

Professor Metenko
FIQWS 10115, WEL9
9 September 2025

My Experience with Change

Immigration is a hard thing to discuss, especially for me as it's been a problem for my family and I for a while. Although the good it has done for me cannot go unnoticed, In Africa the opportunity to go to America is a privilege, a dream so many boys and girls have. But it's just that a dream. One many people in Africa wake up from to start another day. I was fortunate enough to live it, hard but not impossible.

Growing up was challenging switching from babysitter-to-babysitter, daycare to daycare, and coming back they're after hours of school was not making it better and my school life was different it was fun, enjoyable and full of many friendships. You can imagine the laughter of kids, our giggles echoing in the staircase and uno cards being flipped and placed. My life was challenging but enjoyable. There were always moments, times where I was missing something someone, I didn't have my father for most of my life. Immigration prevented him from coming with us to America. We had to leave him back home, no funds to travel back at least not at that time, and no visa for him to come here. But he was always there providing even if he wasn't physically there I have him to thank for all I've received during those special days. So, when we got our citizenship and finally had the chance to not only go back and see him but bring him back with us, I was overjoyed and when we landed in Ghana, and entered its humid land, we were met with many people waiting at the airport gate but I only remember one, He stood out. His smile was radiant it set him apart from the crowd whose expressions I couldn't begin to comprehend, didn't want to comprehend. All I saw and could see was him, tall, and a course beard I couldn't understand it, but I felt drawn to him. I knew that he was my father and when we got close you can only imagine what happened, what I felt I couldn't begin to describe it, but I can say it was a moment I wished to so desperately forget just so I could live all over again and see that face once more.

Our time in Africa was short, and he had a lot of catching up to do. We got a residence, and we only lived there for 2 weeks but it was unforgettable we went shopping,

and he took us around Ghana, and we went to the mall tested out the VR systems and games and that was only day 1, I spoke a lot with my dad those days told him about America all that happened, how it was, how it felt. We went out the second day nothing to crazy a small shop, but what made it good was my family we talked a lot joked around and ate together. Life here was fun, not any better but it was fun, family and the memories we had made it worthwhile. But most of all it was different back in America my mom was a single mother so knowing that the times she'd wake up me up to bring me to daycare, the times she'd come home shaking, panting, and tired out of her mind and she threw up those days, too much to handle. I like to think she was throwing her feelings all the stress that's accumulated being a nurse and a single mother is not easy. So, knowing that those times were over and that they were past her. I can still remember the days she'd pick me up from daycare at midnight I could see the stress on her face, as if she was wearing it, her bags piling. Her smile although still there I knew it was fading I could see it fading. I can only imagine the relief she felt knowing she was no longer going through this alone, and so when our time in Ghana was up and it was time to go back as a family this time, we were all excited not only that he'd be coming but that we'd be together as a family and when we got home it was late so we went to bed although none of us were really tired. The next morning the change was almost instant waking up to see him sleeping in our home in America was different, knowing I could rely on him more personally now was different that I could actually talk to him now was different I had to adjust to how different it all felt. Home felt different, familiar but not the same like putting on somebody else's shoes. It was the little things he did I had to adjust to. He was similar to me but not like, he was quiet but when he had something to say he could talk about it for hours, unlike me he was organized very organized everything was where he wanted it where he could see it, touch it where it should have been is what it felt like and when he started working it seemed like it didn't affect him at all, my father worked 2 jobs ever since he came to America and could work he went right to it working 2 jobs to support our family my mom needed the break by this point. he'd come home maybe twice a day and leave within the next 2 hours, I used to think he didn't sleep. He'd come home and he would make it seem easy like he could do this every single day for the rest of his life if he had to and that's what he would tell me he didn't care how much or whatever he had to do but as long as it was to support me he didn't mind he told me he was sorry he couldn't bring back all those missed times together but that he can at least support me so I'm able to go far and make new memories and guide me on my way to becoming not only an adult but a man. His presence at home was soothing when I was struggling in class, he was the one to help me get through it. When he saw me going to the school gym or doing pull ups with my door frame, he went right to get me a membership. He saw the little things I did and gave me the support I needed to do it better and so as time

went on and I got used to this difference I started looking up to him quickly. he was everything I expected of a father, everything I thought a father was he was it.

If I needed help, he was the one I asked, when it came to advice he gave the best, he was like my guide, a teacher especially so because he was licensed back in Africa, I remember while I was applying for college he was there, helping me practice for the math placement exams the way he was able to teach was impressive, made impossible things feel completely understandable. Those late nights at the dinner table around all the practice tests, books and notes. Our whiteboard full of solved equations and explanations written in red and blue, it covered both back and front. It wasn't like with regular teachers he didn't want me to just memorize not like a trick. It was about knowing why that method worked which is what made so separate from all my past teachers having to adjust to that change in thinking in working, He didn't just want me to pass he wanted me to understand and learn he said "whether you do good or not doesn't matter just try". I didn't realize it then but he was prepping for more than this exam he was changing me so that I realize effort matters more than anything he would tell me to "think about it like this" and tell me "as long as I got the answer right" a lot and that slowly changed me, helped me to realize my own efforts I had to adjust to this change of mindset that no matter how I got there it's the fact I'm even there that I got past it is what really matters. And by the time the exam was here I was ready with a fresh new mindset, the time I spent with him led me to change the way I thought and the nervousness that came with the way I used to think went away. Now that I had learned how to approach those questions I stopped treating the clock at the corner of my eyes as this grave enemy of mine. No rushing like the old me, I took my time I started thinking more instead of just working on auto pilot the change was evident. I took my time, question by question and the sound of continuous clicking, and pencils moving filled the room. I answered with clarity it's not like I didn't before but I never thought to really think and look over my choices that difference helped me stop many mistakes during that test. Doing things, I've never done before, I asked myself questions like "what do I already know?" and "where can I start?". I left the testing ground feeling proud, I thought I did good I knew I handled it better than I ever would, if it wasn't for my dad I would have been stressing, overthinking every question I did, all my answers. But my mind was clear a free conscience unlike before I was less concerned with how fast I could go and more focused on how well I could think through each problem. In the end, the exam felt less like an obstacle and more like a chance to prove myself and how much I actually changed. The change in mindset wasn't just about process it was about the ending itself since this change led by my father helped me to realize that the journey isn't what matters it's the destination, As long as I'm reaching the right answer the right ending how I got there doesn't matter I would have never reached such peace and understanding if it weren't for the change instilled and reinforced by my father. His arrival sparked various differences in

the way I act the way I spoke the way I did anything. He taught me who I really was exposed me in a sense to my true self forcing change simply within the couple of years he has been here and I have him to thank for all of it.