



Maria Francisca Carvalho

Translated from Portuguese

My name is Maria Carvalho, I am Azorean from São Miguel, came to the United States in '72. I found many "highs and lows" as everyone does, but I also experienced great difficulties with my husband's illness, but everything was surpassed. God already took him and I am here continuing my life. I can say that it's everything in Portuguese because I have the opportunity to socialize with everyone in the Portuguese language. And it just so happened that I have lived a bit of a tranquil life now; and much better. Always missing my land, and I have been here for 51 years now, completed this past June 10th; and I feel Portugal in my heart, with the same sentiment and the same vision as to when I lived there. But, I miss over there a lot, but I do live very comfortable here; I have my family here, I have two sons, six grandchildren, three great grandchildren--a normal life, and a life that brought me highs and lows and much, especially, I have great Faith in my religion, my love for the church. I work a lot in church activities, and this helps me very much, and, therefore, we have here our beautiful community of Immigrants Assistance Center that gives us the opportunity of having these meetings; a group of social gathering where we live ... that we gather at times in Portuguese, or English words. All this is part of our community, and we are very, I am very happy. And I am well and I am very happy to have this contact and have this opportunity to introduce myself, because it's in the get together that we live in less solitude. And that's what I am trying to do, it's to get away from the solitude because there was a time when I was down, under a depression because I live alone and feel very lonely. After I started liberating myself and taking part in these social gatherings that the Portuguese community offers us, it's happiness, it's joy and I am very happy. I am very, very grateful this opportunity to be able to address our community and to all of us that are seeing us and hearing us--that have the joy of living in the two communities, Portuguese as well as American, because America also offers us these opportunities in Portuguese, which is very, very good. I am very happy and I try to attend, see everything that is possible within our community.

Thank you, I am very happy. Thank you so much for the opportunity. I have nothing else to say, my dear. What else could I say?

Interviewer: Can I ask?

Exactly.

Interviewer: You visited Discovery Language Academy? Do you know about that?

No, no.

Interviewer: They work to save the Portuguese culture, including folk dances, and folk songs.

I like it a lot.

Interviewer: And the language with children; and the generation does not want to learn the language, maybe the parents say "don't speak Portuguese, we are here in the United States, learn only English."

No, no.

Interviewer: The family, they live in New Bedford or Freetown? You got family that still live here in this area?



My daughter lives here in Freetown, and now I live with her. I moved there. And my son lives in Colorado.

Interviewer: Oh, wow!

I have some family here and some in Colorado. And I have a grandson that lives in Connecticut. So, I have the family divided. It's a bit divided. I only have a daughter here, her husband and two grandchildren.

Interviewer: I have two sisters in Colorado.

You also have two sisters there!

Interviewer: Sim, so, one daughter is here, two grandsons ...

Two grandkids here.

Interviewer: Where, you already saw the great grandchildren?

The great grandchildren live in Colorado. Three great grandchildren in Colorado--they are my son's grandchildren.

Interviewer: Great. What part of your life, in this area, you like the best?

You are referring to the city, or ...

Interviewer: Life in general.

My life in general: My life, I came here and to New Bedford. And here I continue until today, it's been 51 years. So, I don't know ... I have visited Colorado, I visited some states in America, following my son as he was in the Navy, I have been to some ... liked very much some, but I am accustomed to here. It's like I was born here. It's like the love I have for my land where I was born. I love it here, I like to live here, because I don't know any better, I don't know more, other ways. I only know by visiting, but not to live there, I don't know. I like it. I don't know if the answer is correct. I don't know if this is what you wanted me to answer, but this is the area I like--I live in New Bedford, that is what I appreciate, that is what I have.

Interviewer: After you immigrated ...

After I immigrated ...

Interviewer: Did you visit the island? How many times?

I visited ... I visited in 80, in the 80's, 1980 I went for a visit.

Interviewer: Ok.

After I was, at the end of four years I visited again due to my father's passing. And after I was 26 years without going there, because of my husband's illness. After he died I have gone various times, many times. And now, inclusive, on the 15th of September I will be going back. With a one-way ticket. I don't know have--don't know when I will return, because I like my island very much, it's my country. I love very much my Portugal. It's in my heart. I have two nationalities: Portuguese and American. Which do I like the most? I don't know because I have both in my heart. I have lived more years here than over there, but I lived here always in a Portuguese



tradition, and that is what makes me like this area. It's because no matter where I turn, or go to a store, or to church—or any other place, I have the Portuguese language that helps me very much. And there are also our Portuguese traditions that we have frequently, that are our feasts. The Holy Ghost feast, the church feasts—everything in Portuguese that I like so much. But I like very much.

Interviewer: Well, and ...

But I like very much to satisfy the longing feeling that I have for my land. I went in 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, after I went in 2016 or 2017, I am not sure. In 2019 and I am going now. I have been back many times.

Interviewer: Amiudadas vezes, yeah ...

And love it so much, so much and every time I go, I cry when I return because that is the land I was born in and I have a longing feeling for it. I live always with a longing feeling.

Interviewer: The land is in your heart.

In my heart. If I didn't love the land I was born in, I would not be Portuguese, because no matter where we are born, back there is our little piece of land. I have the church that I attended, where I was baptized, where I got married, where I took communion and where I was given all the sacraments. That is always here.

Interviewer: Ok.

Is this ok?

Interviewer: Yeah. Oh, sim.

All done?

Interviewer: Five minutes, but ...

One more ...

Interviewer: But you ...

I did good?

Interviewer: Are you happy with this process?

Very much. I feel like I am lighter. I liked it. Because when I came, I was thinking: "what am I going to say? Share the story of my life?" It was very difficult. I spent 17 years with my husband sick, on oxygen and ... it was terrible. I went through a lot, a lot, in this country, but meanwhile I have my children, I have my grandchildren. They are healthy, thanks to God.

Interviewer: Yes, certo.

Thanks to God and I am very happy with this project. To participate.

Interviewer: The pleasure is ours.



Thank you very much.

Interviewer: Thank you very much.

I wish you happiness and continue.

Interviewer: Thank you for your story.

Thank you and for helping us, every time more and more with projects like this, because we also can know and evolve in our Portuguese here in America.

Interviewer: Sim.

Thank you very much.

Interviewer: Thank you very much.