

AFFIRMATIONS: FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THE U.S.

What can I remind myself when building a life abroad feels overwhelming?

Throughout the process of building 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 you decided to leave. 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 establishing a life in a new country. These affirmations are designed to remind you that although building 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. It is important to remember that you have made a decision similar to the one that your family members made before you. At some point, members of your family had to 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 being undocumented in the U.S. 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. 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 living in. 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 also 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 have moved to a new country or gone back to your country of birth, it is challenging to adapt to a new place, a new culture, and new people. Sometimes, it feels lonely, especially when you have moved by yourself or to somewhere you do not know anyone. Remember that it takes time to put 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, your loved ones want to see you happy, stable, and have opportunities to live up to your full potential.

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.

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.

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