

Seventeen hours is a long time, right? How about 11,600 kilometers? Seems far, doesn't it? Imagine travelling that distance at the age of seven with the idea of a better life ahead. If you can imagine that you'd be living my dad's life in 1979. My dad, always said "Being a handworker will always get you far.", hard work is beneficial in many areas of life, and my dad always made sure I remembered the importance of that. Everyone knows every decision you make or don't make has direct and indirect impacts on your life. However, it's easier to see that once your life has started working out. In the moment you may be thinking about direct outcomes of your decisions. That's just the mindset of people starting new lives.

Many people look at their childhood fondly and the memories they associate with it. "I remember going to the city with my dad and helping him run errands before moving to Canada" is what my dad said when I asked him for his earliest childhood memory. My dad started working from an early age to save money and pay for his life in Canada. Aside from that, my dad completed school while working jobs and helping with his family. Life changes often and you must adapt or change either with or without it.

Jobs change depending on where we are in life and the same goes for my dad. He's worked different jobs to make ends meet. His first job, like many others, was delivering newspapers in his area at the age of thirteen. He moved on to washing dishes at a restaurant when he turned sixteen. Those jobs aren't the most exciting occupations, but he didn't have another option. Having a job was better than nothing. My dad worked different jobs until 1996 when he opened an automotive shop alongside his best friend. However, after four years they decided the business wasn't worth the hours they had to work to keep the shop up for the income they received. "Sometimes you have to realize if the life you're living currently is worth it in the future and make changes accordingly," he said when asked why the business wasn't worth it. So, they went their separate ways, and my dad found a new position driving a semi-truck transporting large containers to various locations across Canada. The job was stable in terms

of hours, income, and work needed to be done. He didn't have to worry about the excessive demands of a business, but he still made a good income and balanced his professional and personal life. Thirteen years later in 2013 my dad found a job as a longshore mechanic. The job still offered stability and the ability to make a living off one of his passions. Supporting yourself is one thing but adding three others has a toll on the quality of life you're able to live.

After my parents got married, changes were inevitable. They had to support themselves and each other. They both worked different jobs, occasionally multiple at once to start their lives and future. After my brother and I were born, my dad had a stable job that paid well and had the passion and knowledge for it, he said "Enjoying what I did made going to work easier." Stability is important for individuals, but it has just as much importance when it comes to having a family and navigating that change. Life can be unexpected, but it's important how you react to the uncertainty that matters.

It's hard to imagine yourself in situations unfamiliar to you but those hypothetical situations could easily be someone's reality. That describes my life and my dad's at the same age. My dad at sixteen was earning money to support himself and his family, while I, also sixteen, am working for money to spend on extracurriculars because my parents support my needs. It seems like a small contrast, but it makes all the difference. From moving countries or quickly adjusting to a new lifestyle our lives started vastly differently. Later, having to work different or multiple jobs to receive a steady income or hours continues to indicate the differences in our upbringing and lifestyle. Lastly, taking care of others with the same income that you lived on is a situation that could change anyone's life positively or negatively. However, every decision made had its impact. It's hard to imagine how life would look had my dad not made the sacrifices he did, but I'll never know how that would be, or if I'd even be here to see it.