of security. My grandfather worked in Mexico City as a guard making sure nothing was taken from the warehouse, in the warehouse was tile and toilet seats metal. When my mother turned twelve my grandparents split up that's when she said her life turned she and her brothers had to drop out of school and help my grandmother out with bills and food my mother's duties were to clean, cook and wash and work in the fields while my grandmother was out in the town trying to sell crops to make money to put food on the table. At the age of sixteen my mother decided to come to the United States with my two aunts to make a better living and help out my grandmother back home. When my mom entered the United States

she settled in Hollister with my aunts. My mother mentioned to me she began to adapt to the American society quickly she was taking on the language of an American and leaving abandoning her belief and language behind. My mother worked in a walnut factory for three years. There is where she met my father. My father was a labor contractor at the time. My parents dated and married within Six months and had three children together.

My mother worked in the walnut factory picking walnuts and packaging them. She also worked in the field off of highway 25. In the field my mother picked lettuce, bell peppers and much more. My mother's day started at 5 in the morning six and sometimes seven days a week and did not end till six o'clock at night. My mother worked hard for a low paying rate. The working conditions while she worked in the field were muddy and wet and at times loss of crops and loss of work days when it rain which meant less money. During the summer time it was hot her back hurt she would all sweaty her head hurt her legs hurt they would work long hours a day.

My mother and father meet in the field at the time my father was a labor contractor and my mother was a field worker. After six months they got married and my mother moved out of my aunt's house and move to Gilroy with my father. My mother also stopped working and became a home maker. Three years after their marriage my parents had their first child together my sister three years after that they had my brother and finally three years after that my parents had me. My father continued to work as a labor contractor until he began to drink more and began to do drugs and became violent and aggressive towards my mother. Their marriage only lasted eleven years. My mother decided to leave my father for good and began to seek for jobs and found a job at Christopher Ranch in Gilroy. My brother and sister, mother and I moved into an apartment together. From the point when my mother decided to leave my father and move out my father never tried to visit us or contact us. Till this very day I have not seen or heard from my father.

My mother job at Christopher Ranch was a peeler at night. She worked Monday through Friday from 3pm to 12 midnight and woke up every morning to feed and get me and my siblings ready for school. When we came home from school my mother always had supper ready so when she left to work house was cleaned and dinner was made. My sister was the oldest so she was the one watching us through the night while my mother worked. As time went by my mother began to get promotions at work her shift changed to mornings and she became a supervisor at Christopher Ranch.

My mother worked very hard to pay bills and provide food and clothing for my siblings and me. My mother was an independent woman she didn't rely on government help or child support to help her succeed in life she did it all on her own. As my siblings and I grew older my mother was our role model. My mother would always remind us that life wasn't easy and nothing was given for free to you, you had to work hard and make sacrifices to get what you wanted in life. My mother lasted eighteen years at Christopher Ranch she quit when she got sick in 2009. She wanted to return to work but her manager did not want to drop her positions so she quit and stayed home for about a year and began to take ESL classes her at Gavilan College for about 1 year and decided to go back to work. My mother found a job at Gold Smith seeds as a flower Technician and has been there for 3 years now the Esl classes she took paid off and helped her get the job at Gold Smith seeds. Her job is seasonal so when the job is over my mother takes vacations back to Mexico for about six months to visit her brothers and sisters.

At that point of time my sibling and I were grown already we all have children and are pursuing an education to help us make a better living for our families. My brother has three children my sister has two children and for myself I have one daughter.

As I bring this story to a closure in my eyes my mother is a strong and independent woman that came to the United States with an open mind to make a better living not knowing what it was really like for someone who didn't have papers or that only had two aunts in the United States or what she was going to face in journey in the Americas. My mother raised three children on her own with no one's help but her own through the good and bad times my mother always kept a smile on our faces and got us through any obstacle that came her way. We were never poor or rich we live comfortable and happy. My mother's story has shaped my life tremendously because of her I know anything is possible. My mother always tells my siblings and I that there is no reason why we can't make it happened when we are US citizens with papers which means we can have any job we want we just have to put in extra effort. She would tell us in Spanish that working hard pays off later and laziness pays off now. I live by those words because at times life does seem to get hard for me but I remember what my mother had to go through to succeed and that's nothing im going through so it gives me a push to go that extra mile. and I'm a single mother myself and raising my daughter my mother has gave me the courage to go back to school and pursue my education and make a better living for my daughter and i. I'm attending my last semester here at Gavilan College and transferring to San Jose State next fall to work on my Master and B.A in criminal justice and to become a Probation Officer for the County of Santa Clara County. I also work full time at Smart and Final I have been with the company for three years.