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Bal, Tejinder Interview

Abby Hicks

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Stockton Immigrant Women Oral History Collection

Interviewer: Abby Hicks

Interviewee: Tejinder Bal

Transcriber: James Lyons, Jamie Lynn Culilap

Date: July 31, 1980

[Tape 1, side A]

[Begin Tape]

Abby: Okay, your place of birth is?

Tejinder: Luthana (sp), Punjab, India.

Abby: How long did you live there?

Tejinder: I lived there till 1969 so I was there for most of my college life.

Abby: Was that in the country or in the city?

Tejinder: In India? I was born in the city and I went to college and school in the city and we own a farm so I lived in the village sometimes and sometimes in the city, so I've had a good exposure to both city and village life.

Abby: Then you grew up like in the country and then you went to the city?

Tejinder: In the country as well as the city.

Abby: Did your parents move or did you just go by yourself when you went to the city?

Tejinder: No, because I was in the boarding school.

Abby: What is your birthdate?

Tejinder: July 6, 1937.

Abby: When did you come to the U.S.?

Tejinder: I came in November 1968, excuse me, 1969.

Abby: And you were how old?

Tejinder: Thirty-six or thirty-five.

Abby: Did you come directly to the U.S.?

Tejinder: Yes, I came straight from India to the United States with a day's halt in Bangkok, and in Japan.

Abby: How many brothers and sisters did you have before you arrived here?

Tejinder: I have two sisters and both of them live in India. I have no brothers. And in America I don't have any relatives, but my husband has a sister who lives in Washington D.C.

Abby: So everybody's back in India?

Tejinder: Yeah.

Abby: Did your immediate family all arrive together?

Tejinder: Oh, see, we just came, husband and wife. That's all.

Abby: So, just the two of you? Was your marriage prearranged?

Tejinder: Yes, our marriage was arranged by our parents and my husband was studying here in the United States so when he went back to India we got married and then we came here.

Abby: Did you ever . . . you went to school?

Tejinder: Yes, I went to the University of California at Berkeley for my graduate program and I did my studies in Education at Berkeley.

Abby: What kind of education?

Tejinder: Emphasis on science education, so I have a Master's degree from there.

Abby: How much did you go to school in the old country?

Tejinder: I had a Master's degree from India, M.S.E Honors degree from India also, in Botany.

Abby: What about your parent's educational background?

Tejinder: My father, who of course died when I was very young, was very highly educated. He was an electrical engineer, went to school in London at the University of London, and was a recipient of Granville and gold medal for his distinguished performance in London. Then he went to school in Germany and then returned to India to serve in the Civil Service.

Abby: You say he went into Civil Service.

Tejinder: Yes, because after having qualified as an electrical engineer from England and from Germany he went to India and worked for the Punjab government as a civil servant. This is a category for people who worked as a government employee.

Abby: Are there a lot of jobs in engineering?

Tejinder: Yes.

Abby: And your mother?

Tejinder: My mother in contrast to her cousins and sisters was very well educated. She had a college degree from La Hore and was well versed in English and Punjabi.

Abby: Is that rare to have?

Tejinder: Yes, in her generation I think she was probably the only one in the family who went to college.

Abby: What made that possible?

Tejinder: My grandfather, her father, that's my maternal grandfather, had a strong faith in education so he wanted her to be well educated.

Abby: What is your parent's religion?

Tejinder: Yes, my parents are both of the Sikh faith and me and my husband also believe in the Sikh faith, and we hope to raise our children to believe in the Sikh faith.

Abby: Have your religious views changed since then?

Tejinder: no. In some ways, I guess I would say instead of changing, you know, we've become more aware of our culture and religious heritage by coming to America than we would have been if we were still in India, because in India when you're surrounded by those things and over here you realize that you have to work to keep up with it.

Abby: Is it because in America there is so much . . .

Tejinder: Yeah, because you don't have these things. There's only one, I would say sort of exposure, one different type of thing . . .

Abby: What do you do to make it work more?

Tejinder: Yeah, we read a great deal. Both of us, we brought some literature with us that we read. We read a great deal for our satisfaction and try to understand, What we do keep a room set aside in the house where we have, which is called you could say a prayer room or whatever, where we do keep the holy bible that we read from and we both read it regularly as we can. Apart from that we do read art history and other things, and try and interact with the children, talk to them about it so they have some idea. Also, in Stockton, we are very fortunate that we

have a Sikh Temple where we can attend, where we get a chance to meet other people, members of the same congregation and same faith.

Abby: Do you go to special services?

Tejinder: Yes, we do, you know, not every week, but whenever we can and we visit other cultural events in the bay area, San Francisco bay area, Fremont, Yuba City, L.A.

Abby: Is this relatives or . . .

Tejinder: No, friends. We have no relatives as I mentioned earlier, on the west coast.

Abby: Did your mother work outside the home?

Tejinder: No, my mother did not work outside the home, but she did work in a way, that she ran the family business.

Abby: Was this while you were growing up?

Tejinder: Yeah, my mother while I was growing up. She raised us. She worked in running the family business, of running the farm, and the other family business that kept us all together, because my father died when I was very little.

Abby: What did you grow?

Tejinder: On the farm? We had different crops, you know, cotton, bran, and wheat, sugarcane, and . . .

Abby: That you were able to . . .

Tejinder: Yes, sure.

Abby: Since your mother got her degree it seems that she would have used it.

Tejinder: No, but she was able to use that education in conducting her business. She never went to work.

Abby: Not like a teacher or other professional . . .

Tejinder: no, she did not, because I think the family business kept her pretty busy.

Abby: How about when you came to the United States?

Tejinder: She still maintains the family business and keeps herself occupied.

Abby: And how did you feel about this?

Tejinder: I had no feelings, you know, I accepted it, that she works and I had no feelings about that because I didn't think there was anything different.

Abby: Your neighbors, were they farmers also?

Tejinder: Yes, yeah, and my other family members were predominantly. My mother's cousins and her family and my father's cousins were all involved in farming. Of course apart from that there were some family members who were in the army or police or other professions.

Abby: How did you feel when you were leaving the old country?

Tejinder: Oh well, I guess I don't know. I can't recall the kind of feelings except you know, you sort of think it is going to be a big adventure.

Abby: You weren't . . .

Tejinder: Yeah, you do have certain considerations of whether you will make it or what's going to happen. In my case I at least had an idea, because my husband had already been there and by virtue of his education had some idea, but the doubt of getting into a job and all that.

Abby: Did you talk much about it before you came over here?

Tejinder: Not really. I mean, I had read about America and I knew about somethings, but, no, we really didn't talk too much about it.

Abby: Did your feelings change once you got here?

Tejinder: Oh yes, I found it a big change because, from what you read, and of course my exposure to America was through books or magazines that desiminated in India and when you come here you find that things are very different.

Abby: What kind of books did you read?

Tejinder: I had read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and I had read Lincoln's books. I had read George Washington's books. I had read L.B. Livingston's books, and quite a few other things that I just can't recall now, that I have read, and apart from that literature from magazines and that gives an idea and however, the impression that you do get when you read these things in America is that this is only a White man's country, because none of the books ever allude to other ethnic minority groups living in America and I don't know if that desimination has changed with the change in America and I think that's where it is necessary to portray even to the people outside you know, like literature through the Embassy or to the Consulates in other countries that America also has some other people living here and they make their contributions too, cause that is something that was never brought out in the things that I read or even in the movies or films that you see, That's the view that you come with.

Abby: How did you . . . When you saw that were other ethnic groups . . .

Tejinder: Yes, and in my case, as I mentioned, that I came straight to San Francisco and we went to Berkeley, which again is relatively a more cosmopolitan area, you know, Berkeley as compared to other parts. And then my husband was at the University and I would go visit him and we would go see the campus, but in spite of this idea that Berkeley and the bay area is a cosmopolitan region, I still found it very sort of monotonous in a way, that everybody seemed to be wearing the same type of cloths and everybody seemed to be speaking the same language and every all the time in everything seemed to be and this is the first impression

that I got, seemed to be so much alike and that's something that stuck to me after having been exposed to a place when you find all kinds of people wearing different kinds of clothing and that's the accepted thing. Nobody will ask you why you're wearing a different sari and that you should be wearing something else. That's accepted, you know, that people wear all kinds of different

Abby: But your culture does wear saris.

Tejinder: No, no. What I am saying is that you come here and you walk out on the road or you go to the city and you sit in the bus and you know you sort of go out and you find that everybody is wearing a pantsuit or everybody is wearing a dress but you know like in India if you went you would find in any one hour of being on the bus or even being on the road you would be able to note at least ten to fifteen different types of clothing that people wear, and you would hear at least five or six different languages being spoken but here you hear the same sounds, you know. I'm familiar with English, I have no problem with the language, but this, for lack of any other word, this sameness proved very monotonous to me and that is something that really struck me that things are so . . . And you know, when I found out that this is a more cosmopolitan or more heterogeneous part of America then I wondered what it would be like where it is not. And then that's where I of course had a chance to see other people living in America like Chintown and we went to see Japantown and in Berkeley of course we had exposure to . . .

Abby: Yeah, that's true. When you get to the towns you see more people dressed more or less the same.

Tejinder: And then of course as I mentioned, we were in Berkeley in 1969, from 1969 to almost 1973 or 1974 and that was the time that Berkeley had the anti-war demonstrations and then of course in 1970-71 I witnessed all the demonstrations when the campus was all shut down, closed, riots you know.

Abby: What did you think of that?

Tejinder: I had all my sympathies with the demonstrations, because for the reason that they were trying to fight the war and I had lived through two wars in India, the 1962 war against the Chinese and the 1965 war against the Pakistanis and I knew what it was to be living in the war and that's why I had all my sympathies and I could understand very well that war is not the only thing in life and that's why the feeling I have that I'm glad that somebody is reacting this way because it's not right to continue fighting in any part of the war if you can help it.

Abby: You were taking classes?

Tejinder: Not at that time. My husband was finishing his dissertation and it was very hard on him because he couldn't see his professor in time or the secretary, you know, or couldn't get to the library in time to check on references because most of the facilities were shut down, but against all those obstacles he was able to finish up his work in time. When I joined the university it was all settled and calm and quiet.

Abby: When did you attend?

Tejinder: I think I went to the University in the fall of 1970 or 1971. Then right after his degree he got this post doctorate fellowship and that made it possible that we were be staying in the area for two years or so I started at the university.

Abby: What did you like most about your life in the old country?

Tejinder: Well, you feel more secure when you have your relatives and friends. You know you do have some family assets and you don't feel that kind of insecurity that you start feeling when you come here. You have to begin from the scratch.

Abby: In regard to family?

Tejinder: Yes, in regard to the family or even about any assets or anything. Because of the regulations in India you cannot bring anything out of India. When you leave India you leave everything behind, whatever you have, even your personal belongings you have to leave there.

Abby: Your dowry too?

Tejinder: Yes. The customs are so because they are trying to avoid things leaving the country as much as they can help it.

Abby: Was there anything about the old country that you didn't like?

Tejinder: Well, I don't know at this time if I can say anything I didn't like. I really haven't had, in spite of the difficulties that my mother went through to raise us, I didn't feel things were all that hard for me there, so in that sense I don't see that there was anything I disliked. IN fact I still don't think there are many wrong things going on in India.

Abby: Was that in the city too?

Tejinder: Yeah, in the city too. And I guess that would probably depend on your individual experiences or background that you had.

Abby: What kinds of things did you expect to find in the United States? You were saying that you read lots of books and things like that?

Tejinder: Yes, somehow the impression that you get of America when you did was that life was relatively easy, that this basic struggle that people sometimes think is in underdeveloped countries and the basic struggle for survival isn't there. You know, that's the sort of impression that you get, but when you come here you find that the struggle for survival, even to meet your two ends together is very, very acute. It's very acute, just as acute. You have to go to work and you have to follow a very rigid pattern of life.

Tejinder: We were talking about, if I remember right, the impression that you get is that it is very easy, that it's easy to make a life and move ahead and get ahead and do those things, but then when you really come and you find that the struggle for survival is just as acute, if not more so,

Abby: As here?

Tejinder: Yes.

Abby: What makes the difference?

Tejinder: I guess, you know, because I think one of the things could be like people in our case, who were raised and brought up in a different setting, of course we were educated and we knew the language, but here things are a little different. And then you have to start from scratch, I should say. You have to sort of go ahead and get into the job market because that's the only avenue open. You can't start a business or you can't do anything so you start working.

Abby: So you're saying that you start over when you come here?

Tejinder: Yes, I'm saying that I had to start from scratch by both of us going to the university and paying a very heavy tuition fee, because we could have opted to do other kinds of jobs, but somehow we were inclined to move into education and then after that you move into the job market and especially if you've had some education, you know, you want a job which is at least satisfying, which gives you satisfaction for the training or the education that you have.

Abby: You were saying that you had to pay high fees at Berkeley. Was that . . .

Tejinder: Because see, when I came I got admitted and I had not been a resident of California for a year at that time and since I had got the admission for the first semester I thought instead of waiting for my one year of residency was over I

would go ahead and pay the tuition and join the university anyway because I didn't want to lose the time. SO whatever we got through the postdoctoral fellowship we went ahead and payed the university and practically lived on nothing.

Abby: What was that: a post-doctoral fellowship?

Tejinder: Yeah, my husband had a fellowship at the university after his PhD which is relatively little but that's what we decided to do.

Abby: So you expected some things from the United States before you got here. How did this change when you got here?

Tejinder: Yeah, that's what I'm saying that the impression you get is that somehow the fact that you're in America takes cares of a lot of things themselves, like a good house to live in or food and all that, but then you find that, that's the impression that you get, as if you're going to find life very easy, but . . .

Abby: Were there any surprises?

Tejinder: No, not really, because when you come here and you've lived here for a few days you do sit down and realize that that was the wrong notion that I was getting, you know, because after all, everybody has to survive and everybody has to live and that's the way of life, so and of course the other thing which sort of, I was not expecting is this part of the American system that some communities or some people were deprived of something intentionally and that's what I mean by the legislation where there is discrimination, intentionally enacted or built into the system. That was something which of course I had a vague idea about as I mentioned, but when you get into studying and all that those were the things that came to me. That was a thing that I had to sort of think about.

Abby: Were you discriminated against?

Tejinder: I wouldn't say it in that sense, but I don't know if it's obvious, but all I can say is that there were some times that I felt that I was not given the opportunity to do that job or do that task because I looked different. Let's put it this way. Or I spoke the language differently. There were one or two instance and without quoting that, you know, exactly they were, I did feel that this was the case.

Abby: How did you handle that?

Tejinder: Handle, you know, what do you . . . You don't have any NAACP or other organization that you can go and talk to and discuss. You just have to put up with it.

Abby: That's here that you're talking about?

Tejinder: Yeah, I'm talking about here. I'm talking about America, sure. That you can't even go ahead and file a grievance, because you know, the way understand things, or at least the way we understood things back in 1971 that at the time when these things happened that you did feel that there was no place that you can go to discuss and even get some sort of advice. And unfortunately that kind of thing is not available in the university where we were studying. One would think that there would be, like at the placement advisors that they would be able to advise you on these things, but that doesn't happen at the university.

Abby: Could I ask you, does it relate to your job or . . .

Tejinder: Yeah, naturally. It was related to a job. We were living in the university housing accommodations so that you know that there is no decimation there. You are a student so they give you a little apartment to live in. And about the grades and all, I don't know. I always felt I would get the grade that I deserved. On that score I never felt it, but it was only when you go and try to move into the job market, that's where the reality strikes you.

Abby: Did you settle in Stockton?

Tejinder: No, as I mentioned, we went to the University of California in Berkeley. Then my husband got a job here in Stockton in one of the private schools and that is how we moved to Stockton. There was a private school. They started somewhere in the Lincoln area. It was started by some people he came to know and they offered him a full time position. Of course with a Ph. D he did not want to do that, but you did whatever you could get, because as I mentioned, earlier in the early 70's there was this affirmative action policy and all these things coming into hiring practices, but as far as let's say Indian people are concerned, the affirmative action policy of hiring in the university or other areas would not apply to us, because you know the affirmative action just meant looking or watching for the interests of a certain type of people, you know, not all types of people and at that time, precisely the Indian people were not considered a minority as such. We did not have a distinct status. They were still considered Caucasians. We were qualified for it, you know, he holds the Ph. D with a grade point of 3.8 from the University of California at Berkeley and I had a 3.5 grade point average all through. On qualification I don't think we were less than any other person, but that was not the main criteria for hiring. The hiring criteria is you know because of the affirmative action policy you have to hire people and that's what happened a few times at the university itself. You have to have a person whether that person has had a background or not. And that's what I mean that those were things that you only come to experience when you really go out and look into it. That's another reality that you begin to face.

Abby: Was there any back in India?

Tejinder: I guess so, in India also I'm sure it is, but as I mentioned earlier this is what I meant that we chose to take the job, whatever it was. At least, if it was not very professionally satisfying, at least it was a job and that's how we came to Stockton and course he worked for that school and I started substituting in the public schools. Then during that time we both took the State testing and we

qualified for the Department of Youth Authority. We took the tests and we qualified for that, but they have their own waiting list so we of course kept on trying other things apart from what we were doing. Of course, we lived in an apartment. We couldn't afford to have a house or anything. And then at that time we weren't even sure whether this is where we would live because we were looking around for any kind of a proper job placement for us to decide whether we want to live here. And then while I was substituting in Stockton, I think it was in the second year, that I came to know that Stockton was moving into the area of bilingual education and having had the education background I sort of got interested in looking into it, what it was, and then I started studying on my own a little bit what it was and then when I found out that there was strict legislation, you know, attached to language minority children in the school and then on that basis I kept trying and I kept all my data straight from the schools. For almost three years I kept reading and every time I come into something I would make a note of it. I kept a proper log and then I felt that I had enough information to go and share with our school district. Otherwise, there was just no job available. Every time you go for an interview, they would call you for an interview and then after three weeks you get a note without even explaining what were the reasons for your having not been hired, You just get a note that we are sorry for not offering you this and that, and then when I found out about this new legislation I kind of felt that this was the avenue open for us to get into a professional job, so then I took notes on how many school, of how many Indian children or Punjabi speaking there are in the district. So when I had that research already I approached the director here in the district and I told him this is what my educational background is and this is what I have done, on my own time. I have collected all this research and I think if the district is so incline to serve the language minorities it is befitting that they do something else for other language minority children and I think, I must say, that at that time the director for bilingual programs was a very fine gentleman. He cooperated, now

the very first day I met him he could see that there was a need and he encouraged me to do as I I I and I worked under this and collected the data that is necessary. I read a great deal on my own. I would go to the library and get this research and that research, this legislation and that legislation. Then in 1976 after having struggled for three years as a substitute I got the job, a regular job with Stockton Unified as a bilingual resource teacher.

Abby: And that's what you do now

Tejinder: Yes. I work right now in the capacity of a resource teacher. However, since last year I have finished all my coursework to qualify for a Bilingual-Bicultural Specialist credential from the State of California and I have applied and I am very confident that I will get the credential of Specialist with a language competency in Punjabi and knowledge of the Indian and American cultures.

Abby: How many Indians are in the school district?

Tejinder: The last data that I had there was close to one hundred and twenty-five children in K-12, That's probably increasing or . . .

Abby: OIs this the San Joaquin County or just Stockton?

Tejinder: No. This is just Stockton Unified. In the San Joaquin County if you look at it, there are more in Lodi for example. Lodi Unified has because of the desegregation you've had in Stockton Unified, I think the population has moved to the north because of the same applies to Indian People too. The population of Lodi also has a good amount of Punjabi bilingual children. I mean haven't looked into it carefully because I've kept myself busy with other things.

Abby: What is your work like? Do you go to . . .

Tejinder: Yes, I work . . . My immediate responsibility is to work with the children who are limited or non-speakers of English, who don't speak any language. I work with the, on a regular basis and that's once a week. I visit every school and I try to

reach every child that is in that school, because the children are spread out. They are not concentrated in any one school, so almost every week I try to get . . . so I've been working in two different schools, one in the morning and one in the afternoon and either meet the children in a small group or if possible on an individual basis. Then apart from that, because of the school district policy, requiring some kind of multicultural education exposure, I have also worked with the teachers in providing the workshops, for teachers in multi-cultural areas with the emphasis on East Indian or South east Culture.

Abby: What do you work basically on, reading or writing?

Tejinder: Yes, basically. With every child I have tried to focus on reading and writing. The children are in their own classes as I mentioned, most of them are spread out, but every school has one or two children.

Abby: What do you give to the teachers?

Tejinder: I don't give anything to the teachers. I have been following what we call an individualized learning package where I develop a little handout for myself which gives me an idea of what is the program being offered to the child in the school. If he is a limited or non-English speaking child then the regular school program being offered all in English is not going to help him. So the twenty minutes or half an hour that I have with him I go to some depending on what class the child is in, I will go through some of the basic things that he needs to know, like even understanding the school set-up. Where are the different facilities in the school. And then for students who have just started reading, sometimes I have done this, that I've gone through their lessons from last week and ask them to tell me if they understood the content, or in other words did they just read it, or did they comprehend what they were reading, so that is especially in the third and fourth grades where they begin to read a little bit and I always try to ask them questions. "Did you read this and did you understand what it meant?" I've been working as I mentioned in K-12. At the middle school and high school I have not

worked on a regular basis as I have with the elementary grades, because in the middle schools I have either gone to assist a counselor in planning the program for the child or if there was a need for any testing or if a new student comes in and has to be programmed into the school, if he has to be sent to the ESL class or if he has to be channeled into something else, or even sometimes in a supervised testing situation. But at the elementary level I have worked with the children very closely almost every week. And of course sometimes, like it happened last year, I had to go and assist with two cases of East Indian boys, or I should say, young men in the high school, having been hurt because of the violence that we have in our high schools. In this particular case this boy was new, just three or four months in Stockton and he was very badly hurt and he wouldn't say a word. He wouldn't even tell the school people who to call for an emergency and then somehow they contacted me and I rushed to the school and I knew from which background the child was, because I knew who to call and then finally I was able to get a hold of somebody in the family to explain what has happened and we would like for them to either give us authority to call the paramedics and take him to the hospital or would they want us to do this, because you know, you have to have all those things in writing before you can do anything. So these are some things that don't happen very regularly but they do happen once in a while and that you have to look into. It was very, very scary for the young man and it was very unfortunate, but that's what it is. See, the way I look at I with this Iran crisis, a lot of people who are not informed about the other parts of the world think that any person who looks, you know in the case of Oriental people, they know they are not Iranians,. Any person who looks real different they think is from the Middle East or is Iranian, so that person has to be penalized and in this case this boy was from Pakistan, so whether that triggered it or what triggered it I don't know, but both of these boys were badly beaten up.

Abby: Are they alright?

Tejinder: Yeah. I think they're all right. I didn't hear anything after that.

Abby: You had an apartment here in Stockton?

Tejinder: Yes. We came and spent four or five days with someone my husband knew. We looked for an apartment, moved into that apartment.

Abby: You were saying that your husband works in Sacramento?

Tejinder: Yes, now. Now he works in Sacramento. Earlier I mentioned when we came to Stockton we took the State testing for the Department of Youth Authority and my husband got a long term at lone, up in lone, to work with the youthful offenders, so while he was working there whe came to know of an opening of a research analyst, educational program analyst within the Department for a short period of time so he went in and applied for that and then when he went for the interview the person who was in charge of the program looked at him and said "What were you doing at lone working as an intermittent teacher? You belong here, with your background." So he got that job for a year to begin with as a research analyst with the Department of Youth Authority and from then on he has been lucky, you know, to continue in that capacity with the Department of Youth Authority.

Abby: As a research . . .

Tejinder: As a research analyst.

Abby: He was sent from the Department of Youth Authority to the Department of Energy to work on the Energyt Comission and allocate fuel to different people. Of course it's not within his education, but the Department of Youth Authority, all departments, in fact all state agencies, had to send a delegate and make a central body for looking at the fuel situation for the state and in his case he just felt that maybe he would try something different, so he applied for it and he got selected and he is working in that capacity right now with the Department of

Energy. He is still an employee of the Youth Authority on loan to the Department of Energy.

Abby: Did you live in a neighborhood mostly with persons from your own country?

Tejinder: No, because as I mentioned earlier we were living in the university housing in Albany and our neighbors were from all different parts of the world.

Abby: What other groups were there?

Tejinder: We had a family from Korea, we had a family from Lebanon, we had a family from Germany, we had a family from Cape Town, we had a family from Pakistan, that was the closest, you could say, to our community and then we had a family from Maine, the state of Maine. These are some families that I can remember because they also had young children and our older boy was about a year old and they would play. And as I mentioned, at that time, for the first six or seven months I was home and we would get together and talk to each other. At that time there were no Indian families living in that area where we were living.

Abby: This is in Berkeley?

Tejinder: Yes, Berkeley, but the University Housing Authority is in Albany.

Abby: There're Indian people aren't there?

Tejinder: Oh yeah, they were then also. They were there also, but what I mean, you know like you live in a certain area. It's a huge, big authority, but in our immediate vicinity there weren't any, but of course on weekends and on holidays, when we could, because we were both studying, and there was not very much we could do except go to the university and study, but on weekends we would go visit some friends, some Indian families as well as others, cause we had so many good friends, American or European that we would go visit.

Abby: Did your family encounter any problems when you got here?

Tejinder: Oh yes, definitely. Before my husband came here, you know back from . . . He had finished his Ph.D. work and he was going to write his dissertation and his dissertation is on Basic Education of Mahtma Ghandi in Comparison with John Dewe's Philosophy. So he thought if he went back to Punjab in India he would be able to get some data on basic education in India. So he did that work and then he was told that when he comes back he would have a job as a research assistant on a certain project and so that is how we decided that I would come with him, that he was going to have a certain, that it wouldn't be very much but at least he would have some job and he would be able to finish his Ph.D. but when we landed in San Francisco and the next day he went and called the University up to say that he was back and when could he start they told him that the grand he was supposed to get didn't come so there was no job for him, so with me and our baby who was about six months old, what were we going to do? So in his cases as I mentioned, he did know a few people so he went ahead and contacted some professors or other people and they gave him, I think his beginning was to do some research data on the Berkeley Unified School District, they would give him a sort of a task and then pay him whatever they could and if it was six hours work or four hours work they would pay him on that basis. That's how we survived for a couple months to begin with till he got his fellowship, because at least for a year we knew that he had something to do. That's the time he had to finish his thesis and pay for the typing and editing and everything out of the little money that we would get.

Abby: Did you have any problems like shopping and things when you came over here?

Tejinder: Yes. This idea of going to one big store, a department store, and finding everything, I really had not had much exposure to this kind of shopping so that was very intriguing, to go to one place and pick up everything.

Abby: Did you like that?

- Tejinder: Yeah, I liked that. It was a very convenient way and when you don't have much time you can quickly go to one place and pick up whatever you want.
- Abby: How about baby care? Was that very different or difficult?
- Tejinder: Yes, that was very difficult and this was one of the reasons that you know that I couldn't really do very much because we couldn't afford a babysitter, but when I did get admission into the university I was really lucky because at that time there were a lot of mothers like me who wanted to go to school and had young children so we all sort of got together at the university campus and approach the university people and they gave us in one of the old buildings a kitchen and two rooms so then about ten or twelve of us started sharing the responsibilities of the children so we would all take our children to that place on campus and we would leave them there and then in between whoever was free would come and supervise all the children and then as time went by, in a month or so, we found that there were some students who wanted to volunteer to watch the children. There were others who wanted to observe the children for their research. So that helped us a great deal, but it was a very big pressure. We didn't have any transportation, any car or anything so we had to use the city bus, so I had to always carry my child and walk to the place and leave him there and then go attend my class and then go back and pick him up. At that time the state money or federal money was not available for child care so whatever expenses you know, we would pool and look into those things, but after about six or seven months, and there were some in the group, who were very, very, I would say, aggressive and very concerned about it and they were able to move ahead and establish a little childcare center at the university. So because of that I was able to finish my coursework. Otherwise it would have been impossible.
- Abby: Your husband turned to others for help in that crisis? So there were friends that you turned to?

Tejinder: Yeah, but you know, you could go and seek their advice or ask them what to do, or ask them if they could suggest any jobs, but that's about all you could do. You can't expect anybody over here to house you, to put you in their house and let you survive for a month or till you can find a job.

Abby: Would you consider welfare or something like that?

Tejinder: No. That was a decision that we had taken that we would never... that we would try and make it as much as we could on our own resources. So we have never taken advantage of any kind of Medicare or whatever. I remember my husband got very sick once with a back problem. I had the university health insurance and he didn't have anything and we had two young children and I was in school and some friends suggested why don't we go ahead and apply for Medicare and or even apply for free food or whatever different things that they suggested, but I spoke to my husband and he says "I just cannot bring myself to do that. I just can't do it."

Abby: Is that part of your culture?

Tejinder: I think so. I think it is probably part of our culture and yet the other thing you know, that you expect that whatever we have I'm going to live within that means and the fact that you go out and get food and you know, remember all through this time we never ... and of course he chose to go to the county hospital and go through all that hassle in getting his treatment done, which was very difficult, very time consuming, but rather than go ahead and apply for Medicare or whatever or even Welfare. So far in all these years that we have lived in America we have never used Welfare and I only hope to God that we never do have to use it.

Abby: If you did, what would that mean to you?

Tejinder: I think it would mean, the way I look at it, when you resort to those things something inside of you tells you you are not able to take care of yourself and if

you keep on doing it you start accepting that this is my way of life, when I can go out and get food stamps and get my groceries for which we have to pay or I can go and sit and get a Medicare card I think that basic instinct to struggle and to make it, I personally think that's going to be affected and if you keep on doing that over a long period of time you just get used to taking it easy. And you know, that's what's happening.

Abby: What languages were spoken at home?

Tejinder: Both of us are trilingual. I can speak, read, and write Punjabi which is our home language and I can also read and write Hindi. My husband also can read and write Punjabi. At home we mostly use Punjabi, even now with my children, because we get adequate exposure to English outside the home so we always try to encourage them to talk in Punjabi. As I mentioned we do have some books that we brought, I meant it is very little whatever we brought from our visit to India a couple years back, that we hope will increase their reading skills in Punjabi.

Abby: There are so many languages in India. How does that rate with the others? Is it the most popular language spoken?

Tejinder: This is the home language or the language which is predominant in Punjab, in the region that we were born and raised in. If you like, in fact I am involved in that kind of study this summer, I can pull out some information on the languages.

Abby: Did English ever become the main language at home?

Tejinder: Yes, both of us as I mentioned, are very conversant in English and course we have lots of English books in the house. We have encyclopedias. And we do use English, especially when we go out to work and everything. Our children speak and read and write English.

Abby: When did this happen?

Tejinder: In my case, if you really ask me, I don't remember when I didn't know English in my life. I think I probably, as I mentioned earlier, my mother had already been to school and she had a college education which was in English, she can read and write three languages, two Indian languages and English, and my grandfather could also speak and read and write English so I knew, and then I don't even remember when I didn't know English so I think right from my childhood I knew English and I knew Punjabi.

Abby: What languages are spoken in your neighborhood?

Tejinder: Over here it is only English, you know in our neighborhood over here, except we do have one or two Chinese neighbors but they don't have any children. I would say the children in the neighborhood speak only English.

Abby: Do you think any of them are bilingual like your children?

Tejinder: No, none of the children in my neighborhood here are bilingual, just my children.

Abby: Who lived in the household during your growing up years?

Tejinder: My grandfather, my, as I mentioned my father had died earlier, so we were all three of us sent to boarding schools for our education.

Abby: What did he die of?

Tejinder: My father died of heart failure at a very young age so then when we would go home if we went to my mother's side my grandfathers and my dad's father...

Abby: So all together you had four or five?

Tejinder: Yeah.

Abby: You had your mother and you...

Tejinder: I would say three, because my mother and if she was with her parents. See my mother is an only child and if it was her family and her parents and us. If it was my father's side, my father was the only son, it was his parents and my mother, cause all my aunts were married and you know had gone out so it was mostly three. We never have had a very big family in our house.

Abby: Did you live in a home of relatives or board with another family?

Tejinder: No. As I mentioned, all through my school and college I was in a boarding school and then I have visited like with an aunt or uncle for two or three weeks but that is the extent I have lived with anybody.

Abby: Do people travel much over there? Like you said you visited San Francisco here?

Tejinder: Yes we would, but then the road conditions are such that you can't go more... like here, the other day we went last weekend. We left here in the morning. We went to Fresno, visited our friends and we were back home that evening. You can't do that there because the road conditions are so slow – the pace of life is so slow, is going to be a three or four day affair. So you know in that sense of course as I mentioned during the school time we would travel and visit relatives or as in India the summers are very hot and sometimes if you can you like to, when your work is done in the summertime, you like to go ahead and take a sort of vacation in the cooler parts, like the hills, so once in a while we would do that but it's going to be a slow process, if you are going to ride a train or if you are going to ride a bus, because we didn't have a car when I was growing up. I think part of the reason was that my mother couldn't drive and to have a chauffeur to drive the car would have been more expensive while especially we had other persons riding the tractors and other things, We couldn't afford to do that also.

Abby: Was gasoline a problem?

Tejinder: Yeah, gasoline was always expensive, so that's why you do travel, but not as fast and not as easily as you do it here. But we would have visitors. You know, aunts

and uncles would come and visit you and we would go visit them, you know, like on holidays, Christmas holidays or whatever holidays. It's just much easier here, Like here you can go to San Francisco and spend the whole day and be back home in Stockton because you can do that. The road conditions are such that you can travel that distance and do that. Over in India if you decide the place is about fifty miles you can't go there and come back in the same day. You have to go and spend the night there even if you were using your own car.

Abby: Are you oriented like towards visiting? Would you say that is one of your pastimes?

Tejinder: No. I am not... once in a while like I mentioned if there is a special gathering or if there is some special visitor that has come to San Francisco or the Bay area we go there. My husband is quite involved in community affairs and both of us about as much as we can, but my full time job and my constant involvement in studies and apart from that I just don't have the time.

Abby: But if you did?

Tejinder: If I did have the time, yeah I would. I have some good friends here in Stockton that I go and visit and once in a while when I do get tired of reading all this and I think I can get away for two or three hours I go and visit some friends. I have so many things going on in the house, that if I didn't go out, I'm not one of those persons who misses, that I have to go and do that, because there are so many things that I can be doing here and I feel very comfortable in that. I never have enough leisure time and once in a while I do feel like going to visit or going to the mall and go through the stores, but this is very seldom. I don't have that amount of time. This last summer of course I just finished sixteen units of work so I had no time at all. All through the summer I was a full-time student.

Abby: Most of your friends, do they visit?

Tejinder: Yeah, weekends we visit once in a while. I will have some friends over. This summer I was hoping that I would take it easy you know, but when this job with the State department came along I really felt very excited and I got myself into. (lapse in tape before the next part) ... able to hold responsibility if the need arises and that is exactly what happened when my father died. She had to stand up and do the things that were necessary, that would have been a man's job, and again in our case we didn't have any brothers, we were just three sisters and we were also raised with ability to handle, you know, and not be entirely dependent and I think that is the reason we were given an education and encouraged even to go ahead and go to college. Of course in other families I could see that there were certain privileges that the boys could have and that the girls could not have, but in our family we did not have a boy and I think all the things that others would have had to share we got them all the three of us. And I don't think that my grandfather ever felt that because we were girls that we shouldn't be doing some things. Like, you know, he would always encourage us to go to school, study, go out and visit and whenever there was any work being done he would never hesitate to have us go out and see how the work outside the home was progressing. We could go and look into it, help out with accounts when it was necessary. In other words you never felt that by being girls there were some things that we should not do.

Abby: What about around the house?

Tejinder: From the beginning all three of us had learned to knit, embroidery, crochet, and of course cooking was never one of my favorite things. I didn't really like to cook and we really didn't do too much of the cooking.

Abby: When you were at boarding school was there a difference between the guys and the girls?

Tejinder: We didn't have any boys. It was for girls. It was a girl's boarding school. There are lots of schools and in fact colleges still in India just for girls. Of course they have co-education also now.

Abby: Well what about your neighbors? Did you see where they expected something different?

Tejinder: Yes, that's what I said. In my mother's house and in my father's house our neighbors were our own relatives. We lived in a family situation. Those areas are such that families have their homes in the neighborhood so most of the families were relatives, cousins or second cousins. In that sense we were never surrounded by strangers. Of course as I mentioned earlier, wherever there were boys and wherever there were girls I'm sure there was a difference and in some families there was a difference that if there was educational opportunity it would be given to the boy rather than to the girl, if there was a choice that had to be made. But those were things as I mentioned were never part of my family life.

Abby: Did you ever work in a job outside the home when you were growing up?

Tejinder: No, I as I mentioned, feel I was one of those fortunate persons who never had to work outside the home till did my MSE Honors and finished my degree and got my degree and then I was offered a job at the local woman's college and that was my first job I ever did in my life. I worked as an instructor in Biology at the women's college. That was my first job and I don't know if my mother felt very good about it, but anyway she let me do it.

Abby: While you were in school?

Tejinder: No, I had finished my schooling. During my school time or my college time I never worked. All my expenses were paid by my mother, tuition and whatever expenses there were.

Abby: How long were you at that job?

Tejinder: Oh, about three years or so, before I got married.

Abby: What was it like to be supervised by an adult?

Tejinder: Course as I mentioned, I started working as an adults so I never had that idea that I'm being supervised by somebody. IU did have an immediate supervisor and we had a principal of the college and I don't think I ever had any problems in that area. The chairman of our department, I think she was an exceptionally nice person. If we did have any concerns or if we did make any mistakes like if you happen to get late for your class or things like that that she would discuss it with us but it never came to a point that it was unpleasant. Of course I have never worked as I told you as a teenage so I really don't know what it would be like.

Abby: You worked when you got back home didn't you, on the farm?

Tejinder: No. Well we did have the farm. Farming was done, but I never worked myself on the farm.

Abby: Oh, you didn't?

Tejinder: No. I've never worked myself on the farm. However I helped keep the accounts or supervised, but I've never worked as a farm laborer. Again I am saying that I think I am one of those fortunate individuals who in spite of the handicap that we did have in my family we could afford to hire farm help who would take care of things and who would be out in the fields. At the most I would do is go out and see that things are coming and that's about all, but I've never really gone out to cut the crop.

Abby: Oh, I was saying you assisted, like, your mother?

Tejinder: Yeah, I would help her, sure, you know, like it's the crop season and you need to supervise the crops, you go and watch things being loaded or if the crops have to

go to the market you out and see that it's being weighed right or you have twenty people that have to be paid for that day you sit down and look into the accounts and in that.

Abby: Did you ever have to do something you didn't like?

Tejinder: I don't know. See these things seem very, if I recall, when I was growing up, course you always think well, if your parents say to go clean up a room or go get that thing from the store or do this, you sometimes think that they are giving you too much work to do, but I never felt in this way that there was something I was being forced to do or that I didn't like it. Somehow you sort of learn that this is part of growing up, you know, some things you don't like and some things you do like. Still you keep doing it.

Abby: Did your grandfather ever help you?

Tejinder: I'm sure he did, but I don't remember have a long discussion with him, but I think in his own subtle way he probably did.

Abby: What kind of homes did you live in when you arrived in the United States?

Tejinder: Our first home in the United States was a little house in Berkeley, surrounded by mostly a Black neighborhood, or in other words it was a neighborhood of low socioeconomic background, because that was about all we could afford. The other reason was that the house belonged to one of my husband's colleagues, you know, who he knew from the university so he was looking for somebody to rent that house and I think he felt that with us Armijit renting the house he knew that his property would be safe and he would get the rent. It was a small house with one bedroom and a little kitchen and a bath and I guess that's about it.

Abby: How was the neighborhood?

Tejinder: I didn't know very many of my neighbors as I mentioned. One thing, I was very new and I could sense right away that people here normally like to keep to

themselves. People in general, in comparison to India, you know if anybody comes then people from the neighborhood will come and ask what they can do and introduce themselves, but that doesn't happen here. So our son was young and my immediate neighbor, they had a little girl. This was a Black family. So through the children we sort of got to know each other and then we lived there for about six or seven months and we sort of got to a point that we would get together once in a while, go out once in a while with them and they were very, very nice to us. Once or twice our older boy when he would get sick they offered to give us a ride and take us to the hospital in case of an emergency because as I mentioned we didn't have any transportation, so they were very helpful.

Abby: When did you get your car?

Tejinder: Oh, that was much, much later when we had a job. And that was the only neighbor I knew. I didn't know any of the other neighbors. I never went to anybody's house. I don't even recall if I knew anybody.

Abby: Your husband's friends...

Tejinder: No, this family was not my husband's friends. They were just neighbors. The house that we were living in was his friends', but it so happened that we also felt that we were paying the rent for the house, but as time went by I found the family who had rented the house to us failed to do their responsibility. You know, like if the water heater is not working they would not attend to it and I think they felt that since we were friends they could take advantage of us. Now that I have lived here and understood things I think that was wrong what they were doing to us, but then from that house, as I have mentioned, we had applied to the university for housing so after six or seven months. Yes that summer, yeah that summer and you know for that we had to pay close to two hundred dollars rent for that little house, which was very much. You know, we just couldn't afford that, but we didn't have a choice. So then somebody had told us that during the summertime some students from the university leave to go to work

outside so they sublet their apartments so I went ahead and put up some ads in the university laundry and asked if someone would sublet an apartment cause we were hoping to get our own apartment in the fall. So that very evening a boy, he was from India who was a student there and his wife who was from America he called nad he says that I'm interested in subletting my apartment, a very small apartment, I think it was no longer than this room, and I don't have any furniture, in fact we just have a mattress on the floor to sleep on, but if you are interested, and boy were we interested, we were very interested. So then we told him that we were from India he said "well, then you can have the apartment, because I know that you will take care of it and you will give the apartment back to me when I need it." So that was a very good opportunity so we moved into that apartment right away. It was a very small apartment but it had a little stove, it had a little bathroom, you know, it was of sort of self-sufficient so then we lived there and in the meantime because of our child we qualified for a two bedroom apartment and then we moved into the university housing and we lived all along.

Abby: Till you came here?

Tejinder: Yeah.

Abby: Then you came here to Stockton and you had a house?

Tejinder: No, no. When we went to the university I did my work and then when I was through with the university, as I mentioned earlier, just at the last semester I was told that there was a part-time position for a biology instructor in one of the community colleges in Alameda so I had applied for that and my husband had also applied for a position in Hayward a part-time position so he got that and I got that for a ten hour a week job with the college so I did that for a couple of months and so during that time we could not live in the university housing because we were not students anymore so we rented out another little house in the Bay area again and we lived there for a couple of months till I couldn't

continue that job and my husband could not continue the job in Hayward, because at that time, anyway I don't want to get into that, and in that house that was the first time I actually had the experience of what it is to live in housing in America, to actually go and get a house, rent a house, and see what are the different things and see how people would treat the people who live in their homes and how the landlords will treat the people. I remember the owner of the house had a hotel and I think he owned a couple of complexes in the area and when we went in here seemed like a very nice person, you know, he says, "I always admire people who are well educated." But once we started living in that house, you know, the attitude and kind of behavior that person had was just unbearable. So when the college within a week said you can't continue the job and with my husband also we decided to leave the Bay area and go and work wherever we can find employment. This landlord refused to even pay us our cleaning deposit or anything back. He was so business-like or whatever you can say.

Abby: I thought they were required?

Tejinder: But that's the reality of housing here.

Abby: When did you come to this house?

Tejinder: Oh, this is much, much later. Then from the bay area we went to Fresno and my husband worked on a farm. There was someone we knew so he worked on the farm for a few months, because we knew that living in the Bay area with the conditions the way they were either we take to Welfare or we just can't live there so we went to Fresno and my husband worked there for a few months and in the meantime we were always trying to get into the job or whatever.

Abby: The reason you left the Bay area, was it job or housing?

Tejinder: Job and housing, you know. If you don't have a job you don't have a house. You can't have a house when you don't have a job. As I mentioned earlier, there was

one thing that we always tried if we can get into a job in which we were trained, rather than go ahead and pick up any kind of job, so during that time my husband decided okay that's all. We would go and live in Fresno and he would work on the farm for a while. So we lived there and it so happens that during the same time he used to offer a course in philosophy of education at U.C. Berkeley extension. That they got approved so they told him that he was needed in Berkeley during that summer to teach the course, so can you imagine, from working on the farm in Fresno to come back to the university and start teaching a course in the philosophy of education approved for credentials. So that's the kind of fluctuation we had to do. So we came back to the Bay area, quickly rented a small apartment and he offered his course, because even when we were in Fresno he would study whatever he could in the evenings and continued it. So during that time that he was offering the course at U.C. Berkeley that was the time he was given this job in Stockton so that's how right from Berkeley we moved to Stockton and of course when we came to Stockton we lived in an apartment and then from the apartment, again as I mentioned earlier, that both of us started working and I started substituting. So I would substitute for the public school, Stockton, Lincoln, wherever they called me, and in between also for the state in the Department of Youth Authority Center here. I don't know if you know that we have three schools here. So in between three of them it kept us quite busy and the children were growing so the day I felt I couldn't go to work I would say that I wasn't available because my child is not feeling too good. So we lived in that apartment for about two years, a year and a half I think. Then we found out, it was again one of the lucky strokes, I should say that there was a house being auctioned by the county and we didn't have so much resources to go ahead and apply for a new house or move into a new house. We weren't ready for that kind of commitment so when we found out that this house was being auctioned I told my husband about it and we went to look at it. It was a house close to the University and was in a good neighborhood, but the house

was in a very bad state because the person who owned the house had died and the state was going to be auctioning it. But the price was very reasonable and we knew that within whatever our means are at this time we would have no problem qualifying and get the house and then move into it. Then we could keep on working at it and improve it, Of course we felt very bad because we didn't want to do that because you want to live in a nice home if you can help it, but we decided that was better than going into a house that you can't afford and you land up making a bigger mess. So we decided that we would do that, so we moved into that house and slowly, gradually the days that I didn't have to go to work I would clean or polish or paint or whatever, so within five of six months we brought the house to a very good condition, the yard and everything. Then we lived in that house for a year. It was during that, while living in that house that I got my job and my husband got his regular job with the state so... (end of tape 1, side 2) ... It has three bedrooms.

Abby: Who made most of the family decisions?

Tejinder: My mother and of course my grandparents, but in a lot of decisions they would take to us, especially later on when it came to our marriages. All three of us had arranged marriages, but we would discuss things. It was an open kind of situation, the family matters, the financial situation, everything. They would talk with us.

Abby: What certain things did they discuss about marriage?

Tejinder: You know, let's say like if we had any preferences, you know like in my younger sister's case she said that she didn't mind being married to a boy who was working in the army and I somehow had any liking for a marriage to a person in the army, you know, so things like that.

Abby: What influence did your mother have in deciding things about the family?

Tejinder: I think she had a very strong influence and I always felt that whatever her decision was even up till now I hold that, because I feel that having been through the circumstances and having done such a good job for it I think she has the full capacity to decide the things that are best for us.

Abby: Did she every remarry?

Tejinder: No she hasn't. It isn't taboo, it's more the individual's own choice.

Abby: So relatives weren't against it.

Tejinder: I don't know. We never discussed that, but I feel it' more the individual's own choices.

Abby: Did you ever disagree with your mother about things, or grandmother?

Tejinder: Yes, that's what I said, you know, like when I had to even go to college, as I mentioned earlier, there were a lot of family members who just didn't believe in any kind of higher education for girls. High school graduation was very good and that was enough, For a girl to go to college and to go ahead and get an M.A. degree I had to really sort of get down on my knees. And somehow I always wanted to be on my own, even if I didn't need to be, but somehow I felt that that's the only thing, if you have education in your hand then you can be on your own. That's the only asset that you have.

Abby: You mean to be on your own in living or...

Tejinder: No, no, no. Like now I'm in America and I'm working full time and I have my own, you know, that kind of thing. Somehow to be dependent on somebody one hundred percent, like even if it's your husband somehow, and that could very well be because of my background, you know, I have seen my mother do those things and I felt that I would like to be able to do that.

Abby: Can you tell me anymore about disagreements?

Tejinder: Well, we would talk about it and discuss it but then I guess my mother agreed to it and so I got that. She was the one I told you earlier bearing all the financial burden.

Abby: Was there anything else that you had disagreements about?

Tejinder: Not really.

Abby: What customs and practices from the old country do you observe at home?

Tejinder: I think we observe all the family customs and practices.

Abby: Such as?

Tejinder: Such as even dress. I have never felt that if I'm in America I shouldn't be wearing the cloths that I wore all along in my life. I wear them and in fact very often I even go to work in a sari or I got to work in a ____

Abby: What is a ____?

Tejinder: This is a _____. And in my husband's case he still ties his turban. He's kept his identity the way he would have if he were in India. All along, even at Berkeley, he never felt that because everybody around him was not wearing a turban that he shouldn't be doing that. He's never done that. If everybody around here is wearing a dress... I've never worn a dress in my life and I don't think I could ever bring myself to wear a dress. I just feel that I can't do that. A pantsuit is about the only thing that I feel comfortable in so I still do that. And our eating habits, you know in our food, at least two or three nights in a week we have Punjabi food. Of course our children are very fond of other foods also. I cook it all the time. I've learned how to fix a lot of other dishes, but we still haven't given our food up completely.

Abby: What is basic food to have?

Tejinder: Like cooking the meats in the Indian style, cooking the vegetables in that style or using Indian ingredients, like garbanzo flour and other things which are normal... Chipati, a sort of a bread like tortillas, I make them at home very often. And like I mentioned about the religious practices...

Abby: You do eat meat?

Tejinder: Yes, we eat meat. We all eat meat. In fact, sometimes we even eat beef. I have no taboo against meat. Yeah, we all eat meat and I fix meat at home for the children. As I mentioned, as far as the religious beliefs go I think I have probably learned more about that while living in America than I probably would have in India where you take things for granted, you know, you somehow think you know everything. Here I found myself reading more on those things and of course it became more... Of course I was always inclined to do that but ever since my job I think I'm reading more into these things because it helps and gives the opportunity to work in this area it helps me in other areas too, because if I'm more aware of the linguistic background and I'm more aware of our cultural heritage then I can be more effective in my job.

Abby: How much of a problem is it to get books?

Tejinder: Oh, lots of problems, you know, because there's just nothing. None of our libraries even have a dictionary. I remember about two years [ago] I had to translate something and there was not a dictionary available, but in 1978 when we went back to India for a visit we brought close to fifty or sixty pounds of books by air. It just didn't seem right not to have some of those things and now very often people in other parts will know that we have some Punjabi dictionaries. In fact, I've had some persons calling long distance to get the meaning from a dictionary. That is a big problem.

Abby: You never think of that till...

Tejinder: Yeah and that's another thing that I find with a lot of our parents here in the schools, that when the children come here in the fourth or the fifth grade they have been in school in India or Pakistan or wherever and they were studying in the languages or whatever, but when they decided to come to America they somehow think that all these things have to be left behind. In my course of working for three or four years or so, every time I've met a family and I have seen through the tests that the children are able to read, they're literate in their own language, they can do math in their own language, in other words they have had a good school background and when you ask them the books they say, "oh, we thought when we came to America, we wouldn't need them." And that kind of realization that in America also it's possible to be able to read your own book in the school. It's a very slow and a very difficult concept for the parents to understand. You could use Indian books and you can use Punjabi books and you can read them in America. See in our office we have the Chinese bilingual program and we have the Filipino bilingual program so we get a chance to talk to each other and share our experiences.

Abby: How do you resolve that? I mean of course the parents aren't going to be able to go back and get the books?

Tejinder: How do we resolve that? As I mentioned earlier, before I went back I had studied the situation a great deal and I had asked the (lady) that this is something I must have, at least I should have so I went ahead and brought some things back on my own resources and some of those things the school district said to go ahead and bring them and they would keep them in their library. The other effort that we are doing is to go ahead and make some program available, by which we can have some of those things developed with America settings and we are making an effort to do that. In fact, we have been working with a federal grant for the last two or three years and this year we have been very successful in getting grants from the National Institute of Education and we started the whole process

in Stockton of making an organization which we call the South Asian American Educators Association with the purpose of being the educational needs of the people from that part of the world, so we have after attempting for two or three years this year we have been successful and we have an anthropologist from Sacramento State and my husband is another person who is going to be involved since he has a cultural and a language background. And we had this project funded and this is what in fact he was trying to tell me that Washington called and said it was okay and the package was in the mail. So far it's only been on the telephone that the project has been funded, but by Friday we should get a package with the written consent from the National Institute. With this project we feel it will focus more on the Punjabi youth because there are more Punjabi in your schools than the others for right now. The pilot study will be done in Yuba City Unified School District though we initiated the project here in Stockton, but it's going to be implemented there because there is a larger number and wherever there is a larger number it is easier to get something started. But the relevance of that will be useful to anybody. So with that I think we have made a little in road and then at the same time the community by itself has realized that there is need to do this kind of thing also so we in fact have a few community members who have started putting the few resources to go ahead and develop some things and gradually we will be able to do something in that area.

Abby: It takes time.

Tejinder: It takes time, yeah.

Abby: How long will this grant be for?

Tejinder: By Friday we will get the written package and it should be for two years. It has to start functioning by August. A lot of ground work has already been done on it on a voluntary basis. The proposal, the data, everything was done on a voluntary

basis. In fact, me and my husband we bore all the expenses for typing, editing, duplicating, everything. It was our donation. So that was all done.

Abby: How long have you been working on this?

Tejinder: For three years! After three years, finally it is going to succeed. Three years of _____. Once it becomes a national Education Institute study other people will read it and it will become available to other institutions and this way I think I feel very optimistic that it will trigger other areas of research. From the viewpoint of these children, you know, like these children they know nothing – they just know what it is like being raised in America and to talk to them and tell them about India or whatever, you know, they've visited there and they've maybe spent two months there, and saw a little bit, but to them it's more what is here so their needs are very different and hopefully this is the thrust we would like to see in education for our children. Like I remember when we were in England and I had taken them to see the Royal Air Force museum, so we were going through and somebody mentioned, "Oh, in England we don't have any guns." So my older boy he turns around and said "Then how come, when you came to fight in America with us?" So this is his way of reacting. He says, "How come then you fought with us in America when you wanted to colonize us?" This was a very quick response, but this is how he relates to history and I think rightfully because he is here as an American, but at the same time we would like him to keep positive, that he does have a cultural background also which happens to be Indian.

Abby: I see a conflict. You know, I guess there's so much you can tell them about your culture, and yet he wants to identify with Americans.

Tejinder: Yeah, but you see like if, I myself find more difficulties. If you ask me I have to read so much about American history myself and that's what I'm trying to integrate in my handbook how does the Indian experience in American integrate with American history. If the Indian people have been here since 1904 how do

they integrate?? And that's where I said I feel and if they've lived here they've experience life here that's part of the American scene.

Abby: That's true. That's their history.

Tejinder: That's their history. That's our history. In other words, that's our part of, so to say, the big American history and that's our part of it. Like these children will be studying all about the missions, and the Spanish and the Mexicans and their involvement and now slowly and gradually they are studying about the Chinese involvenement or the Asian involvement. They also have to know Japanese or other involvements and I think it's high time they also knew it's not they've been here only for a year or three years but there's a history behind, You know, people from your background have also been on the American scene for a while, and that's what is making my task very difficult because there isn't really very much available yet. So anyway, I'm glad that we are least making a little effort.

Abby: Yeah, we were supposed to read up beforehand and there really isn't that much.

Tejinder: But hopefully we should have something ready for you next year.

Abby: But what about holidays?

Tejinder: See we observe _____ and the _____. Those are holidays like Basaki is the New Year and Devali is also...

Abby: What is that date?

Tejinder: April 13. We have a lot of communities get together, but so far I have never taken a holiday in school, in view of this. See what I'm saying. That it happens to be Devalli. So I'm going to take my holiday from school and stay home. I've never done that. What we have done is, like the community gets together to see pictures and we prepare special food, but on the weekends. And in fact since last year I have identified these two or three holidays and put them on our school district calendar. You know so to say that the whole school body then comes to

know what Indian people here observe the Basaki and the Devali. So I've written up a little description for each of these. So this year it was actually made available.

Abby: You see in the library like Black History week or...

Tejinder: Yes, that's exactly what we're trying to do. See what happened last year was there was a presidential proclamation by President Carter that a week in May and I forgot the exact date, has to be observed as Asian Pacific Island Week so last year we had a classical Indian dance performance during that Week at U.O.P. So this is another inroad that we made into the week and as time goes by I think we will really try to organize something more formal that will become a package that can be used during the Pacific Islander Week because of the presidential proclamation. And as I mentioned those are some far reaching things but we are aware of that and slowly, gradually it's coming.

Abby: In numbers, there aren't that many of you here are there?

Tejinder: Yeah, but in education you don't always talk about numbers.

Abby: Do you have any special children's games?

Tejinder: No, I don't have very many children's games that they can play like this, however in the Bay Area since last year they have organized what they call as a Punjabi Sports Club and one of the things that they have started doing is Hockey, which is like soccer, but field hockey, and they have introduced one or two of those things which on a weekend or on a picnic they expose the children to. But something like if they are sitting at home and playing I don't have. I didn't bring any and I never thought of that when I was there last to tell you the truth, Of course we do have records and music you know.

Abby: But you do have things like...

Tejinder: Yeah, there are games you know, like this chess game, it has its origin in India, but it's called Parchesi in India. Then it evolved into chess.

Abby: What about ceremonies?

Tejinder: Yes, we have ceremonies. Like when we moved into the house, what you would traditionally call it as Open House; you know where you invite your friends we had the same thing but we had a religious ceremony here. We did that when we moved into the house. We invited friends and had prayers said for the house, Like if my children have a birthday I have a regular birthday party for them you know, inviting their friends. That's in fact what's happening now. The younger one his birthday is supposed to be being planned and he wants to be assured that so and so is coming and he is excited about that. But before I do that we always have a special religious ceremony for the children and then I have their children come in for ice cream or whatever.

Abby: Do you observe Christmas?

Tejinder: See, remember Christmas is a religious holiday. If you are Christian you observe Christmas. However, what happens is that my children know what is Christmas. Even if they are no Christians by faith I tell them, the same way they know what Hanukah is, because those are things that they hear and I personally felt, both of us in fact felt, that we needed to tell them what it is, that there are some children who believe in this so that's why our children are aware of that, but what you would call as a Christmas you know, because we are not Christians. We don't go to church and do that. But the children are definitely aware of Christmas and religious holidays.

Abby: Do you exchange gifts?

Tejinder: Not during Christmas. Like we will greet our friends who we know believe in Christmas. We'll send them greeting cards because we know it's special for them and the same way we have some friends here in Stockton who are Jewish by

faith and we already send them a Happy Hanukah card for that part of the year. It has happened a couple of times because everybody has holidays during that season and that we have gone ahead and collected, you know, had some friends get together and you know you have... it's not that it's because of Christmas, but it's just that it's a holiday time and festive time so you invited them. However, the festival that we all relate to is the American Thanksgiving.

Abby: You do?

Tejinder: Yes, in fact, every year whatever little we can we always observe what we call as Thanksgiving. Again, it's like we are thanking God for whatever you have, but you don't go to church or like you know we will always have prayers that morning in the house, and of course at night, as I mentioned earlier, if we wanted we can even go ahead and cook a turkey, but that's a think in which I think mentally and psychologically I relate to Thanksgiving more than I do any of the American holidays, because I see the relevance to it you know. Like July 4, my children know what is the significance of July 4 and we go to see the fireworks. July 4 is another holiday that I myself am aware of. I know why we do observe July 4 and why it is necessary to observe that.

Abby: Do you have any folklore or superstitions?

Tejinder: Yah, as I mentioned earlier, I have some children's books that the children get to read about folklore.

Abby: Is it very much in your culture?

Tejinder: Yeah, Indian folklore is in fact very rich. Indian culture is very rich in folklore, in fact the Aesop's Tales have their origin from India, Aesop's Fairy Tales, you know, which are projected as Aesop's Fairy Tales.

Abby: Are you talking about India as a whole or just...

Tejinder: No, no, I'm talking about India as a whole. In some cases you talk about India and in other cases, you know, you talk about... and folklore is, there is a lot of folklore and...

Abby: I just said that because I was interviewing another woman who is Hindu and I think she said there wasn't any folklore or superstitions.

Tejinder: There is no folklore? That's wrong. Anyway, that's what I feel. I think it is very rich in folklore, you know, mythology and folklore, and there are lots of books available. You know, like Aesop's Fairy Tales and if you, in fact I have a book on that on how you can trace the folklore you know, which is portrayed in our education books and in our resources and really trace down the history of the particular folk tale that's going around and you trace it to a certain origin, you know, like some of the folk tales you can trace it to China.

Abby: that far back?

Tejinder: Yeah. That's right and that's exactly what I mean that India in that way has contributed a great deal, but what happens is that from India it goes to Europe and from Europe because of the English rule it became as if it were English people who were giving that while they had their thing from India.

Abby: But is it very strong, folklore? It isn't it?

Tejinder: Yeah it is, it is and in fact this is something that I have written on the origin of some of these folktales, Aesop's Fairy Tales for example is a clear illustration. Each of those folktales had their origin in India and during the Buddhist time, when lots of Indians... Buddhism was very strong in India. Buddhism, their way of relating with life was that they used animation, you know, like certain principles or certain things are discussed by animals, Jathakarta, and that is what we find is being done a great deal in literature in America,. And if you really trace back it goes back to India. Like this, I forget now the exact names and when I was working on this idea because lots of teachers used to ask me this question and I

had a to do a lot of research on that, and I found out that there is a publishing company in Oakland called the _____ Publishing Company and they went ahead and did some research and they in fact offered the material which has traced the history of the Jatharkta tales so I got some of those books and made them available to the schools, you know, that the origin of the Jathakarta tales...

Abby: What tales are those?

Tejinder: Those are like youi know we hear about the Jackal saying this and you know you hear the wise peacock, you know, how a peacock would say you know that never, don't become vain, you know, stay wise, but wisdom doesn't mean you are going to become vain. So some of these things are very nicely portrayed in those tales, you know, the social things that you interact with are portrayed, but instead of using names like John, Peter, or Smith, or whatever they have used the animals and this is a concept that can actually be traced back to so many thousands of years from Buddhist literature.

Abby: And superstitions?

Tejinder: Yeah, there is a superstition like in India you go to the house and you run into a black cat or somebody is leaving the house and you don't normally call them back and these things like this, but I don't know, I find myself not believing that.

Abby: Did you observe it when you were at home in India?

Tejinder: Yes, and I remember the thing that somebody leaves the house and you don't call them back you know, even if the person has left something, you don't call them back and say, you know... These kinds of things I remember were very much, I could see that being observed in the house.

Abby: What was the point of...

- Tejinder: I don't know, but sometimes you don't question those things and you just like, you know, over here people say don't walk under the ladder and it's the same kind of superstition.
- Abby: Right. Well, you could get hit.
- Tejinder: That's right. Here too there are certain superstitions. Like number thirteen.
- Abby: What groups did you belong to while growing up?
- Tejinder: See, this kind of thing, like you belong to this club or belong to that organization, we didn't have that, but of course in the school if there is a little club or in college it became more so in college. You have this society or you have a zoological society. I was a member of those, but at home this idea was not there as much as it is here, you know, that you belong to that club or you belong to this club.
- Abby: Were your friends mostly of the same religious and ethnic background?
- Tejinder: No, no.
- Abby: Did you and your parents often relate to children of other backgrounds?
- Tejinder: Yes. So like even the village you would find children from different socio-economic background and all that. They come and you play with them.
- Abby: Did you ever bring your friends into your home?
- Tejinder: Yes, and I went and visited my friends.
- Abby: And how did your parents feel about visitors from another culture?
- Tejinder: I don't think we had very much of this happening, but whenever it did happen I think it was very well accepted. Like once or twice we had some students visiting us, Peace Corps workers visiting us.

Abby: Did your parents set any rules about dating?

Tejinder: We never had this system of dating and we never did get into that.

Abby: Did your parents have anything to do with who you get married?

Tejinder: Yeah, as I mentioned, all our marriages were arranged by our parents.

Abby: Is it ever difficult for kids from your country to grow up in Stockton?

Tejinder: In our case, as I mentioned, our children, in fact the younger one was born in Oakland and the other one was only six months when he came, so in that sense you can say that they were raised here. However, other children sometimes do have difficulties. One of the things could be the language, they don't understand the language. Another thing could be like I remember I ran into a case that the girl had used hair oil, had put oil on her hair when she went to school and that became a big issue in the school, which I think is just trivial, but that's how things are. And I would say that sometimes the parents will put some eye... like you would do the eyelash or the mascara, and that was an issue in the school, why they do that. Some parents do it because they think it has medical benefits to it, so things like that and then of course as I mentioned in our case we encourage them to because of our religious faith they keep their hair long and they go to school like that. So once in a while I have run into this problem that other children have tried to tease them and especially with the Iranian crisis it's rather become to a point that as a community I think we are getting very concerned because there have been literally some muggings and some very serious cases where people have been checked and stopped on the road because it was thought that they were Iranians. So that's an issue different, not particularly to Stockton. In fact, I have a newspaper here that says how many episodes have taken place of Sikhs being confused with Iranians and being harassed. Apart from that I don't think...

Abby: How about older kids coming here? How are they affected?

Tejinder: Yeah, that's what I said. It's going to be more... like I've experience one or two high school students who came here and I've had a chance to meet them. Their biggest difficulty was with the language. And I remember the other difficulty which they expressed constantly was this lack of discipline in the high school. I remember this one boy. He said that even if he learned a little more English he didn't see how he could study here because there is so much noise. There is just no environment to study in. And those are very, very obvious differences. Again those are things you would never have expected in America. There is so much violence, there is so much lack of discipline in the schools and I don't think that's a problem that is typical only to Stockton.

Abby: Are there some especially good things about growing up in Stockton?

Tejinder: Yes, as I mentioned earlier when we first came here from the Bay area I kind of felt that I didn't know anybody here and how will I be able to adjust? At least we, having lived here for two or three years, we knew some friends, and what will happen here? I don't know anybody in Stockton, but then as time went by, now I really like it. It's quiet and when you want to go visit the Bay area or go visit wherever you can go there, spend the day and come home in the evening. In fact, that's what my husband always does. He finds it very difficult to go and spend a night in a place where it's not as quiet, because the general atmosphere here is so quiet, that he finds it difficult, the pace of life, and I guess in his case since he commutes back and forth from Stockton to Sacramento and all that he really wants it nice and quiet on the weekends.

Abby: He does a lot of traveling sometimes.

Tejinder: Yeah, and of course now that we've lived here and we have some good friends, Indians as well as Whites or Blacks or others, I feel quite at home in Stockton and I quite like it and I think that probably we will keep staying in Stockton. It depends, you know.

- Abby: Was it helpful to have brothers or sisters when you were growing up?
- Tejinder: Yeah, I had two sisters and we could talk to each other and all that. And as I mentioned I didn't have a brother so I don't really know what it is to be having a brother.
- Abby: What were the ages of your sisters?
- Tejinder: Oh, we were two years apart. It was the same as like boys, because there were always constant fightings and disagreements, but still we had... and now of course we are all so far apart that we really miss that. In fact my sister is going to be visiting me this week from England and we're very happy about it and I'm really looking forward to it. It will be the first time that any of our relatives have visited us in Stockton.
- Abby: Since?
- Tejinder: Since 1969 when we left India.
- Abby: Did you and your classmates have the same ethnic background?
- Tejinder: What page is this?
- Abby: This is page 4 about schooling in the US. Did you go to school in the United States?
- Tejinder: Oh yeah. As I told you I went to the University in American and I found it very, very different, because I was used to a very structured type of instruction and then of course my discipline in India was predominantly science. I was a science major, biology, and then I got into education, which in itself was very, very difficult, you know, reading psychology, philosophy, and such. I really didn't know very much about it and then the manner employed, like you have a discussion and you write a term paper and then you are evaluated on true and false and multiple choice. Those were things I wasn't used to. Our method of

evaluating or examinations are very different. So this was something I found, and in fact I still find very difficult to answer multiple or true or false questions.

Abby: What kind of questions do you have in India?

Tejinder: Our type of examination are where they give you some topics and you have to write two or three pages, not brief and this kind of thing. This is something I found very difficult. Another thing that I found very difficult to accept that in the graduate school some students would bring their sandwich and they would bring their food along and they were eating and walking around. I just couldn't do it. For months I would carry my sandwich all the running back and forth from the university to the childcare center and here and I would never find time to really sit down and eat, and then I see other people going down the elevator or walking from one building to another eating their sandwiches and I just couldn't sort of bring myself to do it. Then I remember I had a discussion with my advisor and he was a very nice person, so he was asking me how I was liking it and all that and I said okay but I said that I never seemed to have time to eat and he said, "Time, this is how you are going to make time to eat. You are never going to find time like that, so get in the habit of eating your sandwich while going up the elevator and making use of those few minutes and then also here you are in the class and people are bringing their food and coffee." Those were things very different for me. I had never done for all these years in school. So those were very types of experiences and then I think after about five or six months I was able to deal with that and in fact in some cases doing it myself.

Abby: You never think about that. Did you have any problems with money adjustments?

Tejinder: Yes, yeah. As I mentioned all what we had during that time we paid towards our tuition so we just didn't have anything to spend on any luxury like going out or being able to afford a car or buying anything. The university had also given us small lots, ten by twelve, in the agricultural area so we could grow our

vegetables and if it hadn't been for that I don't think we would even of had much food. But there was really nothing left after you paid the tuition and you paid for your books and for your transport back and forth. You never had the luxury of buying cloths or anything and so that's why whatever cloths or whatever things I had brought with me I practically lived on for two years.

Abby: Then you had a son?

Tejinder: Yeah, but in this case also you know, what little we could have we buy for him and that's all. We couldn't get him... and of course being in the University Village, one thing good about that place was that they have what they call a swap shop. Whoever is moving out leaves things there, furniture or other things and when families need it they can get it and this was something that was very helpful to me. If I need like when my younger baby was born I needed some things for him so I had my name of the list and by the time the baby came they had given me a little crib and they had given me a few other things which I would have never had the money to buy. Then at the University they also had what they' call... Faculty Member's Wives. Some of faculty' member's wives had made a little organization by which they would even help, so those things, and of course since I did not have the language problem I used to be part of this. I would go attend that meeting or that meeting and take my child along, so that helped me understand the system more than it would have if I had just stayed home.

Abby: Did the teachers seem to come from a different background than you?

Tejinder: Of course in my case the teachers were all from this background. None of the teachers there when I went to school, were in fact they were all White, they were all American educated teachers. I don't think I attended a single class with any other teacher, you know, at Berkeley. Oh, excuse me, you are talking about my school.

Abby: No, I am talking about here.

- Tejinder: Yeah, this is when I went to school. In fact I don't think I went to any school where there was a Black instructor or there was an Oriental instructor. I don't remember any class...
- Abby: And back at home it was...
- Tejinder: Yeah, back at home also since I was in a boarding school, it was a Catholic, a Roman Catholic boarding school, so a lot of our teachers were European nuns, Irish, Dutch, and I think maybe one or two were Italians.
- Abby: As you recall now, did the teachers seem able to handle language differences among the children?
- Tejinder: You're talking about my school now, right?
- Abby: Yes.
- Tejinder: Okay, in our school as I mentioned, most of the curriculum was in English. We would have a language class. During that set time you would go and study...
(telephone interrupts)
- Abby: Anyway, you were talking about languages.
- Tejinder: Right. So we would have language, the ability to learn the home language, read and write during that time, but most of the other curriculum was in English. Whether they were able to handle language differences I really can't... I don't know. See, I've never thought of those things, I've started thinking on those terms ever since I got the job, because people ask me those things, but I don't know how and I'm sure there were some children who couldn't speak any language or what was being done I really can't even recall, especially at the elementary school level, but I'm sure there were a lot of other Indian teachers who could speak the language so maybe they would help. I think probably that's how it was done, that those teachers would come and help.
- Abby: Do you recall any funny incidents while you were in school?
- Tejinder: No, I don't think I can remember any. We had very strict discipline in school and most of the time they wouldn't put up with any, so to say, nonsense. And then also the other thing which is in contrast to the situation here is that over there if

you are admitted to a school it's a privilege and if you don't shape up and if you're thrown out of the school you've had it. No other school will admit you. Here, you know, we put up with a great deal of nonsense because they know that nobody can throw them out and that's where most of the students have to be very, very careful because, otherwise, their whole career is just lost.

Abby: Was there anything that bothered you about going to school in the U.S.?

Tejinder: No, of course apart from, in my situation it was a decision that we both took, for me to go to school. Of course I was very apprehensive about the costs involved and also whether I would be able to function in the school here. You know, I was very scared on that account, whether I would be able to, especially with one young child, and then to be able to coordinate the housework and the baby and the studying, and everything. It took a couple of weeks, but eventually I was able to things in control and do it.

Abby: What was your family's attitude towards school?

Tejinder: As I mentioned, I was always very positive and that is the reason we were encouraged and we went to college. If that wasn't the family's attitude I don't think I would have gone.

Abby: did your sisters go to college?

Tejinder: Yeah, all three of us hold M.A. degrees.

Abby: What was your own attitude?

Tejinder: I think I looked forward to my school and I looked forward to the school even though it was a boarding school. I always looked forward and I always wanted to, you know, meet the academic challenge that was necessary.

Abby: What did you think when you came here and you changed schools and there were guys and girls?

Tejinder: Oh, I had, see, as I mentioned earlier, when I did my M.S.E. degree that's the time when we were in co-education so I had exposure and then of course when I came here I was married and all so you know, those things sort of didn't bother me.

Abby: But what about you did change to a co-educational school.

Tejinder: Oh I don't remember now. I don't think... Of course it was a little difficult, you know, because certainly for so many years you have been in school where there are no boys and then you go to a college and then you have both boys and girls studying there and we were a class of ten, you know, in that honors group.

Abby: Did your parents try to help you with your...

Tejinder: Sure. My parents were always very much involved in education, especially my grandfather. Every time we had a report coming in he would go over section of it and would discuss it and once or twice I remember he even found out that there was a mistake in the adding up and my grade points should have been higher or lower or whatever so both my grandparents and my mother always knew what subjects we were talking and like going and seeking admission to college, one of them was always,

Abby: Did they reward you in some ways if you did good, like here you know?

Tejinder: This kind of immediate reward, the psychological idea in that sense, I don't know if those things were happening to us, if our teachers were aware of that. However, if like you know you've done very well they might tell you to go ahead and take a vacation for two or three weeks or we'll get you some nice pretty cloths this summer because you did very wel. And in fact all three of us were always on top of the class. I don't think even in all my years at school that I never had anything lower than a first position.

Abby: Did you rely on anybody else to help you?

Tejinder: No, mostly it was my mother and my grandfather.

Abby: Did girls or boys stay in school longer?

Tejinder: I couldn't respond to that. I guess it would be boys that stayed longer if there was a choice. In my case it was just us girls.

Abby: What did your parents expect you to learn in school?

Tejinder: Well, they expected us to learn whatever was being taught in school and of course in our curriculum is very much oriented towards the content. Like over

here the extracurricular activities play a large part in school life, but they were very limited there. Of course in the school before my high school we would have a class where they teach us a little embroidery or a little sewing. I guess being a boarding school they probably did, but that was about it. Most of the time it was history, math, or science, or whatever.

Abby: And your sisters?

Tejinder: Yeah, we were all in the same school and the same college.

Abby: Did you participate in school activities.

Tejinder: Yes. Whatever was possible, whatever was being offered, like a drama or debate or whatever was being offered I would participate as much as possible.

Abby: Did you like go around to other schools and compete or...?

Tejinder: Once in a while, but it would be within the school, like if you had a drama or a debate then there would be a competition, but in college it was more. In school it was sort of restricted in a way, but in college it became more and I did get a chance to visit one or two other schools to participate in a debate or in a declaration.

Abby: But you didn't do much traveling.

Tejinder: No, within that area I think whatever was possible I did it, however, at the end of, once or twice they had arranged what they would call educational trips during holidays. During holidays the college would arrange to take you for a tour of different facilities and we would participate in that.

Abby: Did you ever participate in the YWCA or take classes there?

Tejinder: I had heard that but I was never involved in it.

Abby: Were your school activities helpful to you?

Tejinder: Oh yes. I remember there was some fair in New Delhi and we came from college and that was the first time I had seen a television. I had never seen one before.

Abby: What did you think of it?

Tejinder: Yeah, it was very exciting so it was because of the trip you know.

Abby: Did you tend to participate in neighborhood or church activities?

Tejinder: Again, this idea of having neighborhood activities, this is different. However, if there is something happening at the church or at the _____ we would help yeah. But it's different than what we expect here. And of course here in the neighborhood and in my small neighborhood they never had any neighborhood activities, nobody talks to each other except my neighbor to the right. We know them very well and they have children who are very good friends of ours and once in a while we meet them and they come over, but very seldom. But the others we just leave everybody to themselves, so in the immediate sense you know, you just say hello to each other and I think we just know their names and they probably know our names. When we moved here nobody came to introduce themselves and you know say feel free to use our phone or if there is any problem and we didn't do it. When our neighbor to the right moved in while we were here I went ahead and said feel free to use our phone and then within a week or so we found out that he also works for the same school district that I work for and then they have a young child whose a good friend of our children so we have good relationships with just the one neighbor, Of course a part from that if there is any activity taking place in the school and they would like us to help, I will always help. If there is any activity being done at the office and they would like us to help. If there is any activity being done at the office and they would like us to help I have always gone ahead and helped, but in that way I have never seen anything happening here that is a neighborhood activity.

Abby: And you said at church...

Tejinder: Of course, yeah, at the church at the _____ yeah. That becomes more like a Sikh activity. Sure, we're involved with that.

Abby: What activities?

Tejinder: Like if there is a group of people coming in visiting and we need to get the meals ready I have always gone ahead and helped or there is a need for somebody to be picked up from the bus stop or from the airport I will help whenever it is

possible. In fact my husband was the secretary of the _____ for two or three years and has helped as much as he could.

Abby: Were there any special activities for your age groups in your school?

Tejinder: Yeah, but you see as I mentioned earlier, the school setup and the environment was very, very different from what we have here. This idea of having, like you have a dance performance planned and this, we never had those things. Of course they would take us for a picnic once in a while or they would take us on a weekend or on a holiday to the city, but that was about it.

Abby: How were these activities helpful to you?

Tejinder: See, whatever activities like a picnic or things that we looked forward to because that way you can go out and play and...

Abby: How far did you go in school as a youth?

Tejinder: I did my M.S.E. I had sixteen years of school.

Abby: Is this the amount of education you hoped you would have?

Tejinder: I am always studying you know. As I mentioned I am always studying. I just finished this work, this specialist course work at U.O.P. last summer.

Abby: Would you like to get a doctorate?

Tejinder: Not right now, maybe when the children are a little on their own I probably would but not for a couple of years.

Abby: So you would like to keep on?

Tejinder: Yeah, I mean I'm always going to this or that conference and bringing home a package and always studying, but formally get myself enrolled for a Ph.D. degree that's about all I can do because I've already done my Masters. As yet, no. With two children, as you can see, even something like this is sometimes hard to do.

Abby: During your years in high school did your family give you some independence in certain areas?

Tejinder: Yes, we were on our own. We were expected to conduct ourselves, you know, live on our own. We were given some money and we learned to handle our money and to budget it.

Abby: How did you feel about your family in those years?

Tejinder: Oh yeah. I always felt very close to my family and to my mother and to my grandfather. WE went home whenever there were holidays and for anything that went wrong we always felt free to call them and always knew that if we run short of anything they are always there to help us. As I mentioned, during that time I never worked so I didn't know what it was to get a paycheck. Whatever money my mother would give me that's all I could spend.

Abby: Did they come up and visit you?

Tejinder: Yes.

Abby: Did your parents speak English?

Tejinder: Yes.

Abby: Was it ever difficult when your friends were present in your home?

Tejinder: No.

Abby: Did you have any special hopes or ambitions while you were in school?

Tejinder: Yeah, I had the ambition to do well whatever I was doing, whatever program I was in to do good in that.

Abby: Did you want to be a school teacher back then?

Tejinder: No. I had never thought that I would become a teacher. In fact I had wanted to get into medical school and my mother felt that it would be too much studying and then I landed up studying anyhow.

Abby: What changed that?

Tejinder: I think it was just that she felt that being a doctor for girls it's very difficult and all that, but I ended up studying for so many years anyway.

Abby: Did your school help you understand life in the United States?

Tejinder: In India when I was in school the only thing that I ever learned, ofcourse you learn about geography and all that you know as you learn about all the other countries, that once or twice we did see some movies, some documentaries n America, but that was about all, but it was not that I was being trained for

anything special in America. We just learned about America like I would learn about any other country.

Abby: Was there ever anything that you felt confused about regarding what you learned or heard about the United States?

Tejinder: No.

Abby: How do the younger people born in the United States of your ethnic background generally feel about having their parents and other family members living in the home?

Tejinder: Children born in the East Indian homes will still hold the parents in respect. They will value their judgement and by large will show good faith in their parents.

Abby: Would you prefer to live with your children if you can?

Tejinder: Yes. I do. Yeah I would. Sure and I do. My children are with me.

Abby: I mean when they get their own families.

Tejinder: That's their choice? If they did stay with us I don't think it would mean any sort of encroachment upon me. I would accept that if they wanted to.

Abby: Think of the kind of lives your children are living. What are some of the best things about their lives now?

Tejinder: Well, I think I am happy with a lot of things the children are being exposed to. One of the things is education and right now there are some things we are very happy with. The fact that the environment would encourage to question, you know, not take things for granted, that they can think about things and question, and I think that to me is very essential for the human mind, to be able to question and to think and then if you can really come to an understanding, that you have a conflict, the way you want things done and the way they are being done and if you do come to a decision that there is a conflict and you would like to see a change you can go ahead and at least talk about it and be able to express the idea and also be able to do something about it.

Abby: What are some of the less desirable things?

Tejinder: One of the things that concern me is the impact of media and too much exposure to violence and especially that has become very obvious through newspaper and through television and I think for very young children when their minds are still in that very formative state it can affect in a very negative way. That's something I'm very concerned with and of course every time I know that the children have watched a show or they have seen something we will sit back and discuss about it, that this is just one part of human life, that there are lots of other good things that humans do. They don't always kill and fight each other,, and that is a thing that is a concern of mine.

Abby: When you first got to the United States did you think yourself still as Indian American?

Tejinder: Yes.

Abby: How about your children?

Tejinder: Yes. We tell them that this is what they are and there's no way we can be any different. You are born like that, you look like that, your physical appearances are like that so you might as well think like that too. How can I turn around and say that I think I'm from Europe or I'm somebody like that? Physically I am different. So why shouldn't I accept that and be proud of that?

Abby: Have your attitudes toward the old country changed?

Tejinder: No, not really.

Abby: What makes a person Indian American?

Tejinder: Well, I guess in some ways if you were born there or if you came from there or if you had your parents, depending on what generation you're talking about, that you had some link through your parentage with the home country and then the most important part of it is that if you still proud of the aspect that you have a link somewhere else also, you know, that you are in American and you're very proud to be in America and at the same time you are aware that there are some good things that I was raised as, you know, as a child and I value them so I am happy about that.

Abby: What aspects of the old country do your children retain?

Tejinder: As far as I know my children retain all aspects. We encourage them to be speaking the language to be able to talk in Punjabi, we encourage them to talk Punjabi, to express themselves as much as they can in Punjabi so that they retain the language. We encourage them to eat the foods, you know, of course all kinds of foods, but I encourage them to eat Indian food also.

Abby: Do you fix that?

Tejinder: Yes. I fix that very often and apart from that you know, lots of other foods that they get to eat, but I don't want them to have a feeling that any Indian food is just no, no, or you know you are going to think negatively about that food. Then my children believe in the Sikh faith that they were raised in and they will continue believing in that hopefully and I think those are very important aspects of human life.

Abby: What aspects have disappeared from their lives?

Tejinder: Well, as far as I can see right now, the children are very young, nine and twelve, and I don't think very many aspects of our life have disappeared, but as time goes by, I don't know how many things will disappear. Right now I think we have a pretty close sort of a unit, as a family unit.

Abby: Have they talked to you about the differences between the Indian ways and the American ways? Have they ever rebelled against your ways?

Tejinder: No, not that, of course they are much aware of different games and things like space terminology, they are pretty much aware of all of these things you know, of all the comics and the latest things that children of that age are aware of. They are very much aware of those things, but that doesn't mean that because they are different. That's part of the environment they are living in, so it's the influence of the environment and I think there is nothing wrong with it. If it is just good and healthy for their mind and they are able to interact you know.

Abby: Will they be able to interact once they are out of the family situation?

Tejinder: As I mentioned earlier that I don't tell them that over there once you step out of the house everything is wrong, no. No, I don't tell them that so I don't see why after a few years if they do go outside somewhere else to live in a college dorm or in a university dorm that they will anyway find things very different you know because we at least tell them you know that... but of course there are individuals who will be nasty or act bad to you but as a whole people will be very good to you and I don't see why they should have any problems once they are out on their own and trying to make it. Again this will depend on the environment. If the environment keeps on pressing, that you have to conform then maybe there might be resistance, but I don't know.

Abby: Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your background?

Tejinder: Yes, I'm afraid that is a very real reality, sure I have.

Abby: Do you know why this happens?

Tejinder: Yes, I think so. One of the things would be that some people unfortunately just cannot accept the idea that in America other people can live also and be part of America and be contributing to the American system. They find it very hard to believe this. And just because coming from that attitude they think that any person who speaks a little different or who looks a little different is inferior and I think again the reality of this is the way I rationalize this is that they just don't know any better.

Abby: They're not educated enough so...

Tejinder: Well, no I wouldn't say that. It's not limited only to uneducated people it's very much prevalent even in educated people. I think that the way I would look at it is that is just in human nature. Some human beings will always just function that way that they feel they are much superior to anybody else.

Abby: What do you do about that?

Tejinder: Well, I don't know what you can do about that, but let's say in the case of my children or in my schools it happens once in a while that I have had a complaint to that effect where the children have sort of said different things and I have

gone ahead and explained, you know, that there are a lot of different things that the children... they are like you but in some ways they are like lots of other children in the classroom so it happens that this one child isn't a Mexican or a Black but he is a different kind of a child so if you can just understand and that's about all you can do. Of course I wouldn't encourage them to be violent or I wouldn't encourage them to take other sorts, but the reality of it is that you do run into things like that. Even in the area that you live you run into things like that.

Abby: How did you meet your husband?

Tejinder: Our marriage was arranged by our parents.

Abby: Are your parents from the old country? Were you still living at home?

Tejinder: Yes I was.

Abby: Could you explain a little about this?

Tejinder: I was educated in India and I worked a little bit in India and then my marriage was arranged by somebody who knew both of the families. We met and my mother was satisfied and we got married.

Abby: You got married back in India?

Tejinder: Yes. Yes I was married in India. Then I came here.

Abby: Are most of your relatives still back there?

Tejinder: Yes, except for my husband's sister all our relatives are back there

Abby: Do you think they may want to come over here eventually?

Tejinder: Right now everyone is busy doing their own thing and everybody is busy with their life so... Maybe later on when they retire they might like to come and visit or something but as yet everybody is busy in my family and in my husband's family and we really haven't had anybody wanting to come over.

Abby: How old were you when you got married?

Tejinder: I was, considering the age you know, of people over here and of some in India, I was relatively quite old when I got married because I wanted to finish my Master's because I got married. So I was about twenty-five.

Abby: And he was a teacher here before...?

Tejjinder: No, he was not a teacher here. He had finished his Ph.D. in Education from Berkeley and was still working on his dissertation.

Abby: After you were married how did the two of you make decisions?

Tejjinder: We would sometimes talk about it, about the thing that had to be decided and once in a while when that was not possible one of us, either my husband or me, had to take the decision and then because it was required right then you had to decide something. So normally we would talk about it with each other. We might not agree to begin with but then we would definitely talk about it.

Abby: How did you resolve your differences?

Tejjinder: I don't know. I just can't think of how we would. You know, I guess by just talking and sharing your viewpoints and then you sort of come to some sort of consensus.

Abby: Are your child rearing practices from those of your mothers?

Tejjinder: Yes. They have to be because here I am working and my mother never worked. And then as I mentioned earlier that I was in a boarding school part of the time so that's different. Here' my children stay with me and I am working also so I have to be like I'm always rushed up you know. I have to get the children ready in time and get them to school and myself and I have to report back to work so in a way it is very, very different. Also over here you have all your household work, your cleaning and your cooking. One area that I can think about is that I am not able to pay a much attention to my children as my mother probably did to me because of the other pressures in life that I have, job and houseowkr and other things. But whenever I have the opportunity I will try and be with my children, like right after school and on weekends and of course we normally accepted invitations where we can take our children along and have the children be part of us you know.

Abby: Were your children very demanding of you?

Tejinder: Well in some ways I should say, well I don't know, physically they're all right. It's not that they can't... physically they're all right. Sometimes children are demanding on parents because they are physically unable to do something. That is not the case with my children but in some ways you can say they are demanding. At this age I guess maybe other children are able to take care of a lot of things. My children still like to have a little help in the morning getting dressed or in finding their things.

Abby: Did your husband seem to realize how demanding your children could be to you?

Tejinder: Oh yeah. Sure he does. Because once in a while he also has to be with them. It's not that I'm the person who is dealing with them all the time. He deals with them so he knows how demanding they can be.

Abby: Do you sometimes help your children with problems they have at school?

Tejinder: Oh yeah, all the time. As I mentioned earlier that is something that as soon as they get home whatever experiences they have had they always talk it over with me, whether it is good or bad or whatever. We encourage our children to come home and talk about whatever has happened in the classroom and if they had a fight at the bus stop or if they had a fight in school or whatever. At that age those are the kinds of problems that they run into.

Abby: What is your greatest satisfaction as a mother?

Tejinder: I guess having two young active boys. Of course, they are very demanding of course ujust sent by sheer nature they are curious and they are active and they ask questions and in spite of it, it's a demand, but I think I am very happy and thankful that I have two nice boys.

Abby: What are your main concerns as a mother?

Tejinder: My strongest concern is always that I would like my children to be nice, healthy human beings, concerned about everybody and not be nasty little boys.

Abby: And how do you handle these concerns.

Tejinder: Well, if I see they have been acting up and they have been doing something they are not supposed to do I will always try and tell them and explain that's not right,

it's not right for you to do that. It's not right for you to pick on other people or on other kids who are younger than you. An of course if I have seen that a child on his own has gone ahead and done something which is very good, you know, I have always tried to sit back and encourage and praise him so that he doesn't feel that I am always at his back. Like the other day he found a little kitten that was run over and he thought that it might belong to one of the neighbors so he went and knocked at the door and he said "Kathy, I think it was maybe your kitten that was hit by the car" so he took his shirt off and wrapped the little kitten up and took it to the neighbor's house and I didn't know anything until the neighbor comes over and she says that this is _____ shirt and that the kitten was not theirs but she was really glad that _____ did that. He was concerned that maybe it was their pet. And I thought that was a very good thing for a little boy to think about, that the animal might belong to so and so. He could have walked away from it as a lot of people do so I really sat down with him and encouraged him and I explained to the younger child that this is what you do. You just don't walk away. You should be concerned about things.

Abby: Think of your life after you were first married. What did you expect to get to get out of life then?

Tejinder: Well, I don't know. Oh, I guess just a normal relationship, just a good home and, and sort of a congenial relationship and of course above everything else good health and a good family where everybody stays together, things that are very fundamental. Being rich and having other things comes later.

Abby: Did your expectations change?

Tejinder: In some things yeah, because I mentioned you come to a different country and you live in a different way and you are bound to change and you are bound to think things differently than you would have done if you were in India.

Abby: What kind of expectations?

Tejinder: You know, like let's say if you are living amongst a family, you have your relations, your cousins and you meet them and all that so your expectations are

to go and visit them. Over here you are living all by yourselves. You know, you have some friends that you visit but in that way you don't have any intimate connections with anybody except maybe one or two families. So in that sense I think it is very different. If someone is sick or if you need some help well you know that you are not going to get it.

Abby: Yeah, back home you have all your relatives.

Tejinder: Yes. You could always count on somebody or if your child is sick you can at least count on somebody to come and bail you out. Over there you just can't do that.

Abby: That must have been hard.

Tejinder: Yes, but there are a lot of things that you learn to live with and deal with and accept.

Abby: What were the goals that you had for your family different than those of your parents?

Tejinder: I can't answer that question because I don't know what goals my parents had in mind and then since right after our marriage we came here I really don't know.

Abby: Have you become a U.S. citizen?

Tejinder: Yes.

Abby: When was that?

Tejinder: Oh, I guess a couple of years back. I've been here twelve years now.

Abby: How do you feel about the United States?

Tejinder: Well, as I mentioned even in India if I remember, that there were things that when I came here I didn't know would exist, like one would never think that in America also there would be some people who would be concerned for their bare survival, so normally one would think that people don't have any struggle here. That was a big awakening that took place in my mind when I observed people in America. Of course then I also the other part of it. There are some people you know who have so much and so much to waste and to throw away. You find that things are more or less the same way, that some people just barely survive and some people have so much so that disparity is right here also.

Abby: Considering your own life what is the best age to be? What makes it the best age?

Tejinder: I just really feel that every age as it comes along I am ready to accept it so I don't know. How can I say that this age is better than the other age because by the time that you have lived through that age that's past and you are entering into another age. And of course if you are to look at it childhood is probably the best. You have no worries and everything is taken care of. It's later on in life that you run into responsibilities.

Abby: What is the worst age to be?

Tejinder: I don't know. Well, I guess as a mother of very young children you could maybe say from the physical aspect of it that is a bad time. You know, children keep you awake at night and things like that, but of course if you accept that also as a part of your normal human duties and that it's a privilege raising a family then you don't think about what's worst about it. I can't really see myself reacting this way, that this phase of life is the worst. Fortunately, I don't have that attitude, And I don't know how I will feel when I'm seventy years old, but this is how I feel now.

Abby: Looking back at your life can you see some great changes that really changed your life or gave you new directions?

Tejinder: Well, I guess in one way a big change that did take place was when I got my job because it was one thing that gave me a feeling that I am capable of doing something and also that I have to do something on my own. I have to decide things and make decisions and do things on my own. So I think that was a big change, Then of course the other change that we talked about earlier is that we were able to get this... and in my way of looking at it it is just as significant as my getting a job is that here we have been trying to focus on the needs of the Indian children in the public schools and then you go ahead and actually conceive of the idea and then you are supported by a federal grant to go ahead and do it. That was another very successful experience that I have had and I feel very good about it. Sometimes you think and you conceive of something but you just can't do anything about it.

Abby: Have you heard of the Women's Liberation?

Tejinder: Yes I have. Oh yeah.

Abby: What do you think of it?

Tejinder: I have mixed feelings. As far as I know, just the idea when I heard about this that women were not given the working rights and when I heard about this also that there are certain rules or certain viewpoints that always perpetuate, that women are inferior, that on that score I feel very strongly and I have my sympathies with the women liberalists because I feel that women are not in any way inferior to anybody else. They are very capable of doing all kinds of things if they are given the opportunity to do it. And of course in other areas, as I mentioned that I am married and I have a husband and you know so and in no way have I felt that there was something that I wanted to do and he wouldn't let me do it. So in that sense I don't think I have felt some sort of discrimination.

Abby: Like in India when you went back, how do you see the women over there?

Tejinder: See, again as I mentioned to you Abby that in my case my father died when I was only three years old. All my education, all my bringing up and all my three sisters, everything was done by my mother so to me just the idea that a women is not able to do, I have never seen that. I have seen her perform all kinds of roles and perform them very good, so that's why I was never raised up in an environment where you feel that women are in secondary roles or incapable of doing things.

Abby: What about your neighbors?

Tejinder: I guess some people, but that's what I say that I can't speak from any first hand experience. My kind of experience I guess has been very, very different than what a lot of other women have been through. And again I probably think, I mean I don't have any data to that effect, but one of my personal observations is that the male female ratio here in America is very different and again it could very well be because of the male female ration difference that some of these things emerge. If you have more women and if you have less men you are going to run into problems. Again I am saying that those are just very, very crude

observations but it could very well be you know that if you find that a huge element of humanity is _____ and again some women have gone ahead and said how they were hurt and you know, but I have never been actively part of the women's liberation. I have never felt that I needed to go out and shout and yell and say that I need those rights because I have them. Whenever I want I can get my own way. It could be subtly or in whatever method you choose, but you can get it.

Abby: Have any of the Stockton events affected you and your family?

Tejinder: Stockton events? Well, as I mentioned most of our pleasant experiences have been in Stockton. You know, we came here fresh graduates from Berkeley with a very little job and we moved into an apartment so all through whatever we are we have been in Stockton all through it. There have been very pleasant experience and there have been very unpleasant experiences. But when you put the whole thing together and you look at it in its totality I think on the whole I would say I am very happy to be in Stockton. It could very well be that historically, as I mentioned earlier, Stockton is an area where East Indian people have been around for about one hundred years and that way I feel very good that at least I'm in a situation where people have been around for a while. You're not viewed as somebody who just came. Some people are aware of this. So in that way... Of course by now we do have some good friends that understand, that at least when there is need we can go talk to them. SO I really like Stockton.

Abby: would you like to see a special event come here, you know, something about the Indian culture?

Tejinder: Yes, I would, I would. I don't know if I told you or not, but we had approached the City Council that under the Arts Commission that we would like to see a little but more of the South Asian arts represented. It could just be paintings or it could be any kind of art, but something more in that area, if we could do that. Of course we were not successful but that doesn't mean that we are not going to try it again. But those few things so that the way I look at it it is not that it would

satisfy me, but I think it would enrich the ethnic environment of the area and possibly something like Micke Grove has like its spring festival, you know, something like that.

Abby: Micke Grove? Oh, that's that...

Tejinder: Yes, in the month of May when you have the Spring festival.

Abby: Does that consist of different groups?

Tejinder: Yes, I'm on the planning committee for that and I think that is a very positive things that happens in the country. You go there and you find the ethnic diversity that you have in this area and the foods and it's really a good atmosphere. So I think that needs to be represented in the arts and in the museums, in our libraries. I'm sure it will be possible to do it some time.

Timestamps to Specific Topics:

Home Life:

- **5:20 – 7:48, tape 1**, Religion
- **1:00:42 – 1:01:53, tape 1**, Languages
- **1:32:23 – 1:34:13, tape 1**, Finding a home
- **54:11 – 55:31, tape 2**, Education for kids in America

Community Relationship:

- **12:53 – 15:57, tape 1**, ethnic groups/ clothing
- **48:33 – 49:54, tape 1**, different families
- **1:22:05 – 1:23:17, tape 1**, neighbors

Labor:

- **20:42 – 22:30, tape 1**, Working in America
- **38:31 – 40:17, tape 1**, teacher work
- **1:18:35 – 1:20:01, tape 1**, farm work

Discrimination:

- **26:20 – 27:57, tape 1 & 1:01:65 – 1:04:14, tape 2**; feeling discriminated

Maintaining Customs:

- **4:36 – 7:35, tape 2**, food and dress
- **18:36 – 20:02, tape 2**, holidays