

**Topic:** Being in a Mexican tradition family.

**Abstract:** The values of traditional Mexican families are such that the well being of everyone comes first above anything else. Always had to do what was told because no wasn't an exception. Working hard to support you family and only spending money on your whole extended family needs

**Key words:** Mexican, family, work, money education, traditions, economic

I am Mexican American and I was born in Morgan Hill, California and I come from a very traditional Mexican family. My mom is from Texas and my dad is from Mexico. Both my parents come from a very traditional poor Mexican family and didn't have much growing up. Both my parents come from families where work was very important and couldn't be missed at all. For both of them in my grandparents eyes work came before school. They both had very strict rules that had to be followed when growing up. The consequences they would get if a rule wasn't followed were horrible.

My mom came to California from Texas when she was five years old. My mom comes from a very big family she comes from a family of ten so finically it was hard to support the family. My grandparents, aunts, uncles and my mom had to move over here for work because they needed money to help support the family. Since they already came to California every summer to work my grandparents thought that they would save more money by staying settle here and work permanently over here. They had moved over here as soon as the summer began because there was lots of work over here due to the season in the field. My mom started working the fields when she was five years old until she was about seventeen years old. My mom had to work all day everyday every summer until the season of what they were picking in the fields was over. The shifts that my mom would work are just overwhelming because she never really had to the chance to relax. My mom always had to go to work, she had no choice. If she didn't attend

work then there would be some serious consequences. She worked so hard for very little pay. For one bucket of cucumber was fifty cents, a big tray full with cut apricots was two dollars, five dollars an hour for picking strawberries and cherries, the list just goes on and on. My mom had to work to support the family and to pay for her own clothes. Every time she got paid she had to give her check to my grandparents with no exceptions. She never had time to go out with her friends because my grandparents believed that she had no business going out and there were plenty of things to do at the house. She was never allowed to have a boyfriend but if a boy wanted to date her he would have to speak with my grandpa and get his approval. When she went on dates with a boy she had to take one of my aunts or else she couldn't go. Or if they wanted to spend time together they had to stay on the front porch of the house for only one hour no longer than that.

My dad came to California from Mexico as an immigrant, when he was sixteen years old. He comes from a family of eleven back then that was perfect but now days we are just like wow that's one big family to support. My grandparents wanted all of them to move over here to California because over here there was work and Mexico there wasn't enough work. My grandparents wanted a better life for them and start fresh. My grandparents, aunts, uncles and my dad didn't come to California together as a whole family. They came together as a pair little by little so they wouldn't get caught and make it over the broader. It took a long period of time to get the whole family over here in California but it all happened over time. As soon as my dad arrived here he started working in the fields because school wasn't an option for him. He didn't like the work at all because he thinks the pay wasn't worth it but he had no choice but to work. The family needed the money so work was his only option. My dad had to pay and work for all his expenses. My dad wasn't able to have many things that he wished for when he grew up

because there wasn't too much to spend on things that weren't important. Money was only spent on things that they really need and was important for the family. My grandparents didn't have the money to buy things for him so he had to do it on his own. If he needed new clothes for work or anything he had to go to the store and pay for his own things. They family was very traditional. They went to church every Sunday as a family and always celebrated and prayed for the saint's birthdays. They always celebrated El Niño dios in December. El Niño dios would always be under the Christmas tree. Everyone would gather around it and prayed together for him. When everyone was done praying a bag of candy filled with peanuts and an orange was given out.

My parents were working in the fields picking bell peppers when they met each other. My dad was twenty-five years old when he met my mom. My mom was eight years younger than my dad, she was seventeen years old. They soon started dating and my mom got pregnant at the age of eighteen. My grandparents were very disappointed because she was still very young and had a whole life ahead of her. My grandparents just didn't want her to go through the struggles that they went trying to raise a family. My grandparents told her that my dad and she needed to get married because they were having a child. Back then once you were pregnant you had to get married because if you weren't married to him then you would just make the whole family look bad. A couple months after my mom gave birth to my brother my dad and her got married. They waited seven years to have me after waited two years to have my younger sister. My parents continued their life's here in California like a family. They didn't want to move back to Texas nor Mexico. They don't want us to go through the struggles they went through as they were growing up. My parents want us to have things that they didn't have when they grew up. Since my mom only went to school till tenth grade and my dad only went to school till sixth grade they

wanted us to have a good education and have a career. Since they had to drop school for work they want us to take advantage of the opportunity of going to school. Like my mom said “You need to go to school be someone in life and have a job that you love because you don’t want to work like your father and I did.” My parents want the best for my brother, my sister and me for our futures. They want us to accomplish things that they weren’t able to. Like my dad would say “Turn your dreams into reality because no one is going to do it for you but yourself, you have to want it to make it come true.”

My parents stayed married for about twelve years. They got divorce when I was five years old. Even though my parents got divorce they still carried on some traditions with the family. My dad is still old fashion like back then when he was young. He didn’t let me put on any make up or paint my nails until I was fifteen and had my quincenera. But till this day my dad still believes I shouldn’t be allowed to have a boyfriend until I finish school. My dad is strict with me and for the most part I understand that he wants the best for me but he needs to be more lean it because times have changed. My mom allowed me to put on make but once I turned fifteen she did allow me to have a boyfriend as long as she knew about it and I didn’t hide anything from her. My mom was the one who understood me the most. I did have a bit more freedom with my mom but she was pretty strict with some things with me like I was not able to get home late when I went out or else I couldn’t go out the next weekend. She was much protected with me though and when she would show me how protective she was with me I always felt like she didn’t trust me. I think my mom thought I had too much freedom compared to her when she was growing up.

My first language that I learned was Spanish because at my house Spanish was spoken because my dad didn’t know English but my mom was bilingual. I struggled trying to learn

English because at my house only Spanish was spoken there and especially since we were a very traditional Mexican family everything had to be the way it was in Mexico which made it challenging for me I had to go to preschool to learn English. My uncle and my dad did the yard work there while I attended and I trying to learn English. When I found out that my dad was willing to do that for the school that showed me how important my education was for my dad. He really didn't want me to have the kind of jobs he did but even though I know my dad did the job for me. Now I speak English fluently and when I try speaking Spanish I forget how to speak some of it. Like ill be talking to my dad in Spanish but then I forget how to say in Spanish so I say it English.

Some of the family traditions have stayed with the family. We still celebrate the saints' birthdays and my dad still has some of those strict rules that he had when he was growing up. As soon I turned eighteen I got a job and ever since then I have been paying for my own expenses. It's my second year attending Gavilan College. I want to transfer to a university and be an ultrasound technician. I want to succeed and accomplish things that my parents wanted me too. I want to prove to them that they made the right choice in staying in California. I am turning my dream into reality just like my parents wished.