

**THE LOCALIZED  
HISTORY PROJECT**  
@AAARI-CUNY

# Oral History Transcripts

**From Bangladesh to Brooklyn:  
Mapping the Narratives of  
Immigrant Women**

The Localized History Project @AAARI-CUNY

### **Saira's Oral History Interview**

Navipa (interviewer): Okay, so today's date is Friday, March 3rd, and it's 10:27 AM. So my first question is, tell me about your childhood, like where did you grow up school, friends?

Saira (interviewee): Okay, I grew up in Bangladesh. Dhaka. We studied in Dhaka. My friend circle were all based in Dhaka.

Navipa: Okay, so you're from Dhaka then?

Saira: Mhm.

Navipa: And what was it like, like, government, society? Was it, you know—

Saira: That time it was fine.

Navipa: And what were your friends like?

Saira: My friend? Yeah, they are like, uh we go to school together, sometime we do go into the library and sometimes we play but it's not that much play grounds. They would come to our houses. Everyone would study together. If we had projects we would go to each others house.

Navipa: So yeah, you were all really close.

Saira: Yeah.

Navipa: Okay. Um, so next question is, what was it like coming to America, where you excited, scared, nervous?

Saira: Yeah, nervous because none of my family lived here. Only my husbands side of the family was here, but not my family. I had a cousin who, once I had arrived, she would visit me a lot and then it felt a good to see her.

Navipa: And unless I'm wrong, you had Ahona..

Saira: No-uh, after I came here.

Navipa: After you came here, so she was born here. okay.

Saira: One day after I came.

Navipa: What was that like? That sounds scary.

Saira: Yeah, it was scary.

Navipa: So, you didn't feel like on the plane..

Saira: No, I didn't feel anything on the plane.

Navipa: Okay, and that was fine. And you came with your husband?

Saira: No, like husband friend.

Navipa: Nice. Nice friend. Um, do you like living in Brooklyn, or do you want to go home? Back to Bangladesh?

Saira: Now, I like living here, but I don't know, in old age, maybe. I go back because it's so much work here. I can't do it.

Navipa: Over there, you can hire a maid.

Saira: Yeah, we can hire a maid.

Navipa: Yeah, I know that too. Yeah, and now it's a little bit safer to go back too. Um so describe your relationship with your family. Like, are you guys close?

Saira: Like which family? I have two.

Navipa: Describe both of them then. The one here and then the one back in Bangladesh.

Saira: Back in Bangladesh, I don't have anyone anymore except for one sister and one brother. With my sister I have a stronger relationship. She is my immediate younger sister and with her I have a great relationship. Still, up to now, everyone here or everyone over there, my brothers and sisters, I have a good relationship. All my siblings here are younger than me but still we get along well especially when we talk or hangout or anything else.

Navipa: So, how many siblings altogether?

Saira: I have seven siblings with me. Yeah, four sister and three brother.

Navipa: So that's a big family, so when you were growing up, well, I know some—there's a larger age gap between some of you, but—

Saira: We don't—uh yeah, not some of—in my—the youngest one is two years old, younger from me. The rest of them, like sometimes 4 years, 5 years—like that.

Navipa: So are you guys close or—

Saira: Yeah, we are close.

Navipa: Okay.

Saira: We didn't have to go outside. We played together—

Navipa: Inside. Yeah, seven people, you can play with them a lot. Um, okay, so next questions are about being a mother, so, what does it feel like being a mom?

Saira: The first time?

Navipa: Yeah.

Saira: When Ahona born?

Navipa: Yeah.

Saira: Is like— it's like dream.

Navipa: Wow.

Saira: I don't know what's going on. How to take care of her. My mother in law help me a lot. She take care of her all that time. That time I'm so young it's like I'm like 20 years old, so she, my mother-in-law, always take care of Ahona.

Navipa: Only 20. I'm about to turn 20. Okay, um and then after that it was—

Saira: Yeah.

Navipa: It was a little easier to—

Saira: Yeah, it was easier—

Navipa: You know what to do—

Saira: Yeah, easier after that.

Navipa: Yeah. Okay. Um, so from Bangladesh, from our culture, what do you teach your kids?

What parts of our culture do you share with your children?

Saira: With the children you have to share everything like for culture—like everything. Like what our culture is like, how we look, how we dress, how we respect elders. All of that we share with our children. We try—even though we live here—we try to teach our culture to our children. How they should act around others.

Navipa: Yeah, that's very important.

Saira: Yeah, how to respect those older than us. How they should carry themselves and how to celebrate our culture.

Navipa: Mhm, okay. Um, so when you were younger and you were in school, did you want to be like—anything like doctor or lawyer? Did you have any of those?

Saira: Yeah, I wanted to be a banker because my dad was a banker, so I want to be a banker.

Navipa: That's nice. Thats what my mom does right now. Um, so when you came here, you didn't know— how much did you know English? Or did you have to learn it here? Was it hard?

Saira: No, I cannot speak that time. Now I can speak a little bit—

Navipa: Yeah.

Saira: That time I cannot speak. Yeah, I know English because we learned it in school/college.

Navipa: Right, the formal English, yeah. So, but you still had to come here and learn a little, like, normal

Saira: Normally, yeah. When I started going out I learned. Its not like I went to school and I had to learn at school.

Navipa: Yeah, yeah.. That's how almost all—every immigrant learns like that, yeah. Um, okay, so next is about community. So the community we have here, like Church Avenue, New Kirk,

Jackson Heights. Do you like them? Do you think it's good or do you feel like it's not that—

Saira: It, its like mixed feelings. Because sometimes its good to see people from our culture and talk to them and our things—in our culture—the food we eat, the things we need, if we didn't live here, we wouldn't be able to find them somewhere else. The access to these things are closer. But sometimes, its not like feeling good that theres too much people. But every people is different. Its not great to see everyone all the time. Its like that. Its like mixed feelings.

Navipa: So, the friends you have, like, my mom, Aziza and them, how have they changed your life and, you know, are you close with them? What what do they bring to you?

Saira: No, ofcourse I am very close to them. They are like—friend here is family now. Because here, my old friends, my school friends, they are not here. So the people who are here now, they are like family and they are the most close to me. If anything happens—bad things—sometimes we cannot share with our family members because family members will get worried. But you can share with a friend. Because they will give us a good solution or something else. Everything bad or good, everything we share with out friends. So, whoever I have now is my family and my friend—everything.

Navipa: I like that—friend is family. Um, okay, so the last question is is a little personal. It's is there anything from your life that you would change, like the whole life you have? Even though right now you're happy, I know, but anything at all that you could change just a little bit, if you could go back and do something differently.

Saira: No, I don't think so. I don't know. I don't. Until now is I don't think anything like that.

Navipa: Okay, that's all. Thank you.

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Navipa (interviewer): OK, it's Friday, March 7th, 11:10 AM. This is the second interview. OK. So first question, tell me about your childhood? Where did you grow up? School? Friends? Society.

Aziza: Our childhood was in Chandpur. From there I completed my intermediates—like 12th grade. After finish, I'll be back to Dhaka city. Then I take the university. My university name is Titumil Government University—meaning it is an official university. Over there I finished my honors in management and after that I getting married. Then after that—you know after two and half years I come this country.

Navipa: You came here. Okay, so when you came here, what was it like? Were you scared? Excited?

Aziza: Okay, yes, this is the big thing. When I came this country, I came here 2005, the September—September 30. It was new. Everything is for me new. New adventure. New culture. I don't know. I'm really scared— I'm so much cry its like one and a half month. I miss my parents. That time I don't have phone. That time I have land phone. Even when I was sick and my child came in that three months— (baby interrupting).

Navipa: It's okay.

Aziza: Three months after I getting pregnant and that time, my husband and one time showed that at the hospital while the hospital and over there, I doesn't know anything. I don't speak well to English. Uh—even I look up people, people what they gonna do. I ask them, I tried to, you know, my voice I don't know anything then. That time I am is scared. So much is scary. And even my husband worried, my sister worry, uh, in a where I am. Is everything okay in the hospital. Then Allhamdullilah after—after that I came back alone in the four o'clock and they're going to call in the land phone. Everything is okay, is yes, everything this is the first time. I'm going the hospital. This is my new experience.

Navipa: So you didn't know English, you had to learn.

Aziza: Right.

Navipa: Was that hard?

Aziza: No. No, because—

Navipa: You can continue its okay.

Aziza: Okay. um yeah, that time uh first of all, I six-month, I getting the English— is very proper. I don't know about the pronoun. I don't know about the, you know, uh is what is the call name? It's the grammar, right? You have a grammar problem. I understand what they say, but I explain one two three word and six months after I had to easily, I talked to people, they understand them. I realized—I watching TV that time. My husband told me all the time that you have to be citizen—if you want to get citizenship then watch TV news. Watch the news that then you getting the English proper way they speak to them.

Navipa: Yeah, that's how all of my—all of the people I'm talking about how they learned it too. Um so now that you're in America, do you like living in Brooklyn or do you want to go home all the time?

Aziza: Some of them I miss my country, really I tell you. Right now, you know, I miss it, my country. Sometime I wish I had to go back because this country uh I don't have any my culture—now is culture everything fine, but it is my culture and different way. I wish it every time and because now it's Ramadan time, right, you know, I misses my family. Over there is my family all people going on the table. We're gonna eat um, you know, Iftar, right? So this country only my children, my husband, but I have another family. It's my cousin, my aunt, my mom's side. My husband's side. Yeah, we miss.

Navipa:

Aziza: Yeah. But I don't move yet, but I don't plan, but I just tell my experience what I feel right now. Navipa: Yeah, you miss. I miss it too and I've lived here my whole life.

Aziza: Yeah, you were born there. Do you remmeber that?

Navipa: I—uh—no I remember like one or two, like really weird memories, not really. I came here when I was like two, three.

Aziza: Yeah, I saw. Sneha, never mind, I saw you and your mommy that time Waffee going, uh I think it's a Waffe going like another 3-K or Pre-K. Another school, he's—he don't get this school because I don't get seat yet. When I stand my building, I see that Sneha and your mommy came to walk. I thought this is Bengali or Pakistani. Then I realized maybe you're Bengali.

Navipa: When you came here, September 2005 that's when I was born, back home over there. Yeah. So describe your relationship with your family, you know, are you guys close, your extended family, but then also your kids and who you— your sister over here. What is that like?

Aziza: So close.

Navipa: So close.

Aziza: So close, because we talk every day. Every day sometimes day— two, three times we gonna talk each other. We are close. She invite to me. I invite her—them. And I have to sometime over there overnight stay. Even my aunt here too. I have cousin— two half cousin. They also sometimes call me. I call them. Yeah, we have good relationship with family. And my close family even my my children. You know, three of children, Alhamdullilah. They talk to— they share with me everything, they don't hide anything Alhamdullilah. Whatever they outside, in the school, train, bus, what happened—right away they tell me.

Navipa: Okay. So now I'm gonna ask you, what does it feel like to be a mother, you know?

Aziza: Ohh. I'm happiness that moment because I feel when my first boy by born in the world, I feel I'm crying my self, happiness, crying, and that time I miss so my mother so much I miss my mother, then I feel my mother away that my mother carry in to me like that right now, what I carry to my son. So I'm happiness. I am three of my mother children. I'm happy, so much happy.

Navipa: The first time is very—

Aziza: Very excited. Right, first— first mother is I don't tell you what what I feel it. When Waffee said to me is "mommy" is after I think 15 month or two months after— two years after he— See, you hear that? My other daughter—a little one all the time call "Mommy, Mommy". Yes, I'm happy.

Navipa: Yeah, the first one. Mommy? Um, from our Bangladeshi culture, what do you teach your children about that? What part of it?

Aziza: Yes, I teach my children every time when is the my culture over there is New Year. Right, "Shubor Noburu", right? I teach my son and my daughter, what does "Shubor Noburu" meaning. Is like my new happy year, new—new thing. Because over what they are a lot of, a

lot of lot of culture, I don't explain. This country, I don't see that time we are celebrated with the family and friend. Yeah, I teaching. Navipa: Yeah. It's important to teach them. Otherwise they forget. Aziza: Right, they forget. And you know what Waffee uh this year going to Bangladesh and he wanted to be going again! He tell me last time he wanted to every year going Bangladesh. He miss over there everything. First of all, he don't want to go. He said "No, why I have to—" Yeah, "why are you— I cut his ticket. He said he don't want to go. He want to alone. He had to go. he don't want to come with me. And he come with me after one week over the other he realize what is that! Now he tell me every year he want to go there. He enjoyed with my family—the father's side family, not about so much, but so far cousins, his father's side, he's enjoyed. Navipa: Me too there, it's like everyone— Aziza: And he said—Also he tell me about the halal food. Everywhere is halal food—no one complain! Navipa: Everywhere—you dont have to worry. Aziza: He didn't worry about the food every time. Whatever he want—he tell me he order it. Right. That's what I'm happy my children, but Manha is so-so. Navipa: It takes time I didn't like it too. the last few times I went I loved it so much. So what you worked here and America for a little bit of time with my mom, what was that like? Aziza: So, first of all, I work with my best friend, it is Dilruba Begum. Yeah she is my really first is the Brooklyn in my first best friend. And I first of all he—she going, sorry, she going that one of grocery store and I tell her about—so he she said, uh, okay, uh, you can come my store, talk to manager, maybe they hire. Uh than I going over there, uh, I don't remember that day that come I have a you know second child and she age was I thinking she getting kindergarten, she getting five years old, I think yes. So that time I really looking for a job finally, I get that that's my best friend is store. And over there, I think I getting is four month or five month after uh, you know, because that job easy for me, but I don't know why no manager like me. They say no more,—they don't need to any employee right now they business is very slow. Say they say, I don't go but they. So after this two—one year, I struggle. I have to looking for new job new job. I couldn't find it. And one of that—one of also mine

and, you know, best friend telling me about that home care service. You can take the certificate, you can apply for, you know, different kind of company. They also hire you. So—the my friend, you know, my friend tell me about—then I going where I get my certificate, I have to one week getting the class, then I get the home care certificate. Then and it is like a two month after I get my job you know, finally job. I start 2016 or 17, 17, sorry. 2017 to start and I finishing its Corona is like 2022— sorry, 2020. Then after Corona, then where one year I have to work also, just one year—when I getting pregnant, I get the having a hard I stop working.

Navipa: Yeah. So you worked for a long time then?

Aziza: Yes. Yes. I worked a long time. I'm happy that I'm working. I'm happy now is I'm home. I take care of my children, some of them. I'm happy or not. How can I explain but is outside, I feel good when as I working. I working. I feel good.

Navipa: It feels good—to work, make your own money.

Aziza: Yeah, right, yeah. Now is I take a time with my family, you know, I take care I have three of children, husband, I cooking, cleaning, shopping. To me, right. But woman is not easy. It outside working and come to home, take care family is not easy. It's not easy.

Navipa: Especially when you have babies—

Aziza: Babies have very hard, very hard.

Navipa: You still did it. You still managed to do that. still. Um so next is about community. So here we have Church Avenue, New Kirk, Plaza, Jackson Heights. Do you like it? Do you like it's good—

Aziza: Yes absolutely, I like it—that community over there when I going, I feel there another Bangladesh. I feel it. Yeah, I like it.

Navipa: Okay. And so your friend group, you know, my mom, the other two, how do you like them? Have they changed your life? Are you really close with them?

Aziza: Yes. When I—they changed my life because absolutely I'm gonna tell about that my friend, best friend, absolutely. First of all, first me to my best, then second meet my best friend, uh, what is the Saira? Saira Bhabi. Thirdly, is my best friend is Mila Vabi—because I have three of best we meet in the school, the PS 99. We talk each other a lot of things.

We—we feel good. We feel good. We share a lot of things. They explain. We feel good.

Navipa: And it's not just you guys. Your kids also are know each other.

Aziza: Yes. Right, right.

Navipa: Older kids, younger kids. Husbands.

Aziza: Husband know, right. We are gathering. This is family friend. We are very close to family friends. We are—we keep our cultural with my family friend. You know, I have family, but is family friend is the different way.

Navipa: It is the different way. Okay, so, my last question is, anything from your life, you know, is there anything you wish you could change, just a little bit? If you could go back and maybe do this, maybe change that, just a little anything?

Aziza: I, you know, right now, I don't change anything, but I wish it—my mind wish it, you know, I have to every year going my country. Really. This is—this is I want to be change. Every year.

Navipa: To see people see—yeah. Okay, well, that's—

Aziza: Now is I wish my best of luck children. How can I do—

Navipa: You have a long time.

Aziza: Right.

Navipa: She has a long time.

Aziza: Thats Manha say all the time. How can take her everything? Everything? That time you getting by day by old. I say yeah—

Navipa: She's gonna keep you busy.

Aziza: Right. Yeah. That's true.

Navipa: That's it. Yeah, thank you.

Aziza: You're welcome.

Mila: Yeah—I don't really have anyone left now. My sister—she loved me like a mom—she died. My mom also passed away. My dad stays with my brother who lives in Bangladesh.

Navipa: So, the relationships you have—are they good?

Mila: Yes, I have a lot of love for my brother—I only have one afterall.

Navipa: Saira Aunty has a lot of siblings, Aziza Aunty has one sister here—

Mila: Yeah, they are very lucky.

Navipa: Um, okay. How does it feel to be a mother—do you like it? Do you enjoy it? What was it like becoming a mother?

Mila: Like—the first time?

Navipa: Yeah.

Mila: I liked it a lot. I really enjoyed it—my first baby.

Navipa: Mahin was born here?

Mila: Yes, he was born here.

Navipa: What was the hospital like?

Mila: It was a very nice experience. My first baby—I miscarried after I came to America. After that I had Mahin.

Navipa: So our Bangladeshi culture that we have—what do you teach Mahin, Zarin, Zaira?

What parts of our culture do you teach them?

Mila: I teach them to respect their elders, listen to others, to pray. To understand Muslim values and Bangladeshi culture. I tell them to speak in Bangla. To speak to their relatives.

Navipa: So, when you came to America, did you ever work?

Mila: After I arrived, I first worked at Cookies—Department Store.

Navipa: How was it like?

Mila: Yeah, it felt really good. I didn't have any kids back then.

Navipa: Thats nice—working. So do you miss the working?

Mila: Mhm...

Navipa: So, learning English—was it difficult?

Mila: Yeah, a lot. Even now. I have always been, how do you say—weak when it comes to English. I can understand it, but I can't speak it.

Navipa: Its like, I can understand Bangla, but I can't always speak it. How did you learn—little by little?

Mila: Listening to them. Zarin and Mahin speak it. Still I can't speak it myself but I understand it all. But I can't say it properly.

Navipa: Over here, we have Newkirk, Church Ave, Jackson Heights—do you like these places? Or no?

Mila: A little, not too much.

Navipa: Why?

Mila: Cause the Bangladeshi people here are different. They talk too much.

Navipa: Yeah, the people here—they talk but its not always good talk.

Mila: Mhm. Thats why.

Navipa: But still its a little nice having—

Mila: Yeah, the Bangladeshi food is good.

Navipa: Yeah, we have the Eid fairs. Those are nice.

Mila: Yes. Yes.

Navipa: So the friend group you have with my mom, Aziza, and Saira—how do you feel about it?

Mila: I really like it a lot.

Navipa: So, how did you all meet? Can you share that?

Mila: So, I met Sajni first. We lived in the same building together. I met Aziza and Saira at PS99. Then we all became a group.

Navipa: Yeah, your kids too all met.

Mila: Yeah.

Navipa: Last few questions. Is there anything in your life that if you could go back and change it—do you have any little regrets? Maybe you wish you could change something. Some people wish that they could go back to school—

Mila: I wish that I got married in Bangladesh and stayed there. That is what I wish for.

Navipa: So you miss Bangladesh a lot. Me too. I was born over there. Okay. That's it. But thank you.

Mila: Thank you.

## Sajni's Oral History Interview

Navipa (Interviewer): It's Friday, March 7, 2025, and it's 8:51 PM, and this is the fourth interview. Okay. So my first question is, tell me about your childhood, where you grew up, where you went to school, your friends, and what it was like growing up during that time.

Sajni (Interviewee): Okay, my childhood is... I grow up... my country is—that's called Bangladesh—and my hometown—Chittagong. I grew up over there. I finished my high school. I finished my college and I finished my bachelor also over there. Everything is same place. I finished it. I have so many friends, and then that's my childhood. This is like very interesting and very like joyable moment because I have so many friends, so many relatives over there. Still I have like a couple of friends attached with me. One of them lives near to me, also in here. One is far, but is still is a good friend, since like 19-1995 or 94 till now. So it's been like almost more than 30 years. We are a good friend. And yeah, that's my childhood. Navipa: Okay. Um, so what was it like coming to America? Were you excited? Were you scared?

Sajni: Uh. So coming to America, it is some kind of dream also, because my mom, she always want to— she always wanted to like marry someone who lives abroad, so that I can come in here, so might be one day she also come in here to see the abroad. How is the abroad? So, yeah, that's why I married like, my husband, and he bring me in here. And I—I'm not as scared because my family, like so many family, they lives in here. So that's why I am okay on this place, which one I live in now is New York. So it's called like United States. So I have so many relatives in United States, different different states, but they lives all in America.

Navipa: Did your mom ever get to come?

Sajni: No, unfortunately, after I get married and then, like I think two or three years and like she got the what kind of disease. It's like very hurtful disease that she got it. It's called liver cancer. So she only survived like 14 month after this, she leave us. Me, my two brother, my dad. Yeah, she leave us alone. Navipa: Were you close to your family?

Sajni: Yes, I am very close, not only close.

Navipa: Who were you the most closest to?

Sajni: I close my mom— my dad, my two brother. They are not lives with me, but still, if I need something, if I want to do something, they always support me 100%. They are my

strongest, like... supporter. Who always support me. How ever I thinking. Whatever I thinking. No matter what they support me. If I say something, if I want to do something, they just tell me, go, go ahead and just do it, or whatever you want, we will do it for you. Just tell us.

Navipa: You ever want to go live with them?

Sajni: Yeah, I wish I could go over there to live with them, but it now I have family, I have, so I have my own daughter, two daughters, I have my husband, so I cannot. That's like reality.

Navipa: So, what is it like, you said you have two daughters? What is it like being a mother? What was the first time like?

Sajni: Okay, so when I first time when I got my first baby, I, like, I'm happy, but like, however I happy more than happy is my mom, because she wants always a girl, because she she has so many she doesn't have she have only one girl, but she raised like three, four girls. So she always wanted to another girl like, when I'm going to grow up, I'm get married and I have also kids, so she always wants to the girl. So when she and she got like my daughter, first time, and she's, like start crying. So when when I got my daughter, I didn't see her—first doctor gave it to like my husband, and my husband said, no, give it to my in law's hand, because she wants like more than me and my wife. And my mom is so happy that I cannot explain. Because I didn't see her face, but I heard that she was so happy when she got my daughter.

Navipa: And your other daughter?

Sajni: Oh, she also cute, but she's like, naughty, but she's also cute. When I got—I come in here, after like five years that I get another guard baby, like, first when I heard this is like girl, I feel a little upset, because I wanted a boy, but when my sonogram said, it's a girl, I feel upset, but my husband, he's—he's a little angry and he said, how you how could you like divide like how could you divide like girl and boy? They both the same thing and you are the mom, you cannot say like that way, oh, this is girl, another girl. Then I feel like, I feel very sad and upset. But when I come in home, I lives with someone with the same apartment. So they just told me, this is whatever Allah wants to know. Allah wants to do for you. That's why they gave it to you. So be happy with the girl. It doesn't matter. It's a boy or a girl and then I realize, yeah, that's true, because that's my another angel come. Yeah, I'm happy with her.

Navipa: So, what part of our culture do you teach that you are two daughters?

Sajni: I try to teach like our culture like Islamic way how–however they can grow up. I cannot give them like everything because they are not taking that thing. Now they like they grow up and they raised like two, three different kind of cultures. So they want to take the all culture, they want to mix up the all culture. So as much as I can, I can give it to them, like a good advice, give it to them, good example for my family, my friends. So then they can take it that in their future.

Navipa: And you teach them about Islam?

Sajni: Yeah, I teach them a lot, me and my husband. Also, when they are like very young, it's like four or five years, one of my sister in law, she teached them a lot. They say like most important thing. She gave it to them. This is like a big opportunity for them. Still, I try to give it to them, my culture most of the things.

Navipa: So you try to give your daughters a lot of opportunities, but what about you? Did you ever go to school here? Did you ever want to go be something when you grew up? Something different?

Sajni: Yeah, I want. When I come in here, my husband, he wants to—to me to go his school first, like finish, like however he wants to study or whatever he wants to study, just finish it, but that time I was not ready because it's like it's language and then so many things. I was little afraid to start studying again. Because it's like a big gap for me. It's like 10, 15 years. After that it starting again—I feel like it really scared. But yeah, I wants to go start to school again, to like some college degree to take it in here. But unfortunately, I—I couldn't like find any good option or good option or good opportunity that I can take it. Sometimes I tell my two daughters, now they are like, like not very old, but yeah, they are very young. And then I ask them, like this is this is opportunity. I want to do this. They end up giving it like they are. They are not agree with me. Sometimes they say, yeah, you can go start it, but they are not like 100% agree with me. It's like they are not supported me so yeah, and then I also not like supported myself also and then I stopped there. But my husband, he wants to go to school, to study again, you to study, unfortunately, I didn't.

Navipa: Was a big part of that because you didn't speak English, or because you didn't know how to?

Sajni: No, that time when I wasn't here, it's like when I started when I lived in here, it's like five, six years then that time also is hard for me because I have like young—I have like my youngest youngest one. So I have to give her time after she started her school. Then I was thinking, but not hundred percent I was thinking to go to college or school, but last couple of years I was like, I was thinking to start it again. And then I—I didn't I got any supported for anybody. And then I stopped that again.

Navipa: So you couldn't go back to school, but did you ever work in America?

Sajni: Yeah, I work is not like professional working place. I work. I work like a couple of like regular stores or some places also last like four or five years, I started as like—a banker. I started as a like a professional job. That actually built up by career, that is that also like built up my community—commune. So now and then that's why I was thinking to start school again.

Navipa: And where do you work now?

Sajni: I work in the, like, Chase Bank. There's like a most like most popular bank in the U.S, not only U.S. This is like most popular bank on the world, so yeah, that's the famous bank that I work on now.

Navipa: So let's talk about community now. So here in New York, we have a lot of different communities for Bangladeshi people. We have Church Ave, New Kirk Plaza, Jackson Heights. What do you think about these places? Do you like them? Do you not like them?

Sajni: No, I like them because they's still they they are carrying our culture. They are showing our culture and so that I can I can show my kids that that's our culture that that's the way you have to be live. You have to be make, like make—you can make your future like that way. I didn't tell them to take the percent of our culture. There' the most thing you have to be taking that our culture that is Islamic way, lifestyle, good communication with family, friends, that I teach them. That's why I like this community, all of the place, on the—in New York.

Navipa: And what about the friends you have right now? Well, I have been, like, good friends in here. That friend I made it in here, not in my school or college friend. So yeah, they are very good. I have like three friends in here who lives near to me. My—my happiness, my sadness, they always are with me. They always support me.

Navipa: So you're very close with them?

Sajni: Yeah, I am, yeah.

Navipa: And my last question is, is there anything from your life that you wish you could change, any regrets? Sajni: Not regrets, like, if—I, if I have a like a chance or if I can't do it, I can start it again my study. I know it's too late, but I'll try because now it's not my physical condition is not stable all the time. I am suffering so many things so yeah I'm not regretting anything—anything, but yeah, I want to to study again. That's the thing. Navipa: And do you have any advice for other Bangladeshi American women or mothers anything you wanna tell them?

Sajni: Yeah, those advices? Like, um, don't do not depend on someone. Do your thing— like in this future or in this in your life, never ever depended with someone. That's that if you were dependent with someone, there's a big mistake, you can do it in your life. Whatever, however you just need to make your like your own income, make your own expense. The you don't need to go some someone's to ask okay can I get some money to spend? So like, let's that your first and last choice to like—do it yourself something for a new future. Navipa: Okay. Thank you.