

Deniz, a 69-year-old retired taxi driver who moved to the US from Turkey in 1974

(Name changed for anonymity. Shared with permission.)

INTERVIEWER: What motivated you to move from Turkey to the US, and how did you feel about that transition at the time?

DENIZ: I moved to the US in 1974 because of the political instability and unrest in Turkey at the time. I wanted a better future for me, my wife, and the children we hoped to have. I decided on the US because it's the land of opportunity. I wanted my kids to go to school here and to have hope for the future. Leaving behind my parents and brothers and sisters was hard—and so was getting used to New York winters and how crazy busy life is here! Things are much calmer in the Mediterranean.

When we arrived, I got a job as a taxi driver, so on top of getting used to the traffic in New York, I had to learn my way around the city. It was hard, but I was so excited about making a fresh start... That helped me deal with the homesickness and get settled.

INTERVIEWER: How have you maintained a connection with your Turkish heritage while adapting to life in the US over the years?

DENIZ: Our Turkish heritage has been an important part of our family and social life. My wife and I were blessed with two children, Ahmet and Bahar, and we instilled in them a sense of pride and understanding of their Turkish roots. We spoke Turkish at home, cooked traditional dishes together, and celebrated Turkish holidays, so the kids grew up with a strong connection to their cultural heritage. I learned to love my job as a taxi driver—I got to see so much of the city and of life here, and I met all kinds of interesting people. I also loved talking to passengers who were interested about Turkey and my culture. And we're active in the Turkish community here. We've always gone to cultural events and social events at the Turkish Consulate.

All of this helped us stay connected to our roots and helped Ahmet and Bahar develop their identity as Turkish Americans. Finding this balance between our Turkish heritage and American life has been rewarding for our whole family.

Want interviewers and transcriptionists to capture *your* life?

To order...

1. Visit Grandkids.com/Legacy and use a credit card, debit card, or PayPal. Financing is available.
2. Or, if you prefer to send a check, call our team at 1-800-296-8099.

If you have questions, call our team at 1-800-296-8099 or send an email to Help@Grandkids.com. We love answering questions.

100% satisfaction guarantee: If you're not 100% happy, we'll redo your transcript package until you are. We're not happy until you're thrilled.