

AFFIRMATIONS: FOR THOSE WHO ARE CONSIDERING LEAVING THE U.S.

What can I remind myself when the consideration process feels overwhelming?

Throughout the process of considering a life outside the U.S., there might be moments when things feel unclear, when you doubt yourself, or receive conflicting messages from the people around you about what's best for you. That's why it is important to be attentive to how you are feeling and the reasons why you are considering leaving. Below are some affirmations that have emerged from talking to formerly undocumented individuals who have left the U.S. and that will be useful for individuals who are considering leaving. These affirmations are designed to remind you that although seeking a life abroad is not always easy, you are not alone. You are loved and you are capable of achieving your dreams elsewhere.

You are continuing your family's legacy of seeking a better future. When you are thinking about your relationships and the possibility of leaving the U.S., it is important to remember that you are doing something that you and your family members have done before. At some point, members of your family had to ask themselves similar questions and make tough decisions with the future in mind. They thought about their families, their parents, their children (you), and what would happen to them if they left home. It is completely valid to want to live free of the limitations that come with your status. It does not make you ungrateful or disrespectful of your family's sacrifices. You deserve to pursue legal status, opportunities, and peace of mind.

You can maintain your relationships from afar. If you decide to leave, remember that you can maintain your relationships with your loved ones in the U.S. You can keep in touch via video chat, phone calls, and messages. You can also find creative ways to express your love by sending flowers, letters, and gifts especially during occasions like Mother's Day and birthdays. Also, if you have family members, loved ones, and friends who are documented in the U.S., they might even be able to visit you in the country you are considering moving to. Remember that this is not the first time you or your family have had to maintain relationships with loved ones in other countries. Many undocumented families live separated. We have parents, children, and relatives living in other countries and we all have had to find ways to stay connected. Although it is difficult, it is not impossible to remain connected even from afar. Many undocumented individuals have family members and friends outside of the U.S. Leaving the country can give you the opportunity to reunite with them.

It's a journey. It is not easy to leave behind your loved ones or the place where you grew up. Whether you move to a new country or go back to your country of birth, it will be challenging to adapt to a new place, a new culture, and new people. Sometimes, it will feel lonely, especially when you are moving by yourself or somewhere you do not know anyone. Remember that it takes time to set down roots and build a community. There will be good days and bad days. Just take it one day at a time.

Your loved ones want what's best for you. The people who love you want the best for you, whether they show it or not. In the end, whether you stay or leave, your loved ones want to see you happy, stable, and have opportunities to live up to your full potential.

If you do decide to leave, you will find ways to get the support you need and to keep in touch with your loved ones in the U.S. You might even be able to reconnect with family members and friends who live in other countries. Your loved ones want what is best for you, no matter what you decide.

This resource is part of the "Life Outside the U.S." project. It was created by Alejandro Espinoza with editing support from Claire Calderón. Visit LifeOutsideTheUS.org to learn more. Find all the resources created and gathered for this project at immigrantsrising.org/LifeOutsideTheUS-resources.

Immigrants Rising helps you make decisions based on your potential, not your perceived limits. Visit our website so you can see what's possible: immigrantsrising.org. For inquiries regarding this resource, please contact Katharine Gin, Co-founder and Executive Director, at kathy@immigrantsrising.org.