



My Supporters Help Me Reach My Goals

Lourdes Gloribel Perez Andrade

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. Do you have supporters in your life? How have they helped you reach your goals?
2. ICE stands for Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The job of ICE employees is to enforce immigration law. Share what you know about ICE.
3. What does *habit* mean? Discuss a *habit* you are trying to change. What would help you make the change?

Many Challenges

When I was 14, I came to North Carolina from El Salvador. Later, my two children were born in this country. When I was 23, my son was 8, and my daughter was 6, a police officer stopped me because my headlights were broken. The police took me to the police station and fingerprinted me. They found out that ICE was looking for me because I missed a court date in 2011. ICE picked me up and took me to a detention center in Louisiana. I called my mom, who lived with me, and I told her what happened. She cared for my children for the six months that I was held in ICE custody.

Many Goals

Now, I am 27 years old. I work about 60 hours a week, and I attend Literacy Together to learn English and to pass the GED. With more education, I will have a better job, and with a better job, I will earn more money. Then I can save money for my children's education, help



my family in El Salvador, and save money for a house. Eventually, I want to have a college degree.

Many People Help Me

I get support from my tutors, family, and friends. My most important American friend and supporter is a teacher at my daughter's school. She supports me by helping my kids do their homework. She goes with me to parent-teacher meetings. She even takes my children out to celebrate if they do well at school and at home.

I have two tutors from Literacy Together; one tutor is for English and the other one is for the GED. They support me by meeting with me in zoom class every weekend.

My other American friend supported me by giving me work. He helped me create my cleaning company. He gave me advice about studying,

and he talked to my kids about the importance of studying. Both of my American friends supported me by sending letters to ICE about me.

My children support me by doing their best not to bother me while I am in class or when I am doing my homework. Before my mother moved, she used to help me with my children so I could continue with my education. Finally, my boyfriend helps me by watching my children when I need it during my classes.

Making Progress

My biggest obstacle is time. I have two jobs. In the mornings for about four hours, I clean houses and Airbnbs. Later in the day, I work an eight and a half hour shift at a factory. On the weekends, I do my chores, as well as spend time with my family, friends, and tutors. Another obstacle is reading and understanding English. I often feel nervous or embarrassed when I speak English. For the past month, I have changed my *habit* of listening to music in Spanish to listening to audiobooks

in English. I can see that my vocabulary is improving.

At the beginning of the time with my tutor, I struggled because there is a lot of reading for the GED, and I was not able to understand what I was reading. I am glad that I have continued. Every time I take a test, I see some progress, and I feel proud. Last month, I was impressed because one of my employers noticed that I could engage in a longer conversation with her!

AFTER YOU READ:

1. Take notes in the chart below to show how Lourdes gets support. (When you take notes, do not write in complete sentences. Paraphrase what the author says. Don't use her exact words.)
2. Make another chart. Fill this one out with information about *your* support network.
3. Write an essay about your support network.

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Supporter	What They Do or Did
mom	
Literacy Together	
American friend (#1)	
tutor (#1)	
tutor (#2)	
American friend (#2)	
tutor (#2)	
children	
boyfriend	