

Podcast Elias Silence Hate

Elias:

My name is Elias. I am from Afghanistan originally.

I am 21 years old, it's about 3 years and I'm in Greece.

I'm living with all of my other family members. My father my mother and my sister.

We live in Exarchia, in the beginning we have been in Laurio in a camp and then we transfer to Athens. I'm going to Junior High School third class.

Journalist:

How is school in Greece compared to Afghanistan?

Elias:

It's totally different just the environment and the children the lessons are totally the same

Journalist:

Are the lessons taught in Greek?

Elias:

Yes

Journalist:

And do you have a translator for that?

Elias:

No we don't and sometimes I don't understand anything.

My favorite subject in the school is biology.

Journalist:

How is possible your English is so good?

Elias:

Just by practice. I had some not really continuously classes. I had some short time classes.

And also by the help of my friends.

Journalist:

Here in Greece or just before at your country?

Elias:

Just Greece. I start learning English just in Greece

My hobby was eating sleeping, beside that computer games. That all was my hobby.

Journalist:

Only that ?

Elias:

Only that.

Journalist:

No any sports like football etc.

Elias:

Nothing

Journalist:

Something with friends?

Elias:

Nothing just maybe hangout sometimes with my friends

Journalist:

The truth is and that is why we had you in our minds, is that you are the perfect example of a person being integrated in the Greek community during the last year. What the term integration means to you?

Elias:

Thank you for that opinion first of all. But for me because I really like the society of the Greece and I want to to somehow include myself, so whatever came to me whatever opportunity was open for me, I just entered that. I start exploring about everything in Greece the culture the people the retreat behaviors and I started making friends in the school and outside.

Journalist:

Can you give us some examples of the opportunities you had in Greece?

Elias:

Music class, photography class, computer class, even mythology of Greek, all of this I had experienced during the classes I was learning them.

One difficulty that really I face in my life in Greece, it was when I'm getting inside the side the society of Greece, at some point I was changing myself and that really makes difficult . Especially for my family also for my old friends. I can say like already lost all of my old friends because of my new behavior. All old friends that I had in Iran and in Afghanistan. The big thing that changed in our family, is our religion. Because before we were Muslims and now we are Christians so that's the most big part and second my character. I totally changed and also my hobbies, everything and I am not lazy boy anymore. Nobody forced me.

Journalist:

What about hate speech in everyday life. Have you faced any?

Elias:

In the beginning Yes. I can say everyday. But as I was a learning about the people in society it's getting less and less and less. So even nowadays sometimes I might hear some hate speech but not really that much as I was hearing before. Because I'm a little bit black and also my face is showing that I'm not from these country, so people can recognize me some of them might say some bad words to me like : "Hey why you came here? This is not your country. Go back to your country. We don't like you." And this is sad.

Journalist:

What has changed from the first time you came here until now ?

Elias:

If I want to say one word all my life. Plus myself. Definitely better!

Journalist:

And now you're also a photographer right?

Elias:

Yes I am!

Journalist:

And you're facilitating your own workshops?

Elias:

Yes I am! Since I have started photography, I started with my mobile phone and then slowly slowly my Improvement cause me to to get my first DSLR camera, just a camera. Before it was landscape and portrait, now I'm concentrating on fashion photography and modeling.

I had had too many exhibitions in Greece and out of Greece. Also just in this month I had three exhibitions, one South Korea one in Greece and the other also in Athens. I made a collection from 10 top of my picture and I made a story of that. The workshop it was a really good challenge for me because I can describe and also explained what I have learned from photography and because of that I decided okay let's go and do it. So I am directing this workshop "The 10 Student" its Intercultural class and my students are from everywhere and I'm just trying to explain and teach whatever I learned. The age range is from 18 years old to 30 years old. I had so many good feedback from them

Journalist:

And where's the course taking place?

Elias:

It's taking place at Elix organization.

Journalist:

Do you get these the whole thing that you're doing, the photography Workshops etc. it's a huge integration step that you made in your life and for your life in Greece. Do you understand with how big this is?

Elias:

Maybe for the other perspective yes for some other people but for myself, I guess it's normal.

Journalist:

Last question what would you like to stay in Greece or travel?

Elias:

Also have to say that this is another thing that I am struggling with my family because they are trying to get out of the Greece, but I don't want. I am already integrated in the society and I really loved it, Greek society. But my family doesn't want, because of the economic problem in Greece and they say all the time like "No we don't like Greece we want to leave, it's not a good future. For you! We are just talking about you!!". And I'm like they don't know. Like I am happy with this situation.

Look it's not about all the time sitting in the house or trying to keep yourself far from the society because you don't know the language you don't know the people try to go out and learn something or at least educate. You already graduate from the school but try to learn the language and be in the society. But my family because they really focus on their target so all the time say to me: "No because we don't want to stay in Greece, we don't want to do anything. And this is a big problem for them. Not for me, for them.

Journalist:

Are you going to follow them if they leave the country?

Elias:

As much as I can, I will stay in front of their way. But maybe, maybe they win this competition. Not sure but I will try my best.