

Chapter 3. Friends

First Narrative: When you came to Canada, there are a lot of questions that you don't know the answers to, and one of the questions was where will I find friends. Everybody wants to have friends. Everybody needs a friend. When I came to Canada and I still didn't go to school, I was worried too. But when I went school, I found a lot of new friends. It wasn't that hard for me. Umm, school introduced to me a girl from my own country. She showed me everything, the room and teacher. She helped me a lot. One of the solutions that you can use is to try different sports in school, to join different sports teams, and also, every school who has to have ESL ambassador Co-op, it helps the students a lot. And everybody will be happy to hear hi in his language.

Second Narrative: All the time people in Canada ask me do you have any problems, what was hard for you here? I answer nothing, I don't have any problems or I have never been better, but if I be honest to you, I have problem here. I don't have my own best friend here. She is far away from me and I very miss her because I was with her from Grade One and now after a lot of years I can understand how important she for me. And I think all people should have their best friend and friendship is one of the important things in this world. And I won't see her, I won't talk with her, to see her face and its very hard to me I think its very hard to her. Now we can appreciate our friendship and we can understand how its important for us.

Third Narrative: Some of the difficulties that I had when I came to Canada was the language and making friends. It was very different for me because I did not my teacher, any words my teacher would say, and people that were trying to be my friends. The most challenging thing was getting over the negative attitude for many people. It was very hard for me. My self-esteem came down. My positive attitude was gone. I really wanted to go back to Bulgaria. I knew it was going to be hard, but I never knew I was going to be out of home. When I came here it was really hard. I was really shocked and surprised by many people. They were really negative and mean. Um I was trying to fit in by doing crazy stuff such as putting on make-up, wearing cr um crazy clothes that I would never wear in my life. It was just very hard, and they would just look at me and laugh back. It

was very hard for me. Again, my self positive attitude was gone. Um, I just wish that people would treat me the way that I deserve to be treated and have more positive attitude when newcomers come.

Fourth Narrative: For me it all started in Grade Seven. I was just an immigrant here in Canada. I've not had a lot of friends, I can say not any at all. I used to go home and cry myself to sleep every night thinking that one day I will have friends. And one day, a sunny day, I went to school and in a lunch room, lunch time, um, I saw this girl and she was sitting by herself and I thought of joining her. I went and introduced myself the way I knew, the way I used to do back home. I told her my feelings, I told her pretty much everything about me, but I did not know that she was going to blame me. We got to the cafeteria and she went with her friends. I thought I can go and join them too, but they told me that I was too tall. I didn't have proper clothing for them and I didn't speak very well English as they wanted me to be. That was the point where my self esteem dropped thinking that now for sure I'll never have friends. I thought that going back to my country, it wasn't going to help either so I went back home and I cried myself to sleep again. Uh, the solutions that I had is I went to, I started reading more books, I went to my ESL teacher and told her to help me more, and I made my own group of new immigrants that had just got here.

Fifth Narrative: When I came to Canada I had several problems with my language. I thought that my English is not good enough to talk to other people. I always sent members from my family to ask instead of me everything that was important for me. After a week, my parents sent me for for to a camp, where I met my new friends. They were all from my country, and they support me all the time. They told me that my English is good and that I can talk to people. They told me not to be shy and to ask whatever I want, whatever I need. That made my self-confidence go up but every time I ask and talk to other people and they keep on asking me again and again what I said, that made my self confidence go down. I told my parents what my problem is and they told me that no matter what they going to be behind me and they told me that if people don't understand what I am saying its their problem not my problem. So I think that people that

are new to the country need to try and speak more and more. That will make them improve their language and also they need to help others to get involved in the community and that will help them improve their language.